

LAND TALK

Newsletter of the 'Centralian Land Management Association' (CLMA)

Hi everyone,

I can't believe I have been at CLMA almost 3 months. Dionne finished up on the 5th January so I managed to get a week of hand over with her which was great. It certainly made things a lot easier for me to pick up coming in as a total green horn!! I spent the first week in the office on my own just sifting through past and present projects and scaring the hell out of my self with all the funding application requirements. All in all I am enjoying the challenges that come with the position. I look forward to getting out and catching up with you all in the near future.

Jillian arrived back from holidays in early January, new ute and float in tow ready to take on all the horsey events this year! Jillian has been busy catching up on her projects and sourcing information on spell grazing in other areas which may be of help in Central Australia.

Peter McDowall recovered from his knee operation and is back in full swing attacking the weeds. The Sandover weeds project ends in September so we are sourcing further funding to carry on in this area. If any one notices any new weeds coming up since the rain he is keen to know about it.

Peter Armstrong is still working with laser truck and has taken on the DEBE project which will be finalized in April after a EMU "Train the Trainer" workshop with Hugh Pringle and Soil Field Day at Deep Well are completed.

We all attended a GPS workshop in early March and updated our skills in this area. These courses are being held from time to time through out the year if any one is interested please gives us a call and we will find out dates.

Jillian and Natalie attended the Central Australian Grazing Land Management course which was held at CSIRO 11th March – 16th March. It was a well put together workshop and very enlightening. I am sure every one that attended enjoyed it. I know I did.

CLMA put in a NLP funding application for feral animal control, this is mostly for camels. No feedback has been forth coming as yet, but it is certainly getting a lot of media coverage at present - lets hope it is not pushed under the carpet once again.

Greening Australia office was broken into on Tuesday night again. Thank goodness our new solid wooden doors withstood the jammy bar and they didn't manage to get into our office. The glass front door was smashed and then the window into Greening Aust., where laptops, cameras and money were stolen *!:#% of course know one was caught!

Easter is just around the corner and jam packed Aileron Weekend so hope to catch up with some of you then. Happy Easter.

Cheers Nat

2007 Office Bearers

President: **Jim Napier**

Vice President North: **Liz Bird**

Vice President South: **Paula Kilgariff**

Secretary: **Rod Cramer**

Treasurer: **Benny Hayes**

Committee Members: **John Kilgariff, Colleen Costello, Robbie Bloomfield, Steve Cadzow, Jamie Evans**

Memberships Due

Yes! its that time again to renew your annual membership for 2007. Please fill out the form attached and return to the CLMA before 30 April 2007.

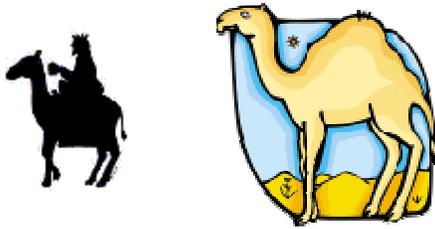
**** You can make membership payments via EFT if you have Internet Banking****

Please don't forget to let us know via email, fax or phone if you have paid with EFT so we can identify your payment in our banking records.

CLMA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Hire of the CLMA laser truck
- Free hire of CLMA seed harvester quad bike
- Local native grass seed for purchase.
- Access to CLMA staff to write funding applications and research
- CLMA staff assistance with weed control, seed harvesting, photo monitoring and plant identification.
- Staff promoting the environmental credentials of the industry far and wide.

Thanks!

CAMEL NEWS

Camel News

CLMA applied for NLP funding for a camel cull on pastoral land. This went in at the end of February but has had no feedback as yet.

Camels have been getting plenty of media coverage of late and we have been pushing the issue hard with government sources. It, at least, has been acknowledged that camels are a huge problem but whether or not government will put forward money remains to be seen.

We have been approached to gather pastoralist's information on the impacts of camels to be put towards the camel management strategies being designed by Desert Knowledge CRC, a form is attached with this newsletter and Peter Armstrong or Natalie will be in touch in the near future to gather your views. Thank you to all the properties that have already sent us lot of information.

