

7 September 2009

## WESTERN GROUPS IN RUNNING FOR STATEWIDE AWARDS

Two Western Catchment groups have been nominated for the 2009 NSW Landcare Awards to be announced later this week.

The Ngemba Billabong Restoration and Landcare Group from the Brewarrina area have been nominated for the Landcare Indigenous Award and the Buckwaroon Catchment Landcare Group from the Cobar area have been nominated for the Landcare Community Group Award.

Representatives from both groups will be at the 2009 NSW Landcare Awards Ceremony in Port Macquarie where the winners will be announced on September 10.

People can vote in the People's Choice award by visiting <http://nsw.landcareheroes.com>

The Ngemba Billabong Restoration and Landcare Group is actively involved in the rehabilitation of 260 hectares of the Old Brewarrina Aboriginal Mission.

The Billabong is an important wetland and plays a vital role in the health of the local environment. It is also an area of cultural significance to the local Aboriginal people, with evidence of multiple living sites, hearth sites and scarred or carved trees.

They are fencing the area to exclude stock and are revegetating the area with 2,500 native plants. They are removing rubbish, controlling weeds and retaining dead and fallen timber as animal habitat.

The project enables local Aboriginal people to connect to their country and to learn cultural knowledge by working with local Aboriginal elders.

They are also becoming accredited in land management practices through NSW Department of Primary Industries and NSW TAFE. Students at the Brewarrina TAFE have been undertaking restoration works as part of their Indigenous Land Management Certificate II course.

Natasha McHughes says "I would like to see the Ngemba Group win this award as I'm from Brewarrina and they are doing a wonderful job here on the old Mission".

The Buckwaroon Catchment Landcare Group (BCLG) is comprised of forty members who manage a total area of 293,600 hectares within the Cobar Shire. Their charter includes "striving to adopt sustainable agricultural management practices and improve natural resource management in order to improve the conditions of the land, environment community and economy."

Formed in April 1994, the group have undertaken a range of activities from education, lobbying and machinery design.



# MEDIA RELEASE



Over the past fifteen years, they have undertaken training in a wide range of subject areas from holistic management to property planning and grazing management. As well as learning from others they have taken on the role of teaching younger generations and have developed the Buckwaroon Catchment Landcare Group School Environmental Education Project, which is implemented through local Cobar schools.

Their philosophy of solving common problems through group effort most recently saw the design, construction and management of the BCLG Weedseeker. The Weedseeker is a computer boom spray for targeting invasive native scrub regrowth on a large scale.

The group and its members have received numerous awards over the years for their efforts and they are active members or representatives on many environmental associations which aim to improve the natural resources of their local area.

According to Megan Nicholson of Glenwood Station "Being members of the BCLG has helped to motivate and encourage the members to move forward in stressful times. Our group has a unique positive outlook on our way of life. We are keen to support each other and have developed many great friendships. The knowledge of our group members is immense and amazing".

Megan and her husband, Matthew, and Stuart Mosely of Manuka Station will represent the BCLG at the Awards Ceremony.

ENDS

## **For more information:**

Maree Barnes, Western CMA on 02 6841 2749/0427 256814

Ray Bennett, Chair of Ngemba Billabong Restoration and Landcare Group on 0447 195700

Rana Manns, Secretary of Buckwaroon Catchment Landcare Group on 02 6837 3912

## Caption:

Landscape\_Scar\_Tree: Scar tree at the Old Brewarrina Mission

Old\_Bre\_Mission: Old Brewarrina Mission Wetland

BCLG: Members of the Buckwaroon Catchment Landcare Group

