 **Landcare Broken Hill Inc**

***Greening the Hill Mk2***

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday, 29 April 2019**

“***Greening the Hill Mk.2***”

**Revitalizing the Broken Hill community to do it again!**

**To be in the vanguard again – to show Australia how it can be done**

**Combating the drought / fighting climate change**

**– a role for everyone**

**– and for a more vibrant and resilient region**

**SEE ATTACHED**

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**To be in the vanguard again – to show Australia how it can be done**

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**Simon Molesworth**

**Honorary President, Landcare Broken Hill**

This document sets out proposals from **Landcare Broken Hill** to revitalize the interest of the Broken Hill community to be in the vanguard again, as it was with the Greening the Hill initiative 1936-1958, when the Regeneration Belt was created. With that Regen initiative, the City and its citizens became national and global leaders. **We can do it again**. Every single person can have a role to combat the drought, green-up our City and concurrently do our bit to fight the effects of climate change. **Broken Hill can show the rest of Australia how it should be done – again.**

**The time is right**

2019 is the year to embark upon this ***Greening the Hill Mk.2*** revitalisation as this year, in late October Broken Hill will host the state-wide NSW Landcare Conference. I believe that by the time of that conference this City, guided by **Landcare Broken Hill**, will be in a position to demonstrate that we have a plan well advanced and it is being actively pursued. Broken Hill can demonstrate it can be an exemplar again – one of the leaders of the Landcare movement not only in NSW, but across Australia.

However, **the primary reason** for the need for the ***Greening the Hill Mk.2*** *Project* now is the continuing drought and all the unpleasant manifestations of it. The extraordinarily hot summer we’ve had; the constant concerns about water and the sustainability of the Murray-Darling River system; the large increase in the number of dust storms Broken Hill has experienced; the general browning of the City as more and more gardens are disappearing into gravel alternatives; and as plants and trees are seen to be dying all over the district. The urgent reasons for this project are many – all of which provide Landcare with a duty to act now – to enlist the widest community support across all of Broken Hill.

**Worthwhile discussion across the whole community will lead to better awareness of the issues and the identification of the needed actions. A true call to action!**

**Awareness raising**

As yet **Landcare Broken Hill** does not have a large membership, yet uniquely **Landcare Broken Hill** is based in an urban settlement – our city. Most Landcare groups are based in small farming communities or comprise just the farms within a designated region. **Being based in a city is both a challenge and real opportunity**. So an important task should be to raise awareness of key Landcare issues so as to generate support across the whole community. We aim to reach all Broken Hill’s 18,000 people.

The membership of Landcare is sure to grow with ***Greening the Hill Mk.2***. With new members will come new energy and capacity. Awareness raising of relevant issues is within the capacity of the skills of the current small membership and will commence immediately. However, ‘on the ground’ more labour-intensive activities, providing real opportunities for the Broken Hill community to get involved, getting their ‘hands dirty’, will occur down the track, once the growing community awareness provides “more troops on the ground”.

Every opportunity to raise awareness will be welcomed. Developing an on-going close relationship with the public media in Broken Hill, and through social media, will be essential.

**Partnerships**

This project will succeed when **Landcare Broken Hill** secures partnerships with as many local organisations as possible – partners who will share the vision, the benefits and opportunities offered. These partners will join with us to give exposure to Landcare issues and will have means of achieving some of its objectives.

Using the by-line “***Greening the Hill Mk.2***”, participating organisations would be described as **Landcare Greening the Hill partners**. Each partner will be invited to play a particular role: perhaps as a supporter, perhaps as a sponsor, perhaps as a supplier of materials for a Landcare project. The key to success will be that each partner will know that they are positively contributing – being a partner in an important project – ***Greening the Hill Mk.2*** *–* for a better future for this City, its environment and its people.

Amongst the first category of partner will be the media, such as the local ABC Radio and the BDT newspaper. All will be invited and will support as they see appropriate. Social media will be fully utilised. Every story will gain awareness, spreading the word and encouraging action. Some stories will be full of advice and tips on how each individual can help. There will be at least 52 news items or stories over the course of a year – opportunities for interviews and articles. There will people talking about how they’ve done it – how they’ve made their part of their world greener, more sustainable. From scientific information, to clever ideas, to simple suggestions for us all to adopt, through to more complex big projects that might be City-wide.

Amongst others to be invited as partners will be Broken Hill City Council, all the schools in Broken Hill, the mining companies, the BIC, the Broken Hill Environmental Lead Programme and all those organisations who have lasted the test of time in Broken Hill who have been interested in this City’s environment and heritage. Local heritage and environmental societies, the garden clubs, organisations focussed on outdoor activities and many more are potential partners. All those already spoken to have said that they support the concept of ***Greening the Hill Mk.2.*** Everyone agrees that the time is ripe for greater exposure to be given to Landcare issues to a wider, even non-traditional, audience. Local businesses – suppliers of relevant materials that are useful to Landcare activities – are also likely to welcome being invited as partners.

Outside the City there are numerous organisations that might be willing to become partners. One prospect is Compost Revolution**,** a Green Globe Award-winning NGO enterprise that is forming partnerships across Sydney municipalities prepared to subsidise initiatives to reduce waste and land fill, by promoting home composting and home-managed worm farms creating home fertiliser. Horticultural organisations could be prospective partners likely to be interested in assisting our community with arid zone seed and plant selections which would be viable in the gardens of Broken Hill. Professional organisations, such as the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects and the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators, as well as researchers within universities, could assist. **They’ll all be approached as this is an opportunity for all to demonstrate how a community can work together to ensure a more resilient and vibrant region**.