



Do you want to make a difference to the environment but don't know how?

Read below for the story about a group of people making a difference to the environment through the "Yongar Reserve" project

In 2003 a group of concerned residents in Forrestfield began a group called "SOTAG", Save Our Trees Action Group due to a new housing development going up in the area which were clear felling trees not only on their own site, however illegally on the neighboring verges.

Unfortunately the battle to save these trees was lost, however this led to action being taken to rehabilitate a piece of land either side of Crumpet creek, (this feeds into the Perth Airport Wetlands) between Berkshire and Sultana Roads, in the Kalamunda Shire. This land was very degraded and over grown with weeds, however it still had a mostly intact tree canopy.



Land surrounding Crumpet Creek in 2004, as can be seen the land is degraded and overgrown with weeds.

Steve Gibellini, the instigator of the SOTAG committee had a great idea to start involving local schools and approached Dawson Park Primary School, and as it was formerly known Forrestfield Senior High School. The idea was to get the children from those schools involved in planting native plants endemic to the area. This would make Yongar Reserve an outdoor learning area for the children.

The committee enlisted the aid of indigenous elders, Noel Nannup and his son, Greg to choose a name for the reserve. They were also consulted with regards to the original owners of the area. Yongar, (meaning *kangaroo*), Reserve was the name eventually decided upon.



The official naming of Yongar Reserve

The Kalamunda Shire contributed greatly by providing \$9434 via a grant, this money was used to hire contractors for weed control. Weed control of the first section began in 2006, with repeated visits completed by May/ June. The area was then covered in a thick layer of mulch by the Shire of Kalamunda as part of their community group revegetation program.

The prepared area was planted by the children of two local schools and the Friends of Yongar Reserve, using plants provided by the same Shire program and the Million Trees Program.



Land in 2006 with Students from Forreestfield Senior High School (Now Darling Range Sports Academy) doing some of the initial planting. Dawson Park Primary School completed the planting in the afternoon.

And so FOTE was born and incorporated in 2008 now with its own website <http://fote.org.au/>

FOTE is a not-for-profit multidisciplinary organisation dedicated to supporting the teaching of environmental, cultural and social sustainability. FOTE began in 2005 to supply an opportunity for teachers to network with other environmentally minded educators. The result is cross-pollination from science, heritage and industry that benefits the education of children across ever expanding and diverse geographic regions

There is now a further section of FOTE called KAPOW, which is "Kids About Protecting Our World". The children are the ones that we are leaving our adult world to and FOTE is committed to helping them make our world a better place than they have found it.

The Healthy Earth Living Planet Fund (HELP) has also been established to allow tax deductible donations to FOTE Inc. These donations are used to:

- fund teacher professional development;
- offset global warming Carbon Dioxide production;
- fund business development to continue the growth and impact of FOTE and KAPOW.

FOTE continues to grow with current partners:

Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative
CRC Plant Biosecurity (ACT, SA, WA)
Dawson's Garden Nursery
Department of Agriculture and Food
Department of Environment and Conservation
Eco Education
EMRC (Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council)
Kalamunda Chamber of commerce
Mindarie Regional Council

Perth Urban Bushland FUNGI
Replants.com
Richard Swan Hot Rock
Richgro
Shire of Kalamunda
Toyota Corporation
Zanthorrea Nursery
Zeta tech Information Technology Cons

..... together with a number of schools throughout the Metro/Country areas.

Yongar Reserve and the commencement of FOTE would not have been possible without the commitment from the founding members of SOTAG Alan Evans—FOTE Member, Co-Convenor, Geoff Cagle, Steve Gibellini and the then MLA Sharryn Jackson. Without their belief, drive, vision and commitment Yongar Reserve would still be a degraded piece of land overgrown with weeds. It is through their efforts that FOTE was created, which concentrates and has success in its projects based on community driven projects respecting multiculturalism and social cohesion and a constant awareness of indigenous care for the land.

This goes to show environmental differences can be made by individuals working together for a common goal.



Friends of the Environment

FOTE: Educating for Sustainability

Awareness **R**espect **K**nowledge

of the Environment

