

# ACROSS THE **OUTBACK**

## SAAL NRM Board signs agreement with Pastoral Board and Native Veg Council

The SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board has formalised its working relationship with two other statutory bodies operating in the SA Arid Lands region – the Pastoral Board and the Native Vegetation Council – and land managers will benefit from improved alignment of policies, programs, information and services.

Presiding Member of the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board Janet Brook signed the agreements with the Native Vegetation Council's Presiding Member Dennis Mutton in August and the Pastoral Board's Presiding Member Geoff Mills in February.

The agreement between the SAAL NRM Board and Pastoral Board provides for the sharing of data where there is no conflict around confidentiality and for consistent policy positions on areas of mutual interest.

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**Dennis Mutton (former Presiding Member, Native Vegetation Council) with Janet Brook (Presiding Member, SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board)**

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## CHANGED FORMAT

The format for this edition of *Across The Outback* has been tweaked a little so that articles are now positioned according to logical themes with the key agencies, groups and funding bodies acknowledged at the end of each item. We hope that putting the issues that you care about front and centre improves the read.

*Jenny Barker, Editor*



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The two Boards have also agreed to align the operational aspects of their programs through joint community engagement, education programs and compliance activities, to share their strategic plans, and to share outcomes of their meetings.

Meanwhile, the SAAL NRM Board and Native Vegetation Council agreement provides for the development of consistent policy positions for native vegetation management in the SA Arid Lands, better coordination of community consultation processes, and improved information and services to the community.

The two groups already work together in areas such as developing guidelines for native vegetation restoration and clearance, heritage agreements and some compliance activities.

The SAAL NRM Board has already enjoyed the benefits of the partnerships at their annual joint meeting with the Pastoral Board at Marree in June (see *Across The Outback*, June 2013) and with the Native Vegetation Council in August.

*SAAL NRM Board, Pastoral Board, Native Vegetation Council*

*"I have no doubt that there will be better on ground outcomes as a result of our Boards working together. We have three overlapping pieces of legislation and it is important to serve the community and our country well by listening to what people have to say and to provide an aligned response."*

Geoff Mills, Presiding Member, Pastoral Board

*"We're very excited to be able to strengthen our relationship with the SAAL NRM Board. The council and the board have the same ultimate goal, which is caring for the region's natural resources at a landscape level."*

Dennis Mutton, (outgoing) Presiding Member, Native Vegetation Council

*"Working under different legislation, it sometimes can be difficult to coordinate our efforts and this is another step towards producing the very best outcomes both for the landscape and the people who manage it."*

Janet Brook, Presiding Member, SAAL NRM Board

PASTORAL BOARD 2013

MEETING 138

Wednesday 9 October, Waite

MEETING 139

Wednesday 11 December, Waite

PASTORAL BOARD AND UNIT CONTACTS

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Level 1, 1 Richmond Road  
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Pastoral Board matters  
David Hanna 8226 2127

Public access to pastoral lands  
David Oag 8648 5174

Lease assessments  
Chris Turner 8303 9752

Lease inspections and tenure  
Chris Turner 8303 9755

# Successful community grants

The SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board congratulates the successful recipients of community grants which were recently announced by Sustainability, Environment and Conservation Minister Ian Hunter.

<b>Arid Recovery</b> <b>\$29,350</b>	A works coordinator will deliver both an on-ground works calendar and community strategy for the Buffel Busters group to tackle Buffel Grass around the Roxby Downs area.
<b>Blinman Progress Association Inc</b> <b>\$28,000</b>	The Blinman-Parachilna Pest Plant Control Group will be exploring biocontrol as an important long term method of controlling invasive Prickly Pear in the Flinders Ranges.
<b>Friends of the Innamincka Reserves</b> <b>\$4,420</b>	Bird survey, campsite clean-up and repair, signage upgrade, weed control (particularly Buffel Grass) as part of the annual working bee.
<b>Scientific Expedition Group</b> <b>\$30,000</b>	Procurement, building, installation and maintenance of new equipment to ensure continued collection of hydrographic and associated environmental data in the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park.
<b>Toyota Landcruiser Club of Australia</b> <b>\$2,500</b>	Removal of Buffel Grass at Kudriemitchie Outstation in the Coongie Lakes region.
<b>SSAA – Hunting and Conservation Branch</b> <b>\$5,000</b>	Acquisition of four trail cameras to monitor and identify feral goat numbers throughout the Bimbowrie, Pualco and Pandappa Conservation Parks to enable key areas to be targeted through control programs.

The money has been awarded through two State Government grant programs – NRM Community Grants and Volunteer Support Grants – aimed at helping community and volunteer groups nurture and enhance the natural environment.

The activities of the successful recipients will help the SAAL NRM Board to deliver on the targets in the *SAAL Regional NRM Plan*.

SAAL NRM Board

### FURTHER INFORMATION

If your bid was unsuccessful, or for advice on how you can access funding for your community or volunteer group in the SA Arid Lands, contact the Community Engagement Officer, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300



*Friends of Simpson Desert members at the Dalhousie Ruins stockyard during their May working bee*

## Friends of Simpson working bee

Tony Magor, Acting District Manager (Outback)

The Friends of the Simpson Desert (FOS) undertook their annual working bee over a fortnight in May marking 26 years of FOS support to the Witjira National Park and the Simpson Desert Regional Reserve and Conservation Park.

### HOW CAN OUR VOLUNTEERS HELP YOU?

Land managers in the SA Arid Lands region still have time to advise Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff of any natural resource management projects they think may be suitable for volunteers.

Since the call for expressions of interest was announced in the last edition of *Across The Outback* land managers in the North Flinders, Marree-Innaminka and Gawler Ranges districts have registered their interest in using volunteers for a variety of projects including weed control, vegetation restoration, feral animal control, and heritage site restoration.

Other activities that might make useful project for volunteers include fencing waterholes and springs, erosion control, threatened species conservation, and wildlife and vegetation monitoring.

The information will be used to test the level of interest in using volunteers on property and to refine the Natural Resources SA Arid Lands' Volunteer Program.

Depending on the response we receive we hope to 'sell' these new experiences to attract new and existing volunteers.

**Expressions of interest are due 30 October.**

SAAL NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands

Twenty-four volunteers cleared overhanging vegetation along the Homelands track; defined walking tracks and installed signs at Dalhousie; installed protective fencing at the main Dalhousie spring; assisted with the restoration of the Dalhousie Ruins; undertook fence patrols along the Macumba-Witjira boundary; surveyed Marsupial Moles and other mammals in the Simpson Desert; and fenced the Umbutchera lookout.

Rabbit control was also carried out at the Dalhousie Ruins and Umbutchera Creek with funding from the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board.

Together the group racked up 2234 hours – that's the equivalent of 297 working days of activity in just two weeks!

