

Sept 2006

## Yarra Yarra Catchment Management Group QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



### *Mongers Drain*

The first construction phase of the Mongers 55 drain, east of Buntine, has now been completed. This includes approximately 10 km of main (arterial) drain and a further 9 km of privately funded spur drains. Excavation began at Mongers Lake in late May and was completed in early August. It is a joint project between Yarra Yarra Catchment Management Group (with state/federal funds granted by NACC, the regional land-care body for the Northern Agricultural Region) and the local landowners (Lazenby, DiAngelo, MacPherson, Shaw, Fitzsimmons and Hoare). The earthmoving contractor was Kevin Lyon.

The design is a double-leveed deep drain, flanked by shallow channels

for surface water – slightly modified from the design developed in 2004 trials on the Marrone farm at Jibberding. In this system, groundwater and surface water are not permitted to mix, but are channelled separately to playas and small salt lakes in bush on the edge of Mongers Lake.

This design greatly simplifies the

#### *Flume setup in drain monitoring water flow, EC + pH*



earthworks required to handle extreme flood events, it protects the drain itself from silting and erosion, and also allows us (in rainier years than this!) to capture relatively fresh runoff water for future rehabilitation work. We envisage that narrow strips of reclaimed land on either side of the arterial drain will be fenced off and revegetated, which will help to stabilise the valley-floor watertable.

Over the next two years, Yarra Yarra and the landholders plan to extend the drain further back into the catchment and to develop additional spurs.

At the moment, there is a strong flow (about 20L/s) and groundwater levels continue to fall in nearby observation bores.

After this successful demonstration, we are now fairly confident that funding will be available for a larger drainage program. We are in the process of preparing designs for a further 13 subcatchment-scale drains throughout the Yarra Yarra catchment basin, from Burakin to Gutha

### *Yarra Yarra Oil Mallee Project*

There has been much interest from growers in the regions, 100km radius from Kalannie and Canna. The 1<sup>st</sup> year seedling subsidy program was oversubscribed and seedlings are being planted as the dry conditions allow. Mulching of some 300,000 trees has been completed around Kalannie and Morawa. Harvesting and distillation trials have commenced in Wongan Hills. The harvester is performing very well and we have produced over 500lt oil so far. The secondary flail harvester is about to undergo modification – this will be suitable for harvesting recoppiced mallees, where the main harvester will be suitable for both first harvest and recoppiced mallees.

Growers are welcome to contact Project Coordinator Jo Ashworth, 9666 1033, to discuss subsidies for mulching of existing stands to bring back into oil production, seedling subsidies over the next 2 years, and existing plantings suitable for harvesting.



Duncan Peter standing near Polybractea on Neil McCreery's farm in Kalannie. Planted 1994, ½ mulched July 2006—debris on the ground to the right.

### *NACC Field Trip*

A tour of the Yarra Yarra by the NACC committee in April gave them an insight into the workings of Deep Drainage within our region.



## Survey

Survey is continuing in a more focused manner using individual survey lines along the proposed drainage lines. This enables us to investigate the actual position where works are proposed rather than a general catchment approach.

This is done in conjunction with the local shires, landholders and experienced people in the field to investigate the Hydrology of each subcatchment and the requirements at road crossings for culverts etc.

Meetings are held with landholders to confirm the works proposed and to make any changes required to better suit the catchment and farm plan of the landholders involved. The difficult season has meant that finding matching funding is often difficult for these big projects and alternative options are being sought from NACC.

## drumMuster

Clean eligible farm chemical containers can be delivered for recycling to the following drumMUSTER collection sites.  
18th to 30th September

Site	Date	Bookings/Info
Carnamah	18 to 22	9951 1055
Eneabba	18 to 22	9951 1055
Coorow	19	9952 0100
Meru Recycling Centre	18 to 29	9956 6600
Mingenew	27, 28	9928 1102
Morawa Depot	18 to 29	9971 1004
Mullewa	23	9961 1007
Northampton	20	9934 1202
Perenjori	18 to 22	9973 1002
Latham	18 to 22	9973 1002
Three Springs	20	9954 1001

## Mongers 55 Deep Drainage Project



Excavator working during construction of Mongers drain. Extra work took place on the spoil bank to improve the finished look and would allow future opportunities for regrowth.



Max Hudson, Kevin and Clayton Lyon discussing the construction of the surface water control at Mongers.



Max Hudson, Kevin Lyon & Russell McPherson discussing the concept and outcomes of the completed Mongers drain.

### FACT

Do You Know Your Water?

- 1000 millilitres = 1 litre
- 1 cubic meter = 1000 litres
- 1 kilolitre = 1000 litres
- 1 gegalitre = 1,000,000,000 litres

## Regional Local Government

The development of the Yarra Yarra Regional Local Government is progressing. There is now an accepted form of agreement approved by the Department of Local Government and Regional Development. A funding application to assist with the establishment will be considered later this month. A Deposited Plan defining the management area has been lodged. These arrangements should be formalised in a matter of weeks.

## Broombush Planting

Georgie Troup was instrumental in getting large numbers of Broombush at a subsidised rate for landholders as an alternative option for revegetation in saline land. In addition Broombush may be harvested, giving returns of between \$120 and \$300 per tonne. For more information call the Yarra Yarra Of-



The web page has recently been given a new look. Please take a look at the revamped Yarra Yarra Catchment Management Group's web page.  
[www.yarrayarracatchment.asn.au](http://www.yarrayarracatchment.asn.au)