



South West NRM Ltd

*Achieving sustainable landscapes
for rural communities*



SOUTH WEST NRM LTD

Performance Report

January - June
2007



South West NRM Ltd Half Year Performance Report January – June 2007



Section 1 – Executive Summary

Major achievements for the period

Establishment of 5 landcare groups including an urban group has been the most exciting achievement for this reporting period, the combined landcare groups cover 60 rural properties and 21 urban landholders, an area of approximately 1,500,000ha. They are involved in land rehabilitation and revegetation (1000ha), erosion control (3500ha), feral pig eradication (200,000ha and 2 catchment systems), parthenium weed control (5000ha) and protection of natural environment projects throughout the region. Further enquiries have been received regarding the establishment of at least 3 more groups, the number of landholders throughout the region wanting to be involved in sustainable natural resource management has risen sharply especially during the past 6 months. One of the reasons for this increase in activity is due the rain events since January; the major contributing factor has been the increase in area covered by the company with 3 new District Project Coordinators engaged and the dedication and enthusiasm of the Landcare Facilitator. South West NRM Ltd is looking forward to increasing the awareness and involvement of community in natural resource management throughout the next reporting period and in anticipation of this increased activity has streamlined the operations.

Three of the Investment programs are undergoing or have undergone evaluation. FUTURESCAPES has been reviewed and revamped; with the result being a streamlined efficient on ground works delivery mechanism. PLANSCAPES has been reviewed and new modules are being developed to ensure that the landholders of the region can access the best information and training possible. Monitoring and Evaluation is currently under review with the results expected to give a system that will be second to none in delivering resource monitoring outcomes. Policies and Partnerships will be reviewed over the next period after receipt of a consultants' report in an attempt to increase Indigenous involvement in all aspects of NRM in the region.

The Far South West Aboriginal Group is in the process of completing the Aboriginal and Cultural Heritage NRM plan for the region and the Traditional Knowledge Recording Project is well underway. Increased involvement in NRM issues has spread throughout the community with groups from local government, Indigenous bodies, schools, the urban community and rural landholders working in partnership with South West NRM Ltd to advance projects.

Some of the achievements for the period are listed below.

- Approx. 2500 hectares protected under 5 informal conservation agreements,
- Approx. 25 hectares protected under 1 formal covenant (nature refuge)
- 2 Cultural Heritage sites preserved.
- 53 on-ground works projects funded through FUTURESCAPES resulting in
- 280 kms riparian fencing,
- 70 alternate watering points developed
- Approx. 6300 hectares of weed control
- Approx. 4500 hectares terrestrial vegetation and degraded land rehabilitated.
- Approx. 100km of fencing to land type completed.
- 4 schools adopting NRM extension material, including water wise material.
- 6 community information sessions held in conjunction with several private organisations.

Progress of all investment

Progress of investments within the region: e.g.

- NAP/NHT
- NLP01
- NLP05
- Envirofund

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All of our funding programs are intricately linked with each source supporting the others. NAP/NHT is the principal source and by 30th June all received funds had been expended, this funding is devolved for the seven investment programs that South West NRM Ltd focuses on. NLP01 is the Landcare Facilitator position and is the main support for PLANSCAPES operations and landholder group participation in NRM focused projects. NLP05 funds have been expended and outcomes/outputs are still happening, this funding supports development of strategies to achieve best practices by landholders in the Mulga regions and has provided baseline data and foundation for the PLANSCAPES and FUTURESCAPES programs. Although Envirofund is completely separate to the South West NRM Ltd programs, off-shoots from this program assist in reaching some targets set by the company for internal projects.

Risks or issues affecting performance and action taken or to be taken

High staff turnover, especially in managerial positions, in the first 6 months of the reporting period resulted in performance slowing. Almost all positions have now been filled and processes to increase staff retention are in place. Performance results are improving at a steady rate as the staff becomes integrated in their roles and the company.

The extended drought has also had an effect on the involvement of landholders with NRM projects but slight improvement in the seasonal outlook has seen an increase of projects submitted by landholders.

Brief summary of key regional events

The major strategic events taking place in the region are the development of the Far South West Indigenous and Cultural Heritage NRM plan and the review of the Regional NRM Plan. Fortuitously, the Department of Local Government and Planning has launched a process to develop its own regional plan for growth management. The Department will rely heavily upon South West NRM's Regional NRM Plan to provide the core content for its NRM chapter. Meshing the two processes will be complex but has the potential to achieve considerable leverage.

