

MEDIA RELEASE

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New faces for Our Valley, Our Future project

With a wealth of local knowledge and a deep commitment to the Mitta Valley, Mr John Scales is an ideal recruit to the Our Valley, Our Future Steering Committee. John's appointment comes after a period of significant change within the Our Valley, Our Future project, explained Steering Committee Chair, Mr Mac Paton.

Following the resignation of the Our Valley, Our Future Project Manager, Jaime Carroll, the position was advertised with applications closing in early March 2014.

"We would like to thank Jaime for the work she completed with the community to develop the Our Valley, Our Future Community Plan, and we wish her all the best for her new role at the Rural City of Wangaratta," said Mr Paton.

Towong Shire Council's Chief Executive Officer, Ms Juliana Phelps, advised that there was a strong response to the recently advertised position.

"We anticipate appointing a new project manager very soon and will introduce the successful applicant in the next edition of the Bush and Bulldust," said Ms Phelps.

The composition of the Steering Committee has also changed over recent months, following Russell "Ned" Kelly's departure from the committee some months ago, and then his replacement, Desiree Harker, also resigning due to other commitments.

"We would like to thank both Ned and Desiree for their work on the Our Valley, Our Future project and for the time and energy they provided to drive the project forward," said Mr Paton.

With the vacancy on the Steering Committee now filled by Mr John Scales, and the imminent appointment of a new Project Manager, the project is poised to move into its implementation phase.

"The key to the Our Valley, Our Future project's success will be community involvement and the Steering Committee is dedicated to getting out and speaking with the community at every opportunity," said Mr Paton. "It was exciting to discuss the project's potential with many locals as well as visitors who dropped by for a chat at the Our Valley, Our Future stand at the recent Mitta Muster,"

Members of the Our Valley, Our Future Steering Committee are Mac Paton (Chair), Karen Moroney, John Scales, Patten Bridge (observer), Stuart Crosthwaite (AVDPP representative), Juliana Phelps and Lauren Elvin (Council representatives), and Rikki Andrews (Gardiner Foundation representative).

Project updates will appear in future editions of the Bush and Bulldust and the Our Valley, Our Future Facebook page www.facebook.com/ourvalleyourfuture. Alternatively contact one of the Steering Committee members for a project update.

Gardiner Our Valley, Our Future funding program opening soon

The next round of Gardiner Our Valley, Our Future funding will open soon and the Our Valley, Our Future working groups will be eligible to apply for financial assistance for proposed community projects.

While originally scheduled to open on 1 April 2014 it was necessary to delay opening the funding round for a few weeks explained Ms Lauren Elvin, Towong Shire Council's Manager Economic Development.

"To access the funds that are available, members of the working groups must attend a project planning training session," said Ms Elvin. "Two training sessions were recently held, however the take up was not strong and we are keen to ensure that all of the working groups are eligible for funding when the round opens."

Additional project planning training sessions will be scheduled shortly to ensure that all working groups will have the opportunity to apply for funding.

"The new Project Manager will also be on board and will be able to assist groups to plan their projects and to prepare their funding applications," said Ms Elvin.

Working groups have been established in the areas of Business and Tourism, Agriculture, Families, Infrastructure, Events and Community Groups.

More information about the funding round will be available in coming weeks and will be published in the Bush and Bulldust. If you are interested in joining a working group, please contact Lauren Elvin by email mail@ourvalley.com.au or on 02 6071 5100.