

NLIS requirements for spring ram purchases

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Industry & Investment

From 1 July 2010 the movement of all goats and sheep—including rams—needs to be reported on the NLIS (National Livestock Identification System) database.

If rams are purchased from a saleyard or public auction, the person in charge of the sale is responsible for recording the movement on the database (unless the terms of the sale

Below: All landholders buying rams this spring, regardless of breed, need to ensure that sheep movements on to their properties are recorded on the NLIS database. (photo source: *The Land*)

clearly transfer this responsibility to the buyer). For this to be done, the agent or ram seller will need the PIC (Property Identification Code) of the property where the animals will be delivered, so ram buyers need to take the appropriate PIC with them to the ram sale.

If rams are purchased privately, the purchaser is responsible for reporting the movement in the database. In both instances the movement needs to be reported within 7 days of the sale.

Entering information on the database is a simple process that uses the information listed on the NVD (National Vendor Declaration) and the PIC of the property receiving the animals. To register and create an account on the database visit: www.nlis.com.au. Alternatively, if you can't enter the movement electronically, contact the NLIS helpdesk on 1800 654 743 to request a Fee for Service Form M (Sheep and Goats).

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Hay sheep fly and lice workshop continued on despite the rain

As the rain keeps falling, the unbelievable is starting to happen, with boggy conditions beginning to hamper some district activities. Two Sheep Fly and Lice Workshops organised by I&I NSW had to be juggled around: the Kitcho workshop was postponed and the Hay workshop, held on 29 July, was moved from the Bedarbidgal woolshed to the Hay Field Station woolshed.

Reduce fly risk

Concentrating on reducing the susceptibility of the average flock to strikes by the *Lucilia cuprina* blowfly, the Hay workshop encouraged landholders to assess their own flocks for breech wrinkle and dags and fleece rot by using a flock scoring chart.

Mr Allan Casey, a Sheep Breeding Specialist based at the Orange Agricultural Institute, worked through how breeders can breed and select Merinos with lower risk of fly strike—that is, reduce both body and breech wrinkle—while at the same time still improving production. Mr Casey pointed out that it is a myth that fly-resistant Merinos are light cutters.

The next management tool discussed at the workshop helped landholders to develop a flystrike calendar that charts annual control strategies against the potential high-risk times of spring and summer.

Lice control

Lice was another important topic of the workshop. Treatment and control and regulatory issues were covered by a number of speakers, including Hugh Palmer from Elanco; Colin Peake, District Veterinary Officer from the Hay office of the Riverina LHPA; Bruce Pettitt from B & G Dipping Services; and Gemma Turnbull, Ectoparasite Control Coordinator from I&I NSW.

The BBQ lunch for the day was provided by I&I NSW Drought Support Worker Danny Byrnes, and the venue was supplied by Shane and Trish McGufficke (after the Matthews' woolshed at Bedarbidgal was no longer accessible!).

The next workshop will be held at Kitcho (north west of Oxley) on Wednesday 13 October 2010. RSVP by Friday, 8 October. Call Sally Ware, I&I NSW Hay, on 0429 307 627, or Bob and Gay McKeon on 02 6993 8173.

Below: Landholders scoring sheep for fleece rot at the NSW I&I Sheep Fly and Lice day held at the Hay Field Station in July. Photo: Sally Ware



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When rams are loaded for delivery to the destination property they must be accompanied on the journey by an original movement document. If the ram seller has provided you with a photocopy of an NVD, the rams must be transported with a TSS (Transported Stock Statement). The Police require all stock to be moved with an original movement document. The NVD is a movement document, but it must be original if it is to be valid in the eyes of the Police. TSSs are available from your Livestock Health and Pest Authority.

NVDs are required to be kept for 7 years. You have the option to use an electronic NVD, commonly known as an 'eDEC'. To register and download the eDEC program, go to the Livestock Production Assurance website at www.ausmeat.com.au/lpa/login.aspx and call 1800 683 111 for help to log in.

The NLIS Sheep and Goats system is slightly different from NLIS Cattle in that NLIS Sheep and Goats requires mob-based information, not individual animal identification. This means that tags do not have to be scanned, making it much easier to transfer animals as a mob on the database. The database will help to ensure that all livestock movements are recorded effectively, as each movement is linked to prior movements. To ensure that the mob-based system remains in use for the sheep and goat industry, landholders are strongly encouraged to implement the new system as efficiently as possible. A move to electronic tags for sheep is not a viable option for the majority of sheep producers and, in particular, for Western Division landholders.

Remember: When you are going to buy rams, take your PIC and do not transport rams without an original movement document!

Legal road network project

By Rex Miller and Maurice Cenzato, Legal Roads Network Project Team, Crown Lands Division (West), Land and Property Management Authority, Dubbo. Phone (02) 6883 5420 or (02) 6883 5417. E-mail: Rex.Miller@lpma.nsw.gov.au or Maurice.Cenzato@lpma.nsw.gov.au



The Legal Roads Network Project has now lodged plans identifying nearly 6000 km of road and 1400 km of restricted easements to landlocked properties in the Western Division.

The project is finalising roads and easements in the Central Darling Shire, with the last being the Trida Road east of Ivanhoe and the Barrier Highway east of Wilcannia into Cobar Shire, as well as Mt Doris Road and Coomeretta Road.

We have now moved into the Bourke Shire and are currently compiling plans for the Wanaaring Road between Wanaaring and Bourke. We have also started work on Mooleyarrah Road and Glenhope Road.

Landholders that have their primary access from these roads should have received paperwork outlining the actions required to ensure the provision of legal access. Landholders that have not returned their paperwork should do so as soon as possible to ensure their requirements are addressed.

