



The NSW Roadside Environment Committee

The NSW Roadside Environment Committee (REC) was established in 1994 by the NSW Government in recognition of the environmental values of linear reserves. The REC is an umbrella body of state agencies and environment groups that promotes and coordinates leading practice in linear reserve environmental management across the State.

**The vision of the REC is:
Environmental values of linear corridors are actively managed in
balance with other functional needs.**

The REC currently comprises fourteen organisations with interests in the environmental management of roadside and other linear reserves in NSW. The REC member organisations are:

- > Ausgrid
- > Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC)
- > Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT)
- > Country Regional Network (CRN) – John Holland Rail Ltd
- > Essential Energy
- > Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia NSW (IPWEA NSW)
- > Local Government NSW (LGNSW)
- > Local Land Services (LLS)
- > Nature Conservation Council (NCC)
- > NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE - EES)
- > NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE – Crown Lands)
- > Rural Fire Service (RFS)
- > Transport for NSW (RMS)
- > Transport for NSW (Sydney Trains)

The REC is funded by Transport for NSW. Member organisations provide in-kind support.

Strategic plan

To work towards its vision, the REC developed a strategic plan for 2020-2023. The plan is provided in Appendix 1.

There are two outcomes in the strategic plan:

1. REC members understand and share good practices
2. Stakeholders aware of REC's key initiatives

Key issues

In developing its 2020-23 Strategic Plan, the REC identified the following key issues that it will focus on.

Environmental Management

Fauna and Flora

Weed and biosecurity management

Native vegetation as habitat
(including hazard tree management)

Wildlife including road kills

Bushfire management and fire regimes

Heritage

Indigenous heritage

Non-indigenous heritage

Illegal activities

Firewood collection

Illegal dumping & litter (waste management)

Pollution

Contaminated land

Acid sulphate soils

Water quality

Contaminants

Other

Scenic amenity

Noise

Rest areas

Signage

Livestock management

Corporate

Staff

Safety (of personnel conducting works in the corridor as well as travelling public)

Training

Operations

Planning

Data management

Compliance

Incident response

Disaster management

Regulator relationships

Stakeholder engagement

Community expectations

Community education

Communications

Achievements

- > Supporting and promoting the Linear Reserves Program funded by the NSW Environmental Trust (Action 2.1 in the Strategic Plan). The Linear Reserves Program consists of two initiatives:
 1. Managing Travelling Stock Reserves for Sustainable Conservation Outcomes managed by LLS (\$4.75 million over three years)
 2. Council Roadside Reserves Project managed by LGNSW (\$2.08 million over three years).
- > Sponsoring the NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award as part of the 2020 Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards initiated by LGNSW (Action 2.6).

The Awards are open to all local councils and council organisations in NSW and aim to recognise outstanding achievements by NSW Local Government in managing and protecting the environment.

The REC has sponsored the Roadside Environmental Management Award for the past ten years.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the awards ceremony was held virtually in October 2020. The NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award recipients were:

Winner Division C (population of more than 70,000) and Overall Winner of the 2020 Roadside Environmental Management Award:

Port Stephens Council: Discovering Mahony's Toadlet – a journey to expand the Hunter and Central Coast Roadside Environmental Marker Scheme.

In 2016, a newly discovered amphibian species, Mahony's Toadlet (*Uperoleia mahonyi*), was identified in the Port Stephens area and was listed as a threatened species the following year. To address the potential impacts of the council's maintenance program on the species, ecological surveys were conducted of roadside environments to assess for likely habitat of Mahony's Toadlet to include in the council's Environmental Management System. The council took the opportunity to integrate this project into the existing Hunter Joint Organisation Regional Roadside Environment Marker Scheme, creating a new roadside marker category for amphibians that can be used by other road authorities across the Hunter Region.

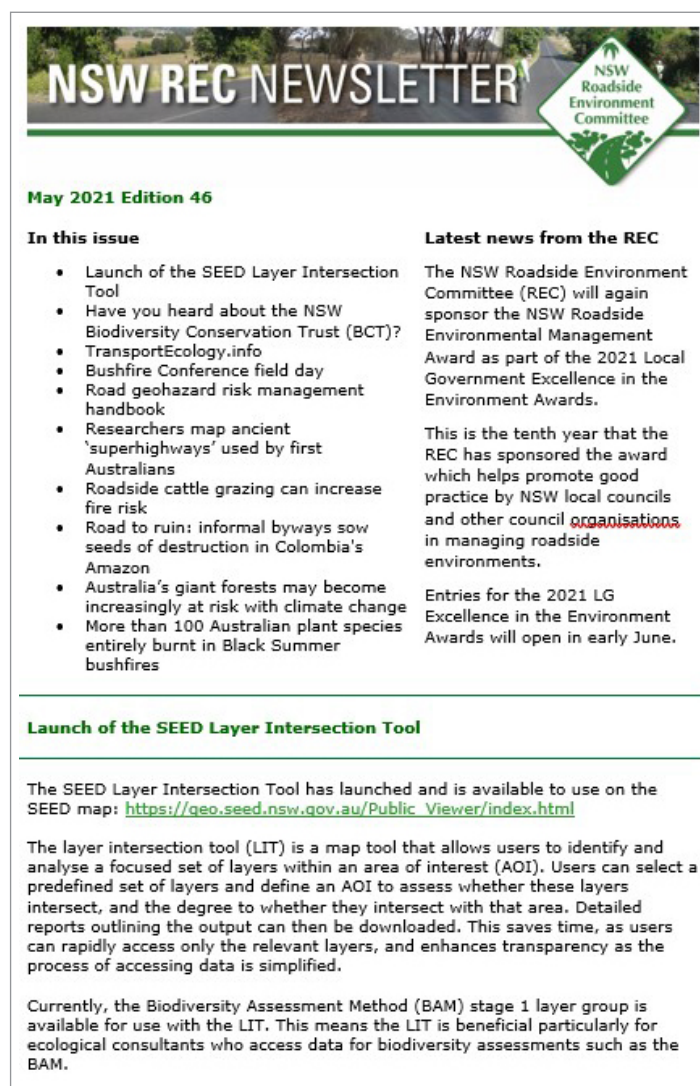


> Mahony's Toadlet

Sutherland Shire Council: Green Streets Program GIS layer with interactive community consultation

