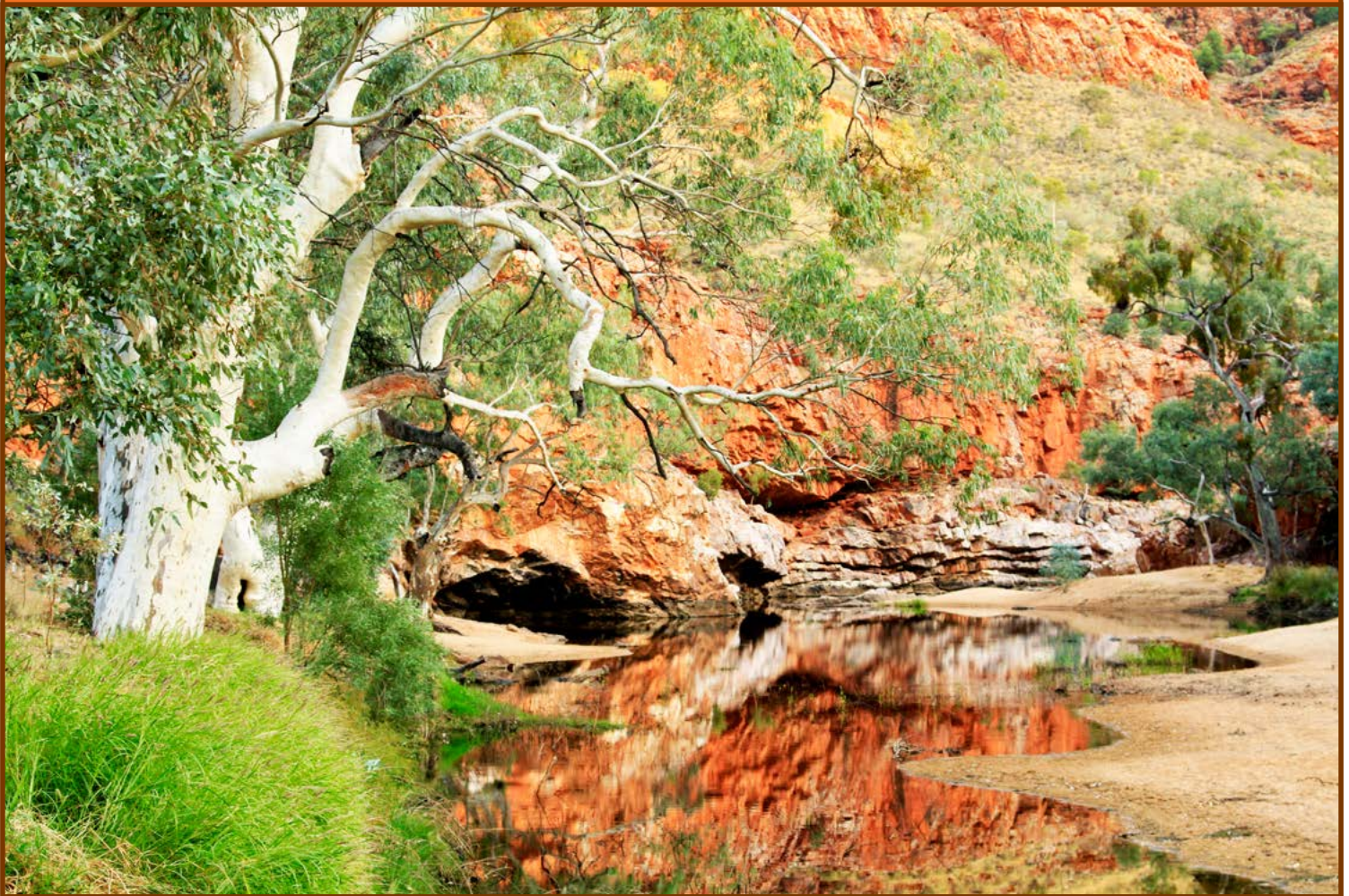
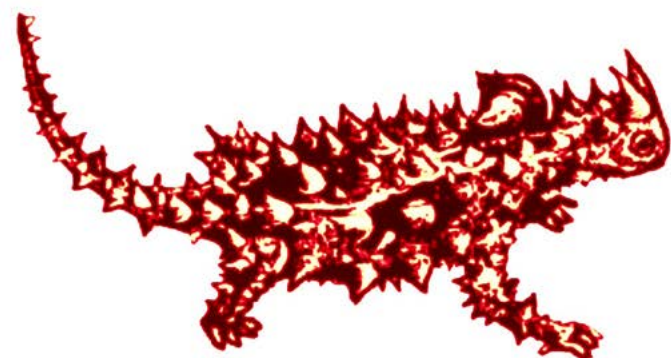


ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015



Healthy futures for arid lands and people
ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE
www.alec.org.au



Arid Lands Environment Centre

'Healthy futures for arid lands and people'



A happy customer at the regular Food for Alice local produce market stall, every second fortnight at Eastside Pilates cafe. Food for Alice is an ALEC initiative.

The Arid Lands Environment Centre acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional owners, both past and present, of this region.

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Work to create more sustainable and resilient communities in Central Australia

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Promote protection of ecosystems and sustainable use of natural resources in Central Australia

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arid-Lands-Environment-Centre/447072910579>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AridLandsEC>

ALEC's Strategic Aims

The Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC) is a community-based organisation, developing and delivering environmental and sustainability programs in Central Australia. For more than 35 years, ALEC has advocated for the conservation and responsible management of land, water and natural resources in the arid lands.

ALEC's vision is 'healthy futures for arid lands and people' and ALEC has three broad strategic aims:

Work to create more sustainable and resilient communities in Central Australia

From the ground up, ALEC is making impact across the region through developing and supporting projects related to the desertSMART Roadmap: energy, water, waste, transport, food and the built environment. ALEC actively works to influence policy by engaging all tiers of government on sustainable development and building local resilience.

Promote protection of ecosystems and sustainable use of natural resources in Central Australia

ALEC advocates for the rights of the land, plants and animals of Central Australia. The wise-use of the region's natural resources is a priority, with the importance of groundwater and the cleanliness of country in regards to radioactivity and pollution impacts being of highest concern.

Strengthen ALEC as an organisation

ALEC is committed to maintaining strong governance and management principles. ALEC strives to be a leading example and source of inspiration for other organisations in the region and environment groups nationally.



Participants at the Threatened Species Day, Biodiversity Matters Field Trip with NT National Parks and Wildlife.

ALEC is an innovative, visionary and enterprising organisation, playing a leading role in driving change in the arid lands.

ALEC continues to build on its strong history of advocacy for Central Australia.

ALEC has a strong, balanced approach to environmental and natural resource management.

ALEC is well-connected to local businesses, non-government organisations, territory and national government agencies.

ALEC Chairmans Report



It is once again my privilege to introduce the 2014-15 ALEC Annual Report.

The report is far from just an account of finances. It's an accessible and comprehensive story of the year's activity. You'll find within descriptions of the many regional programs in which ALEC is active. The breadth of work undertaken by our small community organisation impresses me every year. It is the dedication of the staff and volunteers and the generosity and vibrancy of the Central Australian community that makes this so.

This year has been one of transformation. Organisational adaptation is a constant at ALEC. For instance, several years ago we were delivering multi-million dollar projects yet today we are solely community-funded. Astute strategic planning is key to maintaining our edge. The staff and Board recently completed the latest triennial plan. We are optimistic. There is a sense of social change and imminent opportunity.

A significant focus of the 2016-18 strategic plan is to go beyond regional campaigns. The great environmental concerns of Central Australia are largely national and global in origin. The common factor is climate change. Climate change is not an environmental issue. It is the way we run the world. It's vast. It's every person's issue. Therefore, ALEC will actively partner the social movements established around climate change providing a voice from the outback. It is clear that caring for arid lands and people is fundamentally networked.

The climate change movement is providing long absent leadership in driving large-scale political and economic reform. Let's not flinch, we are midway through the what is estimated as the final decade in which humanity has a real chance to mitigate catastrophic climate change.

The good news is that we have moved from awareness to engagement. Compare today's news stories to those of a few years ago: alternative energy daily in the headlines; powerful ethical investment and divestments movements; financiers abandoning new fossil fuel projects; community backlash against neoliberal one percent capitalism and so forth.

This is a critical time. The much heralded tipping point. Get involved with community organisations. Support ALEC. Now is the time for change.

Stewart Baillie
ALEC Chair



ALEC Directors' Report



It is with great pleasure to be able to present the 2014-15 Annual Report for the Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC) to you. It's been a year of transition and transformation for ALEC as we have come to terms with the de-funding from the Territory and Federal Governments. Rather than complaining about it, ALEC staff have been emboldened by the generosity of many people from within the local community and the entrepreneurial 'can do' spirit of Central Australians.

2014-15 has been a tough year but a successful year. While, ALEC staff members have taken a pay cut in hours to balance the budget, the community has rallied behind us. Donations increased this year to \$124 000 (2014: \$119 000) (note that both years this was due to a single donor donating \$50 000 each year). The Arid Lands Community Environment Centre was established at 90 Gap Rd due to the generosity of another generous donor. Arid Edge Environmental Services has taken off with a solid amount of remote contract work being undertaken by Alex McClean and his growing team.

