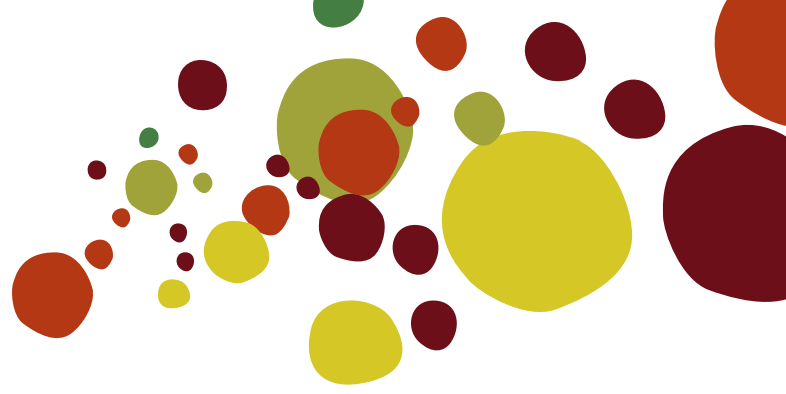


Annual Report 2020 / 2021



Biolinks Alliance

Our story

Biolinks Alliance was formed in 2010 by Central Victorian community conservation groups who recognised that halting environmental and species decline would require large-scale landscape restoration. This scale of work would require coordinated effort and knowledge as well as innovative approaches. Twelve years on, Biolinks is a network of 18 member Landcare and environment groups, representing over 2000 landholders working between the Grampians across to the Australian Alps and from the Dividing Ranges to the Murray River.

Our approach

The Alliance brings together landholders, Landcare and community conservation groups, other non-government organisations and government agencies to learn the latest science, share experience, gain new skills, undertake collaborative planning and agree on the priority actions needed to rebuild healthy habitat, linked across the whole region. Strategic projects provide a focus to develop partnerships, demonstrate innovative and effective approaches to landscape restoration, and get more people actively involved, thereby building community conservation capacity.

Below: The Still, Samantha Slicer commissioned by BA for Treasures of this Land Available for purchase at the Art auction for fundraiser - date tbc





Our 2040 vision

The health of central Victoria’s natural environment is being restored and its species are no longer in decline.



Our mission

To support, coordinate and amplify community efforts to repair regional ecosystems at a landscape scale.

Our programs

The Biolinks Alliance vision for change is presented in our “Passage to the Future” document. Passage to the Future sets out our 2019-2022 goal and six objectives that are key for building landscape-level conservation.



Knowledge and Networking

To enable community conservation groups, First Nations groups and landholders to readily access and share up-to-date information about effective ecological restoration practice



Brokering

To broker support from diverse sources, including urban dwellers, to enable rural land stewards and First Nations Peoples to undertake biodiversity conservation



Landscape Projects

To refine, apply and review our unique “Local to Landscape” conservation planning process and to fund and deliver at least two pilot projects using this process.



Partnerships

To broker support from diverse sources, including urban dwellers, to enable rural land stewards and First Nations Peoples to undertake biodiversity conservation



Advocacy

To establish Biolinks Alliance as a recognised and respected advocate on behalf of its member networks, regarding environmental management and ecological restoration policy and resourcing



Organisational Capacity

To be an effective and efficient network organisation undertaking best practices in governance, communications, human resources, First Nations People engagement and adaptive management



Year in review

A combined report from acting-Chair, Peter Evans and Executive Director, Dr Sophie Bickford

If last year's most-used word was 'unprecedented' – it is not any more, as we still find our work and lives very much changed and challenged by the global pandemic. But despite the postponements and changes to face-to-face events, meetings and other activities that have ensued, our board and staff have risen to the challenges, making 2020-21 a year of solid progress and foundation-strengthening for the organisation.

We held our largest and most comprehensive Symposium ever '*Leaping into action: Sharing practical and scientific knowledge for Glider conservation*'. Holding it as a two-day online event meant that we were able to attract 31 of the field's very best researchers and conservation practitioners to present on the program. It was amazing to bring such depth of knowledge together, much of it cutting edge, and to be able to share it with so many people. The keynote talks, panel discussions and workshops are all available as videos and podcasts on our online Knowledge Hub to provide a lasting, accessible resource for the many who want to take more strategic action to conserve these threatened icon species. We were extremely privileged to work closely with Alliance members Gayle Osborne (Wombat Forestcare) and Bert Lobert (Strathbogie Ranges Conservation Management Network) on the program, with the event strengthening partnerships and connections for more collaborative and strategic conservation action.

Our Local to Landscape projects continued to develop successfully, giving all involved a sense of confidence and hope that we can organise to scale-up the repair of landscapes to create sustainable and resilient futures for people and nature.

The Spring Plains Watershed Repair Project, a demonstration of approaches to restoring the health of our ecosystems and helping to prepare them against the worst impacts of climate change, gained wide interest from government agencies and significant philanthropic

funding from our wonderful supporters. A field visit on a rainy day in March (in one of the short windows when Victoria was not at least partially locked down!) beautifully illustrated the leakiness of the landscape and why fixing the soil's ability to capture and hold rainfall is key to restoring its former productivity and biodiversity. We are on track for on-ground works in the 138-hectare catchment to begin next autumn.

Between lockdowns, we were able to hold a community planning workshop to refine a blueprint to restore the ecological health and connectivity of the woodlands, grasslands and river areas between Greenhill and Black Hill Biolink, just north of Kyneton. The plan is almost finalised. It has already stimulated protection works and enabled landholders (via Biolinks Alliance) to secure funding to begin waterway protection works.

The past year has seen us put much effort into how we can take the organisation to new levels of sustainability and impact. It is now six years since we became incorporated and the hard work and dedication of many during that period is bearing fruit. We have worked hard on a new business plan for the growth, diversification and specialisation of our staff team. We were invited to submit a funding submission for the plan to The Ian Potter Foundation and the great news is that we recently heard that their Board decided to fund it in full. The funding will significantly cement this new phase of growth and maturity in our development as an organisation.

