



South West NRM Ltd

*Achieving sustainable landscapes
for rural communities*



SOUTH WEST NRM LTD

Performance Report

Jul - Dec 2006



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Salinity & Water
AUSTRALIA



Natural Heritage Trust
Helping Communities Helping Australia
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Queensland
Government

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Half Year Performance Report is to provide a fair assessment of South West NRM Ltd position in relation to the implementation of the Regional NRM Plan, funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments.

The preceding six months have presented significant achievements towards enhancing the organisation's capacity to deliver on-ground work programs and its ability to play a proactive role in regional planning. A number of challenges have also been faced during this time. These challenges mainly involve external considerations, in particular economic (human resource retention and recruitment to remote and regional Qld) and environmental (the drought and its significant bearing to the landholder to deliver on-ground works) factors. Nonetheless, good outcomes are occurring in the South West NRM Ltd region, and sound pillars in governance will ensure all areas of risk are appropriately managed to achieve long term viability.

The Regional Investment Strategy (RIS) is South West NRM Ltd's major investment tool. Each of its themes has achieved success to varying degrees.

FUTURESCAPES continues to deliver significant on-ground investment throughout the region. Twenty-seven successful applications in Round 3 of the FUTURESCAPES program saw a commitment of \$544,000 during this reporting period.

Whilst PLANSCAPES achieved similar financial outcomes in on-ground works, its full potential has not yet been realised in prioritised coordinated NRM planning. The loss of key staff and the inability to fill the position of the Natural Resource Planning and Extension Officer has added further strain to the organisation's technical capacity to deliver PLANSCAPES action plans to regional groups. Additionally, the drought has had a direct impact on the capacity of the landholder to participate in such programs. Newly appointed CEO, Geoff Edwards has expressed a willingness to adjust staff roles to better reflect the needs of the company and community and improve South West NRM Ltd's service delivery.

Significant progress has been achieved under the theme Communication, Education and Capacity Building. The activity review in this report lists a number of activities that have occurred in this area with particular emphasis being placed on the development and design of a new web portal incorporating increased functionality to better engage the community. Stronger links have been developed with local media outlets, significantly enhancing the presence of the organisation throughout the south west region.

Continued progress is being made in partnerships with an external consultant recently engaged to enhance the capacity of Traditional Owners to participate in NRM planning activities. An increased presence is also occurring within local government NRM planning with the development of a water use efficiency project in conjunction with the Paroo Shire Council and partnerships between shire councils and South West NRM Ltd to assist in the control of weeds and pests in the region.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Research is also being carried out into priority weeds and pests for the south west region with significant community consultation and desktop analysis undertaken during this reporting period. Due to a lack of staff resources, minimal outcomes have been achieved in determining baseline water regimes and wetlands ecology.

In relation to core costs, a new external auditor was successfully engaged in 2006, with two Finance and Audit meetings having been conducted. Importantly, the Annual Report was disseminated to stakeholders in this period, far in advance of the timeframe this occurred in 2005. Initial planning has also commenced in organising a Board and Staff Retreat for March 2007 to address issues in governance training and NRM planning beyond 2008.

In addition to the Regional Investment Strategy, other government funded programs have included NLP05 and NLP01. The report provides a frank assessment of where South West NRM Ltd is at and its plans for the remainder of the year. In particular, there is an underlying confidence in the work being carried out by the Community Landcare Coordinator in rejuvenating groups throughout the region. Good foundations are being laid for extensive work in future PLANSCAPES projects – which also encompasses the general provisions of NLP05.

The July-December periods represents the first reporting period for the Regional Collective sponsored Spatial Imagery project. Good progress is being made in this area with all major milestones achieved.

The report also identifies the good linkage and benefits being achieved through the employment of the Regional Strategic Facilitator. Through these strong linkages, assistance has been provided in monitoring and evaluation as well as increased community exposure to the South West NRM Ltd name as well as its purpose and the ability of the organisation to influence management ethos via the Envirofund program.

South West NRM Ltd will continue to work hard in achieving its milestones over the coming six months under the leadership of its new CEO, Geoff Edwards, who commenced his appointment January 1, 2007. This Half Year Performance Report represents a fair assessment of where the organisation is at, what it has achieved and importantly, how the organisation will manage the variances.

With this in mind, the general assessment is positive, but the challenges remain forever present.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



REPORTS SUMMARY

Final Reports Summary

Final Reports submitted:

Project/Activity Code	Title	Due Date	Date Submitted
NIL			

Final Reports due in the next 6 months:

Project/Activity Code	Title	Due Date	Date Submitted
SWFC01	SWNRM Facilitator and Coordinator Project	Final Reports have previously been submitted for these items, and financial acquittals are to be submitted in the next reporting period.	
SWFF01	South West NRM Grp NHT 2 Foundation Funding Project		
SWIFA01	Implementing IMPS through sustainable production and nature conservation		
SWPA01	Core Operating Costs		
SWNLP04	SWNLP04		

RIS and NRM Plan Overview

Final Reports

A letter was written to Dr Evelyn Meier on the 24th October, relating to 'Outstanding Issues' in 2005/06 Financial Statements.