The campaign against shale gas fracking has grown rapidly with ALEC taking a supporting role as the voice of concerned residents grows both in number and volume. Participation in policy development has been at an all time high this year with ALEC writing 18 submissions to engage constructively in federal, territory and local government processes from planning to water policy, gift recipient tax deductibility to the privatisation of public assets, if it mattered to central Australia this year, ALEC was in there and continues to engage proactively for the region. And again this year, ALEC has successfully organised countless events to build and support the resilience of our local community.

ALEC is working to build the community's capacity to respond meaningfully and with

sufficient impact to act on climate change. ALEC's Board recently met to review and update ALEC's strategic plan and it is clear that while we're heading in the right direction, we need to get more people involved and taking action. Climate change is bigger than an environmental issue; it is an issue that all businesses, communities and governments need to take seriously and ensuring they are doing all they can.

The strategic focus of ALEC's activities going forward are:

People: educating, engaging and supporting the wider community to take action.

Place: promoting the arid lands; both iconic and fragile; supporting a vast array of well-adapted life forms and livelihoods.

Organisation: the systems to support ALEC's work towards its vision of 'healthy futures for arid lands and people.'

ALEC will achieve its vision through:

Leadership: bringing government, business and the community with us on the journey towards an ecologically sustainable, just and prosperous future for arid Australia.

Doing: being on the ground, working to support community resilience, biodiversity



Jimmy, ALEC staff and volunteers at the Biodiversity Matters Australian Wildlife Conservancy Skink Monitoring Field Trip.

conservation and the efficient use of our natural resources.

Defending: standing up for the arid lands, working to protect our groundwater and the animals, plants and people that call this desert country home.

But none of this is possible without the ongoing and generous support of people who care about what happens out here. We live in a beautiful and complex place. The vast landscapes and the extreme variability in climate and people living in the arid heart of Australia have much to offer the world in terms of adaptation and innovation. Out of need, we have developed ways of living here. Some continue to be exploitative, some less so and some live in tune with the nature of the place. There are many wicked problems out here that require all parts of society to work together to find solutions. Climate change is set to exacerbate social, economic and environmental problems the world over. We need to be ready.

ALEC is working on the frontline of these issues everyday. We are a small organisation in the big heart of the country. We are going to have some big fights in the coming months and years with the proposed 'fracking pipeline' and the nuclear waste nominations sure to have an impact on our region.

We need your support to ensure a voice for the arid environment, the Outback, the desert

country is heard by those making the long-term decisions for it.

Our DESERT DEFENDER program allows you to be a part of ALEC's important work in central Australia by enabling it to continue to operate its programs. Donations can be as big or small, one-off or as regular as you would like and for the time being, they're tax deductible. So please consider making your contribution to support healthy futures for arid lands and people through ALEC.

Membership is also important. ALEC has many supporters but it is measured by its membership when lobbying and advocating for good environmental and social policies. Becoming a member connects you to the global environmental movement with fortnightly Thorny News updates and enables you to participate in supporting ALEC's programs, events and the community garden. Membership is more than a Facebook like, it's to be part of something - become a member today.

Thanks for your interest in reading about this transformative year for the Arid Lands Environment Centre. It has again been a pleasure and honour to serve in the interests of the people and the nature of central Australia. I look forward to working with you into 2016 and beyond.

Jimmy Cocking
ALEC Director

Make a difference

Become a Desert Defender

For 35 years the Arid Lands Environment Centre has worked for the conservation of the outback. We now rely entirely on community support to keep our doors open. Donate at www.alec.org.au

ALEC Business

Partnerships

- Alice Springs Landcare – Biodiversity Matters and buffel busting
- Alice Springs Town Council – community garden activities and EcoFair support
- Australian Conservation Foundation - supporting the Beyond Nuclear Initiative project
- Australian Council of Social Service - energy efficiency workshop in Alice Springs
- Anglicare – Low-income energy efficiency program
- Environment Centre NT - ongoing strategic partnership, regular communications, shared media releases, submissions and coordinated approaches to environmental issues and sustainable development in the Northern Territory.
- Friends of the Earth – supporting the Beyond Nuclear Initiative project
- Greening Australia - Ten Deserts Working Group
- Jesuit Social Services – supporting role in the Santa Teresa Irrigation program
- Land for Wildlife - Biodiversity Matters
- My Pathway - Arid Edge work in Utopia and beyond
- National Energy Efficiency Network - providing strategic and organisational support for engagement in NT
- NT Parks and Wildlife –Biodiversity Matters
- NT Dept Land Resource Management – Biodiversity Matters
- Olive Pink Botanic Gardens - desertSMART EcoFair and member events
- Pew Charitable Trusts - Ten Deserts Working Group
- Power Water Corporation – sponsorship of the EcoFair
- Rangelands WA - Ten Deserts Working Group
- Red Hot Arts and Alice Desert Festival
- desertSMART EcoFair promotion and organisational support.

- South Australia Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources - Ten Deserts Working Group
- Territory NRM - Ten Deserts Working Group
- The Nature Conservancy - Ten Deserts Working Group

ALEC Grants, sponsorship & contracts (GST exc)

Commonwealth

- No operational funding - end of GVESH0 program
- National Science Week - EcoFair 2014 \$20 000

Northern Territory Government

- Operational funding 2014-15: \$70 000

EnvironmentNT Grants

- Waste Smart Announcements \$12, 768
- desertSMART EcoFair: Guest Speaker Veena Sahajwalla \$9,207.00
- Commercial Composting Business Plan \$12,500.00

Alice Springs Town Council

- Community Development Grant - Wheelchair access path at Community Garden \$2000

Ten Deserts Contract

- Pew Charitable Trusts \$30 000
- Rangelands NRM (WA) \$5000
- Dept. Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) \$5000

Sponsorship

- Power and Water Corporation \$5000 EcoFair
- Ecofair inkind sponsorship - DoubleTree by Hilton, Colemans Printing, Sadadeen Expo Hire, Alice Springs Town Council
- Bendigo Bank \$3000 Community Garden - Solar Pergola

Representation

- Alice Springs Community Garden Management Committee
- Alice Springs Town Council Environment Advisory Committee

ALEC Business

- Australian Nuclear Free Alliance
- Boomerang Alliance
- Don't Frack the Territory Alliance
- Environmental Defenders Office NT – Board
- National Environment Groups Meeting
- National Science Week Coordinating Committee NT
- National Science Week Committee (National)
- NT Southern Regional Weeds Reference Group
- NGO Sector Representatives with the Department of the Chief Minister
- Partnerships for Impact - Central Australia
- Places you Love Coalition
- Ten Deserts Working Group Coordinator
- Volunteering SA and NT

Submissions

- Submission to the Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry - July 2014
- Buffel Grass Threat Abatement Advice (Fed) - October 2014
- National Water Commission Abolition Bill 2014 (FEd) - October 2014
- Parliamentary Committee on the Northern Territory's Energy Future - Electricity Pricing Options- November 2014
- Planning Commission - Alice Springs CBD Discussion Paper - REview of Planning Scheme - November 2014
- WA EPA - Mulga Rocks Uranium Mine December 2014
- Alice Springs Water Allocation Plan April 2015
- Rocky Hill Table Grapes Application for Water Extraction Licence Increase February 2015
- Submission to House of Representatives Inquiry into the REgister of Environment Organisations May 2015
- Working on Our Water Future - Conversation with Territorians June 2015
- Terms of Reference Nolans Bore EIS - May 2015

- Proposed Exceptional Development Permit PA2015/0132 - Melankas - March 2015
- Proposed Permit for Commercial Incinerator - February 2015
- Senate Privatisation Inquiry - February 2015
- Submission to the Legislative Council Select Committee on the supply and cost of gas and liquid fuels in New South Wales - January 2015
- Endorsed Federal Biosecurity Bill Senate Inquiry - Invasive Species Council - January 2015
- Waste Management and Pollution Control Act Review - October 2014
- Submission Alice Springs Open Spaces Network Master Plan September 2014

Organisational Membership

- Environment Defenders Office
- Australian Water Association
- Boomerang Alliance
- Lock the Gate Alliance
- National Sustainable Events Network
- NT Chamber of Commerce
- NT Council of Social Services
- Our Community
- Red Hot Arts
- Remote Indigenous Gardens Network
- Right to a Home Coalition



Feature presentation by Dr Veena Sahajwalla at desertSMART EcoFair 2014

ALEC Business

- Tourism Central Australia

Organisational Support and Hosting

ALEC provided organisational support to a range of community groups and hosted projects including:

- Alice Springs Community Garden
- Beyond Nuclear Initiative
- Australian Nuclear Free Alliance
- Australian Youth Climate Coalition – Alice Springs
- Education for Sustainability – Central Australia Network
- Central Australian Frack Free Alliance
- Families for a Nuclear Free Future

Community Engagement & Events

July 2014

- Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry Informal Meeting with Commissioner Allan Hawke

August

- desertSMART EcoFair
- Biodiversity Matters – Bush Regeneration Approaches to Controlling Buffel Grass Field Trip with Alice Springs Landcare
- Introduction to Permaculture Course – Arid Edge Environmental Services
- Developing the North Regional Summit – Community representation

September

- Biodiversity Matters - Threatened Species Day Field Trip with Alice Springs Field Naturalists and NT National Parks and



The endangered swift parrot featured at the ALEC Bilbies and Bunnies Fundraiser in April.

