

# LAND TALK

CLMA Newsletter

## CLMA gets \$312,000 for a new three year project!

CLMA has been successful in getting a grant to be part of the National Pilot Program for Environmental Management Systems (EMS). Funded by the Natural Heritage Trust.

### What is an EMS?

An EMS is a way of proving that you care for the environment on your station. EMS has come about because more and more customers want proof that food is safe to eat and that agriculture isn't bad for the environment. The Federal government wants to see if the EMS process (which is recognised in 170 countries) is a practical way for Australian producers to prove they are doing the right thing.

### What does this mean for CLMA members?

Fifteen stations have volunteered to be a part of this project. Dee Walsh will help people to record how much they have spent on "landcare" works over the years (ponding, weed control, feral animal control, monitoring, fire

management etc). This will help us to show that the pastoral industry spends plenty of its own time and money on environmental issues that benefit the whole community.

CLMA has gained the cooperation of several government departments who will dig out all the environmental information they have for each place in the project. This information will be given to the landholders concerned. For those stations with Cattlecare, organic and/or EU accreditation, the EMS project will also try to find ways to cut down the cost of audits and the amount of paperwork required.

We predict that the stations involved will have current environmental (landcare) problems that they want to tackle. An EMS helps producers to prioritise these issues and make plans for how to do them for the least cost. In order to keep the landcare momentum rolling, CLMA will use the landcare issues identified by the EMS participants to apply for ongoing funds for all members.

The long-term aim of the EMS project is to help prove that the industry is sustainable.

## CLMA has moved

CLMA has moved office. We can be found on Leichhardt Terrace (the river road), two doors north of the Gregory Terrace roundabout (next to the electoral office).

The NT Government has granted CLMA use of the premises for 6 years rent-free. CLMA are responsible for power and of course phone bills. The new location serves as a focal point for local landcare support with Greening Australia next to CLMA.

Our old office is due for demolition. So from humble beginnings in Bob M's backyard to new carpet and a toilet! But don't worry, we still intend to go bush and work. Drop in and check us out.



## Help! Cleanskins Wanted!

As part of the Centre Land Watch monitoring project, Dee Walsh has to track down about 350 monitoring sites that don't have GPS data. It is important to locate and GPS these "cleanskins" so that we can still find them in the future. There are "cleanskin" sites on:

Aileron	Maryvale
Allambi	Mt Cavenagh
Amburla	Mt Denison
Bond Springs	Mt Skinner
Bushy Park	Napperby
Coniston	Narwietooma
Delny/Delmore	Numery
Derwent	Pine Hill
Dneiper	Ringwood
Hamilton Downs	Suplejack
Henbury	Todd River
Idracowra	Victory Downs
Jervois	Woodgreen
Jinka	Yambah

Dee can visit your monitoring sites with you, photograph them and update your albums. If you can help with the cleanskins or are interested in doing your monitoring sites anyway, call Dee on 8953 4230. PS: This project winds up in July, so ring now!



## Greenhouse gases – our trees don't count

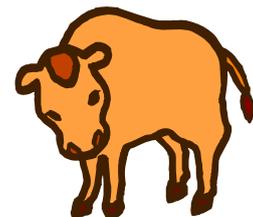
It's pretty obvious to most people that woody plants have really been building up over the past few decades. Woody plants live for a long time and constantly suck in carbon dioxide from the air; storing it in wood, leaves and roots. Carbon dioxide is the most common greenhouse gas.

Queensland has about 600,000 square kilometres of grazed woodlands which they estimate store about 35 million tonnes of carbon per year. This is equivalent to sucking in 25% of Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions per year (1999 figures). However, there are international rules about what is counted when the scientists do their greenhouse gas accounting. At the moment, rangeland vegetation is not even included in the calculations! It's not hard to imagine how much greenhouse gas is absorbed by all of Australia's rangelands if Queensland can offset 25% of emissions on its own!

In Central Australia, woody plants such as mulga, ironwood, whitewood, gidgee, witchetty bush, broom bush etc are all busily sucking in and storing carbon. It is likely

that if rangeland vegetation was included in the calculations, Australia would go close to being a net carbon store (sink) rather than a net emitter. So why is Australia always accused of being a greenhouse "baddy"? Perhaps the Federal Government should be lobbying to make sure rangeland vegetation is included in future calculations. Australia's rangelands are good for the environment!

