**RCE-GWS Strategic Planning Day**15 November 2016, 8.30am – 11.30am  
 *Meeting Minutes*

**Attendees:** Dave Ramas, Campbelltown City Council, Michael Rhydderch, Campbelltown City Council, Suzie Wright, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Ian Knowd, Hawkesbury Harvest/Western Sydney University, Vanessa Keyzer, Local Land Service GWS, Antony Lewis, ParraCAN, Richard Maguire, ParraCAN, Maria Maguire, ParraCAN, Andrew Hewson, Penrith City Council, Damien Feneley Public Schools NSW, Danielle Krix, Royal Agriculture Society, Om Dhungel, SEVA International, Mike Bartlett, Sydney Olympic Park Authority, Greg Cheetham, TAFE WSI, Robert Mann, TAFE WSI, Simon Wolfcroft, TAFE WSI, Brittany Hardiman, Western Sydney University, Caroline Allen, Western Sydney University (The Academy), Chris Vella, Western Sydney University, Debra Keenahan, Western Sydney University, Helen Angelakis, Western Sydney University, Jen Dollin, Western Sydney University, Margaret Sommerville, Western Sydney University, Maryella Hatfield , Western Sydney University, Ricky Spencer, Western Sydney University

**Apologies:** David Town, Blacktown Council, Steve Body Brewongle EEC, Debbie McCall, Campbelltown City Council, Leonie Winner, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Svetlana Kotevska Georges River Combined Councils Committee, David Reid Georges River Combined Councils Committee, Eric Brocken, Hawkesbury Earthcare Centre/HDRA, Robin Wood, Hawkesbury Environment Network, Vicky Whitehead, Longneck EEC, Kartik Madhira, Parramatta City Council, Nicole Thorton Parramatta City Council, Mark Samaha TAFE WSI, Geoff Scott Western Sydney University, Frank Calabria , Wooglemai EEC, Judith Bruinsma, WSROC, Nic Pasternatsky, WSROC

1. **OPENING ADDRESS:** Welcome to all members and apologies. Acknowledgement was giving to Australia’s newest network, RCE Tasmania - <http://www.slt.org.au/rce>
2. **NEW MEMBER PRESENTATION:** Suzie Wright, Conservation Volunteers Australia (Western Sydney) presented on their work across the region. Please see attachment.

* Working in Western Sydney for 18 months
* Work from Windsor to Parramatta to Camden
* Programs include CVA Green Army and Better Earth Volunteers

1. **RCE ACHIEVEMENTS:** We are considered as one of the most active RCE’s in the Oceanic region. Our flagship initiatives include Hawkesbury Riverfarm (living lab/outdoor teaching space), Youth Eco Summit (curriculum based schools event) and Schools for Sustainability (school based empowerment forum), along with a wide range of other activities from education and events to research. Please see attachment.
2. **FUTURE DIRECTIONS:** Please see attachment.
   1. **RCE, SDGs and GAP 2030:** Upon the completion of UN Decade of ESD (DESD: 2005-2014), the UNU Programme is committed to further generating, accelerating and mainstreaming ESD by implementing the [Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD](http://en.unesco.org/gap), and through these activities, contributing to the realisation of the [Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/) As an RCE we are seeking to play our part in addressing GAP and SDGs as a framework for our future directions.
      1. **SDG Australia 2016 Conference, 29 – 30 November (SDGA16 Conference)** aims to raise awareness, foster opportunities for partnerships and catalyse local Australian action around the SDGs. RCE members may be interested in attending - <http://ap-unsdsn.org/event-sdga16-conference/>
   2. **Survey Results:** Generally feedback was positive about our collaboration and a recurrent theme was for more visibility, greater reach and more partners. A continual operational issue is platforms for communication.
   3. **Governance and Communication:** The floor was open to discussion and comment.
      1. **Governance:** The RCE is need of a new governance structure as per the [Terms of Reference](https://westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/governance). It is required for the central leadership of the RCE-GWS network and to represent the interests and direction of the members outside the host (Western Sydney University).

*ACTION: We are seeking 3 – 5 volunteers to teleconference 3 times a year to discuss matters related to the network.*

* + 1. **Communication:** Current communication platform (emails/newsletters) is well accepted but partners want share their projects, ideas, stories of success with the network directly. Suggestions included:
       - Facebook closed group for RCE members to share and post relating to our activities (accessible to members only).
       - Facebook public page for RCE members and the wider community to contribute around “sustainability in Western Sydney”, including events, funding, programs, etc.
       - Using #rcegws for any social media posts
       - Set up a Google Doc for possible project collaborations and to share contact details for all members to access *ACTION: Office of Sustainability to look into setting up a closed Facebook group. Please search “UN RCE GWS: Working Together” on Facebook or join group here -* [*https://www.facebook.com/groups/198527393847619/*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/198527393847619/)

1. **PROJECT PROPOSALS:** 
   1. **Floating Wetlands, Dr Ricky Spencer SSH:** Potential for urban agriculture, water sustainability and biodiversity conservation utilizing technology. Pilot running with Blue Mountains Council, but possibilities to expand further. Please see presentation attached.
   2. **Hack-a-Thon, Dr Maryella Hatfield SHCA:** Early next year (approx. May – June) a 2 day forum around sustainability solutions with Wester Sydney students, staff, industry representatives and community (RCE members) to participate (present solutions or submit issues), provide examples of best practice or to observe/learn.
   3. **Citizen River Ecologies: Community learning for the Anthropocene, Prof Margaret Somerville CER:** A new project to develop this research activism to a different level involving NGOs, government departments and Corporates to explore the development of community learning partnerships for river health of the Nepean River. Please see document attached.
   4. **Student Interns and Placements – Helen Angelakis OoS:** Western Sydney students are required to do some kind of professional service learning. We seek support annually from RCE members to take on our students, which has benefits both ways. Please see document attached.
   5. **Others/Open to the floor:**
      1. **GoMad** - Youth environmental leadership program coordinated by the Environmental and Zoo Education Centre network with support from the Office of Environment and Heritage. Next year GoMad 2017 is expanding statewide and has a paid coordinator – Brewongle EEC
      2. **Community Renewable Energy Program** – ParraCAN
      3. **Youth-led Sustainability Projects** – The Academy, possible collaboration with hack-a-thon
      4. **Biodiversity and Citizen Science** – Western Sydney University, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Campbelltown City Council, Local Land Services GWS
      5. **Wetlands:** NGO Wetland Forum to be held in conjunction with CVA on 2 February **–** Hawkesbury Environment Network
      6. **Community Development –** SEVA International
2. **OTHER BUSINESS:**
   1. **Dates 2017:** Tentative dates for our meetings are 9.30am – 11.00am on:
      * Tuesday, 28 February – General Meeting
      * Tuesday, 27 June – General Meeting
      * Tuesday 28 November – Planning Day/End of Year Celebration
   2. **Other UNU networks**
      1. [Australia/Pacific Regional Network of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)](http://ap-unsdsn.org/)

