Malcolm Creek & Grasslands

- Community Involvement
- Community Participation
September 2005:

Meeting with Delfin, Hume City Council and Merri Creek Management Committee, regarding community involvement in Malcolm Creek & Malcolm Creek grasslands. It was unanimously decided that:

"Interest first needs to be generated within the community, before a Friends Of group can be established."

November 2005:
Construction begins on Community Art Poles

Artist’s brief:

- To provide defined meeting points within the grasslands
- To include reference to local flora & fauna
January 2006: Delfin Summer Festival

- Jan 18  First Home Buyers Seminar
- Jan 21  Summer Festival Celebration
- Jan 29  Malcolm Creek Charity Walk
- Feb 26  Delfin Duck Derby
- Feb 28  Craigieburn Festival

Malcolm Creek Charity Walk

Adventure Trail Questionnaire
Some stations along the way…

• The kids loved the gnomes and fairies
• The Art poles generated a lot of discussion
• People were impressed by the new path and pedestrian bridge
• Free brunch in the park was a real winner
• Over $500 was raised for charity

March 2006: The next step

Meeting at Malcolm Creek Learning Centre to discuss Community involvement/engagement in Malcolm Creek and the Malcolm Creek Grasslands. Present were representatives from:

– Hume City Council
– Delfin Craigieburn
– Merri Creek Management Committee

All present unanimously decided that the process should begin with a “Get to know your Creek” day on Sunday 22 October 2006. Steering Committee elected.

October 2006:

• Final meeting of Get to know your Creek day steering committee; activities booked
• Flyers sent by Hume City Council to local residents
• Letters sent by Delfin to local residents, outlining the events of the day
Get to know your Creek Day

- Tours of the Red Gum Woodlands and Malcolm Creek grasslands
- Reptile Displays
- Waterwatch activities
- Free indigenous plant

Wrap up of Get to know your creek day:

- 80 men, women & children attended
- Strong interest shown in flora & fauna poster display
- Reptile display VERY popular, ran overtime!
- Grassland tours very informative and were extensively praised
- People participated in Waterwatch activities whilst waiting to go on the grasslands tour
- We ran out of enviro showbags and free indigenous plants
- 48 people put their name down to receive info about future creek days/activities

Friends of Malcolm Creek:

- 24 people at the Get to know your Creek day expressed interest in attending a Friends Of Malcolm Creek information evening
- Poor turn out for information night due to the busyness of the season and delay in holding the meeting
- Information evening unable to be held until late November, due to previous commitments of key speakers
- Delfin sends letter in January to interested parties, inviting them to “Walk and Talk” the creek on Sunday 29 January 2007
First meeting

- Eleven people attend a “Walk and Talk” along Malcolm Creek, followed by a BYO picnic lunch
- List of preferred activities drawn up
- Commitment made to participate in Clean Up Australia Day on 4 March

Clean Up Australia Day

- Organised by Friends of Malcolm Creek & Delfini
- 42 Bags of rubbish collected from the Malcolm Creek corridor
- 3 people sign on as new members

Defining the Friends of Malcolm Creek – what did members want?

- Meetings every third Sunday of the month at 11 am
- Hands on activities rather than having to worry unduly about rules, regulations and office bearers
- Access to funding for planting days and activities
- No to incorporation
- Broader community involvement desirable
- A few big activities spread out through the year, rather than lots of smaller ones
- Insurance to cover the group for events
- To preserve and enhance the creek and grasslands
What has been achieved so far?

The group obtained “Membership in Association” with Friends of Merri Creek. This means that:

- The group can now apply for funding under the auspice of FOMC
- Activities and Planting days are covered by FOMC's insurance
- The group is now included in the activities calendar of FOMC

- The group’s first official activity was held on August 26, a “Clean Up the Creek” day.

Where to from here?

- The group’s first Spring Community planting day on 23 September will be funded by Hume’s Greening program
- October meeting with Craigieburn Cluster to discuss possible enviro programs for local students
- Ongoing Craigieburn Venturer participation in future creek/grasslands activities as part of their Queen Scout coursework
- Meeting with Hume’s Greening Officer Damien Harrison (date TBC) to plan activities & possible funding for next year

Possible future activities for 2008

- Clean Up Aust Day
- Autumn Planting Day
- Autumn Frog Census
- Planting Wildflower walk along grasslands path – preferably with local schools
- Flora & Fauna Survey
- Mid year clean up day
- Schools indigenous plant propagation program
- National tree planting day
- Spring Planting Day
- Spring Frog Census
Summary: What worked

• Good initial support from stakeholders to start the ball rolling
• Invaluable ongoing advice and support from stakeholders
• Effective advertising & mailouts of events
• Community events that were fun and appealed to a wide section of the community
• Taking the time to do things properly — avoiding doing too much, too soon
• Engaging broader community support
• Having a vision of what was possible for the future
• Keeping things as relaxed and simple as possible
• Finding an alternative to incorporation — this was vital to the ongoing viability of the group

Friends of Malcolm Creek

Would like to thank Delfin, Hume City Council, Merri Creek Management Committee and Friends of Merri Creek for their ongoing and invaluable support.