

Southern ACT Catchment Group Coordinators Report 22 May 2012

CfOC Catchment Coordination & Waterwatch Coordination projects

- Reports are due in June.

A Labour of Love:

- The book celebrating over 20 years of Landcare in the ACT is being edited and written by volunteers. There are about 45 groups who have provided their contributions to the book and recently the Editorial Team have begun the process of selecting the photos. We are still waiting on stories representing Aboriginal Landcare and further information from the rural community.

The nature of relying on volunteers means we are a fair bit behind our estimated timetable so we have requested an extension of time beyond September, particularly as the draft will still have to have ACT Heritage input and go to a professional editor. In reality we are probably looking at a launch (potentially by the Chief Minister) next March.

African Lovegrass project:

- Our project CAG10-00356 - *Regional education on African Lovegrass - an integrated approach* is nearing completion, however it would be advantageous to the success of this project if we could receive a six month extension. We largely rely on volunteer effort to undertake such projects and we have had a number of delays in achieving our milestones on time due to some of our volunteers being unable to meet our timeline. This is no reflection on our volunteer effort but rather due to their personal circumstances.

We have achieved a great proportion of our project including:

- Identified areas for priority control through analysis of existing data producing a map indicating the ALG distribution in 2000, undertook surveys to map the 2010 distribution, and provided an estimate for the likely 2020 distribution, based on current control levels. This has resulted in a report on the distribution and abundance of African Lovegrass in the Capital Region and options for strategic control. This report has been very well received by ACT Government and other land managers;
- produced and distributed a poster and associated pamphlet on ALG impacts and actions to reduce these impacts <http://sactcg.org.au/node/611> ;
- in conjunction with other partners placed several articles in the local press with same aim as poster;
- conducted field days in conjunction with other partners to demonstrate best-practice control methods;

- We are yet to finalise our contribution to African lovegrass control trials on nearby farms and add to ALG information on our website and link to other NRM websites.
- Budget expenditure is about 90%. We are also yet to receive a promised donation to the project from one of our partners. Additionally there is the time and work involved to bring everything together to acquit the project.
- Kelly from Gininnderra Catchment Group has put together some 'Place Stories' from participants at the ALG Scottsdale Field Day. These are now on our website.
- Waiting on Ian Chivers (BAGSc MAppSc, PhD) is put together a series of paper on herbicide use on ALG, particularly relating to native grasses.

'Spray Safe and Save' training

- Herbicide use 'Spray Safe and Save' training course is booked for 14/15 July. Organising a plant identification component.

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Mobile QuikSpray Unit

- Mobile QuikSpray Unit available to assist landholders and managers across the ACT or in the Googong or Upper Murrumbidgee catchments (within 50 km south of the ACT border) to undertake weed control. Booked out for all of June and all of November.

Website

- Need to work with Deb Kellock to maintain www.sactcg.org.au

Office

- All current accounts paid as of 22/05/2011.

Other Activities

- Sick Leave (6 weeks)
- Attended UMCCC exec meeting
- Invited to and attended a serrated tussock workshop in Yass last Friday. The workshop was about improving serrated tussock control adoption amongst landholders. The focus was on overcoming barriers to adoption of control practices, and deals with the concept of a community-based weed control programme. The research is funded by RIRDC.
- Kelly Behrens, Ginninderra Catchment Group Coordinator, organised a meeting with ACT Parks and Conservation Service staff who manage and undertake Hazard Reduction Burns within the ACT, to discuss the development of a 'communication strategy' for HRBs. PCS is keen to improve channels of communication between PCS and the public and agreement was reached to continue sending notification of RFS HR Burns. Additionally a meeting will be held in early Spring for PCS staff to speak on the Fire plan. Also discussed was a proposal from GCG, regarding the production of a 'Living with Fire' brochure, to be developed as part of the other 'Living with.....' series of brochures already produced by ACT PCS.
- Submitted an application to ACT Environment Grants entitled *Catchment Wide Pest Species Mapping and Coordinated Control Program*. We have applied for funds to purchase three motorised backpack sprayers and an outdoor PC tablet. This equipment will be 'held' by SACTCG, and loaned out to SACTCG member groups to improve efficiency of weed control within the catchment. Weed control is an ongoing issue addressed through many thousands of volunteer hours each year. The provision of motorised back pack sprayers will enable groups to more efficiently undertake spraying, allowing more weeds to be sprayed. ACT Parks and Conservation Service have agreed to provide training on the use of this equipment, and all users will have a Chemical user accreditation (AQF3/4). The outdoor PC tablet will enable groups to accurately record the location of weeds and pest animal species in areas where they are working, and send this information directly to the ACT Parks and Conservation Service to be integrated into their data systems to assist in more efficiently planning pest plant and animal eradication programs. Ginninderra Catchment Group has applied for similar funding.
- Supported application by Scouts ACT for an ACT Environment Grant to control weeds and rehabilitate native vegetation at Camp Cottermouth. Consequently Camp Cottermouth will become a member of SACTCG.
- Attended WONS grant ANU site application at the Box-Gum Grassy woodlands on the Acton Peninsula.