



Students help create Bushland corridors at Merkanooka

Around 30,000 native trees have recently been planted in the Merkanooka area (west of Morawa) with funds received by the Yarra Yarra catchment group through a Caring for our Country, Community Action Grant, and with the collaboration of the Morawa High School and Morawa Ag school. Students from the high school had planned to assist with planting but heavy rains made the site unworkable (but great for the trees!).



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY



The picture shows teacher Lesley Stephens and Jenny Berger along with the students who listened intently to Jenny's talk on various plants and the reasons for planting in the saline areas, and for creating bushland corridors. A big thanks to Gavin Clarke from Morawa Ag school who helped coordinate students and planting for the project.



The native trees and shrubs have been planted alongside or near the existing deep drain that was installed in 2008. Native species have been chosen in order to maximise the long term survival of seedlings and to produce a biodiverse revegetation area. The plantings also help to link existing areas of remnant vegetation, which helps to create wildlife corridors in the region. These are especially important for many of the birds in the area. Thanks to everyone in Morawa involved in making the project a success.

Critically Endangered Flora Species in the Yarra Yarra Region

Over the past few years the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) have been in the Yarra Yarra area working to help bring back populations of some of the Critically Endangered flora species that are found in our region. Alanna Chant is the DEC Flora Conservation Officer currently working on several threatened flora recovery projects in this area and through this work, some of the flora populations have been brought back over 100% in number of plants from where they were several years ago. The main species Alanna is currently working on in this area are *Eremophila nivea*, (silky eremophila), *Stylidium amabile* (loveable triggerplant) and *Pityrodia axillaris* (wooly foxglove). If you happen to come across any of these plants, please inform either us at Yarra Yarra or, you can contact Alanna on 0407 382 700 or via email - Alanna.Chant@dec.wa.gov.au

We have some fact sheets on these flora species in our office, and look out for more information on these plants in our Spring newsletter.



NACC's Sustainable Farming Grants - Now Open

Funding of up to \$10,000 (ex GST) per project is available for sustainable farming projects including wind erosion and soil management that comply with the Grants criteria.

The NACC Sustainable Farming Grants aim to increase the skills and knowledge of land managers and farmers to implement improved soil management practices to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the Northern Agricultural Region.

Closing Date for applications - 2nd September 2011

For more information contact Dene (0427 731425) or Lizzie (0408 934153) or NACC (9938 0110)

The Carbon Tax and the Climate Change Plan

Whether you support the carbon tax or not, the climate change plan is set to come into place from 1st July 2012 so it is worth knowing where the opportunities for farming and natural resource management (NRM) can be found.

The key message is that the agriculture industry has been excluded from the scheme and farmers will not be facing a carbon pollution price for their carbon emissions including fertiliser use, animal emissions or off road fuel use (or on-road fuel use for light vehicles). At the same time, farming has been recognised as an integral part of the solution in reducing carbon emissions in Australia. Below is a summary of how Land Use will fit into the Climate Change plan.

Boosting support for our farmers & landholders

The Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI) will create economic rewards for farmers and land managers who reduce pollution or store carbon in the landscape. It will work by creating credits for each tonne of carbon which can be stored or reduced on the land. These credits can then be sold to other businesses wanting to offset their own carbon pollution. The Government will also purchase carbon credits. This is a \$250million program over six years and will create incentives to undertake land-based action such as storing of soil carbon, revegetation and forest conservation. Increasing carbon storage in agricultural soils improves soil health and productivity. Revegetation will help restore degraded landscapes, provide biodiversity habitats and corridors, and help to address salinity, protect livestock and reduce erosion.

Farming for the future

The Carbon Farming Futures program will include specific support for conservation tillage equipment. This will provide a 15 percent refundable tax offset for eligible equipment. No-till and min-till farming techniques can enhance soil carbon, water retention and productivity. There will be funding for research and development into improving management practices, improving soil carbon, reducing pollution from livestock and cropping, and novel approaches such as biochar, biofuel and new crop and grazing species will be targeted. There will also be support for landholders to test new ways to increase soil carbon and reduce emissions. Money will also go towards testing more effective methods of measuring carbon stored in soils, and in ensuring landholders get access to relevant information to help them benefit from carbon farming.