Wildlife

- Global Day of Climate Action – Alice Springs Vigil

October

- Biodiversity Matters – Bat Monitoring Field Trip with Land for Wildlife
- Global Frackdown – Alice Springs Event

November

- ALEC AGM
- One Hot Desert Night – ALEC Fundraiser
- Central Australian Frack Free Alliance Strategic Planning Meeting

February 2015

- Central Australian Frack Free Alliance – Fracking Report Community Action

March

- Alice Springs Town Council – Fracking Presentation
- Alice Springs Community Garden – Earth Hour Celebration

April

- Bilbies and Bunnies Soiree – ALEC Fundraiser
- The Give Grid Energy Workshop – with ACOSS

May

- Biodiversity Matters – Native Plant Propagation Workshop with Alice Springs Desert Park
- Introduction to Permaculture Course – Arid Edge Environmental Services
- This Changes Everything – Film and Presentation with Alex Kelly

June

- Biodiversity Matters – Finke Gorge Field Trip
- World Environment Day – ALEC Community Centre Opening

Plus

- Central Australian Frack Free Alliance fortnightly stalls at the Alice Springs Town Council (ASTC) Sunday markets from October 2014
- Intermittent ALEC stalls at the ASTC Markets
- Food for Alice Fortnightly Local Produce Market at Eastside Pilates

ALEC Highlights

Arid Edge Environmental Services

Arid Edge Environmental Services (AEES) is ALEC's fee-for-service arm that specialises in project management, landscaping, design, research, consultancy, training and support in the areas of energy, water, food and waste. In 2014-15, AEES has run a permaculture workshop and established a community garden in Tjuntjuntjarra Western Australia; assessed the feasibility of the re-establishment of the Santa Teresa Orchard; established a Work for the Dole project in the community garden; running a full-time Remote Jobs on Community Program in the Utopia homelands; and provided gardening, irrigation, landscaping and design services for many people in the Alice Springs region. Arid Edge is becoming recognized for its niche to support sustainable development outcomes across the region, under the vision and direction of manager Alex McClean.

Ten Deserts

Across 2.85 million square kilometres, 17 bioregions, and 3 states and a territory – land managers and conservationists are coming together to deal with the biggest threats to biodiversity in the desert country. The Ten Deserts is a collaboration of conservation, land management and indigenous groups working to raise the profile of the desert country and work on landscape scales across borders and land tenure. A working group was established in June 2014 and vision, purpose and principles worked and agreed upon. A website was established www.tendeserts.org and phone-link up meetings organized. A face to face workshop was held in Alice Springs in April 2015. 33 people from 22 organisations met and discussed the challenges and opportunities of fire and the threat of buffel grass on arid ecosystems. Targetted projects were identified including a buffel-free Great Victoria Desert. The other

key project is building the case for integrated and collaborative regional fire planning and management and working to support increased capacity. An On-country Fire Forum to build capacity for burning at scale and planning indigenous land manager is planned. Thanks to Pew Charitable Trusts for providing on-going support to employ a Coordinator (0.5FTE) for the next two years.

ALEC Community Centre

After 5 years at the Warburton St premises on East Side, ALEC moved to the Gap in late May 2015. The Arid Lands Community Centre is being established at 90 Gap Rd. Thanks to a generous donor who bought the property for ALEC to live, charging only the interest in rent, has enabled ALEC to survive this harsh funding environment. We have big plans for the place. Not only does it provide enough storage for all of our community event and field trip gear but also provides affordable printing services and two community meeting spaces for ALEC members and supporters to use. Arid Edge is drawing up plans that include food gardens, native verge garden, solar power, water tank, community recycling centre and a host of energy efficiency and water efficiency measures to showcase a sustainable community space. A crowdfunding campaign is being planned for 2016 to raise \$50 000 to set the centre up.



Peter Latz tours the intertexta forest with the Ten Deserts Working group

Strategic Aim 1: Work to create more sustainable and resilient communities in Central Australia

Arid Edge Environmental Services

2014-15 has been a year of growth and expansion for Arid Edge. Our portfolio of contracts has grown compared to 2013-14, we employed our first staff member late in the year and we have expanded our remote work in particular, continuing in Santa Teresa and starting to work regularly in the Utopia Homelands as well.

This year saw Arid Edge continue it's ongoing work at the Santa Teresa Orchard in partnership with Athyenghe-Athere Aboriginal Corporation and Catholic Care NT. Following on from the 2013 install of emergency irrigation under COOLmob in 2013, Arid Edge secured funding from ILC to develop a 5 year property management plan for the revitalized orchard. With assistance from Clarsen and Clarsen Architecture, Arid Edge consulted a wide range of stakeholders to develop a bold vision for the orchards long term development as a multi purpose work experience farm, training centre and community asset. This consolidated Arid Edge's relationship with the orchard crew AAAC and Catholic Care NT and will form the basis of further work in the future putting the plan in place.

Arid Edge has also expanded into working on homeland gardens in the Utopia Homelands as part of Health Network NT's Merne Murde (Good Food) project, with funding from My Pathway. Arid Edge has brought it's permaculture skills and innovative 'extension' style approach to working on food gardens in the homelands to build on gardens already established under the Merne Murde program in 2013. This project is set to grow with My

Pathway ready to contract Arid Edge to place an employee full time in the Utopia Homelands to support this project in the new financial year.

Arid Edge has also worked as the implementing arm of ALEC's grants program this year, undertaking a number of ALEC projects funded through the NTEPA Environment Grants Scheme. These included waste audits and waste strategy development in 3 Alice Springs primary schools (Sadadeen



Tree planting at the community garden in Tjuntjuntjarra Western Australia

Primary, The Yipirinya School and Alice Springs Steiner School), undertaking research into the commercial composting of food waste and recruitment of Ben Wall as a project officer to complete stage 2 of the Low Income Households Energy and Water Efficiency Project.

Arid Edge continues to carry forward the legacy of the Alice Water Smart program, particularly through our Garden Tune Ups service and water efficient landscaping contracts. During 2014-15 Arid Edge undertook 15 garden Tune Ups (both in Alice Springs and remote) and delivered 9 water efficient landscaping contracts to residents, schools, and businesses – including beginning work on a design for the upgrade of ALEC's offices at 90 Gap Rd into a desertSMART Living Centre.

Our popular Introduction to Permaculture courses were run again in August 2014 and are planned to continue on in the year to come. While requests continue for another 2 week Permaculture Design Certificate, demand has not been high enough to this as a 2 week block, so plans are being made to deliver the training over a 3-6 month period instead.

Whilst this has been a successful year of expansion for Arid Edge, the operation still made a loss over the year. This leads management conclude that Arid Edge must grow in order to be able to secure contracts big enough to make the operation profitable. With support from the ALEC board, Arid Edge plans to employ 4 staff in the new financial year (1 full time manager, 1 full time field officer and 2 part time project officers) in order to be able to grow the work with My Pathway in Utopia, expand our landscaping work and undertake Work for the Dole contracts in Alice Springs, and free the manager up to develop further contracts and undertake a greater percentage of high return consulting work.

This represents a significant and exciting change from Arid Edge being essentially a one staff member operation during it's first 2 years

of existence, to being a more mobile, higher capacity organisation with the real prospect of subsidising ALEC's running costs in the not too distant future.

List of Contracts 2014-15

- My Pathway & NTML (Now Primary Health Network) - Utopia Homelands Merne Murde (Good Food) Project, 7x 2 day trips between Nov 2014 & June 2015.
- Athyenghe-Athere Aboriginal Corporation - Santa Teresa Orchard 5 year Property Management Plan
- Sadadeen Primary School, Alice Springs Steiner School, Yipirinya School - School waste audits and waste management strategies.
- ALEC (NTEPA funding) - Commercial food waste composting research
- ALEC (NTEPA funding) - Low Income Households Energy & Water project
- Landscaping - 8x residential, commercial and school water efficient landscaping jobs
- Garden Tune Ups - 15 Garden Tune Ups (Alice Springs & remote)
- Permaculture Workshops - 1x Introduction to Permaculture workshop (9 participants)

Alex McClean
AAES Manager

www.aridedge.com.au



Working on building the garden in the Utopia Homelands.

Alice Springs Community Garden



The Alice Springs Community Garden (the 'Garden') was originally championed by a group of locals in 2007. In 2010 the Arid Lands Environment Centre secured the current 5 year lease from the Council on the community garden site at Frances Smith Memorial Park and in 2011 work on the Garden began in accordance with the Alice Springs Community Garden Project Plan (2010).

Our Vision: 'Growing Healthy Gardens'

Our Goals:

1. Learning Together
2. Valuing Safe Friendly Environments
3. Creating Useful Resources
4. Inspiring Effective Leadership

ASCG Committee

Governance Pod: Bruce Simmons (Convenor), Jimmy Cocking (Deputy Convenor), Fran Liepa (Secretary) and Wendy Mann (Treasurer)

Plot Membership Pod : Philippe Freidel

Communication Pod: Margaret Carew

Fundraising Pod: Britt Puschak

Maintenance Pod: Allan O'Keefe

Meditation Group Pod: Kay Smith

Healthy Garden Pod: Bruce Simmons

General Members: Jenny Taylor, Sue Fielding, Simon Murphy

The Committee meets regularly on the first Tuesday of each month to work towards our Vision of 'Growing Healthy Gardens'. Throughout the year, Committee members undertake many jobs, including:

- financial and risk management
- reviewing the health and development of the Garden
- promoting the Garden in the community and beyond
- planning working bees, fundraisers and events
- supplying and developing resources
- advancing projects
- communicating with members using social

- media
- recording minutes
- responding to enquiries.

