



The REC Newsletter

May 2011 Edition 6

The aim of this newsletter is to profile the NSW Roadside Environment Committee (REC) and share information about the management of NSW linear reserve environments. For more information on the REC, including how to create roadside vegetation management plans, go to: www.rta.nsw.gov.au/rec

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Latest news from the REC

The REC is holding its 2011 annual regional meeting in the Central West of the state. The meeting, hosted by Bathurst Regional Council, will be held on 15 and 16 August. Part of the meeting will involve a REC 'fact-finding mission' to learn more about local linear reserve management issues and how the REC can assist. It will include a field trip, presentations and discussions with local linear reserve managers. REC representatives will then discuss the meeting outcomes with the Central West Local Government Reference Group meeting at Wellington on 17 August.

- ❖ The REC is sponsoring a new Roadside Environmental Management Award as part of the LGSA's 2011 Excellence in Environment Awards to be announced on 29 November 2011. NSW local councils are encouraged to apply for the Award. Further details about the Award will be provided by the LGSA to councils in the near future.
- ❖ In consultation with a sample of local councils, the REC has recently developed a series of learning outcomes that could be used to guide the training of local council maintenance and construction staff and contractors in good management of roadside environments. The learning outcomes can be obtained from the REC Executive Officer (details below).
- ❖ In consultation with Albury City Council, the REC has prepared a community fact sheet to raise awareness of the meaning of Significant Roadside Environment Area (SREA) signs. Contact the REC Executive Officer for more details about the SREA signage program and for a copy of the SREA fact sheet that can be amended for use by any council.
- ❖ With responsibility for over 20,000km of linear infrastructure easements across NSW,

Transgrid joins the REC as a member. Transgrid will be represented on the REC by Dr Stuart Johnston.

- ❖ The REC also welcomes Warren Sharpe, Director of Roads and Recreation, Eurobodalla Shire Council as the new IPWEA representative on the REC replacing Gary Murphy from Richmond Valley Council.

Balldale-Walbundrie Road Feral Olive Control Project



In 2003, the West Hume Landcare Group identified an infestation of feral olives on a section of the Balldale-Walbundrie Road which posed a threat to important roadside vegetation and the nearby Goombargana Hill, which is an extremely important area for biodiversity in the region.

The roadside reserves are important corridors linking to Goombargana Hill and the infestation of feral olives had the potential to move into the reserve and threaten the condition of the vegetation and the wildlife that relies on it.

European olive (*Olea europaea*) is an introduced plant that has become an environmental weed in many areas of Australia.

Images: Before and after olive control

Studies have shown that invasion of feral olives leads to a reduction in native species and alter the structure of woodlands. Once established, the mature olive trees form a dense permanent canopy under which olive seedlings can grow, but native plants cannot regenerate.

In 2003, West Hume Landcare obtained funding from the Federal Government Envirofund and assistance for the then Hume Shire Council to undertake extensive control of olives along the four kilometres of Balldale-Walbundrie Road. The initial works managed to kill 70% of the olives present with follow-up works carried out on the remaining plants in 2004.

In 2007, West Hume Landcare Group submitted an application for funding to the CMA for follow-up works on the olive trees as they had identified that some of the trees killed during the initial works were re-sprouting and new seedlings had appeared along some sections. Murray CMA provided funding of \$5,000 to Greater Hume Shire Council to undertake control of olives and also peppercorns on this section of road.

The results have been impressive with some areas showing complete eradication of olives, and many of the larger trees now dead. Unfortunately, there are still a small number of trees that are re-sprouting, and a small number of seedlings appearing.

Control has been carried out with a combination of cutting and pasting and basal bark chemical application. It has been identified that the basal bark technique was not always successful, particularly when trees were not sprayed around the entire circumference at the base. In these cases the trees had re-sprouted.

In 2009, Murray CMA signed a new contract with Greater Hume Shire for weed control on high conservation roadsides, including a further \$2,500 for further follow-up olive control on Balldale-Walbundrie road. The latest works were undertaken in November 2010 to ensure that this area of high-conservation roadside continues to remain olive-free. The technique used was the entire removal of the remaining trees and painting of the stumps with herbicide to prevent re-sprouting. Although this process is more labour intensive than other techniques, it is ensuring that the remaining trees are permanently removed.

Murray CMA and West Hume Landcare Group are now investigating doing revegetation works along this section of road to reintroduce mid-storey trees and shrubs where the olive

trees have been removed.

The success of this project is a testament to the West Hume Landcare group for identifying the issue and instigating the project, and to Hume and Greater Hume Shires for their commitment to the ongoing follow-up works. The project also illustrates the benefits that the Murray CMA can achieve with effective and long-term partnerships with local communities and Shire Councils.

- Elisa Tack, Catchment Officer – Conservation: Murray CMA

The Cost of Environmental Non-Compliance



A recent NSW court case involving a local council serves as a reminder for all linear reserve managers to protect threatened species and endangered ecological communities.

