



The Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee On Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
Parliament House  
Canberra

13<sup>th</sup> August 2008

Dear Senate Committee,

I have been a member of Landcare for the last 10 years or so, the last four as president of the local Tarwin Landcare Group. Our group has received significant funding from NHT which has enabled members to do many projects on their properties with the main focus being protecting remnant vegetation and creating wild life corridors. Those members adjacent to the Tarwin River have also been active in riparian protection.

The main driving and co-ordinating force has been our local Landcare facilitator. I am extremely concerned that with the change of focus under the Caring for our Country program, and the reduced emphasis on Landcare facilitators, that we will see what has been a reasonably successful program grind to a halt. The facilitators keep the local executives on their toes; assist with organising meetings and events; co-ordinating community projects; and act as contact points for new arrivals to the area.

Tarwin landcare is currently involved in a widespread fox control program, and rather than losing our facilitator, we are in fact looking for funds for an additional facilitator to co-ordinate all the local farmers and Parks Victoria. These projects do not happen by themselves!!

If funds are tight, rather than reducing the number of on ground workers, who are actually achieving something, cut upper level management staff. After all you only need one queen bee in a hive!!

Yours faithfully

Murray Hooper ,