[The Queensland figures were presented by Stephen Bray at a recent rangeland conference in Kalgoorlie. Anyone interested in reading his article can ring Dee Walsh for a copy.]



*Code of practice No.47a -  
Select polite cattle that  
belch near trees*

## CLMA depot

CLMA also has to move it's bush gear. Sean Leigh from Murray Downs has come to the rescue and offered shed space near Elder Street - fantastic.

## Desert Knowledge – *what is it?*

'Desert Knowledge Australia' is a consortium of government, non-government, industry and business parties that aims to establish a knowledge-based industry relevant to arid lands. It proposes to build a sustainable future for Australia's "desert" areas.

## Desert Knowledge Co-operative Research Centre

Desert Knowledge Australia will receive almost \$21m over 7 years from the Commonwealth government to run a Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) based in Alice Springs – starting in July 2003.

### What is a CRC?

Cooperative Research Centres bring together researchers from universities, CSIRO, and

other private and public sector agencies, in long-term arrangements to support research, development and education activities aimed at outcomes of national economic and social significance.

Research within the CRC will come under 4 themes:

1. Natural resource management;
2. Improved viability of communities;
3. Governance, management and leadership;
4. Integrated systems for desert livelihoods.

Research proposals have been submitted, mainly from universities and government agencies across Australia.

### ***What does it mean for pastoral lands?***

The CRC is keen for the local pastoral industry to become involved. They may seek cooperation to run research projects on pastoral land. We don't know what projects will be funded. However, it is looking like aspects of biodiversity and 'sustainable' management practices will feature heavily.

CLMA understands that many pastoralists seem unaware of Desert Knowledge. The name 'desert' doesn't seem to go

down well with producers. And Desert Knowledge has been promoted in a way that gives the impression it is an indigenous program. But be assured, we can expect to hear more from Desert Knowledge in the next year or two.

## Athel pine progress

Steven Morphett is operating the bulldozer to remove Athel trees in the Finke River on Horseshoe Bend station. He is doing a great job but progress is slow because the Athel Pine is so thick. Peter Morphett is providing fatherly guidance. Brian O'Hanlon from DIPE Weeds Branch is doing a lot of spraying of young stuff and isolated trees.



*Athel in the foreground and athel in the background*



*Athel Pine at night*

be one region because of our small population size. 'Sub-regions' may be based on catchments or bioregions. Info from sub-regions will feed into the Territory-wide plan.

Regional plans will be the basis for determining where funding will go.

- We could get trapped in an interim year with no funding for weed control, ponding banks or rabbit control.
- Project money could be scarce for the next couple of years.
- Developing a regional plan will be the main priority for the NT.

## Future funding prospects

### *What is the Natural Heritage Trust?*

The Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) was established by the Howard Government in 1997. It is a partnership with the community, providing funding for environmental activities.

### *New regional approach*

Future landcare funding (and other programs) will be guided by regional plans. No more applying for one-off projects – they will have to be linked to the regional plan.

### *Regional plans*

More than 60 'regions' have been identified covering all of Australia. A natural resource management plan will be developed for each region. The whole of the Northern Territory is considered to

### *Who will have a say in regional plans?*

All interested parties will try to have their voices heard including: pastoral, aboriginal, mining, conservation, horticultural, agricultural, fisheries, tourism and urban.

The CLMA Coordinator will represent pastoral interests for 'arid' NT, responsible for putting your voice into the NT plan.

We remain very hopeful that the Coordinator position will be funded after June but are still waiting for this to be confirmed.

### *Interim funding*

While regional plans are being developed, limited interim funding is provided for positions and projects.

### *What does it mean for CLMA?*

- The funding rules have changed for all groups.



*We will soon be able to prove that what we knew 10 years ago was right.*

### **Pete's left**

Peter Lightfoot has left CLMA to do earthworks around town and help Narelle in the shop.

### CLMA contact details

PO Box 2534  
Alice Springs NT 0871  
Phone: 8953 4230  
Fax: 8952 3824  
Email: [clma@octa4.net.au](mailto:clma@octa4.net.au)

### *CLMA - proud winners of:*

- 1998 "Alcoa of Australia National Landcare Community Group"

*Award”*



- *2000 national “BHP Landcare Research Award”*

