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## EverGraze Program

EverGraze sites allow groups of producers to trial in their local environment, new grazing, pasture or animal systems that will lead to significant improvements and profits and NRM outcomes.

A support site will be established near Ballan on Moorabool River gorge country. This site will be testing grazing management strategies to reduce the reinvasion of serrated tussock seedlings by encouraging native grass competition. Previous set stocking in the area has meant that the gorge country has become dominated with serrated tussock. Paddocks then require blanket spraying with flupropanate which kills serrated tussock but also

native grass species such as wallaby grass, spear grass and annual grasses. The EverGraze group hopes to reduce the need for blanket spraying through the use of strategic grazing strategies. The strategies to be used include the Long Spell Deferred Grazing developed from the Steep Hills project (October – Autumn break) and strategic grazing techniques over autumn and winter that maintain 90% groundcover and 1500kg DM/ha. EverGraze is a partnership between Australian Wool Innovation, Meat and Livestock Australia, CRC for Plant based Management of Dryland Salinity (CRC Salinity) and regional catchment agencies.





Victorian grasslands

## Bush Broker Program (Department of Sustainability and Environment)

South-eastern Australian indigenous grasslands are now regarded as one of Australia's most threatened ecosystems. Only half of 1 percent of the original two million hectares of lowland grasslands remains in near-natural condition, and they contain the greatest number of species facing extinction (Marriott and Marriott, 1998).

In most cases, the clearing of native vegetation that requires planning approval must be offset by a gain elsewhere. Offsets are permanently protected and linked to a particular clearing site. BushBroker facilitates the location of sites that could potentially be used as offsets on different properties to where the native vegetation is being cleared.

For developers, this provides a simple and secure process for locating third party offsets (subject to approval from the responsible authority). The system will also assist to reduce transaction costs associated with finding offsets. From a landowner's perspective, the BushBroker process represents an opportunity to improve biodiversity on their property, as well as generate a potentially new income stream from their native vegetation.

Landowners with native vegetation on their property can gain credits that are based on the

extent and quality of their vegetation. Credits need to be registered with BushBroker to be recognised and traded, and once finalised are listed on a database. Registration of a credit will be subject to meeting requirements relating to assessment of the site by DSE, management and security.

Gains for a native vegetation credit can be generated in a number of ways:

- improving the management of an existing patch of bush. This could include weed control, rabbit destruction and stock exclusion;
- revegetating previously cleared land using native plants indigenous to the area; and/or
- protecting scattered paddock trees and facilitating regeneration of new trees.

Potential buyers of credits are able to request searches of the BushBroker database for native vegetation credits that match their specific requirements. Trading of credits (i.e. negotiations over the price) is between the buyer and seller. BushBroker will not be involved in this process, other than to record trading information such as new ownership details of the credits.

Landowners can register an expression of interest through the DSE Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or can find more information on the program from the website <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au>.

## Bellarine Landcare & Swan Bay ICMC Serrated Tussock Project

The Serrated Tussock project this year centred on a newly discovered outbreak off Andersons Rd. The infestation noticed by an alert share farmer covered an area of 29ha in previously grazed paddocks. Much of the property is being returned to native vegetation through the grant incentive scheme.

Through the services of the Conservation Volunteers Australia CIP program a team spent two days walking the area and grubbing out individual plants. Some areas were quite thick whilst others had plants spread out. Burrows Rd bordering the property was also treated with numerous plants removed. The landholders played their part by following up and eradicating any left over plants before seed set. Other priority weeds including Gorse were also treated at the same time. A direct seeding project is planned for next year which will continue to add biodiversity to this site and provide roosting opportunities for the



critically endangered Orange-bellied Parrot which feed adjacent to the site on the Swan Bay Coastal Saltmarsh.

This site will be monitored and further plants grubbed out as part of next years on ground works projects. We hope to obtain the services of CVA again for this purpose. This project highlighted how important it is to have skilled community members that are able to identify outbreaks of Serrated Tussock, landholders willing to do their bit and eradicate it and volunteer resources to assist with the eradication.

This project was submitted for the Weed Warrior awards in which it received runner up status.