Howard Springs Pet Foods are currently working in the area and are killing around 80 camels a week and taking meat back up to Darwin in freezer van for dispersal. They are keen to work in with our culling program should it be funded. Anyone wishing to reduce their numbers by pet meat can contact: Wayne Ford on 0428853959 or Natalie at CLMA.

Phil Gee - Senior Animal and Plant Control Consultant with Rural Solutions SA - is leading a combined NHT-funded camel management initiative of the SA Arid Lands NRM Board and the Alinytjara Wilurara NRN Board in conjunction with the Dept. Environment and Heritage and the Dept. Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation. Phil anticipates that movement will occur eastward and northward from the Western Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) lands towards the Tallaringa Conservation Park and Fregon and across the NT border where the heaviest rains fell. A groundswell of movement is also expected in the Simpson Desert Regional Reserve salt lakes south of Poeppel Corner.

Feral camel experts from around the country met in Perth on Thursday, 15 March as part of a research project to develop a national feral camel management plan. The steering committee of the Desert Knowledge CRC Cross- Jurisdiction Management of Feral Camels project met as

land managers from Central and South Australia to the Pilbara report of significant and increasing damage to land and infrastructure caused by camels.

Camels on Mulga Park





Envirofund Grants: Round 9 is open (5 February – 27 April 2007)

Individuals and community groups are invited to apply for up to \$50,000 for natural resource management projects from Envirofund. Projects that have been funded in the past include fencing, erosion control, off-stream stock watering points, habitat protection, awareness- raising activities and pest and weed control.

In this round there is an increased focus on funding pest and weed control on private land in Exceptional Circumstances (EC-declared areas). Ammunition will not be funded!

The requirements for matching contributions from individuals and groups applying for funding of pest and weed control has also been reduced for those in EC-declared areas.

Envirofund is the local part of the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust program. It provides funding direct to community groups and individuals to carry out on-ground natural resource management projects that can show a public benefit.

Projects can be on public or private land, and can be submitted by individual, partnerships, companies and community groups.

Application forms and guidelines can be downloaded from the Envirofund website www.nht.gov.au/envirofund or by contacting CLMA with your requirements. Applications close at 5pm Friday 27 April 2007

Camels at Murputja in a road side burra pit. March 2007



Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre Camel Research

There may be as many as one million feral camels in Australia and the population is doubling every eight years. Camels already have significant impacts on production, environmental and cultural values across much of their range.

Because camels occur across a large portion of arid Australia and they are very mobile animals, a national approach is needed if the species is to be managed effectively. With this in mind, the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre (DKCRC) developed a project entitled "Cross-Jurisdictional Management of Feral Camels to Protect NRM & Cultural Values" and sought funding for this initiative under the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT).

This 3 year project has four major components: 1) survey of people's perspectives on feral camels and their management, 2) evaluation of camel impact, 3) feasibility study of commercial use of feral camels (including pet meat) to determine the role this approach might play in managing feral camels and 4) assessment of non-consumptive approaches to managing camels including culling, fencing off of key assets etc. The overall goal of the project is to produce a practical management plan with a package of acceptable control options and a business case to justify investment in camel management.

The DKCRC is working with 13 partners through a nationwide network to deliver this project. A Steering Committee meeting has been set up to guide the project. The Steering Committee includes representatives of government, NRM boards, the camel industry, the pastoral industry and Aboriginal land owners. This group met recently in Perth to discuss progress of the project and to exchange information about camel issues with key camel interest groups in Western Australia.

For more information, please contact the Project Leader:

Glenn Edwards
Principal Scientist, Biodiversity Conservation
Dept Natural Resources, Environment & Arts
PO Box 1120 Alice Springs, NT 0871
Ph 08 89518239 Fax 08 89555190
E-mail: glenn.edwards@nt.gov.au

**CLMA LASER TRUCK HIRE
\$350 PER DAY (INCLUDES THE
LASER TRUCK AND OPERATOR)**

The Laser system (set up on the back of the CLMA Toyota) marks the correct position for banks and drains, by accurately marking along the contour line.

This minimises the chance of banks and drains busting after rain and maximises the success of the soil rehabilitation works.

