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CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The natural resource management (NRM) achievements of local communities within the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (CMA) region feature in a publication launched by Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water, John Robertson, at NSW Parliament House today.

The publication, *NSW CMAs celebrate five years of achievements* highlights the joint contribution of thousands of landholders; Landcare, community groups and volunteers; Aboriginal networks; industry groups; contractors; and local government and other agencies to improve landscapes across NSW.

Since they were established in 2004, the thirteen Catchment Management Authorities have worked in partnership with local people to deliver \$2.11 billion of investment in over 13,000 projects, to target and address critical NRM issues. Over five million hectares of land, the equivalent of six per cent of the State, has been protected, repaired and enhanced.

Southern Rivers CMA Chair, Pam Green said the people of the Southern Rivers region have contributed significantly to improving the natural environments in which they live.

"Local people have undertaken 472 projects since 2004," Mrs Green said.

"The projects have ranged from large-scale river rehabilitation projects involving numerous individuals and groups to children undertaking environmental activities in their local schools," Mrs Green said.

Shoalhaven dairy and oyster farmers feature prominently in the publication, with a major environmental effort on private properties in the area leading to a dramatic improvement in the water quality of the Crookhaven and Shoalhaven Rivers and Shoalhaven Estuary. This has had positive effects for both dairy farmers and the local oyster industry.

Other Southern Rivers projects featured in the publication include:

- Coasts and Estuaries Incentives Program – with \$5 million investment, 62 on-ground projects have been undertaken to protect and improve estuaries and coastline from Stanwell Park to Eden.
- Monaro Grasslands Conservation Project – a \$2.1 million project to preserve endangered ecological communities.

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- Bega Cheese EMS partnership – a total of \$10 million has been invested in this project which involves over 90 per cent of Bega and Eurobodalla dairy farmers engaged in environment works to protect creeks and riparian zones.

Major achievements in the Southern Rivers region from July 2004 to June 2009 include:

- Over 22,500 hectares of native vegetation has been rehabilitated and restored.
- Almost 6,000 hectares of significant species and ecological communities have been protected, for example by fencing to exclude stock, human traffic or vehicles.
- Pest plant control measures have been implemented on 181,000 hectares.
- Soil condition has been improved in on almost 24,000 hectares of land. Activities to achieve this result include conservation farming practices aimed at improving soil health.
- Over 9,000 local people have attended 759 awareness raising events such as demonstrations, field days or study tours.

Copies of *NSW CMAs celebrate five years of achievements* are available by calling 1800 032 101.

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