We are grateful to FOS for their continued support. The work assists the Witjira Co-management Board and Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff to deliver on strategies set out in the Witjira National Park Management Plan.

Without the huge amount of time spent by volunteers like these each year, the parks would not be as we find them today.

Now begins the process of planning and organising the 2014 working bee.

### Call for volunteers

If you are interested in taking an annual visit to our desert parks to carry out conservation work you might like to consider becoming a Friends of Simpson Desert member.

The Friends of Simpson Desert volunteers are dedicated to preserving the wildlife, cultural and heritage sites of the Simpson Desert Conservation Park and Regional Reserve, Witjira National Park, Lake Eyre National Park, and Elliott Price Conservation Park.

Membership is composed of enthusiastic families and individuals, two thirds of whom come from outside South Australia.

The group meet once every two months for activities and a committee meets regularly to review and plan, widen the group's effectiveness, and propose projects for the future.

The group raises funds, participates in activities, promotes conservation and reinforces the codes of safety for visitors travelling in these remote regions.

Volunteers are active in the parks during the cooler months on a variety of projects.

### Further information

Email Lesley Hunkin (Secretary) [fos@twpo.com.au](mailto:fos@twpo.com.au) or visit [www.friendsofthesimpsondesert.com.au](http://www.friendsofthesimpsondesert.com.au)

*Friends of the Simpson Desert, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands*

### BE INSPIRED!

If you're wondering how volunteers could help you on your property, pick up a copy of the *Working with Volunteers* booklet which profiles three long-term and successful volunteer-land manager relationships in the North Flinders district

Working with Volunteers

Advice for land managers in the South Australian Arid Lands





# Land manager survey results

Jackie Watts, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer



**Pelicans on Innamincka Common**

**Forty land managers from across the SA Arid Lands region participated in in-depth interviews last year to establish their level of skills, knowledge and participation in natural resource management, with the results highlighting opportunities for improving NRM programs and services and the preferred methods of engaging with land managers.**

Participating land managers were randomly selected from each of the six NRM districts in the region and across the full range of pastoral tenures (ie. industry owned, family-owned, NGO-owned, and Aboriginal owned) and the full range of pastoral uses (ie. sheep, cattle, combined sheep and cattle, and no stock).

We are still analysing the results but here's some of what we've found.

## NRM issues

Eighty-three per cent of interviewees nominated either pest animals, labour availability, weeds, or changing land use as their top local issue.

## Skills and knowledge

The majority (87%) of respondents considered that they have the skills and knowledge required to manage the property, or know where to access additional information if required. Over half (54%) said that their management views/approaches had changed over time.

The majority (93%) of respondents who participated in a natural resource management program, workshop or event found the support, training or advice they received was useful in managing that issue. Almost half (47%) wanted to receive more information on weeds, pests, and other issues including earthworks and stock management.

## Information sources

Many (75%) respondents use the Internet daily. Of the 30 per cent who use social media, nearly two-thirds (64%) stated that they would find it a useful way of receiving information about events. However, less than half of the social media users access it daily.

The top sources of natural resource management information were friends/neighbours/family (90%), rural newspapers (79%), Internet (79%), *Across The Outback* (77%), and NRM Board/Groups or staff (72%). Nearly two thirds (64%) had previously been contacted by NRM Board, Group or staff members. Of these, one third said it was about dingoes. Most (81%) stated that they would visit an NRM stall at regional events such as race days and gymkhanas, although 44 per cent indicated that they would do so only if it coincided with a scheduled visit.

## Participation

Most respondents (75%) were aware of NRM grants or programs they were eligible to apply for with many naming the Board's dingo and weed control programs and the Ecosystem Management Understanding (EMU)<sup>TM</sup> program. Over half (55%) were participating in an NRM activity, or had done so previously.

One-third of respondents had used volunteers on their properties to assist with natural resource management and other activities and 42 per cent said they would consider using them – see *How can our volunteers help you?* (p. 03)

## Contact methods

A wide range of contact methods was preferred including emails, traditional post, phone calls and in person. In general, people over 60 years old preferred to receive hard copies, rather than electronic communications, and to be contacted in person rather than by phone or email.

With the interviews to be repeated every five years, these results provide important baseline information to show the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board how it is tracking in meeting the targets in the *SAAL Regional NRM Plan* that aim to increase the number of people actively engaged in natural resource management and to ensure that people have access to the appropriate information, knowledge and skills.

Similar surveys will be undertaken soon with other groups with a stake in natural resource management in the region including volunteers, Aboriginal communities, schools and Progress Associations.

Thanks to the participating land managers for their time and hospitality. Once analysis of the results is complete, the final report will be placed on the website.

## Further information

**For further information contact Jackie, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.**

*SAAL NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, Ehrenberg-Bass Institute (University of South Australia)*





# North Flinders stations reveal their business secrets

Rawnsley Park, Willow Springs and Wirrealpa Stations in the North Flinders district are the focus of three new case studies profiling business diversification in the rangelands.

Developed in conjunction with the station owners, the case studies tell how, in different ways, these operating sheep and/or cattle stations have adapted to changing circumstances and value-added to their business through expanding their tourism ventures or adopting new land management approaches such as Ecosystem Management Understanding (EMU™).

The case studies explain how and why each business has changed and grown over the years and reveal the variety of benefits – production, environmental, financial, and social – that the station owners are experiencing by ‘spreading the risk’ and diversifying their businesses across several enterprises.

*The station owners reveal some of the lessons that they have learned running complementary livestock and tourism enterprises while an in-line video sees Brendan, Warren and Tony talk about the changes they’ve made to their properties in their own words.*

Land managers in the SA Arid Lands region who are keen to learn more about the Ecosystem Management Understanding (EMU™) approach will find the Willow Springs and Wirrealpa case studies particularly interesting.

Thanks to Brendan and Carmel Reynolds (Willow Springs), Warren and Barbara Fargher (Wirrealpa), and Tony and Julie Smith (Rawnsley Park) for sharing their stories.

