

EMU CREEK CATCHMENT LANDCARE

SPRING 2011 NEWSLETTER

Hello members,

Emu Creek Catchment Landcare is still alive and well and looking forward to a couple of good seasons. We hope the weather is not quite as rough as last summer but rain is what makes the pastures and crops grow and fill our dams and creeks for water.

Our Group has been a bit quiet over winter although Frank likes organizing things in the cold such as a BBQ at Pinelands Hall for students in July and the odd field day in the sleet.

Now that it is warming up we hope to run more things for members that will help with your property management.

AGM.

We are to hold our AGM on the 19th of November at the Thornville Hall on the New England Highway towards Cooyar.

We intend to start with a demo of our new Gessner plough on Paul Mc Rae's paddock opposite the Thornville Hall after a cuppa at 9am.

The plough has been used by a few dairy blokes to renovate compacted cultivation after silage making and it has tested the horsepower and shear bolts out well and truly.

Frank tells me that the second season of use shows great improvement in the ease to pull the implement. Yeomans concept was to gradually increase the depth of operation as your soil improved by aeration and organic matter.

I digress.

Also on the day we will have a demo of the gas powered splatter gun for use on woody weeds. This gun fires a concentrated mix of chemical at plants like Lantana enabling a large number of plants to be done with a backpack of mix.

Paul Coman will also talk on his control methods for Lantana and we can look at some past treatments.

We also have the latest copy of "Weeds of Southern Qld" to give away on the day.

The meeting will take place about 1.30 after a BBQ lunch.

At our last AGM it was requested that we provide a brief description of the executive positions so hopefully people will come forward and nominate for a position.

It is vitally important that the group remain fresh, with new ideas and enthusiasm so new people are essential if the Group is to prosper.

There is so much on the plate of property owners now with mining exploration, carbon issues, environmental regulations, Regional Council issues such as weeds, fire management, as well as the day to day production issues such as weeds and water.

Landcare is a big organization with access to a wide variety of information as well as facilitating discussion between landowners so to keep it active locally we need member participation.

Exec positions:

Chair.

The role of the Chair is to ensure the Group functions well by holding regular monthly management group meetings which handle the “business” of the Group.

The Chair provides direction to the Group based loosely on our Strategy and ensures we run functions to address issues of concern to the catchment and its landowners.

The Chair works with the exec to see we have funding for projects and that we meet our financial obligations.

The Chair is responsible for Group publicity and PR in conjunction with the Secretary.
Treasurer.

The Treasurer is responsible for the Group finances. He/she prepares a financial report for each management group meeting, quarterly BAS, as well as end of year reports for audit and taxation. Treasurer is responsible for ensuring accounts are paid on time and that invoices for our hire equipment are issued.

The Treasurer is also involved in funding applications to Government as well as Catchment Groups and local funders.

Treasurer prepares a yearly budget for the group.

Treasurer also keeps a record of memberships.

Secretary:

The Secretary is responsible for meeting notices for all meetings.

Secretary takes minutes at meetings and writes outward correspondence and receives inward correspondence and keeps records of these.

Secretary is involved in funding applications with the Treasurer and writes reports on projects.

The Secretary writes the newsletter with help from other committee members.

Management Committee.

Members of the committee are responsible for one major function in their area per year.

They are expected to attend the monthly management meetings and participate in the running of the Group.

A member will be responsible for the maintenance of our equipment.

Carbon Issues:

We now have a carbon tax like it or not, involved or not it will affect landowners.

There is a lot of angst about Global Warming and people are divided on whether it is an issue or not.

The attacks on scientists are not helpful as we need all the information we can get to make our own decisions on this issue.

Increasing carbon in soils, reducing nitrogen losses from fertilizer, having alternate power sources, running more efficient machinery, having cattle on better diets to reduce methane are all good outcomes for farmers regardless of the effect on climate.

A good website to look at for the facts is www.skepticalscience.com

One myth debunked for example, volcanoes produce 65-319 million tonnes of CO₂ per year compared to 30 billion tonnes produced by fossil fuel per year.

The debate over coal seam gas poses a dilemma for landowners in that the disruption to their farm life is not good but the alternative of burning coal is probably worse and certainly has a bigger impact on the land.

We do need a bulk source of energy and nuclear does not seem to be an acceptable option in Australia.

Remember to not “shoot the messenger”.

Fires on Roadsides:

We are in the fire season and already there have been some out of control fires.

Landowners are not allowed to let fire escape from a permitted area e.g. onto roadsides or neighbors' land.

Neighbors can have combined burns provided they agree and both have permits.

Roadside burns are possible now provided application is made by the local RFB to Qld Fire and Rescue who contact DERM and the Regional Council. When approval is given a permit to burn is issued by the local warden to the Rural Brigade to conduct the burn.

Adjacent landowners are also contacted so they can either burn at the same time or construct fire breaks to protect their paddocks.

In these days of litigation it is just not worth letting fire escape particularly onto roads.

Fire break construction has its issues as well.

Dozed breaks along fence lines can often lead to erosion if “whoa boys” are not constructed and these can then make driving interesting.