The laser truck can mark out 30 banks a day. Even if you don't want to push them up straight away, the marks last several months or more.



Bookings can be made by contacting Peter Armstrong at the CLMA - phone (08) 8953 4230, fax (08) 8952 3824 or email: clma@clma.com.au

**‘Production based conservation
the way of the future???’
Or ‘4 steers, 3 wet cows and
two environmental services
please!’**

Way back in July of 2004 an article appeared in Land Talk about conservation projects on pastoral lands. Along with this was a case study of the work done on Andado Station. As the article said then “pastoral land is coming under the spotlight as a large and significant area for conserving important and special plants and animals.” Greening Australia has recognized the potential for this sort of conservation and has Natural Heritage Trust funded project officers in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs to help get projects up and running that aim to maintain healthy country for production and conservation of native species.

The project in Alice Springs is concentrating on the MacDonnell Ranges bioregion because of its significance as a refuge in Central Australia for many rare and threatened plants and animals. The sorts of activities that have the best chance of getting funding and helping to conserve habitats include, fencing of waterholes and range country, relocating water points away from delicate habitats, controlling feral animals, weed management, fire management and strategic erosion control works. Maintaining productivity and land condition will usually have benefits for wildlife so a lot of activities that attract funding will also contribute to the profitability of your enterprise.

This project is a bit of a trial which is another reason it is limited to the MacDonnell Ranges bioregion. Both the NT Government and the Federal government thinking along these lines and have shown commitment to it through several funding streams. It's not too far away now that most landholders will be paid not only for their agricultural produce but also for the environmental services their land can deliver. This type of system already exists overseas and in other parts of Australia. Here in the centre where most landscapes are still in good condition and rare plants and animals coexist on pastoral land there should be lots of opportunities to get involved.

For more details on how to get involved call Suni at Greening Australia on 8953 2882

Deep Well Field Day

Hells Gate Area

20th April 2007

Bus pick up CLMA office 7.45am for 8am Departure

******Get your roads on the right track******

Save Your Soil & Bring it Back!

☆☆

Morning Tea & BBQ Lunch Provided

Sponsored by Central Petroleum Ltd

Presenters :Hugh Pringle, Col Stanton, Bill Low, Tom Newsome

- Demonstrate Soil conservation
- Laser System marking out banks and drains in areas planned for
- Ponding Banks, Reclamation, Realignment of Roads.
- Road Work Rehabilitation. Whoa Boys
- Grader & Operator will be on site to demonstrate procedures

RSVP CLMA 89534230 by 16th April if attending for catering purposes.

COMING EVENTS:

What	Where	When	Who
Central Australian Camel Industry Assoc AGM	Alice Springs Resort	4 th April 2007	Peter Seidel 89536200
EMU "Train the Trainer" soil workshop - Presenter: Hugh Pringle	Alice Springs	14 th 20th Apr2007	Peter Armstrong 89534230
Deep Well Field Day	Deep Well	20 th April 2007	Peter Armstrong 89534230
Preg testing School	Alice Springs	16 th -22 nd April 2007	Bryan Gill 89518127

Weeds March 2006

The fifteenth Australian weeds Conference was held in Adelaide last year and I have been reviewing the papers that are likely to relate to the weeds and grazing systems of our landcare region.

Several papers were presented on Parkinsonia. There are developments in bio-control but they are not as yet having a impact.

A seed predating insect released over 20 years ago is widespread (I have collected it on the Sandover) but not having a major effect as the insect only attacks one seed at a time and it is attacked by a native egg parasitic wasp.

Surveys in one of the homelands of Parkinsonia (Central and South America) have identified several promising bio-control agents. One being a leaf eating moth and another, a fungus that attacks the leaves and stems. These agents are not yet imported in Australia as they require host specificity testing before import

A locally isolated fungus is being further tested at the University of Queensland (Gatton Campus). It has proved so far that the fungus can be transferred from one plant to another by stem inoculation. Early days yet with further work needed.

The effect of camels on the ability of Parkinsonia to set seed was investigated. Under heavy continuous grazing seed production per plant was reduced in some cases to one per tree compared to 3000 in the ungrazed area with similar reductions in pods on the ground. Seeds however found in camel dung which would mean that a low level infestation would be spread away from present areas of infestation. It was also noted that under the heavy continuous grazing pressure damage to some native plants was severe.