The content of this correspondence sought:

- Finalisation on unspent funds for Grants prior to June 2004;
- Finalisation on unspent funds for Grants in 2005/06; and
- Potential liability to South West NRM Ltd in retribution of misappropriated funds (2005).

Subsequent advice has been received from Wallace Yuen, who will be assisting in these matters.

It is envisaged that all outstanding matters pertaining Foundation/Transition/Facilitator Coordinator Funding will be finalised and submitted as FINAL REPORTS in the Annual Performance Report.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Risk Assessment

Areas of major risk to the running of South West NRM Ltd are identified as:

- Secured Commonwealth and State funding beyond June 30, 2008 remains an unknown variable for the organisation and its long term capacity in planning, delivery and outcomes;
- High staff attrition levels, particularly in areas of NRM technical expertise;
- The drought continues to hinder community and landholder involvement and delivery in on-ground work programs and participation in workshops;
- No resolution to issues relating to fraud liability of previous management, and the subsequent question of company solvency.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



RIS THEME REVIEW

PLANSCAPES

Overview

PLANSCAPES is a multi-property scale planning initiative addressing land management issues that negatively impact upon soils, water, vegetation and biodiversity in the South West NRM Ltd region. The program is designed to assist small groups of neighbouring land managers address property and catchment management issues.

PLANSCAPES works in conjunction with the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries' Grazing Land Management (GLM) program to deliver a comprehensive and complete planning package to participants.

Key Achievements

- Four PLANSCAPES workshops were delivered.
- Twenty-four land managers took part in the Eulo and Moble Creek PLANSCAPES groups, significantly exceeding the projected sixteen participants.
- Eleven Voluntary Management Agreements (VMA's) were signed.
- \$260,150 was outlaid through the PLANSCAPES program over the July-December 2006 period. This represents 95% of the 2006/07 Schedule 2 allocation and 52% is directly attributed to on-ground work projects.
- Extensive analysis and updating of PLANSCAPES materials (workbooks, application forms and fact sheets) occurred in this period.

Milestones

6 workshops delivered to 3 PLANSCAPES groups

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- Four workshops were delivered to two PLANSCAPES groups over the six month reporting period.
- Eighteen businesses/properties and twenty-four participants were involved in the two PLANSCAPES groups (Eulo and Moble Creek regions).
- Workbooks were extensively reviewed and redesigned following a needs analysis of each PLANSCAPES group and twenty-four copies were distributed to participants. Extensive revision of the Weed & Pest, Riparian and Floodplain, Weed and Pest and Land and Soils sections was undertaken and a more concise format was developed.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Development of 3 PLANSCAPES action plans and 24 individual property plans

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- Two PLANSCAPES action plans and twelve individual property plans were developed during the six month reporting period.
- Riparian area management plans were developed for each of the sub-catchment groups.
- Surface water assessments were conducted for the Eulo and Moble Creek PLANSCAPES areas.
- Sub-catchment flora and fauna assessments for these groups were incorporated into individual plans.
- Sub-catchment weed and pest assessments for the two PLANSCAPES groups were undertaken. Sub-catchment plans and twelve individual action plans were developed incorporating priority pest management strategies.

GLM Workshops delivered to 3 PLANSCAPES groups

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- GLM workshops were delivered to two PLANSCAPES groups (Eulo and Moble Creek).

Evaluation of PLANSCAPES program

ACHIEVED

- Evaluation of the PLANSCAPES project has been ongoing throughout the reporting period and a report will be submitted to the South West NRM Ltd Board on the 29th of January, 2007.

Significant Variances

- All milestones within PLANSCAPES have been marked as incomplete in the VISTA reporting system. This is partially due to only two PLANSCAPES programs having been conducted over the reporting period and the way the milestones are formatted. However, within these two groups most of the milestones have been achieved with the exception of the number of property plans developed. The individual property plans are not currently structured into the PLANSCAPES program in the format that they are described in the Schedule 3.
- Two PLANSCAPES groups and four workshops were undertaken during this reporting period, falling short of the required number. Factors that have inhibited the development of the PLANSCAPES program include:
 - Vacancy of the Natural Resource Planning and Extension Officer role whose duties include the development and implementation of the PLANSCAPES package and coordination between PLANSCAPES and GLM;
 - Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries experienced difficulty in accessing qualified Grazing Land Management presenters in the region limiting the availability of dates/times for workshops;
 - The concept of the PLANSCAPES program has a sound grounding and is an organisational priority however a number of significant deficiencies have been identified in the structure and application of the program.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Corrective Actions

- Position analysis has identified a number of staff resources and skills that can be directed towards the development of the PLANSCAPES program. For example, there is an opportunity to utilise the skills of the Community Landcare Coordinator to assist in the sourcing and development of PLANSCAPES groups in conjunction with the rejuvenation of Landcare groups in the region. Good ground work is already occurring.
- Employment of a PLANSCAPES officer to focus on assessment, refinement and development of the PLANSCAPES program. The person in this role will coordinate staff and external stakeholders in order to achieve the programs objectives.
- The prospect of alternative delivery providers for the Grazing Land Management section of the GLM/PLANSCAPES program is currently being investigated.