The partnership between the four key arms of our Alliance – staff and critical consultants, funders and donors, members and the board has been stronger than ever this year. We thank our talented, dedicated and hard-working staff (Ellie McKenna, Sasha Dobson, Kara Finlay and Cameron O'Mara) and key consultant (Paul Foreman) for their energy, enthusiasm and efforts. We are always grateful to our funders and donors for providing the financial support and network contacts we need to operate and thank them for their ongoing contributions. Our members continue to be critical to building the organisational network with which we can tackle the environmental ecosystem. And our diverse and skilled board has continued to operate effectively

despite rarely being able to meet in person. We welcome Brendan Sydes and Brian Walters who joined the board in 2021 to fill casual vacancies and extend a very big thank you to Ann McGregor, who is standing down at this year's AGM, for her highly significant contribution to the organisation.

Few could have missed the message put out by the International Panel of Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report and the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) that we need to act now to address the interrelated challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. The CBD is proposing a rapid scaling-

up of action to save biodiversity with the goal of effectively protecting 30% of the Earth's land, sea and freshwater ecosystems by 2030 ("30x30"). The UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration was launched in June this year and with it we are proud and excited to say that the Alliance is primed to go forth and play a key role in delivering a new type of large landscape conservation fit for the challenges of the 21st Century.

Below: Special friends of Biolinks Alliance visiting the Spring Plains Nature Conservation Reserve to learn more about the Watershed Repair project.



“Climate is an important driver in population declines of Greater Gliders”

*Dr Benjamin Wagner,
2020 Symposium presenter.*



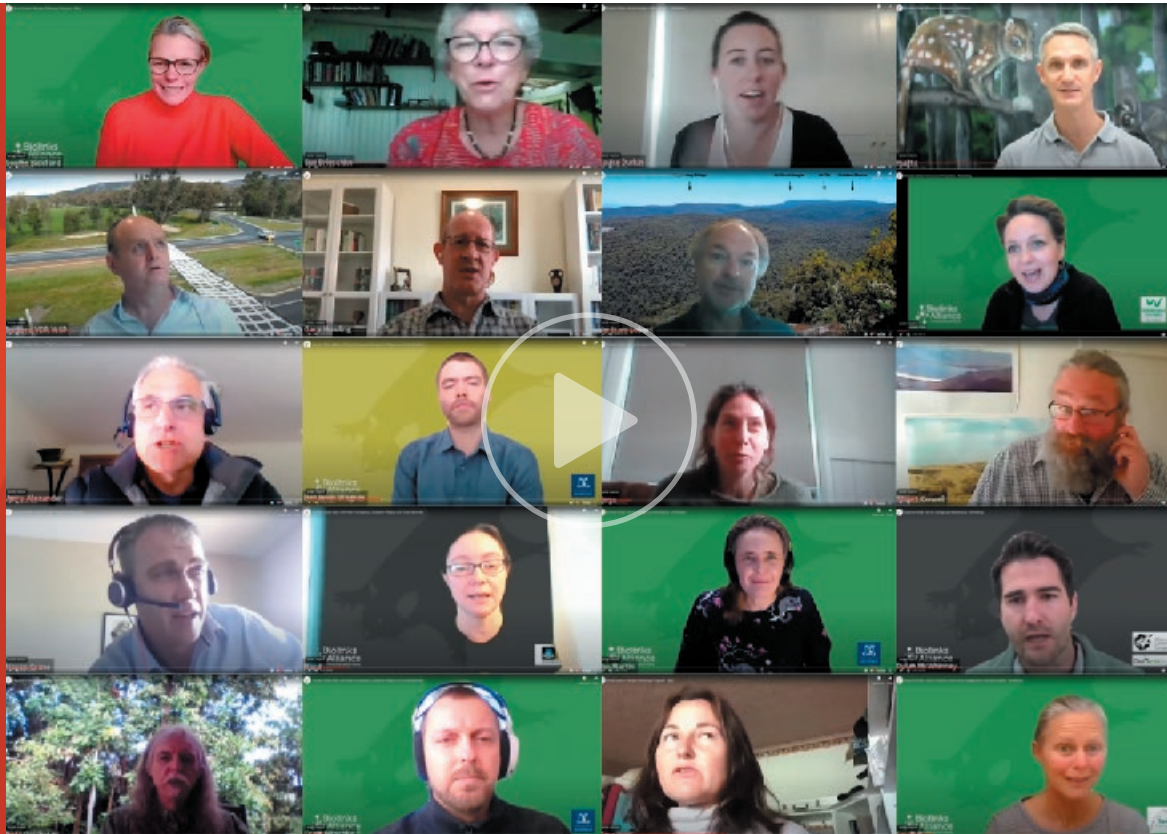
Knowledge sharing

2020 Squirrel and Greater Glider Symposium

Our 2020 Symposium, revisited the topic of our very first Symposium – Glider conservation – but dedicated two entire days to a deep dive into the conservation status and strategies for two threatened species of the gliding possum family, the Greater Glider and Squirrel Glider. The online format expanded the size and reach of the event. We were able to attract Australia’s best and latest research and experience to the program, it presenting 35 notable speakers from Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, participating in 20 sessions. Keynote presentations were available for viewing prior to then event and they attracted 1,347 views in the week prior to the event. Attendees were primarily from people

working at the coal face of conservation, working with community conservation groups and local government agencies. A very high number, 92% of attendees responded that the information they received from the Symposium would “reasonably” or “very strongly” help with their future decision making. All symposium materials are now available as videos and podcasts on our Knowledge Hub. They will be useful and accessible references for further developing Biolinks Alliance’s Glideways in Melbourne Ark Landscape Project.

Below: Our online Symposium was part of the Networks For Nature project which allowed us to design and program ways to connect digitally. [Click here](#) to watch the video below to learn about all the outcomes from the Digital Networks for Nature project.





