

ECCO GENERAL MEETING NOVEMBER 26TH 2008 – MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Present: Stephen Nugent, Peter West, Yvette Black, Terry Bannigan, Ric Cother, Brian Phillips, Jenny Smith, Tony Smith, Haidee Nelson, Shane Adams, Sandra and Owen Robinson, Bob Hill, John Gill, Jenny Holdaway, Colin Foster, Phil Stevenson, David Williams, Peter Napier, Colin Young.

2. Apologies: Neil Jones, Nick King, Fiona Hawke, Marlene Farrell, Meg Bannigan, Carol Gill. Acceptance of apologies moved by John Gill, seconded Yvette Black

3. Minutes of General Meeting held on October 22, 2008

Minutes moved by Peter West seconded by David Williams that the minutes of the 22nd October be accepted. Carried.

4. Business Arising

- Phil Stevenson provided an update on the proposed slow summer festival to be run by Taste Orange, from 5-16 February, including Robertson Park and music.
- Kurrafalls Open house at Brian Phillips place – received good visitation from ECCO members (20-30).
- Eucalyptus trees at Leewood Park - the park has been sold but it is understood that many of the trees will not be directly impacted.

5. Guest Speaker - Mr Peter Napier, Agriculture Teacher at Orange High School presented plans for the development of a sustainable school farm in Kearney's Drive

Invited speaker, Mr. Peter Napier from Orange High school, gave an inspiring presentation about a school farm project aiming to develop a sustainable agricultural learning venue with a focus on three themes: 'whole farm planning', 'ecologically friendly' and 'sustainable agriculture'. The site is located on Kearneys Drive and consists of a 20 acre block of predominantly pasture species. The project started in 2007 with weed control (for hawthorn and briar), fencing, and the installation of wind breaks containing young casuarinas and native shrubs. Their immediate aim is to teach students by putting sustainable land management principles into practice. Their long term goal is to provide an opportunity for students to see the longer term rewards of their individual contribution to the establishment of an ecologically sustainable farm.

The next steps in the project will be to identify and subdivide (with fencing) areas of the block according to their characteristics - to accommodate for the minor variations in the block such as wetter areas, e.g. move fencing to suit the landscape to protect them from further disturbance or install fences along natural contours. This approach will help to protect drainage lines and existing water holes, as well as protect the site from erosion. Making provision for a small wetland may be considered in the future.

The project may become a demonstration site – providing an opportunity to showcase sustainable agriculture and whole farm planning with an ecological and environmental focus to other schools/institutions. The key would be to document the process and record progress sufficiently to inform other groups. Monitoring of biodiversity outcomes, such as periodic bird surveys, may demonstrate that agriculture and biodiversity conservation can be simultaneously achieved. Future challenges include ongoing weed control, and the risk of infill due to urbanisation. Overall, to date the project has been successful because

of a commitment from Peter Napier, Trevor Thompson and Gordon Tink and students of Orange High School.

6. Treasurer's Report: Phil Stevenson reports that ECCO's balance stands at \$4,159.85 as of 26th November 2008; last month it stood at \$2,750. Small costs have been incurred in the last month for printing and postage. Current membership stands at 81 (total) plus 1 more this evening. This consists of 7 concession memberships, 28 family memberships, 14 individual memberships, 4 life memberships. Motion to accept the treasurer's report as accurate, moved by Colin Foster, seconded by David Williams.

7. Correspondence:

Cyanide transportation through Orange

ECCO has sent letters to Russell Turner - Member of Orange and John Cobb, raising the issue of environmental safety with the transportation of cyanide products through Orange via rail and road. Enquiries suggest transportation complies with standards and codes of practice. However risk of spillage cannot be ruled out entirely. To date, no reply has been received from Russell Turner.

***ACTION:** ECCO awaits a response from Russell Turner – Tony Smith to follow up by contacting Russell's office before next ECCO meeting. Motion moved by John Gill, seconded by Tony Smith.*

Further issue – The National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) (see <http://www.nicnas.gov.au/>) is the federal governments agency responsible for regulating the use of industrial chemicals (including cyanide). ECCO may wish to write to the authority regarding monitoring of cyanide transportation through or around Orange. ECCO agreed to wait for Russell Turners response before taking further action.

Community committee representation

Orange City Council wrote to ECCO extending an invitation for ECCO representation on the 'Strategic Planning and Land Use Community Committee'. Nick King has submitted an application in response, indicating he would be willing to represent ECCO on the Committee. Other ECCO committee members have submitted expressions of interest for other Council community committees. The deadline for expressions of interest has been extended for all committees until Friday 28th November due to less-than-desirable interest to date. For more information including application forms, see

<http://www.orange.nsw.gov.au/go/our-council/charters-community-committees> .

Acceptance of correspondence moved by Stephen Nugent, seconded Jenny Smith.