Plots

It has been pleasing that the demand for individual plots has matched their availability. No-one has had to wait long and all 36 plots are currently allocated.

Healthy Garden

Allan O'Keefe has done a great job trucking in manure and spoilt hay from the Bohning Cattle Yards and those materials used in combination with our Garden compost has enabled plot holders to keep their soils fertile and productive. Some plots have been left languishing at times and pests have invaded. Keeping our gardens full and growing and removing any sick plants for composting are areas where we can do more.

Other achievements have included:

- 6 more mulberry trees were successfully transplanted
- Another 6 fruit trees and 3 grape vines were added in the orchard areas.
- All but one of our fruit trees are now thriving in spite of receiving an earlier savaging, not only from a plague of wondrous grasshoppers, but also from severe frosts.
- Most of the bare areas and paths in the



The view of the community garden from a drone.

Garden now have a thick layer of wood chip mulch which suppresses weeds and helps retain moisture.

- Some plot holders have been experimenting with imaginative shade structures and their exploits are being observed and taken up by others so that the overall interest, success and productivity of the Garden is on the rise.
- Our monthly first and third Sunday morning working bees have been a mixed success. They are very important for looking after all parts of the Garden and its resources. The Committee would like many more people to participate, both to get things done and to share ideas and experiences through Learning Together.
- The community plots have been quite productive and it's been great to have many people contributing to their maintenance and harvesting.
- The garden beds in the swale areas on either side of the wheelchair path down to the solar pergola area are gradually being built up with layers of buffel grass and manure.
- Convenor Bruce Simmons has recently begun writing 'Healthy Gardening' notes to offer some timely tips to gardeners.

Garden Events

The major event this year was the Science of Gardening Workshop in August, organised as a part of the Desert EcoFair. Over 50 people attended a very informative and hands on session!

Communications

POD Rep Margaret Carew has continued to work on promoting the Garden, producing two colourful newsletters full of news and beautiful photos to go out to members and onto the Garden Facebook. She also organised our prize winning Best Collection of Vegetables at the Show and our entry in the ABC Garden of the Year Comp. The Garden is now a site in a 'Gardening in the Arid Zone' Sites and Trails app.

Bodhi Tree/Meditation Group

The Bodhi tree was once again knocked right back by our severe frosts this winter in spite of some elegant protection. It's shooting again vigorously though so will remain the spiritual centre for the small meditation group that meets most Sunday mornings and welcomes new members.

Projects Report

We have funding for two projects, the 'wheelchair access paving' and the 'solar pergola'. We have in effect achieved Stage 1 of both projects. We now have a hard path down to the gabion seating and the 'iron wood' solar pergola site, plus a levelled area south of our main shade structure. We also have power to the electricity pole next to the main entrance ready to connect to site.

Thanks very much to all the committee and members and friends of the Garden who have contributed to growing its and our well being. We have had many visitors this year who have been greatly taken by the Garden, expressing words like peaceful, tranquil, friendly, beautiful, productive, amazing. Let's all do our best to keep our Garden ever more productive in a myriad of different ways in the years ahead.

Bruce Simmons
ASCG Convenor

www.alicecommunitygarden.org.au



A flourishing community garden plot

desertSMART EcoFair



desertSMART EcoFair has again been a resounding success, with more than 2000 people participating in talks, workshops, films, bike rides and community forums over the weekend of 8th-10th August at the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens.

With the focus being on science and sustainability as part of National Science Week, and a direct aim of encouraging people to participate in, learn about and create greater connections with science and sustainability in their own lives, desertSMART EcoFair 2014 provided ample opportunities for meaningful engagements and community discussions.

Eco-Science Schools Day on Friday 8th August saw 180 students, 30 teachers, parents and support staff attend what is becoming an increasingly popular science and sustainability learning opportunity for local students. Students participated in hands on workshops on the issues of energy, water, waste, science and technology with Engineers without Borders, Live and Learn, CSIRO, Parks and Wildlife Commission NT, Land for Wildlife, Dept. of Land Resource Management, and National Rural Health Students Network. Students also had the



Special guests Adam Spencer and Costa Georgiadis stand in front of the solar powered generator that powered the event.

opportunity to engage with special guests Amelia Telford (Australian Youth Climate Coalition) and Costa Georgiadis (Gardening Australia) who both encouraged active participation and enquiry into the world they live in.

The ABC 783 Outdoor Broadcast and Great Science Quiz saw 80 people attend and enjoy afternoon tea whilst listening to special guests Adam Spencer and Costa Georgiadis, as well as representatives from the various events happening over the weekend. The Great Science Quiz as part of the broadcast was popular and entertaining, with some great prizes including binoculars, science gadgets and books won by competitors.

The Great Science Variety Show followed the broadcast and featured a special Q&A session with TV & radio personality Adam Spencer, who discussed amongst other things the trials and tribulations of being a mathematical comedian and the science of being a 'man-washer' in the laundry. The Great Science Quiz Round 2 provided the opportunity for everyone to participate and test their scientific knowledge. The 90 participants were also entertained by poetry and music.

The Bike and Brunch with Adam and Costa on the morning of Saturday 9th August saw 25 cyclists ride from Olive Pink Botanic Gardens to the Telegraph Station, and upon return receive a pancake breakfast. Adam Spencer and Costa Georgiadis are keen cyclists, and it was a fantastic way to experience the beauty of the local environment.

That afternoon the Science of Gardening Practical Planting Workshop with Costa Georgiadis at the Alice Springs Community Garden saw 25 participants contribute to the garden whilst receiving knowledge about arid zone gardening approaches.

The ever popular Alice Springs Bicycle Film

Festival saw 350 people become part of an outdoor cinematic experience and enjoy international and local bicycle themed films at the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens. This year there were 9 local entries, with the winning entry being a mockumentary about self proclaimed Alice Springs BMX Legend Alastair McMichaels.

The Sunday Eco-markets and Sustainable Living Festival on Sunday August 10th again drew more than 1000 people to the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens to enjoy panel discussions, garden walks, workshops, market and informational stalls, kids activities and refreshments. Highlights included feature presentation by Veena Sahajwalla which focused on the role of engineering in society and new waste technologies and discoveries. All panel discussions were well supported, and stall-holders provided feedback that

Food for Alice

It was a great year for Food for Alice as we slowly build up both our supplier and customer base.

This was our first full financial year located in the same space – Eastside Pilates - after in previous years giving a few different locations a go including the Todd Mall Markets and doing vegie boxes. It has been really beneficial working from Eastside Pilates from both a logistical point and for both our customers and suppliers. Business is steady which is a good base to build from, and the fortnightly market is growing in popularity.

This biggest joy though as always is getting local, fresh food out to the community. Food that would normal sit on the plant, tree or in the ground and not get used. Food that is better off being spread around to those who either do not have the space to garden, or like me, are not very good at gardening. How much easier to head down to Food for Alice and grab your fresh fruit and veg for the week!

Food for Alice is proving to be a great

participants were interested and engaged.

Nicole Pietsch
EcoFair Coordinator
www.ecofair.org.au



Local students participate in Eco-Science Schools Day activities.

educational tool around self sufficiency, healthy eating, growing vegetables, and food miles.

After the success of this year, Food for Alice will move to a weekly market in late 2015 and will employ someone to run it. Keep updated via the Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/108715702520033/>

Carmel Vandermolen
FFA Coordinator



Sustainable Science Trail



The Sustainable Science Trail (SST) is an interactive tourist trail showcasing natural science, sustainability and innovation in central Australia. It is an Inspiring Australia initiative funded by the Australian Government to engage people in the sciences.

The Sustainable Science Trail has been developed by Edan Baxter from Spinifex Valley and includes downloadable Apple and Android Apps.

The trail currently includes:
Alice Springs Community Garden
Alice Springs Desert Park
Desert Knowledge Australia Solar Centre
John Flynn Memorial Church and;
Olive Pink Botanic Gardens

There are physical signs located at each site that provides some more information and instructions as to how to install the App. Each site has its own unique interactivity and the scalability of the trail is huge.

For the first time in Australia, technology is being used to connect tourists to sites associated with science, innovation,

sustainability and ecology in an accessible and engaging way.

The Sustainable Science Trail has been nested within the Sites and Trails website www.sitesandtrails.com.au which will enable this innovative approach to tourism and education to live beyond its initial funding.

Take the tour and let us know how you go.



Desert Science Network

The Desert Science Network (DSN) project is to establish a network of science communicators working to support the communication of science to people living in desert Australia but also to communicate science coming out of the desert to a public audience.

The Desert Science Network was a recommendation that came out of Inspiring Australia's Inspiration from the deserts report <http://www.science.gov.au/scienceGov/Documents/InspirationFromTheDeserts.pdf> of which ALEC was on the expert reference panel.

The initial proposal (\$50 000) by the DSN working group consisted of representatives from Desert Knowledge, Alice Springs Desert Park, Centre for Appropriate Technology, CSIRO and Ninti One. By the time funding was awarded (\$25 000), representatives from ALEC, Ninti One and CAT remained.

The working group decided to have a launch event off the side of the Rangelands Society Conference in April 2015. The theme was 'Stand up Science' which had guest speakers from around the country telling engaging and funny science stories. The event was packed out with 110 people attending and thoroughly

enjoying themselves. More than 90 signed on to the Network.

