



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2014

ANGAS BREMER WATER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE INC

Waterways Showing Positive Signs

The ABWMC's 2 year project funded by the Australian Government is now in its final months. Work has been carried out at 16 sites along the Angas and Bremer Rivers and in local swamps with the aim of increasing local biodiversity.

Weed control has been undertaken at all sites and will continue until the end of the project. Many were direct seeded with a variety of locally sourced native plant seed late last year, and despite the hot, dry summer many seedlings are emerging.

Other less accessible sites have had swamp and river plants added via tubestock, and hundreds more will be planted in the coming months.

The bird and frog surveys have demonstrated that the rivers and swamps provide habitat to a wide variety of animals and hopefully numbers will



Bird photo: Darcy Whittaker

increase as the sites establish. The swamps stood out as providing the best habitat for frogs, while the rivers had a greater diversity of creatures living in the water.

This demonstrates how important it is to have all parts of the river system in a healthy state.

This was a relatively short-term project and the sites will take a few years to become established. With careful maintenance by the landholders, the biodiversity benefits to the properties, the rivers and the region should be significant.

The ABWMC will also seek grant funding to assist landholders to further improve the sites wherever possible.



Irrigators Code of Practice Updated

As you should be aware, the Angas Bremer Water Management Committee last year produced a draft update of the 'Code of Practice for Irrigators in the Angas Bremer Region' to ensure that it reflected current knowledge of best practice irrigation and was consistent with the Eastern

Mt Lofty Ranges and River Murray Water Allocation Plans.

All irrigators were given the opportunity to provide their comments and as none were received, the draft was accepted by the committee at their meeting on the 11th of February.

The new Code of Practice will be available on the ABWMC website shortly and will be emailed or posted to irrigators with the upcoming Irrigation Annual Report forms.

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Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges WAP



The Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges (EMLR) Water Allocation Plan, aimed at the fair and sustainable allocation of water resources across the region, has been adopted by the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Hon. Ian Hunter. A staged roll-out of water licences to more than 900 water users in the region is underway and will continue through the coming year.

Members of the community, including the Angas Bremer area and its Water Management Committee, have played a very important role in developing the plan to guide how water from the region's resources will be shared between all users and the environment, to protect the environmental, social and economic well-being of the area for current and future generations.

The plan introduces rollover credits, which allow a portion of unused allocation from a previous year to be

'carried over' to following years.

The volume that can be rolled over is capped at up to 10% of the water allocation. For surface water and watercourses, the credit can be rolled over for one year only. For underground water, the credit from one year can be rolled over for up to two years. The maximum volume that can be taken in any year is capped at 110% of the allocation.

Also new is the ability to transfer water allocations between licensees. Water licences and allocations are personal entitlements—tradeable assets. The plan outlines how these entitlements can eventually be transferred. All water allocation transfers or applications for new water allocations are on hold until all existing user licensing, including appeals, has been completed to ensure we do not over-allocate the region's water resources.

"What the plan delivers for primary producers and

other water users is clarity and security around their water entitlements", said SAMDB Natural Resources Board presiding member Sharon Starick. "Ongoing monitoring will continue, particularly in areas of high demand, to continually assess the condition of water resources."

View the EMLR water allocation plan at the Murray Bridge, Mount Barker or Strathalbyn Natural Resources Centres, at public libraries within the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges area, or online at www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/samurraydarlingbasin. Printed copies of the plan are also available. Phone the Natural Resources Centre in Murray Bridge on (08) 8532 9100 to request one.

If you would like more information on the existing user licensing process, please phone the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources on (08) 8463 6844 or visit the website above.



Natural Resources
SA Murray-Darling Basin



Government of South Australia
South Australian Murray-Darling Basin
Natural Resources Management Board

River Murray Water Allocation Plan



RIVER
MURRAY
WAP

Natural Resources, SA Murray Darling Basin is also amending the River Murray Water Allocation Plan (River Murray WAP) to update science and policy content and to ensure effective management of the water resource for all users.

They are working in collaboration with the community based River Murray Advisory Committee (RMAC) to develop policy options to be included in the River Murray WAP.

