

the burnett buzz...

Spring 2013

Chemical available for weed control following the floods

Landholders in the central Burnett district are encouraged to make the most of chemical being made available by the Burnett Catchment Care Association for weed control along creeks, rivers and floodplains.

Chemical is currently available to landholders to control weeds that have been identified as threats following the floods in January. Weeds identified as a threat include Parthenium, Giant Rats Tail grass, Rubber Vine, Hymenachne, Cats Claw Creeper and Madeira Vine.

This initiative targeting weeds is one of the many flood recovery activities being implemented throughout the North Burnett by BCCA in partnership with the Burnett Mary Regional Group. On-ground works such as streambank rehabilitation, gully erosion repair, debris removal, infrastructure repair or replacement, and floodplain planning are being undertaken in priority areas to assist landholders and the landscape recover from the January floods.

BCCA Weeds Project Officer, Louise Newman, said, 'Now that we've finally had some rainfall, it's the perfect time to be heading out to those areas along the creeks and areas that were flooded to look for new weeds and also to control the ones that are coming back since the rain.'

For more information and to check if you're eligible, check out our website www.betterburnett.com/floodrecovery or phone the Association on 07 4166 3898 during office hours.

"... it's the perfect time to be heading out to those areas along the creeks and areas that were flooded to look for new weeds"

This invasive weed control project is part of a Burnett Mary Regional Group initiative funded under the Queensland and Australian governments' Ex-Tropical Cyclone



Oswald On-farm Productivity and Riparian Recovery program. This program is helping reinstate agricultural productivity and assisting primary producing regions become more resilient to future events.



Landholders along the river are encouraged to make the most of the chemical on offer, here with BCCA weeds project officer, Louise Newman

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3 reasons why you should participate in the Carbon Farming Solutions project

The Restoring the Balance: Carbon Farming Solutions project will provide relevant Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI), carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation information and tools to land managers in the Burnett Mary region.

There are 3 good reasons to register your interest in the Carbon Farming project.

You will receive:

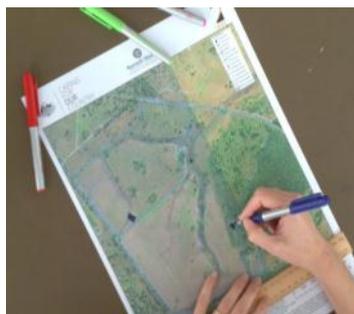
1. an introduction to carbon farming practices & the Carbon

- Farming Initiative (CFI)
- a free Property Management Planning service – a personalised property plan tailored to your farm business with a focus on action planning and includes a property map.
- notification of upcoming training, workshops and demonstration site visits being run by the project.

More details regarding the project and a registration form can be found on the BCCA website at

www.betterburnett.com/extension-outreach-program/

This project is supported by funds from the Australian Government.



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Highlights

- Update on the Carbon Farming Project
- Threemoon Floodplain Funding and Action Planning
- Chemical for weed control
- Welcome Jenny and Peter!!
- BCCA backs BMP program
- Riparian restoration begins
- Reef Rescue Grazing 2

Property Management Plans piloted within the region

In November, the Property Management Planning (PMP) component of the Carbon Farming project was piloted with 5 graziers in the region.

Some comments from these graziers included -

- the property planning session was a good opportunity to discuss our plans and capture them on paper
- the plan, and especially the property map, will be great communication tool amongst family members



- it was a chance to prioritise my planned activities and helped me identify that I need more technical information before I get started

One person realised they had “another lifetimes worth of work to do on the property” before it would be just the way they wanted it and another noted that the Property Management Plan would help facilitate their “sometimes robust management discussions”.

“... Property Management Plan would help facilitate their sometimes robust management discussions”

The planning process also highlighted to some just how much they had already

Photo left: BCCA extension officer, Veronica Chapman with Mundubbera grazier Jim Robertson doing his PMP.

achieved on their properties.

A big “thank-you” to the 5 graziers who piloted the PMP process for me - some refinement will occur as a result.

The Property Management Plan is an individual and flexible plan and can cater for all grazing enterprises irrespective of the business stage. So whether you are just starting out, you want to review current practices or you are intending to make major changes on your property, the Property Management Planning process may be helpful for you.

