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## **WESTERN CMA SEEKS TO SPONSOR FOUR LANDHOLDERS AT RANGELAND CONFERENCE**

The Western Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is seeking to sponsor four landholders' attendance at the Australian Rangelands Society Conference in September.

Western CMA Rangeland Rehabilitation Officer, Chris Higgins, says they are looking for four Western Catchment land managers interested in participating in the conference and communicating the information they gain with their local community. Entries will be accepted until August 8.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Australian Rangelands Conference will be held in Charters Towers from September 29-October 2.

"The successful applicants will travel with Western CMA staff on a four-day journey to Charters Towers which will include a number of visits to Queensland properties where innovative land management techniques are being undertaken. They will then attend the four-day conference and the group will begin the two-day return journey.

"The Australian Rangelands Society Conference is an extremely valuable opportunity to get the most up to date information, from both a technical and experience-based point of view, about managing the rangelands of Australia," Mr Higgins said.

The conference's theme, 'A climate of change in the rangelands', recognises the changing environmental, social, cultural and economic factors facing the Australia's rangelands and its people in the future.

"The Western CMA will pay all registration, transport and accommodation costs, which represents a saving of up to \$2,500 for people who may want to attend the Conference but find the cost prohibitive.

People interested in attending the conference are asked to complete an Expression of Interest form detailing in 300 words or less how attending the field tour and conference relates to the management of their property and could influence future management decisions.

Copies of the Expressions of Interest forms are available at Western CMA offices, by ringing freecall 1800 032 101, visiting [www.western.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.western.cma.nsw.gov.au) or at the Western Catchment Landcare Forum in White Cliffs on August 6-7. Expressions of Interest will be accepted until August 8.

This is the second time the Western CMA has sponsored landholder attendance.

In 2006, the Western CMA sponsored the attendance of Lachlan Gall from Langawirra Station, north east of Broken Hill, Tony Thompson of Prattenville Irrigation, Bourke and Chris Ferguson of Myrning Station near Wanaaring at the 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial conference in Renmark.



# MEDIA RELEASE



All three landholders said they found the conference very beneficial and were surprised at how few land managers attended. Chris Ferguson said the conference exposed her to new ideas and allowed her to develop contacts which may help her improve the efficiency of her farming enterprise.

Tony Thompson said he was impressed by the range of innovative management tools available and the opportunity to take advantage of the rangelands network, while Lachlan Gall said attending the conference gave him the opportunity to shift his attention from being preoccupied with "day-to-day" issues to the bigger picture.

"Landholders who are able to fund the trip themselves but would like to travel in convoy with the group are very welcome," Mr Higgins said.

ENDS – For further information, please contact:

Maree Barnes, PR and Media Officer on (02) 6883 3058/0427 256814

Chris Higgins, Rangeland Rehabilitation Officer on 0418 211 016

Caption: Lachie Gall; Chair of the Western CMA, Rory Treweeke; Chris Ferguson; and Tony Thompson at the 2006 Australian Rangeland Society Conference.