As input into these planning processes, our company has commissioned consultants to prepare material on the ecological footprint of residents in south west Queensland, carbon trading and sequestration as well as the financial health of the pastoral industry in the region.

The launch of our new website was a major milestone achievement toward attaining our target to develop an Information Hub, a point of access to all known documented scientific and anecdotal knowledge about the region. A project to capture unpublished records from former scientific researchers is underway.

The company has been mounting displays at all rural shows in the region and will manage a stall at the Ekka on behalf of the Regional Groups Collective in mid-August.

An Urban Landcare group has recommenced operations in Charleville and there is considerable enthusiasm amongst the townsfolk. The company is providing design services for a \$400,000 river beautification project within town boundaries.

Summary of corporate governance issues, initiatives and risks

At the date of writing, the company has not yet been given the favour of access to a previous audit report which would enable its accounts for the year 2004/2005 to be finalised.

The Administration staff have been skilled up to run the accounts, allowing the Financial Controller to adopt an auditing role in a part-time mode.

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A major Directors' and Staff retreat was held in March 2007 on the coast. Presentations were received from technical and managerial staff of the departments, including the Director-General of NRW, as to current and emerging issues and trends in the sector. Directors and staff then attended a facilitated workshop which resulted in a budget strategy for 2007/2008 and number of corporate understandings and strategic positioning.

In May/June 2007 the CEO attended the Company Directors' course held by the Australian Institute of Company Directors and was awarded the diploma. This will enable him not only to oversee governance within the company but also to give better informed advice to the Directors as to their responsibilities under the company's legislation.

All salaried staff have been offered one week's study leave anywhere in Australia to update themselves on new initiatives and best practice in the sector.

A second Directors' and Staff retreat is scheduled for August 2007 in order to set strategic directions for the next tranche planning period 2008-2013.

An internal risk facing the company is staff burnout, particularly given that many of the issues they are tackling require long-term investment and results are not always easily demonstrable within short budget periods. The long drought has depressed spirits among landholders and reduced their willingness and capacity to engage in land care-type activities.

There are primary external risks facing the company. The first is a disrupted changeover early in the next financial year into the next tranche of the Natural Heritage Trust, leading to a cash flow difficulty.

The second is a significantly reduced funding in 2008/2009: the staff establishment has been built up to enable it to handle a heavy workload of projects using previous under-expenditures and a good deal of momentum will be lost if funding drops back to basic levels next financial year.

The third external risk is that governments will seek to divert funding either from central government directly to landholders or via industry bodies, bypassing the coherence and synergy that the company can provide through its capacity to integrate programs across land, water, vegetation, cultural heritage and other fields.

The fourth and major external risk is that the scale of the deterioration in the landscapes in the region as a result of drought and overgrazing will lead governments to consider either that the company's programs are ineffective or that nothing can be done anyway.

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Section 2 - Final Reports Summary

A. Final Reports submitted in past 6 months:

There were no final reports submitted during the past 6 months

B. Final Reports due in next 6 months:

Project / Activity Code	Title	Date Due
NLP05	Establish strategic grazing practices for the mulga lands of south west Queensland.	December 07

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Section 3 – RIS Program & Project Review

RIS Program 1 – Core Costs

A. Project Summary

This program encompasses all the fixed operational costs of the business of South West NRM Ltd. An effective management and administration framework is essential to ensure delivery of MAT's.

Key projects include:

- The revision of the Regional NRM plan project, this is in the second stage with the best practices report having been finalised and the communication process now under development. South West NRM Ltd is working through this project in collaboration with the 7 local Governments and the 6 Aboriginal groups of the region.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities are being delivered by the contracting of consultants to develop the NRM plan as well as involvement in the DLGC meetings throughout the region and the company ILO working closely with the indigenous community. Training is being provided by outside sources to the relevant staff to ensure up-to-date procedures are being adopted.
- Extensive community communication: 6 indigenous community information sessions spread throughout the region, 6 information sessions, with collaboration from private organisations held in regional centres and consultants drafting a further information communication process for the finalisation of the plan.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Development of the Far South West Indigenous and Cultural Heritage NRM Plan commenced with the engaging of consultants to work with the Far South West Indigenous group to develop the plan. Progress has not been as smooth as expected but with extensive consultation the process is on track to be finalised in September 2007.
- Best Practices report for the development of the Regional NRM plan completed. See attachment.
- Community consultation process started. 6 indigenous community information sessions spread throughout the region, 6 information sessions, with collaboration from private organisations held in regional centres and consultants drafting a further information communication process for the finalisation of the plan.