FUTURESCAPES

Overview

The main objective of the FUTURESCAPES program is to provide financial support for the implementation of priority on-ground works that improve natural resource condition in the south West NRM Ltd region. Funding is provided to NRM stakeholders who demonstrate a willingness to go beyond what is considered their 'duty of care' or core business in order to provide a healthy and sustainable landscape for the benefit of the wider community and future generations.

Key Achievements

- Round 3 of FUTURESCAPES funding allocation has been completed with twenty-seven successful project applications, totaling \$544,491.

Milestones

50% (or 12) of FUTURESCAPES project applications selected from PLANSCAPES action plans.
PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- There were no specific FUTURESCAPES project applications from the PLANSCAPES action plans due to the funding structure, however eight project applications were selected from PLANSCAPES action plans and were funded through the FUTURESCAPES program.

1 case study/fact sheet for implementing on-ground works and distribution of 150 copies

ACHIEVED

- Case studies were created for two on-ground projects. Particular focus was placed on the success of the Lime Bush Paddock project undertaken by the Kooma Traditional Owner group on Murra Murra Station. This was extensively distributed and featured in the Annual Report and in promotional materials. A case study was also developed in conjunction with the Bush Heritage Fund on a project undertaken at Carnarvon Station.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



All successful applicants sign FUTURESAPES management agreements and receive successful applications package. Including revision of Application Package.

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- Fifteen of twenty-seven FUTURESAPES Round 3 successful applicants have signed and returned voluntary management agreements with the rest expected early 2007.
- Application packages were reviewed and updated to incorporate corporate image and new information.
- All applications were sent receipt letters and notification of the assessment procedure. Funded applications were then sent a successful letter and Voluntary Management Agreements. Unfunded applications were sent unsuccessful letters and were advised of feedback from the panel and the process.

FUTURESAPES project sites are inspected to ensure project completion

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- Seven FUTURESAPES projects were inspected during this period.

30 land managers registering interest in FUTURESAPES funding as a result of promotional material.

ACHIEVED

- Over sixty land managers registered interest in FUTURESAPES funding in Round 3 with thirty-six indicating their awareness through promotional materials.
- Application packages were sent to 150 land managers in total.

New assessment panels select projects based on 3 sets of reviewed criteria

ACHIEVED

- Project assessment has continued to be based on the framework developed at the start of the RIS period to identify priority areas to devolve funding. The three-tiered assessment panel process was used in Round 3 of FUTURESAPES:
 - Tier one involves South West NRM Ltd technical staff ensuring applications meet all relevant criteria for assessment;
 - A technical panel consisting of 3 Government representatives then determines if the projects are technically feasible and if there are additional legislative requirements which need to occur before the project can progress;
 - The final step involves a community assessment panel, whose member make the final selection of projects based on advice from the Government technical panel.

On completion of the three steps the South West NRM Ltd Board of Directors meet to agree or disagree to fund the selected projects.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



On-ground works outputs

This round of funding has seen allocation for 171.75 km of fencing, 69.3km of poly pipe, twenty water tanks, thirty-four troughs and 1798 hectares of weed control, resulting in \$630,683.84 spent to achieve the twenty-seven projects. The project breakdown is as follows:

- Control of exotic weeds and feral animals – 5 projects;
- Management of areas of high nature conservation value (not involving formal covenant) – 5 projects;
- Protect an area under a formal covenant (Nature Refuge) – 1 project;
- Preserve Cultural Heritage – 2 projects;
- Alleviate grazing pressure on fragile land types – 9 projects;
- Fencing Riparian Areas – 1 project;
- Rehabilitate degraded land - 5 projects.

Significant Variances

- The major weakness of the FUTURESCAPES program is the current under-performance of the PLANSCAPES program which leads to an inability to prioritise sub-catchment planning projects.
- The current capacity of the organisation to conduct on-going monitoring and evaluation of projects is of concern.

Corrective Actions

- Refer to comments above regarding the PLANSCAPES program.
- NRM Officer will commence 22 January, 2007. The purpose of this role is to develop and maintain monitoring and evaluation schedules for all on-ground projects. This will significantly increase the organisation's capacity to monitor and evaluate projects. The position will be based in Cunnamulla and will also help provide a consistent presence in our regional office.

COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Key Achievements

- BoaB Interactive contracted to develop and design new web portal for South West NRM Ltd which will incorporate additional features such as a resource library, on line submission of funding applications, board member intranet and education portal.
- Roll out of GPS/GIS training in Thargomindah, Quilpie and Charleville as part of a series of Information Days.
- Further development of South West NRM Ltd corporate image – including development of a series of fact sheets, Information sheets and newsletters.
- Significant increase in promotional opportunities and local coverage including development of media networks.
- Completion of Annual Report.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Milestones

3 NRM Forums facilitated which incorporate new membership

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- The forum process was reviewed in the last reporting period and has largely been replaced by community training needs with an information component.
- New format trialed with recent GPS/GIS training days (4 sessions) which also presented South West NRM Ltd specific information and the opportunity to access staff members in a one-on-one situation.
- Five new members.

