

21 January 2008

BENEFITS FOR LANDHOLDERS AT SUSTAINABLE GRAZING FORUM

Landholders will have the opportunity to learn about and share their grazing management techniques at the Sustainable Grazing Forum 2008 in Broken Hill.

The Forum is being hosted by the Western Catchment Management Authority (CMA) with additional financial support from the Lower-Murray Darling CMA and will be held from March 12-14 in Broken Hill.

The Forum is free of charge and attendees will undertake both hands-on field-trips and the opportunity to hear from speakers who developed their careers in Broken Hill, returning to share their knowledge from years in the field.

Landholder participants will receive a free, wall-sized Spot 5 image of their property for planning purposes, a property planning kit and an optional one-on-one session allowing them to tailor information to their individual property.

People should RSVP by February 20 so that the kit for their property can be assembled and should call (08) 8082 5200 or visit www.western.cma.nsw.gov.au for more information.

The first day will consist of a full-day field tour to "Fowler's Gap" to observe vegetation change and natural banding, discuss the ecology of our saltbushes, briefly talk about soil carbon and the trends we've observed in our Rangeland Assessment Program (RAP) since the early 1990s.

Speakers will include David Eldridge, Peter Jessop, Melinda Fletcher, Gresley Wakelin-King and John Lawrie.

The second field-site at "Langawirra" will showcase rangeland restoration and will include a visit to a chopper roller and crocodile-treated site. There will also be a chance to observe some small animals that have been captured in pit-fall traps and discuss the benefits of burrowing animals to rangeland rehabilitation. We will also run some small experiments to show participants rates of water infiltration, litter decomposition and also measure how much carbon there is in the soil. Speakers will include James Val, David Eldridge, Alex James, Lachie Gall and John Gall.

Lunch, morning and afternoon teas will be provided during the day and will conclude with a formal dinner at the Musicians Club.

The second day will consist of presentations from nine rangeland officers including Ron Hacker, Gemma Junk, Genevieve Carruthers, Robyn Neeson, Greg Curran and Steve McLeod, who will cover a range of topics from a review of grazing practices and infrastructure, Environmental Management Systems to organics and animal nutrition issues.

Representatives from the Western and Lower-Murray Darling CMAs will outline each of their organisation's Catchment Plans and funding opportunities for landholders through their Incentives Program.



MEDIA RELEASE



The final day is an optional half-day which allows participants to tailor the information received to their property. They can undertake one-on-one discussions with some of the speakers and CMA staff and can use mapping, modelling and software to develop a sustainable grazing plan for their farm business.

ENDS

Further information:

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Caption: The Barrier Ranges grazing country in full flower, photographed by Ruth Sandow of Pimpara Lake, Milparinka.

