

7 April 2008

## **FENCING THE PAROO RIVER BECAUSE 'THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER'**

Mr Garry Heffernan of Ularara Station near Wanaaring knew the grass was always greener over the fence and was one of 199 Western Catchment land managers who improved the condition of his property through the Western Catchment Management Authority's \$4.3 million 2007 Incentive Program.

People have until the end of April to apply for funds through the Western CMA's 2008 Incentive Program by ringing 1800 032 101 or visiting [www.western.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.western.cma.nsw.gov.au)

The Paroo River runs through Mr Heffernan's property and then onto the adjoining Nocolche Nature Reserve.

Mr Heffernan fenced approximately 10km of the river's frontage and installed eight off-river watering points for his merino sheep because he could see the difference between the land condition of his property and that of the Nature Reserve.

"The area around the riverbank had been flogged out from 150 years of set stocking," Mr Heffernan said.

"It was really obvious to compare the difference with the area across the fence that has had stock excluded for the past thirty years. The lignum and other native grasses have returned to that area and that's what I expect will happen on my property," Mr Heffernan said.

As a result of the fencing approximately 1,000 hectares will be rehabilitated, including 900 hectares of ephemeral wetland.

"Depending on rainfall and river flow, the area can act as a wetland but it needs good vegetation to slow down the water.

"It will also help the Yapunyah trees, which are important habitat for the bees that support the local beekeeping industry," he said.

The fencing allows Mr Heffernan to control stock movement, which provides a number of benefits for vegetation, soil health and water quality.

When stock access the river for water, they contribute to soil erosion and silting and as they often defecate whilst drinking their faeces reduces water quality and can lead to algae blooms.

Mr Heffernan was one of 28 Western Catchment land managers who received funding to improve riverine habitat and water quality.

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



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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.

The Incentive Programs are provided through the NSW and Australian Governments and is part of a combined \$23 million commitment to the Western Catchment over a four year period.

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For further information:

Maree Barnes, PR and Media Officer CMA. Ph: 02 6883 3058/0427 256814

Garry Heffernan, Ularara Station. Ph: 6874 7822 – best to ring after hours.

Caption: Garry Heffernan with the fence he's erected to protect 10km of Paroo River frontage on his property, Ularara Station.

\* Ularara is pronounced 'you-lee-are-uh'

