

25 February 2008

## **WESTERN CATCHMENT PEOPLE INVEST \$4.3 M TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENT**

Land managers in the Western Catchment have received \$4.3 million in grants to undertake on-ground works or training to improve natural resource management in their area through the Western Catchment Management Authority's (CMA) 2007 Incentive Program.

Chair of the Western CMA, Rory Treweeke, said one hundred and three applicants received funding towards projects which meet the CMAs natural resource management targets, which include native pasture recovery, riverine habitat and water quality improvement, pest management and sustainable agriculture.

"As we start 2008 it's important to recognise the achievements of the previous year," Mr Treweeke said.

"The 2007 program yielded significant results and shows the interest and willingness of Western Catchment people to improve the natural resources of their local environment," he said.

The funding is part of the NSW and Australian Government's combined \$23 million commitment to the Western Catchment over a four-year period.

Major projects include:

- \$2 million committed to 43 applicants for native pasture recovery and sustainable agriculture.
  - Land managers will use a total of 680km of fencing, and the installation of 11 watering points to assist with the management of grazing pressure which will encourage native pasture growth on a total of 143,140 hectares (1,430km<sup>2</sup>).
  - In addition, 33 trapyards will be erected to exclude goats from a total of 103,300 ha (1,033km<sup>2</sup>).
  - As a result, native pasture recovery works will be undertaken on an area of 2,474km<sup>2</sup>, which is equivalent to the area of the Australian Capital Territory or approximately four times the size of the Gundabooka National Park near Bourke.
- \$1.42 million was committed to 22 applicants for riverine habitat and water quality improvements. 58 off-river watering points have been installed to stop stock accessing waterways and 383km of waterways have been fenced (equivalent to the distance by road from Sydney to Port Macquarie). As a result, 17,060 hectares (170km<sup>2</sup>) of riverine vegetation is now protected, which is equivalent in size to the Ledknapper Native Reserve near Enngonia.
- \$440,500 was committed to 18 applicants treat 117,500 hectares (1,175km<sup>2</sup>) affected by invasive native scrub using a range of techniques including chemical spot-treatment, chaining and raking. This is equivalent in size to the Yathong Nature Reserve near Cobar. Although invasive native scrub or woody weeds are native plants, they out-



compete native pastures and results in bare and eroded soil, so their management is essential.

- \$180,000 was committed to three applicants to control noxious weeds, including \$65,000 to control Hudson Pear on 4,000 hectares in the Lightning Ridge area and \$30,000 to control Athol Pine, which affects wetlands and riverine corridors.
- \$80,400 was committed to four applicants to undertake rangeland rehabilitation works on 1,638 hectares using a combination of engineering works and revegetation of native species.
- \$135,000 was committed to seven applicants to encourage sustainable agriculture through conservation farming. Four machines have been converted to direct drill and one purchased, resulting in 10,400 hectares (104km<sup>2</sup>) of cropping land converted to no-till agriculture.
- A further \$400,000 was committed to applicants for:
  - training to improve their natural resource management skills; and
  - protecting the variety of plant and animal life (biodiversity) through the Environmentally Significant Areas program.

The 2008 Incentive Program will be launched in March at the Sustainable Grazing Forum in Broken Hill.

## ENDS

For further information:

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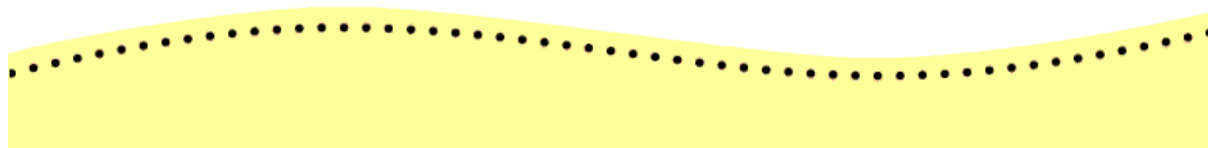
Captions:

01\_Davies\_Green: Gary Davies of the Grawin-Glengarry Sheeppark Miners' Association and Daryl Green of the Western CMA inspect treated Hudson Pear near **Lightning Ridge**.

02\_Whytcross1: Randall Whytcross of Kia Ora Station 80km south-west of **Cobar** received funding to undertake stage two of a project to improve total grazing pressure and encourage native pasture recovery. Through the 2007 program, the Whytcross family installed two additional watering points (two tanks, two troughs and 8.5km of piping) to reduce grazing pressure on their paddocks and encourage groundcover and healthier soils.

03\_Nantilla: Andrew Scott, Manager of Nantilla and Garden Vale Stations near **Wanaaring**, with one of seven goat traps installed as part of the Western CMA's Incentives Program.

04\_Ferguson: Duncan and Chris Ferguson of Myrnong Station, 60km south-west of **Wanaaring**, have had excellent results regenerating native perennial grass thanks to 86km of total grazing pressure fencing funded through the 2007 program. The fencing complements a comprehensive system of trapyards and total grazing control paddocks and their rotational grazing system, which allows them to effectively manage their groundcover and promote perennial grass species.



# MEDIA RELEASE