*Rural Directions Pty Ltd, SAAL NRM Board, Bestprac, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, Australian Government*



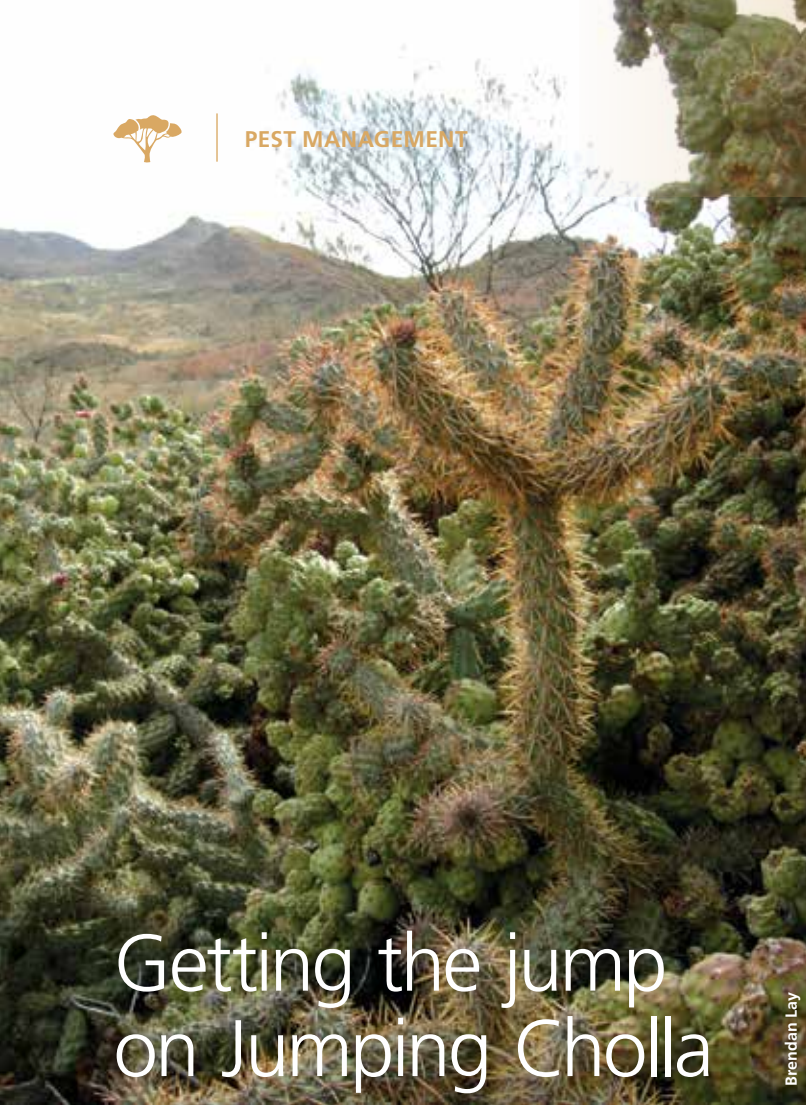
*One of the most productive areas of Willow Springs with bare patches caused by erosion – this area is the target of a project to regenerate and repair the bare, moisture starved areas.*

## FIND OUT MORE

Download the case studies – and watch the videos here...

[www.bestprac.info/pages/latest-news.php](http://www.bestprac.info/pages/latest-news.php)





# Getting the jump on Jumping Cholla

Brendan Lay

Lorraine Edmunds, Arkaroola Landcare Group

**It's an unlikely scenario – a threatened species aiding the spread of an introduced invader. But the Arkaroola Landcare Group is discovering that where Yellow-footed rock-wallabies go the highly invasive cactus species, Jumping Cholla, grows. Finding outliers is proving to be quite a challenge for the local landcare group.**

Over the past five years, the Arkaroola Landcare Group has surveyed eight square kilometres and treated more than 10,500 cactus plants on Arkaroola and numbers are trending down.

This year, the team treated 2950 plants during a 10-day survey compared to over 4500 plants in just one week in 2012.

But the team is battling some other 'jumpers' too.

Small plants, some no bigger than a marble, are often found beside Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby and Euro pads, and on shoulders along ridgelines where animals regularly cross.

Plant segments of Jumping Cholla readily detach with the slightest contact by a passing animal, attaching to fur, and getting a free ride. As the segments drop, they take root, and a new plant grows.

As stem injection is not an option for treating this dense spiny cactus, volunteers must foliar spray all plants. The work is

arduous as the volunteers work on steep, loose hill slopes, negotiate ridges, and cross deeply incised gullies, carrying heavy knapsacks filled with mixed herbicide.

The team is now concentrating on finding outliers beyond the known area of infestation. But, like other cactus control programs, annual maintenance will be required for many years to ensure that all recruits are found and treated.

**Arkaroola Landcare Group, Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary, SAAL NRM Board**



**Arkaroola Landcare Group setting out for a day of cactus killing.**

**Casualty: a red-backed kingfisher impaled on a small Jumping Cholla plant and (left) a Jumping Cholla infestation**

A native of semi-desert country in Mexico and southern California, Jumping Cholla (*Cylindropuntia prolifera*) is a Weed of National Significance and member of the highly invasive opuntoid cacti.

Most likely a garden escapee, Jumping Cholla was first noticed in 2000 during a pastoral lease assessment on Arkaroola and has since colonised more than eight square kilometres of rocky hills around Arkaroola Village.

In 2008, a small team of volunteers formed the Arkaroola Landcare Group to work with Marg and Doug Sprigg to try to eradicate Jumping Cholla from the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary.

Earlier work with Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) to physically remove plants from creek beds and the lower slopes of hills did not stop the spread of the cactus into higher country.

A bio-control trial, using cochineal sourced from the closely related Devil's Rope Cactus (*Cylindropuntia imbricata*), was not successful.





Opuntioid invasive cacti species are native to South America, the USA, Mexico, Canada and the West Indies, and, in Australia, they are listed as Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) because of their invasiveness and resilience to control.

In the SA Arid Lands region there are 13 species of Opuntioid cacti, including Jumping Cholla (see p. 06), Wheel Cactus and Prickly Pear. The Blinman-Parachilna Pest Plant Control Group has been controlling the spread of Wheel Cactus on properties in the North Flinders Ranges for 10 years and is currently having success with biocontrol agents – see *Across The Outback*, April 2013.

## National Cacti Forum hosted in Adelaide

Henry Rutherford, Weed Management Coordinator

The 2013 Australian Invasive Cacti Forum held in the Adelaide Hills in May generated a tide of enthusiasm from its participants to better utilise the biological control agents currently available to control cacti weeds in Australia.

Attended by over 30 people the forum brought together land managers, community groups, rangers, and researchers from across Australia who are tackling invasive cacti, providing them a platform to share their experiences and find solutions.

The forum identified that Australia has several biological control agents available to manage cacti and in order to maximise efficiency we should:

- better understand the biological relationship between host plants and agents
- plan a distribution strategy around a risk analysis
- educate land managers and communities about the practical application of biological controls
- ensure that a distributed population of agents are available to manage cacti on the ground at the local level perpetually into the future.

Meanwhile, land managers in the SA Arid Lands region are also encouraged to pick up their free copy of the new *Field Identification Guide*. This full-colour, comprehensive guide to Australia's worst cactus species will fit neatly in the glovebox, is full of cacti facts, and provides an easy reference for identifying cacti species on your property.

Biosecurity SA

### GET YOUR COPY TODAY!

Copies of the guide are available free of charge from Biosecurity SA on-line [www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/opuntioidcacti/resources.htm](http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/opuntioidcacti/resources.htm) or from Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.