It is important to remember that the Land and Property Management Authority's property transfer policy now requires legal access to be in place before any consent to transfer is granted. If applications are not returned by the due dates, then the opportunity to create an easement to a landlocked property will be missed. It will not be possible for the project to revisit these areas,

and any creation of legal access in the future will be at the landholder's expense, possibly running into several thousands of dollars.

The project team looks forward to your continued support so that an effective legal access system can be achieved in the Western Division.

**The 21st Annual 'Kilfera' Field Day
Ivanhoe NSW
Wednesday 29 September 2010,
commencing at 10 am**

A great family day out, featuring:

• Rural Products • Sheep and Cattle Studs • Machinery
• Craft • Manchester • Nursery and Government Agencies
Auction in aid of R.F.D.S. and the Ivanhoe Hospital

Exhibitor inquiries welcome

Contact: Clive, Fay and Peter Linnett, 'Kilfera', Ivanhoe.
Clive and Fay: Phone (02) 6995 1315. Fax (02) 6995 1224
Peter: (02) 6995 1442
E-mail: Kilfera1@bigpond.com

'Bringing Outback People Together'

21 years of fundraising

Getting connected: information technology support for the Hatfield region

By Joy Harris
'Round Plain'
Hatfield.
Phone (03) 5020 6887

The Hatfield/Homebush/Clare area was fortunate to receive a grant of \$23,900 through the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). The initiative, now concluded, was well received, and 32 families willingly took part in a combination of IT (information technology) classes and one-on-one tuition in their own homes. In addition, support was offered to help clear up niggling technical issues.

The initiative worked well, because participants could work at their own pace, on their own issues, on their own computers and in their own homes at no cost other than their time. The program was unanimously deemed a success, with all families recording how well it had worked for them and how much they had learned.

We acknowledge the support of Balranald Shire Council, who graciously agreed to manage the finances of the grant. Thank you for a job well done, as all accounts were promptly paid and budgetary reporting commitments were completed on time.

Credit goes to Karen Marr for conducting excellent classes, to Andrew and Amber Croft for obtaining the grant and delivering first-rate technical assistance, and to Ian Large for his exemplary teaching skills, technical knowledge and patience and for taking the time to fit all the residents of Hatfield, Clare and Homebush into his schedule.

This project has been very beneficial for our area; although applying for grants is often a long and difficult process, this an example of a local success story where the outcomes have all been positive.

Incentives for graziers in NSW disease surveillance

By Dermot McNerney
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Australia is recognised as free from a group of brain diseases known as TSEs (transmissible spongiform encephalopathies). TSEs include BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy or 'mad cow' disease) and scrapie in sheep. In order to retain our disease-free status, Australia is required to examine brain samples on an ongoing basis.

The presence of these TSE diseases overseas has led to extensive damage to European and US domestic and export markets and the extensive slaughter of stock. It is important that we keep these diseases out of our national herd, as similar losses would occur here in the event of such diseases being imported.

BSE also presents a risk to public health, as the infectious agent in cattle has been implicated as the cause of a human TSE, which is known as 'new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease'.

To maintain our disease-free status, a sample of our national flocks and herds is tested. The sampling requires a veterinarian to send the brain

of an animal that has died after showing signs that might fit with a TSE disease. Signs include staggering or nervous system or behavioural signs such as blindness or head-pressing. Of course, these signs are common in conditions such as plant poisoning, pregnancy toxemia, metabolic disorders and pulpy kidney, but in selecting animals with such signs we are more likely to pick up a case than by

simply randomly sampling the sheep and cattle population.

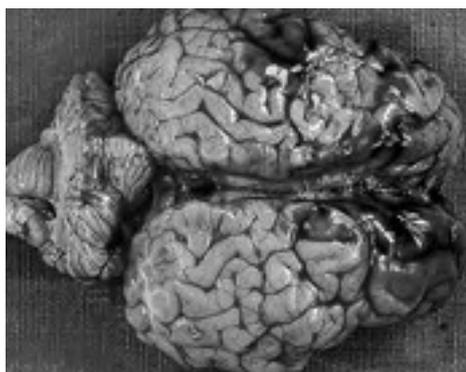
The NSW annual target is 87 cattle brains and 149 sheep brains. These sample numbers have been statistically calculated to ensure that, if TSE were present in the sheep and cattle population, we would quickly identify it.

The grazier receives compensation for an animal that would otherwise have been of no value. Animals that are terminally sick and look as though they are suffering from nervous system problems or showing similar signs before dying are also eligible. The grazier receives \$300 for each cattle brain and \$50 for each sheep brain. Private veterinarians are separately compensated for collecting and removing the intact brain, sending it to the laboratory, and documenting the case. In the Western Division, the NSW I&I veterinarian should be contacted if you believe you have eligible animals. There is a limit of two brains per property per clinical episode, and cattle must be at least 30 months and less than 9 years old. Eligible sheep must be at least 18 months of age.

In addition to the compensation mentioned, the TSE program covers the cost of laboratory tests to determine the reason for the animal's death or sickness. So the grazier gets two benefits: one is the payment for the sample, and the other is a free laboratory investigation of the cause of death.

Your veterinarian will be familiar with the details of the program and requirements.

Below: Brains wanted!
Landholders are asked to notify their local vet if they have sheep or cattle dying of diseases that might be TSE. The landholder receives \$300 for each cattle brain (like the one pictured) and \$50 for each sheep brain.