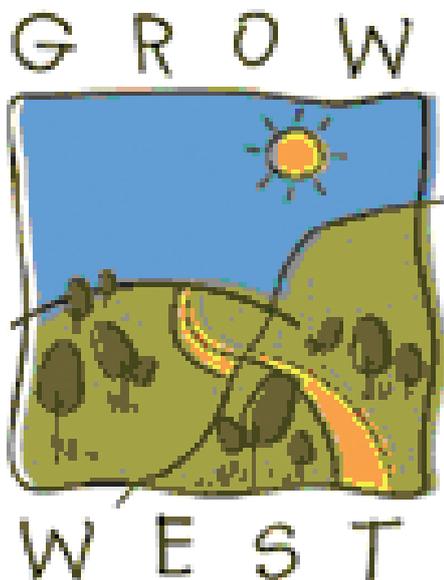
## The Grow West Program

The Grow West Program is aimed at rehabilitating degraded farm land west of Melbourne. This involves a range of approaches including tree planting, education, improving farming techniques and adoption of alternative land uses. The program aims to plant indigenous species or farm forestry to reduce the spread of weeds like tussock, address salinity, soil disturbance, increase biodiversity and improve carbon sequestration.

Ground work for the program commenced from 2002, and good outcomes have been seen at most sites considering climatic and seasonal influences. One focus area of the program in particular is the Upper Werribee area, where the team is reconnecting patches of remnant vegetation. This project is being undertaken in conjunction with Conservation Volunteers, Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of sites is set to commence shortly. This will include the monitoring of tussock density at sites. Benchmarking sites will be established and landowners and community groups will also be involved with the monitoring process.

For more information on the Grow West Program contact: Matt Mooney – Grow West Team Leader on Tel: (03) 5366 0015.



## Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party Update

The Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party will be holding their annual strategic planning workshop in January. The aim of the workshop is to develop priority areas and goals to be targeted for serrated tussock control in the coming year. The workshops include input from working party members, DPI staff and local government, as well as various stakeholders such as DSE and Melbourne Water.

The working party website has also recently been updated. Research articles, facts sheets, manager's fact pack, media releases, updates and what's new can be accessed through this website, as well as past editions of this newsletter. The website can be accessed at <http://www.serratedtussock.com>

## Local Government and Serrated Tussock (Department of Primary Industries)

### Port Phillip Catchment

The first local government meeting to discuss serrated tussock management within the Port Phillip catchment area was held in August. The meeting was attended by members from Wyndham, Brimbank, Mitchell, Whittlesea and Hume. Issues such as roadside and railway weed management, new grant schemes and upcoming DPI projects were discussed. It is hoped that the meetings will allow council's to collaborate together on serrated tussock management.

### Corangamite Catchment

The second local government meeting was held for Corangamite members at the end of October. Topics discussed included road and rail management, DPI project updates, and interim roadsides project.

DPI and the VSTWP are looking forward to continuing the local government partnerships' into the new year.

## What's New in Research

Biological control for serrated tussock is still continuing by David McLaren, DPI Frankston. The two most notable agents being trialled are *Puccinia nassellae*, Rust and *Silages* sp., Smut. Results have not yet been finalised.

Resistance to the herbicide; flupropanate, has been identified at a few properties within the Melbourne area, the most notable ones being at Diggers Rest, Sydnam and Bulla, north of Melbourne.

In research conducted into resistance, serrated tussock plants suspected of being resistant to flupropanate were grown in a pot trial and treated with a range of flupropanate rates. The resistant serrated tussock survived application rates as high as 8L/ha which is four times the recommended rate used for controlling this species. Similarly, petri dish dose response trials undertaken on serrated tussock seeds have shown that the flupropanate dose required to reduce the germination of seeds from resistant plants by 50% was approximately 10 times higher than for susceptible seeds.

A PhD student working with David McLaren (DPI) has been working on reproduction of serrated tussock, genetics and spread, and radio-labelled flupropanate that will be used in determining flupropanate uptake by plant, aiding in resistance information.

Charles Grech from DPI has been working on pasture trials and investigating the effectiveness of flupropanate and pre/post applications on native pasture species.

Latrobe Uni will be working on dose response trials for seeds with resistance and looking at a comparison between three geographic areas.