Landscape projects

Heathcote Local to Landscape

'Phase 2' of the community-developed Local to Landscape plan for ecological restoration of the Heathcote region, involving undertaking innovative pilot ecological restoration projects, broad community engagement, shared learning and the development of new partnerships, began this year. Cameron O'Mara was appointed as Project Facilitator to the project and hit the ground running with the establishing a Large Old Tree citizen-science mapping project, the Spring Plains Watershed Repair project, advancing a partnership with the City of Greater Bendigo and meeting with locals keen to find out more and be involved.

The past year has seen visits to some of the diverse landscapes right across the Heathcote region. From Baynton in the south to Lady's Pass in the north, landowners have demonstrated their interest in how they can do their part. These landholders, whether they own huge swathes of agricultural land or smaller bush blocks, represent key stakeholders in how the land is managed and they want to conduct their businesses in accordance with best practice environmental management.

Marty, a farmer in Glenhope, has set aside more than six hectares of paddock along Pohlman's Creek to passively regenerate native vegetation, with future gully restoration works also in line. This will significantly

contribute to the biolink of the creek creating habitat for native wildlife and restoring the creek-line vegetation. Some others who have been visited in the past year are just waiting for the chance to be involved in a steering committee for Landcare across the Heathcote region, a resource that is currently sorely lacking in the region. What's most important for the Local to Landscape approach is being able to go out and speak with these farmers on their land, listen to their story and understand their perspectives. The only way that we will be able to make progress in this space and protect biodiversity is by understanding one another and finding ways to work together to achieve long term meaningful goals.

Below left to right: Heathcote locals Julia and Leon with ecologist Paul, put together a plan of action, detailing their goals to regenerate the native bushland on their property near Spring Plains on Taungurung Country.

Farmer Marty's son, Clancy and Moose the dog, sizing up a newly dug hole ready for a new fence post - fencing off areas as part of plan to protect and repair.

Next page: Biolinks Alliance's Local to Landscape facilitator, Cameron O'Mara, discusses protection of a large old Eucalyptus Melliodora, with 4th generational farmer Marty in Glenhope, on Taungurung Country.







Landscape projects

Heathcote Local to Landscape - Large Old Trees *pilot*

Despite the limitations of the previous year, the Large Old Trees program kicked off with the Tooborac Primary School visit. Students had a fun-filled afternoon of getting in touch with nature and drawing the massive trees that are typical of the region. The interpretive drawings included hollows filled with whatever the kids could imagine living in them. Everything from phascogales to cockatoos, highlighting the diversity of the region and their personal connection to it. The enthusiasm for large old trees and protection of biodiversity seen in this crop of kids is as heart-warming as it is hopeful. From this and other promotional avenues, more than thirty records of large old trees have been documented across Heathcote and surrounds by the community. This advocacy gives voice to trees which are declining year by year but by giving people the knowledge of simple ways to care for large old trees we can prevent and even reverse the loss.



Above: Students at Tooborac Primary School and local educator, Natalie Wills, with their fantastic sketches of these special habitats, the Large Old Trees at their school.



This Red Gum in Lady's Pass will be protected by fencing to highlight its significance in the landscape and also the significance of large old trees everywhere. The massive crown stretches to 40 metres at the widest, dwarfing the other large trees around it. Local farmers take pride in the natural features of their land and have witnessed the decline of large old trees first-hand within their lifetimes.

The most frequent sentiment heard from landowners on visits is the desire to improve land management practices but also the lack of resources and available expertise which continually undermines their efforts..

“This is the second year we have supported the Spring Plains Watershed Repair Project. We expect to be involved for a few more years, enjoying the improvements and seeing the learnings being adopted and refined elsewhere.”



*Tony Isaacson & Megan Davis,
Isaacson Davis Foundation*

Landscape projects

Heathcote Local to Landscape - Spring Plains Watershed Repair *pilot*

This year solid progress was made on the Spring Plains Watershed Repair Project, one of the pilot projects identified in the Heathcote Local to Landscape plan for ecological repair of the region. It is addressing the pressing need to restore damaged bushland so it can continue to provide critical habitat for endangered species like the Swift Parrot, under a rapidly changing climate.

A major focus of activity has been around fundraising and partnerships. The innovative project does not neatly fit into current state government funding priorities for the region, so donor and philanthropic fundraising has been crucial to the project's development and implementation.

This year we hosted several field visits for the project's visionary private funders and ran our month-long end of financial year fundraising campaign on the project. Throughout the campaign, a series of valuable video assets was produced by our clever project manager, Sasha Dobson and shared on social media. *The short videos can now be found on youtube.* As a result of this campaign, which included an online crowdfunding page and a *live zoom panel presentation*, we raised a total of \$61,262 and increased our Biolinks Alliance followers.

We have now raised a total of \$151,262 towards the project, completely funding the proposed hydrological restoration works, direct seeding and contour ripping, along with its management.

A strong relationship is being developed with the consulting firm *CDM Smith*, to undertake the baseline soil surveys, measuring soil permeability and respiration, at three sites on the project area and three on the neighbouring control catchment. Led by hydrogeologist Jon Fawcett, a team of CDM Smith environmental scientists will undertake the work this year.

We continue to strengthen our partnership with Parks Victoria and relationship with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council. We hosted a field meeting and site tour with Parks Victoria in June and further discussed operational aspects of the project and the development of a MOU for a partnership approach to the project's delivery. Cameron O'Mara is working with Taungurung LWaC to undertake a requisite Land Use Activity Agreement; two days where this has been planned have had to be postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Below: Lunchtime in the Box Ironbark forest, as part of the Spring Plains Watershed Repair group site visit.

Following page: Critically endangered Swift Parrots are frequently spotted in the Heathcote area when they migrate from Tasmania to the mainland during the winter. Photo: Chris Tzaros.





“we have to enhance our landscape. It can’t just be a dot here and a dot there, it has to be linked up - and it’s this ambition of scale that the Biolinks Alliance are coordinating.”

