BREMER CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

April 2016

Transforming a Salt Scald to Wetland at Kalbar

Field day on April 23rd at Kalbar 8.30am start till 1.00pm.

around the bremer

President's Message

The recent rainfall throughout the region has provided some positive tones for the oncoming winter season. A colleague said to me a month ago ***"you got to be under the clouds - to get any rain"***. How apt I pondered, but one would have thought other regions more in need would have received some welcomed rainfall to boot.

Interesting to see that livestock producers are continuing to receive the highest prices for livestock. The Eastern Young Cattle Indicator (EYCI) has remained firm (around 571.00 c/ Kg cwt) for the past weeks. For more information regarding livestock trade check out this important website:- (http://www.mla.com.au/Prices-and-markets/About-the-National-Livestock-Reporting-Service/Eastern-Young-Cattle-Indicator [accessed 04Apr2016]).

Recent local Council elections have now been held and a number of newly elected candidates have taken up their posts. BCA looks forward to working with local Councils and their appointed member to continue the valuable work in the catchment region. At the time of writing this newsletter BCA has not been informed as to whom the new Council members in charge of the environmental portfolio will be. No doubt as this information becomes evident BCA will invite the member elect to the monthly meetings.

The '**Bremer River Network' (BRN)** has been developing a structured program for future consideration. Obviously funding has been an important factor with a number of environmental projects outlined. This work remains a major focus not only for BCA, but the greater community at large, and BCA is hopeful in obtaining some grant monies for this work to continue.

At this stage work on the Upper Mt Walker Hillslope Erosion Project (UMWHEP) has slowed down. Obviously BCA is keen to continue working on this project, however without valuable funding, future work will now be restricted to revegetating the site. The work to date on the UMWHEP has been most successful and funding is definitely required to continue this project.

The Kalbar Revegetation Field Day is well on the planning table and scheduled later in April 2016. As stated in the last BCA newsletter, members involved in this revegetation site (Jocelyn Clarkson and Barry Jahnke) have been progressing along for many years. This is a great opportunity to take in and observe their hard work, listen to their experiences and view the exciting results. The Field Day is an Open Day and I hope you can join us in meeting everyone at the Kalbar Revegetation Site.

Stay safe and drive steady on the roads.
Gary H Cochrane

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Have you seen these declared weeds?

Declared gingers

Tobacco weed

Gamba grass

Madras thorn

Biosecurity Act 2014

On 1 July 2016, the ***Biosecurity Act 2014*** will come into effect in Queensland. The Act provides a consistent, strategic, risk-based and less prescriptive approach to Biosecurity in Queensland and deals with:

- pests (such as weeds and wild dogs)
- diseases (such as foot-and-mouth disease)
- contaminants (such as lead on grazing land)

Biosecurity Queensland's latest video relating to the Act, entitled '*Biosecurity: Protect your property, protect Queensland*' is a great introduction to the significant changes to take place and how you can manage day-to-day Biosecurity risks.

For more information see page 4

Thank you to Heather Morrow

The executive of the Bremer Catchment Association visited now retired Cr. Heather Morrow to show their appreciation for the work and support Heather has offered during her time as Ipswich City Council Representative. The President Gary Cochrane presented Heather with a 'Certificate of Appreciation'.

Revegetation was challenged by salty soil, frost and weeds

Transforming a Salt Scald to Wetland at Kalbar

Barry and Marjorie Jahnke (BCA) have transformed their 17 hectare property near Kalbar from a degraded, saline eyesore, to a thriving diverse wetland full of water birds. On their property an area of 4 ha is under *Phragmites australis.* It is known as a Common Reed and considered to be native to large parts of the world. In Australia it is native to Queensland and other States.

See the results with your own eyes and attend the Field day on April 23rd at Kalbar 8.30am start till 1.00pm. Refreshments will be served.

WATER IN AUSTRALIA

Water is a valuable resource. Apart from drinking water and household use, Australians rely on water as an input to almost every industry in the nation's economy, particularly agriculture.

Availability: The volume of water available is determined mainly by rainfall, which affects run-off and groundwater supplies. Rainfall is variable and in recent times many parts of Queensland and Australia have experienced prolonged periods of drought. Population growth also contributes to pressure on water supplies. Water storage in dams and aquifers (underground storage) is important to secure water supplies for human use. However, storage is also an environmental issue; for example, dams disrupt and deplete environmental flows. This can adversely affect flora and fauna downstream.

Consumption: Water consumed for drinking and in our homes and gardens is only a small part of the total water use in Australia (11% of total water consumed). Most of the water consumed in Australia is by the agriculture industry, which accounted for nearly two-thirds (65%) of total water consumed.

River health: Water quality is directly related to river and wetland health. Human activities can exacerbate river health problems such as salinity, turbidity and blue-green algae outbreaks. Reduced water quality and flows can affect the agricultural and tourism industries and damage the plants and animals that rely on the water for food and habitat.

Management and conservation: The recent drought has firmly focused attention on the need to conserve water. One-third of farmers reported water-related management activities. For households, mandatory water restrictions apply in many parts of Australia to limit outdoor water use, and many Australians have been voluntarily conserving water by adopting water saving practices and installing water saving devices.

In Rural Areas it is important to protect every drop of rain. In particular farm dams need care. The dams on a property require regular inspection and maintenance to keep them in good order. If these points are neglected, extensive repair work may be required and consequently loss of water is the result.

Unfenced dams and creeks can lead to stock degrading water quality.

Managing Water Quality

Managing water quality depends on knowing the current, and desired, uses of particular waterways. Any use of water has the potential to pollute. Even sunscreen washed off while you're swimming can cause water pollution problems in particularly sensitive areas.