8. ECCO Orange Local Environment Awards: Report from Stephen Nugent - ECCO Environment Awards Committee.

The Committee inspected 3 projects and unanimously agreed to provide awards to:

- 1) Sandra and Owen Robinson – For their 5 year old urban native garden consisting of a large variety of native species, including eucalypts, native shrubs and ground covers - providing a complex shrub and under storey layer. It attracts prolific bird life and does not require any water because it is with well mulched. It provides a great demonstration of how native gardens can be highly successful. Congratulations!
- 2) Eva and Gerd Wolf – For their rural native garden and solar-passive earth covered house on Forest Reefs Road. The native garden consists of a huge variety of endemic plants, and presents habitat for many lizards, frogs, and birds. The house design with

northern facing front windows ensures that it maintains a constant temperature of 18-22C all year with almost no internal heating required. The house block has no lawns, and has subtle paths meandering through the gardens and across the roof of the house. The house is made largely from recycled products. Congratulations!

- 3) The OCAN Climate Action Award was awarded to Orange Public School – For significant participation in this year’s National Tree Day involving 700 students and the planting of over 1000 trees. (see <http://treeday.planetark.com/>). Congratulations!

***ACTION:** ECCO to prepare an Earth First article on the ECCO Local Environment Awards followed by a formal presentation with media to congratulate each winner and promote community awareness.*

9. Development Application for the Evangelical Church, Ploughman’s Lane

Report from Stephen Nugent:

ECCO has previously made a submission to Orange City Council regarding the proposed Evangelical Church development on the corner of Cargo Road and Ploughmans Lane. The development plan consists of a sizeable building with approximately 150 proposed car spaces. Orange City Council invited stakeholders to a mediation meeting on Monday 24th November, to discuss relevant concerns and issues. While the Church representatives failed to attend, the meeting proceeded. Issues discussed with the Council included the suitability of site for the proposed development, the streetscape, noise, lighting, etc. Geolyse has advised that the size of the development footprint may still be modified/ negotiated. ECCO members commented that there may be potential for significant impacts to Ploughmans Creek (via creek diversion or piping).

The next steps:

- The church responds to concerns raised by submissions by stakeholders, and ECCO should receive a copy of that response.
- The development application will go to the Council’s Sustainable Development Committee on 15 December.
- ECCO will have an additional opportunity to comment, and will be able to present directly to the Sustainable Development Committee on the issue.

***ACTION:** ECCO to wait for the Church’s response before addressing the matter further.*

10. Update on Draft Local Environment Plan. Stephen Nugent to report.

The current understanding is that the Draft LEP will be on public display during February 2009 for comment and submissions. It is likely to be a sizable document. ECCO discussed the prospect of:

- Reviewing the previous LEP in anticipation of the draft being released in February
- Dividing into small groups to review specific sections of the new Draft when it is released, to make good use of time and resources, then reporting back to the main ECCO group with recommendations and findings
- Seeking input and comment from all ECCO members because of the diverse range of skills, knowledge and experience across the group that may be useful in ECCO’s submission(s).

***ACTION:** ECCO to divide responsibility for review and comment of different sections of the draft LEP among internal groups of ECCO. Motion moved by Peter West, and seconded by Dave Williams.*

***ACTION:** ECCO to form a steering committee (working group) to review the previous LEP and inform the broader ECCO group on what are the likely issues of the new LEP. This information will be used to sub-divide the ECCO group to coordinate a thorough review and response. Moved by Phil Stevenson, seconded Tony Smith. The working group to consist of Phil Stevenson, Peter West, Haidee Nelson, and Tony Smith.*

11. ECCO Christmas Party/BBQ - Sunday 7th December

Venue: Orange Botanic Gardens, Kearney’s Drive Orange

Time: 5-6pm

Further details will be circulated prior to the event.

Walk Against Warming (Botanic Gardens): This year’s ‘Walk Against Warming’ was initially scheduled for Saturday, November 15th, but was postponed due to inclement weather. It has been rescheduled for **Sunday 7th Dec. from 3-5pm** prior the ECCO BBQ (as above). A reminder email will be circulated to the ECCO group. Motion moved and carried for the walk to be held on Dec 7th from 3pm-5pm.

12. General business

- ECCO to write to Orange City Council – regarding their recent call for recommendations on the allocation of a federal government grant. ECCO to recommend further installation of footpaths, cycle ways, and bike racks to accommodate for increasing pedestrian traffic. Motion: Colin Young, seconded by Bob Hill, thirded by Tony Smith (at special request). ECCO to contact Orange City Council to identify how we are able to make our recommendations, e.g. written submissions or open forum discussion.
- Isabel Higgins – has contacted ECCO – regarding the sale of Wilderness Society Calendars for 2009. Price: \$18.95. If interested, contact Stephen Nugent (stephenandfiona@oxleyce.net.au)
- Heather Blore – has contacted ECCO regarding organization of a daytime environmental group meeting as evenings are difficult for many ECCO members. For further information, please contact Stephen Nugent

13. Next meetings

Next ECCO General Meeting	To be held at the ECCC Christmas party
Next Committee Meeting	Wednesday 10 th December.

Minutes recorded by Peter West, ECCO Committee.