Forums were held with key stakeholders in December 2013 and feedback received during these sessions is being incorporated into the River Murray WAP.

Information about policy options and the amendment process is available online, at <http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/samurraydarlingbasin/water/water-allocation-plans/river-murray>

A draft of the River Murray WAP is expected to be

available for review in mid-2014. Consultation on the draft WAP will be advertised at this time.

If you would like to talk about any of the policy options being considered, or the amendment process, please contact Peta Brettig the Senior Project Officer, River Murray Water Allocation Plan, on 8463 6877 or 0439 824 477. Feedback on policy options can also be provided via email – rmwap.feedback@sa.gov.au

Next stage for the Irrigation Industry Improvement Program (3IP)

The South Australian River Murray Sustainability (SARMS) Irrigation Industry Improvement Program (3IP) has entered its next stage. People who submitted an Expression of Interest (Eol) have recently been advised if they have been invited to submit a full application.

The 3IP has \$240 million to assist the irrigation industry to adjust to the Murray Darling Basin Plan and seeks to help return 40 gigalitres of water back into the River Murray.

SARMS Program Sponsor, Andrew Johnson, said there had been a strong response to the Eol process for Round One of the 3IP, with more than 200 Eols received and assessed.

Information sessions will be held to assist successful applicants who wish to submit Full Applications for Round One. They can also access Regional Support Officers to assist in outlining the process and information required to complete the application form.

Applications close on Wednesday 30 April 2014. More information is available on the 3IP website at www.pir.sa.gov.au/sarms-iiip.

There will be another opportunity for those who were unsuccessful to resubmit, and for new applications to be submitted, in Round Two, which is expected to be released early in the 2014-15 financial year.



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Irrigation Management Workshops

Natural Resources, SA Murray-Darling Basin have a suite of Irrigation Management training workshops that potentially can be conducted in the Langhorne Creek region subject to landholder interest.

The workshops have previously been held in the Angas Bremer district and

cover a range of irrigation management topics including Soils, Irrigation Scheduling and Drip Irrigation Management and Maintenance. A higher level Soil Water Dynamics workshop is also available which focuses on the interpretation of capacitance probe soil

water data and irrigation scheduling.

Should you wish to receive further information about the irrigation management training opportunities please contact Michael Cutting at the Strathalbyn Natural Resources Centre on 8536 5619.



Angas Bremer Salinity Monitoring Report

As has been mentioned in previous newsletters and Irrigation Annual Reports Dr. Richard Stirzaker from CSIRO is currently preparing a report on the history of community salinity monitoring in the Angas Bremer district. The report aims to capture the key learnings from over 10

years of community driven salinity monitoring and also look at future monitoring needs.

Research indicates that the community driven water management model in the Angas Bremer is fairly unique not just at a State

and National level but also internationally.

The report will provide an excellent opportunity to showcase the monitoring work and demonstrate the community's on-going commitment to the efficient and sustainable use of land and water resources in the Angas Bremer region.

WATER EFFICIENT QUALITY FEED? THINK LUCERNE.

Lucerne is one of the most productive and water efficient plants to grow. Drawing on water further down in the soil profile, it has a greater capacity to access water, minimising deep soil drainage. Offering quality year-round production, lucerne also helps to shorten the feed gap, delivers excellent persistence and provides nitrogen fixation for soil like no other.

- Quality production all year round
- Excellent water use efficiency - per mm of irrigation
- Shortens the feed gap that usually occurs in drier months
- Superior feed quality
- Persistent, will last for years
- Great companion with many pasture species.

Sardi-Grazer
Heritage Seeds

Dormancy 6
Winter Active

NEW

SARDI-Grazer is the most persistent and grazing tolerant lucerne in Australia. A new variety, it has been developed primarily for use in cropping rotations where large paddocks limit the use of rotational grazing. It delivers superior persistence where long periods of continuous grazing (more than four weeks) by sheep and cattle is commonplace, making it the ideal choice when a long-term lucerne stand is required.