Graham Connell Landholder in the Green Hill to Blackhill Local to Landscape biolink



Landscape Projects

Greenhill to Black Hill Local to Landscape

Just north of Kyneton, nestled within the Macedon Ranges and several nature conservation reserves, is an area predominated by privately owned land. This area holds an unexpected landscape rich in remnant natural values despite European colonisation, farming and more recently urbanisation. We are working with a diverse and invested community; bringing together their collective goals for a healthy sustainable environment.

At this point in the, intended, first phase of the project we have surveyed over 10 sq kms of private land. All involved were thrilled to discover remnant grasslands, abundant springs and soaks, majestic, invaluable, irreplaceable Large Old Trees and distinct opportunities for regeneration. These significant values, when mapped, protected, enhanced and linked within a large-scale conservation plan or “blueprint” will provide carbon sequestering habitat, climate refuge and the possibility for threatened species to once again thrive - national treasures the likes of Koalas and Platypus and also the lesser known but no less important Rakali, Phascogales, Legless Lizards, Bibron’s Toadlets and more.

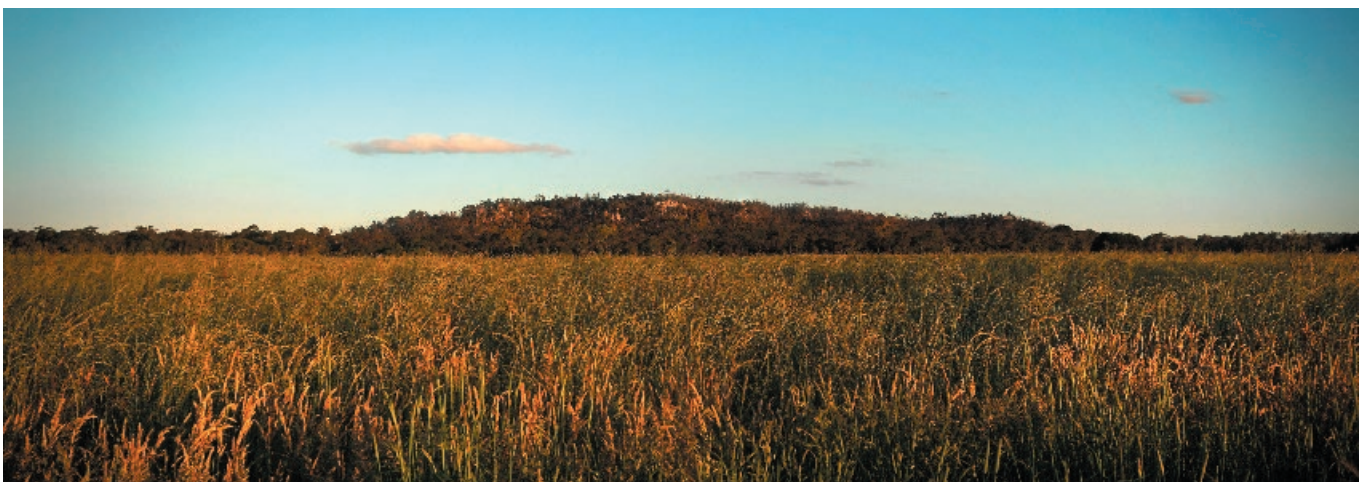
As with all our projects, fundraising is integral and a must for the implementation of on-ground works. We actively look at ways to diversify our asking pool and create new and interesting methods to tell the story, educate and bring people on the journey. An exhibition

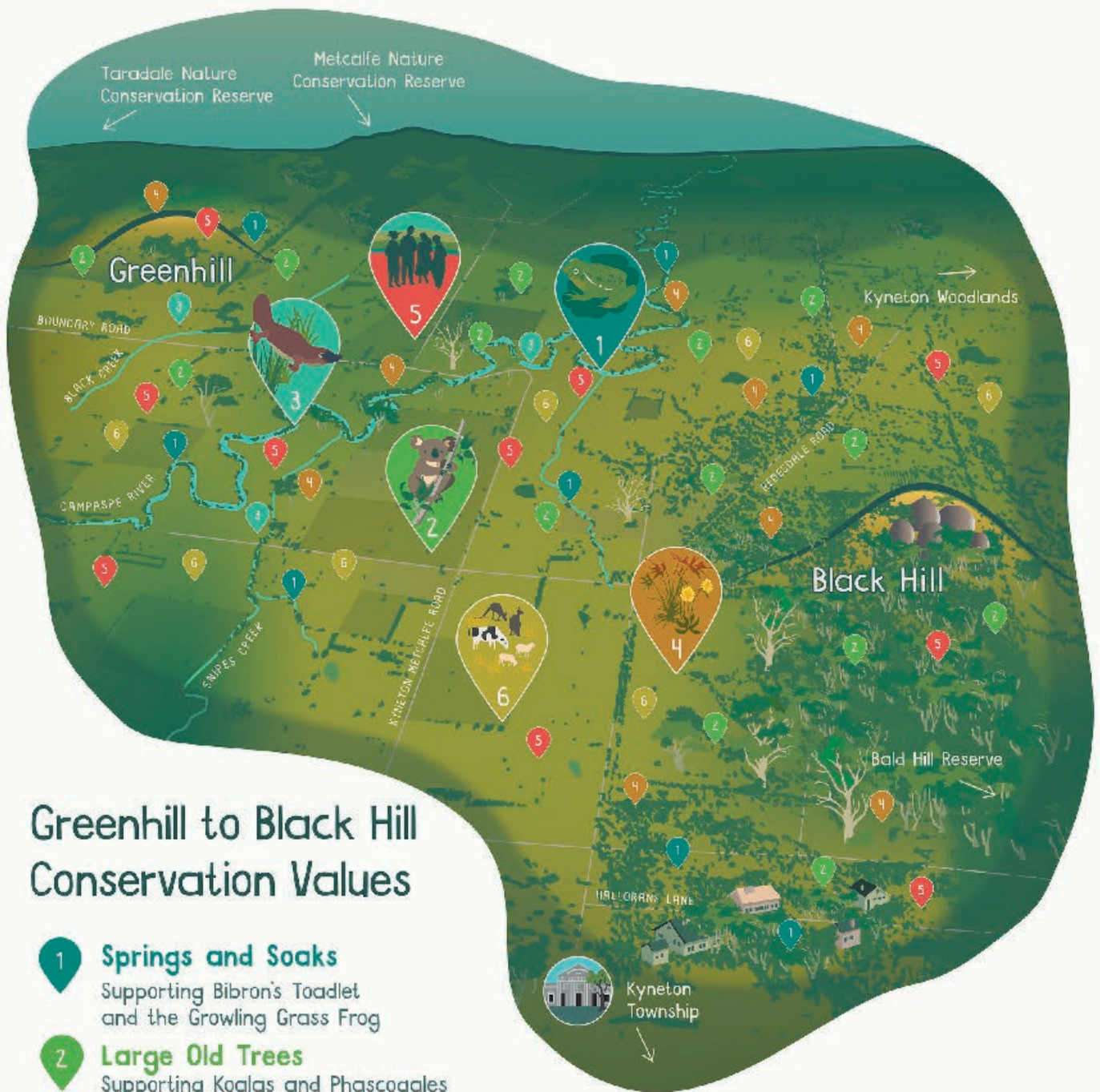
and auction fundraising event “Treasures of this Land” was developed this year to promote and fundraise for the biolink, but the pandemic has put the kibosh on this event twice. Not to be deterred, we plan to deliver a late summer soiree fundraiser both online and in person. The event is a cross-pollination of artists and conservation involving many members of the broader community. The enthusiasm we have received and the calibre and expertise of those wanting to help, donate and volunteer has been humbling and a testament to the appetite there is in the community to do more for nature.

