

Community Science for Sustainability

Assessing soils and developing designs for a community garden in Tallangatta, Victoria

Description

Tallangatta is a small town in North-East Victoria of a little over 1000 town residents and around 6000 shire residents. The town was heavily impacted by bushfires in the 2019-2020 season and was the centre of relief efforts over that period. The area has also been subjected to severe drought in the past years.

Tallangatta Health Service is establishing a large park and community garden as a space for their community to come together, share and build resilience following their experiences with bushfires, while contributing to the thriving local food economy. This is an important project for supporting mental and physical health, community cohesion and learning. Located on the site of an aged care facility, the garden will be designed and owned by the Tallangatta community from the beginning.

The park and garden will be designed to attract visitors of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, while also responding and integrating with local ecology and environmental conditions.

This project will undertake a site assessment to ensure that the plot is as productive and healthily embedded in the landscape. It will also involve landscape design guidance to ensure accessibility, productivity and visitor enjoyment are maximised. This will see the garden best prepared to be handed over to the community to own and steward in the coming years.

About the Community

Casey Fahey, Community Garden Project/Quality Improvement Officer at Tallangatta Health Service, will serve as the community lead on this project with the support of Denise Parry, CEO of Tallangatta Health Service.

Tallangatta Health Service (THS) is a small rural health service (and one of the largest single employers in the area) which is a community leader in promoting health and wellbeing through its primary and community services, hospital and aged care. THS is also a member of the Global Green Health Hospitals network and sees environmental protection as a priority. THS promotes a learning environment which is open to innovation through accommodating experimentation and improving the evidence base for health and wellbeing.

Project Team

Tallangatta Health Service has partnered with [Professor Tim Cavagnaro](#) (lead), Professor in Soil Ecology the University of Adelaide and [Ms Tanya Court](#), Landscape Architecture Program Director at the University of Adelaide.

Tim is a Professor in Soil Ecology in the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine, The University of Adelaide. He is also Deputy Head of School (Learning and Teaching). Tim's research seeks to understand how we best manage soil ecological processes to achieve agricultural and environmental sustainability in a time of significant environmental change. Tim's group develops and uses cutting edge techniques from across disciplines, and span scales from the molecular to landscape. Working across the science-policy interface is an important theme in his research.

Tanya is the Director of the Landscape Architecture Program at the University of Adelaide. She originally trained as an artist at Curtin University before attending RMIT to study landscape architecture. Tanya works as a landscape architect and artist, focusing mostly on the public realm. Her work seeks to extend understandings of what constitutes landscape architectural practice through a variety of means including policy writing, institutional and civic landscape design, street furniture and public art projects.



Mr Casey Fahey



Prof Tim Cavagnaro



Ms Tanya Court