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MEDIA RELEASE

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Rural City of Wangaratta named Landcare Agency of the Year

The Rural City of Wangaratta has won the Agency Award at the 2006 North East Landcare Awards.

Mayor Don Joyce was presented with the Award tonight (25 August) at an event that also celebrated 20 years of Landcare in Australia.

The Agency Landcare Award is made to a government or non- government organisation for excellence in preserving and managing its local environment and encouraging a Landcare ethic and action in the local community, and cooperating on Landcare issues with neighbouring organisations/councils/landowners.

Awards organiser and North East CMA Landcare Team Leader, Mr Tom Croft, said the Rural City of Wangaratta had actively demonstrated a strong Landcare ethic, including;

- Offering a roadside weed support program to Landcare groups for the past decade – in 2005/06 this project gave support to Landcare groups to target 219 (two hundred & nineteen) kilometres of roadside noxious weeds;
- Implementing a comprehensive weed control program for all Council owned land within Wangaratta urban area and the length of the Rail Trail with a focus on Patterson's curse, St John's Work, Broom, Gorse and Blackberry;
- Developing and implementing a Waterway Action Plan in partnership with the North East CMA. Works have focussed on woody weed removal and replanting of native understorey on One Mile Creek and a section of the Ovens River;
- Hosting a six month Green Corps team in 2005/06 who undertook three hectares of weed removal and bush restoration along the Ovens River;
- Developing an information booklet on local plants in partnership with La Trobe University;
- Offering a rate incentive to all Trust for Nature covenanted properties within the municipality for the last three years;
- Developing a Sustainable Water Use Plan to reduce consumption of water by Council and Council facilities;
- Promoting sustainable heating without degrading biodiversity through involvement in the North East Firewood Strategy

Tom Croft said the North East Landcare Awards highlighted the diversity and impact of the Landcare movement in the Region.

“These Awards encourage and recognise the outstanding commitment to Landcare from a diverse range of individuals and organisations across the North East. Although it is best known for tree planting, our winners demonstrate the incredible diversity of activity going on in our Region.”

The annual Awards are run by the North East CMA and proudly supported by the Victorian Government through the Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare.

For additional information or an interview please contact,

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