



Householder's Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

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HOPE E-news Bulletin, 16 February 2009

Hi all,

Nature is a strange thing. Australia experiences its extremes to the extreme. Floods in North Queensland, and fires in Victoria and NSW. What a dreadful few weeks. HOPE wishes to express its deepest sympathy to those affected, and gratitude to everyone out there trying to help. If you haven't already done so, please give generously at www.ourcommunity.com.au/bushfirehelp.

Miriam Sharp, Secretary - office@hopeaustralia.org.au

Office news

Volunteers are needed to help us staff and manage over 30 information displays to be held at various locations in the Toowoomba area during 2009. We also require extra assistance with our media, newsletter, website and publications activities. Give us some of your time and talents to bring these activities to fruition. Contact the office by phone or email ASAP.

Wanted - Used Postage Stamps

Since 1993, HOPE has been collecting *used postage stamps* for distribution to community groups in the Toowoomba area, for their fund-raising efforts. If you can contribute to this worthwhile exercise, please forward a "Used Postage Stamps" package to the HOPE Office, PO Box 6118, Toowoomba West QLD 4350 or simply drop them into 22 Vacy Street., Toowoomba. We are also happy to receive un-wanted stamp albums / collections.

Wanted - Used Envelopes

One of our Toowoomba members is keen to make gift cards out of used envelopes. Please drop off your bundle of envelopes at 22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba or post a package to the HOPE office.

Library resources

Good Gardens with Less Water, by Kevin Handreck

It is possible to have a great garden, even under the toughest water restrictions. This book contains information on such key topics as: how to improve soil structure; selecting drought-tolerant plants; choosing the best lawn grass and rainwater harvesting.

(Sourced from The Natural Selection, no.23 Sept 08 - Dec 08, CSIRO Publishing)

General

Protection of the Bimblebox

Currently in Queensland vital conservation areas, rich in biodiversity and with carbon stores intact are being sacrificed for the sake of digging up more climate-changing coal. At present there are nearly 100 nature refuges in Queensland with mineral exploration permits and about half of these are for coal. Let our policy makers know that this is unacceptable. Please sign the petition to help secure 'Bimblebox' and all other nature refuges from the threat of mining. If you are a Queensland resident, you can **sign the petition** at '[Protection of Bimblebox Nature Refuge and all other nature refuges from mining](#)' and find more information at www.bimblebox.org.

The Climate Leadership Project

Are you concerned about climate change, your career and that in 2009 you need to do something exciting and different? The **Australian Youth Climate Coalition** is now looking for 150 young people to become leaders in preventing dangerous climate change. The Climate Leadership project has developed a 9 month training and internship program that will support you in making a real difference in solving climate change, without taking over your life. You will learn skills including project management and strategy, media communications, alongside knowledge of Climate Change essentials to give you a platform to then explore your passions. Applications are now open! Check out www.aycc.org.au or email: leaders@youthclimatecoalition.org for more details and an application form.

Department of Climate Change <http://www.climatechange.gov.au/index.html> - by Melissa Glen

"Think climate. Think change. We can't afford not too" - a bold statement made by the Australian Government to clearly project the seriousness of climate change. This website contains information about what actions the Australian Government is taking against climate change and also what actions householders and industry can take to reduce their carbon emissions. Links to latest research, news and publications are available.

News from the Department of Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts

Energy Efficient Homes - ceiling insulation in 2.7 million homes

To support jobs and set Australia up for a low carbon future the Rudd Government will install free ceiling insulation in around 2.7 million Australian homes. This investment will support the jobs of trades-people and workers employed in the manufacturing, distribution and installation of ceiling insulation during a severe global recession. In addition, under the Energy Efficient Homes investment the Solar Hot Water Rebate will be increased from \$1000 to \$1600 and the Low Emissions Plan for Renters rebate will increase from \$500 to \$1000. These investments will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions by around 49.4 million tonnes by 2020, but will also cut around \$200/year of household energy bills. See http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Release/2009/media_release_0783.cfm

Rudd Government rebates for rainwater tanks and greywater systems

Australian households will be eligible for a rebate of up to \$500 each for the purchase of a rainwater tank or a greywater system under a new Rudd Government program. Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong launched the National

Rainwater and Greywater Initiative. "The \$250 million National Rainwater and Greywater Initiative delivers on an election commitment to help households save precious drinking water," Senator Wong said.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/pubs/mr20090130.pdf>

Information on water issues

Water Matters is a new e-newsletter being produced by the Department to provide up-to-date information about the Australian Government's *Water for the Future* plan. The e-newsletter will be produced every two months. Each edition will focus on a theme in addition to containing reports on new projects and programs. The first edition includes a message from the Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong. You can subscribe to *Water Matters* at <http://www.environment.gov.au/water/index.html>

Waterwise <http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/waterwise/index.html> - by Melissa Glen
Waterwise is a Queensland Government initiative, which aims to promote practical ways to efficiently use water. A resource package for regional councils is available, titled "Bucket loads of savings!" which promotes waterwise behaviours inside and outside the home. The Department of Natural Resources and Water has also launched an exciting new comprehensive online education program for schools called "Water: Learn it for Life!" This program was written by Queensland teachers and compliments current school curriculum.