## NOXIOUS WEEDS HANDBOOK RELEASED

Land managers in the SA Arid Lands region now have access to updated information about safely and effectively controlling 94 'noxious' weeds – amongst them African Boxthorn, Noogoora Burr and African Rue – that have been declared in South Australia.

The new publication *Weed control handbook for declared plants in South Australia* lists 94 weeds together with tables of registered or permitted herbicide treatments.

Each weed is illustrated by a colour photograph for easy identification and biological control methods are included where applicable.

A 14-page introduction discusses the declaration of plants under the *Natural Resources Management Act*, the theory of weed control and of herbicide safety.

The book stresses the importance of using a herbicide for the purposes listed on the registered label or authorised by a permit. With registration of herbicides changing from year to year, the intention is to update the handbook annually.

Land managers are also asked to keep a look out for 'alert weeds', declared weeds that are not yet established in South Australia.

Get your copy!

Contact Biosecurity SA 8303 9620 or download a copy from [www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/nrm\\_biosecurity/weeds](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/nrm_biosecurity/weeds)

Biosecurity SA





# CSG impacts on water – update

Jen St Jack, Senior Policy Officer, DEWNR

## Data is continuing to be gathered to improve information about water resources in areas of the SA Arid Lands region with potential for coal seam gas (CSG) or coal mining developments.

Since the last update in *Across The Outback* in March 2013, field surveys have occurred across the Arkaringa and Pedirka Basins to improve our understanding of groundwater processes occurring within the basins, including how and why groundwater moves from one location to another. Investigations have included bore audits and hydro-chemical sampling.

These investigations have led to greater definition of the hydrogeological features of the Arkaringa and Pedirka geological basins (see map), such as the geometry and extent of each basin and the depth from the surface to different geological strata.

A targeted drilling program is now installing monitoring wells which will be used to address key knowledge gaps such as recharge processes and connectivity between aquifers, and to monitor impacts from any future development.

Information on water resources from six NRM regions, including the SA Arid Lands, has been pulled together to create a single spatial database which consistently defines water assets and identifies environmental, cultural and economic values of those assets. This is a significant advance in the state's capabilities to map and manage these water resources.

A team investigating rivers and springs in the Lake Eyre Basin has conducted several field trips in South Australia, with more to come in the next few months. Also involving research in Queensland and the Northern Territory this work brings together a wide range of scientific research, documenting hydrological and ecological processes of springs, wetlands, rivers and floodplains of the region. This research will enable potential impacts on these systems to be better understood when assessing any future developments.

A risk and vulnerability assessment framework is being developed to support the future assessment of coal seam gas and coal mining developments, using the best available science and considering

community concerns.

Thank you to the land managers who are providing access to their properties for this work.

The research will lay the foundations for the Australian Government's Lake Eyre Basin Bioregional Assessment.

### Further information

Contact Tom Carrangis, Program Manager, 8463 7974 or visit [www.environment.gov.au/coal-seam-gas-mining/bioregional-assessments](http://www.environment.gov.au/coal-seam-gas-mining/bioregional-assessments) for further information on the Australian Government's Bioregional Assessment Program.

*Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR), SA NRM Boards and numerous South Australian and interstate government departments, research bodies and private consultants*

## WHAT IS COAL SEAM GAS?

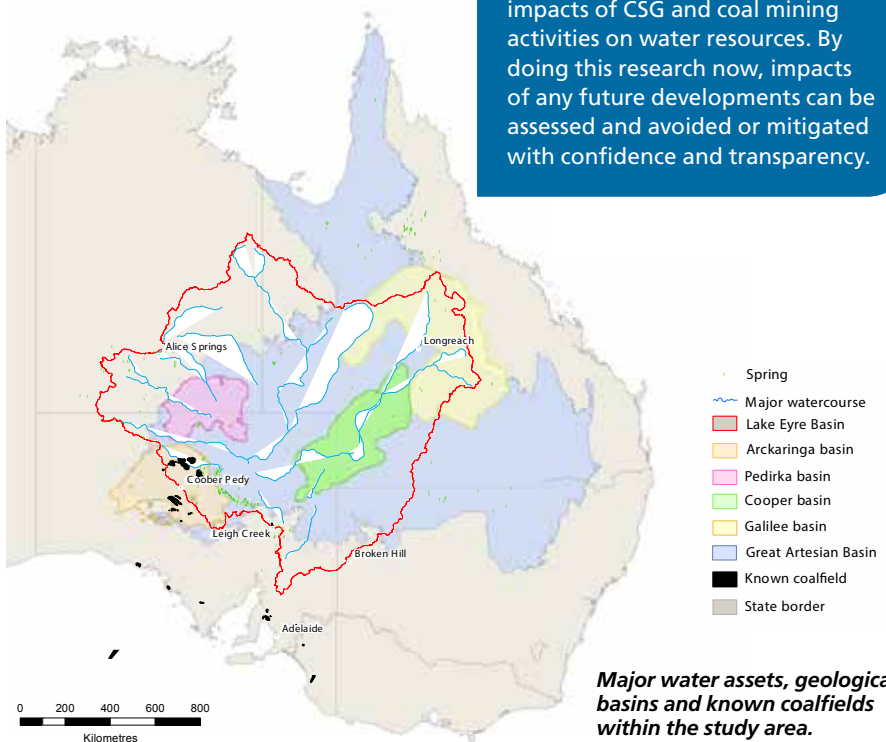
Coal seam gas (CSG) is the name given to naturally occurring gas trapped in underground coal seams by water and ground pressure.

Coal seams store both gas and water. The water is under pressure from the weight of overlying rock material, holding the gas in place, and when the water pressure is reduced the gas is released. The extraction process (production) involves the drilling of a well into a coal seam and the water being gradually pumped out of the seam, which reduces the pressure and allows the gas to flow through the well to the surface.

There are vast CSG resources spread across Australia's many coal basins, particularly in the Bowen and Surat Basins in Queensland and New South Wales. It has been commercially produced in Queensland for more than 15 years and generates about 17 per cent of Queensland's electricity needs.

## WHEN IS MINING LIKELY TO START?

This fieldwork does not signal the beginning of CSG or coal mining development in South Australia. It is about understanding, through scientific research, the potential impacts of CSG and coal mining activities on water resources. By doing this research now, impacts of any future developments can be assessed and avoided or mitigated with confidence and transparency.



**Major water assets, geological basins and known coalfields within the study area.**





# 'Cooper Creek' findings presented at Innamincka workshop

A workshop in Innamincka in June gave local residents and land managers the opportunity to learn about the findings of the 'Cooper Creek project' and to provide direction for future management of this iconic but little known arid ecosystem.