C. Milestones

1 milestone was recorded and completed.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via VISTA NRM Online for:

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved January –June 2007, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

No variances to report.

E. Risks associated with program/project

The major risk associated with this project is the large area to be covered for community consultation, organising meetings can prove difficult. This is made worse by the fact that local governments are distracted by the amalgamation debate from engaging with natural resource management.

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RIS Program 2 – Communication, Education & Capacity Building

A. Project Summary

This program will deliver increased community awareness, provide education and training, and strengthen community capacity and instigate attitudinal and behavioural change related to natural resource management in the South West region.

Key projects include:

- Cadetship project is a partnership project with the University of Queensland to give the opportunity to disadvantaged rural people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to access university education in the field of natural resource management.
- Ecological Footprint project is being carried out to see what is the effect of the grazing industry on the natural resources in the region, this will assist in developing the best practices to improve sustainable resource management and landholder awareness of these practices.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities are conducted by the media and education officers at field days, shows and static displays with regional organisations.
- Consultation processes are carried out through community surveys and information sessions.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Delivery of the wild dog awareness workshops throughout the region. These workshops were a great success and involved 13 workshops in 7 shires reaching 145 landholders in the region, further workshops have been requested by those who could not attend. This project is one of those listed in the National Mosaic project.
- Delivery of educational sessions to the region's primary schools. 4 schools were attended covering approx. 100 students, the students were enthusiastic and discussed how they would be taking the information home to their parents. The participating schools have asked for follow-up sessions and the 3 other schools in the region have been targeted for the next reporting period.
- South West NRM Ltd is involved with the 'Mosaic' project put together by the Commonwealth Government and has 5 projects showcased through this initiative.

C. Milestones

There were 17 milestones for this program and 14 were successfully completed.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via ViISTA NRM Online for:

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved Jan-Jun 07, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

No significant variances to report.

E. Risks associated with program/project

No expected risks with this program.

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RIS Program 3 – FUTURESCAPES

A. Project Summary

This program is South West NRM Ltd's principal delivery method for on-ground outcomes leading to fulfilment of MATs and RCTS identified in the NRM plan.

Key projects include:

- Approx. 25 hectares protected under 1 formal covenant (nature refuge)
- Approx. 2500 hectares protected under 5 informal conservation agreements.
- 2 Cultural Heritage sites preserved.
- 53 on-ground works projects funded through FUTURESCAPES resulting in:
 - 80 kms riparian fencing
 - 70 alternate watering points developed
 - Approx. 3600 hectares of weed control targeting parthenium and coral cactus, (both projects are on-going)
 - Approx. 4500 hectares terrestrial vegetation and degraded land rehabilitated
 - Approx. 100km of fencing to land type completed.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities are carried out by the District Project Coordinators now located in 4 shires of the region. They conduct onsite inspections and assist landholders to apply for funding to carry out natural resource projects.
- FUTURESCAPES has seen the devolving of funding for 53 individual and group projects focused on improvement of the regions natural resources.
- Extensive community communication has been carried out through 4 field day displays, 6 information workshops held with several private organisations and 2 surveys of the community.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- 1 nature refuge agreement covering approx. 25 ha.
- 1 preservation of cultural heritage project was completed on Murra Murra Downs covering Lime bush paddock.
- 5 high nature conservation projects covering mainly floodout country back from the rivers and protecting the habitats of Koalas, broilgas and speckled ducks.
- 17 land rehabilitation projects covering approx. 4500 ha and with approx. 100 km of fencing to land type.
- 9 riparian and wetland area protection projects utilising 280 kms fencing, 70 alternate watering points and 1 high nature conservation informal covenant.
- Landholder participation in nrm related projects has increased over the past 6 months, this is partly due to a slight turn for the better in the season and also to the increased profile of South West NRM Ltd throughout the region.