A Facebook group has been established <https://www.facebook.com/groups/desertsciencenetwork/> and the mailing list compiled. The challenge for the network is to generate its own momentum when so many

science-related groups are under severe financial pressure. The next steps is to survey interested people and find the right people to help this network run on its own steam.

Jimmy Cocking
DSN Coordinator

ALEC Event Highlights

ALEC facilitates a large number of community events as part of its objective to build a more cohesive and environmentally aware community. ALEC events include film nights, community meetings, information sharing gatherings and stalls, exhibitions and celebratory events – bringing the community together, sharing information and skills, and activating people to engage in environmental and sustainability issues.

Highlights from 2014-2015 include:

- desertSMART EcoFair, which saw over 2000 people engage in science and sustainability activities in August 2014 at the Olive Pink Botanic Garden.
- The Global Day of Climate Action - Alice Springs Vigil, in September which from short notice saw 100 people congregate at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station to be part of the national awareness raising event.



Community members at the Global Day of Climate Action - Alice Springs Vigil

- The Global Frackdown - Alice Springs Gathering which saw 80 people gather at Snow Kenna Park to take part in the global event to raise awareness about the impacts of hydraulic fracturing
- This Changes Everything Film and Presentation with Alex Kelly which saw 100 people pack into the ALEC Carpark to watch the film and be part of the following community discussion around mobilising communities.
- The World Environment Day – ALEC Community Centre Opening in June saw more than 100 people come to the new ALEC premises at 90 Gap Road to help celebrate the new community centre. Participants heard from local elder Aunty Doris Stuart who officially opened the centre, shared dinner and watched environmental films that focused on pertinent environmental themes.

Nicole Pietsch
ALEC Events Manager



The Global Frackdown Alice Springs event in October.

Strategic Aim 2: Promote protection of ecosystems and the sustainable use of natural resources in Central Australia

Representation

One of the key areas of influence for the Arid Lands Environment Centre is its representation on a wide range of committees and reference groups that support the development and implementation of environmental policies across the region. While it can take up a significant amount of time and with no operational funding from government to support participation in these processes – it is important that ALEC and ALEC representatives are around the table or making submissions on projects and policy direction.

The ALEC Business section shows the long list of committees and reference groups that ALEC regularly participates in and also the policy submissions made in the 2014-15 financial year.

ALEC takes a leading role in this space. All submissions are thoroughly researched and reasonable and achievable recommendations are generally made. The challenge at the moment is that Northern Australia Development focus is supporting the oil and gas, mining and pastoral sectors above all else, meaning that government is overlooking many innovative opportunities to build on our natural strengths (renewable energy, innovation and climate adaptation).

ALEC is constantly advocating for collaborative approaches to land management issues whether it be through the cross-border Ten Deserts Initiative or the Southern Regional Weeds Reference Group. Water is a big issue in Australia, particularly in the arid heart and as such ALEC has been advocating strongly for integrated planning processes

for water allocation rather than the 'first in first served', 'suck it and see' approach that currently dominates government policy.

The ALEC Director also sits on the Regional Economic Development Committee for the Alice Springs region. This was a surprise but a valued opportunity for ALEC to have a voice around the table in economic development direction for the future.

ALEC is known as an organisation that doesn't pull any punches. We politely but firmly represent the interests of nature and that of current and future generations of people living in central Australia. ALEC is advocating for policies that will support sustainable communities heading into the next 50-100 years rather than simply the next election.

It is critical that ALEC remains engaged as it enables us to be at the forefront rather than off to the side in the policy space. With Government plans to extract more water, frack shale gas, build pipelines and support risky mines – this is not the time for ALEC to be shying away. ALEC members can expect that we will keep on pushing until we are satisfied that all tiers of government are adequately planning and acting on climate change while ensuring that developing the North today does not impact negatively on desert people of the future.

Jimmy Cocking
ALEC Director

Ten Deserts

The Ten Deserts is one of the most exciting areas that ALEC is working on. ALEC has advocating and working towards a collaborative large-scale, cross-border conservation and land management initiative for almost 5 years. Indirectly and inadvertently, in June 2014, this became a reality.

Fifteen organisations from the local to international scale met at Ross River and agreed to a founding vision, purpose and principles to working together on reducing the continental scale impacts of fire, weeds and feral animals in the desert country. A working group was formed and ALEC nominated to coordinate it.

The Ten Deserts Initiative is focused on achieving outcomes under three themes:

Raising the Profile

- Increase the profile and public awareness of the value of Australia's desert country, and the challenges of solving complex issues in remote regions
- Attract additional resources for land management activities in the arid zone
- Promote opportunities for collaborative partnerships within and across the arid lands

Connecting People

- Connect disparate and remote partners to promote knowledge sharing, and better use of available land management resources
- Support capacity building for traditional owners and other land managers to manage desert country in a healthy and sustainable manner

Connecting Country

- Achieve landscape-scale management of critical ecological threats through integrated cross-border and cross-tenure approaches
- Contribute to regional climate adaptation and the growing movement towards continental connectivity conservation across Australia.

Vision:

Australia's desert country is the healthiest and most ecologically intact arid landscapes remaining on Earth. The Ten Deserts Initiative will work to build collaborative partnerships across state and territory borders to support the protection of the natural and cultural values of Australia's outback.

A vibrant future for the arid lands will recognise the interdependence of people and nature with social and economic development being built on healthy and sustainably managed landscapes.



Australia's Ten Deserts

- Sturt Stony Desert (SA, QLD, NSW)
- Strzelecki Desert (SA, QLD, NSW)
- Perdirka Desert (SA)
- Tirari Desert (SA)
- Great Sandy Desert (SA, WA)
- Simpson Desert (SA, QLD, NT)
- Gibson Desert (WA)
- Little Sandy Desert (WA)
- Tanami Desert (NT, WA)
- Great Victoria Desert (SA, WA) and the arid and semi-arid lands of NT, WA, SA, QLD.

In 2014-15 this is what has been done:

- Funding secured for 2014-15: \$5000 Rangelands NRM (WA), \$5000 Department Environment, Water and Natural Resources (SA), \$32 000 Pew



Paddy O'Leary from Pew Charitable Trusts outlines the Buffel Free GVD concept to the group, April 2015

- Charitable Trusts (0.2 FTE Coordinator ALEC plus Organise F2F workshop in Alice Springs)
- Hosted 4 x Working Group Phone-Link Up meetings with up to 12 people across 5 time zones participating
 - Agreed purpose and principles
 - Website developed – <http://www.tendeserts.org>
 - Attended cross-border meetings supporting collaboration
 - Participated in Landscape Scale Conservation Workshop at Rangelands NRM (WA) in Perth – late June 2014
 - Participated in Working on Desert Country workshop in Sydney – November 2014
 - Organised Face-to-face meeting and workshop in Alice Springs – with 33 people from 22 organisations attending – April 2015

Identified key priorities for Ten Deserts – A

buffel-free Great Victoria Desert and sharp focus on developing a framework for cross-border and cross-tenure fire planning and management are the two major priorities.

Base level funding secured for Coordinator (0.5FTE) for 2016 and 2017. \$60 000 pa for 2 years pending matching funds in first year.

It is exciting times as the Ten Deserts starts building support and coordinating collective action on a massive scale. Fire is key to the health of our landscapes and livelihoods in this country, if we can all start to see it as a tool rather than a threat – then we can start moving forward together.

Jimmy Cocking
Ten Deserts Coordinator

www.tendeserts.org



Biodiversity Matters

Biodiversity Matters is an Arid Lands Environment Centre initiative to increase community participation in land management and biodiversity conservation activities.

Biodiversity Matters cuts across the barrier of land tenure by engaging private landholders, indigenous land managers, pastoralists, park rangers and scientists to identify conservation priorities and land management needs. ALEC currently works with the Northern Territory Department of Land Resource Management (DLRM) - Flora and Fauna Division, NT Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC), Land for Wildlife Alice Springs (LFW), Centralian Land Management Association (CLMA), Alice Springs Desert Park (ASDP), Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club (ASFNC), Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC), Olive Pink Botanical Gardens (OPBG), Alice Springs Landcare and other partners to develop an annual field trip and activity program.

The Biodiversity Matters program includes informational sessions and hands-on field trips, where participants learn about local biodiversity issues and participate in conservation activities including flora and fauna research, weed removal, fencing and other activities as needed.

The 2014-2015 financial year saw a continuation of the success of the Biodiversity Matters Program, with 6 different field trips focused on biodiversity conservation and community education. These included:

Saturday 26th July
Slot Gorge Walk
With Alice Springs Desert Park

Sunday 31st August
Field trip: Bush regeneration approaches to controlling Buffel Grass
With Alice Springs Landcare Inc

Sunday 7th September
Threatened Species Day Community Walk and BBQ
Simpsons Gap
With NT National Parks and Wildlife

Saturday 20th September / Sunday 21st September
Field Trip : Palm monitoring at Finke Gorge
With NT National Parks and Wildlife + NT Flora & Fauna Scientists

Saturday 4th October 4th / Sunday 5th October
Field Trip: Bat Monitoring
Alice Springs Telegraph Station
With Land for Wild Life

Saturday 9th May
Workshop: Secrets for Success with Native Plant Propagation
Alice Springs Desert Park Nursery
With Alice Springs Desert Park

All field trips averaged between 15-30 participants, and offered community members a chance to learn about and contribute to local conservation projects.

