



ACROSS THE

OUTBACK



RIVERPRIZE

Riverprize is a prestigious international environmental award which has recognised 22 winners and more than 60 finalists around the world since its inception in 1999.

Unique LEB partnership takes out Riverprize

Janet Brook, Presiding Member

The Lake Eyre Basin partnership – an alliance of community, government and natural resources management bodies including the SA Arid Lands NRM Board – took out the 2014 Australian Riverprize in September. Presiding Member Janet Brook attended the ceremony and shares her thoughts about this 20-year, cross-border initiative and the important role of community in protecting natural river flows in our region.

The Lake Eyre Basin is unique. It is one of the last naturally free-flowing river basins in the world and its semi-arid rivers and floodplains support an enormous diversity of plants and animals.

Continued on page 04...

From L-R

Richard Kingsford (University of New South Wales and LEB Scientific Advisory Panel member), **Bruce Scott** (Chair, Desert Channels Qld), **Janet Brook** (Presiding Member, SAAL NRM Board and LEB Community Advisory Committee member), **Sallyanne Atkinson** (International River Foundation Board member), **Kate Andrews** (Chair, Territory NRM Board and LEB Community Advisory Committee member)



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PASTORAL BOARD 2015

MEETING 146

Thursday 26 February, Keswick

Proposed abolition of Pastoral Board

Chris Turner, Pastoral Unit Leader

A final decision on the future of the Pastoral Board is expected to be made after Parliament resumes in 2015.

In September 2014 the Premier announced a review of all Boards and Committees in South Australia.

The review made clear the Government's intention to abolish all non-essential Government Boards and Committees, noting that the review would create efficiencies, reduce "red tape" and provide greater opportunity for the community to engage directly with Government on relevant issues.

Following the review, a list of Boards and Committees to be abolished was published in October with the Pastoral Board of South Australia being included in this list.

Following this, a number of individual pastoral lessees were consulted directly regarding their opinions for future delivery of Pastoral Board functions.

The peak industry body, Livestock SA, has also convened a number of meetings, in Marree, the North East Pastoral and Eastern Districts, and most recently in Port Augusta where they have consulted broadly with their membership on this matter.

The legislation providing for the abolition of the Pastoral Board was introduced in Parliament in early December 2014 with a final decision expected after Parliament resumes in 2015.

At this stage, the Pastoral Board will continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis with meetings currently scheduled in February and April 2015.

Further updates will be published in *Across The Outback* as more information is received.

2014 PASTORAL LEASE RENT INVOICES ISSUED

Pastoral Lease rent invoice notices will be sent out to leaseholders in December 2014 and lessees have 90 days to make payment.

Following a review of available evidence the Valuer-General has determined that the annual rate of return on pastoral leases will remain unchanged for the 2014 rental period. Unimproved values have not changed from 2013 levels. The rates of return are:

- 2.7 per cent for leases used for pastoral purposes
- 2 per cent for leases used for conservation purposes
- 0 per cent for leases subject to a Heritage Agreement
- 5 per cent for leases used for tourism purposes

Under Section 23 of the *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989*, the Valuer-General determines the rental amount and rent notices are sent out by the Pastoral Board.

The annual rental for a pastoral lease is set as a percentage of the unimproved value of the land.

The percentage represents the rate of return for the land taking into account the purpose for which the land is being used.

The unimproved value of a pastoral lease is the capital amount that the land might reasonably be expected to realise upon sale assuming that any improvements on the land had not been made.

When determining the unimproved value of a pastoral lease and the rate of return for the land, the Valuer-General takes a range of factors into account, including the most recent land types classification and the area of each land type on the lease; carrying capacities; climatic conditions; access to markets and property location; property sales and price movements within the pastoral industry; and prevailing market conditions.

Further information

For further information on how unimproved values for leases and determinations are calculated please contact the State Valuation Office, GPO Box 1354, Adelaide SA 5001 or 8226 3979.



Thank you for sharing what's special to you

Regional NRM Plan development

Janet Brook, Presiding Member

The SAAL NRM Board has officially completed the first step in the development of its new Regional NRM Plan having spent the last few months finding out what's special about the region.

On behalf of the Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff have visited with pastoralists, Progress Associations, tourism bodies, conservation groups, Aboriginal communities, mining companies, children, women, men, the cat and the dog...

Our planning team's office is littered with butchers' paper and maps of the district, all busily and enthusiastically scrawled upon as people shared their top spots to socialise; areas of high ecological, historical, grazing or geological value; or places that are the subject of their precious memories or heritage.

We've received terrific feedback about the sights and sounds that make this place your home or a great place to visit, and the plants and animals that keep bringing you back to explore. You've shared some of your special childhood memories, told us how you like to relax here and told us the places where you take your friends.

The role of the NRM Board is to champion sustainable use of the region's natural resources – knowing what's special to our community will help the NRM Board balance the needs of our industries with our community values.

