

Burnett Catchment Care Assoc Inc

NEWSLETTER 16 June 2008

BCCA
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The BCCA is in good shape to participate in the funding environment to ensure that the Burnett gets an equitable share.

Program Manager

The end of the financial year has been a busy time for the BCCA as it probably has been for you. When we launched Better Burnett almost 12 months ago the Better Burnett Steering Committee were very clear that bureaucracy i.e. paperwork needed to be minimised for landholders. Hopefully we have done a reasonable job of doing that, we have had some good suggestions and insights to improve even further. However there is a great deal of reporting and documenting to be done to satisfy the contractual arrangements attached to investment by the Federal and State governments via the BMRG.

Speaking of Federal and State investment, at present all those involved in NRM are waiting with eager anticipation further announcements regarding the roll out of "**Caring for Our Country**" (the new federal government's natural resource management investment program). The federal government seem to be working very hard to get funding rolled out, however there is some uncertainty over when and how some of the funds committed to "**Caring for Our Country**" will become available to onground groups like the BCCA. Our planning has been based on managing in the most conservative of funding outcomes, however with a vision for the most positive of outcomes. Overall the BCCA is in good shape to participate in what is likely to be a fairly competitive funding environment over the next 12 months and to ensure that the Burnett gets an equitable share.

In mid July the BCCA offices in Mundubbera expect to play host to Member for Flynn, Chris Trevor. Staff expect to give Mr Trevor an overview of activity and hope that the visit will be part of a sound relationship much like the one enjoyed with other past and present local members.

It has been pleasing to see some winter rain in most parts of the catchment to follow on from the rain earlier in the season. Our land condition monitoring on all funded Better Beef projects indicates that the vast majority of sites have improved the volume and diversity of desirable pasture species. This rain and careful management will hopefully put pastures in a position in the new growing season. At Better Beef follow up workshop days in Cadarga Creek and Auburn River sub-catchments participants were able to benchmark their own properties against district averages on specific land types. This type of approach may be an interesting tool for the future.

On Wednesday 18th June Growcom will host a Farming Management Systems bus tour to highlight activity undertaken with BCCA and BMRG investment in the Kolan and Bundaberg districts. Growcom have added tremendous value to the Better Burnett Catchment Recovery Program and BCCA staff hope to continue the relationship in new funding arrangements. Isis Canegrowers have kicked off their partnership with BCCA with some workshops that will support the onground nutrient management work that is being done by that group. Most of the Bundaberg Canegrowers projects and all the workshops are now complete in the 3 way partnership between BMRG, BCCA and that group.

Reflecting on the last 12 months, partnerships have been the underpinning theme of our success. I would also suggest that future successes in NRM in the Burnett and associated river systems will rely heavily on the quality of partnerships. Given that we may all be facing a lean year investment wise partnerships will be vital, so can I extend on behalf of BCCA staff an invitation to explore partnership as we all move forward.

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter please email
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What's On

11 June Wetland Prioritisation meeting in Bundaberg with Wetland Care Australia

11 & 18 June Workshops with Isis Cane Growers for soil nutrient management

17-18 June – Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement for Natural Resource Management Training, Bundaberg

19 June – BGA Field Day, Kingaroy

26 June – Grazing Land Management in the Periurban Workshop, Gympie

3 July: White Throated Snapping Turtle information session with EPA, St George Hall, South Kolan

Better Beef

Katie spent most of May as the Better Beef Coordinator conducting second round property visits of funded grazing projects. Katie and the team visited approximately 17 of our 32 grazing projects in May to monitor the progress of the projects and conduct end of growing season Stocktake assessments. Stocktake is a DPI&F pasture assessment tool aimed at monitoring land, soil and pasture condition over time through species recording and photo points. One or two of these Stocktake pasture monitoring sites were set up in late 2007/early 2008 on all project properties in areas where we expect to see an improvement overtime in land condition due to the funded on-ground activities implemented. Katie was happy to see most projects were progressing well, with a number of projects completed well ahead of schedule.

Better Bush

This past month, there has been a large focus on threatened species in our catchments. BCCA has hopped on board with BMRG in their search for threatened flora and fauna populations in our areas in the lead up to the BMRG Multi-Species Recovery Plan; while planning is underway at BCCA to assist the work that the EPA began in protecting nesting areas for the White Throated Snapping Turtle (*Elseya albagula*) in the Burnett and Kolan catchments. Glossy Black Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami*) were the theme for a series of North Burnett local government NRM field days in support of the Glossy Black Conservancy work, and the BCCA attended these to support threatened species recovery in the Burnett.

Better Bush Coordinator, Louise Newman, has also been busy with 2nd round monitoring and evaluation visits to Better Burnett projects around the catchment. Most have been completed and all look like they'll prove to be a successful move towards sustainability.

Better Waterways

Water weeds project has been going along well, since the last newsletter more weed control of water hyacinth and hymenachne has taken place with the use of chemical spray regime and the weeds are now at good manageable level with continue surveillance of both along the Burnett Rivers and the Kolan Rivers.

The Waterways Coordinator, Rebecca Sunnerdale, has attended water quality awareness workshops and also attended an information day looking at Cabomba and its effects of the environment and economy of the region. In the weeks to come workshops will be held in conjunction with Isis Cane Growers looking at soil nutrient management and also a tour is to be held by Growcom to look at the project sites that have been funded by BCCA.



Photo courtesy of Marilyn Connell

White Throated Snapping Turtle (*Elseya albagula*)