The Government Veterinarian's role in the Western Division

The Western Division of NSW is unique in that the Western LHPA (Livestock and Pest Authority) does not employ its own veterinarians. However, I&I (formerly DPI) has three veterinarians, based in Broken Hill, Bourke and Dareton, who work closely with the LHPA on animal health matters. I get telephone calls from graziers asking me to pregnancy test cows or replace a prolapsed uterus. In general this work is not government veterinary work. The work of the government veterinarian (and that of the LHPA District Veterinarian in all other parts of NSW) that affects the grazier can be summarised as follows:

- **Disease surveillance.** This ensures that disease incursions and emerging diseases are picked up early. For example, several deaths in a flock or herd may be a signal that a contagious disease is sweeping through the area. The government veterinarian will investigate to a) rule out an exotic or notifiable disease and b) determine the diagnosis and treatment to minimise further economic loss. The process nearly always starts with observations by the grazier, who might alert the LHPA or I&I. Together we work to ensure rapid disease control and continued access to markets.
- **Working alongside LHPA rangers to implement animal health priorities.** These include monitoring for ovine brucellosis and ensuring NLIS traceability of stock. NLIS traceability ensures access to markets and rapid disease control in the event of an exotic disease outbreak. In countries where adequate animal traceability systems have not been present, it has taken months and sometimes years to bring disease outbreaks under control, at enormous cost in terms of livestock slaughtering and loss of export markets. We work closely with the LHPA to ensure compliance with NLIS regulations for the good of the industry as a whole.
- **Food safety.** This ensures that production animals are free from chemical residues (e.g. lead, arsenic, DDT and antibiotics). For example, the LHPA or I&I may get calls that a couple of cattle have died and others are looking sick. These

may well be cases of 'heavy metal' poisoning, where stock have accessed old dumps where car batteries have been disposed of. As readers will know, lead and other heavy metals are toxic to humans, so procedures need to be implemented to protect the food chain. Not to do so would endanger both consumers and our export markets.

- **Emergency preparedness and response.** If an exotic (e.g. foot and mouth) or notifiable (e.g. anthrax) disease is suspected, then the government veterinarian is the first point of contact and knows what to do. The grazier is again more than likely to be the first person to notice that something is wrong. Careful noting by the grazier of clinical signs (e.g. scouring, drooling, dopiness, aggression) and history (e.g. stock movements, husbandry practices) makes the job of the veterinarian easier when making a diagnosis.
- **Disease-control programs within herds or flocks.** Examples include giving advice on internal and external parasite control, footrot and ovine brucellosis. Minimising the effects of herd diseases ensures a healthy product for the consumer, increased profitability for the producer, and continuing demand from our markets, both domestic and export.
- **Animal welfare.** We ensure that stock are farmed and handled humanely and with minimal discomfort.

The government veterinarian (or LHPA District veterinarian in other parts of NSW) is not authorised to undertake surgery on individual animals. Surgery, treatment of individual animals, pregnancy testing and companion animal work is the role of a private veterinarian. Similarly, government or LHPA involvement in horse work is limited to the exclusion of notifiable diseases such as equine influenza, strangles and Hendra virus or, if requested, helping private veterinarians with mob-based horse problems such as plant poisonings.

If you want to discuss these issues further or need government veterinary help, contact your local LHPA office or your local I&I NSW veterinary officer.

By Dermot McNerney
Veterinary Officer
Industry & Investment NSW
Dareton.
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Rangeland conference at Bourke: conference subsidy available

By subsidising conference registration by up to \$500 per person, the LMD CMA is offering LMD Catchment landholders the chance to attend this great biennial conference. You will need to forward a brief statement of purpose to LMD CMA before the conference date. More details are available from Susan Walla on (03) 5021 9460.



Monitoring the effectiveness of management actions in reserves



This project by the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority (LMD CMA) looked at the changes in vegetation condition in response to changes in land use (e.g. removal of grazing by domestic livestock).

Below: A coral snake that was captured in the pitfall surveys.

The project will help evaluate investments in the form of incentives provided to remove

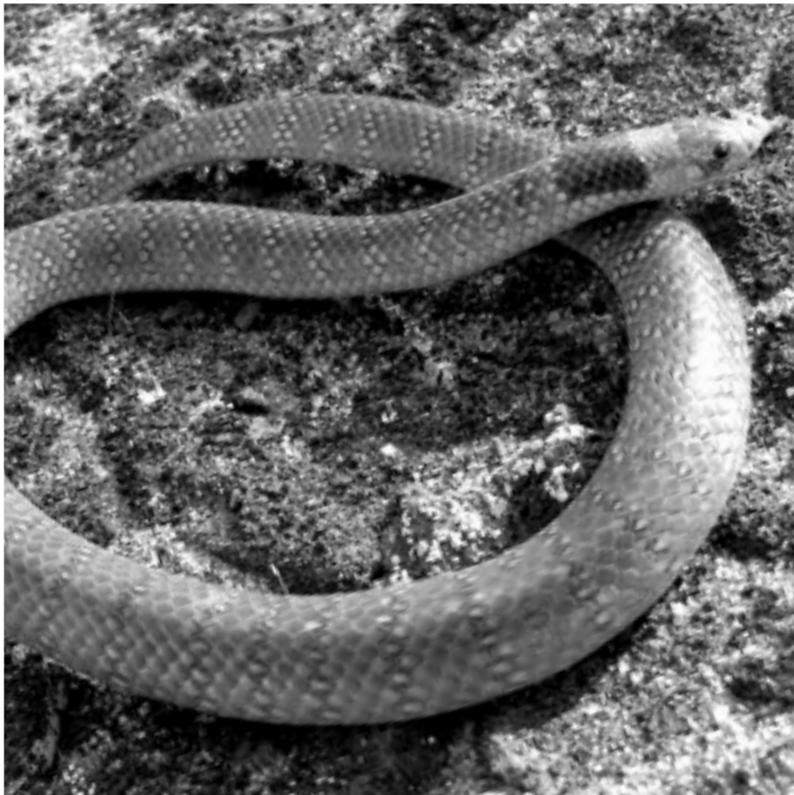
grazing from priority areas to protect biodiversity values. Grazing removal has resulted in improvements to vegetation condition and has provided an opportunity to gather additional information on the habitat requirements of protected and threatened species.

