

'Caring for our Country' (Applications close 6/3/09)

Caring for our Country is the Australian Federal Government's new natural resource management initiative that integrates a range of previously available grant programs.

Caring for our Country is focused on achieving strategic results in six national priorities:

- the National Reserve System
- bio-diversity and natural icons
- coastal environments and critical aquatic habitats
- sustainable farm practices
- natural resource management in northern and remote Australia, and
- community skills, knowledge and engagement.

Binalong Landcare Meeting
Monday 16 February, 2009
Binalong Hall—7.30pm
Speaker: EPURON—
proposed wind farms in the
Binalong/Bookham area.

There are a number of outcomes for each national priority and targets have been identified for each outcome.

Investment proposals are invited for projects that will achieve or contribute to achieving particular targets and, in turn, deliver outcomes to address the national priorities. Caring for our Country provides \$2.25 billion in funding over the first five years. The business plan is available at <http://nrm.gov.au/publications/books/business-plan.html>

Harden Murrumburrah Landcare Group meet on Wednesday 4 February to discuss possible projects, if you have any ideas for projects please contact either Ken Clark or myself or please attend the meeting commencing 9am @ Harden Shire Council.

HMLG & Murrumbidgee CMA Cereal Stubble Management Trials 2007/2008 Report now available

The Harden Murrumburrah Landcare Group (HMLG) stubble management project, funded through the National Landcare Program and Murrumbidgee CMA, and delivered by the NSW Department of Primary Industries, has investigated management options available to land managers to help minimize cereal stubble burning and allow handling of heavy stubble loads. High levels of stubble pose serious problems for sowing of subsequent crops.

Four commonly used stubble retention and management strategies (retained after normal harvest height, retained after low harvest height, mulched, grazed) were evaluated. Their effects on soil moisture conservation and crop establishment are reported. The report also briefly looks into the effects of various stubble loads on machinery blockages.

If you did not receive a copy of the report please go to web page or call Louise 63863954

<http://murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au/publications/project-reportsupdates/cereal-stubble-management.html>.

Congratulations to winner of the 2008 HMLG Landcare Award

Chris Coddington, McWilliams Winery, Barwang Road and the runners up Bruce Hazel, Bookham and Bill Stanley, Galong

Thanks to the Clark family, Nubba for their generous sponsorship of a weeks holiday at "Beach Haven" Culburra Beach to the winner and the Murray Darling Basin Commission for their annual book prizes. Thanks must also go the 2008 Judging Panel of Jim Wright, Phil Bowden, DPI Cootamundra, Ken Baldry (2007 HMLG Landcare Award Winner) Brad Parker, TransGrid, Yass & their driver Ken Clark (Chair HMLG)

Congratulations to Kirsty Johnson, winner of the 2008 Harden Murrumburrah Landcare Certificate at Murrumburrah High School Speech Day December, 2008





Tree Planting across the Jugiong Creek Catchment in 2008

A massive 140,000 trees and shrubs have been planted by the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority (MCMA) in the Harden area this year in partnership with local landholders. Plantings were undertaken on more than 38 properties in the Harden district. These revegetation activities are targeted to improve water quality in the catchment, combat dryland salinity and soil erosion whilst enhancing biodiversity.

Murrumbidgee CMA Chair Mr Lee O'Brien said the plantings are part of the 1.1 million native trees and shrubs that have been planted across the Murrumbidgee catchment this year. "The MCMA plantings offer practical solutions in adapting to the challenges of climate change. With impending climate change impacts predicted to result in extreme weather events, revegetated areas will offer landholders stock shelter options in cases of extreme low temperatures or heat." MCMA Catchment Officer, Matt Walker said the location of the plantings have been targeted to gain the best environmental outcomes particularly water quality & salinity for the catchment. "Conditions should be ideal for these native trees and shrubs to get a good start, with plenty of moisture at planting time" Mr Walker said. "Landholders are aware of getting on top of the weeds and other competition, all they need is some good follow up rain."

For more information on Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority activities call Louise Hufton, Natural Resource Officer in Harden (02) 63863954 or visit the website www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au

HMLG Cereal Stubble Project is continuing in 2009 with funding from the Murrumbidgee CMA, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporation & Woolworths Drought Action Funding. Thanks to Committee of Rob McColl (Chair) Tim Condon, Paul Parker, Terry Brown, Charlie Baldry, Peter Cusack, Peter Holding, Hugh Flanery and John McGrath

PROPOSED CASE STUDIES

2008/2009

Stubble management demonstrations will be conducted on the five case study farms in the 2008/2009 year with the following aims:

1. To compare different farming systems using different seeding and tillage methods
2. To evaluate the effects of stubble grazing (mixed farming) on soil and crop parameters
3. To investigate the effects of stubble retention and management on soil parameters.

Each demonstration will include up to four treatments (██████). All management decisions will be made by the farmer.

Measurements

It is planned that the following soil and crop parameters will be measured for each stubble management treatment at each demonstration site

- Stubble load immediately after harvest & before sowing, including measurements across the width of the header swath
- Soil moisture to 60cm at harvest & sowing
- Soil nitrogen to 60cm at harvest & sowing
- Penetrometer resistance at sowing
- Crop establishment
- Early dry matter production
- Crop yield & quality

Phil Graham & Fiona Leech, NSW DPI, Yass have produced a paper with points to consider when planning fertilizer requirements for 2009
Key points are

1. Take meaningful soil test to provide quality data
2. Use the Phosphorus Buffer Index (PBI)
3. Determine your planned stocking rate for 2009—how much country needs fertilising, no point fertilising to grow more grass if you aren't using it
4. Ground cover is your monitoring tool to assess if you are over stocked—target 70% ground cover
5. Soil depth & aspect—focus on the parts of the paddock which will give you the best payback
6. Soil biology is a crucial component of the soil for mineralisation of nutrients

The detailed paper is available from either myself or NSW DPI, Yass office (62262199)

If undeliverable return to:
Murrumbidgee CMA
PO Box 145
Harden NSW 2587



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P.O Box 145, Harden 2587
Head Office: 43-45 Johnston St, Wagga Wagga
Phone 02 6932 3232 Fax 02 6932 3269

www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au

Jugiong Creek Community Stream Monitoring Project.

Thanks to everyone for the time and effort taken during the past 12 months obtaining readings where possible. The data gathered is extremely valuable as we all hope that we will not see such low flows again in our life time and as such it is unique data. It is unlikely, however, that it will provide a reliable assessment of the main sources of salinity and especially of salt loads. The project has been integrated into the Murrumbidgee Community Stream Sampling project for the Murrumbidgee CMA, to be continued until June 2009. I hope that you will be able to continue monitoring the various sites during this period. It is anticipated that the Bureau of Rural Resources will have all the data collated into a report and it will be presented to members in March, 2009 - Jim Ryan, HMLG project subcommittee



Want to become a Waterwatcher?

If you are interested in monitoring and are not already involved please contact your regional Waterwatch Coordinator, Peter Bennetts at 6932 3274 or email peter.bennetts@cma.nsw.gov.au

Why monitor?

Healthy catchments produce healthy ecosystems with healthy fish, frogs, birds, plants macro-invertebrates and people. Waterwatch aims to create awareness of water quality issues by involving all members of the community and forming partnerships between the Waterwatch group and water authorities, resources management authorities, business and industry. Water quality information collected throughout a catchment provides a picture of the health of your waterways. Waterwatch groups have initiated many positive community based conservation activities such as creek restoration, willow removal, removing litter from waterways, eradicating weeds, development of habitats and reducing the use of pesticides and other pollutants.