The communication plan is implemented and current methods of communication are updated

ACHIEVED

- A review of the lines of communication between the Board and staff has been conducted and in communication channels and frequency of communication have been implemented.
- A terms of reference and tender document were completed for the development of a new web portal for South West NRM Ltd. Boab Interactive have been successfully contracted to undertake development of the new web site.
- A series of templates were designed in the corporate style for fact sheets, information sheets, newsletters, terms of references, contracts and data sharing agreements.
- The style guide has been updated to reflect further development of the company's corporate image.
- Completion of Annual Report.
- Increased participation in external newsletter contributions including editorial in DPI&F Mulga Line and regular contributions to Q-Links and AgForce newsletters.

2.5% of NRM decision makers have participated in at least one training program.

ACHIEVED

- A series of GPS and ArcGIS training days were rolled out during December in Thargomindah, Quilpie and Charleville. 37 people participated in this training.
- Wild Dog Trapping Workshops were conducted in two shires. Thirty-two participants attended these training workshops.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Promotional Package is delivered

ACHIEVED

- Significant updates have been undertaken to the company's promotional information packs.
- Information packs have been distributed to funding applicants, Envirofund project landholders and also at the DPI&F drought information days and GPS and ArcGIS training days throughout the region.
- Information and promotional material packs were developed for South West NRM Ltd Board Members. These packs incorporate a selection of fact sheets, corporate material, PowerPoint presentations and promotional materials to assist Board Members to present the South West NRM Ltd image in a professional manner.

100 Community Members given direct access to information regarding NRM Issues

ACHIEVED

- South West NRM Ltd Information Packs have been handed out at the DPI&F Drought Information Days (approximately 65 packs).
- South West NRM Ltd information has been sent to all FUTURESCAPES applicants (approx 60 packs distributed).
- Information has been added to the current South West NRM Ltd web site and is available for download.
- Case Studies on Carnarvon Station and Murra Murra Station have been completed and distributed with information packs.
- CRP sheets have been developed for an upcoming water efficiency campaign – to be used in early 2007.
- Staff and information have been available at a number of community events over the past six months including the Cunnamulla Festival, Landcare Week and AgForce conference.

3 South West NRM Ltd resource centres are updated and maintained to reflect community needs.

ACHIEVED

- Both Quilpie and Cunnamulla resource centres have been assessed and new information distributed. Display stands have been updated.
- Facilities for staff at Cunnamulla have been updated to reflect a more professional image and to help encourage landholders to visit. An alternative location for the Cunnamulla Office was arranged to assist in visual presentation of the corporate image and ease of access for clients.
- A system to access our library online has been developed as part of the new South West NRM Ltd web site.
- Training opportunities for staff over the 6 month period include: First Aid, GPS, ArcGIS and additional TAFE studies for some staff members.

100 Community members visit resource centres

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- Lack of full time staff in both external resource centres has limited the number of visitors. 53 visitors have been recorded.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Promote awareness in the community of the roles, activities and benefits of community NRM groups.

ACHIEVED

- Within the media (three local newspapers, regional NRM publications, on-line newsletters) fifty stories have been run on South West NRM Ltd and associated NRM issues.
- Six radio interviews have taken place on a range of NRM issues and events and company key messages continue to be reinforced through sponsorship of the weather on local radio.
- Information stands at four regional events (Tree Planting Day, Cunnamulla Festival, Threatened Species and Landcare Week and AgForce conference).
- South West NRM Ltd coffee mugs and new coolers were designed and developed as promotional tools.
- Two publications of Three Rivers Three Creeks newsletters were distributed.
- Staff attendance and participation in Regional NRM Conference, Weed & Pest Symposium and Landcare Conference.

Upgrade promotional package to reflect change in water use efficiency

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- A water efficiency package has been developed to include a magnet and water saving ideas card, community information sheets on the importance of water, the Great Artesian Basin and water saving ideas for the home and garden.
- A water wise initiative has been organised for 2007 in conjunction with the Paroo Shire Council.

Development of promotional package for TO Groups

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- The Far South West Aboriginal NRM Group is currently working with the Communication Officer on a promotional package for inclusion in South West NRM Ltd region NRM booklet and also a community NRM fact sheet.

Promote awareness about Traditional Owners Advisory Group on-ground activities

ACHIEVED

- Extensive local media coverage on the Murra Murra Station – Lime Bush Paddock Project.
- Media opportunity with three stories published on Piastre Fish Trap project.
- Case study on Piastre Fish Trap project underway.

Significant Variances

- Limited number of visitors to resource centres.