C. Milestones

There were 12 out of 14 milestones completed for this program. 1 milestone was marked as completed and closed as it was a double up from when the schedule was input into VISTA and as such had been achieved in prior recordings.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via VISTA NRM Online for:

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved Jan-Jun 07, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

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D. **Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances**

The only variance was through an error when the schedule was being input and has been highlighted.

E. **Risks associated with program/project**

No follow-up of the seasonal change resulting in a continuation of drought conditions may have a significant effect on landholder participation in NRM projects. South West NRM Ltd will concentrate on engaging landholders in landcare groups in an attempt to encourage long-term involvement in the nrm issues of the region.

F. **Other Comments**

South West NRM Ltd has rebuilt staff numbers to the stage where delivery of this program is in a better position than the previous reporting period; the company has put processes in place to assist in the retention of staff.

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RIS Program 4 – Landscapes Assessment and Research

A. Project Summary

This program primarily addresses research required to set South West NRM Ltd's resource specific high priority RCTs that encompasses the thematic areas of; land salinity, water regimes and flow paths, and weeds and pests.

Key projects include:

- Weeds and pests management projects are being conducted on parthenium in the Bulloo catchment, coral cactus in the Paroo shire and feral pigs throughout the Bollon and Quilpie shires.
- Resource condition targets for river and wetlands condition and health are ongoing projects with partnerships between the company and EPA, NRW and DPI working towards the documentation of best practices for these targets.
- Sustainable management of Great Artesian Basin ground water projects are in the Tender stage for investigation of inter-aquifer leakage and water use/wastage from the system.
- Setting resource condition targets for salinity is proving difficult with some areas being identified as salinity but further investigation has shown the area is actually badly degraded but has no salinity as yet.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities and devolving of grants.
- Extensive community communication.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Partnership developed with NRW for assessment of land resource condition throughout the region (subject to Board approval and finalisation of contracts) will lead to 3 display sites in the region and modules developed for delivery in the PLANSCAPES workshops. The results of the assessments will also give the company a base to work from when assessing landholder projects for land rehabilitation.

C. Milestones

Seven (7) out of ten (10) milestones were achieved for this program. 5 of these were marked as "incomplete and closed" due to being duplications from a data entry mistake. The 3 milestones marked as "incomplete" have actually been fully delivered but still have outputs that could be recorded against them in the next reporting period even though in some cases this will cause the milestone to be over achieved.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via VISTA NRM Online for:

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved January-June 2007, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

Further outputs will be advanced against the 3 "incomplete" milestones throughout the next reporting period which will see the milestones checked off as complete.

E. Risks associated with program/project

No follow-up of the seasonal change resulting in a continuation of drought conditions may have a significant effect on land resource condition and trend. South West NRM Ltd will concentrate on putting processes in place to monitor resource condition and trend, so relevant action can take place prior to significant downward trend.

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RIS Program 5 – Monitoring and Evaluation

A. Project Summary

This program is an integrated and essential element of the RIS that extends across all other investment programs, this program has three components; internal reporting, project monitoring and resource condition monitoring.

Key projects include:

- Development of framework for resource condition monitoring is still undergoing assessment and evaluation with on ground inspections being conducted at a number of sites. The current system is not adequate to give the level of information we require for future delivery of natural resource projects.
- Implementation of internal reporting systems has given project managers the ability to track all internal and external projects from start to finish and for any staff to check the progress of projects they are interested in. The system also allow for the position tracking of staff to allow for scheduling of meetings, field inspections and assessments.
- Project monitoring using *Monitoring made easy* guide and other methodologies.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities and workshops are delivered by the Monitoring and Evaluation officer and encompass onsite training for landholders in monitoring site development and reporting/recording procedures, as well as in-house workshops on the use of GPS/GIS and monitoring kits.
- Extensive community communication through information sessions and workshops mentioned in the previous item as well as media opportunities.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Delivery of GPS/GIS workshops for landholders and staff was conducted by the Spatial Imagery team and gave staff and landholders up to date information on these systems, the workshops were well attended and the consensus by participants was that the course was of great value.
- Delivery of educational sessions on water use monitoring to the region's primary schools was well accepted with follow up sessions being organised to train pupils and teachers in the collection of data. This data will be used at future field days to pass on knowledge to the broader community.
- Re-assignment of staff duties to allow revision of the company's innovative monitoring kits for land, water and vegetation. These are expected to be of interest to regional bodies in other inland regions and may even have commercial potential.