Attended by around 30 people including mining and pastoral industry representatives, Aboriginal Traditional Owners, volunteers and other interested people, the workshop – *Understanding the Cooper Creek: a workshop exploring aquatic ecosystems in arid environments* – provided an overview of the current and immediate threats to the riverine ecology of the Cooper Creek.

Presenters came from South Australia and interstate to talk about the current condition of riparian vegetation, the hydrology, geomorphology, fish distribution, and the cultural landscapes associated with the Cooper Creek catchment.

The presence of Buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) was identified as a key potential threat. This highly invasive species has the potential to form dense monocultures, displacing native vegetation with an associated impact upon local biodiversity. Other noted impacts to the vegetation and riparian habitat included the presence of feral animals, namely the widespread distribution of rabbits and increasing numbers of feral pigs.

Attendees also learned that the Cooper Creek catchment has one of the most hydrologically variable flow regimes in the world, and any variation to flow regime (eg through extraction of water or through impeding flow through infrastructure development) has the potential to substantially impact the hydrology of the river and affect the catchment's natural function.

*Such activities will have particular repercussions for the catchment's permanent waterholes which play a significant role in providing refuge to plants and animals in times of drought.*

The project has confirmed that Cullyamurra Waterhole in particular provides critical refuge to aquatic species (native fish, turtles, water rats, yabbies, shrimps and macro invertebrates) due to its ability to hold water and sustain life in extended dry periods.



Information sessions were followed by facilitated group discussions where participants helped identify priorities for future action and build on the project's findings to ensure sustainable management of the Cooper Creek ecosystems.

#### Further information

**Henry Mancini, Senior Water Projects Officer 8648 5300**

SAAL NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, SARDI, Australian National University, University of Melbourne, Wakelin Associates, Australian Government

A series of technical reports that describe the geomorphology, hydrology, aquatic ecology, riparian condition assessment, vegetation and birds, and cultural landscapes will be available from the Natural Resources SA Arid Lands website in late 2013:  
[www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/aridlands](http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/aridlands)



Mick Starkey and Greening Australia Vegetation Consultant Mick Durant assess condition of Tandaie rockhole

# Rockhole protection in the Gawlers

Alexandra Vickery, Project Officer, SANTS

A Gawler Ranges pastoralist, the Gawler Ranges Aboriginal Corporation and the South Australian Native Title Services (SANTS) are applying western and cultural knowledge on Thurlga Station to restore and protect rockholes.

Four members of the local Aboriginal community are undertaking the on-ground activities, providing them with employment and training opportunities, as well as the experiences that come with working on country.

The team are currently constructing two permanent waterpoint trapping yards which will be used to trap and remove feral goats in the height of summer when the rockholes are dry.

Work is also underway around rockholes to control Horehound and other weeds and to remove sedimentation, while two areas which have been historically degraded are being destocked and revegetated by direct seeding.

Levels of engagement, assessment and on-ground restoration work has varied between stations, and work on Thurlga demonstrates potential for further natural resource management partnerships between the pastoral and Aboriginal community. This project is a great illustration of cultural and pastoral interests working in partnership to achieve cultural, ecological and economic outcomes for all.

### Further information

Alexandra Vickery, South Australian Native Title Services, 1800 010 360

SA Native Title Services

## ROCKHOLE SIGNIFICANCE

The rockhole complexes throughout the Gawler Ranges are of cultural significance to the native title holders because they are associated with traditional mythology and law, and historically shaped migration patterns as groups moved across the landscape. Caring for the rockholes continues to be an important part of contemporary life, to maintain cultural values and connection to country.

The rockholes and associated granite landscapes are also of ecological significance, comprising of isolated patches of mature vegetation with a high level of plant and habitat

diversity and providing the only natural surface water resources across the region.

The cultural and ecological assessment work of rockholes throughout the Gawler Ranges has been ongoing since the SAAL NRM Board funded a project in 2008. Over the next three years, through the Australian Government's Biodiversity Fund, the water harvesting capacity of rockhole complexes will progressively be restored, and threats to associated landscapes and biodiversity reduced.

**HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?**  
Natural Resources SA Arid Lands' Aboriginal Partnerships team helps provide opportunities for Aboriginal communities to successfully achieve NRM project outcomes. Does your community have a project in mind? Call 8648 5300.

## Everybody's land:

A strategy for Aboriginal Partnerships in the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Region



Government of South Australia  
South Australian Native Title Services  
Natural Resources Management Board

## PARTNERSHIPS STRATEGY RELEASED

The SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board finalised its strategy for building Aboriginal partnerships in July.

The publication – *Everybody's land: A strategy for Aboriginal Partnerships in the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Region* – was developed with the input of a range of Aboriginal and regional stakeholders and is built on feedback from prior engagement activities.

It describes the SAAL NRM Board's vision, guiding principles, strategies and success measures when working with Aboriginal partners and participants across the SA Arid Lands region.

The strategy takes into consideration the needs of Aboriginal groups, and provides a basis for all other stakeholders to understand what will be required when working on country with Aboriginal groups in the region.

If you would like a copy contact the Aboriginal Partnerships team 8648 5300.

SAAL NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, Australian Government





# Breakaways under new management

A seven-member co-management board will now be formed for the Breakaways Conservation Park, near Coober Pedy, after the land was handed back to its traditional owners – the Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara people – at a ceremony in August.

Under the new arrangements, the park will be co-managed by the local Aboriginal community, the District Council of Coober Pedy, and the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR).

The hand back of the land, along with its constitution as a Conservation Park, is part of the Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara native title claim resolution negotiations.

“This partnership, and the co-management arrangements over the park, ensures that the high quality of the natural environment is enhanced, and its cultural significance is both recognised and protected,” said Minister for Sustainability, Environment and

Conservation and Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Ian Hunter, who attended the ceremony.

The Breakaways is the state’s second Aboriginal-owned park – the Mamungari Conservation Park north-west of Ceduna was returned to the Maralinga Tjarutja people in 2004.

### About the Breakaways

Estimated to be more than 70 million years old, The Breakaways are a group of flat-topped hills close to the Stuart Ranges. The conservation park covers almost 15,000 hectares.



**Minister Ian Hunter and Ian Crombie (Chair Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation)**

The park also provided dramatic landscapes for the internationally-successful Australian movies *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Mad Max 3*.

Once covered by an inland sea, the region is now home to almost 60 native flora species, along with Red Kangaroos and the Fat-tailed Dunnart.

As well as being geologically important, and providing vital habitat for arid flora and fauna species, the Breakaways Conservation Park holds great cultural significance for the Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara people.

*DEWNR, Coober Pedy Council, Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation*



## NEWS FROM NORTH EAST PASTORAL DISTRICT

There has been recent progress towards the formation of a NRM Group in the North East Pastoral district – but the group is looking for representation from a local pastoralist to assist with a balance of perspectives and opinions.