The SAAL NRM Board is now planning the next steps in the Regional NRM Plan development – combining your values with the latest science to set the priorities for NRM planning.

You can expect to hear more in 2015 on what you told us about what you value, what the science is telling us about how our landscapes function and the threats and pressures to those land systems, and how you can get help the Board and our six district-based NRM Groups prioritise management actions to ensure a sustainable future.

Natural water flows

Healthy country for grazing and native animals

Finding shield shrimps in puddles of water after rain

Simpson Desert – sunsets, hot springs, solitude, howling dingoes

Camp cooking with friends

Helping keep families on the land

Peaceful spots along creeks and waterholes

Looking at stars and sky, finding satellites

Emu eggs about to hatch at Wilkatana

Sitting on sand dune with glass of wine and no one around



The Coordinators and Presidents of the region's various volunteer groups joined 35 other volunteers for the SAAL NRM Board's Volunteer Appreciation Night in October. Over nibbles and wine they generously shared with the Board what's special to them about the region and what keeps them coming back to volunteer here year after year.



...continued from page 01

It is also home to huge reserves of fossil fuels, large cattle stations, scattered townships, and tourists attracted to the outback experience.

With the Basin extending across South Australia, the Northern Territory, Queensland, and into New South Wales, the need to share responsibility for this important area and to protect the free flowing systems from unbridled development was first recognised in the mid-1990s and formalised through the Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement in 2001.

Two decades on, we are fortunate to have active cross-border collaboration between states, the Northern Territory and the Australian Government with stakeholders working towards a consistent approach to keeping the Basin – and the communities, industries, and plants and animals that it supports – productive and healthy.

Not only is this arid river system unique, the people and the LEB process is too.

In particular the LEB partnership has understood the value of working with people – our Lake Eyre Basin communities – through its community advisory committee (LEBCAC).

LEBCAC brings people together from a diversity of backgrounds – Aboriginal, mining, tourism, pastoral, scientific, conservation – and from different jurisdictions, all with the one common goal of looking after what we have.

In fact the Riverprize was won because of the role community plays in the partnership process and in managing the rivers of the basin.

Information sharing and collaboration is key and the LEB partnership has been responsible for a biennial conference – the most recent one in Port Augusta in 2013 – that joins land managers, researchers, historians, ecologists, and climate specialists with government and industry representatives.

We also have the ear of our various governments, providing community feedback and high-quality scientific advice at least once a year to the Ministerial Forum to support the development of policies and strategies for the Lake Eyre Basin.

It is thanks to this partnership and community involvement that the LEB remains in pretty good shape.

Looking at other river systems around the world, this is unusual – Riverprizes are usual

presented to acknowledge work that is being done to rectify and remediate river systems.

I am proud to be representing the SAAL NRM Board through the community advisory committee, a position that I took over in 2011 from former Presiding Member Chris Reed.

I am also proud to be a member of a Board that has supported and directed Australian Government funding to important work in South Australia to better understand the Diamantina, Neales-Peake and Cooper Creek catchments of the Lake Eyre Basin and, that other great system, the Great Artesian Basin.

On behalf of the Board, I congratulate the many people who have contributed to the success of the LEB partnership and, in keeping with the nature of the prize, I give particular thanks to the grassroots efforts of SA Arid Lands community members Maree Morton and Sharon Oldfield for their long-standing contributions and passion for protecting the special values of the Lake Eyre Basin.

The \$200,000 prize money will be spent on initiatives that support the sustainable management of this unique catchment.



The SAAL NRM Board are offering a package deal to land managers or people with an interest in natural resources management in the SA Arid Lands region to attend this exciting four-day event.

Are you interested in learning about rangelands communication, leadership and making the most of long distance relationships, mining and resource management, water sharing in the rangelands, pastoral production, natural resources management, emerging and alternative industries, or policy directions?

Delegates will share their ideas and experience of how to nurture, then develop and share, innovative solutions to the challenges of living successfully in our rangelands environments, where climate extremes, remote urban decision making and small, isolated communities are common.

The people who live and work in the rangelands have generated many imaginative and practical solutions to living in the rangelands. This is the opportunity to hear about these solutions and consider what else needs to be done.

Places are limited – so register your interest today!

Register your interest by 10 February 2015 – contact Regional Landcare Facilitator Lisa Stevens 8648 5300, 0438 720 469 or email lisa.stevens@sa.gov.au. For further information visit arsconference.com.au or naturalresources.sa.gov.au/aridlands

The SAAL NRM Board will cover five nights accommodation in Alice Springs, and the full conference registration which includes the welcome and BBQ functions, conference dinner and one of the four field trips.





From L-R: Peter Litchfield, Gordon Lillecrapp, David Bell, Adam Litchfield, Shane Oldfield



Anne Collins



Anne Collins

Lyn Litchfield and Cindy Mitchell



FIELD DAY IN MARREE 28 OCTOBER 2014

More than 100 people gathered in Marree recently for the pastoral beef field day, "Profit Drivers and Innovation". The day was an excellent opportunity for the regional community to catch up on the latest news, information and technology relevant to the beef industry.