C. Milestones

Four (4) out of five (5) milestones were completed for this program. 1 was marked as "incomplete and closed" due to being a duplication from a data input mistake.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via VISTA NRM Online for:

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved Jan-Jun 07, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

The monitoring and evaluation framework of South West NRM Ltd is currently being reviewed and processes evaluated to deliver a higher standard of monitoring and evaluation over the following reporting framework. Two juniors have been recruited to allow the IT/GIS specialist to take on a monitoring and evaluation role.

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E. Risks associated with program/project

Retaining staff is the biggest risk for any program, processes have been developed and implemented to address this issue.

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RIS Program 6 – Policy and Partnerships

A. Project Summary

This program is focused on two areas of operation; 1) the development of positive partnerships and collaborative solutions to NRM and 2) the need to identify and document aboriginal interests through processes of a Traditional Owners' advisory group.

Key projects include:

- Development of framework for resource condition monitoring.
- Implementation of internal reporting systems has given project managers the ability to track all internal and external projects from start to finish and for any staff to check the progress of projects they are interested in. The system also allow for the position tracking of staff to allow for scheduling of meetings, field inspections and assessments.
- Project monitoring using Monitoring made easy guide and other methodologies.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities and workshops are delivered by the Local Government officer and Indigenous Liaison officer.
- Extensive community communication via information sessions held in Cunnamulla, Thargomindah, Quilpie and Charleville.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Charleville Botanical Mulga Lands Park project in partnership with local Government. South West NRM Ltd and the local Government are working in partnership to develop the nature reserve into an educational area for schools and tourists alike, the area has a number of different land types and flora/fauna communities and is unique for the area.
- Warrego River project in partnership with community members and local Government. South West NRM Ltd, local Government and the community are working together to develop a river walk that will highlight the flora and fauna of the Warrego River and surrounding environment. The company is funding the project as well as supplying technical information and assistance in the identification and signage of the species in the area.

C. Milestones

Six (6) out of eight (8) milestones were completed; the 2 milestones to be carried over are the Aboriginal Asset reports.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via VISTA NRM Online for:

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved January -June 2007, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

The Aboriginal asset report will be finalised in the 1st reporting period of 2007/2008.

E. Risks associated with program/project

Retaining staff is the biggest risk for any program; processes have been developed and implemented to address this issue.

F. Other Comments

N/A

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RIS Program 7 – PLANSCAPES

A. Project Summary

This program is a multi-property scale planning initiative addressing land management issues that negatively impact on soils, water, vegetation and biodiversity in the south west region. This program is our major delivery program for NRM education and awareness to the landholders of the region.

Key projects include:

- Development of modules for resource condition monitoring training for landholders. The process of identifying the content of modules has only just started and input from landcare groups has been encouraging, the groups have indicated that workshops geared around the problems they face are more acceptable than the regional ones currently on offer.
- Parthenium awareness and eradication project has been initiated in the Bulloo catchment with the first area of 5000ha now mapped and project plan developed. This area is one of the recently invigorated landcare group regions and has 5 properties working together.
- Terrestrial revegetation and erosion control project covering 200 ha has started to show benefits after the rain events this year.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities and workshops have been delivered through the Landcare facilitator and the District Project Coordinators at 8 landcare group meetings and 2 in-house meetings. Feed-back from these sessions has been positive and enthusiastic.
- Extensive community communication through 6 information sessions held throughout the region and participation in 5 field days.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Establishment of 5 landcare groups including an urban group has been the biggest achievement for this reporting period, the combined landcare groups cover 60 rural properties and 21 urban landholders. They are involved in land rehabilitation and revegetation (1000ha), erosion control (3500ha), feral pig eradication (200,000ha and 2 catchment systems), parthenium weed control (5000ha) and protection of natural environment projects throughout the region. South West NRM Ltd is assisting these groups with funding, technical specialist advice, on-ground advice as well as information and nrm training workshops.
- Expressions of interest from a further 3 groups.

C. Milestones

Four (4) out of nine (9) milestones were completed for this program. The other 5 milestones are marked as "incomplete" but have been fully delivered - there are some projects to be carried over to the next reporting period that will "feed" into the milestones so they are being kept open.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via VISTA NRM Online for:

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved Jan-Jun 07, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

The monitoring and evaluation section of South West NRM Ltd is currently being reviewed and processes evaluated to deliver a higher standard of monitoring and evaluation over the following reporting periods.

