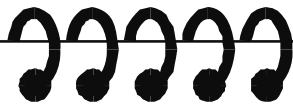


LAND TALK

Newsletter of the 'Centralian Land Management Association' (CLMA)

G'day all, Welcome to the first edition of Land Talk for 2004.

Lots to squeeze into this newsletter and we look forward to your feedback. Please give myself or Dionne a call if you have anything to discuss or would like us to have a look at or follow up for you. Hope to catch up with you soon, *Andrea*



CLMA

**Memberships
due 30th March**

\$330 inc. GST

Please post cheques
to:

PO Box 2534
Alice Springs 0871
or drop in payment to
CLMA office when you
are next in town

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- Desert Knowledge CRC kicks into momentum
- NRM issues affecting the CA Pastoral industry – where to from here?
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 - EMS update
 - CLMA activities to date

Yep, it's that time of the year....memberships are due again, and for those of you who are not so sure about being involved with the CLMA please take time to consider the following points...

Being involved with land management is not just about fixing problems, you are all doing "land care" every day in everything you do. CLMA is here to support you with all realms of land management issues. We are able to:

- ❖ help you with accessing technical or legislative information which is often hard to source from Government agencies
- ❖ promote the benefits of industry within the wider community
- ❖ Represent pastoral interests on numerous government (both territory and commonwealth) committees and groups
- ❖ Assist with applying for funds to do on-ground landcare works on your property

- ❖ Provide you with palatable native pasture seed.
- ❖ Keep you up to date on latest research and development with relation to pasture management.
- ❖ Maintain an active voice with media to defend the interests of the pastoral industry that may be under public scrutiny.
- ❖ Enable use of equipment and access to expertise to help with on-ground works – especially rehabilitation, ponding banks, re-veg work, feral animal and weed control.

Your membership fees help with admin costs and the day to day running of vehicles and equipment. Without your membership, the CLMA is unable to attract other funds to carry out projects (eg. From NHT)

The CLMA believe in promoting the sustainable land management ethics of the central Australian pastoral industry, join up & let us help you to keep doing what you do best!

CLMA in 2004, Where to from here?

In a meeting with MLA, DBIRD and QDPI in Darwin in late January, the CLMA looked into how Grazing Land Management Courses (GLM) can be customized for beef producers in Central Australia. The first GLM course will be run with producers in the Katherine region in early March, and has already received positive feedback from Pastoralists in the Top end. GLM provides an excellent platform to draw together all existing and historic pasture and grazing management research, to help producers improve productivity whilst maintaining sustainable grazing systems. Keep an eye on this space for more news on the development of GLM for the Alice region.



GLM will not “reinvent the wheel”, its’ emphasis is getting all the existing information from the Alice region OUT to producers in a language that is production based. Putting a \$ value on methods of grazing land management, and providing the tools to use the information currently produced by research.

How does the beef industry fit in with the whole NRM picture?

The next 12 months will see the developments of a Natural Resource Management plan for the whole NT. Many people have asked

“What....another bloody plan?!”

”.....well how does this affect us?”

Part of my job within the CLMA (and the principal reason this position was funded) is to represent the interests of the pastoral industry as part of the NT Natural Resource Management Plan.

If we don’t contribute and ensure that we maintain being vocal in the development of the NT plan, then future funding and

assistance with land care works will be prioritized to other stakeholders. 45% of rangelands in the NT are managed by the Pastoral industry so it is vital that your voice is heard. The strengths of our voice and importance of issues raised will affect funding, budget and policy in the future. Over the next year, I will be asking for your input, ideas and aspirations. If you have anything at all you wish to discuss or need help with in relation to land management, please do not hesitate to call.

EMS Update

Many of the stations involved in the EMS project recently did an Introduction to EMS course. Although the experience wasn't very enjoyable, it did get people thinking hard about what they do and don't want to do as part of their EMS. Who would have thought you could make an EMS into something so complicated? The course verified that CLMA's plan of a simpler approach to EMS is the right way to go.



Participants at the course last week.

Most properties in the project have been given a folder full of environmental information. The next stage of the project will be to use this information to develop priorities for environmental action on each station. As part of the project, the NTCA has also agreed to find out what environmental laws affect the industry and what they mean in a language we can all understand.

Are you planning to buy hay this year?

For those of you who buy hay from the Top End, please consider the following few points when you are looking out for hay in the following year.

There are a number of introduced weeds in the Katherine, Daly and Darwin region which have the potential to become a serious problem if they are able to establish in the Alice region. Most hay growers in the top end have a majority of these weeds on their property and there is a real risk that you are likely to get some of these weed seeds in your hay. It is almost impossible to guarantee and unrealistic to expect to purchase weed free hay grown in intensive agricultural areas, however it is important to be aware of what the potential threats may be so that you can keep an eye out for any weeds on your place when and if they germinate.

As a buyer, you are able to ask for a Vendor declaration from the hay grower to tell you:

- What chemicals have been used in the process of making hay
- What weeds are on the property (including non-declared weeds)

JARRAH versus CAVALCADE

In terms of weed seed contamination risk, your safest bet is with Jarrah Grass hay. Growers producing Jarrah hay are able to control broad leaf weeds with chemical better than in cavalcade crops. Although there is a greater risk of grass weeds (particularly annual) in Jarrah, this is not likely to be a big problem down here as seed viability is generally not as long as broad leaf weeds, and stock are likely to eat any grass plants should they germinate.

