BREMER CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

around the bremer

October 2023

Special points of interest:

The next Meeting will be on

19th

October

2023

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President's Corner by Keith McCosh

Our President Darren Close has resigned and moved camp and I wish him good luck and all the best in the future. That makes me President until the coming AGM. With that in mind I want to give a brief summary of what is going on in the Bremer Catchment. We have projects in the agricultural lands of the upper Warrill Valley, and the upper Bremer Valley, as well as projects in the urban estuary. By projects I mean the coordination role of BCA, as well as the networking and supporting roles essential to our purpose – i.e. that of speaking for the Bremer.

To achieve our vision of a healthier Moreton Bay fed by a healthier Bremer River, we will support those parties (landowners, industry groups, Councils, irrigation operators, utilities, etc.) operating in the catchment, to achieve better land practices that don't leak sediment and nutrients. We are always looking for "best practice" land management as far as water quality and river health are concerned.

"River Health" is a good indicator of how well the land in the catchment is being managed. We know from a Sedimentation Study last year that too much top soil is being lost from our lands. Fish are a good indicator for "river health" but sadly there are far too many fish barriers, especially along the Warrill, so straight away the lack of the full range of fish species is a gross indicator of poor health. So we will use other indicators (like Total Nitrogen) until the fish are free to move up and down the river according to their own wants.

Over the next few months I hope to clarify what "water quality" actually means to the catchment community. And hopefully we can start a movement towards better land practices.

Keith McCosh.

Weeds in fenced off areas

The rate at which newly fenced riparian areas will regenerate is dependent upon many factors. If native vegetation has been absent from the site for a long period then recovery can be slow and weed infestations can become a problem.

In many cases ‘crash; grazing of the riparian land will assist in controlling excessive weed growth. The timing, intensity and duration of grazing should be carefully monitored in the first few years in order to determine the most appropriate grazing strategy for controlling weeds and allowing natural regeneration of native plants on your riparian lands.

Not all weeds will be controlled through strategic grazing. Established woody weeds and problem species should be controlled at the same time as adjacent paddocks are treated.

Offsetting costs

In some districts, assistance may be available through government funding. This is because there is increasing recognition that better management of stock access to riparian lands has benefits for the wider community as well as landholders. Contact your local suppliers or Landcare groups for information on what’s available in your area.

Weed Control on fences and driveways

Weeds and volunteer species

Pasture weeds may be grass or broadleaf plants. They may be annuals or perennials. Control differs with the type of weed involved.

Perennial weeds are controlled by managing pastures so that desirable species first suppress and then dominate the weeds. Annual weeds can flourish in a new pasture or when ar pasture has become run down and weakened by mismanagement. Annual broadleaf weeds can be controlled by slashing before the weeds have set viable seeds. Spraying with herbicide should only be done if all other methods fail.

The Hidden Damage of Landfills

Some countries have over 3,000 active landfills and 10,000 closed landfills. Landfills are necessary for the proper disposal of solid waste. They reduce the amount of waste that makes it into the environment, help to prevent disease transmission, and keep communities clean. However, landfills still have significant environmental and social impact. While landfills are a societal necessity, there are practices that can reduce the reliance on landfills and decrease their effects on the biosphere.

How do landfills effect the environment

Landfills can impact on air, water and land quality. Landfill gas, mainly methane, is produced by decomposing organic waste which contributes to global warming when released to the air. Water moving from, or through, landfill waste forms leachate which has the potential to contaminate nearby surface and ground water.

How to avoid Landfills

Recycle! Every year the amount of waste that avoids the landfill increases due to recycling. Continuing to recycle will keep plastics and other materials out of the biosphere and put them to further use!

Compost! Landfills lack the oxygen that compostable items need to fully decompose. By putting biodegradable items into the compost instead of the trash, huge amounts of waste can avoid the landfill.

Landfills help to keep our communities clean, but they also pose serious threads to the health of our environment. Working towards living a zero waste lifestyle will help to reduce our reliance on landfills, their impact on the environment, and their impact on human health and well-being.

Social Impact of Landfills

Emissions from landfills pose a threat to the health of those who live and work around landfills. A study at some landfills found that there is a 12% increased risk of congenital malformations in children born to families that lived within a kilometer of a hazardous waste landfill site. Large landfills, on average, decrease the value of the land adjacent to it by 12.9%. Smaller landfills depress land values less, with around a 2.5% reduction, but will have an impact.
Landfills bring hazards such as odor, smoke, noise, bugs, and water supply contamination.

For more information: Environmental Center Colorado University

Small things that you can do to help biodiversity thrive!

The conservation of biodiversity is paramount for our quality of life, and ability to survive, thrive, and prosper. What can you do in your everyday life to help?

Biodiversity is more than simply the collection of plants and animals, ***it encompasses the huge variety of all living things on earth.*** This includes the diversity found within species (i.e. genetic diversity), between species and of ecosystems.

Queensland is the most biologically diverse state in Australia, and South East Queensland (SEQ) is teeming with native species. Some of our native species are found nowhere else in the world!

As a subtropical area of around 6,600,000 ha, SEQ is home to over 3,000 species of native plants found across a wide range of ecosystems, including subtropical rainforests, open eucalypt forests, wetlands, heathlands, mangroves, and coastal dunes (to name a few). Believe it or not, there are more than 145 Regional Ecosystems (REs) described for the region.

This biodiversity rewards us with beautiful natural environments and unique species, but it is so more than that. Biodiversity also supports our health, wellbeing, culture, lifestyle, economy, and contributes to our tourism, primary production, and creative industries.