And a NZ company; Certified Organics has developed a pine oil product. DPI research will be looking at the possible use of pine oil as a spot spray in conjunction with glyphosate and is looking at conducting a small-scale trial.

Serrated Tussock resistance is still being researched, but it can be said that a mixture

of herbicides used and dosages is the safest way to avoid resistant plants. A fact sheet on herbicide resistance in plants can be found on the serrated tussock working party website: <http://www.serratedtussock.com>

## 2007 Landcare Award Winners

### Local Government Landcare Partnerships Award – Hume City Council

This award recognises an outstanding local government organisation which is collaborating with its community to preserve and manage its local environment and natural resources, encouraging a Landcare ethic and action in the local community, and forming partnerships to further Landcare issues.

The city of Hume occupies an area of 504 square kilometres on the northern fringe of Melbourne and is home to 158,000 people. It includes residential, industrial, urban growth and rural areas. Hume City Council has received many awards for its commitment to environmental sustainability. The Council supports an extensive Community Greening Program which involves a range of local environmental groups, school groups and a network of culturally and linguistically diverse groups who all help to revegetate council reserves. The Council's annual Multicultural Planting Day attracts more than 1,000 people. The Council offers rebates to landholders who control weeds and implement sustainable land management practices. Hume City Council also supports revegetation activities on private land with free indigenous plants and information sessions.

Note: Melton Shire Council was a highly commended nominee in this category.

## Sustainable Farming Award – Port Phillip & Western Port Region: Graham Simpson



The Sustainable Farming Awards go to one representative of each Catchment Management Authority region for sustainable land use and management.

Graham and Marlene Simpson bought a degraded Bacchus Marsh property in 1953. Graham has improved his land through innovative work to control soil erosion, weeds and rabbits; his farm is often used as a demonstration site for local farmers. He has been a leading figure in local groups including the Grow West program, which is attempting landscape-scale rehabilitation. Graham has fenced off 68 hectares of Box Ironbark remnant forest on his land, conserving habitat for threatened species such as the Powerful Owl.

## Funding Opportunities

### NRM Funding Extended to 2013

A further \$2 billion investment for the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) over five years from 2008-2009 was announced in the recent federal budget. Further NRM and environment budget announcements included:

- Continuation of the Envirofund Grants Program
- (\$20 million per year)

- Extension of the Community Water Grants Program
- (\$200 million over six years)
- A new Environment Stewardship Program
- (\$50 million over four years)
- Establishment of Australia's Centre for Climate
- Change Adaptation (\$126 million over five years)
- Enhanced administration of the EPBC Act
- (\$70 million over four years).

For further information on environment initiatives in the budget visit:

**<http://www.environment.gov.au/about/publications/budget/2007/ebo/index.html>**

### SCIPN Funding for Landcare works on Private Land

SCIPN have funding for landowners to undertake landcare works on private land. The funding provides support for priority works along waterways and wetlands and to protect and enhance remnant vegetation. It includes a contribution towards fencing, and revegetation projects that meet specific guidelines for site preparation. All landholders within the SCIPN region are eligible to apply. Grants are available for projects and properties of all sizes, from small projects on rural residential blocks to larger projects on working farms. If you are interested in undertaking works on your property please contact:

Jeanette Spittle, SCIPN Landcare Co-ordinator, on Mobile Tel: 0423 325 664 or email [attunga@webaxs.net](mailto:attunga@webaxs.net) for further information.

### Mobile Muster

Mobile Muster funding is available for a revegetation project within Victoria. There are a couple of constraints on the Mobile Muster funding, they are:

- One tree must be planted for every \$2 of funds, i.e. 10,000 trees will need to be planted with \$20,000
- There must be an 80% success rate

Therefore, we are looking for projects which have other funding that can supplement

the Mobile Muster funds to pay for site preparation, weed control, tree guards, etc.

If you know of an appropriate project, please provide the following information:

- Project Location
- Potential Start Date
- Land ownership (public or private)
- Site details – any significant features
- Environmental outcomes
- Control measures (to achieve the 80% success rate – eg. weed control, weed mats, etc.)

