

ECCO Orange Inc.

Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Orange

President's Report to the Annual General Meeting 23 July, 2008.

I have pleasure in presenting the President's Report to the second Annual General Meeting of ECCO Orange Inc.

ECCO Orange was launched in April, 2006 and for two years has played an increasingly important and dominant role in environmental education, awareness and activism in the Orange community. ECCO membership has grown steadily to the point where there are currently 120 financial members.

ECCO General Meetings have been held on the 4th Thursday of each month, and have provided members with the opportunity to contribute to discussions and decisions on many significant issues. Special Guest Speakers have included Dr Andrew Rawson speaking on Climate Change, Mr Chris Devitt on Orange's water supply issues and projects, Mayor John Davis sharing his vision for the City, and Mick Fabar and Mark Hodges on Sustainable Buildings and the Basix code. An inspection of the "Twin Peaks" restoration project with Rod Holcombe was another well attended activity organised by ECCO.

ECCO has facilitated widespread community debate, prepared submissions, media releases, letters to the editor and Earth First articles in the CWD, on a range of important local issues including;

- The North Orange Shopping Centre and the reclassification of community land ("the triangle") opposite the Orange Botanic Gardens.
- The removal of trees on the site of the new Orange Hospital at Bloomfield, and the proposed location of the Forensic Mental Health Unit.
- Orange City Council's Recreational Needs Study and the recommendation to sell off 13 neighbourhood parks.
- The proposed redevelopment of the Baldock, Stacy & Niven Building.
- The proposed Lake Canobolas water pipeline.
- The Blayney, Cabonne, Orange Rural and Industrial Land Use Strategy.
- The Bathurst, Orange, Dubbo Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.
- Orange Principal Local Environment Plan, with particular reference to crown lands at Bloomfield / Forest Rd, and Council land in Ploughmans Valley and North Orange.
- Proposed amendments to the Orange DCP, wrt subdivisions in Ploughmans Valley.
- The HUB Regional Resource Reprocessing Facility.
- Significant Landscape Features Project, Orange City Council.
- Stormwater Management Plan, and the Blackmans Swamp Creek Project.
- The route of the Southern Distributor Road, and proposed use of Ploughmans Lane.

ECCO members have participated in working bees and tree plantings associated with;

- Planet Ark National Tree Day, at Hinton Reserve on 29th July 2007.

- Clean Up Australia Day, at Moulder Park / Blackmans Swamp Creek on 2nd March 2008.
- World Environment Day, at Ridley Oval and Wentworth Reserve on 5th June 2008.
- Daroo Orange Urban Landcare Group, native vegetation restoration at Wentworth Reserve.
- ELF Community Garden.
- Parks Alive tree plantings in Ridley Oval.

As part of its involvement in World Environment Day, ECCO donated \$100 to Orange City Council, and \$50 to each of Calare Public School, Orange High School and Borenore Public School for the purchase of trees. ECCO and Daroo members facilitated the involvement of students from Calare School in planting trees on Wentworth Reserve.

A major initiative in November 2007 was the formation of the Orange Climate Action Now (OCAN) group as a subcommittee of ECCO under the chairmanship of Nick King. This group was officially launched at a fundraising premiere screening of the movie, "The 11th Hour". OCAN organised the "Walk Against Warming" at Lake Canobolas on 11th November, promoted "Earth Hour" in the Orange Community, and has held meetings with the Bathurst Community Climate Action Network.

ECCO played a major role in assisting the Central West Environment Council with a highly successful Regional Water Forum in Orange on the 15th February 2008.

ECCO has finalised plans for the introduction the "ECCO Environment Awards", which will be launched at the forthcoming Rotary Enviro Expo on the 17th – 18th October 2008. ECCO is contributing to the organization of the Expo and will assist in the running of a social function at which the Awards project will be launched.

The achievements of ECCO are due in no small part to the untiring efforts of members and the Committee, particularly at critical times when major issues have emerged requiring participation in rallies, lobbying or attendance at Council meetings.

The Committee of Stephen Nugent, Nick King, Phil Stevenson, Jen Smith, Margaret Weaver, Colin Young, Susan Sanders, and Col Foster has met monthly throughout the year between General Meetings and deserves special acknowledgement.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has been part of an exciting and productive year for ECCO.

The year ahead will once again provide many more challenges, and opportunities for ECCO to show leadership in the community in protecting our local environment and precious natural resources, and ensuring that sustainable development occurs in Orange. The introduction of ECCO's proposal for a Neighbourhood ParkCare Programme, and the ECCO Environment Awards are two important projects to get under way, and the evaluation of the Draft Orange Local Environment Plan will require a major effort towards the end of 2008 and early 2009.

Neil Jones
President.
23 July, 2008