Large Old Trees, Spring Soaks, Grasslands, Creeks and the River were identified as priority values to develop onground pilot projects around. Last year, before the plan was completed the community via Biolinks Alliance was awarded funding from an EPA administered fine to Coliban Water. The funds are to be used in the rehabilitation of Snipes Creek, a tributary of the Campaspe River. Both lie within the Greenhill to Black Hill landscape. We are continuing to work on ways to build the community’s capacity to implement the GH-BH Biolink according to the conservation plan that this project has developed.

Below: Raffle Item for Treasures of this Land fundraiser The Black Hill - Samantha Slicer 2020 large framed photograph 1/1

Following page: Greenhill to Black Hill Biolink - illustrating the values identified for restoration. Illustration Sophie White





Greenhill to Black Hill Conservation Values

- 1 Springs and Soaks**
 Supporting Bibron's Toadlet and the Growling Grass Frog
- 2 Large Old Trees**
 Supporting Koalas and Phascogales
- 3 Rivers and Creeks**
 Platypus and riparian health
- 4 Grasslands**
 Supporting Legless Lizard and wildflowers
- 5 Cultural Vitality**
 Strengthening partnerships with Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung clans, inclusive of whole community
- 6 Visionary Land Management**
 Ecological farming and regenerative agriculture



Landscape projects

Glideways in the Melbourne Ark

Kangaroo Creek, a seasonal tributary to the Coliban River, weaves and winds its way through the forest and private property dispersing into the Malmsbury Reservoir. It boasts some of the highest quality reaches of a stream within Victoria and a section crossing private land as it emerges from the Wombat State Forest, supports an important population of Greater Gliders.

Through this project, arboreal mammal survey specialist Brad Blake undertook additional baseline surveys over a period of four nights, assessing Greater Glider population densities along the creek line and in the surrounding remnant stringybark forest. Ecological surveys of properties and consultation with landowners have resulted in a staged 'grand' plan to strengthen the population through a variety of measures to improve the quality, extent and connectivity of the habitat in the area.

Below: Ecologist, Paul Foreman in dry Kangaroo Creek bed identifying remnant vegetation

*Next page: Majestic Gum on Kangaroo Creek edge with a carpet of *Poa labillardieri* at its feet*

Planned measures include:

- Installation of Greater Glider nest boxes to provide more refuge; the recent storms took out at least seven large old trees with hollows!
- Encouraging diversity of arboreal habitat with understorey plantings and protection of current remnant values. This will create alternative prey density for the Powerful Owls that regularly hunt in this area and pick off the young male Greater Gliders with ease.
- Ecological thinning of overly dense regrowth forest to encourage Large Old Trees with nesting hollows.
- Planting future habitat trees, extending extent and connectivity of existing habitat
- Installation of Glider poles - creating arterials to suitable ridgetop habitat areas currently inaccessible
- Hydrological assessment and works for the health of the creek and surrounding alluvial plains to strengthen the climate refugial properties of the area.

This project is part of a larger coordinated effort to conserve Glider species through the Glideways in the Melbourne Ark landscape project, which in turn is part of the Glideways Program being undertaken by communities along the length of the Great Eastern Ranges.







Who We Are

Biolinks Alliance member groups

Biolinks Alliance now has an impressive line-up of 18 member groups, spread across central Victoria from the Grampians to Benalla and from Mt Macedon to the Murray. Our members include 8 Landcare Networks representing more than 92 local landcare groups; 8 Conservation Management Networks made up of

well over 70 member organisations; and two regional community conservation organisations. We estimate the combined membership to be, conservatively, more than 2000 landholders and local volunteer conservation practitioners.

