



Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority Chair Reappointed

NSW Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, Minister Verity Firth, recently announced the reappointment of Pam Green as Chairperson of the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA).

"Mrs Green is a highly respected member of the community who has been Chair of SRCMA since its establishment in early 2004" said Minister Firth.

"She will continue her work with the catchment community in the strategic management of natural resources with the support of Board Members Michael Muston, John Kerin, Howard Charles, Kerry Pfeiffer, Mandi Stevenson, Iris White and SRCMA staff.

"Their ongoing challenge, which will not always be easy, will be to continue to successfully deliver practical and permanent on ground changes to the way we manage our natural resources in partnership with the local community," Minister Firth said.



Mrs Green has extensive Natural Resource Management and governance experience and knowledge. She has served the Eurobodalla community as a Councillor and Mayor and is trained in planning and development mediation.

"Mrs Green is a dedicated worker for a sustainable future through her skills and knowledge and involvement in many natural resource management advisory bodies, she has a passion for people, their place in the landscape and local community involvement in decision making," said Minister Firth.

"I am delighted to have been reappointed as Chair of SRCMA. I'm looking forward to continuing SRCMA's work with our community in addressing the many natural resource management challenges. We have to find ways to manage our natural resources in a sustainable way as we face the impacts of increasing population and climate change. Decision making needs to recognise the limits in the capacity of our land, native vegetation and fauna, water and our marine environments. We need them to continue to function and adapt to these pressures to provide the environmental services we all need like clean air, clean and sufficient water and healthy and productive soils," said Mrs Green.

Mrs Green's appointment is for three years.

Issue No. 10
July 2008

What's In This Issue?

Blackberry Control Program on the Snowy River Complete

Volunteers Plant 2000 Local Native Species Over 2 Weeks

Bega Cheese Attracted by 'Designer Carrots'

Sculpture a Home For Lizards

Pacific Oyster Bash—Wagonga Inlet Working Bee

New SRCMA Logo Adopted

SRCMA recently adopted a new logo, incorporating the SRCMA Aboriginal logo, designed by Wollongong School girl Nikitah Wilson. The colours used in designing the platypus are black, for Indigenous people and red for the earth in which the platypus build their burrows. The zigzag pattern represents the river systems flowing through the state. Nikitah used red and white spots to represent micro-organisms that are vital in keeping our waterways healthy and the green spots are for the vegetation along the river bank.



Nikitah used red and white spots to represent micro-organisms that are vital in keeping our waterways healthy and the green spots are for the vegetation along the river bank.

Blackberry Control Program on the Snowy River Complete

Local contractors working for SRCMA have recently completed a complicated blackberry control program on the Snowy River, in the last four kilometres of the rugged, boulder strewn gorge below Jindabyne Dam.

The contractors used a small boat and a spray unit with 100m of hose to treat the big weed infestation, while other crew members got to small, isolated plants using back pack sprayers. Contractors also treated any willow regrowth found along the river.

"Most of the vehicle accessible areas directly below the Jindabyne Dam wall were treated last Autumn, but this season's program has been a particularly challenging job," said Danny Henderson, Catchment Officer with SRCMA.

"Not only is there only one access track into that four kilometre section, but the blackberry has become very vigorous and dense in recent years, and the terrain is very rough."

"Much of the river in the gorge is too rugged for kayaks, let alone this bigger boat. To get through these areas a helicopter was used to pick the boat up on a long-line and fly it downstream to the next pool. With the helicopter being based only minutes away at the Jindabyne Airfield, this job was quick, inexpensive and removed the risk of injury to people manhandling bulky equipment over boulders."

Landholders are legally required to control blackberry on their land due to the fact that it is a noxious weed. It can, however, be difficult and expensive to control, given how the weed spreads and where it grows. In recent years the Snowy River Rehabilitation Project has made funding available to assist landholders in managing their riverfront land.