NRM Groups are the on-ground contact for the SA Arid Lands community, feeding district information or concerns relating to the natural resources in the region to the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board.

The Group membership currently consists of a representative from a local mining company, an NGO, an Aboriginal community, and a National Park.

### Further information

Contact Louise Gavin, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 86485300 if you are interested in receiving a nomination form.

**There are currently five NRM Groups operating in the SA Arid Lands each with a maximum of seven members.**

### NRM GROUP CHAIRS

**North Flinders • Keith Slade  
Gawler Ranges • Sandy Morris  
Marla-Oodnadatta • Mark Fennell  
Marree-Innamincka • Raylene Ogilvy  
Kingoonya • Julie Mould**





# Proposal to re-name outback roads

The Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure is proposing a number of new names for outback roads and residents of the SA Arid Lands region and other *Across The Outback* readers are encouraged to visit their website and provide their feedback.

Re-naming of these outback roads will enable the provision of a unique and easily recognised property address for all occupied properties, homes, and businesses in unincorporated areas that is consistent with the national standards for Australia and New Zealand.

Roads have been re-named according to the following principles:

- dual directional road names have been removed
- in most cases the furthest homestead name has been used to rename the entire road from the main road
- when an outback road continues into a council area, the council's road name will be used where practical.

The provision of a unique and easily recognised address will:

- help emergency services and service providers (eg Telstra) find properties
- improve the safety of people in these areas (by giving them a specific address)
- provide a certainty of location and a recognised address that can be understood nationally
- assist people when applying for licenses (eg drivers' license, firearms license).

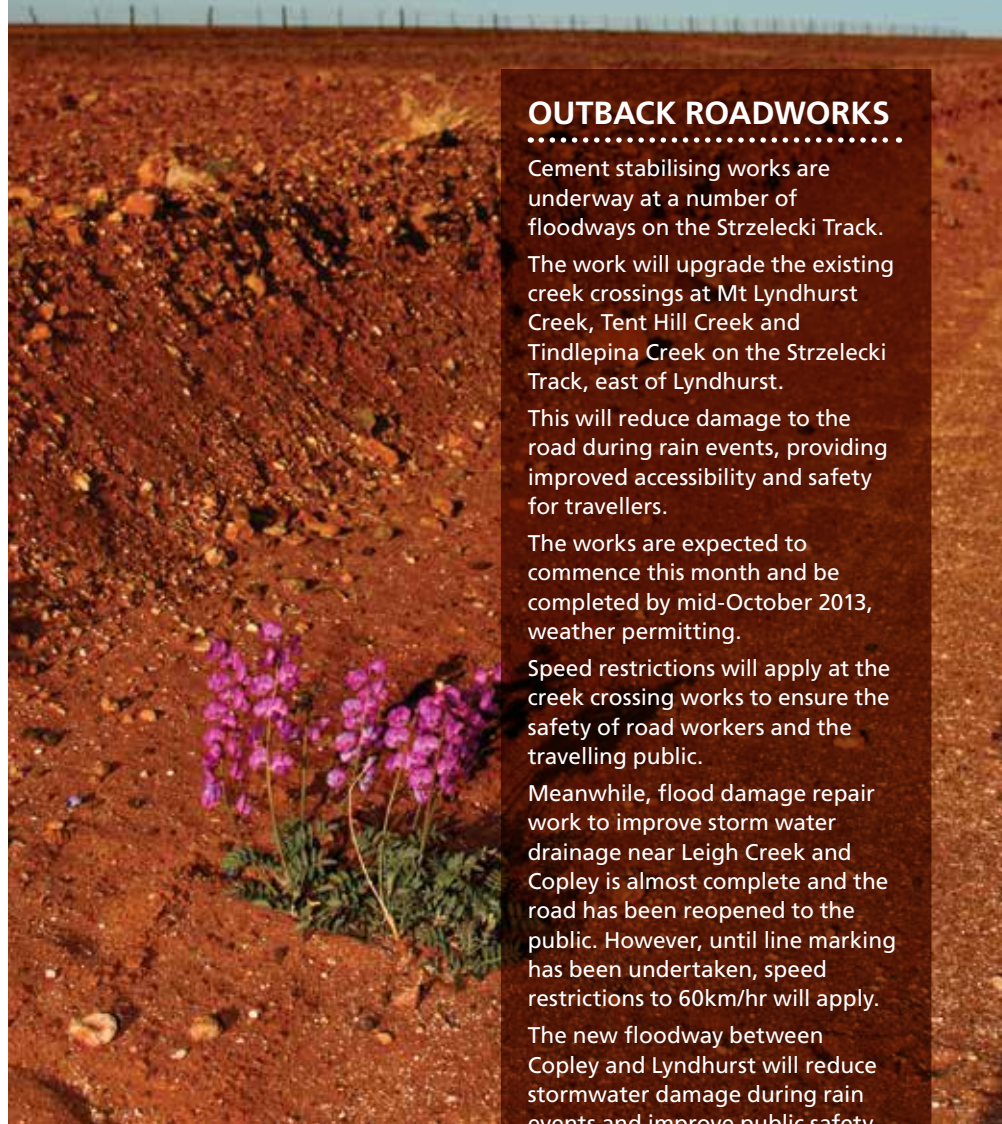
Existing signage to homesteads will remain. In most cases, new signs for re-named roads will not be installed until the existing sign is replaced as part of routine road maintenance purposes. There will be an option for people to purchase and install their address plate in the future.

To view the proposed names visit [www.sa.gov.au/consultation/outbackroads](http://www.sa.gov.au/consultation/outbackroads)

Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure

## HAVE YOUR SAY! DEADLINE FOR FEEDBACK EXTENDED TO COB 27 SEPTEMBER

To provide feedback on the proposed name changes email [DPTI.OutbackRoadNaming@sa.gov.au](mailto:DPTI.OutbackRoadNaming@sa.gov.au), fax marked 'ATTN DPTI Non-Infrastructure Delivery' 08 8343 2516, or send mail to Renaming of Unincorporated Areas, DPTI, Non-Infrastructure Delivery, GPO Box 1533, Adelaide 5001



### OUTBACK ROADWORKS

Cement stabilising works are underway at a number of floodways on the Strzelecki Track.

The work will upgrade the existing creek crossings at Mt Lyndhurst Creek, Tent Hill Creek and Tindlepina Creek on the Strzelecki Track, east of Lyndhurst.

This will reduce damage to the road during rain events, providing improved accessibility and safety for travellers.

The works are expected to commence this month and be completed by mid-October 2013, weather permitting.

Speed restrictions will apply at the creek crossing works to ensure the safety of road workers and the travelling public.

Meanwhile, flood damage repair work to improve storm water drainage near Leigh Creek and Copley is almost complete and the road has been reopened to the public. However, until line marking has been undertaken, speed restrictions to 60km/hr will apply.

