

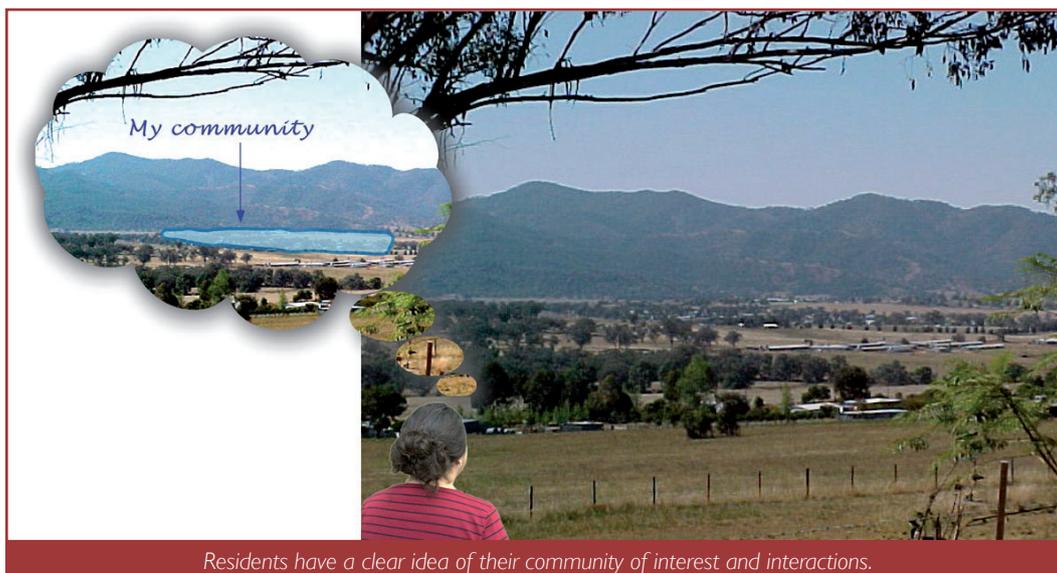
Eco-Civic Regionalisation of NSW

Introduction

This major study produced a nested hierarchy of optimal resource management and local government regions for the State of New South Wales. The method used, developed by the Institute, aims to produce regions that contain relatively homogeneous suites of landscape types, reflect a variety of socio-economic criteria, community interests and identification with the landscape. The larger regions at the top level of the hierarchy are suitable for broad scale resource management, planning and service delivery, while the smaller regions at lower levels in the hierarchy are of a size similar to the new amalgamated local governments in New South Wales.

Background

The NSW Department of Lands engaged the Institute to undertake a study to delineate eco-civic regions of NSW, providing digital spatial data, independent policy interpretation and recommendations



to Government regarding local government, planning and natural resource management.

The Eco-Civic Framework

Residents have a clear idea of the area they consider to encompass their local community. Previous research demonstrated that while both the boundaries and size of an administrative region are important, it is the location of the

boundaries which is of fundamental importance to encourage civic engagement.

There is likely to be dissatisfaction with the government and consultation processes if administrative boundaries and natural resource areas do not coincide with the area of common interest to most residents.

Effective local governance, including natural

resource governance and management, requires appropriate institutional arrangements and processes.

Today, communities of interest and place attachment bear little similarity to the original patterns of settlement. Boundaries must change to represent areas of civic interest to rural communities in the 21st Century. Communities of interest can be identified at several hierarchical scales and mapped. Level 3 eco-civic regions identified in this study appear to be appropriate for local government areas. The framework will assist integration for planning, decision-making and policy across departments.

Results

The new spatial understanding and synthesis provided by the eco-civic regionalisation and comparative analysis of administrative boundaries has identified considerable mal-

alignment of LGA and catchment management (CMA) boundaries. The government's reform agenda, however, provides the opportunity to concurrently adjust boundaries and administrative arrangements for both LGA and CMA regions so that new regional LGAs (eco-civic level 3) nest up into resource management regions (eco-civic level 2), building community engagement and producing improved service delivery by government.



Eco-Civic Regionalisation for NSW (Levels 1-3)

Visit www.ruralfutures.une.edu.au for more information

Project Details

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