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Winners of 2006 North East Landcare Awards announced

The winners of this year's North East Landcare Awards include a dairy farming family, primary school, local Council and an Indigenous group.

Landholders and community groups from across the North East gathered in Wodonga tonight (25 August) to celebrate the spirit of those who volunteer through Landcare.

The 2006 North East Landcare Awards were announced at an event that also marked 20 years of Landcare in Australia. The winners of the seven categories were:

- **Agency Award** – Rural City of Wangaratta
- **Community Group Award** – Mudgegonga and District Landcare
- **Indigenous Landcare** – Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation (Wodonga)
- **Individual Landcarer** – Lyn Coulston, Koetong (also received a 20 Year Active Service Award)
- **Landcare Education** – Beechworth Primary School
- **Nature Conservation** – Baranduda Landcare Group
- **Sustainable Agriculture Award** – the Humphry family, 'Avondale' Springhurst.

More than thirty people with a combined involvement in Landcare of some 323 years (three hundred & twenty three years) also received Active Service Awards. One posthumous Award was made to Jack Jones from Mudgegonga Landcare Group. Mr Jones was tragically killed earlier this year.

Awards organiser and North East CMA Landcare Team Leader, Tom Croft, said there was plenty to celebrate in the 20th Anniversary year of the movement.

“ Australia has around 4000 (four thousand) Landcare groups with 700 (seven hundred) of these in Victoria. There are now over 55 Landcare Groups and Networks in the North East Region. These volunteers undertake works to protect and enhance the natural resources of our Region and are also involved in activities and projects that promote community awareness,” said Tom.

Mr Croft said North East Landcare Groups and Networks had directly gained around ten million (\$10m) in funding from the Commonwealth and State Government since 1986.

“ Research indicates that landholders and groups contribute on average a matching contribution of around 5:1 of cash and in-kind to funding they receive. This means that Landcare has been responsible for contributing about sixty million (\$60m) in value to resource management in this Region over the last 20 years,” he concluded.

The North East Landcare Awards encourage and recognise the outstanding commitment to Landcare from a diverse range of individuals and Landcare groups. 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 further information or to arrange an interview/photograph please contact:

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