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E. Risks associated with program/project

No follow-up of the seasonal change resulting in a continuation of drought conditions may have a significant effect on landholder participation in nrm projects. South West NRM Ltd will concentrate on engaging landholders in landcare groups in an attempt to encourage long-term involvement in the nrm issues of the region. The difficulty in keeping landholders interested if the drought does not break is a question that the Operations team and Landcare facilitator have discussed in length. They are agreed that this can be addressed by the new PLANSCAPES workshops and modules as well as on site assistance to engage in nrm projects.

Retaining staff is the biggest risk for any program; processes have been developed and implemented to address this issue.

F. Other Comments

N/A

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NLP 01 – Regional Landcare Facilitator

A. Project Summary

NLP 01 – our Landcare co-ordinator position contributes to the development of regional arrangements for NRM particularly the support and strengthening of Landcare groups.

Key projects include:

- Evaluation, redevelopment and packages of the PLANSCAPES investment program.
- Mimosa control project.
- Parthenium awareness project.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities and devolved grants.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Establishment of 5 Landcare groups including an urban group.

Landcare Coordinator Narrative 23rd July 2007

Overall the past 12 months since the last reporting period has been very positive with regards to Landcare groups. There are a number of reasons for the positive outlook but the two main factors are some significant rain events around the region during this period, which has taken some pressure off landholders, and the work being carried out to support and provide information to landcare groups from the landcare coordinator and district project coordinators employed by South West NRM.

The Bollon Landcare Group is one group that has been reinvigorated in this time and has had two meetings so far to discuss group issues and South West NRM programs and initiatives. The group has expressed interest in participating in Planscapes/Sub catchment planning. They have also had a presentation on Sustainable Wildlife Enterprises with regards to kangaroo harvesting and incentives for landholders.

Another rural group on the verge of reforming is the Upper Bulloo Landcare Group in the north western part of the region. We have had several discussions with members of this group and are working towards holding a meeting and gaining momentum with the group to deal with their biggest issue, which is parthenium. Meetings were scheduled during this reporting period, but were postponed due to various reasons. Planscapes would be promoted to this group with the focus being parthenium. An NLP community support project application was submitted this year to assist with this core infestation of parthenium and to deal with it on a sustainable grazing management basis, however this project was not successful through NLP. This group should be reinvigorated within the next 6 months.

Both these groups have been inactive and in sleeper mode for several years due to extreme drought and subsequent lack of interest.

A new Urban Landcare group has been formed in April this year in the town of Charleville. This group has had two meetings and held a Riverwalk activity just recently. The group has a solid vision and has formed together for the common intent to help find solutions to the environmental issues that face the town area. An extensive project list has been formulated to tackle some of the issues, such as riparian rehabilitation, weed control, environmental education activities and promotion of native and water wise plantings and gardens.

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Several other rural groups had planned to hold meetings during this reporting period but were postponed due to unfavourable weather conditions and other valid reasons. These groups included Mobile Creek Landcare Group and Beechal Creek Landcare Group. Both these groups have held together and remained functional during this drought period but have not held meetings for a while. These groups are strong and will continue to be active and refocus over the coming year.

Another Landcare group remaining active over this time has been the Tinnenburra Landcare group and they currently putting together submissions in collaboration with South West NRM for consultancy and research into hydrological information with regards to water flows, surface water and inter-bore leakage. The group is still working on the details of these submissions, and are due to meet again soon.

The Middle Road Landcare group which is a cross regional group between QMDC and South West NRM has been active in attending a Grazing for Profit course in April. They have recently finished some mapping workshops to progress towards sub catchment planning run by QMDC.

Over the coming months it is expected that some new rural groups will form in the region due to expressions of interest, which we will be following up with and providing support for, along with the reinvigoration of other groups that have been inactive for a long period.

The landcare movement in the South West NRM region is still alive and gaining strength. With the right climatic conditions and regional body support, it will continue to grow and gain momentum in the coming years.

Regional Landcare Coordinator
Angie Walton

Milestones

All 3 milestones completed.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via VISTA NRM Online.

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved Jan-Jun 07, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods
- Supporting details for milestone status
- Outputs achieved against each milestone

C. Risks associated with project

No follow-up of the seasonal change resulting in a continuation of drought conditions may have a significant effect on landholder participation in nrm projects. South West NRM Ltd will concentrate on engaging landholders in landcare groups in an attempt to encourage long-term involvement in the NRM issues of the region. Retaining staff is the biggest risk for any program; processes have been developed and implemented to address this issue.

