



2018 NATIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

11 October
Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Nominee: David Marsh, NSW

Category: Australian Government Individual Landcarer

Boorowa grazier David Marsh is acknowledged for alerting primary producers to the fact that a healthy catchment and long-term profitability go hand in hand. He was pivotal in the early establishment of the Landcare movement, and David's property "Allendale" has long been a proving ground for sympathetic land management.

The Boorowa Community Landcare Group (BCLG) was formed in response to landholder questions, after local trees died from scarab beetle defoliation. In 1989, David became the first president of BCLG, and was pivotal in its gaining of funding to map saline discharge areas. BCLG used the money to identify degraded landscapes and plan their rehabilitation. David's work with John Powell to facilitate catchment hydrology studies and salinity mapping led to strategic planting of trees and perennial pastures around the Boorowa district.

David was instrumental in dealing with the logistical challenges common to voluntary groups handling public money for the first time. Record keeping without computers was a particular challenge. David helped farmers develop budgets and measure outputs, and later obtained funding that enabled the BCLG to employ coordinators to manage projects and reporting. The Boorowa Salinity Catchment Action Plan in 1996 provided a framework for the development of Landcare projects, as well as a sense of accountability.

David's on-ground practice has been hugely influential in educating other landholders, and since 1989 the Marsh family has hosted thousands of visitors to their property. David was one of the first people in the Boorowa district to use direct seeding techniques for planting trees. Other landholders noticed that early revegetation work was reducing salt scalds and preserving the biodiversity of the land. The Canberra Ornithologists Group carries out bird surveys onsite, evaluating the success of plantings to create habitat for threatened species. Local grazier and ex-BCLG president Steve Jarvis has heralded "Allendale" as hugely influential on his Landcare philosophy.

David has also hosted groups of students on his property as part of the Boorowa Educational Excursion Program (BEEP), in which young country children teach older city students about agriculture and the environment. His property continues to be visited as part of Mid Lachlan Landcare's 'Growing the Grazing Revolution' program, and he has hosted many 'Grazing Management' and 'Pasture Assessment' workshops for Boorowa Community Landcare Group on his farm.

David has fostered relationships with students from the University of Sydney (Orange campus) who undertook the monitoring and collection of data on his site in the Catchment Control of Dryland Salinity program that began in 1992. "Allendale" has also been part of the longest running salinity monitoring study in NSW, with 14 piezometers on site. David has also been an active supporter of Australian National University's program of mapping Boorowa properties in collaboration with landowners.

This program is supported by Landcare Australia and the National Landcare Network, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.





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David has also shared his knowledge away from the farm, addressing over 50 farmer groups and conferences across Australia on holistic management, planning for drought, healthy soils and biodiversity. Since 2014, David has been a member of ARLASH (Alliance for Regenerative Landscapes & Social Health) where he posts blogs on the ARLASH website. Since April 2017, he has been involved in speaking about regenerative agriculture in Facebook Live interviews with Charlie Arnott Grass Fed Beef, that have had many views.

Landcare is a grassroots movement that harnesses individuals and groups to protect, restore and sustainably manage Australia's natural environment and its productivity. Groups that fall under the Landcare umbrella work on a diverse range of environmental projects and include farmers embracing sustainable farm management and any community group that partakes in volunteer environmental activities. To find out how you can become a Landcare volunteer and for full details on all 2018 National Landcare finalists, visit www.landcareaustralia.org.au

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Web Summary

Boorowa grazier David Marsh is acknowledged for alerting primary producers to the fact that a healthy catchment and long-term profitability go hand in hand. He was pivotal in the early establishment of the Landcare movement, and David's property "Allendale" has long been a proving ground for sympathetic land management. David was one of the first people in the Boorowa district to use direct seeding techniques for planting trees, and his on-ground practice has been hugely influential in educating other landholders, with the Marsh family hosting thousands of visitors to their property since 1989. David has also shared his knowledge away from the farm, addressing over 50 farmer groups and conferences across Australia on holistic management, planning for drought, healthy soils and biodiversity.

Pull-out quote:

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