Stuart Paul, Regional Manager, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, also launched the booklet *Linking business success with landcare* the culmination of many years work by producer group Outback Lakes SA to develop their Environmental Management System, a shared vision of responsible land management and productivity.

For further information about Outback Lakes SA or their Environmental Management System visit www.outbacklakessa.com.au

GRADER WORKSHOP

APRIL 2015



REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

Are you interested in improving your grader skills, track design and knowledge?

Save yourself time and dollars. Learn how to improve your station roads and tracks and maintain your pastoral country.

Training will be delivered by Alice Springs-based soil conservation expert Col Stanton a well-known and experienced operator in track maintenance in rangelands environments. Col will demonstrate practical skills in track design and maintenance, drain location and design as well as grading techniques and maintenance.

The workshops are open to land managers, contractors and government staff working in the SA Arid Lands region and are currently scheduled for each NRM district in April 2015.

Further information to follow.

To register your interest contact Lisa Stevens (Regional Landcare Facilitator)
8648 5300, 0438 720 469 or lisa.stevens@sa.gov.au



Government of South Australia
South Australian Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board

These workshops are delivered by Natural Resources SA Arid Lands on behalf of the SA Arid Lands NRM Board with Australian Government funding.



Land managers urged to maintain wild dog control

Aerial wild dog baiting inside (south of) the Dog Fence will occur from March next year but the SA Arid Lands NRM Board and Biosecurity SA are urging land managers to also continue their ground baiting efforts.

For the past three years, Biosecurity SA's aerial baiting has complemented the SA Arid Lands NRM Board's *Biteback* ground baiting program by targeting inaccessible areas such as lake margins and rocky ranges.

Biosecurity SA and the SAAL NRM Board work closely to align their programs but since aerial baiting was introduced there has been a drop off in ground baiting participation.

"Aerial baiting helps to fill in some of the gaps, but as long as some land managers fail to substantially participate in the *Biteback* ground baiting program, wild dogs will continue to have a significant impact," said Janet Brook, Presiding Member, SA Arid Lands NRM Board.

"Wild dogs have been a major problem for the past few years but with large parts of the north in serious drought and less pressure on the Dog Fence, this will be the best opportunity in years to get on top of residual wild dogs inside the fence."

The aerial baiting, planned for 23-31 March 2015, will mimic the previous program which saw 50,000 baits laid along a 10,000 kilometre flight path on 95 properties.

Participating land managers will be approached in the next few weeks to review and sign off on proposed flight paths. All baiting is done to a high level of accuracy using GPS mapping so that baits are laid only where specified by land managers.

Land managers will also be sought to help for a day to cut up and dry the 50,000 baits needed for the program.

For further information on the aerial baiting program contact Peter Bird, Biosecurity SA, 8303 9519

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

NRM BOARD ENDORSES REGIONAL DOG PLAN

The SA Arid Lands Wild Dog Management Plan was endorsed at the December SAAL NRM Board meeting and will be launched at the Wild Dog Consultation Forum in February (see p. 7).

The Plan is an important document for the Board and for the region, providing guidance to land managers and government staff to conduct wild dog management throughout the SA Arid Lands region to 2017.

The Board praised the work of Wild Dog Project Manager Heather Miller in working with interested stakeholders through all phases of the plan's development.

The Board now encourages the SA Arid Lands community to consider the statewide plan – *Wild Dog Strategic Plan for South Australia* – devised by the SA Wild Dog Advisory Group. This plan provides for a cooperative approach to wild dog management by government, industry and community across South Australia over 2014-18.

It is available for download here: www.environment.sa.gov.au/haveyoursay/wild-dog-strategic-plan

The SAAL Wild Dog Management Plan can be downloaded here: www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au



Drought initiatives for wild dog control

Register your interest...

As reported in the October edition of *Across The Outback*, a range of measures to step up wild dog control in the region are being made available to land managers.

Land managers inside the Dog Fence are encouraged to register their interest in having a professional dog trapper visit their property or to participate in trapping workshops planned for the new year.

Outside (north of) the Dog Fence, volunteer shooters are being made available to interested properties.

Subsidised manufactured baits are also available to land managers across the region.

These initiatives are being delivered on behalf of the SAAL NRM Board and Livestock SA with State and Australian Government drought assistance funding.

For further details on these initiatives contact Greg Patrick, Biosecurity Team, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.

WILD DOG CONSULTATION FORUM

Thursday 12 February
2015, 10am-4pm

Port Augusta Sporting
and Social Club,
3 Hannagan St

Lunch is provided

Concerned about wild dog management in South Australia? The South Australian Wild Dog Advisory Group have finalised the draft *Wild Dog Strategic Plan for South Australia* and we want to know what you think.

Wild dogs, including dingoes and their hybrids, are both a pest of livestock and a wildlife species with ecological and cultural values.