We have different water quality objectives for different water uses. Domestic water supplies for human consumption need to be of a higher quality than water used for livestock. Recreational activities such as swimming and windsurfing need water to be of a much higher quality than water used for cooling machinery in industrial processes.

Diffuse pollutant discharges are difficult to manage because they're so widespread. One solution to the problem is education programs aimed at industry and the community. These programs include Landcare, Integrated Catchment Management and Water watch, and the development of guidelines on environmental management for industry.

We have different water quality objectives for different water uses.

New Biosecurity Laws for Queensland

If you are a commercial grower, you will be expected to stay informed about the pests and diseases that could affect or be carried by your crops,

The *Biosecurity Act 2014* (the Act) was passed by Parliament and will come into effect on 1 July 2016.
The new Act provides a consistent, modern, risk-based and less prescriptive approach to Biosecurity in Queensland.

The Act deals with:

- pests (such as wild dogs and weeds)
- diseases (such as foot-and-mouth disease)
- contaminants (such as lead on grazing land).

Decisions made under the Act will depend on the likelihood and consequences of the risk. This means risks can be managed more appropriately.

Biosecurity is the protection of the economy, the environment and the community from animal and plant pests, diseases and contaminants. It is critical to market access and the profitability and sustainability of our industries. It also safeguards Queensland's natural assets, our health and our way of life.

What will change?

The new Act will replace a lot of legislation you might be familiar with. Importantly, the Act allows a consistent, modern, risk-based and less prescriptive approach to Biosecurity in Queensland.

The Queensland Government will continue to take immediate action to manage Biosecurity risks. In fact, under the new Act, action can be taken if there is a reasonable belief that a serious risk exists, without having to wait for scientific confirmation.

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All Queenslanders need to take an active role in managing Biosecurity risks under their control. Under the Act, individuals and organisations whose activities pose a Biosecurity risk will have greater legal responsibility for managing them. This **general Biosecurity obligation** means they must take all reasonable steps to ensure they do not spread a pest, disease or contaminant.

Queenslanders will need to report unusual events that might be related to Biosecurity, for example abnormally high mortality or morbidity rates in animals and sudden, unexplained falls in production. They will also have obligations for registering some animals and reporting their movements to allow for disease tracing.

Biosecurity zones will be introduced by Regulation and used to manage, reduce or eradicate pests or diseases (such as fire ants and banana diseases) across all or part of the state.

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The Bundamba Creek Subcatchment

The Bundamba Creek Subcatchment
lies mostly within the Ipswich Shire with a small section in the south falling within the Scenic Rim Shire.
A major urban centre (Ripley) development is been created within.
Large parts of Ipswich city are found in the northern extremity. The total major stream length within the subcatchment is is approximately 52.3 km in a total subcatchment area of 117 km².

Land use classes are grassland and open woodland, forest and urban area. The Mount Perry Conservation Park is located within the catchment.

It is important to look after the stability of the riparian banks. The main problem is erosion, although the extent and location varies between subsections. At a study the ratings of overall conditions of the banks suggest that instability was generally low.

The major factor effecting bank stability is the presence of stock, the clearing of vegetation and runoff. Minor factors include; walking tracks, man-made structures (culverts and roads), and flow and wave action.

Despite the generally high stability rating of stream beds, bed erosion processes within subsections are noticed. Man-made structures (bridges , fords and culverts) fallen trees and rock outcrops in the stream bed are important factors of maintaining bed stability.

Riparian Vegetation

Vegetation types within the Bundamba Creek subcatchment are grassland and eucalypt-dominated areas.

Riparian zone condition are quiet poor. These sections have been subjected to a reduction in the natural riparian vegetation width through clearing for agriculture or grazing or urban development, which reduces regenerative ability or promotes the introduction of exotic species.

Riparian zones in the subcatchment are composed of a wide variety of structural types and associated ground covers.

Weed species are common within the majority of riparian zones. These weeds are Chinese elm, lantana, milk weeds, thistles, castor and wild tobacco.

Bundamba Creek Subcatchment

Weed species are common within the majority of riparian zones

Extensive livestock industries rely on productive pastures.

Selecting the best mix of grasses and legumes for each land type will ensure the best financial return on investment from improved pastures.

Disclaimer

While we hope that you will find this publication informative , BCA does not guaranty that the information herein is without flaw, or is wholly appropriate for your particular purpose. We therefore disclaim all liability for any error, loss or other consequence , which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication

Selecting the right pasture species

It is important to select the right pasture mix for your land and livestock. There is a wide selection of legume, grass and pasture species available for Queensland conditions. Investigate the characteristics of various native and sown pasture species, and talk to people with practical knowledge about local pasture, before deciding on the right species for you.

Selecting pasture species for quantity and quality

When selecting species for quantity, use forage sorghums or tropical grasses. When selecting for quality, particularly protein content, select annual forages, tropical or temperate legumes, or nitrogen fertilised grasses.

Before deciding on a grazing pasture mix, consider the:

- climate, especially rainfall and frost
- land type
- native and sown pasture species that grow well locally
- soil type and health
- type of animals to be grazed
- current environment or existing pasture
- proposed grazing management system
- need for annual or perennial species
- best sowing method to maximise establishment costs.

Winter forage legumes

Most of the winter legumes are better adapted to the heavier soils and are mainly grown to feed dairy cows.

The major species available are Persian clover, Berseem clover, and Clare sub clover. Other winter forage legumes that can be tried are Lupins, Dunfield peas and Namoi woolly pod vetch.

Late March and early April is the best time to plant these crops. It is important that they are established before the really cold weather starts.

For more information go to: Queensland Government Business and industry portal