Our Group has a mapping facility and we intend to run a workshop in the future on fire management and will include fire break construction, basic fire protection, and grazing management.

Cats Claw project:

We have started our battle against this invasive pest at Pinelands.

The Prison Crew from Westbrook along with Scott Brown have started at Starks Road to control a mix of Cats Claw , Privet and Asparagus fern using overall spray and cut stump methods.

We are to continue down the creek at Djuan in the near future.

Cats Claw will be flowering soon and its bright yellow flowers will give its presence away .If you see any let us know so we can attack it. We are aiming to control the pest in the upper catchment before we tackle the major infestation in Emu Creek itself.

Hire Equipment:

QuikSpray unit for weed control.

Fertilizer spreader

Gessner plough.

Pasture planter.

Other equipment available:

Dumpy level and staff.

GPS units

Gas Gun.

Contact Bob 46984196.

We also have a property mapping program which is capable of producing a farm plan which can include all infrastructure, soils, contours and vegetation.

It is capable of measuring any shaped paddock and can measure fence length.

It is very useful to plan new fences and water supply.

It is based on the latest aerial photography.

As said earlier a fire management plan would be a good thing to have and it could be developed using this system.

Contact Bob for more information on 46984196.

Membership:

We are now approaching 60 farm businesses as members of Emu Creek Catchment Landcare.

This is a great result for our first year of formal membership.

We hope you have felt joining was worthwhile but as said earlier it is your group and the management committee relies on your feedback to keep us relevant.

We have changed the membership year to end at the end of June to make reporting easier and to allow late joiners to have more time before renewal.

Contact Frank on 46984161 for more details or comments for improvement.

Host Day at Pinelands.

Emu Creek Landcare group hosted a group of 45 University of Queensland students and also 17 senior students from 6 South African countries for an afternoon. The students are doing courses in Agricultural Science, Environmental Science, Finance and Law. This was a part of a week long excursion as part of their studies.

Their afternoon was held in the Pinelands District where they visited Burgess's farm to look at a soil pit in red soil where they discussed soil layers and soil health.

They also had the opportunity to look through a patch of remnant vine scrub and discuss timber species and birds.

The Landcare Group told them about the funding which had been received to fence the scrub for stock control and for a management plan for the scrub.

The Students were also shown the Marshall spreader and they were interested to hear how the Group manages its other equipment for hire.

The field walk was then followed by a BBQ in the Pinelands hall hosted by the Pinelands Hall committee and this was followed by a general discussion on how Landcare operates locally. See photo below:-



EMU CREEK CATCHMENT LANDCARE GROUP inc

**Annual General Meeting
Anduramba 20th November 2010.**

Present: see att list

Apologies: J.Seifert and Ian Stark, B.Burgess, P&BMcGreevy, N.Stark, S.Morris, R.Fuller.

Chairman Frank thanked Mary and Lindsay Vagg for hosting the bus trip to look at Cats claw on Emu Creek.

Minutes: The minutes of the last agm were read and confirmed by S.Burke sec M.Genrich CARRIED

Business Arising:

A paper folder has been purchased with funds form PCCN and is available for group to use from Heritage Bank

Chairmans Report: att:

Motion "That the report be received " F.Burgess sec D.Parton CARRIED

Treasurer's Report:

Att.Auditors report also att.

Asset valuation.Agreed to reduce asset valuation by 30% to more accurately reflect the true value of our assets.Office equipment to be revalued 50%.

Capital purchased:

Gas powered splatter gun

Chairs for meeting room

Cannon printer

MOTION: That the Treasurer's and Auditors reports be received and accounts paid" R.Wallace sec G.Gossow CARRIED

Comments from accountant.

Martin Bridges comment on membership stating that "anyone who wants to be a member can be a member". This in relation to tax issues with people outside the catchment.

MOTION "That we formalize the membership op the Group with an annual fee to be paid of \$25 per business plus gst." D.Parton sec S.Burke CARRIED

Benefits of membership to include:

Newsletter

Access to funding when available

Discount on equipment hire.

Contact with members to be via email if possible.

Committee structure:

MOTION "That the Exec Committe be comprised of Chair, Vice chair, & Treasurer. Committee has the power to add to the management group" D.Parton sec V.Bowman CARRIED

ELECTION:

Frank stood down and asked Bruce Lord to call nominations for all positions.

Chair: F.Burgess nom by K.Christensen no others, declared elected

Vice chair: P.Gould nom J.Nolan accepted and elected

" S.Brown nom B Kahler accepted and elected

Secretary: Bob Rowlings nom K.Christensen accepted and elected

Treasurer: Bob Wallace nom D.Parton accepted and elected

Assistant Treasurer: Leanne Murphy

Frank resumed Chair.

MOTION "That the term of office for the committee exec be limited to 3 years with 50% of the committee to be replaced at any one time"

Motion to lie on table until next AGM to see how new system goes.

Job descriptions for the committee positions to be sent out in newsletter prior to the next AGM.

No other business Frank closed the meeting.

BBQ