The NSW Land and Environment Court ordered the local council to pay a total of \$130,000 for "grossly inadequate" environmental policies that led to it damaging endangered plants during roadside maintenance activities.

The NSW Land and Environment Court heard that two council employees harmed a total of 76 *Grevillea obtusiflora* plants and one *Phebalium bifidum* specimen during road works in 2008.

The roadworks were carried out by a bulldozer and a self-propelled vibrating roller, which broke and in some cases flattened or uprooted the plants.

The court heard that the council had already been put on notice by the NSW environment department in December 2006 that its roadworks in the area had damaged threatened species, following complaints from the public.

"There was no noticeable response, and no apparent effort by Council to pass on the warning to relevant operational personnel," said Justice Terence Sheahan.

A list of environmental compliance breaches in the court system, including a number involving local councils and roadside construction works can be found at:

www.hccrems.com.au/Programs/Environmental-Compliance/In-the-media.aspx

Minimising the Spread of Weeds/Weed Grasses in Linear Reserves



In a new project recently commenced, the REC is supporting a multi-agency project to develop a mapped plan for minimising the spread of high risk weeds along linear corridors and reserves.

Image: Coolatai Grass: an invasive weed found along roadsides that is capable of spreading easily.

The project has been funded by the RTA and is being co-ordinated by the Sydney Weeds

Committees. Over the next seven months, the project will seek to:

- ❖ identify high risk pathways and weeds
- ❖ develop an optimum cross tenure inspection/monitoring regime
- ❖ implement an efficient weed alert reporting system.

This project is also aligned with key state-wide objectives of the NSW Invasive Species Plan 2008-2015. It will involve collating existing weed mapping data from various agencies, whilst also reviewing existing processes of weed mapping and inspection across various land tenures.

A Technical Committee will be formed in the coming months, comprising of agency representatives with experience and knowledge in the management of linear reserves and corridors (major transport routes, utilities easements etc).

If you know of any information or contacts that may assist with this project, please contact Shelly Slater, the Project Officer: shelly.slater@cma.nsw.gov.au: Mon-Thurs (02) 9895 7449

Workshop: Managing Native Vegetation in Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs)



Presented by the Australian Network for Plant Conservation (ANPC)

Are you working in or managing remnant vegetation? Would you like to know more about biodiversity conservation? Would you like to enhance your knowledge and skills? Then this workshop is for you, according to the ANPC. While it may focus on TSRs, the content is relevant for anyone managing grassy woodland vegetation remnants.

Workshop Date and Location:
26 & 27 May 2011, Bathurst NSW

Workshop Program:

Day One

- ❖ Background of TSRs and current status
- ❖ Connectivity conservation in the landscape
- ❖ Biodiversity values of TSRs
- ❖ Case Studies
- ❖ Everyone has a stake in TSR conservation
- ❖ Collaborative programs and approaches
- ❖ Where to get help (interactive session on available information)

Day Two

- ❖ Morning bird walk
- ❖ Identifying natural values (e.g. habitat, vegetation, fauna)
- ❖ Identifying threats to your site (e.g. weeds, erosion, over-grazing)
- ❖ Management actions workshop session
- ❖ How do you measure your success? (monitoring and targets)

❖ Discussion with panel of experts

Registrations close on 18 May 2011. Registration forms, fees and the full programme are available from the ANPC. W: www.anpc.asn.au: Ph: 02 6250 9509: E: anpc@anpc.asn.au

The 2nd NSW Travelling Stock Routes Conference



Managing the Uses, Users and Threats... for Heritage, Habitat and Livelihood.

Sponsored by The Grass Routes Initiative, National Parks Association of NSW and The Earth Welfare Foundation

You are invited by the conference sponsors to join with a range of stakeholders and interested parties for the 2nd NSW TSR Conference, to develop a practical management framework for the shared and sustainable use of Travelling Stock Routes, at a time when the TSR network is facing numerous serious threats.

The conference will be a practical, participatory workshop style, followed by a dinner and networking opportunity. Details will be circulated shortly, however we want to “claim the date” at our earliest opportunity.

To be held at Orange Ex-Services’ Club NSW on 28 July 2011.

To register your interest: Kirstin Proft (02) 9299-0000 or kirstin@npansw.org.au

Did You Know??

“The Bradfield Highway in Sydney is still designated as a Travelling Stock Route and livestock can still be herded across the Sydney Harbour Bridge if a grazier needed to.”

- *Stock Routes Coalition website*

Do you have an article on Linear Reserve Environmental Management to share?

The REC encourages readers to share ideas and information through the REC newsletter. If you have a project, idea or any other piece of news regarding linear reserve environmental management that you would like to share with others from around the State, we would love to hear from you. Email your ideas or articles to akarwaj@molinostewart.com.au

For more information contact:

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Links:

[REC Website](#)
[Molino Stewart](#)