Corrective Actions

- Two new staff members will be starting in Cunnamulla early 2007 and new office space has been arranged. This will provide opportunity for signage and easier access to staff for clients. Having two staff based in Cunnamulla will also ensure the office is open for much of the time.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



POLICY AND PARTNERSHIPS

Key Achievements

- Engagement of interPART and Associates Pty Ltd to build the capacity of traditional owners to participate in natural resource management.
- Two successful Traditional Owner forums held over the reporting period.
- Development of a water use efficiency project in conjunction with Paroo Shire titled "don't be the drip that wastes the last drop".

Milestones

Indigenous issues section incorporated into the NRM Plan

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- A Tender document for the development of a Traditional Owner Natural Resource Management and Cultural Heritage Plan for South West Queensland was developed and advertised.
- interPART and Associates Pty Ltd successfully won the tender to build capacity of traditional owners to participate in NRM via the development of a Traditional Owner Natural Resource Management and Cultural Heritage Plan for South West Queensland.
- In February 2007 there will be a meeting with the Far South West Aboriginal NRM Group to be attended by interPART representatives. The purpose of this meeting is to determine time frames in consultation with the Far South West Aboriginal NRM Group.

Traditional Owners engagement guidelines updated and 1 forum facilitated for TO Groups

ACHIEVED

- Two meetings of the Far South West Aboriginal NRM Group were held during this reporting period. During which the Traditional Owner guidelines were discussed and evaluated.
- Two forums were held with each of the Traditional Owner groups with representatives from the Budjiti, Bidjara, Kullilli, Mardigan, Kunja and Kooma Traditional Owner groups attending.

Provide regionally specific information for PLANSCAPES & FUTURESAPES workshops and application packages

NOT ACHIEVED

- Regionally specific Aboriginal cultural heritage information, initiated by South West NRM Ltd, is underway through the development of a Traditional Knowledge Recording Project. This project has expanded to involve a number of regional bodies throughout Queensland.
- Case study for Traditional Owner FUTURESAPES project was added to the South West NRM Ltd promotional package and application package.
- A flyer focusing on regionally specific Traditional Owner information and contact details is planned for 2007 to be included into the PLANSCAPES & FUTURESAPES packages.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Water use efficiency promotional package delivered to community

Round 3 of Water use efficiency on-ground projects facilitated for each Shire

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- A number of water use efficiency promotional materials were developed late in 2006. These included a series of fact sheets on water conservation, water saving tips for the home and garden as well as a handy hints magnet. The promotional materials were trialed at a festival in Paroo Shire and will be released in 2007.
- One awareness raising event was held in Paroo Shire.
- A water use efficiency project “don’t be the drip that wastes the last drop” is planned in conjunction with the Paroo Shire Council for early 2007 to promote awareness of water wastage in both urban and rural communities. This project is an offshoot of previous water efficiency projects undertaken with the Murweh and Quilpie Shire Councils.
- Pending external funding approval a combined project between South West NRM Ltd and the Murweh Shire Council will be undertaken in early 2007. South West NRM Ltd will contribute a number of school visits to promote water efficiency and provide hands on science experiments in water use and the effects of pollution.

Focus groups convened to develop projects

ACHIEVED

- Shires (Quilpie, Paroo and Booringa) have been supported and assisted in discussing and considering water efficiency issues and from this have developed successful applications via funding sources to improve water use efficiency (this has been in place of focus groups).
- A focus group was formed to develop a weed control project between South West NRM Ltd, Murweh Shire Council and Paroo Shire Council. A project plan was developed and a funding application submitted to assist in the control of Coral Cactus in the two shires.
- Continued support in NRM activities was provided to Local Government. Specifically, the Paroo Shire Council was successful in attaining \$18,960 in assistance to control exotic weeds and feral animals within the Wyandra Butcher’s and Police Paddocks.

Attendance and input at Landcare and other community NRM group planning meetings

ACHIEVED

- Attendance by Community Landcare Coordinator at three Landcare meetings.
- Meeting with Charleville Fishing Club to discuss possible projects.
- Partnership with QMDC to assist Middle Road Landcare group – attendance at two meetings.
- Assistance in preparing funding application for Tinnenburra Landcare Group.
- Organisation of training and participation of Landcare groups in BRS Community Stream Sampling Project.
- Development of information sheets on Landcare, water efficiency and funding opportunities for Landcare groups.
- In conjunction with the Murweh Shire Council and the Save the Bilby Foundation, South West NRM Ltd has been invited to participate in an Advisory Committee to provide advice and recommendations to Council concerning the operational management of a planned Botanical Reserve. The Local Government NRM Support Officer represents South West NRM Ltd on this Committee.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



- South West NRM Ltd has had direct representation in attending various meetings with government and non government NRM organisations including:

Mesquite Meeting	-	Quilpie Shire
Weed Facility Wash down	-	Booringa Shire
Warrego River Upgrade	-	Community and Councilors
Back on Track	-	EPA
Planet Ark Tree Day	-	Landcare
Warrego River Walk	-	Murweh Shire Council and Dept of Health

- South West NRM Ltd will maintain representation on the Wild Dog Advisory Committee and the Shire Rural Lands Offices Group of Western Queensland (SRLOG) in 2007.

