

 

Landcare Victoria Inc.

&

Victorian Environment Friends Network

**Memorandum of**

**Understanding**

 DRAFT 3, 3rd July 2019

## Context

A network of volunteer community groups across Victoria has been established to care for the environment. Some of these groups focus on supporting private land managers to build healthy and sustainable landscapes and others focus entirely on caring for our public land or select native species. Some groups do both.

Community groups whose primary purpose is to protect and enhance the public reserve system or individual native species are often termed “friends“ groups, and the peak organisation established to represent the interests of these friends groups across Victoria is the **Victorian Environment Friends Network (VEFN).**

The Landcare movement on the other hand was first established to support private land management, but because of the significant impact of public land management on adjoining private land and vice versa, a number of landcare groups also now work on public and private land. The peak organisation within Victoria which exists to secure increased recognition, resourcing and support for the Landcare movement is **Landcare Victoria Inc. (LVI).**

The success of both friends groups and landcare groups relies on the partnerships that are established between the groups and the relevant public and private land managers and the wider community. In fact the ability of these volunteer communities to be able to value add through leveraging off external resources is significant.

The synergies between the friends groups and the landcare groups are many. First and foremost is that both focus on fostering a community framework with a sense of place, a strong commitment to the landscape they live and work in, and to the long term health of that landscape. Coming a close second is the reliance on volunteer commitment, a degree of self-sufficiency and independence and frequently a need for external resourcing to support the work needed to care for, rehabilitate and reinstate natural ecosystems.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been developed to capitalise on the synergies between the communities that the VEFN and LVI represent, and support and grow the partnership between the two peak organisations. Both organisations seek external resourcing to enable their operations. The design and delivery mechanisms of State programs impact on the operational capacity of both organisations, at the state and regional scale.

It is hoped that this document will provide guidance and a framework for the building of similar effective relationships between friends groups and landcare groups and networks at a local level.

## 2 Partnering organisations

This MoU is between:

**Landcare Victoria Incorporated (LVI)**

and

**Victorian Environment Friends Network (VEFN)**

## 3 Partnership statement

LVI and VEFN are stronger working together in achieving outcomes for communities and landscapes.

## 4 Governance

The Chair of LVI and the Convenor of the VEFN jointly have the responsibility and accountability to manage the partnership.

To foster this collaboration there shall be a joint committee of at least two nominees from each organisation which shall meet at least twice per year or more frequently as agreed.

### 5 Goals and objectives

To establish a foundation for collaboration between LVI and the VEFN on a broad range of natural resource management, information, participation, consultation, partnership and empowerment issues.

The objectives of this MoU are:

* to ensure a productive partnership that builds the capacity of both LVI and VEFN;
* to establish methods consistent with this MoU to harness the skills, knowledge and resources of both LVI and VEFN to meet our common goals, objectives and vision.

### 6 Common purpose

This MOU is based on a mutual interest in environmental outcomes, volunteer contribution to those outcomes, and building community and government support for that work. Both organisations seek to work through a community custodian approach to addressing the significant challenges faced by public and private land managers and communities in Victoria in the management of natural resources. This MoU articulates the intent of LVI and VEFN to work collaboratively while building on existing relationships, principles and co-contributions.

### 7 Delivery

This MoU sets the partnership foundation for strong leadership at the State level which will inform, guide and support regional relationships and natural resource management activities.

The objectives of this partnership will be delivered through:

* Open, regular and effective communication processes between the partners including:
	+ Dialogue between representatives of the Committees of Management of LVI and VEFN;
	+ Collaborative networking opportunities at the State level; and
	+ Clear regional and local communication pathways.
* Alignment and adaptive improvement of strategic planning processes through collaboration and sharing of information and knowledge;
* Identification and securing of investment and resources using the strength of the partnership to leverage greater outcomes;
* Active and collaborative promotion of the capability provided by the partnership to Government, investors and key stakeholders;
* Provision of mutual support for each other as genuine and respected partners;
* Adaptive management which will monitor, review and evaluate the success of the partnership to guide adaptive improvement.

### 8 Relationship review

The Chair of Landcare Victoria Inc. and the Convenor of the VEFN (or their delegates) will jointly review this MoU every two years or within another period as mutually agreed.

### 9 Partnership benefits

Through adoption and delivery of the principles and delivery components espoused in this MoU, the mutual benefits will need to be tangible for the partnership to succeed. This partnership is anticipated to provide a range of benefits, as outlined below, to the partner organisations and the broader community:

#### 9.1 Benefits for the partner organisations include:

* Skills and knowledge of the respective organisations harnessed for better outcomes;
* Coordinated, innovative and supported approach to planning and delivery at the relevant

scales;

* Stronger relationships between landcare communities and friends communities;
* Mutual support and acknowledgement;
* Reduced potential for conflict resulting from collaborative, adaptive, innovative and outcome focused relationships;
* Greater volunteer support and increased on ground outcomes; and
* Improved member benefits such as joint training and government support

#### 10 Communication and media

Where possible, where a matter involves issues of mutual interest, LVI and the VEFN will work together to develop a joint and consistent approach to communications with the media and third parties.

#### 11 Commencement, Duration and Termination

This MoU will commence on the date of signing below, and will be ongoing subject to review every two years. Modification of the MoU will be at mutual agreement at any time. Termination can be exercised by either party subject to a written three-month notification to the other party.

#### 12 Signatories

Each party signs this MoU to acknowledge that it will use its best efforts to work collaboratively with the other party to reach the objectives stated in this MoU.

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| **Landcare Victoria Inc.**  | **Victorian Environment Friends Network** |
| Name:   | Name:  |
| Title:  | Title:  |
|   |  |
| Signature:   | Signature:  |
| Date:   | Date:  |