As the project progresses I look forward to meeting and working with more graziers across the Burnett Mary region with an interest in carbon farming and property planning.

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Staff Profile – Jenny Voigt

Hi, I am Jenny Voigt and I have just commenced working with the BCCA as the Cropping Technical Officer. I will be coordinating the “Action on the Ground” cropping research trial in Monto over the next 3 ½ years.



This cropping research trial project aims to trial, measure and demonstrate farm practices/technologies to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions while improving cropping productivity. Such practices that will be trialed include integration of legume crops into the cereal cropping rotation, the use of nitrification inhibitors, compost additions and minimum tillage practices.

The trials will be located on two Monto properties and we hope to hold a number of field days over the course of the project to demonstrate and present the trial results.

“I will be coordinating the “Action on the Ground” cropping research trial over the next 3 ½ years”

My formal qualifications include a Bachelor of Applied Science (Horticultural Technology) honours degree from the University of Queensland – Gatton College. My background is in Horticulture/Entomology and I have conducted research in both fields.

I have moved to Monto from Mundubbera where I was employed in a pest/disease monitoring based position as a crop scout in citrus, grape and mango crops.

I am looking forward to applying my knowledge in a field crop environment and working with local landholders to improve outcomes and yields.

I am currently living on a small cattle property just outside of Monto with my husband.

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What's on 'round the Burnett...

10 Dec 2013—Vegetation Management Reform Information Sessions, Bundaberg and Kingaroy

10 Dec 2013—How to carry out your own revegetation, Bundaberg

11 Dec 2013—BCCA General Meeting, Mundubbera

12 Dec 2013—Vegetation Management Reform Information Session, Gayndah



Reef Rescue Grazing—the next chapter

The new Reef Rescue grazing project, to be implemented by BCCA over 3 years, differs from previous rounds in that this time there will be a much greater emphasis on education and awareness.

This Reef Rescue grazing project will be rolled out in the coastal areas of the Burnett. This will include the Burnett River downstream from Paradise Dam, the Kolan downstream from Lake Monduran, as well as the Elliot, Isis, Gregory, Burrum and Baffle Creek catchments.

Funding will be available for a range of on-ground projects that address a reduction in sediment going into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.

Projects could include, but not necessarily be limited to, riparian fencing, fencing and rehabilitation

of erosion and degraded areas, fencing to reduce stock tracking and patch grazing, and installation of off-stream and paddock water points.

Funding will be limited to a maximum of \$10,000 per landholder, and must be matched 50:50 by cash and/or in-kind expenditure by the landholder.

Project applications will be assessed as to their meeting a range of criteria before being approved.

To be eligible to apply for funding, landholders will need to commit to:

- Undertaking a property assessment by working through 2 modules of the on-line Grazing BMP program: grazing land management and soil health
- Undertake a property paddock assessment with a BCCA Extension Officer and assist with the development of a basic property assessment and capability plan

BCCA will develop and supply a detailed property map for all participants.

BCCA will also be running workshops and field days having an emphasis on grazing management, and participants will be invited to attend these events.

The first year of the project will focus on the Baffle Creek catchment, and expression of interest flyers have been circulated on all mail runs in the catchment.

If you are an interested landholder and you have not received an EOI, you can download it from www.betterburnett.com/reef-rescue.



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\$10K grants help farmers on the Threemoon Floodplain

Landholders in a badly flood affected area of Monto's Threemoon Creek floodplain have had a small relief with \$10,000 grants been made available back in October. The grants were provided to undertake priority land productivity activities, such as, laser levelling and replacing fencing on areas impacted by the January 2013 floods. Landholders had a short time to apply and subsequently complete their activities, so full steam ahead for those fortunate to have their application approved.

The funds were made available through the Queensland and Australian Government's On-farm Productivity and Riparian Recovery program to assist primary producers to recover from flooding caused by ex-Tropical cyclone Oswald.

The projects are being coordinated locally by BCCA and on the Burnett coast by BMRG.

For many landholders it has been a challenge to keep going after losing so much in the floods. Seeing highly productive paddocks becoming unusable overnight was heartbreaking for many farmers.

