

# MOORE to the point



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## Natural Resource Management Update Issue 14 Autumn 2009

Welcome to the Moore Catchment Council's (MCC) 14th *Moore to the Point* quarterly newsletter. The MCC NRMOs have been busy during last quarter organising and attending events, plus writing and submitting projects for the Governments Caring for our Country funding.

As always, if you have any articles or updates that you would like to see in future newsletters, or wish any additional information, please contact the MCC in Moora. Editor, Rachel Walmsley

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## Completion of East Moore Project

In December 31st 2008 the East Moore Project concluded. It has been funded by the Federal Government and the State Government. The project was administered by the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council and delivered by the Moore Catchments Council.

The key achievements of this project include fencing off 91 hectares of high priority remnant vegetation. Fencing off 136 hectares of high priority natural drainage lines. Revegetating 19 hectares of high-priority natural drainage lines.

In total 227 hectares has been protected through creating 15 Voluntary conservation agreements via 7 landholders. To raise scientific knowledge of flora and fauna in the East Moore Catchment 9 Flora Surveys were carried out and 20 Bird surveys completed. Through Flora Surveys in 2007 a new plant species has been found called *Tetratheca* sp. *New Norvia*, from the

Tremandraceae family. An article has been submitted to the Western Australian Herbarium's journal *Nuytsia* and hopefully will be published by March 2009.

**Left:** Lana explains to the project wind-up field tour participants about the re-vegetation of one of Vernon Bailey's creeks.



**Right:** Lana hands Sarah Mason a cheque for works carried out at her property through the project.



The project was promoted via workshops, presentations, media releases, field days, displays/stands and project gate signage. Most of the workshops and field days focused on the importance of protecting remnant vegetation and creek line's, local flora and fauna and altered hydrology and the treatment options.

I would like to thank the landholders who participated in the project and everyone else who assisted. Thanks to all MCC staff and NACC for this opportunity and for their support.

Project Officer Lana Kelly



# Achieve Good Grazing Management of Perennial Pastures

Rachel and Ingrid attended a 'Pasture to Pocket' Grazing Management Workshop, run by David McLean of RCS. We both thoroughly recommend it, and hope it will be run in the NAR again. The central idea is that an understanding of agro-ecosystem processes can improve sustainability and optimize profit in grazing systems. Following is a summary of the 7 key principles of grazing management.

## Principle 1 – Rest and Graze Period

- grazed plants require a recovery period and time taken for recovery is determined by growth rate
- growth rate is determined by growth phase (see diagram below) and environmental conditions (incl. growth season)

## Principle 2 – Match Stocking Rate to Carrying Capacity

- Stocking Rate: how much we plan to have eaten
- Carrying Capacity: how much can be produced
- no more than 40-60 % of productivity should be eaten (take half and leave half)

## Principle 3 – Plan, Monitor and Manage

### PLAN

- layout, water capability, stock movement
- grazing (using grazing chart)
- for problems (flood, drought, poisonous plants)

### MONITOR

- use grazing chart as a monitoring tool (record rest periods and resting paddocks; paddock productivity; stocking rate; stocking rate relative to carrying capacity)

### MANAGE

- reacting to changes (weather/climate/season, animal requirements, growth rate, markets)
- use grazing chart as a decision making tool

## Principle 4 – Manage Livestock Effectively

- husbandry impacts on production and gross margins
- influences on animal production: nutrition (matching stocking rate to carrying capacity), water (quality and quantity), distance walked, health (disease, parasites), timing of reproduction, feed utilization, stress, etc

## Principle 5 – Short Graze Period

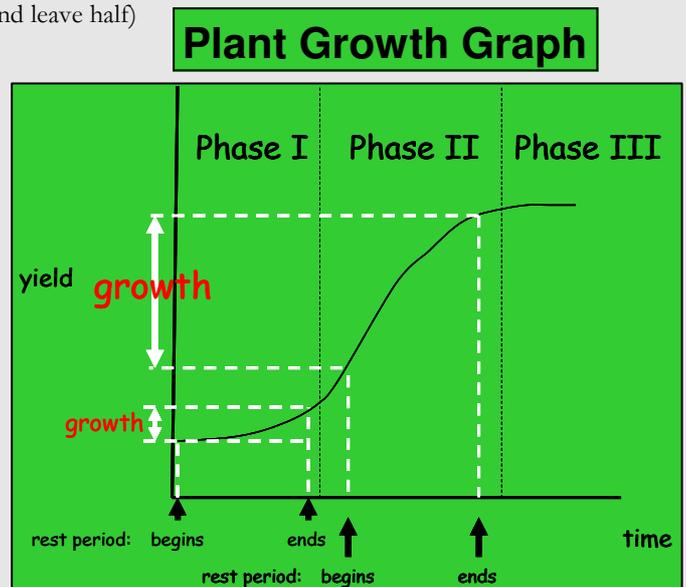
- feed intake reduces as graze period is extended beyond 2 days
- balancing short graze periods with long rest periods? solution: large number of paddocks

## Principle 6 – High Stock Density

- maximum stock density for minimum time, to encourage even utilisation of pasture and to stimulate pasture growth