Summaries of the catchment management approach such as we are attempting in the Sandover were presented. In the Cape river catchment in Qld., 14 previously infested properties are free of Parkinsonia and subject to yearly monitoring. Seventeen properties in the in the mid and lower catchment are continuing with control. The main point is that the collective work of the graziers concerned is enabling the eradication to progress.

The effect of climate change on weed encroachment is being studied. It is predicted by modeling the effects of increased sunlight and rainfall that the range of the plant Prickly acacia (*Acacia nilotica*) will spread below Alice Springs, across the Tanami and along the Plenty highway by 2080. At present this noxious weed is present on the Barkly and down the Rankin River. Satellite imagery is also being used to map the extent of encroachment of this weed.

Athel Pine work in the Finke River region was summarised. It is stated that the program commenced in the 1990's and to date 400 km of the river catchment have been treated. There remains 23 km of severe infestation below Horseshoe Bend and a further 70 km of lighter infestation below that site awaiting treatment after the heavy infestation is eradicated. Mapping and control work in Karinga Creek is ongoing.

Weed Control Summary

Sandover River Project: Contracts have been let and work commences in mid April on the remaining 18 km of the Sandover River and approximately 800 ha of flood out. The work will then move to the Bundy River and progress along that river till the funds are exhausted. Further weed mapping of the flood out will progress through Ooratippra, Argadargada and Georgina Downs.

Currently we are working on control of Rubber Bush in The Garden and Alcoota on the headwaters of Gillen Creek.

South of Alice Springs weed control of Athel Pine and Parkinsonia were undertaken in February. Control of Devils Rope in the Todd River flood out is ongoing.

CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN LAND MANAGEMENT

CAGLM workshop exceeds producers' expectations.

The Central Australian Grazing Land Management workshops continue to build a reputation of providing valuable information and tools in a user-friendly manner, with the aim of assisting producers to meet production and land health outcomes.

Eleven people from nine businesses took part in the most recent workshop, held in Alice Springs this month.

Grazing land management issues were outlined and explained and possible solutions identified. Producers were able to indicate how they would apply these solutions to the issues they face on their own properties.

Most of the plans they intend to implement involve determining the carrying capacity of their paddocks using tools demonstrated in the workshop.

CAGLM officer Ellena Hannah said: "This information is used to balance the number of animals grazing with the land condition, land types and distance to water found in the paddock. It can also be applied to calculate the expected returns as a result of improvements to infrastructure."

Meanwhile, pastoralists who had taken part in the first CAGLM held last November gathered at Narwietooma Station to review the topics covered at their workshop. They also visited to Napperby and Tanami Downs stations as part of their road trip.

If you would like further information on the CAGLM workshop, or would like to speak with a past participant:

Contact Ellena Hannah, CAGLM officer, on 8951 8143.



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry
National Landcare Program



Northern Territory Government
Department of
Primary Industry,
Fisheries and Mines



**Aileron Bush Weekend
Easter Weekend
7th & 8th April 2007**



CENTRALIAN LAND MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
 PO BOX 2534
 ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871
 Phone: 08 89534230
 Fax: 08 89523824

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For general enquiries contact: Natalie Turner - Coordinator Ph 08 89534230 clma@clma.com.au
 Laser Work ,DEBE Project Deep Well Field Day , Contact Peter Armstrong ph: 08 89534230
 For info about the Sandover weeds project, contact Peter McDowall weeds@clma.com.au
 For info about the Central Australian Grazing Strategies Partnership, contact Jillian Fisher
cagsp@clma.com.au

Current and upcoming funding opportunities

What?	Deadline	Types of projects
Envirofund	26 th April 2007	Weeds, fencing for conservation, soil erosion etc on individual properties, up to \$50,000.
Natural Heritage Trust	Probably June 2007	The CLMA may tender for projects if they are relevant to our members. This is also where we normally apply for coordinator funding.

If you have ideas for projects, please contact the staff at the CLMA and we will develop the applications.