



Ord Land and Water

Newsletter

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Lake Kununurra weed project continues

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Some of the leucaena growing just below the BBQ area next to the Ord Dam. The area to the far right has been controlled (See arrow)

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Project now ongoing

Ord Land and Water was fortunate enough to secure funding through the Caring for Country Open Grants program to continue and expand its Lake Kununurra weed control program into 2009.

This means that work can continue on the 20 control sites on the lake where control has been carried out in the past and weed management plans developed for the Crossing Falls and Packsaddle communities. Control around the Crossing Falls community as an outcome of their plan started in May with the weeds like neem, chinnee apple, snake weed and leucaena killed off.

Work on the lake earlier this year concentrated on killing off the germination of new weeds over the wet season on the control sites. One area of particular focus is under the Ord Dam where large patches of leucaena and bellyache bush have been growing for a number of years. This work will be one of the priority areas for 2009 due to the bellyache bush found on the waters edge opening up the unhappy prospect of downstream contamination.

On another site the news is much better. On Lake Kununurra's southern front of neems OLV has started its fourth year of control work. Figures to date show that due to the previous three years work only 13% of trees are still in existence. These were only small seedlings at the start of the work hidden in the undergrowth. The bushland on the edge of the lake is extremely thick with many vines and other thickets making heavy work of the job.

Blu's back!

Kununurra's scourge of neem trees is back after a longer than expected holiday that saw Blu and partner trapped by flood waters on the other side of the country for a longer than expected holiday.

Blu has been the face of the OLV neem control program for a couple of years now and has recently been working on land adjacent to the Packsaddle wetlands and neighbouring tree farms. The concern is that if neem gets into the farms it will become a serious weed issue to the farms as well as being a source of re-infestation on bushland and other properties adjacent to them.

OLW still has its neem removal program for neem trees around the townsite, where the cost of removing the trees is shared between OLV and the land owner. For more details of this interested people can contact the OLV office on 9169 2222.

New Board members for OLW

Two new members were recently appointed to the OLW Board. Andrea Dobson and Steve Sharpe, both long term locals took the place of retiring members Kym Croot and Noel Wilson.

Andrea, or more commonly known as Andy has lived in Kununurra 17 years and worked in almost every industry including tourism, pastoral and farming.

Andy commits her free time to events such as the rodeo, races, the Agricultural Show and has an ongoing commitment to developing the local equestrian industry.

Steve has lived locally for 28 years starting work as a commercial fisherman on Lake Argyle before moving into the tourism business on the Lake.

He has a keen interest in the environment and having lived in the Kimberley for most of his life has a passion to see this unique region develop in a responsible and sustainable way.

Also at the AGM the coordinator gave a report on the group's activities over the past twelve months and the Chairman John Moulden took the opportunity to thank outgoing Board members Kym and Noel for their services over the past two years.



New Board member Steve Sharpe and Chairman John Moulden.
Insert left Andrea (Andy) Dobson

Kimberley Aboriginal Reference Group (KARG)

KARG represents Kimberley Aboriginal people from Saltwater, River, Desert and Rangelands Country. It is also a member of the four Aboriginal Organisations, Kimberley Land Council, Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, Kimberley Language Centre and Kimberley Aboriginal Pastoralists Incorporated.

KARG is working to ensure that all Indigenous people are engaged appropriately and effectively in NRM processes. Its main responsibilities are to assist the Kimberley NRM Group with project and investment priorities.

These include the current development of a Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Country Plan and a set of regional guidelines for Aboriginal engagement in NRM. KARG along with members from other Aboriginal organisations act as the steering committee for the Kimberley Aboriginal Caring for Country Plan.

KARG'S main strengths are particularly its representative base and strong organised networks and is administered from the Rangelands NRM WA Kununurra office with the support of the Indigenous Engagement Facilitator, Trish Terry – mob 0439416007

Funding acknowledgements

Fire Project - Caring for our Country

Lake Kununurra weed project - Caring for our Country

Neem Control -DEC Save our Species initiative.

KARG- Rangelands NRM WA

Burning to protect environmental assets

Ord Land and Water has been involved in a new project this year that is using the concept of early season burning to limit the effects of late season fires on the environment.

As a result some early work was done to identify the areas of environmental importance in an area from Kununurra, out to the border, north to the coast, the two lakes and Carr Boyd Ranges. This was followed up by an aerial burn in late April to the east of the townsite in conjunction with Carlton Hill Station and FESA.

This year has seen a number of organisations including the local bushfire brigades and the Department of Environment and Conservation increase their early burning program as a result of the good wet season that created plenty of potential fuel for late fires.

Developing strategies to stop fires lit late in the season from causing too much damage to the environment and infrastructure is problematical. High winds, low humidity and dry fuel can become a volatile mixture. Whilst these fires remain an issue early season burning though not an ideal answer to the problem will help to limit the damage done from hot late season fires.



Picture taken on the 22nd August 2008 showing the fire that later threatened much of the Weaber Plain community and as well as localised environmentally sensitive areas.