## Principle 7 – Biodiversity

- wide range of plants and animals for varied root depth, mineral uptake and accumulation, organic matter accumulation, growth periods, soil microorganisms, birds, insects, etc.
- effect on water and nutrient cycles, energy flow, and parasite and disease control



### Growth Phases

#### Phase I:

- growth slow, mainly supplied by root reserves

#### Phase II:

- rapid growth, supplied by greater leaf area with high rates of photosynthesis

#### Phase III:

- growth slows or ceases, due to lignification (woodiness) and senescence (old age)

The Moore Catchment Council helped the Moora-Miling Pasture Improvement Group (MMPIG) organise a field tour of the 2007-08 NLP saltbush project on the 24<sup>th</sup> March, to show how the seedlings have progressed eight months after planting. Ian Pulbrook (Greenoil Nursery) and John Borger (DAFWA) were on hand to provide their expertise regarding planting methods, grazing management and weed control. We visited a number of sites to compare how the saltbush has established in the varying land conditions – soil type and level of salt, and all agreed that the mounding technique used by the project was the key to the overall success of the project.

The field tour also visited Paula Moore's farm which breeds alpacas for use amongst stock as a fox deterrent and they have proved most effective at doing so. Dan Walsh (DAFWA) was also on hand to explain the baiting methods available for foxes and rabbits, and the training needed to use the 1080 baits. The field tour was concluded with John Borger giving an informative talk on saline land weed control – most notably Slender Ice plant – then a MMPIG AGM and BBQ.



**Above:** Ian Pulbrook explains to Ken Seymour how to graze his new saltbush pasture effectively

**Right:** Alpacas - cute and effective as fox deterrents in the paddock



**Above:** Peter (red hat) explains to the farmers his theories on how the Australian landscape functions

Nearly 30 members of the MMPIG and MCC received an audience with Peter Andrews, the famous east coast farmer and author, on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Peter, a former race horse breeder and grazier, has spent over 30 years radically transforming a run-down property in the Hunter Valley by testing out his many theories that he has developed from reading the Australian landscape and the natural processes it uses. The MMPIG was lucky to secure his presence after stiff competition from other groups in WA wanting to hear him too, but MCC jumped at the chance to book him for the group. Everybody there wanted to hear the author of 'Back from the Brink' and 'Beyond the Brink' explain his theories and understanding of the Australian landscape and its environmental processes, and also about his Natural Sequence Farming methods which claim will help save the land from complete destruction.



**Above:** The BBQ in the evening provided a good opportunity to question Peter further

He presented and explained his thoughts and ideas on a white board and then in the field at Cranmore farm, and was challenged by several of the farmers on some of Peter's topics including how the groundwater moves through the different soils, why lack of ground cover is causing the global temperature rise, how the surface water used to be a series of interconnected wetlands, why Australia receives less rain than it used to and what WA will end up like if present farming methods continues. The field trip was followed by a very enjoyable BBQ dinner hosted by Tony White at Genocanna, which then gave the opportunity for the farmers to ask Peter individual questions. Tony, president of the MMPIG, said that it is essential for the farmers here to question their current farming practices and

modify them to work with the land for a healthy sustainable future which will help save the WA landscape from desertification and failure. The day was a great success and left everybody who attended with an alternative view of how the Australian landscape functions and ways to make their farms more fertile for a productive future.

## Brushwood seedlings available through MCC project

More than 520,000 brushwood seedlings have already been offered to a number of landholders in the Moore Catchment as part of the MCC's government funded project 'Increased Adoption of Sustainable Brushwood Production'. The project received \$224,000 of Caring for our Country money last year and the project builds on the successfully completed project 'Growing Brushwood for Profit and Protection in the Northern Agricultural Region' which has seen 1.25 million brushwood seedlings planted since 2006.

This project is using two varieties of locally collected seed which is currently being grown in nurseries and will be delivered to participating landholders in early winter. Workshops and field days will be held for potential and established growers, with technical advisors on hand, to help ensure correct planting and establishment methods are used, and also to demonstrate the potential for this sustainable resource now and into the future.

If you are interested in growing brushwood at **5c** a seedling plus delivery through this project, then please call the MCC office ASAP. We don't have many seedlings left so get in quick.



**Photos:** From small beginnings to paddocks of huge potential both environmentally and commercially



### Upcoming Events in 2009:

- ◇ 18th Apr - **Gingin Expo**
- ◇ 20th Apr - **Brushwood field day, Miling** - more info 9653 1355
- ◇ 19th May - **NRM at home workshop, Dalwallinu** - more info 9653 1355
- ◇ 21st May - **MCC OGM** - more info 9653 1355
- ◇ 9th & 10th June - **NACC soil biology course, Geraldton** - more info 9964 9774
- ◇ 24th June - **Liebe Womens Day,**

## NACC incentives currently available

NACC have a variety of incentives available for the Moore River Catchment that you may qualify for, which include:

- ◆ **Rivercare** - fencing and re-vegetating creek lines
- ◆ **Wetland incentive** - fencing and re-vegetating wetlands
- ◆ **Oil mallees** - strategic planting of oil mallees

For further information please ring the MCC office. These incentives are all subject to government funding so they won't last forever !

**Moore  
Catchment  
Council**



*protecting the natural resources  
in the Moore River Catchment*



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