- 1 **Project Platypus** is a community-based Landcare Network made up of 11 landcare groups working in the Upper Wimmera Catchment. Their revegetation, habitat protection, invasive plant and animal control and community engagement events are building the Grampians to Pyrenees Biolink.
- 2 **The Loddon Plains Landcare Network (LPLN)** supports more than 17 groups and 300 land managers, who are together responsible for about 300,000 ha of private land; as well as groups working on public land management with Parks Victoria and DELWP. LPLN is developing a landscape scale connectivity project, GOANNA, built on biolink projects and raising community awareness about the importance of biodiversity in an agricultural landscape.
- 3 Six local Landcare Groups and the Mid-Loddon Conservation Management Network combine to make the **Mid-Loddon Landcare Network**. Covering an area of over 95,000ha, the network is creating linkages from the central Victorian Box Iron-bark Forest across to the Loddon River. In Box-Ironbark country around Shelbourne they undertake habitat restoration and conservation works on farms, as well as on public land. They are leading the Save our Bush Stone Curlews Project.
- 4 **Upper Campaspe Landcare Network** supports 16 landcare groups in the Kyneton region. Their member groups are working together protect, restore and link habitat for the precious wildlife in the region.
- 5 **Moorabool Landcare Network** supports and resources 12 landcare groups and 5 Friends groups across the Shire of Moorabool. They are building biolinks to connect the Wombat Forest with the Brisbane Ranges.
- 6 **South West Goulburn Landcare Network** is an alliance between 8 Landcare Groups operating in the catchments running from the Great Dividing Range to the Goulburn River near Seymour. Their works include building the Piper Biolink.
- 7 The **Upper Goulburn Landcare Network** supports 18 member groups. Their varied projects include community wildlife monitoring, schools programs, farm planning, co-ordinated fox control and post-Black Saturday habitat rehabilitation.
- 8 **Upper Deep Creek Landcare Network** supports Newham and District Landcare Group, Deep Creek Landcare Group, and the Upper Maribyrnong Catchment Group - working with the many new, absentee, small-acreage landholders in the region.
- 9 **Kara Kara Conservation Management Network (CNM)** comprises local Landcare, conservation and environment groups, State Government agencies and interested local community members. Kara Kara is dedicated to protecting and enhancing habitat through the creation and maintenance of well-managed biolinks about 2000 km² of Victoria's western goldfields; between St Arnaud and Moonambel, and from Morrl Morrl to the Avoca River.
- 10 **Connecting Country** is a community-based organisation that operates at a landscape scale to increase, enhance and restore biodiversity across the Mount Alexander Shire and surrounds in Central Victoria. It works to support the 30 local landcare and Friends groups in the district.
- 11 **Whroo Goldfields Conservation Management Network** works on the reserves and private land within the Box-Ironbark region of the Goulburn Broken catchment. They operate a coordinated fox control program in the area surrounding Puckapunyal Army Base and have installed over 1000 nest boxes for Phascogales and Sugar Gliders.

Biolinks Alliance member groups cont.

- 12 The **Strathbogrie Ranges Conservation Management Network** partners with any group working on biodiversity conservation in the Strathbogrie Ranges, including landcare, conservation and environment groups, landholders, and Government Agencies. The Network tackles all sorts of conservation, biodiversity and land management issues, but is focusing on the most threatened ecosystems in the Ranges, including precious wetlands (spring soaks & bogs), rocky outcrops and high conservation value forests.
- 13 **Wedderburn Conservation Management Network**, made up of individuals and both public and private land managers, promotes profitable, productive, and sustainable human enterprises while conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Wedderburn area. Projects include Mallee Fowl protection, weed control and Grassy Woodlands revegetation.
- 14 **Ballarat Environment Network** is an umbrella organisation for the many environment and conservation-focused groups in the Ballarat region. They manage 50 public reserves covering over 800 hectares for their biodiversity and conservation values, mostly in partnership with local groups.
- 15 **Jacksons Creek EcoNetwork** links 12 Landcare, friends groups and volunteers who care for the environment along Jacksons Creek and its tributaries, including Riddells Creek, from Keilor, through Sunbury and Riddells Creek, to Mt Macedon.
- 16 **Federation of Environment and Horticulture for Macedon Ranges** acts as an umbrella group for Environmental and Horticultural groups to meet and plan projects and events that benefit the environment, and passive enjoyment of the Macedon Ranges
- 17 **Wombat Forestcare** is a community group dedicated to protecting and enhancing the natural ecosystems of the Wombat Forest and surrounding areas, which support many unique and threatened species. Their activities have a strong focus on community involvement, education and wildlife surveys.
- 18 **Bendigo and District Environment Council** are determined environmental advocates. They have worked extensively with the City of Greater Bendigo on a range of policies and planning schemes, and have maintained a constant public profile.

Biolinks Alliance Board Members

Peter Evans - *Acting Chair / Secretary*
Sophie Bickford - *Executive Director*
Pat Scanlon - *Treasurer*
Ann McGregor • Jennifer Rolland • Gayle Osborne
Penny Algar • Brian Walters • Brendan Sydes

Consultants

The Biolinks Alliance staff team is ably supported by
Roewen Wishart - *Xponential*
Bronwyn Willis - *Writer*
Inhaus.com.au - *Design*

Staff

Paul Foreman - *Ecologist and Conservation Strategy*
Ellie McKenna - *Relations Manager*
Sasha Dobson - *Project Manager*
Kara Finlay - *Project Coordinator*
Cameron O'Mara - *Local to Landscape Facilitator*
Wanda Millicer - *Book Keeper*



Thank You

The work of Biolinks Alliance has been made possible by the support of many people and organisations. We sincerely thank the philanthropic trusts, private donors, sponsors, Ambassadors and volunteers whose generous & enthusiastic support has made 2021 a successful year for us.

