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Director – Environmental Services
Cowra Shire Council
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Cowra Council	
Office Use	
Received Date:
Page:
Register Date:	31.10.14
Document Number:
Project: Years

Dear Ms Alberry,

Re Small Environmental Project Final Report - St Raphael's Catholic School

The following are key elements of the council funded project:

- After information was sought and received from Council Grounds and Gardens personnel a particular species of native grass, *Pennisetum nafray* (Fountain Grass) was selected for planting out the main bank in the school yard of the primary department.
- A local supplier was identified (Golden Glove Nursery) and, despite some delay in the supply of tube stock, some \$850 worth of plants was purchased.
- Basic irrigation facilities that were in place have been refined at a modest expense (approx. \$150)
- Mulch was sourced locally and generously contributed by one of the parents and distributed by a group of Year 6 students and their teacher.
- Students and staff were also engaged in the planting process and ongoing irrigation of the seedlings.
- This project is not in isolation – it has worked in conjunction with the establishment phase of vegetable gardening at school in which local businesses, Cowra Men's Shed, parents, staff members and students are engaged.
- The greatest test will be answering the challenge of having the plants get through the Christmas holiday and the height of summer.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Gallagher
Principal
29.10.14

Project Name: Soften and Stabilise Banks at St Raphael's Catholic School



Project Outline: Beautifying and stabilising the banks in the school grounds are the goals of this project. The playground of St Raphael's Catholic School is essentially a series of terraces cut into the hillside between Macquarie Street and Lachlan Street. Between each of the terraces is steep bank, too steep to play on or garden. There are two major banks and two minor banks to be planted out.

We currently harvest water from roofs of playground shelters and have installed water reticulation on the main bank in preparation for planting. Mulching has already begun with the help of secondary students and a number of parents and friends through the P&F Association.

The vision is to plant out the banks with native grasses, along similar lines to what the council has undertaken on the western end of the main bridge on Grenfell / Boorowa Roads. The purpose of seeking funding is for the purchase of those native grasses – the school community has provided / can provide all other requisites.

Project Timeline: One of the main banks has already been prepared and we can move immediately on planting out that portion of the project. The remaining three banks can be prepared through coming months and the planting would take place at the time recommended by the supplier of the grasses to ensure maximum success.

Landowners Consent: The landowner is the Trustees of the Catholic Church (Bathurst Diocese) whose agent is the Parish Priest of St Raphael's, Fr Laurie Beath. Fr Laurie has been engaged in planning discussions and supports the beautification project. Principal, Michael Gallagher, is an active supporter of this project.

Project funding: Supplying native grasses for each major bank will cost approximately \$500 and grasses for both of the minor banks together will total another \$500. In total the supply of native grasses will cost \$1500. We are seeking the full amount if possible but would be grateful for any support.

Support this Project: Establishing a mentality of steady, sustainable improvement of one's environment is a goal of education. Engaging children in that process of improvement maximises the effectiveness of that learning. Such projects have several phases; preparation / execution/ nurturing / maintenance, and engaging students over time adds weight to the learning. This is a project partly about stabilising banks, but mainly about children and their learning – so that banks and waterways across the country in years to come will also be stabilised and beautified by the next generation.



FOUNTAIN GRASS.
(Redfern St, Cowra)



Mulching
begins



Mulching in
progress



Mulching



Some of the
workers