Across two stations, 'Wampo' and 'Joulni', 12 sites (six at each) were monitored. A total of 285 pitfall captures were made. Reptile species dominated, possibly because of the warmer than average temperatures at the time of trapping (November 2009).

As well as the pitfall surveys (to detect the types and abundance of both ground-dwelling mammals and reptiles), activities carried out at each site included bird surveys (to detect the type and abundance of birds), dung counts (domestic and feral) and assessment of vegetation condition.

A blind snake (*Ramphotyphlops wiedii*) was captured. Although this is not a threatened species, the capture may be the first known one of this species in the LMD catchment. Eighty bird species were also recorded, including two threatened species, the chestnut quail-thrush and pink cockatoo.

LMD CMA would like to thank participating landholders for allowing the monitoring to be done on their properties. We look forward to continuing to work with the community in projects such as this, to evaluate the success of investment at a catchment scale.



Great Anabranh booklet reprinted



The first record of European experience with the flow of the Great Anabranh was made by Captain Charles Sturt on 24 September 1844 as he travelled with his party up the western side of the lower Anabranh on his expedition into the interior of Australia. Since this time the Great Anabranh has seen some family names become synonymous with the area. Maxine Withers wrote a history of the Great Anabranh in 1994 that gives details of the Anabranh floods and flows since 1869. Maxine drew on the memories of her

grandmother. The Anabranh is the old path of the Darling River extending 460 km from its junction with the Darling River (south of the Menindee Lakes) to the Murray River.

Maxine's booklet has now been reprinted by the LMD CMA with kind permission of the NSW Office of Water. It is available to purchase for \$20.00, which includes P&H and GST. Contact the LMD CMA on (03) 50212 9460 to obtain a copy.

NSW Regional Landcare Facilitator working with landholders

The Lower Murray Darling Catchment Authority (LMD CMA) welcomes Bonnie Pettett to the position of NSW Regional Landcare Facilitator. This is a position that will promote Landcare and sustainable agriculture and will contribute to the uptake of sustainable farming practices

in a changing climate in our catchment. With a Bachelor of Science degree, Bonnie is fulfilling this position with enthusiasm, including helping groups to source funding. Bonnie can be contacted on (03) 5021 9460.



Hawkesbury-Nepean
Catchment Management Authority

PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF A POLICY (under Clause 28 of the Native Vegetation Regulation 2005) FOR NATIVE REVEGETATION INVOLVING MINOR CLEARING OF NATIVE VEGETATION IN THE CENTRAL WEST, HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN, HUNTER CENTRAL RIVERS, LACHLAN, LOWER MURRAY DARLING, MURRAY, MURRUMBIDGEE, NAMOI, NORTHERN RIVERS AND SOUTHERN RIVERS CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY AREAS

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Notification is hereby given for the exhibition of the draft Policy for native revegetation involving minor clearing of native vegetation in the above listed Catchment Management Authority (CMA) Areas.

The draft Policy was developed to facilitate streamlined approval of minor clearing of native vegetation associated with certain management techniques under the Property Vegetation Plan (PVP) process. The Policy sets out the circumstances in which minor clearing is likely to result in improved condition of native vegetation and prevent the long-term degradation of native vegetation on the land.

Public comment is invited on the draft Policy. Submissions must be in writing and be received no later than close of business on 23 September 2010. Hawkesbury-Nepean will be receiving submissions on behalf of all listed CMAs.

Submissions should be addressed to:

General Manager
Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA
Locked Bag 2048
Goulburn NSW 2580
or e-mail: john.reynolds@cma.nsw.gov.au

Copies of the draft Clause 28 Policy are available on the CMA websites:

Central West www.cw.cma.nsw.gov.au
Hawkesbury-Nepean www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au
Hunter Central Rivers www.hcr.cma.nsw.gov.au
Lachlan www.lachlan.cma.nsw.gov.au
Lower Murray Darling www.lmd.nsw.gov.au
Murray www.murray.nsw.gov.au
Murrumbidgee www.murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au
Namoi www.namoi.nsw.gov.au

Northern Rivers www.northern.nsw.gov.au
Southern Rivers www.southern.nsw.gov.au
Further information may be obtained by contacting the relevant CMA on:
Lachlan CMA: David Creeper 6851 9511
Lower Murray Darling CMA: Noel Hayward (03) 5021 9435
Murray CMA: David Costello 6051 2205
Murrumbidgee CMA: Janelle Jenkins 6932 3282

Some thoughts on planned grazing

By Ron Hacker, Director,
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Two of the central principles of planned (or cell) grazing systems are that the rest period should be related to the growth rate of the pasture and the regrowth must not be grazed too soon. In practice this means that rest periods—and therefore graze periods for any given number of paddocks—should be short when the pasture is growing fast and longer when the pasture is growing slowly.