Keep a lookout for unusual looking seedlings, shrubs or small trees that come up around stock or holding yards, or along main access roads and tracks. Give us a call about anything you may be unsure of.

Weed seeds typical to the Top end that may be in your hay :

Rubber bush	<i>Calotropis procera</i>
Mimosa Bush	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>
Hyptis	<i>Hyptis suaveolens</i>
Parkinsonia	<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>
Noogoora Burr	<i>Xanthium strumarium</i>
Bellyache Bush	<i>Jatropha gossypifolia</i>
Castor Oil Plant	<i>Ricinus communis</i>
Coffee Senna	<i>Senna occidentalis</i>
Devil's Claw	<i>Martynia annua</i>

References with useful descriptions of some of these weeds:

Smith, N. M. (1995) **Weeds of the Natural Ecosystems**, A field guide to environmental weeds of the Northern Territory Australia. Environment Centre NT

Normandy NFM Limited (1999) **Weeds of the Tanami**, A field guide to the environmental weeds of the Tanami region, Central Australia. Asprint Print Group

(the CLMA office has copies of these for you to look at if you need)

WEED PROFILE:*Acacia farnesiana* – “Mimosa Bush”

There seems to be a lot of young Mimosa Bush (not to be confused with top end Mimosa) coming up along the Stuart Highway south of Alice Springs. Although it is unclear how long it has been around for, it does pose a potential threat to pastoral enterprises if it gets out of hand. In higher rainfall areas in the NT, I have seen Mimosa Bush form really dense thickets around bores and yards, and along creeks. If left unchecked, it can make access to water a problem and also cause grief during mustering.

Mimosa bush has long nasty thorns and is not easy to control. Grubbing or cutting off with the Grader blade doesn't worry it, and it is likely to come back stronger. Although stock won't usually bother with eating the leaves amongst the thorns, they will eat seed pods and thus spread the seed. I would certainly appreciate your feedback about what you have seen, how long it has been around and how likely it is to be a problem in unaffected areas of the region.

GRASS SEED available

If you are interested in rehabilitation or vegetating ponding banks, CLMA have a good range of palatable and productive native pasture species in the seed store. We offer members access to seed at a small cost (donation to recover costs.)

Call us for more information.

Ph. 89534230

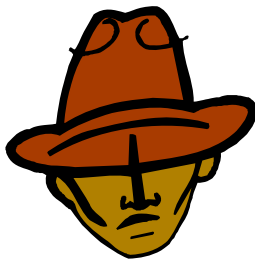
Desert Knowledge

The Desert Knowledge Co-operative Research Centre (DK-CRC) has identified and committed funding to various projects in the Alice region and these are now starting to take shape

The DK-CRC will deliver outcomes through four research and education themes:

1. Natural resource management for better livelihoods
2. Technical services for improved community viability
3. Governance, management and leadership for sustainable futures.
4. Integrated systems for desert livelihoods.

The CLMA will have input with the first theme, to represent the views and needs of the pastoral industry in relation to natural resource management. A sub-project of this theme is fire, and the CLMA has been given access to a small amount of funds to help with collecting information on the effects the 2000 & 2001 fires had on pastoral lands. This will be a collaborative project with the BFC and will build on existing work which is currently underway.



Questions the project will be interested in include:

- ? How much of pastoral land was burnt
- ? Where did the fires come from
- ? How did fires affect productivity
- ? What economic impact was felt by the pastoral industry.

It is hoped that the results from this project will enable researchers, agencies and industry to identify the key issues involved in the prevention and management of wildfires in the future.



Do you know about CAT?

The Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT) is an Indigenous organisation based in Alice Springs to develop and promote sustainable livelihoods through appropriate technology. Their work involves developing resources and technology for remote communities, many of the projects developed by CAT may be able to provide useful information for station people, especially with reference to alternative energy and waste management in remote areas. CAT have established a series of fact sheets on issues relevant to remote communities eg. Choosing a Landfill design, Renewable energy, Pit toilets.

For more information, check out their website at www.icat.org.au

What CLMA has been up to since last newsletter:

- Involvement with the drought policy review committee visit
- Meetings with MLA to plan GLM courses for Central Australia
 - Weed control work on Erldunda, Lyndavale, Umbeara
 - Involvement with Parks & Conservation Masterplan
 - NHT and Envirofund funding applications
 - EMS training & property visits

CLMA HERD ARE FAST MOOVERS!

CLMA staff recently promoted "clean green beef" at the Corporate Cup Triathlon in Alice Springs. Andrea "Angus" Johnson and Dee "Droughtmaster" Walsh were able to coax Will "The Old Bull" Dobbie out of semi-retirement for the big event. This was quite easy given that there's been no demand whatsoever for The Old Bull's "stud" services, so he's feeling pretty frisky.

Upon arrival at the triathlon, there was some question over The Old Bull's genetics. Luckily, Jock McPherson from rival team Elders was on hand to offer his expert opinion. After the very briefest of inspections, Jock declared that The Old Bull was "definitely a Shorthorn".

The rivalry between CLMA, Elders and the RFDS was pretty strong. Unfortunately for the CLMA herd, Elders led us out of the pool and we were never able to chase them down. Typical stock agents - slippery as eels. Thrashing RFDS probably wasn't the smartest idea, so we're hoping that none of us get crook out bush in the near future!



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