The Dowling's on Threemoon Creek have had significant productivity loss on their property during the floods. Although, having been successfully granted funds through this program, it is only a drop in the ocean on what needs done to get the property back to full productivity.

The Dowlings have made use of the funds by undertaking laser levelling on an area which resembled a 'moonscape' following the floods.

Scott Dowling said, they have removed banks and levelled the land to enable flood waters to spread across the property evenly without impediments. They are very grateful for the opportunity to have this assistance to help them get back on track.

"... undertaking laser levelling on an area which resembled a 'moonscape' following the floods"

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The Dowling's "moonscape" after the flooding



The Dowling's paddock after some laser levelling

Staff Profile—Peter Crawford

Hello, I am Peter Crawford, and I started with BCCA in October as Reef Rescue Grazing Extension Officer. I will be responsible for the roll-out of the new 3-year Reef Rescue project which will be focussed in the coastal region of the Burnett catchment, including Baffle Creek.

My wife Lenore and I moved to our property at Mount Maria in 2011, and for the last two years I have been working as a contractor/consultant with various organisations on natural resource management projects. Prior to that I was employed as a Coordinator, and then Special Projects Officer with North East

Downs Landcare Group, based at Oakey. I also took on the position of regional Landcare Facilitator for a short time in 2003.

I have extensive experience with facilitation and group formation, as well as with writing successful funding applications for numerous on-ground projects. As a group we were successful in obtaining a large amount of funding from a range of programs to assist landholders to adopt more sustainable practices, over a 14 year period.

“I have extensive experience with facilitation and group formation as well as with writing successful funding applications”

My formal qualifications include Graduate Certificate of Sustainable Agriculture, Diploma of Conservation and Land

Management, and Certificate IV Training and Assessment.

Prior to my Landcare involvement, my wife and I owned and operated a farming and grazing property in northern NSW. After we sold the property in 1995, I was employed as a trainer/assessor at the Northern Territory Rural College at Katherine, before taking up the Landcare position at Oakey.

My passion is sustainable land management and soil health, so I am very excited about being offered this position. I thoroughly enjoy the relaxed and friendly atmosphere at BCCA, and the obvious commitment and dedication of all staff members. I am really looking forward to getting out and about with landholders over the next few months and years, and helping to facilitate improved land management practices and on-ground change.

Peter Crawford



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Make money from weeds???

Creator of the online resource, 'The Weeds Network', Dr David Low is based at the Monash University in Melbourne.

He recently presented his ideas and thoughts on 'innovation in weed management' and how to 'make money from weeds' at a series of half-day workshops in north-eastern New South Wales.

The crux of his presentation was that the relationship that we currently have with chemicals and our increasing use of them for weed control is costing us too much: financially, time and health.

He believes that there are many fantastic alternatives to using chemical, if you don't have to.

“weed control is costing us too much: financially, time and health”

For example using goats to graze heavily weed invested paddocks, and then having the option of using or selling the products that goats can provide: cheese, milk, meat; or utilising free-range chickens to graze the weed seeds that fall to the ground and being able to turn a weed control method into a profit, instead of always being another cost.

There are already many people in the Burnett who prefer not to use chemicals and who are looking outside the square



when it comes to controlling weeds, in the interest of human, animal and soil health. What do you think?

You can read more articles and stories at www.weedsnetwork.com.

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BCCA are on Facebook— Like our page!!

Yes, BCCA is up with the times and on Facebook. Just head to : www.facebook.com/pages/Sustainable-Burnett-Catchment/197863326932611 or search for 'Sustainable Burnett Catchment' on Facebook!



Cats Claw Creeper Afloat workshop

What do these two pictures have in common? They're both Cats Claw Creeper!