Supporting skills in land management

The Carbon Farming Skills program will ensure that there are people in regional Australia with the necessary skills to support implementation of the Carbon Farming Initiative. Through extension activities they will ensure that landholders will have access to credible, high quality advice about carbon farming opportunities.

Unlocking the benefits of biodiversity

The ongoing Biodiversity Fund has been allocated \$946 million over the first six years of the program and will support projects that establish, restore, protect or manage biodiverse carbon stores. Funding will be provided for establishing mixed species plantings in targeted areas, such as areas of high conservation value.

All of this information has been taken from the official government website. For the most up to date information go to: www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au

Some current incentives available to help you in caring for your land

Miss it Miss Out!

Fodder Shrubs for Saline Lands

Turn your unproductive saltland into an asset. This is our most popular incentive so get it in quick before the money runs out !! Subsidies include:

- ☺ Fencing: \$2,000/km for mesh fencing,
- ☺ Fodder shrub establishment: \$0.20/stem for tubestock
- ☺ Industry membership: 12 months membership to Evergreen or \$110 towards membership to a grower/industry group of your choice (if not received from NACC before)
- ☺ Incentives for fodder shrub establishment are available up to a maximum of \$8,000 per site.

Tree Cropping

Another popular incentive project is tree cropping and is likely to be more popular now the new carbon tax has been announced. This incentive includes the following:

- ☺ Tree crop establishment: \$250/ha
- ☺ Industry membership: 12 months membership to Oil Mallee Association or Australian Sandalwood Network or \$110 towards a grower/industry group membership of your choice (if not received from NACC before)
- ☺ Incentives for tree crop establishment are available up to a maximum of \$3,360 per site.



Two year old oil mallee plantings

Strategic Revegetation

This incentive is targeted towards protecting and enhancing areas of existing bushland and also to target wind-prone sites through planting native species.

Some of the options available include:

- ☺ Mesh fencing: \$2300 to \$3,450/km dependent on site size (plain wire fencing options available)
- ☺ Revegetation: \$750/ha for sites < 10ha. \$1000/ha for sites > 10ha
- ☺ Weed control: \$30/ha/year for 2 years
- ☺ Pest control (rabbits only): Various options available
- ☺ Incentives for strategic revegetation establishment are available up to a maximum of \$16,000 per site.

Now is the perfect time to consider next years plantings. To discuss the incentives available, to find out if you qualify or to organise a site visit, please call Dene Solomon: 0427 731 425 or 9973 1425

To guarantee your inclusion in next years projects you will need to be signed up by November 2011

Sandalwood Trial Site

The Sandalwood demonstration site funded through the Woolworths Sustainable Farming Grant is progressing well with all of the host seedlings now in the ground. All the seedlings were planted at the beginning of July and should be benefitting fully from the great rains we've received over the past few weeks. The rain should help to get the seedlings well established before the sandalwood nuts germinate.



Half of the seedlings have had a sandalwood nut planted next to them already, and the other half will have sandalwood nuts planted next to them next winter. This will give us an opportunity to see whether it is a better option to plant the host seedling and the sandalwood at the same time or not. Later in the year (possibly September) we would like to hold a field visit to see how the trial site is coming along (still to be confirmed). We will also be looking to get a guest speaker from the Australian Sandalwood Network to come along on the day to discuss the benefits of Sandalwood and also to answer any questions that may arise. We will also look at other tree cropping options. If you would be interested in attending this field walk, please email lizzie.king@iipb.net.au



Sandalwood nuts



Sandalwood seedling



Sandalwood with host



Ready for picking

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

1. Perenjori Show - 20th August
2. Dalwallinu Show - 27th August
3. North Midlands Show - 17th September

Free Trees!



We will have an information stall at the above shows, along with NACC. Come and have a chat, find out about what's going on in the region or grab some free native tree seedlings!

STAFF NEWS

All change again in the Yarra Yarra office. Kirsty has taken up a position with the Shire of Dalwallinu. We would like to thank Kirsty for all her hard work over the past 10 months and wish her all the best with her new job.

Lizzie King has returned to the job on a part time basis.

If you were dealing with Kirsty regarding any projects please now contact Dene Solomon or Lizzie King:

dene.solomon@iipb.net.au

Tel: 9973 1425 or 0427731425

lizzie.king@iipb.net.au

Tel: 0408 934153



Kirsty checking broombrush growth rates