



Volume 1, Issue 15

December 2003

Regional Catchment Strategy Launch

The State Minister for environment John Thwaites launched the Regional Catchment Strategy at a function in Shepparton this month.

The launch was held at Kidstown, situated near an indigenous heritage site on the Goulburn River.

Representatives from all over the Goulburn Broken catchment attended to hear Mr Thwaites speak about the region and the importance of having a strategy

for natural resource management. He mentioned the practicality of the strategy and its strength of content. He also said that the GBCMA would have a strong role to play in water initiatives in the future.

Highlights of the day included a mural painted by members of the Bangerang cultural centre, which includes artists Rebecca Atkinson and David Roland.

Local indigenous elder Alf Turner performed the "Welcome to Place" and spoke about the

site's history emphasising the traditional use of Yorta Yorta land adjacent to the Goulburn River.

The Regional Catchment Strategy is available from CMA offices in summary form and can be obtained on CD. It will also be available on the CMA website.

For a copy of the CD Rom please contact the Shepparton office of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority on Ph 5822 2288

Rural Urban Links

This program was initiated by the former city of Essendon in 1993. At that time approximately 400 students and teachers from urban schools visited the Shepparton region to learn about the food production cycle and threats posed by land degradation.

This community education program delivered through primary schools brings together Councils, communities and landcare groups where knowledge and experience are shared.

Primarily funded by local government, participating councils subscribe to the project with an annual payment.

All three municipalities in the Shepparton Irrigation Region support the project.

Participants in the program will be the consumers of tomorrow. Hopefully they will become adults who understand the importance of the economic, social and environmental changes required to sustain and conserve our natural resources

for Australia's future. The challenge for Urban Rural Links is to ensure that the program remains relevant and useful to schools and sponsor councils.

Further information can be found on the program website www.urbanrural.org.au

Did you know?

Only 170kg seed was collected by the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seed Bank this year due to the prolonged drought conditions—down 35% on the previous year.

Protecting Indigenous Heritage

To help reduce unintended damage caused by development decisions, the Australian Heritage Commission has just published a free 22 page guide for organisations as a tool to protect special indigenous places. Your free copy is available on the internet www.ahc.gov.au/infores/publications/



GREATER SHEPPARTON



The GBCMA wishes you a safe and happy festive season and a successful 2004.



IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR QUERIES PLEASE CONTACT THE MUNICIPAL CATCHMENT CO ORDINATOR AT THE GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

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Managing for Wildlife

Habitat for wildlife means much more than just trees. Our wildlife needs a variety of features in the landscape including large old trees, both living and dead, understorey trees and shrubs, logs, rocks, leaf litter and native ground cover. They also need creeks, rivers and wetlands.

Wildlife is often dependant on more than one type of habitat. Squirrel Gliders need large old trees with nesting hollows and wattle for feeding on sap. They need connected patches of vegetation to move between areas as they will not cross open ground. Frogs are another good example who need wetlands and flood plains to breed but will shelter under rocks or fallen logs or cracks in the soil out of the breeding season.

There are many things landholders can do to protect and manage areas of their property for wildlife habitat. Many activities have focussed primarily on revegetation and while this is very important, it is crucial to protect what remnant vegetation remains. Once our remnants are gone we have lost them forever.

Think about protecting remnant patches from stock; allow room for natural regeneration—the cheapest form of revegetation; plant local native vegetation understorey such as wattles to enhance remnants; plan vegetation to enhance or connect existing remnants; leave logs, sticks and leaf litter on the ground; protect stream frontages from stock; protect lone trees; leave a buffer between remnants and cultivated ground; manage weeds and pest animals; avoid spraying upstream of wetlands and farm dams to maintain healthy water quality; leave some fallen timber when collecting fire wood and think about fire wood woodlots for winter heat.

This information comes from a CMA recent publication called "A Wildlife Guide for Landholders" available from the Shepparton office of the Catchment Management Authority on Ph 5822 2288

Biodiversity *Action* Planning (BAP)

Biodiversity Action Plan mapping is currently underway in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Mapping is backed up with on ground visits to assess the quality of each site, and also to do a short bird survey to gain an understanding of what birds are



present through the area. This data can be used to identify and prioritise sites for action. The first priority is to protect what is already there, followed by enhancing any remnant vegetation and then restoring depleted vegetation.

It can help us understand what actions we need to undertake to help certain species that live in an area. By knowing what habitat specialised species require, we can target resources to assist them.

These "focal species" provide a benchmark to aim for and by assisting these we also assist other birds, mammals etc which may live in the same habitat but may not be so fussy in their requirements.

