

ECCO Orange Inc.

Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Orange

President's Report to the Third Annual General Meeting 26 August, 2009.

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

ECCO Orange was launched in April 2006, and for three years has played an increasingly important and dominant role in environmental education, awareness and activism in the Orange community, with an increasing emphasis on climate action initiatives. While ECCO membership continues to grow, and the support of all members comes to the fore over critical issues, there is a solid core of members who regularly attend meetings and do the hard miles. Their commitment is invaluable and is largely responsible for ECCO achieving such outstanding results during the past twelve months. Our challenge is to involve more members in our activities and to provide a variety of opportunities to cater for and satisfy the interests all members.

ECCO General Meetings continue to be held on the 4th Wednesday of each month, usually at the Environmental Learning Facility (ELF). When the need arises to deal with an issue of widespread community concern, meetings have been promoted as Public Meetings, often associated with special guest speakers.

Well attended Public Meetings were held regarding;

- Global Warming and Climate Change (Guest speaker, Dr Andrew Rawson).
- Orange City Council's Blackman's Swamp Creek Stormwater Harvesting Project (Dennis Marsh, Summerhill Creek landowner).
- Proposed Rezoning of Department of Primary Industry's Land at Bloomfield for residential and commercial development.
- Development Application for Evangelical Church, Ploughmans Lane (Allan Renike, Orange City Council).
- Transport of Cyanide through the Central West (Graeme Dunstan, Cyanide Watch).
- Orange Showground and Colourcity Caravan Park Options Paper.
- Cadia East Goldmine Project Environmental Assessment (Senior Staff from Cadia Valley Operations).

ECCO invited Steve Harding from Solar Pumping Solutions to present a seminar on solar hot water systems, and the particular features of evacuated tube systems. This was part of an ECCO initiative to facilitate the bulk purchase of solar HWS's.

Peter Napier, Agriculture teacher from Orange High School addressed a meeting on plans for the development of a sustainable school farm in Kearney's drive, North Orange.

ECCO has prepared major submissions, media releases, letters to the editor and Earth First articles in the Central Western Daily, and held consultations on a range of important local and regional issues including;

- Blackmans Swamp Creek Stormwater Harvesting Project.

- The Northern Distributor Road Environmental Assessment.
- Bathurst Orange Dubbo Sustainability Action Plan.
- Evangelical Church Development Application.
- Rezoning of DPI Land at Bloomfield.
- Orange Showground Options Paper
- Cadia East Goldmine Project Environmental Assessment
- Moolarben Coal Mine
- Companion Animal Management Plan
- Floodplain Risk Management Plan and the role of constructed wetlands
- Supermarket trolleys
- Natural burials

ECCO assisted Orange Rotary Club in the planning and running of their inaugural Enviro Expo in October 2008. ECCO, Orange Field Naturalists and Conservation Society and Daroo Orange Urban Landcare Group organised a joint stand, while ECCO also launched its Local Environment Awards, with presentations being made to the first winners, Bowen Public School and Daroo Orange Urban Landcare Group. ECCO will be similarly assisting Orange Rotary Club in the forthcoming 2009 Enviro Expo.

Throughout the year ECCO and its Climate Action subcommittee (OCAN), has been very proactive in organising a range of important environmental and climate action initiatives including;

- Clean Up Australia Day at 5 sites in Orange.
- Walk Against Warming at the Orange Botanic Gardens.
- Representation at the Climate Action Summit in Canberra.
- Climate Action Protest outside the Orange office of John Cobb, Member for Calare, as part of a National Day of Protest
- World Environment Day Community Arts Competition
- Earth Hour
- Working bees at the ELF Community Garden, Coute's Estate Community Garden, and Glenroi Heights Public School Kitchen Garden Project
- Planet Ark National Tree Day (in association with OCC), and including donation of \$100 worth of native trees and shrubs to each of 5 local primary schools; Orange Public, Glenroi Heights, Borenore, Manildra and Molong
- Open House at "Kurrafalls", the energy efficient home of Brian and Jan Phillips.
- Bike Week and Ride to Work Day.
- Input into the location of bike racks in the Orange CBD.

ECCO has continued to promote two major ongoing activities throughout the year; the Earth First column has appeared each Saturday morning in the Central Western Daily thanks to a small team of committed regular contributors; and the quarterly ECCO Environment Awards continue to provide recognition of local environmental and climate action.

The achievements of ECCO and OCAN 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 preparation of major submissions, in particular, the DPI Land Rezoning and Cadia East Goldmine EA.

The ECCO Committee of Stephen Nugent, Nick King, Phil Stevenson, Jen (and Tony) Smith, Colin Young, Susan Sanders, Col Foster, Yvette Black and Peter West

and the OCAN subcommittee of Nick King, Stephen Nugent and Brian Phillips, have met monthly throughout the year between General Meetings and deserve special acknowledgement.

The year ahead will once again provide many challenges, and opportunities for ECCO to show leadership as we seek a sustainable future for our community. The long overdue Orange Local Environment Plan will shortly be released for comment, as will be the Environmental Assessment for the Euchareena Road Waste Treatment Facility (formerly called the HUB). A priority will also be to progress the Orange Neighbourhood Parkcare initiative, and to launch and promote our new website, and the introduction of a home energy auditing service. The urgent need to address climate change will require a greater commitment to action through OCAN initiatives, and support for creating awareness of resource use efficiencies and energy transformations in homes and businesses.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members, supporters and friends who have contributed to the success of ECCO this year. ECCO is playing a critical environmental role in our community and we are making a difference!

Neil Jones
President.

26 August, 2009