D. Final Comments

N/A

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NLP 05 – On-ground works to establish strategic grazing practices in the Mulga lands of south west Queensland

A. Project Summary

To give incentive to primary producers to undertake land capability assessments that consider biodiversity, production and the broad landscape values of specific land types.

Key projects include:

- PLANSCAPES workshop involvement by landholder groups will achieve the goal of gaining involvement in land capability assessments. The PLANSCAPES program will deliver modules on nrm issues relevant to the landcare group involved the group can suggest what information they need and the workshops will deliver that information. One of the modules currently being addressed in partnership with NRW is soil condition assessment.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Extension activities.

B. Key Achievements for the period

- Increased involvement of landholders in doing property assessments, District coordinators have conducted 15 assessments to date. These assessments have assisted landholders in identifying projects that need to be carried out to achieve sustainable natural resource management and productivity on their properties.

C. Milestones

Four (4) out of four (4) milestones were completed for this project.

Please refer to Milestone/output report submitted via ViSTA NRM Online

- Statement of achievement of milestones scheduled to be achieved January –June 2007, and all outstanding milestone from previous periods.
- Supporting details for milestone status.
- Outputs achieved against each milestone.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

This is an ongoing program from previous reporting periods, outputs are being achieved and the program will be finalised by December 2007.

E. Risks associated with project

There are no foreseeable risks to completing this program.

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SR01 – Spatial Imagery Capture Project

A. Project Summary

To provide state-wide coordination of spatial imagery purchasing and capacity building for the Queensland NRM bodies.

Key projects include:

- Purchase of Spot5 satellite imagery at a resolution suitable for regional NRM bodies needs.
- Capacity building activities in the fields of GPS and GIS at a basic level suitable for entry level attendees. Higher level training for advanced level GIS staff available.

Key delivery mechanisms

- Imagery Products
- Nationally accredited training

B. Key Achievements for the period

Spatial Imagery Purchase

- The Project Steering Team purchased and took delivery of approximately 450 scenes (i.e. 91%) of the required 500 scenes from Raytheon. Through our partnership with Geoscience Australia and purchase of imagery in a single coordinated plan, the project managed a saving of \$1,180,000 over standard purchase rates.
- The team were responsible for finalising the project specifications, quality assurance of imagery products and data distribution. With the support of regional body GIS staff this process was completed ahead of schedule.
- The tender documentation for other rectification, colour balancing and mosaic of the imagery was drafted and managed by the Project Steering Team. Three companies were offered to submit tenders and were selected on their proven ability to deliver products to the Project Steering Teams requirements.
- The ortho-rectification process was completed in June 2007. Regional GIS staff were given the task of validating the accuracy of this ortho-rectified imagery. Reports received were that the positional accuracy is excellent and have exceeded expectations.
- Natural colour mosaics are currently in production with South West NRM and a northern portion of Terrain NRM completed. The balance of these are expected by early August 2007.
- The balance of the required capture area (9%) is currently on program for capture. Cloud cover over Cape York and Torres Strait has delayed suitably scaled imagery capture.

Imagery Savings

- The Project Steering Team requested, through the RGC, to reinvest the achieved savings into value added products. These products would be identified via a tender process through the executive officers of each regional body. Requests have been received from each RB and will now progress to the Project Steering Team for assessment. The PST is looking for products that use the imagery to its full potential and have the potential to benefit all RB's through similar application of processes and methodologies.
- A major portion of the savings was directed to extending the term of the project to March 2008. Training regional body staff and all stakeholders was seen by the PST as knowledge value adding. It is estimated that the project team will train an additional 250 participants in either GPS or GIS.
- Funding has been directed to subsidising the cost to regional bodies for specialised imagery manipulation software. This bulk purchase resulted in savings to each of the regional bodies of around 60% of the original cost. The software was seen as an essential tool to support the regional body's ability to deliver the imagery to its stakeholders. Standardisation of this software also ensures sufficient support is available and development of tools can be utilised by all regions.

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Provide State-wide Imagery Coordination and Integration

- The coordinator represents the RGC on the Spatial Imagery Working Group, VISTA (spatial) and other spatial industry groups as required. This is essential to ensure current and future technologies and developments are identified, assessed and disseminated to regional body GIS staff.

