



# South West NRM

## On-Ground Project Fact Sheet

### Improving pastures in the Paroo River Catchment

**Landholder Name:** Jake Berghofer

**Property Location & Lot on Plan:** "Springvale" 10kms South West of Eulo on the Hungerford Road  
07WELL5389, 15WN60, 1AP2294, 1WN18, 2WN18, 7WELL5389

**Property Outline:**

"Springvale Station" was purchased by Jake Berghofer in 1993 ; situated in between the Paroo River and Yowah Creek the property is a mix of Landzones, including Mulga Sandplains (51%), Wooded Alluvia (34%), and Soft and Hard Mulga (14%).

The property is approx 17,582 hectares and is often flooded by the Paroo River and the Yowah Creek. Jake runs cattle and has a small irrigation operation; the grazing enterprise has been expanded to include a goat depot.

In the past "Springvale" has experienced severe drought conditions and poor management has resulted in a loss of perennial grass species and major woody weed infestations (*Ereomophila gilesii* and other species). It is evident across the property that since Jake has been managing "Springvale" there is an increase in ground cover and good perennial grass regeneration.

The major issue in the Paroo River catchment and on properties like "Springvale" is that the turkey bush and other woody weeds are still thick and appear to be impacting the grazing and general management of the property. Whether the wood weeds are impacting on the regeneration of perennial grasses is a concern felt by land managers around the Eulo area and the Mulga Lands.



CARING  
FOR  
OUR  
COUNTRY



Q2  
Coasts  
and  
Country

## Project Description

“Springvale” already has two goat holding paddocks of 212 ha and 76 ha that has been heavily grazed by goats. This grant will fund fencing to split the 212ha paddock in to three paddocks of 65ha, 66ha and 82ha. One additional paddock of 177ha will also be fenced, giving us a total of 390ha in 4 or 5 paddocks.

Addition trials may include mechanical treatment with a crocodile, burning or seeding of grasses and legumes.

These trials will be subject to weather conditions and the availability of other grants or in kind funds provided by landholders.

South West NRM will be contributing \$25,000 to this project in 2010-2011, with in-kind labour and support from the Landholder.

## Project Aim

The major issue in the Paroo River Catchment is that while there are some good productive grasses regenerating post drought, the turkey bush and other woody weeds are still thick from poor conditions in the past.

This trial will attempt to reduce the impact of the woody weeds and increase perennial grasses in diversity and density, therefore increasing productivity, with the use of grazing and some mechanic methods.

The two original goat paddocks of 212 ha and 76 ha are mainly wire grass, as the goats have destroyed all woody weeds in the paddock, along with some grasses. The proposed new paddock has good ground cover, but also plenty of woody weeds.

The aim is to graze each paddock with goats and record the grazing days per Dry Sheep Equivalent per hectare. Stock will only be allowed in each paddock long enough to graze the best grasses in the paddock, and then moved on to next paddock or moved out of the trial area. We will run the trial as per holistic grazing principals.

Any mechanical treatments will be subjected to planned grazing, i.e. if grasses are seeded, the area be managed as per these holistic grazing principals also.

This trial will be watched closely by the reference group of landholders and they will be involved in all parts of the trial, including the planning stage and monitoring the outcomes.

## Project Outcomes

This project will graze stock (goats) in each trial paddock, moving to next paddock based on the availability of perennial grasses; therefore resting all other paddocks, we hope to see an increase in ground cover and an improvement in perennial grass species over time.

When grass improves we hope to achieve an increase in Grazing days per hectare per DSE, which would increase turnover and production.

All data will be recorded and available during field days and critically reviewed by SWNRM and other landholders from the Paroo River Catchment. We will facilitate discussions about the advantages and problems faced when setting up and using rotational grazing. Formal monitoring sites with photo and grass check data will allow other landholders to see the results of planned grazing.

## Outputs

**CB 1.1 Events;** 1 field day in conjunction with Eulo Planscapes Group; expect 20 land managers to attend.

**CB1.2 Project Fact Sheet;** 2 Factsheets produced and distributed to 100 land managers.

**CB1.4 Media opportunities;** 1 news article written to promote adoption of planned grazing in the Mulga lands.

**OG14.4 Ground Cover Management;** 591 hectares with planned grazing by one land manager and influencing 17582 ha and 20 other land holders.

**CB5.1 Establish 4 grazing learning sites.** One established Learning Site at “Springvale”

**P3.2 Property management plans;** 1 management plan with mapping for “Springvale”.

**P5.1 Biophysical, economic or social plans;** 1 Monitoring and Evaluation plan.

## Project Monitoring:

### Objectives:

Monitor ground cover response, presence of pasture species and diversity, and reduction of woody weeds. Assess benefits of planned grazing and any other activities for holistic outcomes.

Transfer of knowledge and skills of holistic management to the learning group.

### Methodology & Indicators:

**Indicators:** P3 pasture species, rainfall, grazing days and land condition, number of landholders attending learning days.

**Methodology:** 'Stocktake' photo and Land Condition monitoring and grazing charts. Number of landholders attending learning days and participating in discussions and planning of grazing on their own property

### Monitoring Schedule:

Establish baseline data prior to commencement of the project.

The landholder has agreed to assist project collaboration and holistic data analysis under the project, the initial collection and onforwarding to South West NRM, of rainfall and ongoing production monitoring data (e.g. grazing days / location etc. incorporating actual rest periods for each paddock, yields: stock days / ha, stocking rate). This has to be collected daily and weekly.

Biophysical monitoring every six months in which South West NRM will be responsible for collecting, collating, interpreting and reporting data (Feb and Aug).

Two pasture monitoring transects considering pasture species and ground cover established within the trial project area.

16 photo monitoring sites, at least two within each paddock on "Springvale" Trial paddocks .

Analysis: Return on Investment. Develop a case study on the return on investment of the rotational grazing system monitored under this project, and consider the holistic outcomes – economic, environmental and lifestyle.

Analysis: Has the learning group participated in discussions about planned holistic grazing and changed any management on their own properties.