Local government NRM issues reviewed at planning meetings with shires

ACHIEVED

- Two local government meetings have been attended and have lead to further discussions on possible partnerships and NRM issues specific to those shires. Two projects have been identified from these meetings and are being progressed.
- Attendance at Paroo, Quilpie and Booringa Shire planning meetings, and meetings with Murweh Shire Economic Development Officer on planning issues have taken place.

Significant Variances

- The original timeframe submitted by interPART in carrying out its Traditional Owner NRM and Cultural Heritage Plan indicated a commencement month of October 2006. This has been delayed to February 2007.

Corrective Actions

- A general meeting of Directors from the FSWANRMG will be held on February 2nd, 2007 and a representative from the interPART will be at the meeting to determine a mutually agreed timeframe for 2007.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH

Key Achievements

- Appointment of Geodorum Consulting to undertake research into priority weeds and pests for the Bulloo, Nebine-Mungallala-Wallam, Paroo and Warrego catchments.

Milestones

Research sub-catchment salinity

ACHIEVED

- Nebine/Mungallala/Wallam salinity assessment completed previous to this reporting period as part of SE05 project. Two sub-catchment salinity assessments completed as part of the PLANSCAPES.

Community NRM and Scientific Land Salinity Forums Facilitated

ACHIEVED

- Two community salinity forums facilitated in conjunction with SE05 project prior to this reporting period.

Community NRM and scientific water regimes forums facilitated

Baseline water regimes and wetlands ecology information is determined

NOT ACHIEVED

Priority pest distribution and abundance confirmed for two shires

Community NRM and scientific weeds and pests forums facilitated

Desktop analysis of range and density of existing and potential weed and pest incidences

ACHIEVED

- Geodorum Consulting has been contracted to undertake research into priority weeds and pests for the Bulloo, Nebine-Mungallala-Wallam, Paroo and Warrego Catchments.

The objective of this project is to:

- collate current information on the extent and impact of weeds and pests in the whole of the South West NRM Ltd region;
 - develop methodology to prioritise the identified weeds and pests based on extent and impact;
 - Research Current Recommended Practices for all weeds and pests identified in the region; and
 - Present information, written and spatial, on the top five priority weeds and the top five priority pests.
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- Community and scientific NRM weed and pest forums were held in Charleville in November 2006 with 15 participants.
 - Priority pest distribution and abundance study for each catchment within the South West NRM Ltd region has been concluded, report due on June 30th 2007.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Significant Variances

- Currently there are no staff resources directed towards determining baseline water regimes and wetlands ecology information.

Corrective Actions

- Investigation in outsourcing this activity will occur.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Key Achievements

- Appointment of a Natural Resource Management Officer – this position will focus on on-ground Monitoring and Evaluation activities within the region.
- Draft “Review of MFT and current monitoring” document from CRAMER group.

Milestones

Facilitate stakeholder working groups to determine future direction of M&E activities; Report on the M&E review and identify gaps in activities which can be filled with new research.

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- CRAMER working group established and active, with the aim to determine future direction of M&E activities.
- Draft Report from CRAMER, but final report on the review will not be complete until some time in 2007.

The monitoring framework is completed and a template for data collection is drafted which will link outcomes and milestones across MAT/s; The draft template is trialed at the working groups to determine suitability and recommend changes.

INCOMPLETE

- At this point, no South West NRM Ltd internal working groups have been established - we will wait until after finalisation of CRAMER report before actioning this.
- National M&E framework has been developed and is being considered at CRAMER group level - after which a local framework and draft monitoring template for performance against MAT's will be developed.

Produce a report and extension materials from database on state of the environment in South West NRM region.

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- *Participants trained in monitoring methods* - 4 staff members trained in water quality monitoring methodology.
- *Community monitoring sites established* - Water quality monitoring sites will be set up through the BRS project in conjunction with the M&E and Landcare Coordinator positions in early 2007.
- *Community monitoring kits completed* - Water quality monitoring kits have been purchased through the BRS project for use by community groups, 4 NRM monitoring kits for use by landholders are currently being reviewed by M&E officer and the Monitoring Made Easy guide updated.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



- *Condition and trend report for South West NRM region* - Trend report will be commenced once frameworks for monitoring and evaluation and templates have been finalised.

Significant Variances

- Internal Monitoring Framework, Draft monitoring template for performance against MAT's, and Condition and Trend report for south west region – due to the M&E position being filled in a part-time capacity, as well as staff turnover, the framework and associated templates and reports are not complete at this time.
- Community monitoring sites and kits – community monitoring kits (for use by community groups and landholders) have been completed previously but are under review at this time. This review is due for completion early 2007.

Corrective Actions

- The appointment of a full time Natural Resource Officer to address on-ground M&E activities will allow the M&E officer to focus more on the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, templates and reports (planning issues).
- With the advancement of the CRAMER group review and associated report documents in 2007 – the M&E framework and future direction of M&E activities will be addressed.
- Community monitoring kits are under review at this time (in terms of equipment and processes), also, community monitoring sites and kits will be set up through the BRS project in 2007 (kits have already been purchased, and discussions on sites and groups was well underway in this reporting period).