The new floodway between Copley and Lyndhurst will reduce stormwater damage during rain events and improve public safety.

The Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure thanks motorists for their patience while these important safety upgrades are carried out. Both roadwork programs are funded by the Australian Government's *Roads to Recovery Program* for a total of \$2.25 million.

Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure





# Branding the outback

Several staff from the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) converged on Coober Pedy on 4 June to meet with industry representatives and tourism operators to discuss the best way to market the outback and all that it offers in its attractions and experiences.

Representatives from Coober Pedy, Adelaide, Flinders Ranges, Innamincka, Roxby Downs, William Creek, Port Augusta, Marree and the Northern Territory brainstormed ideas about what the outback meant to them and what attracts visitors and entices them to keep coming back.

*Ideas for linking South Australia with the Northern Territory were also investigated as an important cross-border link.*

The group also worked through and updated the *Outback Destination Action Plan*, a simple action plan that focuses and prioritises projects and goals taking into account infrastructure, experiences, access, marketing, distribution and industry capability, and events.

A networking function also allowed local tourism operators to meet with SATC representatives and discuss support and opportunities for their businesses.

The Outback Tourism Working Party will continue to work with the SATC on the branding and future workshops will be held with operators on how they can connect with the brand.

**Further information**

**Paula Osborn, Regional Development Australia Far North, 8641 1444**

*Regional Development Australia Far North, SA Tourism Commission, Outback Tourism Working Party*



**STANDING L-R**

Nick Jones (SATC), Yanni Athanasiadis (Outback Tourism Working Party), Peter Rowe (Desert Diversity Tours Coober Pedy), Julie Smith (Chairperson Flinders Ranges & Outback Tourism SA), Kym Fort (Outback Loop), Pauline Hedger (Outback Tourism Working Party), Peter Cahalan (SATC), Jo Fort (Outback Tourism Working Party), Lisa Pearson (Pure Outback), Tony Smith (Ravnsley Park Station), Paula Osborn (Outback Tourism Working Party/RDAFN), Kylie Piper (Outback Tourism Working Party), Rob Coro (Outback Tourism Working Party)

**SEATED L-R**

Jaclyn Thorne (Tourism NT), Trevor Berry (Old Timers Mine Coober Pedy), Pat Katnich (Outback Tourism Working Party), Mark Phelps (SATC), David O'Loughlin (SATC)

## ARE YOU ON THE ACROSS THE OUTBACK MAILING LIST?

*Across the Outback* is a free publication that is issued to 1500 individuals or organisations with a stake or interest in the SA Arid Lands region.

If you would like to join the mailing list or update your details please contact the editor jenny.barker@sa.gov.au.

Please include your name, mailing address and email address (to receive electronic notification).

## CALL FOR CONTENT

*Across the Outback*  
October 2013 edition

Content due by COB 11 October 2013

Contact jenny.barker@sa.gov.au or 8463 3354 for further information.

## THIS SPACE COULD BE YOURS!

*Across the Outback* remains committed to reporting on government activities in the region in the single publication and we welcome contributions from other agencies. We'd also like to hear from non-government organisations, Progress Associations or Friends groups operating in the area. Tell us what you're doing to support your community and if we have space we'll try to accommodate you.

**Further information**

Contact the editor jenny.barker@sa.gov.au or 8463 3354  
A fee per article may apply







# Going the extra mile

Land managers, kangaroo processors, and staff have been going the extra mile to support programs for wild dog control in the SA Arid Lands region – and Biosecurity SA and Natural Resources SA Arid Land staff are keen to acknowledge their efforts.

This year volunteers from the North Flinders district donated their time to help cut up meat for baits for the recent aerial baiting program.

Thanks to Keith Slade, Alan Ireland, Ian Fargher, Kathy and Darrel Fargher, Brendon Reynolds, David Henery, Warren Fargher, Geoff Mengerson, Kaeli Mengerson, Ian Ferguson, Tate Williams, Troy Fels, David Nicholls, Greg Smithson and Ned Hage, and also to Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff, including National Park rangers, who also supported the aerial baiting program.

This assistance helps spread the load amongst land managers and it is hoped that this volunteer assistance can be rotated between the participating districts each year.

The aerial baiting program is also assisted by Dew's Meats from Orroroo who provide good quality kangaroo meat at the best possible commercial price. Dews Meats have been supporting wild dog control in the Arid Lands since 2009.

*The aerial baiting program coordinator, Bill McIntosh, Biosecurity SA and Natural Resources SA Arid Lands wish to extend their thanks to everybody who has supported the program for the last two years.*

Meanwhile, the *Biteback* ground baiting program delivered by Natural Resources SA Arid Lands on behalf of the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board continues to receive support from Dew's Meats, VOR Meats and landholders, with National Parks providing access to the Orparinna baiting facilities for 1080 bait injection services.

*Biosecurity SA, SAAL NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, SA Sheep Industry Fund, Australian Wool Innovation*

## NEXT BAIT INJECTION SERVICES

*Biteback* offers participating land managers a bi-annual bait injection service to allow restocking of the 14 freezers installed across the SA Arid Lands region south of the Dog Fence. Don't forget to pop these dates in your calendar.

**NORTH EAST PASTORAL**  
Monday 30 September to Wednesday 2 October

**NORTH FLINDERS**  
Monday 14 October to Thursday 17 October

**GAWLER RANGES & KINGOONYA**  
Monday 4 November to Friday 8 November

The time and location of each injection service will be mailed to land managers. For further information contact the Dingo Management Team, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about the region's dingo management programs, contact the Dingo Management team, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300





# Sheep movement changes under new OJD approach

As we reported in the last edition of *Across The Outback*, the new national approach to managing Ovine Johne's Disease (OJD) came into effect from 1 July and it brings with it some changes for land managers who are bringing sheep into South Australia.

All sheep introduced to South Australia from interstate must be accompanied by a National Vendor Declaration and a National Sheep Health Statement and, if sheep are purchased from an interstate location by means of an on-line facility like Auctions Plus, a period of 10 working days will apply for the provision of the National Sheep Health Statement.

For adult sheep and lambs (other than Terminal 'T' tag lambs) to be eligible for entry, they must meet *at least one* of the following conditions:

1. The sheep destined for entry must come from a flock not infected or suspected of being infected with Ovine Johne's Disease and be participating in a Regional Biosecurity Plan (RBP) approved by South Australia's Chief Inspector of Stock (CIS) (see box).