It's worth noting the origin of these principles and considering how well they apply to the semi-arid and arid zone of western NSW. Surprisingly, they come from the work of André Voisin, a celebrated French pasture scientist, and are based on his work in dairy pastures in northern France. Voisin, in his very readable book *Grass Productivity*, published in 1961, established four 'Laws of Rational Grazing', as he termed his approach, which he argued were universal and must 'govern all rational grazing, whatever the soil conditions, climate, latitude or longitude'. These laws are (in my paraphrasing):

1. To achieve maximum pasture productivity, the interval between grazings must be sufficient to allow the pasture to (a) 'accumulate in its roots the reserves necessary for a vigorous spurt of regrowth' and (b) 'produce its blaze of growth'.
2. The duration of grazing must be short enough to ensure that pasture grazed on the first day is not grazed again before the animals leave the paddock.
3. Animals with the greatest nutritional requirement must be helped to harvest the greatest quantity of pasture of the best possible quality.
4. For regular milk yield the cow must not stay longer than 3 days in the one paddock.

Only the first three laws need concern us here—particularly the first, which Voisin argues 'determines the colossal increases in yield obtained from rational grazing', and of which the second is really just a corollary.

Alan Savory, the founder of Holistic Resource Management, picked up these ideas (although he initially ignored them when working with wildlife, and he came to appreciate them only later when working with livestock) and in both his books he acknowledges his debt to Voisin. He incorporated these rules (particularly the first two), together with his own ideas about the effect of animals on ecological processes, into his concept of managing whole systems, where they remain today as pillars of 'planned grazing'.

The first point to note is that these rules are directed at maximising dry matter production

from the pasture. Voisin explains nicely why a rotation based on rest periods related to growth rate does this. It's all about keeping the pasture in the rapid growth stage, not allowing it to get so rank that growth slows, and not grazing too early when the pasture is recovering from the previous grazing. This makes good sense and probably is a universally valid concept, even in the rangelands of western NSW, where growth occurs in sporadic bursts, rather than continuously during a well-defined growing season as in Voisin's dairy pastures.

So if the objective is to maximise dry matter production, then Voisin's rules should work very well. Recent research by Dr Warwick Badgery on the Central Tablelands near Orange, for example, showed that pasture availability in a 20-paddock system with variable rest periods was greater than in either a continuously grazed system or a four-paddock rotation, and the stocking rate could be increased (see photo). However, I would argue that, in rangelands, maximising dry matter production is not the key objective of pasture management. Keeping perennial plants alive between the growth opportunities, and maintaining ground cover to ensure that scarce water is retained, are far more important objectives in this environment than maximising dry matter production (although, of course, they are related to it). In fact, during active growth periods it is often not possible to have enough stock to consume the available forage before it dries off and decays, and there is no need to grow more.

Given these changed objectives there is a need to reconsider the basis of planned grazing in the rangelands. Since rest in some form is essential for pasture maintenance and productivity, allowing plants to recover after a period of grazing is desirable. In keeping with Voisin's first law, this will mean longer rest periods in times of slower growth. However, since the capacity of desirable perennial grasses to survive dry periods is closely related to how heavily they have been grazed (i.e. their level of utilisation), it is necessary to consider this factor, as well as the need for subsequent rest, in deciding when grazing should cease. Otherwise, the risk to the pasture if seasonal conditions deteriorate will be increased. So while growth rate may be the primary factor determining when the pasture is able to be re-grazed (i.e. the length of the rest period), the level of utilisation of the important species must be a key determinant of when the animals leave the paddock. If movement based on this criterion is going to result in animals returning to the paddock before the desired rest period can be achieved (Voisin called this



Above: A fence-line comparison showing differences in green feed on offer before (right) and after grazing in the Evergraze experiment near Orange. The native pastures are dominated by *Microlaena* and wallaby grass and are grazed by Merino ewes joined to White Suffolk rams. After the first year of the experiment (2008) the stocking rate in the 20-paddock system was increased by 36% compared with those in the continuous and four-paddock systems because of greater feed availability. Ground cover in autumn was higher in the 20-paddock system in both 2009 and 2010, despite the higher stocking rate. However, in both 2008 and 2009 individual animal performance (e.g. lamb growth rate and ewe condition score) was higher under set stocking and there has been little difference in gross margins among the different systems. (Photograph and caption supplied by Dr Warwick Badger)

'untoward acceleration' and regarded it as the greatest danger to the successful application of his principles), then adjustment of the stocking rate will be necessary either by sale, agistment off, or removal to other parts of the property.

In this respect, rangelands are a mirror image of the situation managed by Voisin. In his system, paddocks could be left out of the rotation early in the season, when growth was rapid, because not all paddocks were necessary to obtain the correct length of rest. These paddocks would be cut for hay and then brought back into the rotation later in the season when growth slowed. The counterpart for rangelands is that paddocks may need to be kept in reserve to allow stocking rate adjustment when moves based on pasture utilisation are incompatible with a rest period determined by growth rate.

Note that both utilisation and rest periods will have to be judged on the most important species, or even a single species. In rangelands with many species and different growing seasons no single rest period will suit everything. Both overgrazing and undergrazing might occur simultaneously and unavoidably. It's also worth noting that, in Voisin's situation, cattle were stall-fed in winter and so were not placed on pasture until it was ready for grazing. United States range administrators use the same

concept of 'range readiness' to determine when cattle can go onto high-altitude Federal allotments in the spring. In western NSW stock are generally always present, and so when pasture starts to regrow after a dry spell there is likely to be some degree of overgrazing in some paddocks, even with a rapid rotation. Whether this has any lasting effect is debatable.

Interestingly, given his dairy background, Voisin was not greatly concerned about the effect of management for maximum dry matter production on pasture quality, although he did acknowledge that the quality of pasture available, particularly for the most productive cows, might be reduced. His solution to this was to divide the herd so that the most productive cows were able to 'cream' the pasture and select the best quality material (i.e. rule 3). It's interesting to speculate on the extent to which this should also be practised in planned grazing systems in rangelands.