I recently attended a weaving workshop in Gayndah at the Art Gallery, put on by Afloat who are a group of people bringing creativity into the mix of flood and disaster recovery to the central Queensland region (check it out on Facebook, search 'Afloat – Creative Regions')

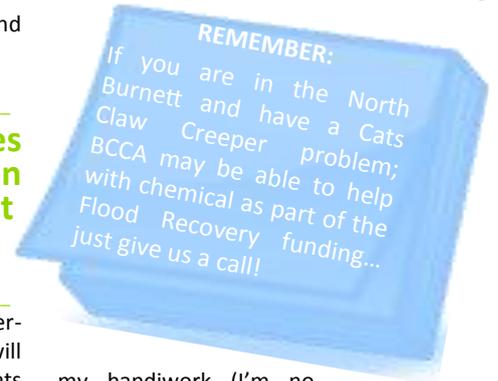
We know Cats Claw Creeper to be a vine-growing plant, and one that is seen all too



often in our creeks and rivers, and sometimes in backyards in town!

"...is to strip back the leaves and use the fresh green vines to weave a fruit basket"

But one clever way to make use of this ever-present resource (hopefully one day we will run out of Cats Claw, though), is to strip back the leaves and use the fresh green vines to weave a fruit basket. The basket in this photo here is



my handiwork (I'm no professional, you can see).

The workshops were run in the Bundaberg and North Burnett regions and there will soon be a big weaving project coming our way.

Louise Newman

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Threemoon Floodplain Farmers are Action Planning

Monto Town Hall was a hive of activity during the first week of December with landholders of the Threemoon Floodplain having the opportunity to input into their Floodplain Management Action Plan.

Floodplain specialists Clive Knowles-Jackson, Geoff Titmarsh and John McLatchey from the Darling Downs have been commissioned to assist landholders in the Threemoon Floodplain to develop a coordinated plan for the area.

The workshops enabled all landholders the opportunity to have their post flood issues identified and discussed with many ideas and solutions highlighted. State and local Government representatives also attended

as major stakeholders and offered valuable input into the workshops.

There was great enthusiasm from the participants, with one farmers saying "he wanted to keep things rolling and was very keen to know how to keep the plan alive".

The funds were made available through the Queensland and Australian Government's On-farm Productivity and Riparian Recovery program to assist primary producers to recover from flooding caused by ex-

-Tropical cyclone Oswald.

There were five workshops covering the priority area of the Threemoon Creek Floodplain.

All the information gathered from the workshops will be used by Clive, John and Geoff to develop the coordinated plan. The intention is that priority activities will be recognised and funding may be available to implement some of those priorities.



Threemoon farmers from the top of the catchment mark water flows at a Floodplain Action Planning Workshop in Monto

"he wanted to keep things rolling and was very keen to know how to keep the plan alive"

It is hoped a similar planning process will take place on Bye Floodplain in the South Burnett in the new year.

Landholders on the Threemoon Floodplain who were unable to attend but are keen to provide input, please contact BCCA on (07) 4166 3898.

Contact Marisa @
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Carol Larsen, Matt Dendle, Clive Knowles-Jackson, Kevin Fox, Barry Woodall and Kendall Muller discussing issues at a Floodplain Action Planning Workshop

Vegetation Law Reforms take a road-trip

This month, and into the new year, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines vegetation management officers are stopping in many regional towns to give a rundown of the Vegetation Management Act reforms, which came into place on 2 December 2013.

The changes are part of the Newman government's overhaul of red tape for the primary industries, and there are some significant changes.

Three major changes are noted:

1. The addition of more Self Assessable Codes, allowing activities such as weed management and fodder harvesting as well as native forest practices to be undertaken without requiring a permit, instead only requiring notification of these such activities to the Department.

2. Exclusions for clearing areas for high-

value and irrigated high-value agriculture activities. High-value agriculture is listed as including annual and perennial horticulture crops, and broadacre crops, but not including grazing land or plantation forestry.

3. Changes to the vegetation mapping to include a so-called 'easy-to-use' overall base map, with many more supporting maps.

The classifications have changed, and regrowth mapping has been removed from freehold blocks (not leasehold), and there is plenty of information available.

The Department are hosting information sessions in Bundaberg and Kingaroy (Tues 10 Dec), and Gayndah (Thurs 12 Dec).

More information on these info sessions can be found at our website or via www.dnrm.qld.gov.au where you'll also find

all the latest vegetation management information and a link to request the latest vegetation management maps. The new laws do not allow for indiscriminate clearing of vegetation and DNRM will continue to monitor property-scale vegetation management activities.