Highlights included the Bat monitoring workshop at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station with Land for Wildlife. Microbats are the unseen portion of mammal diversity in the Red Centre with around 9 species calling the region home. They are hard to detect without specialist equipment, and the workshop



Participants in the Bat Monitoring Workshop



Sorting seeds at the Native Plant Propagation Workshop at the Alice Springs Desert Park

covered some microbat ecology and set traps overnight for an early morning return to get a closer look at the subjects.

Another highlight was the Native Plant Propagation Workshop at the Alice Springs Desert Park. The Alice Springs Desert Park is famous for unravelling the 'Secrets of the Desert' to its many visitors. The workshop examined the secrets involved in propagating native plants from seed and cuttings, best times for propagation, when to collect seeds and cuttings, secret potions to promote roots on cuttings, secret mixes in which to place those cuttings and seeds.

Check out the great photos from the field trip events on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/biodiversitymattersaridlands/> This page also shares information about local conservation news and activities.

As a result of funding cuts to ALEC, who coordinate the Biodiversity Matters program, it is unsure at this stage whether there will be the capacity for Biodiversity Matters to continue with a program of activities in 2016. The Biodiversity Matters Facebook Page will remain active and continue to promote local conservation information and activities.

Nicole Pietsch
Biodiversity Matters Coordinator
www.biodiversitymatters.org.au

Central Australian Frack Free Alliance

Overview

The Frack Free Coordinator position commenced in October 2014. Tanya Hall was appointed to the role. The position is funded for 3 days a week by the Lock the Gate Alliance and hosted by ALEC. ALEC provides a workspace including a laptop and access to equipment and accounting support for the role.

The key objectives of the role are as follows:

- Undertake research and develop resources for community education
- Support the local campaign group (formed in May 2014) - the Central Australian Frack Free Alliance
- Outreach to key stakeholders in Central Australia including Aboriginal communities and pastoralists to inform them of the risks of Hydraulic Fracturing or 'fracking'.
- Advocate on the issue to Government
- Keep a strong media presence on the issue.

The role is part of a broader NT Frack Free Alliance with consists of another 2 part-time roles based in Katherine and Darwin. Funding is confirmed for the role until June 2016.

Central Australian Frack Free Alliance

The Frack Free Coordinator role has been instrumental in building a strong visible campaign presence in Alice Springs through supporting the growth of the Central Australian Frack Free Alliance ("CAFFA").

In November and December 2014 strategic planning was undertaken to identify an agreed position for the group on hydraulic fracturing as well as the key focus areas for the group. In 2015 the group gained momentum with an increase in active members as well as supporters. CAFFA has keep an ongoing campaign presence in Alice Springs with fortnightly market stalls and local 'actions' in response to opportunities to raise awareness

of the issue.

Out of CAFFA another local group was formed in June - the 'Knitting Nanna's Against Gas Alice Springs'. CAFFA continues to meet fortnightly to plan campaign activities.



Main Events for 2014-15

- "Global Frackdown" event in October 2014 to raise awareness of the issue of fracking. Attended by 80 people.
- Community Action outside Adam Giles Office February 2015 to demand the release of the report on the Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing. Attended by 40 people.
- Action at AGES Conference March 2015 to show community opposition to exploration for shale gas in Central Australia. Attended by 40 people.
- Community petition for a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in Central Australia. Presented to Alice Springs Town Council at their April 13 meeting where a motion was tabled for a moratorium on fracking.

Key Stakeholder Engagement

A significant focus of Frack Free Coordinator role has been on raising awareness of the risks of fracking in Aboriginal communities.



The CAFFA stall at the ASTC Sunday markets

Under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act Traditional Owners have the right to veto applications for gas exploration on their land and so are a key point of engagement for the campaign. Aboriginal communities will also be in the front line of the unconventional gas invasion.

In 2014 the Frack Free Coordinator role developed a simplified English resource for use by the Central Land Council in providing information to communities about the process of and risks of fracking. Through the Lock the Gate Alliance 3 film resources were developed targeted at Traditional Owners. These were put on USBs and distributed widely. The Frack Free Coordinator presented at numerous forums to provide information to Aboriginal community leaders including the Central Desert and MacDonnell Regional Councils and the Central Land Council.

The Coordinator is continuing to build relationships with key community leaders with the aim of delivering a series of local forums in communities on fracking.

Key Community & Stakeholder Outreach Activities

- Presentations to Central Desert and MacDonnell Regional Councils.
- Community Information session in April 2015.
- Presentation on the risks of fracking at CLC full Council meeting in April 2015.

- Presentation at the 'Wide Open Space' Festival May 2015.
- Community forum in Tennant Creek in June 2015.
- Fortnightly CAFFA Stall at Todd Mall Markets.

Advocacy on the Issue

The Frack Free Coordinator has advocated strongly around the issue through a variety of mechanisms including directly lobbying elected representatives of state and local government and making submissions through the consultation process on the review of the regulatory framework. The Coordinator position has also maintained an ongoing presence in local media on the issue.

Tanya Hall
Frack Free Coordinator



Beyond Nuclear Initiative (BNI)



Overview

Beyond Nuclear Initiative is a joint project of the Australian Conservation Foundation and Friends of the Earth Australia and has been hosted by the Arid Lands Environment Centre since 2006. BNI convener Natalie Wasley relocated to Sydney in early 2015 but continues to campaign under the BNI project banner.

BNI tracks the status of nuclear projects across the country, with a focus on NT proposals, radioactive waste management and the disproportionate impact on remote and Indigenous communities.

Radioactive Waste Management

After the landmark victory against the Muckaty nuclear waste dump proposal in

June 2014, the federal government requested NT Aboriginal Land Councils nominate sites for assessment within three months. BNI assisted Traditional Owners to attend briefing meetings with government officials, coordinate public statements and write to relevant Ministers. No NT sites nominated were subsequently nominated.

The federal government then opened nominations to all landholders across Australia under the National Radioactive Waste Management Project. The shortlist of nominated sites has not yet been announced, however, all sites that have been revealed have been strongly contested by local communities. BNI is working to amplify the voices of affected people and advocate for waste management options beyond a single remote dump to be considered.

Because a remote site has not progressed, spent fuel rods returning from reprocessing overseas will be taken to Lucas Heights nuclear reactor complex south of Sydney for extended interim storage starting November 2015. BNI has convened meetings with Illawarra region trade unions and other stakeholder groups to discuss issues related to management of the returning radioactive waste.

The transport of radioactive materials on NT road and rail networks continues to pose a threat to the health and safety of NT residents, waterways and the local environment. BNI works closely with Territory and national environment groups, trade unions and health organisations to highlight risks posed to both people and the environment.

Protecting Manuwangku

Protecting Manuwangku, produced by Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning (UTS) with assistance from BNI has now screened at a number of festivals, including the 5th International Uranium Film Festival in Quebec (April 2015) and the No Nukes Film Festival Taiwan (June 2015). NITV agreed to screen the film on June 19, marking exactly

one year since the Muckaty campaign victory.

Australian Nuclear Free Alliance

BNI holds a committee position on the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance and is actively involved in the administration of the network, including coordinating logistics for the national meeting, organising committee phone links and developing the national meeting agenda.

National Campaign Coordination

BNI coordinates key national initiatives for the nuclear free movement, including monthly phone link ups and an annual national nuclear free strategy meeting.

Funding

From 2006-2013 BNI operated through philanthropic donations. From July 2013 to July 2015 one day a week funding was also received from the Environment Centre of the NT. The BNI steering committee is now working to secure an ongoing funding source for the project.

The hosting arrangement with the Arid Lands Environment Centre has been critical for maintaining operational capacity and BNI looks forward to maintaining this relationship into the future.

Natalie Wasley
BNI Campaigner



ANFA in Alice Springs, 2014

Strategic Aim 3: Strengthen ALEC as an organisation

Financial Resilience

Resilience is the ability to 'bounce back' after a significant and traumatic event. Adaptation is the combination of long-term changes that enable organisms to increase their chances of survival into future.

ALEC has demonstrated resilience over the past 12 months where having been defunded and losing COOLmob, it has still managed to ramp up its activities thanks to the support of donors and enterprise development.

Being a flexible and family-friendly workplace, ALEC has maintained its core staff and Arid Edge is actually growing as the number of contracts increases steadily.

In 2014-15, we have managed to reduce the deficit to below the \$100 000 limit set by the ALEC Board. This is a result of tight fiscal management, increased donor funds (particularly the single \$50 000 donation from an anonymous ALEC savior), reducing rent costs significantly through the donor purchased community centre at Gap Rd and a strategic appetite for risk in supporting the growth of Arid Edge Environmental Services.

ALEC's balance of enterprise development, recruitment of donors and fundraising activities makes it a sector leader in this space. The appetite of the Board to support Management in investing to grow Arid Edge is to be commended and supported. Establishing a fee-for-service arm has created flexibility for the organisation to say 'yes' and give a quote rather than 'no' we don't have time or inclination. It is also creating a sustainable business model that will return profits to ALEC in the medium term.

Given that 2015-16 will be the first year

without any operational funding, ALEC will have to ramp up its donor recruitment to cover the losses and increase its enterprise activities. Adaptation is a long and rocky road but in the end we'll be stronger for it. Despite canvassing for a funded Policy Position next year, ALEC is keen to find alternative sources of income beyond government funding.