The aim of the draft Strategic Plan is to find a balance between these two competing interests.

The forum will also launch the SA Arid Lands NRM Board's *SA Arid Lands Wild Dog Management Plan* and discuss the proposed review of the State Dingo Policy and new developments in wild dog control including employing trappers.

All sectors of the community with an interest in wild dog management are invited to the forum.

The event is being held by the SA Wild Dog Advisory Group with support from Biosecurity SA and the SA Arid Lands NRM Board.

If you can't attend but would like to comment on the draft *Wild Dog Strategic Plan for South Australia* visit www.environment.sa.gov.au/haveyoursay/wild-dog-strategic-plan

Comments close on 27 February.

For further information or to RSVP contact Peter Bird, Biosecurity SA, 8303 9519 or peter.bird@sa.gov.au

Please RSVP by Friday 6 February.



Government
of South Australia





Understanding Idnya behaviours

Across The Outback has been reporting on the trial release of 41 Western Quolls (Idnya) since they were released in the Flinders Ranges National Park in April. This project has brought together a range of volunteers and partners but also university students who have been conducting important research into Idnya behaviours.

PhD student Melissa Jensen (University of Adelaide) has been involved with the project from the start, with her work on the ground important in investigating potential shelter sites (eg tree hollows, burrows and rock crevices) before the Idnya were released into Wilpena Pound and along the Wilcololo Track.

After the release, she monitored the sorts of shelters that were being used by the reintroduced Idnya.

Melissa is also interested in understanding whether the way Idnya are released back into the environment will affect the success of reintroduction.

Back in April, 10 Idnya were “soft” released into 10 by 10 metre pens where they were kept for 10 days before being released in the wild; the remaining 31 Idnya were “hard” released directly into the wild.

Melissa has been tracking the response of these Idnya and whether the soft-release pens has helped them acclimatise to their environment and thereby improve their chances of survival.

She has also been investigating the Idnya’s individual temperament types and stress levels by observing their behaviour before and after release into the wild, and by analysing the stress hormones

in their scats – would Idnya that showed more cautious characteristics survive better in the wild than ones that are bold or aggressive? And would there be differences in their reproductive success or movement? And is there a pattern evident with stress levels?

Meanwhile, before the Idnya were released, in order to support their successful reintroduction, it was first necessary to know what potential predators and competitors of the Idnya occurred in the Flinders Ranges National Park and at what densities.

Honours student Alyson Stobo-Wilson (University of Tasmania) spent the year looking at the influence of fox-baiting on both fox and feral cat activity as well as prey species, such as rabbits, goannas and Idnya.

With cats removed from the Idnya reintroduction area prior to their release, Alyson has also been interested in whether this has resulted in a reduction in cat activity.

FAME and DEWNR thank Melissa and Alyson for their time on this important project and for their contribution to improving our knowledge of the habits and behaviours of the Idnya.



Melissa Jensen with newly radio-collared juvenile quoll



Juvenile quoll

TRAPPING THE IDNYA

The project team spent a fortnight in early December conducting intensive trapping of Idnya to evaluate the ecological success of the trial – with most of the collars off the Idnya, the team are particularly keen to trap as many adult and juvenile quolls as possible to see that they are surviving in the wild. We’ll present the results of the trapping in the next edition of *Across The Outback*.

Thanks to the many volunteers, contractors, donors, land managers and partners of *Bounceback* and **FAME** for their support for this project.

FAME is leading the drive to raise approximately \$1.7 million over a five year period to support the recovery of the Idnya. They need your help to continue this vitally important project and make it the success it deserves to be. Donations to the Western Quoll project can be made by visiting fame.org.au/projects/western-quoll or contact fame@fame.org.au for more information.





Dalhousie classroom for Roxby students

Four Year 12 students from Roxby Downs Area School enjoyed a hands-on learning experience when they travelled to Dalhousie Springs over five days in September in a field trip led by water scientist Travis Gotch. A popular outback identify, it's difficult not to share Travis' excitement for all that is "awesome" about the Great Artesian Basin springs and the experience of these students' proved no exception.

A world expert on the region's Great Artesian Basin springs – and renowned for his tall stories and ability to talk the leg of the proverbial donkey – Travis has been conducting research on the springs on behalf of the SAAL NRM Board for 10 years.

The four Environmental Studies students – Lachlan Hancock, Brody Davis, Nathan Rainsford and Alex Burton – were selected by their teacher Lee Copeland to assist Travis in his latest fieldwork as part of their outdoor education project.

Throughout 2014 Travis had met with various classes to talk about the GAB springs and conduct workshops on how to use a GPS and basic field survey techniques and bush skills – this was a chance for these students to put some of these skills into action.

With their teacher in tow, the students piled into a troop carrier, threw their swags in the back of Travis' ute and followed him up the Borefield Road and Oodnadatta Track, stopping at key springs and waterholes along the way.