Philanthropic trusts



Brian D Newman Foundation



Donors

Bill & Carol Holsworth • Brian Snape • Gayle Osborne • Alf and Meg Steel Fund • Isaacson Davis Foundation * TAP Fund • The Waterdragon Endowment • Rendere • Pool of Dreams (Claire Eliza's gift) Lindy Shelmerdine • Jenny Rolland & Euan Moore • Anthony & Chloe Fitzwilliams Hyde Denis Gibson & Jeff Appleton • Katerina & Rob Bickford • Daniel Young • Di Pearton • Lincoln Kern Thelma Rosier Peter Mitchell • Meredith Gould • Revium • Wei Wang • Martin McKenna Diana Brady • Naomi Fountain • Penny Algar • Karen Thomas • Jennifer Anderson • Lara Bickford Karen Alexander • Chris Joyner • Graham Connell • Mark McKew • Steve Marriot • Chris Johnston Chris Fyffe • Marion Van Gameren • Ian Holmes • Jeff Wilmot • Kevin Whithear • Wendy Joyner Maureen Sladdin • Lucy Jones Dave Sag • Marty Mckenna • Rachel Musgrave • Gary Ellett Julie Macdonald • Annabel Crabb • Jemi White • Hannah Norris • Sasha Dobson • Ralf Thesing Michael Reeves • Doug Humann • William Terry • David Whelan • Trevor Speirs • Yovie Saputra Nicole Shackleton • Kirsty Baker • John Murray • Sarah Caplan • Nat Dowling • Alan Morton Alison Booth • Marita & Seamus Mckenna Michelle Jull • Simon Weller • James Clough • Natalie Cursio Lachlan Milne • Jo Hawley • Emily Voogt • Roxanne Esagunde

Ambassadors

Brian Snape AM & Doug Humann AM

Partners



RESEARCH CENTRE FOR FUTURE LANDSCAPES



Acknowledgement of country

Biolinks Alliance is proud to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the places where we live and work. We recognise the enduring relationship they have with their lands and water, and we pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.



Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to present the attached CVBA financial report for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.

The financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012

Statement by members of the board

The CVBA reported a surplus of \$58k for the 2021 financial year (2020—surplus of \$117k), with income of \$352k being offset by expenditure of \$294k.

The main source of income for CVBA came from donations and grants. Other income of \$150k was received from Coliban Region Water Corporation in relation to the EPA fine for Snipes Creek. In addition, \$27k was received from the ATO in respect of the cash flow boost for not for profit entities.

Income from donations totalled \$99k which included major donations from Brian Snape, the Isaacson Davis Foundation, Gayle Osborne, the Australian Communities Foundation and Dr William Holsworth. Grant income was \$73k comprised of Bush Heritage Australia \$25k, LaTrobe University \$23k, Macedon Ranges Shire Council \$15k, Australian Communities Foundation \$5k and Great Eastern Ranges Limited \$5k.

Major items of expenditure were as follows:

- Salaries and wages (including superannuation) of \$166k
- Contractor Expenses of \$100k
- Consulting and Accounting of \$4k
- Project Expenses of \$4k
- Software & IT of \$4k

Closing funds at 30 June 2021 were \$464k (2020: \$374k) and net assets (total assets less liabilities) totalled \$441k (2020: \$383k).

(the Act). This report has been prepared by me in my capacity as a qualified professional accountant.

The Board has determined that the Alliance is not a reporting entity.

However, it should be noted that as of 30 June 2021 there was \$347k to be spent in future years on current projects.

At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due. The members of the Board have determined that the Alliance is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The members of the Board declare that the financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance Inc. as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria).
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due. This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

Patrick J. Scanlon

Pat Scanlon
Treasurer

Peter Evans
Acting Chairman and Secretary

Statement of Profit or Loss	2021 \$	2020 \$
TRADING INCOME		
Donations	99,262	120,462
Grant Income	73,300	191,300
Interest Income	399	711
Other Revenue	150,000	400
Ticket sales	2,579	0
Cash Flow Boost	26,644	0
Total Trading Income	352,184	312,873
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Advertising & Marketing	2,297	5,241
Bank Fees	24	9
Catering	2,034	1,087
Consulting & Accounting	3,970	4,140
Contractors - Other	100,433	42,039
Depreciation	1,635	1,635
Donation Expenses	6	220
Employee Entitlements	2,732	
Events	2,155	582
Fundraising Expenses	2,633	5,538
General Expenses	0	299
Gifts	0	206
Insurance	573	584
Low value equipment	0	2,247
Meals & Entertainment	32	190
Motor Vehicle Expenses	56	555
Office Expenses	25	704
Postage & Mail	158	494
Printing & Stationery	535	6,576
Project Expenses	3,514	0
Software & IT	3,505	1,866
Superannuation	14,382	9,950
Training	340	393
Travel - National	614	1,781
Venue & equipment hire	0	103
Wages and Salaries	151,609	108,664
Workcover	1,129	1,120
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	294,391	196,223
Net Profit	57,793	116,650

Statement of Financial Position	2021 \$	2020 \$
ASSETS		
BANK		
Expense Account	1,581	3,402
Main Account	157,685	118,328
Saving Account	304,764	251,910
Total Bank	464,030	373,640
Current Assets		
Receivables	2,149	35,786
Total Current Assets	2,149	35,786
Non-current Assets		
Computer and Office Equipment	4,769	4,769
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(4,769)	(3,134)
Total Non-current Assets	0	1,635
TOTAL ASSETS	466,179	411,061
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	5,065	3,574
PAYG Withholdings Payable	13,612	7,501
Provision for Annual Leave	3,547	2,859
Provision for Leave in Lieu	968	1,713
Superannuation Payable	0	2,924
Accrued Expenses	0	10,087
Total Current Liabilities	23,192	27,138
Non-current Liabilities		
Provision for Long Service Leave	2,150	879
Total Non-current Liabilities	2,150	879
TOTAL LIABILITIES	25,342	28,017
NET ASSETS	440,837	383,044
FUNDS		
Current Year Earnings	57,793	116,650
Retained Earnings	383,044	266,394
Accumulated Funds	440,837	383,044
TOTAL FUNDS	440,837	383,044

Statement of Changes in Funds

Accumulated Funds
\$

TRADING INCOME	
Balance at 30 June 2019	266,394
Net Surplus	116,650
Balance at 30 June 2020	383,044
Net Surplus	57,793
Balance at 30 June 2021	440,837

Statement of Cash Flows

2021
\$

2020
\$

OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Receipts in the course of operations	361,513	280,175
Payments to suppliers and employees	271,123	(190,384)
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	90,390	89,791
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payment for property, plant and equipment	0	0
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	0	(3,269)
NET CASH FLOWS	90,390	86,522
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	373,640	287,118
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	464,030	373,640

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012. The Board has determined that the Alliance is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are generally consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report and are in the opinion of the Board, appropriate to meet the needs of members.