CORE COSTS

Key Achievements

- 2005-2006 Annual Report printed and disseminated to stakeholders and community members (milestone for Jan-Jun 2007).
- Two Finance and Audit Committee meetings have taken place.

Milestones

1 training session held for Board Members and members of Traditional Owner Advisory Groups

NOT ACHIEVED

- A Corporate Governance training session has been organised for both Board and staff members as part of a team building and staff retreat in early 2007.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Draft NRM Plan Developed

Community Consultation for NRM Plan

NOT ACHIEVED

Partnership agreement for 2 local governments developed

ACHIEVED

- Partnership agreements have been developed between South West NRM Ltd and the Murweh Shire Council (Botanical Reserve Management Agreement); Murweh and Paroo Shires (co-project on Weed control) and with the Paroo Shire (Water wise project/management agreement). Verbal agreement has been reached with Murweh Shire Council to partner with South West NRM Ltd on the NRM areas of their upcoming Shire Corporate Plan.

5 South West NRM Board Meetings

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

- Two teleconference meetings & one face-to-face Board meeting were held during this reporting period.

1 South West NRM Promotional Event

ACHIEVED

- The Mulga Awards are a regional recognition awards ceremony, celebrating and rewarding the hard work and achievement of many people who are often the unsung heroes of our communities. South West NRM Ltd was heavily involved in the development of the Awards and Sponsorship of the NRM sections of the awards.

Financial and organisational audit (Jan – Jun 2007 Milestone)

ACHIEVED

- Two Finance and Audit Committee meetings via teleconference.
- One meeting was attended by Lionel Walsh (newly appointed external auditor).

1 South West NRM Annual Report (Jan-Jun 2007 Milestone)

ACHIEVED

- South West NRM Ltd Annual Report completed well before required date.

Significant Variances

- Board training in corporate governance.
- Development of the NRM Plan.
- Number of Board meetings held.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Corrective Actions

- March 2007 – planning is underway for a staff and board retreat which will incorporate:
 - Director performance appraisals;
 - Governance training;
 - Strategic review of corporate plan (human resource management has been identified as a key issue to address ongoing capacity deficiencies and staff retention);
 - Risk management;
 - Commencement of NRM Plan and RIS review (including sector feedback from directors);
 - Team building.
- Six general meetings are scheduled for the period of January 2007 – December 2007.
- Six teleconferences are scheduled for the period of January 2007 – December 2007.

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

SPATIAL IMAGERY PROJECT

Milestones

Purchase Spatial Imagery

ACHIEVED

- The project team have purchased and taken delivery of approximately 450 scenes (91%) of the required 500 scenes from Raytheon through Geoscience Australia.
- The original process has been modified resulting in savings of approx \$300,000 above the original \$880,000 as previously forecast.
- The RGC through existing Project Steering Committee arrangements are responsible for finalising the project specifications, quality assurance of imagery products and data distribution in collaboration with GA. The quality assurance of these images is currently in progress and will be completed by the 21 December 2007.
- The ortho rectification, colour balancing and mosaicing of the imagery is currently going through the tender process and managed by the Project Steering Team. Three companies have been offered to submit tenders and were selected on their proven ability to deliver products to our requirements.
- Some of these proposed savings have been directed to subsidising the cost to regional bodies for specialised imagery manipulation software. This has produced savings to each of the regional bodies of around 60% of the original cost.
- It was also recognised that special priority areas (yet to be identified) may require high resolution imagery.

Provide State-wide Imagery Coordination and Integration

ACHIEVED

- The coordinator represents the RGC on the Spatial Imagery Working Group. A state-wide framework has been developed by this group and the RGC provides regular input ensuring that financial resources are maximised.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Project Management & Co-ordination:

ACHIEVED

- 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 meets quarterly with regular phone & email communication.

Develop Training Kits for NRM Staff and Stakeholders:

ACHIEVED

- Introductory level training kit has been completed.
- Competency based accredited through TAFE modules.
- Delivery modules are complete and provide participants with:
 - 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; and
 - 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 Landholders and Stakeholders

ACHIEVED

- Training delivery modules are complete (accredited through TAFE). Workshops commenced in December 2006 with the first sessions held in Thargomindah, Quilpie and Charleville. Numbers were excellent with 37 people attending the first 3 GPS workshops. The breakdown of these workshops was:
 - 50% landholders;
 - 33% local authority;
 - 17% state government.
- The 2 day GIS workshop was attended by 7 people.

The general comments for the content and delivery of the training were excellent.

Further Training Developments

ACHIEVED

- Advanced level training kits are in planning stage. The purpose of this training will be to enhance basic level skills in a range of areas such as integrating data from a variety of sources and formats, advanced map production skills and using more advanced ArcGIS tools.
- Imagery Interpretation Training Package for GIS professionals was delivered by Prof Stuart Phinn UQ with in-kind support from the SLATS and compliance units within NR&W. The training was well received and appreciated by all attendees. Further training modules will be developed by the project team targeting specific areas of remote sensing used by NRM GIS officers.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



GIS Knowledge Sharing Workshops

ACHIEVED

- 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.