## OR

1. The sheep destined for entry must come from a SheepMAP accredited flock; **or**
2. The sheep destined for entry must come from a flock(s) that has had a negative faecal test (either a Pooled Faecal Culture [PFC] 350 or High Throughput Johne's [HT-J] 350) or, for small flocks, all sheep over two years of age have been tested, or Abattoir 500 tested within the last two years and the flock is a closed flock (that is, no introduced sheep, including rams); **or**

3. The sheep destined for entry must come from a flock(s) that has had a negative faecal test (either a PFC 350 or High Throughput Johne's [HT-J] 350) or, for small flocks, all sheep over two years of age have been tested, or Abattoir 500 tested within the last two years and all sheep introduced within the preceding five years were from:
  - flocks not infected or suspected of being infected with OJD and participating in a Regional Biosecurity Plan approved by the CIS; **or**
  - a SheepMAP accredited flock; **or**
  - flocks that had a negative faecal test (either a PFC 350 or HT-J 350 or for small flocks all sheep over two years of age have been tested) or Abattoir 500 tested within the last two years.

- flocks not infected or suspected of being infected with OJD and participating in a Regional Biosecurity Plan approved by the CIS; **or**
- a SheepMAP accredited flock; **or**
- flocks that had a negative faecal test (either a PFC 350 or HT-J 350 or for small flocks all sheep over two years of age have been tested) or Abattoir 500 tested within the last two years.

## Further information

Sheep Health Statements are available on the OJD website [www.ojd.com.au](http://www.ojd.com.au), from your livestock agent, or phone 1800 332 312. For further details on terminal 'T' tag lambs or sheep attending shows or breeding centres, contact Trent Scholz, Biosecurity SA-Animal Health 8648 5160.

*Biosecurity SA-Animal Health*

## REGIONAL BIOSECURITY PLANS

The *OJD National Management Plan* recognises that producers have the responsibility to manage risk for all animal health diseases. The policy is built around risk-management – that is, individuals implementing animal health controls and good farm biosecurity practices, and making informed choices when buying livestock. The strength of these systems is enhanced when producers work together as a collective.

Participation in Regional Biosecurity Plans is voluntary for all producers.

At the time of writing, Regional Biosecurity Plans have been approved for Queensland, South Australia and the following areas of New South Wales (Northern Tablelands, Western LHPA, Central West (Coonamble), Central West (Nyngan), Darling, Riverina Sheep Biosecurity Group, and Coonabarabran.

## CHANGES TO CATTLE AND BUFFALO MOVEMENT

There are also new entry requirements for cattle entering South Australia from 1 July 2013 to protect against Bovine Johne's Disease (BJD).

All movements of beef cattle, dairy cattle and buffalo to South Australia require an appropriate National Livestock Identification System device.

Cattle must be accompanied by either a National Vendor Declaration or an Alternative Cattle and Buffalo Movement Waybill, along with a National Cattle Health Statement. Copies of these documents must be retained for seven years.

The property of origin must not have an *Infected, Suspect or Restricted* status for Bovine Johne's Disease unless authorised by the South Australian Chief Inspector of Stock.

Cattle moving into the BJD South Australian Protected Zone must be *beef only, Monitored Negative 1*, or have *Check Test* status.

## Further information

For more information as well as a map showing Bovine Johne's Disease areas visit [www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/animalhealth](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/animalhealth) or contact Trent Scholz 8648 5160.

## WHAT IS OJD/BJD?

Ovine/Bovine Johne's disease (OJD & BJD) is a silent but costly disease. Sheep/cattle may look healthy but shed high numbers of bacteria and spread the infection before the disease becomes apparent. In infected flocks/herds, OJD/BJD has a serious welfare and financial impact, as it affects growth and production. Infected sheep/cattle can waste away and die.



# Outback roads tonnes cleaner

*Perri Carter & Emma Bloomfield, Community Engagement Officers*

**In six years, the Great Tracks Clean Up Crew has travelled nearly half way around the world and dedicated over 20,000 hours of volunteer labour to the outback – and it’s all for the love (or not) of rubbish.**

Every year, for one week in July, members of the Great Tracks Clean Up Crew and visitors make the pilgrimage to Leigh Creek to rid the region’s tracks of rubbish.

The scale that this Group operates on is simply phenomenal, particularly given the Group relies solely on volunteer and sponsor support and the tireless coordination of Stuart and Carmel Paxton.

Travelling in an entourage of four-wheel drives and trailers the Group collects rubbish from the region’s tracks including the legendary Birdsville, Strzelecki and Oodnadatta Tracks, off-loading at depots and recycling what it can to avoid contributing to landfill.

Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff recently added up the figures and discovered that through the Group’s work, the region’s tracks are over **350 tonnes lighter** – that’s 350 tonnes of rubbish that, if it remained, would send a message to visitors that our outback tracks are not cared for and treated as rubbish dumps.

And, when we added up the distance travelled and the number of vehicles, we discovered that the group has travelled

16,872 kilometres – that’s nearly half way around the world!

This year 28 members and visitors made the journey from Leigh Creek with 10 four-wheel drives and trailers and collected nearly 70 tonnes of rubbish along a route taking in the Birdsville Track, the Cordillo Downs Road, and the Strzelecki Track.

The team filled eight wool bales with bottles and cans – up from three the year before – and there was also a marked increase in truck tyres.

### **It’s only rubbish...**

We often hear people say ‘it’s only rubbish’ yet the work of the Great Tracks Clean Up Crew brings with it enormous ecological, social and economic benefits.

Keeping our tracks free of debris helps to maintain and preserve our iconic landscape, improve the region’s aesthetic appeal, and provide greater safety to residents and visitors who travel on our roads.

The removal of dumped chemicals and other rotting matter also protects the region’s soils from contamination and protects plants and animals.

## **ACROSS THE OUTBACK**

*Across the Outback* is prepared and edited by Jenny Barker, Senior Communications Officer, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, a division of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

It is currently jointly funded by the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board; Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources; the Pastoral Board; and Biosecurity SA (a division of Primary Industries and Regions SA).

Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Please contact [jenny.barker@sa.gov.au](mailto:jenny.barker@sa.gov.au) or 8463 3354



**Government of South Australia**

The benefit to local communities is also enormous.

Not only do the outback communities have cleaner and tidier towns but also increased community morale and economic support.

Outback towns are few, tiny and remote and when the Great Tracks Clean Up Crew comes to town, populations swell as members stop for refuelling, snacks and accommodation.

In a region where there are few hands to look after vast tracts of country, the Great Tracks Clean Up Crew is also taking the pressure off local communities and land managers who have little time to remove roadside rubbish – and the removal of roadside rubbish also discourages others from dumping rubbish in these areas.

We are indebted to their efforts.

***Natural Resources SA Arid Lands and a variety of other sponsors support the Great Tracks Clean-up Crew***

*A Bettong*



## **HELP ME!**

Volunteers are required to assist with an exciting project at the Arid Recovery Reserve. This is a great opportunity to get up close and personal with bettongs, bilbies and bandicoots. To help out or for more information call Arid Recovery 8671 2402 or email [info@aridrecovery.org.au](mailto:info@aridrecovery.org.au)