Deadline for articles for the November – February Issue 135 of the Western Division Newsletter is Monday 4 October 2010. Please send articles to Sally Ware, I&I NSW, PO Box 393, Hay 2711, email to sally.ware@industry.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 6993 1608.

Lots of information but still no water

By Patti Bartholomew
Publicity Officer
Lower Lachlan Stock &
Domestic & Basic Right
Water Users Inc.



Landholders from along the Lower Lachlan region in the south-west of the State met at the village of Euabalong, one of the communities that was looking at running out of water last year, when the Office of Water closed the Lachlan River at Condobolin.

The occasion was an Information Day and the first meeting of the Lower Lachlan Stock & Domestic and Basic Right Water Users after its formation in February.

Water meetings are known for their sometimes robust argument, with one speaker, quoting Mark Twain, saying 'Whiskey is for drinking, and water is for fighting over'. However, before beginning the Information Day, Patti Bartholomew, the Publicity Officer for the group, outlined the aims of the day:

"The speakers are our invited guests, so we ask that they be shown country courtesy. However, information is a two-way street, and as I look around the room I can see many hundreds of years of collective knowledge of living along the Lachlan".

Mrs Bartholomew pointed out a number of people who were present, some whom have held lands in the Lachlan area for five generations. Mrs Bartholomew requested that the invited guests also listen to the landholders.

A full agenda kept the day rolling on, with Chairman Stephen Doyle successfully keeping the crowd and the guest speakers on track. The meeting attracted speakers from the Murray

Darling Basin Authority, State Water, the Office of Water, the Land and Property Management Authority, the Lachlan Catchment Management Authority, the South Gipps Water Scheme and NSW Farmers, plus Kiacatoo landholder Chris Jones, who is involved in a tree planting scheme, and new agronomist Ian Menz from the Condobolin Research Station.

Organisers of the day were very happy with the roll up: approximately 65 people, some of whom had travelled up to 500 km to attend. The Information Day brought together people from as far away as Ivanhoe, Booligal and Oxley—all with a common cause—and it gave everyone an opportunity to catch up with old friends and to form new alliances.

Perhaps the most frustrating thing for many of the attendees was the fact that State Water and the Office of Water could not give a definitive answer as to when and at what point the Temporary Water Order placed on the Lower Lachlan would be lifted. Despite a number of queries, it appeared that, although under the original Drought Contingency Plan river closure comes into play once Wyangala Dam drops below 5%, the goal posts are likely to be changed. This gives landholders no mechanism to forward-plan. Other comments voiced at the Information Day included the comment that the Murray Darling Basin Plan may not actually work at a practical level. Lynda Pollack from the Murray Darling Basin Authority acknowledged that there were a lot of unknowns and that the science behind the Plan could not be guaranteed 50% either side. Attendee Chris Jones commented that 'You could drive a bus through the Plan'.

Following on from the Information Day, a meeting of the Lower Lachlan Stock & Domestic and Basic Right Water Users was held and a number of issues were discussed. A Vice Chairperson had to be elected, with this position being filled by Michael Callanan from Oxley. The group was happy to have heard back from Minister Costa that a Stock & Domestic representative is to be appointed to the Lachlan Critical Advisory Group. This was one of the main reasons for the formation of the group, as there was little or no representation for the people who were being affected the most by the recommendations of this Advisory group. The Office of Water is accepting expressions of interest from individuals and groups on the Lower Lachlan below Condobolin for this position. The group nominated Peter Skipworth of Lake Cargelligo to be put forward for the position from Lower Lachlan Stock & Domestic and Basic Right Water Users.

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Invasive native scrub management guide launched



By Rod Campbell,
Communications Officer,
Central West CMA.
Phone 02 6881 3430



Left: Participants and CMA staff and board members at the launch of the INS management guide at the Hermidale property 'Hermitage Plains'

Landholders in Western NSW affected by invasive native scrub (INS) will benefit from the release of a best management guide on the issue in May.

The comprehensive 144-page publication includes latest information from the INS research program run by the Central West and Western CMAs.

Landholders' experience and knowledge are also well documented throughout the publication, and a number of management programs are profiled through case studies.

Over 30 landholders visited the Hermidale property 'Hermitage Plains' with CMA staff and board members for the launch. Those attending were also taken on a field trip of INS management undertaken as part of the NSW Farmers INS incentives trials.

Speaking at the launch, Western CMA Board Member Andrew Mosely said that the release marks the formal end of a 3-year research program on INS.

'The program came about through a need to fill gaps in what we know about INS and develop resources for land managers', said Andrew.

'Our program partners and the CMAs set out to develop our knowledge and help make informed land management decisions.

'This work would not have happened without landholders willing to talk to researchers, attend events like today and give access to study sites.'

Andrew's comments were also echoed at the launch by Central West CMA Chairman, Tom Gavel.

'The research program and this management guide would not have been possible without the support of the community', said Tom.

'Feedback from researchers and staff working on the program is that people have been very open with their country and experiences in the name of research.

'Through this support we have been able to carry out our work and better understand best practice.

'The program was ultimately run to put information back in the hands of land managers. I congratulate those working closely on the program on what they have produced.'

This work has been coordinated by the Central West and Western CMAs with the support of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW).

Program partners included ecologist Anne Kerle, CSIRO; researcher Geoff Cunningham, GHD Pty Ltd; Industry & Investment NSW; the University of New England (UNE); and the landholder community.

Although the majority of the research programs have been finalised, UNE will continue to explore issues relating to INS, such as soil erosion, soil health, and the management of coolabah black box.