Significant accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions

The preparation of financial information requires the Alliance to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgements. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revenue

Grant and donation income is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

Accounting Standard 'AASB 15 – Revenue from Contracts with Customers' and 'AASB 1058

Income for Non Profit Entities' are applied in determining when monies received from Grants and Donations are taken up as income.

Where a contract exists with specific performance requirements the income is taken up in the financial year to the extent that those requirements have been met. Where no contract exists, or the performance measurements are not clearly defined, income is taken up in the financial year when the income is received. Expenditure which may be incurred in future in relation to that income is expensed in the financial year in which it is expended.

Cash

Cash includes cash on hand and deposits held at call with banks. For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents consist of cash as defined above.

Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis over the expected useful economic lives of the assets.

Minor assets with a purchase price of under \$2,000 are expensed in the year of purchase

Employee Benefits

Employee benefits comprise wages and salaries, annual leave, non-accumulating sick leave, long-service leave and contributions to superannuation plans. Liabilities for services rendered by employees are recognised at the reporting date to the extent that they have not been settled. Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119 Employee Benefits) due within twelve months of balance date are measured at their nominal amounts. The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability.

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting. The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration, including employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination. Superannuation for the reporting period is made up of the statutory contribution made to the superannuation plan which provides benefits to its employees.

Payables

Liabilities for trade creditors and other amounts are carried at cost which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the entity.

NOTE 2 RECONCILIATION OF CASH

Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the Balance Sheet as follows

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Operating Account- Bendigo Bank	157,685	118,328
Expense Account_ Bendigo Bank	1,581	3,402
Savings Account - Bendigo Bank	304,764	251,910
Total Cash at Bank	464,030	373,640
RECONCILIATION OF NET CASH USED IN OPERATING ACTIVITIES TO OPERATING RESULT		
Operating Result	57,793	116,650
Adjusted for		
Provision for Depreciation	1,635	1,635
Provision for Leave entitlement	2,731	(201)
(Decrease)/Increase in Amounts Payable	(5,408)	6,040
Decrease/(Increase) in Amounts Receivable	33,639	(34,333)
Net Cash from Operating Activities	90,390	89,791

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRAL VICTORIAN BIOLINKS ALLIANCE INC. FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 2021

Scope

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of CENTRAL VICTORIAN BIOLINKS ALLIANCE INC., which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June, 2021, the Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the Board's assertion statement.

Officers' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Board of CENTRAL VICTORIAN BIOLINKS ALLIANCE INC. are responsible for the preparation of the financial report and have determined that the entity is not a reporting entity and that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members.

The Board's responsibility also includes such internal controls as the Board determines are necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Board's responsibility also includes assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable matters relating to going concern, and using the going concern basis for accounting unless the Board intends to liquidate the entity or to cease operations or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error.

In making those risk assessments the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Board's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Board's internal controls.

An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Qualifications

It is not practical for the entity to maintain an effective system of internal control over Donations and Fund Raising income until their entry in the accounting records. Accordingly my audit in relation to these cash receipts was limited to amounts recorded.

Recognition of income in accordance with Note 1(f) is dependent upon a review of the contracts which may relate to the awarding of grants and donations. As it is impracticable for me to review such contracts my audit relies on representations of the Board as to the timing of the recognition of revenue in accordance with this policy.

As the financial report was not audited last year my audit does not express an opinion on the opening balances to the extent that their accuracy or otherwise may impact on the audit of the 2021 accounts.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, subject to the qualifications noted above, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of CENTRAL VICTORIAN BIOLINKS ALLIANCE INC. as at 30 June 2021, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012.

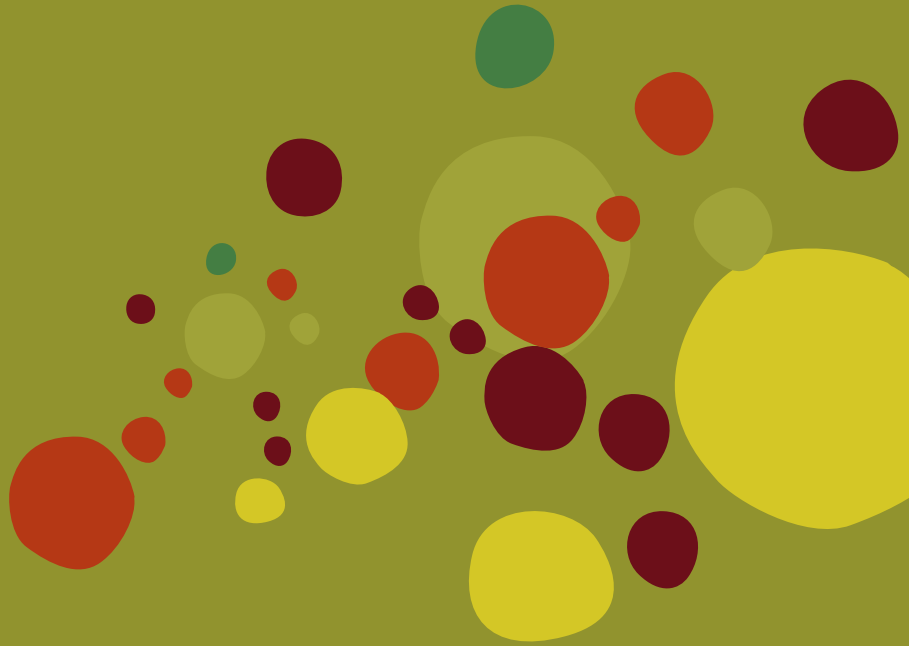
Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist CENTRAL VICTORIAN BIOLINKS ALLIANCE INC. to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Dated at Lower Plenty: 13 October, 2021



Fred Gerardson
Chartered Accountant Registered Company Auditor Partner
Colville Williams & Co. Pty Ltd 99 Main Road Lower Plenty VIC 3093



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