A new path to independence lies ahead but it requires the on-going commitment and support of a dedicated team of people and a community willing to support it.

Strength is in diversity. The more people we have supporting ALEC, the more we can do for the community and the desert country we call home. While the Turnbull Federal Government seems less hostile to the tax deductibility of our gift fund, it is still a real risk. So donate while you can.

Add to the strength of community by giving nature a voice through supporting ALEC.



Jimmy Cocking
ALEC Director

Communications and Campaigns Report

Communications for the Arid Lands Environment Centre have remained strong despite a reduction of staffing from 0.6fte to 0.4fte in January of the 2014-2015 financial year.

The regular fortnightly Thorny News E-newsletter is distributed to 550 people and continues to be an effective tool in sharing information with ALEC members and supporters.

The quarterly hardcopy Devils Advocate newsletter is also an incredibly effective communication tool that is used at information stalls, meetings and public events. More than 1000 copies have been distributed throughout the last year.

Social media also remains strong with the ALEC Facebook page now having 1100 likes and regular engagement from supporters. The ALEC Facebook group is also increasing in popularity with more than 600 members. The ALEC Twitter account has more than 600 followers.

With the changing funding circumstances and evolving campaigns priorities the ALEC website had a significant update in early 2015, however with issues changing so quickly it is due for another upgrade in early 2016 to reflect changing priorities.

ALEC memberships have grown with the increased support from the community post government funding cuts, with ALEC currently having approximately 300 members. In the new funding environment membership is increasingly important, and ALEC will be strategising in early 2016 how to facilitate a more active and engaged membership base.

Fundraising has by necessity been a focus, and throughout the year ALEC has held a number of fundraising events including One Hot Desert Night in November 2014 and the

Bilbies and Bunnies Soiree in April 2015. These events have helped raise vital funds for the organisation and have been an effective community engagement method facilitating new memberships and involvement in the organization. ALEC has also ran a number of online fundraising donation campaigns throughout the year.

Fracking and climate change have been the two main campaign focuses for the organisation, with the Communications position facilitating a local fracking response until the employment of the Frack Free Coordinator in October 2014. Whilst it has been hard to maintain a local action group on climate change in Alice Springs, it is consistently placed as community members number one concern in ALEC surveying, and there is a lot of support for national climate event focus days.

ALEC's major yearly event, the desertSMART EcoFair is a huge focus and organisational task for the Communications staffing position and requires substantial community and volunteer engagement for the event to happen.

Communications and community engagement will continue to be a strong focus in 2015-16, with the aim of facilitating an active engaged local community, and sharing ALEC's messages and campaigns nationally.

Nicole Pietsch

Communications & Campaigns Manager



Business and Operations Manager Report

As foretold in the previous Annual report, the 2014/15 was going to be a tough one. There were a number of changes, and at the same time a number of highlights.

2014/15 had further staffing cuts as both my role and the communications roll were decreased to 15 hours per week as of the start of January. This has put a good deal of pressure on making sure our procedures were effective enough to deal with the reduction in hours. Add to this the fact that to reduce costs we also stopped outsourcing our data entry and high end accounting requirements bringing all of this back in house. All of this was done to support ALEC's long term strategic goals around making ALEC a sustainable ongoing business. With reduced funding sources we needed to reduce expenditure, at the same time continue to grow ALEC's funding diversity.

In regards to all of this ALEC has been operating very successfully. The audit preformed on the 2014/15 accounts showed up a couple of data entry errors and a few other bits and pieces. All of which were easily corrected and most importantly did not impact on the credibility of the financial reporting. At the same time as doing well in this area we have continued to grow our fee for service division as well as continue to support the community in ways that other environmental organisations have found hard to continue with no funding.

Another big tick came when all of our policies and procedures, including OHS, went under the microscope by a third party. This was necessary in winning a large fee for service contract. Now this is quite frankly a back of house, rather boring, aspects to a business, and one that ALEC has a good reason to feel proud off. This is for the simple fact that we know how much we have worked to get our policies up to scratch, especially our OHS under the national regulations. We also know other bigger businesses that have had to

scramble and get this stuff organised when it comes time to a 3rd party looking at them. And we know that business can and do miss out on larger contracts when this aspect of the business is not up to scratch. Again this was good fore-planning by ALEC to slowly get all of our Policies and Procedures sorted and up to national guidelines. One that is paying dividends now.

Of course one of our biggest logistical move and money saver was the opportunity presented to ALEC to move location. The logistical nightmare of setting up a once residential property to run effectively as a Community Centre, moving all our equipment from Lindsay Ave to Gap Rd, and getting things done quickly and as smoothly as possible so to cause as little interruptions to normal business as possible, was exactly that, a nightmare.

However with a well thought out plan, wonderful help from volunteers, and staff who put there all in, we were able to get ALEC back up and running in just over 4 days. This is another example of just what a great team ALEC has, and just how much ALEC is appreciated by the local community.

I have no doubt that 2015/16 will throw ALEC a few curve balls, just as I have no doubt that ALEC will continue to change these curve balls into opportunities. ALEC is here for the long haul, and we will continue to move and improve each year, with eyes focused on both the short and long term.



Carmel Vandermolten
Business Operations Manager

Treasurers Report

In a funding climate akin to the desert landscape we live in, the future of environmental organisations continues to be threatened by pressures from elements often challenged by voices like ALEC.

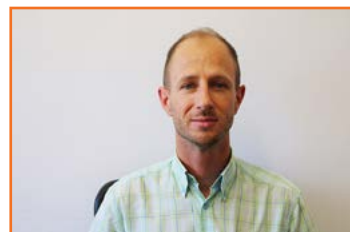
To use a contemporary analogy, ALEC is in survival mode. This is not meant to sound alarming, rather to describe an organisational profile required to meet the issues of the day, which are many.

To get here has required a combination of shrewd planning and investment and a team of people who give over and above what could be expected and means that ALEC continues to deliver outcomes and impact for the arid lands and the people who live here.

In this report, it is also particularly important to highlight the great and conscientious generosity of people who support ALEC, financially and through voluntary efforts throughout the year.

To maintain engagement with the broad scope of issues with reduced resources, including people and their time, has been achieved through a number of strategies and cost savings, including:

- Partnerships - by working collaboratively with partners to create shared value through projects and/or service delivery, as with the Pew Trust on the Ten Deserts project;
- Financial Services - outsourced services have been brought in-house and managed by the skilled and stalwart Business Operations Manager, Carmel Vandermolen;
- New Offices - working with a benevolent supporter, ALEC was able to relocate to new headquarters that greatly decreased related overheads and created a base for increased community engagement;
- Social Enterprise - investment in developing social enterprises to generate



revenue while delivering services that fulfill the strategic objectives and mission of the organisation.

In greater detail, the successful growth of Arid Edge Environmental Services has been both timely and vindicating, as it has gained traction with its business model and built a flexible and skilled team. A sustained project relationship based in Utopia has provided a strong foundation for further activities and a profile in key markets.

Along with the benefits to ALEC, the potential implications for the broader financial health of the organisation underline the importance of close monitoring of performance and the gradual increase in operational autonomy for Arid Edge.

Through this lean time, it is a testament to the team that ALEC remains in good, albeit streamlined financial health, with a clear audit and an outlook that fills all of us with resolve.

Jason Quin
ALEC Treasurer



ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC ABN 50 100 640 918

FINANCIAL REPORT

YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

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ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

| | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Grant - NT Environment Operation Grant | 70,000 | 136,700 |
| Grants - GVESH0 | - | 30,000 |
| Project Grants & Consultancy Income | 200,979 | 169,922 |
| Donations received | 125,475 | 108,379 |
| Interest Received | 10,495 | 19,907 |
| Other Revenue | 62,947 | 134,386 |
| Rent Income | 19,011 | 21,326 |
| Fundraising | 9,711 | 3,558 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 498,618 | 624,178 |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Accounting Fees | - | 27,251 |
| Advertising | 11,365 | 28,844 |
| Audit Fees | 7,708 | 9,537 |
| Bank Charges | 1,890 | 1,230 |
| Bad Debts | 4,504 | - |
| Catering | 12,890 | 10,812 |
| Cleaning | 3,965 | 5,945 |
| Consultancy fees | 43,184 | 61,501 |
| Computer, IT & Internet Costs | 6,965 | 11,404 |
| Depreciation | 8,589 | 11,697 |
| Electricity | 8,827 | 8,880 |
| Fundraising | 738 | 846 |
| Grants repaid | - | 129,388 |
| Hire of plant & equipment | 7,321 | 15,331 |
| Insurance | 14,164 | 17,365 |
| Loss on disposal of assets | 2,353 | 607 |
| Materials & Supplies | 15,295 | 23,390 |
| Minor Equipment | 12,372 | 7,589 |
| Motor Vehicle Expenses | 8,355 | 16,915 |
| Multi Media Productions | 12,793 | 28,040 |
| Office expenses | 964 | 964 |
| Postage | 481 | 331 |
| Printing and Stationery | 3,716 | 4,223 |
| Professional Development | 1,852 | 5,116 |
| Program expenses | - | 32,184 |
| Provision for Annual Leave | 2,940 | (14,480) |
| Provision for Long Service Leave | 5,393 | 11,122 |