To find out more about the research program and get a copy of the publication *Managing INS to Rehabilitate Pastures and Open Woodlands* contact Rod Campbell on 6881 3430 or rodney.campbell@cma.nsw.gov.au

Further information:
Rod Campbell, Communications Officer
Central West CMA
Phone: (02) 6881 3430 or 0447 430 160
E-mail: rodney.campbell@cma.nsw.gov.au

Around the traps

Hatfield resident Suzanne Nield's photo of the 72 blade shearers re-enacting the famous Tom Roberts painting 'Shearing of the Rams' in the North Tuppal shed near Tocumwal in June. Over 10 000 people turned up to see the re-enactment, which was organised by Sports Shear Australia, in the Atkinson family's woolshed, where more than 6000 sheep were shorn over the 2-day period.



2010 NSW Rural Women's Gathering 29th, 30th & 31st October 2010 in WENTWORTH

No matter what age you are, where you live in the state, across the borders, in a town or the outback, ALL women are invited to join us for the weekend, and "Wander West to Wentworth" or from what direction you come from,



"A chance for you to relax, be inspired by notable speakers, learn from the diverse range of workshops, enjoy the "Tastes of Sunraysia", make new friends and catch up with old friends and just have a weekend that you will remember for a long time. Take the time to check out the program, and we hope to see you there."

For further information, or to receive regular updates, contact us or visit our website
www.bendigobank.com.au/wentworth



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The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (August 2010). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Industry and Investment or the user's independent adviser.

Wild dogs in the Western Division

Following an increase in wild dog sightings and activity and concerns about the potential impact on grazing enterprises in the Darling and Western LHPA districts, a meeting was convened at Wilcannia on Wednesday 9 June to discuss this issue.

Present were the LHPA Chairs Brian Thomas (Western) and Robert Wason (Darling); Rangers Shaun Learmonth (Western), Tim Wall (Wilcannia), John Hiscox (Tibooburra) and Colin Betts (Bourke); Wild Dog Destruction Board (WDDDB) member Ken Turner and Operations Manager Tony Mayo; and a representative from the Ledknapper Wild Dog Action Group, Ben Mannix.

The WDDDB acknowledged that extreme conditions over the past 8 to 10 months (i.e. severe dust storms late last year and huge volumes of water flowing through, and sitting under, the dog fence this year) had affected the condition of the dog fence in some places. Although the fence was quickly brought back to a dog-proof condition, there were sections that could not be accessed until the floodwaters receded. To reduce the risk of incursions of wild dogs from outside the fence, permission to aerial bait was applied for and granted 4 weeks after the rain. The whole length of fence that was accessible was ground-baited immediately, and the aerial baiting took place when permission was granted. A second aerial baiting took place on 3 June, concentrating on sections of the fence that were still inaccessible because of the presence of floodwaters (i.e. from

Wompah east to Hamilton Gate). The fence has continually been ground baited since the rain.

The WDDDB also tried to coordinate a combined aerial baiting with graziers near and around the fence, but insufficient support was raised for this to happen.

With the increase in rain and hopefully more good seasons to follow, increases in dog numbers could affect everyone. It would be a shame to come out of this drought only to be cleaned out by wild dogs.

Wild dog baiting should be an integral part of everyone's management program, and the best times are twice yearly in about April–May, before the female dogs den up to whelp, and September–October as the new pups are leaving the den. This can coincide with fox baiting, and the WDDDB and LHPA would like to encourage graziers to dog-bait instead of fox baiting only.

Dog baits contain twice the dose of fox baits and therefore will kill foxes and wild dogs. This increase in dose can be done with only a very small increase in overall cost. Foxes will kill your lambs, but wild dogs will eat the lot.

The WDDDB and LHPA are very keen to promote wild dog baiting programs in a three-way partnership with graziers and suggest that now is not too soon to organise a combined program in your area for September–October 2010. Meat baits can be supplied at cost, or, alternatively, grazer-supplied meat can be injected with 1080 free of charge.

For further help please contact your local LHPA Ranger.

By Tony Mayo,
Operations Manager,
Wild Dog Destruction
Board, Broken Hill.
Phone (08) 8088 4724



Primary Industries Drought Support Program is pleased to announce

Sandra Martin

well known Style and Image Consultant, is coming to Packsaddle and Menindee.

Packsaddle SES Shed

Wed 29 September 2010 9am – 3pm

Bono Station Menindee

Thurs 30 September 2010 9am – 3pm

Ladies, you are invited to a FREE Sandra Martin Style and Image Day in Packsaddle and Menindee. Morning tea and lunch will be provided.

Come along and learn about your colours and how to dress to suit your individual body shape. Uncover your own individual style, ensuring a look that is healthy, bright and energetic in all aspects of your life.

Sandra will provide you with a set of powerful, yet simple, image tools that will enhance all aspects of your personal impact and appearance.



www.sandramartin.com.au

Bookings are essential. Please contact Danny Byrnes, Drought Support Worker, Industry & Investment NSW, 177 Lachlan St (PO Box 393), Hay 2711. Phone (02) 6993 1608. Fax (02) 6993 2177. Mobile 0428 973 141. E-mail danny.byrnes@industry.nsw.gov.au

Free lunch will be provided by I&I NSW Drought funding RSVP for catering Gayle Bennetts 08 8082 5288 or Ellen Day 0408 829 839

Yanga National Park: rich history, bright future

At 76 000 ha, Yanga Station was the largest family-owned freehold property in the Southern Hemisphere and has been a part of the Balranald landscape since the 1840s. These days it's a national park that celebrates both its pastoral history and natural wonders.



Situated on 160 km of the Murrumbidgee River, in its heyday in the 1950s the property boasted flocks of sheep in excess of 40 000 and also ran over 1500 head of cattle.