"The drive was a real eye opener and we were able to visit several places...including Coward Springs and The Bubbler, which



Assessing vegetation cover at an unnamed spring tail at Dalhousie Springs



From L-R: Lachie Hancock, Alex Burton, Nathan Rainsford, Brodie Davis

we had all heard of but [had not] actually seen," the students later wrote in a thank you letter.

But it wasn't just about sightseeing: "We had several amazing...opportunities... learning about the different Flora and Fauna that...[inhabit] the region."

At Dalhousie Springs the group was also able to get their hands dirty surveying the spring tails, identifying the various reeds and sedges and assessing the proportion of vegetation cover.

They also got to see the Dalhousie Catfish and Dalhousie Hardyheads, so named because they occur only in these springs.

For Travis, the experience was also rewarding: "A lot of the kids don't get out north of Roxby so it was a good opportunity for them to see the real outback not just a mining town," he said. "It was awesome to talk to them about how springs develop, and about groundwater conservation and to show them some of the management issues associated with free flowing bore drains and the work being done to cap them."

On their part, the students enjoyed getting out of the classroom and into the field.

"Having the ability to learn...out in the environment [meant] we were able to associate the information with real life scenarios and gain an understanding of the impacts that different species can have on the natural environment."

"...this is probably the most effective learning experience that we take from the year, and we have already recommended to everyone back at school that if they get the chance to take this subject in future years then they absolutely should."

The students were keen to thank Travis for leading the trip and for his "wealth of knowledge", and Dean AhChee, Tony Magor, Frank Lyman and the Witjira National Park Co-Management Board for approval to take part in the expedition and for use of the rangers' facilities.

The work is part of a four year SAAL NRM Board/Australian Government-funded project to develop and implement management actions to restore and maintain the GAB spring habitat.

SAAL NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, Witjira National Park Co-management Board, Australian Government

TRAVIS ON THE MOVE

Travis Gotch will bid farewell to Roxby Downs in January as he relocates to Adelaide to be closer to his family. He has enjoyed being part of the Roxby community and will miss living in the bush; however, he will still be seen around town as he continues his work in the region on the GAB springs. Travis can be contacted on 0417 869 525.



Movement-activated cameras installed on the Innamincka Regional Reserve and Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park helped to inform feral pig numbers and locations in preparation for feral pig removal conducted on the Cooper Creek catchment in November. As the catchment's ephemeral waterholes continue to dry up and water becomes more scarce, so too have the pigs. The removal team also included PhD candidate, Toni Dalziel and her assistant who collected tissue samples from culled pigs to inform her investigation of the exposure of pigs to avian influenza as a potential vector for infecting humans.

PARKINSONIA DISCOVERY AND ACTION

Alinta Energy staff at Leigh Creek recently recognised a "strange" tree growing in a watercourse which runs through their mine lease.

Identified as one of Australia's worst invasive weeds – Parkinsonia (*Parkinsonia aculeata*) – their Compliance Officer responded by surveying the creekline and cutting and swabbing a further four juvenile plants.

Parkinsonia is a Weed of National Significance and a declared species under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*. Alinta Energy notified Natural Resources SA Arid Lands and will continue to monitor the creekline for any future Parkinsonia occurrences.

Under the *NRM Act 2004*, all land managers are responsible for control of declared weeds on their land and to notify authorities and Alinta Energy are commended for their best practice example and swift action.



Parkinsonia

African Boxthorn removal



WORKING TOGETHER TO TACKLE AFRICAN BOXTHORN

African Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*), a Weed of National Significance and a priority weed identified in the North East Pastoral District Weed Strategy (see p. 11), has been the target for a number of activities in the North East Pastoral district with the Oлары Weed Management Group targeting over 2000 hectares for control works.

Six land managers – referred to as the Oлары Weed Management Group – have been collaborating to carry out African Boxthorn control along drainage lines and floodplains and across property boundaries for several years.

Various control techniques have been used depending on the targeted site and its proximity to native vegetation and watercourses.

Individual African Boxthorns, spread across paddocks surrounding the drainage lines, have been manually removed using loaders while dense thickets have been sprayed.

One participating land manager, Michael Parker (Bindarra Station), says it's really important to control African Boxthorn on drainage lines and floodplains in the district.

"This control removes the source of seed that flows down the creeks and on to neighbours' properties," he said.

"If my neighbours' also carry out control, I have a better chance of continuing effective control on my property and vice versa."



The Marla Oodnadatta NRM Group and community members took time out to visit a rare endemic plant restricted to the Breakaways Land system. Barker's Pussytail (*Ptilotus barkerii*) is a small rounded shrub, with small dark green leaves and numerous pink white flowers on its tips. This small population of Barker's Pussytail was found miraculously still surviving in the precious stones mining area around Coober Pedy township.