Saving water in agriculture - by Clare Davies

www.savewater.com.au is an Australian Government website with the theme, 'saving water in agriculture'. The site includes a lot of information on relevant research and its results, agricultural products available to help save water, and other related topics.

Updates on upcoming events

Clean Up Australia 2009 activities:

Business Clean Up Day - Tuesday, **24 February**

Schools Clean Up Day - Friday, **27 February**

Clean Up Australia Day - Sunday, **1 March**

-> To register a site go to <http://events.cleanup.org.au>

Grow Local SEQ - a community gardening forum at Griffith Ecocentre

Grow Local SEQ is a regional strategy under development by Queensland Conservation Council that aims to increase the production and consumption of locally grown food across Southeast Queensland. A full day Forum takes place on **Friday 27 February** to discuss this strategy and a whole-of-region approach to local food production programs. For more information, or to register, please contact Event Manager, Racquel Lyons on 0419 789 574 or racquel@wombatcreative.com.au. More information about the Grow Local SEQ Campaign is available from Campaign Manager, Samantha Morris on 0421 709 519 or sam@wombatcreative.com.au.

Myall Park Botanic Garden (MPBG)

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|------------------|--|
| 28-20 March | Sculpture Workshop: Tutor - Garry Greenwood; Cost - \$30/day |
| 25 April - 4 May | Friends' Working Bee - contact Peter Reilly, ph 5537 3354 |
| 29 August | Open Day |

Full information on these events is available at www.myallparkbotanicgarden.org.au , ph 4665 6705 or email myallparkbotanic@bigpond.com

Media items

Irrigation cuts Snowy lifeline by 70pc

Water intended to restore the health of the Snowy River has been cut back by almost 70 per cent to meet rising demands for electricity and irrigation, a scientific report says. The river's pools and channels are shrinking, becoming increasingly clogged by sediment, algae, debris and weeds, as environmental flows are scaled back and "compromised by the need to meet water supply requirements".

The damning report, by the six-member Snowy scientific committee appointed last year to advise NSW, Victorian and Federal governments on the river's health, was handed to the NSW Government more than four months ago. It reveals that despite a \$375million rescue package approved in 2000 by the three governments, environmental flows to the Snowy have been cut "to less than one-third" of the amount agreed under a 10-year plan.

The 40-page report has not been made public by NSW Water Minister Phil Costa, and the federal Labor member for Eden-Monaro, Defence parliamentary secretary Mike Kelly, has not received a copy. But documents obtained by The Canberra Times reveal a bureaucratic bungle has resulted in copies of the controversial report being circulated to Snowy Hydro, local environmental activists and catchment management groups. A spokesman for Dr Kelly said although he was aware of the report, he had not seen a copy and was "looking forward to its release when he can carefully examine the findings".

(From 'Irrigation cuts Snowy lifeline by 70pc' by Rosslyn Beeby Science and Environment Reporter Canberra Times 6/02/2009)

New Ambassador for Climate Change

Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith, announced that Ms Louise Hand has been appointed to be Australia's Ambassador for Climate Change. The Ambassador for Climate Change is the lead Australian negotiator within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the head of the International Division of the Department of Climate Change. Ms Hand will commence her appointment later this month. Outgoing Ambassador for Climate Change, Jan Adams, will return to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to handle crucial trade negotiations.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/pubs/mr20090209.pdf>

MSP news

The LEAD Group

The Lead Education and Abatement Design Group (LEAD) is a not-for-profit community organisation which develops and provides information and referrals on lead poisoning and lead contamination prevention and management. Our goal is to work to eliminate childhood and foetal lead poisoning by the year 2012 and to protect the environment from lead in Australia and throughout the world.

We aim to achieve this in three main ways:

1. Through information and referrals on our website;
2. Input into government policy on lead abatement and the elimination of lead in

products and processes;

3. Advice and advocacy nationally and globally.

The LEAD Group is made up of dedicated volunteers, a Committee, a Technical Advisory Board as well as staff of the Global Lead Advice and Support Service (GLASS).

Established in 1991 Sydney, Australia, The LEAD group is a central source of information for the Australian public. Since our 1991 inception we have had many achievements both locally in Australia and internationally.

For more information on LEAD go to www.lead.org.au.

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons ICAN news

Sign Global Zero Declaration To Abolish Nukes

Global Zero, launched in Paris before Christmas, brings together prominent supporters aiming to eliminate nuclear weapons and plans to hold a Global Summit in 2010. Please join their signatories, and commit to Global Zero's aim of "working for a legally binding verifiable agreement, including all nations, to eliminate nuclear weapons by a certain date" <http://www.globalzero.org/sign-declaration>

A tip / helpful hint

Eco products

Need a good insecticide? Try Eco-Oil, the organic miticide/insecticide made from a non-toxic botanical oil concentrate. It controls pests such as citrus leafminer, scale, aphids and whitefly in certain vegetable and ornamental plants in the home garden. For more info on this product and lots more on eco gardening go to www.ecoorganicgarden.com.au.

Remember, you CAN make a difference!

Think before you print! 1 ream of paper = 6% of a tree and 5.4 kg CO₂ in the atmosphere; 3 sheets of A4 paper = 1 litre of water

If you do not wish to receive this fortnightly bulletin please email 'unsubscribe e:news' to office@hopeaustralia.org.au