Blackwood River Restorations Pty Ltd's boat being flown onto a downstream pool, Snowy River



Martin Blackwood hooking his boat to the helicopter long-line prior to it being flown downstream, Snowy River

"Most people really want to do what's right, but the costs in doing this can be prohibitive. That is where programs like the blackberry funding can really make a difference. Some great results have been seen along the Snowy River where landholders have been able to get their riverfront under control through a simple short term management agreement," said Mr Henderson.

Over the past three years more than 50 landholders from Jindabyne downstream 90 kilometres to the Delegate River junction have entered into blackberry control agreements through the Snowy River Rehabilitation Project, which is funded by SRCMA through the Department of NSW Premier and Cabinet. Blackberry and willow control is continuing along the entire Snowy River in NSW, including in the very difficult and remote country within the Kosciusko National Park.

For more information on the blackberry control program along the Snowy River contact Danny Henderson on 02 6452 1455.

Volunteers Plant 2000 Local Native Species Over Two Weeks



Volunteers planted approximately 2000 local native species over two weeks

Ooaree Creek is a major tributary of Werri Lagoon - a wetland of State significance - and is located on an active dairy farm at Rose Valley, Gerringong.

On-ground conservation work has been occurring in this area since 2006 under the Revive Our Wetlands Program, funded by BHP Billiton and the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA), and the SRCMA's River Rehabilitation Program.

Work has included the installation of an off-creek watering system for stock, in-stream erosion control works and mechanical removal of the densely growing weed species Coral Tree, along a 2 km length of the creekline to prepare for revegetation with native species. These works will improve water quality of the creek and lagoon, control erosion and add to biodiversity. The Coral Trees have contributed to major erosion (incision) of the creek bed by excluding the range of native plant species that would have originally stabilised the creek banks.

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) have coordinated volunteers to undertake a range of on-ground conservation works in this area under the Revive Program since 2006. This culminated in a huge planting event last month - May 2008 - when approximately 2000 local native species were planted by 200 volunteers over a 2 week period!

Some of these volunteers had been involved in the seed collection on the site since 2006 with the plants propagated by a local nursery in time for the event. Many were dedicated regular CVA volunteers. Others were Conservation and Land Management students from Yallah Tafe, University of Wollongong Students, Kiama Council staff, Kiama High School students and many members of the local Landcare Group, Werri Beach/Gerringong Dunecare, as well as other members of the local community.

Many thanks to all the volunteers that assisted with this huge planting event and to CVA for co-ordinating them. Also to Jo Chittick, the dairy farmer and property owner for his dedication to improving the condition of Ooaree Creek, and to the cause for conservation.

Bega Cheese attracted by 'Designer Carrots'

Bega Cheese, in partnership with Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA), has been successful in securing a small national Market Based Instrument (MBI) capacity building grant aptly named 'Designer Carrots'.

\$20,000 will be used by Bega Cheese and SRCMA to evaluate whether a new MBI, in combination with existing government incentives, would have the potential to enhance voluntary participation by Bega dairy farmers in natural resource management activities at the farm scale.

"The Designer Carrots project will assess alternative methods by which NRM activities can be funded, including such measures as paying a price premium for milk where a farmer can demonstrate that they meet a minimum level of environmental performance," said Noel Kesby, General Manager, SRCMA.

"Over the last five years, SRCMA has invested over \$2million in natural resource management activities on Bega dairy farms, including effluent reuse, wetland and river protection, revegetation, soil testing and nutrient budgeting.

"By exploring options for new MBIs, we anticipate that industry will be in a better position to self-fund continued improvements in the longer-term," said Mr Kesby.

Mr Ken Garner, Farm Development Manager at Bega Cheese, is hoping that the 'Designer Carrots' project will provide them with an opportunity to establish the real cost to dairy farmers in meeting community and industry expectations for environmental performance, especially in the face of climate change.

"Bega Cheese has developed an Environmental Management System (BEMS) for its farm suppliers and we are currently preparing an EMS for our factory," Mr Garner explained.

"This has allowed us to establish a benchmark for improved farm management that is consistent with community and consumer expectations for a clean, green product," he said.