NEW

Dormancy 7
Winter Active

**Series 2
Sardi 7**
Heritage Seeds

SARDI 7 Series 2 is even more versatile, broadly adapted and persistent than the original SARDI 7. It has been bred for the Australian climate and offers greater performance in cold, wet environments where lucerne can struggle. This new variety is an excellent high yielding and multi-purpose lucerne that is ideal for both grazing and hay production.

For more information please contact
Daryl Turner, Heritage Seeds SA territory manager
Mob: 0418 191 060

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Low-input Under-vine Management Trials

The present management of the under-vine zone is generally directed towards removing the plant growth with herbicides, preventing competition for water and keeping the area tidy.

However, this creates a bare soil surface, without above or below ground organic matter. This is the opposite to what is required of a healthy soil, which has plant roots and soil organisms cycling nutrients and improving soil structure.

A new project will investigate replacing unwanted plant species with others that will enhance soil health without having an adverse impact on vine productivity. It will be lead by Chris

Penfold from the University of Adelaide in partnership with researchers from the South Australian Research and Development Institute, and NSW Department of Primary Industries, with funding from the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation.

Grass and broadleaf species are being selected for 9 sites in South Australia and Griffith, in preparation for an autumn sowing. The functional microbial groups active beneath each of the cover crops will be identified and once the benefits or otherwise of the various cover-crop species have been determined in the field, a thorough cost-benefit analysis will be conducted.

After 3 years it is expected that growers should have some cost-effective options available to them on a web-based decision support tool, which will decrease herbicide requirements without compromising vineyard productivity.

One vineyard in Langhorne Creek will be part of this trial and a number of others will be augmenting this project by setting up trials of their own with assistance from Chris Penfold.

A field day will be held later this year, open to all interested landholders in the region. This will showcase the initial results of the project and provide information on establishing cover crops on your own property.



Alexandrina Council's Environmental Plan

The Alexandrina Council recently released their Draft Environmental Action Plan. This includes plans for the Council to embed sustainability throughout their organisation, create a Biodiversity Team to manage their reserves and to support community and other stakeholders interested in working on Council land.

The Environmental staff from the Council, Ms Shen Mann and Ms Lisa Kirwan, attended the ABWMC meeting in February to discuss the plan and the committee has provided a submission to the Council to show their general support for it.

Other community meetings held around the region during the public consultation period were attended by over 110 people.

All received submissions will be discussed by elected members at a meeting in early April, with a view to the Council endorsing the final Plan at the Council meeting on Monday 17 May.

A launch event to be held at Centenary Hall in Goolwa on World Environment Day, 5 June 2014, is also planned. More details about the event will be released in mid-May.



Funding and the Future of the ABWMC

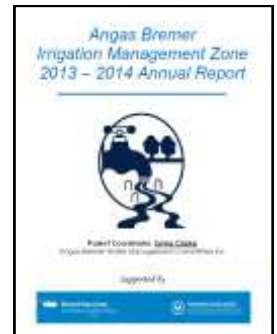
The SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board has committed funding to the ABWMC for the upcoming 2013-14 irrigation reporting. After this season it is currently unclear how the reporting process will be carried out or funded. Discussions are continuing with the Board who are aiming to ultimately roll out

Annual Irrigation Reporting across the whole of the Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges.

The ABWMC will continue to seek grants from a variety of sources to enable it to carry out its core functions and deliver projects, while maintaining close links with the Natural Resource Management Board and all levels of government.

The committee is currently seeking grant funding to upgrade its website to ensure the available information is kept up to date. This has been applied for through the NRM Board's Volunteer grants.

A grant application has also been submitted to Alexandrina Council to assist with the costs of the cover crop trials (see story on page 5) .



Angas Bremer Water Management Committee 2013-14



- Chair: James Stacey
- Vice-chair: Nick McDonald
- Secretary: Barb Blaser
- Treasurer: Michael Clements
- General Committee Members: Darren Aworth, George Borrett, Mac Cleggett, Loene Furler, Dale Wenzel
- Natural Resources, SA Murray Darling Basin, (DEWNR) Staff: Michael Cutting, Mardi Van Der Wielen
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Currently working out of the
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