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

| | 2015 | 2014 |
|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Rent, Rates & Taxes | 35,119 | 50,460 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | 29 | 2,616 |
| Salaries & Wages | 279,983 | 392,377 |
| Subscriptions | 2,567 | 1,059 |
| Sundry Expenses | 2,822 | 2,951 |
| Superannuation Contributions | 26,143 | 36,562 |
| Telephone | 3,389 | 3,014 |
| Travel, Allowances & Fares | 29,048 | 21,523 |
| Workshop Expenses | 494 | 312 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 578,218 | 966,906 |
| NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) | \$ (79,600) | \$ (342,728) |

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

| | Retained Surpluses |
|--|--------------------------|
| Opening Balance, 1 July 2013 | 778,554 |
| Net Surplus (Deficit) attributable to members | <u>(342,728)</u> |
| Closing Balance, 30 June 2014 | 435,826 |
| Net Surplus (Deficit) attributable to members | <u>(79,600)</u> |
| RETAINED SURPLUSES AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR | <u>\$ 356,226</u> |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918
ASSETS AND LIABILITIES STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

| | Note | 2015 | 2014 |
|--------------------------------------|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Cash and Cash equivalents | 2 | 573,419 | 624,514 |
| Accounts receivable & other debtors | 3 | 29,743 | 58,512 |
| GST Receivable | | - | 12,752 |
| Prepayments & Accrued Income | | <u>13,555</u> | <u>30,641</u> |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | | <u>616,717</u> | <u>726,419</u> |
| NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Property, Plant & Equipment | 4 | 45,661 | 72,180 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | | <u>22,918</u> | <u>27,395</u> |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | <u>22,743</u> | <u>44,785</u> |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | <u>639,460</u> | <u>771,204</u> |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Accounts payable & other payables | | 19,512 | 41,101 |
| Accrued Expenses | | 7,000 | 12,648 |
| Payroll Liabilities | | 9,236 | 19,067 |
| GST Payable | | 2,114 | - |
| Unexpended Grants | 5 | 202,312 | 227,836 |
| Provision for Annual Leave | | 13,936 | 10,995 |
| Provision for Long Service Leave | | <u>29,124</u> | <u>14,182</u> |
| TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES | | <u>283,234</u> | <u>325,829</u> |
| NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Provision for Long Service Leave | | - | 9,549 |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | | <u>-</u> | <u>9,549</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | | <u>283,234</u> | <u>335,378</u> |
| NET ASSETS | | <u>\$ 356,226</u> | <u>\$ 435,826</u> |
| MEMBERS' FUNDS | | | |
| Retained Surpluses | | <u>356,226</u> | <u>435,826</u> |
| TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS | | <u>\$ 356,226</u> | <u>\$ 435,826</u> |

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Page 5

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

| | Note | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES | | | |
| Cash Receipts | | 506,118 | 812,266 |
| Payments to Suppliers and Employees | | (578,808) | (1,096,081) |
| Interest Received | | 10,495 | 19,907 |
| Net Cash provided by (used in) Operating Activities | 2 | <u>(62,195)</u> | <u>(263,908)</u> |
| CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES | | | |
| Payments for Property, Plant & Equipment | | (1,750) | (14,000) |
| Proceeds from disposal of Property, Plant & Equipment | | 12,850 | 300 |
| Net Cash provided by (used in) Investing Activities | | <u>11,100</u> | <u>(13,700)</u> |
| CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES | | | |
| Net Cash provided by (used in) Financing Activities | | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> |
| Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash Held | | (51,095) | (277,608) |
| Cash at the Beginning of the Financial Year | | 624,514 | 902,122 |
| Cash at the End of the Financial Year | 2 | <u>\$ 573,419</u> | <u>\$ 624,514</u> |

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Act. The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuation of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

(a) Income Tax

Under Section 50.5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 the income of the Association is exempt from income tax.

(b) Property, Plant & Equipment

The depreciable amount of all other Property, Plant and equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Profit and losses on disposal of property, plant & equipment are taken into account in determining the surplus for the year.

(c) Impairment of assets

At the end of each reporting period the committee reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised in the income and expenditure statement.

(d) Employee Benefits

Provision is made in respect of the Association's liability for annual leave at balance date. Long service leave is accrued in respect of employees with more than six years employment with the Association.

Contributions are made by the Association to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred. The Association has no legal obligation to provide benefits to employees on retirement.

(e) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed.

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest rate method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument

Grant income is recognised when the association obtains control over the funds, which is generally when the grant is acquitted.

If conditions are attached to the grant that must be satisfied before the association is eligible to receive the contribution, recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are met.

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (contd)

(f) Goods & Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the assets and liabilities statement.

(g) Going Concern

The accounts of the Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc have been prepared on the basis that it is a going concern and that the Association will continue to operate. The Association's future as a going concern is dependant upon grants and subject to compliance attached to grants received.

On this basis the Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc will generate sufficient cash flow to be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

| | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| NOTE 2: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS | | |
| Cash at Bank - Ops Account | 1,748 | (4,046) |
| Cash at Bank - Gift Account | 63,404 | 302,867 |
| Cash at Bank - Holding Account | 82,298 | 56,893 |
| Cash at Bank - Pay Pal Account | 19,347 | 16,825 |
| ALEC Debit card | 774 | 192 |
| Term Deposit | 404,643 | 250,578 |
| Cash on Hand | 1,205 | 1,205 |
| | <u>573,419</u> | <u>624,514</u> |
| NOTE 3: ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE & OTHER RECEIVABLES | | |
| Trade & Sundry Debtors | 31,743 | 65,512 |
| Less: Provisions for Doubtful Debts | 2,000 | 7,000 |
| | <u>29,743</u> | <u>58,512</u> |
| NOTE 4: PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT | | |
| Leasehold Improvements (at cost) | 14,200 | 26,022 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | 5,205 | 7,747 |
| | <u>8,995</u> | <u>18,275</u> |
| Office Furniture and Equipment (at cost) | 15,711 | 16,343 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | 14,241 | 11,565 |
| | <u>1,470</u> | <u>4,778</u> |
| Motor Vehicles (at cost) | 15,750 | 29,815 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | 3,472 | 8,083 |
| | <u>12,278</u> | <u>21,732</u> |
| Total Property Plant & Equipment at cost | 45,661 | 72,180 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | 22,918 | 27,395 |
| | <u>22,743</u> | <u>44,785</u> |

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 5: UNEXPENDED GRANTS

At balance date the Association had not expended all of its grant funds. These unexpended funds have been carried over into the next financial year.

NOTE 6: CONTINGENT LIABILITY

A contingent liability exists in relation to the potential repayment of surplus funds to funding bodies. It is the board's view that any surplus represents unexpended funds and will not be repayable to the funding bodies.

ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC
ABN 50 100 640 918
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report being the assets and liabilities statement, income and expenditure statement, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements:

- 1 Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc as at 30 June 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- 2 At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc will be able to pay its debts as when they fall due.

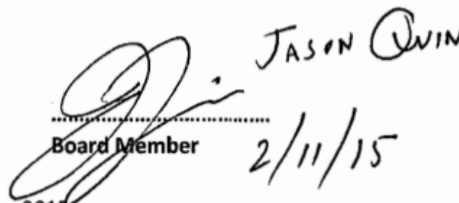
We confirm as follows:

- (a) The name of each committee member of the association during the financial year were:

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Jenny Pender | Stewart Baillie |
| Clement Bresson | Ben Convery |
| Anjali Palmer | Tim Brand |
| Jason Quin | Emily Webster |
| Rodney Angelo | Mikaila Thwaites |
- (b) The association is a community based environment organisation
- (c) The net deficit of the association for the year ended 30 June 2015 was \$79,600

This statement is made in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Act and by resolution of the committee:


Board Member
Signed in Alice Springs this _____ day of October 2015


Board Member
2/11/15

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc (the association), which comprises the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2015, the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the committee.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc is responsible for the preparation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Act and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Qualification

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc to maintain an effective system of internal control over cash receipts from memberships, merchandise sales & other income such as fundraising until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit in relation to these activities was limited to the amounts recorded in the accounting records.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC

**basso
& newman**
chartered
accountants

Qualified Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, except for the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitations in the qualification paragraph not existed, the financial report of Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc as of 30 June 2015 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Act.

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Arid Lands Environment Centre Inc to meet the requirements of the Associations Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.



Trevor Basso - Partner
Basso Newman & Co
Chartered Accountants
Adelaide
6 November 2015

ALEC Board as at June 30th 2015

Public Officer - Jason Quin
Convenor - Stewart Baillie
Deputy Convenor - Jenny Pender
Treasurer - Jason Quin
Secretary - Emily Webster
General Members - Rodney Angelo, Ben Convery, Alex Kelly, Tim Brand, Clemment Bresson, Anjali Palmer, Mikaila Thwaites

ALEC Staff as at June 30th 2015



Jimmy Cocking
ALEC Director



Carmel Vandermolen
Business and Operations
Manager



Nicole Pietsch
Communications and
Campaigns Manager



Alex McClean
Arid Edge Environmental
Services Manager



Natalie Wasley
Beyond Nuclear Initiative
Campaigner



Tanya Hall
Frack Free Coordinator

ALEC would like to acknowledge and thank our major funding partners for 2014-15:



ALEC & desertSMART EcoFair would like to acknowledge our sponsors for 2014-15:





Healthy futures for arid lands and people
ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE
www.alec.org.au