Biodiversity information gathered in this way will help extension officers to assist landholders decide what works they should undertake.

Links with Local Government

Municipal councils and Catchment Management Authorities (CMA) have similar objectives but differing responsibilities for natural resource planning. Councils and CMA's are keen to promote the sustainable use, development and management of the states natural resources.

Natural resource management issues of common concern to both local government and catchment management authorities are currently being used to link the regional catchment strategy objectives with municipal business plans.

Opportunities for improved co ordination and co operation are currently being explored. This work is being done by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority in conjunction with eight municipalities associated with the catchment region.

Waste Management

Waste management groups in the Goulburn Broken and North East Catchments are successfully tackling littering and recycling programs with the assistance of waste Management Task Forces.

"Changing community behaviour has never been easy, but when it becomes a essential, ways must be found"

*-EcoRecycle Program Manager
Steve Malcolm.*

Did you Know?

Victorian Councils and shires spent \$24 million on litter collection and mitigation programs in 2002-03. Individuals need to take responsibility for reducing litter.

"Ecosystems are the earths primary producers, solar powered factories that yield the most basic natural resources and services at an efficiency and cost unmatched by any technology"

World Resources Institute 2000

Partnerships in Natural Resource Management

The **Wyuna Landcare Group** recently celebrated its 10th birthday. This was a great opportunity for the group to reflect on and show case what they have achieved and to thank all who have been involved over that period of time. The Shire of Campaspe and HW Greenham and Sons provided support for this activity.

During the past year the **Dhurringile and District Landcare Group** managed to put a total of 11,890 native trees and shrubs in the ground. The City of Greater Shepparton, Tracey Toyota, Murchison Lions Club, AMP and the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network work crew were among the many community members, agencies, businesses and organisations that provided support for the group during 2003.

Implementation of the works associated with the **Kinnairds Wetland Recreation Master Plan** are well under way. A range of stakeholders have signed off on a plan for the management of the site. A steering committee made up of representatives from the Moira Shire, Goulburn Murray water, Friends of Kinnairds and the Catchment Management Authority have developed and will be installing directional and interpretational signage for the Kinnairds Wetland project site.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority have approved design works for several **urban storm**



water outfalls actively eroding the banks of the Goulburn and Broken Rivers and the Seven Creeks. The works include stabilisation and rehabilitation of these sites. To implement these works cost share arrangements between the City of Greater Shepparton and the Catchment Management Authority (CMA) are currently being negotiated.

Funding of \$50,000 has been approved for a project in the Goulburn Broken Catchment working with farmers to monitor and account for **carbon benefits** of revegetation. The CMA, in partnership with the Sheep Pen Creek Land Management Group, Superb Parrot Project, FFORNE Hardwood Co-op, CSIRO and the Moira Shire are engaged in this project.

"Murray the Cod" is currently being painted onto stormwater pit lids across the Shire of Campaspe to remind residence and visitors not to litter because this litter usually ends up in the river system. This is part of a Stormwater Education program currently being conducted by the Shire.



Did you know?

Research has estimated that every year about 230,000 m³ of litter and debris are deposited into Melbourne's waterways, ultimately arriving in Port Phillip Bay. This is equivalent to dumping one semi-trailer load of rubbish off the Westgate Bridge every two hours!

Proposed New Zones for Rural Victoria.

Three new rural zones are proposed to be included in the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP). These together with the Green Wedge Zone and the Rural Conservation Zone introduced into the VPP by amendment VC22 will provide a range of zoning options available to be applied in planning schemes for rural areas in Victoria. Comments on this discussion paper are to be submitted to the Department of Sustainability and Environment by 20th February 2004. Further information is available from www.dse.vic.gov.au/planning

Rate Rebate

Moira Shire Council and the City of Greater Shepparton in partnership with the Trust for Nature and the Natural Heritage Trust are offering a rate rebate to landholders with a conservation covenant.

A conservation covenant is a voluntary agreement between the Trust for Nature and the landholder. It is placed on the title of the land to ensure that the natural bushland is permanently protected.

Landowners that have native pastures, bush or swamps on their land are encouraged to apply for a conservation covenant. Once the covenant has been registered the land owner will automatically receive a rate rebate. The Shire of Campaspe environmental



rebate aims to recognise natural resource management works carried out by landholders. These works will have benefits to both the community and landholders through improved sustainable land and water management. All farm rated properties are eligible to apply for the environment rate rebate. To qualify landowners agree to undertake natural resource management works on their property. These works may include the preservation and enhancement of; wetlands, waterways, remnant vegetation, and riparian vegetation.