The homestead was built in the 1860s on a peninsula overlooking the picturesque 1500 ha Yanga Lake. The 'drop log' Murray Pine construction of the homestead has survived the test of time, as have the formal rose gardens laid out by Eliza Morris, wife of owner Augustus Morris, in the 1850s. Both are a testament to the past prosperity of the region.

The 150-m-long Yanga Woolshed had sweating pens for up to 3000 sheep, which would have kept the 40 shearers busy. After its construction at the turn of the 20th century the woolshed was often described as the 'largest and most modern shed in the district'.

Yanga had been in the hands of the Simms/Black family from 1919 until 2005, when it was purchased by the NSW Government and opened as a National Park in May 2009.

Yanga was acquired primarily for its conservation values. The 17 000 ha of River Red Gum forest is the second largest in the world. It is home to some of Australia's rare and

endangered species and is a crucial breeding ground for numerous waterbird species.

But Yanga is steadily becoming an attraction to tourists as well as scientists, and visitors are surprised to find that Yanga National Park celebrates its pastoral past in many exciting ways.

Yanga National Park ranger Mon Carmichael has lived in the district for over 30 years and remembers skiing on Yanga Lake as a teenager.

'Yanga was always out of bounds to locals, unless you worked there. The only way to get a glimpse of the homestead was to ski past. Now people can come anytime and have a look around.

'We (NPWS) conduct a guided tour through the Homestead every morning at 10:30 and explain historically what an important part Yanga played in food and fibre production in the region', Mrs Carmichael said.

A state-of-the-art exhibition telling Yanga's history is housed in the Cook's Cottage. The Woolshed now has extensive interpretive panels on the shearing board, in the wool rooms, and on a specially constructed deck overlooking the majestic Murrumbidgee River.

Campers no longer require a written permit from the manager: just pitch your tent in one of the two campgrounds. There is even a separate caravan and motor home section.

Visitor numbers are growing all the time, and the recent 'Yanga ALIVE!' festival held on the June Long Weekend saw over 1000 people enjoying music, markets, food and fireworks at the Homestead.

It is hoped that similar numbers will turn out for a Woolshed dance to be held on Saturday 2 October as part of Balranald's Five Rivers Outback Festival (see ad on page 15).

A guided 'Wetland Experience' tour will be conducted the same day. Call the Park Office on (03) 5020 1764 for more information, or visit www.5riversoutbackfestival.com.au.

Below: Guided tours take place through the Yanga Homestead every morning at 10.30am.



Riverina red gum parks now open

New river red gum national and regional parks in the Riverina are officially open and ready for visitors these September–October school holidays.

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) head Sally Barnes said that management of these iconic areas was transferred to the NPWS on 1 July following assessment of the area last year by the Natural Resources Commission.

'While day-to-day management of the areas has changed, we want to reassure people that they continue to be very welcome to visit and to enjoy these magnificent areas', Ms Barnes said.

'We expect good crowds during the upcoming school holidays.

'The parks cover more than 100 000 ha and NPWS looks forward to building on visitor

experiences in these new areas with the local community.'

In passing the legislation which created the new parks, the NSW Government allocated \$97 million towards affected timber industry workers and regional communities and to set up and manage the new parks.

Included is a \$12 million Regional Employment and Community Development Fund, which is currently assessing applications for the first round of grants.

More information on changes in the red gum forests can be found at www.riverredgums.nsw.gov.au, or, to stay up to date, subscribe to the e-newsletter.



Useful contacts:
NPWS Western Rivers
Regional Office
(02) 6966 8100
Occupation Permit Holders
contact the Land and
Boundary Management
Officer on 0413 388 814.



Left: New river red gum national and regional parks in the Riverina are officially open and ready for visitors these September/October school holidays.

5 Rivers Outback Festival

1 to 3 October 2010

- fishing • markets • bush dance at Yanga Woolshed • tours of Yanga Wetlands
- bowls competition • kids activities • art exhibition • Burke and Wills Trek movie and display • My Camp Oven Rules • Poets' Breakfast



For further information and competition details contact
Casey Jess, Coordinator
5 Rivers Outback Festival
9:00 am to 4:30 pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays

Phone (03) 5020 0453
5rivers@hotmail.com.au

www.5riversoutbackfestival.com.au



A tribute to Bill Noad

Bill Noad, the quiet behind-the-scenes man of this Newsletter for over 18 years, left I&I NSW in June and in doing so took quite a lot of the history of the Newsletter with him.

Bill was in charge of the layout and distribution, but in reality he did much more. Bill knew everything about the Newsletter and was always on hand to help fix things. It's the dedication of staff like Bill that made the Newsletter the popular bush read that it is today.

Enjoy your retirement Bill!

Pooncarie Field Day Inc. FLEECE COMPETITION AND WOOL SHOW

Have you ever thought of showing your best fleece (or fleeces) at the Pooncarie Field Day before?

With many currently shearing, please consider putting aside fleeces for the Pooncarie Field Day on Saturday 7 May 2011.

Fleece bags are available from Emily Crozier (5029 6230), Peta Hibberd (0439 362 993) or Trevor Ablett (0418 667 310).

We hope to see your fleeces at the Pooncarie Field Day.

Proudly sponsored by 'The Australian Wool Network'

- Classes: Fine, Medium, Strong & Weaner
- Champion & Reserve Champion Fleece of the Show
- 1st, 2nd & 3rd prize ribbons
- Outside District Exhibitor Class



Details available from the Secretary, Rachel Strachan • Phone 5027 9209 or E-mail – tulney@esat.net.au

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