Unfortunately, our biodiversity in SEQ is under threat. Habitat loss, coupled with climate change, is leading to broader declines in environmental health, with knock on effects for people, communities, and the economy. Many species and ecosystems face multiple threats that can interact to ***make biodiversity management increasingly complex and challenging.***

The Queensland Government released a biodiversity conservation strategy that outlines goals and objectives to actively support nature to thrive.

There are also a range of things that we can do as individuals. Our everyday choices can make a huge impact. Here are some examples of things you can do to support biodiversity:

- Learn about biodiversity and food issues. Understanding biodiversity is important to understand how humans should live while respecting our resources.
- Support local or sustainable farms and eat in-season fresh, local food.
- Buy biodiversity-friendly products and support biodiversity-friendly companies. Look at labels and make sure that you do your research.
- Take pictures, not samples.

Reduce your carbon footprint. Climate change is one of the biggest threats to biodiversity, so reducing your carbon footprint can make a big difference. You can do this by using public transportation, driving less, using energy-efficient appliances and light bulbs.

- Learn about weeds and how they prevent natural regeneration in remnant vegetation.
- Minimise waste. Waste disposal is one of the biggest threats to biodiversity, as it can lead to the accumulation of waste in natural habitats, such as forests, rivers, and oceans. This waste can harm or even kill wildlife through entanglement, ingestion, or suffocation.

Rethink, reduce, reuse, repair and recycle. Recycling helps to reduce waste by converting materials that would otherwise end up in landfills, or the environment, into new products.

For more information go to: https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/222081/queensland-biodiversity-conservation-strategy.pdf;

Is repairing waterway erosion my responsibility?

Is repairing waterway erosion my responsibility? A watercourse adjacent to private property is owned by the State government, but a riparian landholder may exercise certain rights under Section 13A of the Land Act 1994 over the land beside the watercourse. These rights include a right of access of the watercourse, a right of grazing over the adjacent land and the right to bring action against a person who trespasses on the adjacent land. Watercourse right of access is to the low flow channel which is called the thalweg.

A riparian landholder may exercise certain rights under Section 13A of the Land Act 1994 over the land beside the watercourse.

In the Land Act 1994, a watercourse has the same meaning as in the Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003, Section 63 and is as a river, creek or other stream. It can be a stream in the form of an anabranch which leaves the waterway then re-enters it, or a tributary, in which water flows permanently or intermittently, regardless of the frequency of flow events. A watercourse includes instream islands, benches and bars. A watercourse does not include a drainage feature.

Although not stated categorically in any legislation, it is accepted that the landholder is responsible for their reach due to their rights of use and access. This could include the management of any gully, streambank, or instream erosion.

Preparing to undertake work to repair gully, streambank, or waterway erosion.

Before taking any action to repair waterway erosion on your property there are a few questions to ask and government departments to contact for advice or approval.

For more information: Fact sheet, Scenic Rim Regional Council, March 2022

A successful field day at Pepper Tree hill with our sustainable Ag team!

What a great location for a field day to learn more about soil conservation and sustainable land management!
Simon and Jenni Lott recently hosted one of our Soil Conservation and Erosion Control Field Days at their Pepper Tree Hill property, which had significant erosion issues when they purchased it in 2017. They shared their successes, challenges, and learnings over the past six years of implementing a comprehensive Soil Conservation Plan.

Attendees got to see firsthand the value of soil conservation planning and implementation, including gully erosion works to improve land condition, productivity, and resilience.
This successful field day was the result of a proactive partnership between Healthy Land & Water's Sustainable Ag team and EnviroAg Australia, with funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

Correspondence after the Event: *Bill Steentsma wrote to Simon and Jenny:*

Thank you for the Field Day and hospitality. I could hear/see what the huge work and thought you both put in is enormous!

Which are the two important Departments you mentioned that the Visitors were to contact?

Simons reply:

The Department of Resources currently has custody of the Soil Conservation (SC) Act. The Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water looks after the Water Act.

The Water Act and the SC Act interact with regard to drainage, water courses and potential interferences in overland flows (OLF). Issues of OLF have to be dealt with in any Soil Conservation Plan.

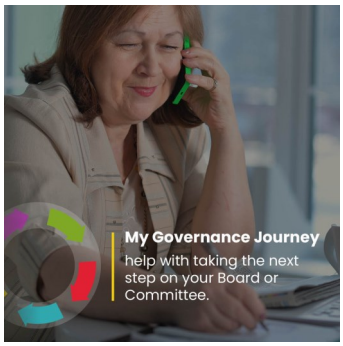
Regards, Simon

Information Page

My Governance Journey Online forum

Amanda Nixon, Senior Manager Initiatives, Volunteering Queensland

Volunteering Queensland recently launched a new online tool to help volunteers understand and learn more about taking on roles of your volunteer boards and committees.
Navigating a path through the topic called Governance for volunteers is notoriously difficult.
Across Queensland thousands of volunteers sit around tables late into the night making decisions, reviewing finances and planning ahead to make sure the local organisations that are the lifeblood of our community keep doing what they do.
My Governance Journey is a plain English guide to what you need to know when you join a Committee or Board and points people to the best available resources depending on where they are on their journey as a Governance member.



Knowing what you are getting into makes the journey a more enjoyable experience.

Join Amanda Nixon from Volunteering Queensland, as she guides you through the My Governance Journey tool and the many resources it has on offer.

Fire ant coalition calls for government action.

QWaLC has joined a coalition of organisations calling on the State and Federal Government to prioritise its response to the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program Strategic Review.

Mal Abbott, Member of BCA,

reported on various fires in the Boonah and Mt Alford/French areas. Boonah had the misfortune to run out of water.

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