Send project information to:

**Lana Collison,**  
State Projects Coordinator,  
Landcare Australia

Tel: 03 9662 9977

Fax: 03 9662 4466

Email: [lana@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto: lana@landcareaustralia.com.au)



## GrantsLINK

GrantsLINK makes it easier to find suitable and relevant grants for your community projects from the many Commonwealth grants that are available. GrantsLINK also helps you find the best source of funding and assists you to complete application forms.

Visit <http://www.grantslink.gov.au/index.aspx>

## Grant Assistance

For help accessing grants and writing applications for serrated tussock projects please contact:

### **Kellie Hose**

Serrated Tussock Partnerships Officer

Tel: (03) 5226 4018

Projects may also be incorporated with the Serrated Tussock Working Party when applying for funding.

## Community Support

### Strengthening Communities

A Victorian Government grant to provide project funding for organisations, networks and partnerships to implement projects that will advance the interests of their communities.

Such as involving a wide range of community groups, improve community environments and support volunteers.

**Applications are ongoing.  
Up to \$30000, \$50000 or \$500000  
depending on category.**

For more information visit:

[www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au](http://www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au) or contact a  
Department of Victorian Communities (DVC)  
Program Officer, Tel: 1300 366 356

### Victorian Volunteering Small Grants

A Victorian Government initiative to encourage local community organisations to attract new volunteers from diverse backgrounds and create new volunteering opportunities. Eligibility is limited to not-for-profit organisations that involve volunteers at a local level.

Applications are ongoing. Up to \$5,000.

For more information visit:

**[www.dvc.vic.gov.au](http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au)** or contact a  
Department of Victorian Communities (DVC)  
Program Officer Tel: 1300 366 356

### PPWCMA Grants and Incentives Calendar

A list of grants available for environmental projects.

For more information on this calendar contact:  
Sam Bayley Tel: (03) 9296 4644

Calendar can be downloaded from: [http://www.ppwcma.vic.gov.au/funding\\_calendar.htm](http://www.ppwcma.vic.gov.au/funding_calendar.htm).

Several local government grants that involve weed management within Port Phillip catchment can be found in this calendar. Grants are restricted to residents within the relevant shire. Shires include Cardinia, Hume City Council, Macedon Ranges, Manningham City Council, Moorabool Shire, Mornington Peninsula, Melton, Nillumbik

## Publications

### Caring for Country: A Guide to Sustainable Land Management – Macedon Ranges & Mitchell Shires

North Central Catchment Management Authority, in partnership with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and a number of other local governments and agencies, including Mitchell Shire, have produced a guide to sustainable land management called Caring for Country. This guide summarises the range of land management issues land owners are likely to encounter, it provides practical information, as well as links, references and contact numbers to assist land owners build their knowledge.

How to view the guide & get a copy: 3,100 copies of the guide will soon be posted out to Macedon Ranges Shire's ratepayers and new residents (with properties of 5 hectares or greater). For those not eligible to receive a hard copy version it is available to view or download via the links below. Due to the

large size of the document it is available to download in chapters. A full version has also been made available, (not recommended for users connected via a dial-up modem). See the following website link: [http://www.macedon-ranges.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page\\_Id=1482&h=0](http://www.macedon-ranges.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page_Id=1482&h=0)

More information: contact Lachlan Milne (Macedon Ranges Shire) Tel: 5421 9659

## Contributions

Thank you to everyone that contributed to this edition of Tussock Times.

Contributions for this newsletter are greatly welcome. Please contact

Kellie Hose on Tel: (03) 5226 4018 or email: [kellie.hose@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:kellie.hose@dpi.vic.gov.au)

More information on serrated tussock can be found on the serrated tussock working party website: <http://www.serratedtussock.com> or at DPI online: <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au>

## Feedback

We welcome your feedback at any time using the space below:

### Reply to:

Kellie Hose  
Serrated Tussock Partnerships Officer  
Department of Primary Industries

**By Fax:** (03) 5226 4725  
**Email:** [kellie.hose@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:kellie.hose@dpi.vic.gov.au)  
**Mail:** PO BOX 103, Geelong VIC 3220  
**Tel:** (03) 5226 4018

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