Project Management & Co-ordination

- Project co-ordinator position filled.
- Two GIS project officer positions filled.
- The Spatial Imagery Project Steering Team was formed from academia, NRM regional bodies, state and federal governments. The team meet quarterly with regular email communication and teleconferences as required.
- One GIS team member resigned to take up a permanent position with the Burdekin Dry Tropics. A replacement has been employed with induction and up skilling in progress.

Develop Training Kits for NRM Staff and Stakeholders

- Introductory level training kit has been completed.
- Competency based accredited through TAFE modules.
- Delivery modules are complete and provide participants with:-
 1. Skills to correctly configure and use GPS units to calculate areas, capture points and tracks and generally navigate in the field. Download and view this data in freely available software packages.
 2. Knowledge in the operation of the ArcGIS software to view, capture and manipulate data. These tools will enhance many NRM outcomes from property planning to landscape scale applications

Training Delivery to Regional Staff, Landholders and Stakeholders

- Training delivery modules are complete (accredited through TAFE). Workshops commenced in December 2006.
- 12 NRM regional bodies have now participated in the training.

Workshops to date were held at :-

Thargomindah	Quilpie
Charleville	Clermont
Brisbane	Longreach
Atherton	Toowoomba
Townsville	Georgetown
Rockhampton	Mackay
Charleville	Mt Isa
Bundaberg	Amby

Total attendees:-

GPS	178
GIS	141

- Training delivery modules are complete but are under continual modification and refinement.
- The training is flexible to accommodate individual regional needs and takes place using a combination of indoor and outdoor situations. The training attempts to simulate data capture in a real world situation.

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Training to Regional Body GIS Staff

- Imagery Interpretation Training Package for GIS professionals was delivered by Prof Stuart Phinn of the University of Queensland with in-kind support from the SLATS and compliance units within NR&W. The training was well received and appreciated by all attendees.
- Further imagery training was provided at the recent GIS knowledge sharing workshop held in Gympie. This enhanced GIS operator skills and was designed specifically with the new Spot5 imagery in mind. Tools were developed to enable staff to process and clip imagery faster than anything currently available and reprocess imagery to the GIS operator's specifications.

Further Training Developments

- Advanced level training kits are in planning stage with a range of products proposed. Tools to standardise data capture will be developed along with a file format (geodatabase) which will revolutionize the data capture process.
- Further develop imagery manipulation tools.
- Further develop advanced ArcGIS tools.

GIS Knowledge Sharing Workshops

November 2006 Workshop

- The second workshop of Regional Body, Industry, Agency GIS and Information Officers was held in November 2006. This workshop focused on developments relating to outcomes of the Spatial Imagery Capture Project.
- Current operational issues were addressed with a number of action items developed to progress further. Networking, current & future directions and technology were issues of major discussion.

July 2007 Workshop

- The third workshop was held in July 2007
- Regional Body, Industry (Growcom & Agforward), NR&W agency GIS and Information Management Officers attended the workshop at the Gympie Forestry Training Centre. This workshop focused heavily on operational procedures and regional learning's using best practises from Queensland regional NRM bodies.
- The focus of the workshop was directed towards "hands on training".
- Comments received from this workshop were extremely positive. All attendees requested the next workshop to be developed along the same lines i.e. Training to be integrated with operational requirements.

Major topics discussed and outcomes achieved.

1. *Rural leasehold land strategy impacts on regional GIS staff*
2. *Processes and tools to standardize data capture*
3. *Data capture standards*

C. Milestones

Nine (9) out of ten (10) milestones were achieved for this program with 1 milestone "incomplete" and carried over to the next reporting period.

Technically, one milestone was not achieved during this reporting cycle. The milestone was to hold a GIS knowledge sharing workshop between January and June 2007. This was unattainable due to venue and regional staff availability. July 2007 was chosen to maximise attendance of regional GIS staff, industry and stakeholder representatives.

D. Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances

This is an ongoing program from previous reporting periods, outputs are being achieved and the program will be finalised by March 2008.

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E. Risks associated with project

There is one minor risk associated with this project:

1. Imagery capture over Cape York and Torres Strait is dependant on seasonal factors. These to date have not been favourable. If required, imagery could be sourced from earlier capture cycles.