From L-R: Marla-Oodnadatta NRM Group members Jackie Williams, Christel Hauri and Caroline Thomas with Chevahn Hoad



Prioritising weeds at a NRM district level

The North East Pastoral, Marree-Innaminka and Marla-Oodnadatta NRM districts now have five-year strategies to guide the top weed management priorities in each district thanks to the work of their NRM Groups.

The strategies identify priority weeds, outline management actions to reduce the current and potential impacts and detail current best practice control methods and surveying and monitoring activities.

The NRM Groups, in conjunction with district communities, nominated weed species that were significant in their districts, which as a result, formed the basis for the evaluation process to recommend priority weeds to be included in each strategy.

Weeds nominated by the Groups, communities and Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff were risk assessed with the species posing the most threat to each district included.

Other weeds that rated as a low priority and therefore unlikely to attract funding for control – including Onion Weed (*Asphodelus fistulosus*) – were not included.

The strategies recognise that the six NRM districts making up the SA Arid Lands region share many commonalities, but not necessarily when it comes to priority weeds.

Weed distribution and abundance, and in some instances the absence of a weed species, varies from district to district.

Opuntiod cacti (*Opuntia* spp.), for example, are a priority weed species in the North Flinders district where they are highly invasive and difficult to control, especially in steep rocky gorges.

However, this group of weeds don't rate in the Marree-Innaminka district where there are no known infestations.

In the Marree-Innaminka and Marla-Oodnadatta districts, however, Mimosa Bush (*Acacia farnesiana*) is identified as a priority weed because it is a threat to ephemeral waterways associated with the northern districts but it is not currently considered a threat within the four southern districts.

The NRM Groups were key in ensuring that the needs of the community were reflected in the strategy.

A notable example of this was the Marree-Innaminka NRM Group's request that best practice physical removal of their priority weeds was included for reference by properties with organic status.

This inclusion is now reflected in the two other district weed strategies.

The Gawler Ranges, North Flinders and Kingoonya NRM district weed strategy reviews have begun and will be completed in 2015.

Further information

If you would like a copy of the North East Pastoral, Marree-Innaminka or Marla-Oodnadatta NRM District Weed Strategy or for further information contact Paul Hodges, Biosecurity Project Officer 8648 5300 or paul.hodges@sa.gov.au

North East Pastoral NRM Group, Marree-Innaminka NRM Group, Marla-Oodnadatta NRM Group, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, SAAL NRM Board, Australian Government



Wipa rockhole restored by Traditional Owners

At Teyon Station in the far north of the SA Arid Lands region, the native title holders, the Tjajiwara Unmuru people, undertook the restoration of the Wipa rockhole, a culturally and ecologically significant water body that had over time become considerably degraded.

Rockholes are culturally significant to the Tjajiwara Unmuru people because they are associated with traditional mythology and law, and historically shaped migration patterns as groups of people 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.

Traditional custodian practice of caring for rockholes in the area had been interrupted and as a result the Wipa rockhole had silted up with sediment and debris and no longer held the amount of water which it would have at the time of traditional subsistence living.

Seven members of the Tjajiwara Unmuru community and others worked together over three days, removing approximately 28 cubic metres of sediment from the rockhole.

To prevent damage to the rockface, the sediment was largely shoveled by hand into a bobcat bucket, rather than the bobcat doing the heavy lifting.

Mary Tjaruwa Anderson, Chairperson of the Tjajiwara Unmuru Aboriginal Corporation (TUAC), said "We have

wanted to do this work for a long time, these rockholes are very special and to have now completed the work, we can all feel proud of what we have done to look after country.

It would be great if we could get more funding to continue this work, to tend to the rockholes on a regular basis like in the old days."

This project was identified as an extension activity of the *Kapi Palya Kanyintjaku – Protecting significant water places in our Country* project in 2011-2012. In addition to the now completed works at the Wipa rockhole, ongoing engagement with representatives of TUAC may continue to develop other rockhole protection work in the future.

SA Native Title Services, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, SAAL NRM Board, Australian Government



From L-R: Ray Lennon, Kevin James and Donald Grant shifting silt largely by hand



New name and plan for Coongie Lakes National Park

Coongie Lakes National Park in the Marree-Innamincka district has formally been co-named and has adopted a dedicated park management plan. The park is now co-named as the **Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park** and the Plan will guide how the park will be managed into the future.

The Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Traditional Land Owners Association was consulted on a suitable name for co-naming the area with the Traditional Owners advising that the name for the area is "Malkumba" which identifies the bodies of water "where the serpent rests".

In announcing the co-naming in August the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation Ian Hunter remarked on the special cultural and biodiversity values of the Park.

"The lakes area is listed as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance and is one of the state's most spectacular natural attractions with pristine waterways hosting a diversity of wildlife – and I'm pleased its new name acknowledges the land's Traditional Owners."

In 2009, the State of South Australia and the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Traditional Lands Owners entered into a Co-management Agreement and the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Parks Advisory Committee was formed.

The Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people through the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Parks Advisory Committee, and the Department for Environment,

Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) have devised the Plan in consultation with stakeholders and it centres on three themes of continuing traditional management; enhancing the ecological character of the Coongie Lakes; and providing a unique and sustainable visitor experience.

Malkumba-Coongie Lakes Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Parks Advisory Committee chair Rob Singleton said that, "sharing the stories and the importance of caring for our land with the wider community will help us all sustain and protect this beautiful part of our state."

To download a copy of the Plan visit: www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/Park_management/Management_plans/Adopted_management_plans

Further information

For further information about Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park contact Erik Dahl, Innamincka Ranger in Charge 8675 9909

Malkumba-Coongie Lakes

Paul Wainwright

SIMPSON DESERT AND REMOTE TRACKS — SUMMER CLOSURE

The Simpson Desert and four Public Access Routes (PARs) located in the State's outback will be closed over the hottest months of the year to ensure the safety of visitors and emergency personnel.

The closures apply from Sunday 30 November 2014 to Sunday 15 March 2015 and affect the Simpson Desert Conservation Park and Regional Reserve, Perdirka (PAR No. 18), Halligan Bay (PAR No. 13), K1 Warburton Crossing (PAR No. 15) and Walkers Crossing (PAR No.16).

The areas are closed during summer to prevent potential life threatening situations from arising.

For further information on these annual summer closures visit www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/aridlands/news



Calytrix tetragona (flowering) and *Acacia havilandiorum* on North Tusk Hill, Gammon Ranges

Walking group on North Tusk hill, joined by Lindsay Brown, Senior Ranger VGRNP



Volunteers celebrate 26 years recording rainfall in the Gammons

Members of the Scientific Expedition Group recently celebrated 26 years recording rainfall in the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park taking a three day trek to the Gammon Plateau in October where they cracked open the champagne. SEG volunteer Nadine Brown kindly shares the experience with *Across The Outback* and provides an insight into the group's history and some of the important work that this group of volunteers has been doing.

The Scientific Expedition Group (SEG) was initially set up to encourage young people (16-25 year olds) with a scientific interest to participate in biological surveys.

In 1988, some of the founding members were puzzled by the irregularity of rainfall in the northern Flinders Ranges and sought to establish a method to record rainfall in the Ranges which they assumed to be different to that of the surrounding area.

Today, SEG maintains eight rain gauges – or pluviometers – in the Flinders Ranges area, six of which are in the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park.

Chris Wright, the organiser and driving force of this group, recalls that when monitoring first began in 1988, it was necessary to check the gauges five times a year in order to change the batteries and access data – but with improved technology over the years, this has been reduced to once annually.

Five of the six gauges in Arcoona Creek are now automatic, and data transmitted from the Plateau can be retrieved immediately by the Bureau of Meteorology in Adelaide.

In addition to monitoring rainfall, SEG has also set up six vegetation photopoint sites that are visited twice yearly by volunteers.

Over the years the group has expanded their involvement to include monitoring vegetation change through photopoints and exclosures; Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby monitoring; water monitoring; fox baiting; and establishing pitfall traps to monitor native animals.

The group covers some ground and does some heavy lifting with all materials needed for these projects largely carried in on foot.

The celebration on North Tusk Hill

To mark their 26 years, 18 past and present SEG members came together in October, walking from Arcoona Campground at the western end of the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park to Vandenberg base camp nine kilometres upstream along Arcoona Creek.

From here, the gauging station on the Plateau can be accessed via a steep climb up North Tusk Hill.

As the highest automatic rain gauge in the State it was a fitting spot for the group's celebrations and it presented only a small challenge for this scientific group to devise an ingenious method using dry ice to keep the bottles of champagne cold for two days! All members commented that there has been a huge improvement in the vegetation cover

in the area with the reduction of goat and rabbit numbers. Certainly on the weekend of the walk the vegetation was stunning.

Calytrix tetragona was flowering in profusion on North Tusk hill, along with Sennas, Halganias, various daisies, Greenhood orchids, Dianellas and other lilies, just to mention a few.

SEG is an amazing group of dedicated volunteers who have maintained enthusiasm for three decades. When they began in 1988, it was thought that if they could continue their involvement in this project for 10 years then they would be happy. Twenty-six years on, they certainly have cause to celebrate.

GET INVOLVED!

SEG is keen to recruit new members. For further information and for more about our other projects – including fauna trapping at Minnowarra, mallee fowl monitoring in the Murraylands, and the Southern Fleurieu road reserves project, visit www.communitywebs.org/scientificexpeditiongroup.



Moving stock interstate? You'll need a livestock health certificate

Did you know that livestock health certificates and waybills are required by most interstate jurisdictions when moving animals across the border? This article provides some advice to South Australia's pastoral land managers who are planning to move livestock interstate.

Whenever sheep or cattle are moved interstate for sale, agistment or slaughter you may be required to send an appropriately completed livestock health certificate/waybill.

These health certificates are generally available online from the relevant government website – see the links below – in the state or territory to which you intend to move your stock.