“The Department are hosting information sessions in Bundaberg, Kingaroy and Gayndah”

This is just a brief summary of the changes; if you think the vegetation reforms may impact on you and your property management we urge you to check the department website for details and seek clarification from a Vegetation Management Officer.

High quality satellite imagery for BCCA

Property and local area mapping has become an important aspect of many of BCCA projects. In fact high quality mapping is a crucial component in BCCA Reef Rescue grazing and PMP programs. The most important requirement for a high quality property

map is high resolution imagery.

Until now the available imagery has been Spot 5. This satellite imagery has a pixel size of 2.5 metres meaning the imagery is not particularly suitable for mapping on small blocks. At a scale of less than 1:4000, Spot 5 imagery is not very clear, and really not all that useful.

Recent discussions with two councils in the BCCA region, Bundaberg and Gladstone, has now enabled BCCA to access high quality imagery from the council servers. The Bundaberg and Gladstone satellite imagery has a pixel size of 0.5 metres, which means a much clearer resolution of property features. Both councils plan to update their imagery in 2014, to an even higher quality, and this will be available to BCCA when it is on-line.

“...which means a much clearer resolution of property features”

Reef Rescue Grazing Extension Officer Peter Crawford is very excited about this development. Peter says that this will allow us to provide high quality property maps for all landholders, but especially for landholders on smaller blocks.

BCCA will be having on-going discussions with the other Regional Councils in the Burnett over the next few months. It is hoped that eventually access to high resolution imagery will be available for all of the BCCA area.

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Difference in resolution on a 35 acre property; the top image is the Gladstone Regional Council 0.5m imagery and the bottom image is 2.5m Spot 5 imagery.

Riparian restoration begins after the floods

Restoration of some of the Burnett River's eroded banks will start soon as part of the On-farm Productivity and Riparian Recovery program funded by the State and Federal Government. Due to the vast damage to the river banks, priority has been given to areas at high risk of further erosion and areas of high productivity. These high risk areas have been determined by experts who have examined conditions from ground level and analysed detailed post flood aerial imagery.

Riverbank restoration through native revegetation and stabilisation works is essential to restore and make damaged land more resilient.

BCCA's Fiona Morris is currently contacting landowners in high risk areas along the Burnett River to encourage them to take advantage of the specialist advice and support the project can offer.

Contact Fiona @
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Some of the river bank erosion in need of restoration

Pasture rundown workshops

During November, BCCA hosted a sown pasture rundown workshop, at Miriam Vale.

The workshops were facilitated by Stuart buck and Brian Johnson from QDAFF, and were designed to give landholders some valuable information on recognising the symptoms and possible actions that would help improve their sown pastures.

“It seems that the major cause of sown pasture rundown is reduced availability of nitrogen”

Both Stuart and Brian have extensive experience in this field, and this was apparent by the attention and enthusiasm of the participants.

It seems that the major cause of sown pasture rundown is reduced availability of nitrogen. Even soils with a large inherent organic nitrogen supply have been showing symptoms of pasture rundown, and this is because of the lack of mechanisms (soil disturbance, soil microorganisms) to

convert organic nitrogen into plant available nitrogen.

Although potentially highly productive, all sown pasture species will (if not managed properly) show rundown symptoms over time.

Suggested activities to improve sown pastures showing rundown symptoms are ripping or renovation, establishing legumes

into straight grass pastures, and application of nitrogen fertiliser. Management activities would include reduced stocking rates and longer rest periods.

For more information, contact Stuart Buck at Biloela Research Station on 0427 929 187.

Contact Peter @
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Stuart Buck explaining how to go about renewing a rundown sown pasture to the participants at the Miriam Vale workshop

BCCA backs Grazing BMP program

The Grazing BMP program (or Grazing Best Management Practices program) is a voluntary, industry-led process designed to help you to identify practices which may improve the long term profitability and sustainability of your grazing enterprise.

It helps you to identify the steps you may need to take to incorporate best management practices into your enterprise.

In time, with good industry uptake, the Grazing BMP program will also allow the grazing industry, as a whole, to demonstrate good environmental management to the wider community.

