

# Lower Sixth Creek Riparian Rehabilitation Report - 2021

The last year has been another successful year for the Friends of Lower Sixth Creek and a very big thank you to all our volunteers! The 2021 working bees have been attended by a regular band of volunteers recording 423 volunteer hours! It has been fabulous to have some new volunteers too.



Over the last 12 months the working bees in Zones 1 and 2 have involved planting approximately 200 tube stock and managed invasive weeds. The new plantings have largely been mid story and ground cover species along with some flowering and shade trees so that we provide habitat for the small birds between previous planted Eucalyptus, Sheoaks or Banksias.



We have trialled the use of Cornstarch guards which are completely biodegradable and will be watching to see how well they last and protect the plantings from Kangaroos.

Of course, there is always weed management too. Sometimes this is done at working bees, weeding around the previous plantings and at other times as spot spraying by landowners or the project coordinator. This has been carried out along the full project site of 1.3 km and targeted Blackberry, Broom, Pea and Mile-a-Minute as well as regrowth of Arundo, Willow or Ash. This will be an ongoing maintenance task for a few years yet. For this job in particular we are always glad to have the use of the Sixth Creek trailer which has a 100litre tank and 100 metre hose.

We always finish with morning tea and a chinwag!



**Did you know the SCCG Trailer is available for hire at \$10.00 a day? SCCG also has Tree Pullers available to borrow at no cost.**



But by far the most noticeable achievement this year has been the completion of removing and managing all the dead Willows and Ash and some stands of Arundo. These were first poisoned in 2017 and 2018. Some were removed in 2019 but a decision by the Landscape Board not to fund this project in 2019-2020, meant this expensive heavy work had to stop and was only able to restart when we were

successful in winning a Grass Roots grant for the 2020-21 financial year.

The risk of leaving the dead trees where they stood was that the trees would fall and cause blockages and erosion along the creek line. To minimise this damage, they have been cut stacked and burned. These before and after photos show the dramatic impact of this work. A very BIG thanks to Ulf and Bill who contributed many hours of volunteer time to complete this work.



In addition to the removal of these woody weeds, we have also been able to start on basal barking the smaller Ash trees growing on the higher riparian slopes in Zone 2. These will soon become evident as their leaves begin to yellow.

When we started this project late in 2016 a working bee was held with eight volunteers who were all local landowners and we focused on pulling Broom. Since that time, with just \$25,000 funding from the Landscape Boards & DEW and \$3600 from Adelaide Hills Council we have:

- Commissioned a Vegetation Study and used it to prepare a five year Management Plan
- Applied for, administered, and reported on Community Action and Grass Roots
- Contributed over 2000 volunteer hours – this approximates to \$80,000 value
- Designed and erected two beautiful signs informing the public about the rehabilitation work. These have been installed with the assistance of Adelaide Hills Council
- Cleared the creek line of all large woody weeds. Replanted approximately 500 metres of riparian zone with appropriate tube stock to re-establish habitat for animals and birds
- Created a community group caring for this part of the creek and developing knowledge about maintenance and care of this water resource.

This is an amazing achievement in five years and with the relatively small level of funding we have had!

What do you want?  
What could we do?

So having completed the work which was outlined and planned in the Management Plan we need to consider whether we simply go on maintaining this section of the creek, or perhaps extend this work further upstream in the Sixth Creek?

To do this we would need to develop a new management plan that could guide the work as well as applications for funding. And to do that we would need ideas and commitment from landowners.

Come along to the last working bee of the year on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November. After some of the usual working bee weeding, we will finish with a barbecue lunch and some planning. Please email or message Erica on 0407668225 if you plan to come. Meat is provided and BYO drinks/ salad/ cutlery & plates.

Thank you to everyone for your ongoing interest and support with this project.

Erica Womersley

Coordinator Friends of Lower Sixth Creek