In many cases some portion of the certificate will need to be completed and signed by an Animal Health Officer or a private veterinarian.

If you are thinking about moving livestock interstate, start planning well in advance of the anticipated movement time. Look on the relevant website and print off a copy of the relevant health certificate/waybill.

Forms and requirements change periodically, so make sure you have the most up to date information.

You will also need to understand the requirements of the receiving state or territory. For example:

- Are the animals eligible to enter the place you are intending to send them?

- Do the animals require some testing before being sent?
- Do you need to get the animals inspected?
- Who is going to do the inspection?
- Do the animals need to be shorn or checked for weed seeds?
- Do you need to provide prior warning of entry?
- Do you need to send copies of the health certificate/waybill to an interstate department?
- How long do you have to hold onto copies of health certificate/waybills?

If you need an Animal Health Officer or veterinarian to sign the health certificate/waybill or complete some testing or inspection contact them well in advance of the proposed movement date.

It is a lot better to have a completed health certificate/waybill well in advance and not need it because the proposed movement hasn't occurred, than trying to find someone to sign off on the paperwork only days before the movement is scheduled.

CHECK THESE WEBSITES FOR INTERSTATE REQUIREMENTS...

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

www.agric.wa.gov.au/livestock-movement-identification/importing-livestock-western-australia

NORTHERN TERRITORY

www.nt.gov.au/d/Primary_Industry/

QUEENSLAND

www.daff.qld.gov.au/animal-industries/moving-selling-livestock/livestock-entry-requirements-for-queensland

NEW SOUTH WALES

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/stock-movements

Further information

Contact Trent Scholz,
PIRSA Animal Health Officer,
Biosecurity SA
0427 970 453, 8648 5166 or
trent.scholzs@sa.gov.au



Jenny Roland

The Innamincka Cemetery after the clean-up and with graves marked out with gibber stones

ACROSS THE OUTBACK

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Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Please contact jenny.barker@sa.gov.au or 8463 3354

This edition edited by Meg Barker and Jenny Barker.



Government of South Australia

Content for the February edition due COB Friday 13 February 2015

The mystery surrounding Innamincka Cemetery

Across The Outback often reports on the work of various groups who combine volunteering with their travel and enjoyment of the region. Usually we're reporting on their environmental projects but some of our groups also get involved in valuable community work and in heritage restoration. For the past few years, Friends of Innamincka Regional Reserve has been piecing together the history of the Innamincka Cemetery and its occupants – and it reads like a good “whodunit”.

Sitting just on the outskirts of Innamincka, the Innamincka Cemetery was looking rather neglected until the Friends of Innamincka Regional Reserve (FOIR) turned their energies to it.

Work started in 2011 when members put a new fence around the cemetery and noticed how few graves were marked or had headstones.

“After the 2010 floods, the cemetery had become overgrown and we worked for days, clearing the weeds and trying to maintain the outline of the known graves,” said Kate Buckley, FOIR President.

Their interest piqued, several members started researching the lives and deaths of people connected with Innamincka.

“The Outback Communities Authority in Port Augusta had no records and Genealogy SA had little detail but the librarian at the Burra Library – an avid historian – provided a great deal of useful information and directions for where to search.”

Various books and websites were then used to compile a list of people who had lived or died in Innamincka.

“We traced some detail on 60 people who had died in the Innamincka region since the period of Burke and Wills,” said Kate. “Some of the names were of Indigenous folk, perhaps members of the Yandruwandha or Yawarrawarrka peoples.”

But there was also a lack of detail about the cemetery such as lot numbers or a cemetery plan; the next breakthrough came in 2013 after ground penetrating radar was used to identify another 30 unmarked graves.

“The radar confirmed the 34 graves that were visible or partially visible – nine of which had headstones – and revealed an additional 30 unmarked plots where the earth had been disturbed in a manner consistent with a burial site.”

This year during their annual working bee FOIR members spent two days with a GPS measuring these new unmarked graves, and outlining them with gibber stones to match the rest of the graves.

“It was evident from the east-west orientation of some of the graves that they are the resting place of some of the very early immigrants to this area, the cameleers, or Afghans, who maintained their Muslim faith,” said Kate.

Armed with the knowledge of the grave locations, the group continue their work trying to connect as many names as possible with the burial sites and are still chasing up leads.

“After advice that the town policeman would have kept a record of deaths at Innamincka, I have been in touch with the Retired Police Association – but so far to no avail.”

Friends of Innamincka Regional Reserve thank Tony Magor (Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources) for his continuing support for their work and for organising Ian Moffat (Flinders University Archaeology Department) and Julia Garnaut to carry out the ground penetrating radar at the cemetery.

CAN YOU HELP?

If you think you can shed more light on the Innamincka Cemetery or you would like to know more about the Friends of The Innamincka Regional Reserve contact Kate Buckley 0428 887 786. The full list of deaths associated with Innamincka is also available on their website friendsofinnamincka.org.au.