NLP05

Milestones

Form new PLANSCAPES groups

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

Undertake one round for PLANSCAPES and GLM

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

Project site selection

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

On-ground works processes

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

Comments

- This project was scheduled to be finalised in this reporting period. An extension has been sought to December 2007 and Schedule 2 will be adjusted accordingly.
- To date the funding has been used to assist in the associated employment and office expenses to the positions of the Community Support Coordinators based at Cunnamulla and Quilpie.
- To a large degree the above mentioned milestones have been partially achieved through RIS funding. The objectives of both NLP05 and PLANSCAPES within RIS correlate. However with the deficiencies that have been identified in the PLANSCAPES program earlier in this report, significant spending in on-ground works has not been achieved. It is projected that the funding will be utilised in on-ground works over the extended period authorised by the Department.

NLP01 – COMMUNITY LANDCARE COORDINATOR

Milestones

Improve sustainable natural resource management practices through sub-catchment planning and on-ground funding

ACHIEVED

Establish PLANSCAPES/GLM Workshops from Landcare groups.

- The completion of one GLM/PLANSCAPES workshop has taken place. Participants included members of the Moble Creek Landcare group plus other landholders. Follow up meeting have been planned for 2007.

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



Maintain relations with, and attend meetings for Landcare groups across the region.

- Since the inception of this role a large amount of time has been spent reestablishing contact with Landcare groups in the region, assessing their current status and capacity levels and developing a positive relationship with the groups.
- Meetings have been held with the Tinnenburra, Moble and Middle Road groups (5 meetings).

Assist Landcare groups with the preparation of FUTURESCAPES and Envirofund applications.

- Promotion of FUTURESCAPES and Envirofund and other programs to Landcare groups.
- Development of Funding Assistance Fact Sheet and dissemination to Landcare groups.

Promote Landcare ethos and South West NRM Ltd programs and initiatives and advance land management practices.

ACHIEVED

Facilitate information sharing and knowledge development on NRM issues and sustainable management with Landcare groups.

- Development of strong communication links with three Landcare groups and sharing of information on many NRM issues.
- Information package developed for Landcare groups.
- Development of Landcare newsletter to provide concise, relevant information to groups.

Organise participation and training of Landcare Groups in the region in water quality monitoring as part of BRS funded project.

- Five Landcare groups targeted to participate in water quality monitoring and training in monitoring techniques.

Establish or reinvigorate 1 regional Landcare group.

- Utilising projects such as BRS and funding opportunities to establish contact within Landcare groups and assist stagnant groups in getting together for meetings.
- Survey of all Landcare groups (current and past) to assess their current status and hindrances to the groups completed.
- Tinnenburra Landcare group was reactivated during this period.

Foster better linkages by development of networks

ACHIEVED

Organise and participate in planning activities such as Landcare Week, Threatened Species Week, Tree Planting days.

- Involved in planning and participated in Threatened Species/Landcare Week activities, Planet Ark Tree Planting Day and Cunnamulla Festival.

Participate in 2 educational activities to promote Landcare to schools.

- Two educational activities organised during this period – Tree planting day/Information session was held with year six students at Charleville Primary School and also with the local pre-school This activity involved

South West NRM Ltd

Half Year Performance Report

July – December 2006



education in the theme of riparian areas and their importance in the landscape. Planting of appropriate trees, shrubs and grasses along a riparian environment in the local part took place.

- Junior Landcare information has been collected and is being promoted to schools in the region.

Organise and participate in field and information days in collaboration with Landcare groups, South West NRM Ltd, state agencies and Local Government.

- Participation in 3 organised information and promotional displays for South West NRM Ltd – AgForce conference, Threatened Species Week/River Walk and the Cunnamulla Festival.

STRATEGIC REGIONAL FACILITATOR

Overview

The role of Strategic Regional Facilitator commenced in October 2005 and is designed to support, coordinate and deliver respective organisational programs, goods and services and provide a defined feedback opportunity for the community to the Commonwealth on issues relating to Federal initiatives.

Milestones

- A major component of this role has been the administration of the Commonwealth's Envirofund program. One hundred and sixteen (116) Envirofund projects are currently managed within the South West NRM Ltd region, influencing management ethos of landholders implementing innovative opportunities within rural industry to the value of two million dollars.
- This role has provided the opportunity for South West NRM Ltd to achieve greater exposure of, and access to, its programs and services to the community at large.
- The partnership between South West NRM Ltd and the Commonwealth Government through the implementation of this position in the region has proved to be beneficial to the company and region.

SOUTH WEST NRM LTD PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER REGIONAL BODIES

- Development of indigenous indicators for measuring natural resource health in Southern Queensland – Condamine Alliance
- Community stream salinity sampling project for Queensland Murray Darling Basin – QMDC
- Wild dog management within the Queensland wild dog barrier fence – QMDC
- Traditional knowledge recording project – Desert Channels (pending)