Sutherland Shire Council has developed a spatial tool that allows tree planting design, stakeholder review, community consultation, installation and maintenance to be captured and edited while in the field. The development of the Green Streets GIS layer with interactive community consultation has successfully created avenues to meaningfully interact and engage with residents about the value of street trees and has enabled the 2020 planting program of 3000 street trees to continue during COVID-19 restrictions.

- > Sharing and learning more about aspects of linear reserve environmental management including the review of NSW crown lands, the review of NSW travelling stock reserves, and new methods for environmental management (Actions 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4).
- > Implementing the REC Communication Plan (Action 2.3). Measures of the performance of the Communication Plan implementation in 2020-21 include:
 - Mailing list of stakeholders increased from 420 to 430 individuals/organisations during the year
 - Hits on the REC website averaged 140 per month
 - Four editions of the REC newsletter were produced and distributed electronically to stakeholders during the year as planned.



- > Actively continuing the REC Facebook and Twitter sites during 2020-21 (Action 2.4). The Facebook site has 93 followers (up from 69 in June 2020) and the Twitter site has 172 followers (up from 167 in June 2020).
- > Responding to numerous stakeholder enquiries via the REC Secretariat (Action 2.3).
- > Adding the Biodiversity Conservation Trust to the REC member organisations (Action 1.5).

The REC carried out a range of other activities in 2020-21 related to the Strategic Plan.

The activities included:

- > Discussing and sharing ways to manage linear reserve environments after the devastating 2019-20 bushfires. This included the post-fire management of hazardous trees.
- > Receiving a presentation by TfNSW on the Sydney Trains' approach to weed management
- > Receiving a presentation on TfNSW bat management
- > Receiving a presentation on the Inland Rail's biodiversity offsets
- > Holding interagency sharing sessions to improve linear reserve environmental management practices across NSW. Responding to numerous stakeholder enquiries via the REC Secretariat (Action 2.3).

Meetings

The REC met four times during 2020-21. Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, all were virtual meetings using Microsoft Teams.

The following persons represented the member organisations on the REC during 2020-21:

Martin Driver (NCC) - Chairperson
 Chris Dunn (Essential Energy)
 Julie Ravallion (Transport for NSW)
 Lloyd Van Der Wallen (RFS)
 Luke Durrington (Transport for NSW)
 Mark Roebuck (IPWEA NSW)
 Kathy Godfrey (LGNSW)
 Lucian McElwain (DPIE - EES)
 Paul Harper (DPIE – Crown Lands)
 Eve Bleuel (Ausgrid)
 Bridget Bartlett (LLS)
 Stuart Ross (ARTC)
 Bruce Thompson (BCT)

The following persons acted as alternates to the above:

Jane Gye (NCC)
 Kirsty McIntyre (LGNSW)
 Kris Le Mottee (Transport for NSW)
 Sally Durham (Transport for NSW)

Molino Stewart Pty Ltd was contracted by Transport for NSW to provide secretariat services to the REC during 2020-21. Neil Dufty of Molino Stewart was the Executive Officer of the REC and was supported by Rebecca O'Rourke and Ruth Fernando of the same company.

For more details about the REC go to its website

<https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/about/what-we-do/committees/roadside-environment-committee.html>

Appendix 1 > NSW Roadside Environment Committee Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

Outcome 1 > REC members understand and share good practices

Action	Measure of Success	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
1.1 Share tools and approaches to manage vegetation for environmental & transport safety objectives	> Information supplied	H	Ongoing	Infrastructure members of the REC
1.2 Share rapid assessment tools and spatial products	> Information supplied	M	Ongoing	REC members
1.3 Focus REC meetings on key issues and share policies, procedures, learnings etc.	> Meetings on key issues	M	Annual	REC members Secretariat
1.4 Brief each REC member on all relevant major government reforms and changes to legislation	> Briefings occur on new reforms and legislation	M	Ongoing	REC members
1.5 Identify gaps in REC membership and add if required	> New members added when required	M	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat

Appendix 1 > NSW Roadside Environment Committee Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

Outcome 2 > Stakeholders aware of REC's key initiatives

Action	Measure of Success	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
2.1 Disseminate outputs from the Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) and Council Roadside Reserves (CRR) projects	> Outputs promoted to land managers including local councils	M	Ongoing	LGNSW, LLS, Secretariat, REC members
2.2 Communicate ways to manage priority issues to stakeholders	> Hold at least one regional meeting to discuss local issues	H	Annually	Secretariat REC members
2.3 Communicate the REC's purpose and activities	> REC communications strategy used including REC website, Annual Report, Speaker's Kit	M	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat
2.4 Promote examples of good practices	> REC newsletter > Social media posts > REC website	H	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat
2.5 Organise a state-wide linear corridor forum	> Forum successfully held	H	April 2022	REC members Secretariat
2.6 Sponsor the NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award	> Award sponsored annually	M	Annually	Transport for NSW, Secretariat