BCCA believes the grazing BMP is a quality product with potential benefits for graziers in the Burnett. As such, we are encouraging all graziers to participate in the program. In particular, we request landholders interested in our Reef Rescue program and Carbon Farming Solutions Property Management Planning project to

participate in the Grazing BMP as a precursor to project activities.

The Grazing BMP is a self-assessment process and can be accessed online at www.bmpgrazing.com.au. The program is divided into the following 5 modules -

- Soil Health
- Grazing Land management
- Animal Health & Welfare
- Animal Production
- People & Business

“BCCA believes the grazing BMP is a quality product with potential benefits for graziers in the Burnett”

Peter Crawford, our Reef Rescue Extension Officer, has created a step-by-step instruction guide on how to register and use the grazing BMP site. If you would like a

copy of this guide please contact BCCA on (07) 4166 3898.

If you require assistance to complete your Grazing BMP or if you think we can be of assistance in implementing your associated action plan please let us know.

The Grazing BMP program was an initiative of Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA) with funding under the Federal Government Program, Caring for our Country. Agforce and the Queensland Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry supported, and will continue to support, the development and delivery of Grazing BMP together with FBA.

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GRAZING BMP
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY

REMINDER!!!
IF YOU WANT TO BE KEPT UP TO DATE ON BCCA EVENTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES BECOME A MEMBER!!!
CALL 4166 3898 FOR A MEMBERSHIP FORM!



Burnett Catchment Care Association



BCCA is a community based organisation working on the philosophy of integrated catchment management. Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) is a philosophy that encourages a coordinated approach to the management of natural resources in Queensland. Its overall purpose is to integrate the management of land, water and related biological resources in order to

achieve their sustainable and balanced use.

ICM involves the voluntary actions of stakeholders including government, rural landholders, industry, fisheries and urban dwellers that incorporate the goals of achieving and maintaining a healthy catchment for future generations.

BCCA is a member based organisation. If you'd like to become a member please phone or email the office for a membership form! BCCA derive the majority of our funding and acknowledge support from the Burnett Mary Regional Group and the Australian Governments Caring for our Country program.

We're on the web!
www.betterburnett.com

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CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



Last word...

BCCA has exploded/expanded/multiplied!!! I am extremely pleased with the growth of our organisation in the last 12 months, with four new staff members to join the ranks in that time alone. I particularly welcome Peter and Jenny to the team very recently.

Peter Crawford joins the team to coordinate the new round of Reef Rescue Grazing where he will be very well placed in the centre of the Baffle catchment where priority focuses for the first 12 months at least.

Jenny Voigt will be running our Nitrous Oxide Cropping Research Trial project based in Monto. Research trials are a new avenue of project for the BCCA team, however we have excellent support from BMRG, CQU and the State Government Departments as well as experience in research within the BCCA team.

Flood Recovery is in full swing and I am glad to see significant funding going on ground to support farmers severely affected by the floodplain to help get them back into production.

Fiona and BMRG's Peter Wilson have been

busy visiting a large number of Burnett River citrus farms to assess riverbank erosion and identify opportunities to assist in their restoration. In the new year it is hoped we will have a significant labour force helping to revegetate and restore the River banks in the Mundubbera and Gayndah areas.

"Fiona and BMRG's Peter Wilson have been busy visiting a large number of Burnett River citrus farms to assess riverbank erosion"

I urge Central Burnett landholders to take advantage of the chemical we have available to control weeds spread from the flood, particularly parthenium. I have noticed it become significantly worse at the top of the catchment and I expect as it warms up its presence may become more evident further downstream.

I had privilege to participate in the Threemoon Floodplain Action Planning

Workshops held in early December and I was very impressed with the farmers positive attitude and willingness to work with their neighbours for the best outcome for the floodplain. I am looking forward to the outcomes of the plan developed by the experts due by June 2014.

Marion Denholm has also joined the team and will be coordinating our water quality monitoring project for the North Burnett which is thanks to funding from the Queensland Governments Everyone's Environment grant.

Finally, I encourage anyone interested in natural resource management and our great Burnett to become a member or renew your membership. We are growing in size and our projects and team are diverse. I am looking forward to an appropriately wet summer and our numerous new projects hitting their stride in the new year.

Katie Muller

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