Both Bega Cheese and SRCMA gratefully acknowledge the financial and logistical support provided by the Queensland Government's Department of Natural Resources and Water that has enabled this project to be undertaken in the Bega Valley.

Sculpture A Home For Lizards

The Far South Coast Conservation Management Network (CMN) held a gathering recently when a practical demonstration of 'microhabitat' was created on a property in Bournda.

The aim was to recreate ground-layer habitat in native vegetation by laying out common materials to make suitable homes for small fauna such as reptiles, mammals, insects and other invertebrates.

Steven Sass, Senior Ecologist with NGH environmental shared his extensive experience with the group saying "The major threat to small fauna is removal of their home through fire wood collection, over grazing of native vegetation and 'cleaning up' of the forest floor."

"A lack of microhabitat can create a gap in the food web which means a lack in the fauna that rely on it. There are many other animals that feed on or rely on these animals, predatory birds other larger mammals and reptiles for example," said Steven.

The demonstration was well attended by CMN members and others who had an interest. The group tapped into their artistic urges as they created sculptures from bricks, old fence posts, roof tiles and roofing iron.

"Obviously we don't encourage removing dead wood or rocks from other ecosystems so we've used common materials in the demonstration. They've been chosen for good thermal properties and protective crevices," said Dan Williamson, CMN Facilitator.

"The microhabitat 'sculptures' have been laid out to create a corridor between existing natural habitats. This is so easy to do; anyone could create artificial habitat on their own property"

The demonstration results will be monitored to see if there is any increase in small animals. A monitoring date will be advised shortly and anyone is welcome to join in.

For more information about the demonstration or the CMN, see the website www.fscmn.com.au or call Facilitators Dan and Vickie Williamson on 6492 5558. The CMN is supported by the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority.

Pacific Oyster Bash Up – Wagonga Inlet Working Bee

30 volunteers participated in a working bee to remove 3806 Pacific oysters from Narooma's spectacular waterway, Wagonga Inlet, on Saturday 28th June.

The Pacific oyster is an introduced species that threatens the growth of locally produced native Sydney Rock oysters. Pacific oysters can be found growing on the shells of other shellfish and compete for food and settling sites with native species. They grow between 80mm to 400mm in size with their shells variable in shape depending on where they grow. Un-harvested oysters may live up to 30 years and can produce up to 100 million spats in a single spawning event.

Found in intertidal and subtidal zones, they prefer to attach to a hard or rocky surface in shallow or sheltered waters, however they are known to also settle and thrive in muddy or sandy areas such as estuary bottoms.

Oyster farmers nominated the area upstream of Hobbs Point as the target area for the clean up. Workers collected Pacific oysters from the shorelines, with divers collecting them from deeper waters.

Department of Primary Industries (DPI) (Fisheries NSW) Aquaculture Manager Ian Lyall said the Pacific oyster is a problem for the environment and the oyster industry.

He praised the various groups coming together to work in partnership to address the problem. "Working together to address issues in the catchment is a benefit for the whole community," Mr Lyall said.

"This project is just one of the many SRCMA is currently working on with oyster farmers, the community and other key stakeholders in all major oyster-producing estuaries on the NSW south coast," SRCMA Coast and Marine Officer Jillian Keating said.

"Others include clean-ups of derelict oyster leases and catchment rehabilitation projects to improve water quality for harvest harvesting."

For more information or to get involved with the project contact Jillian Keating from SRCMA on 4475 1004.

Catch uP

is the electronic newsletter of
Southern Rivers CMA

To contribute an article or to receive
a hard copy or an emailed Acrobat
PDF version of Catch uP contact:

Laura Hawes
Phone: (02) 4224 9707
Fax: (02) 4224 9669
Laura.hawes@cma.nsw.gov.au

Southern Rivers
Catchment Management Authority
PO Box 3095
Wollongong NSW 2500
Phone: 4224 9700
Fax: 4224 9669
Email: southern@cma.nsw.gov.au
www.southern.cma.nsw.gov.au