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1. Mobile Quikspray unit available to landholders

The Southern ACT Catchment Group supported by an ACT Environment Grant has purchased a trailer mounted QuikSpray unit to assist landholders across the ACT to undertake weed control. The 600lt dual hose unit is now available to any rural lease in the ACT and those properties adjacent to the ACT border.

The Southern ACT Catchment Group Inc. offers to lend its mobile Quikspray Unit under a limited number of simple conditions:

1. Unit is to be returned in the same condition as it was lent;
2. Only clean water is to be used in herbicide tank;
3. A small donation per day of lending is requested to be paid to the Southern ACT Catchment Group to assist with unit maintenance, registration and insurance;
4. The borrower agrees to supply as to what weeds were targeted, herbicide, rates and volumes used and the location.

To find out more or book the spray unit contact: Steve Welch on 6296 6400

2. Don't be a Drifter Herbicide spraying workshops

ActewAGL and the ACT NRM Council are to provide funding for herbicide use training organised by SACTCG. Through the catchment group, rural landholders will have free access to high quality chemical use training that will result in more efficient and safe use of herbicide for weed control in rural ACT. The proposed training package with the 'Spray Safe and Save' Company will provide training to land managers in the most efficient weed control practices as well as the economic, health and environmental benefits associated with

correct use of chemicals (see below). The concept is to deliver an advanced practical/theory session in one day, which will include observing, using UV light, droplets of water coloured with dye, applied to stubble, leaves or grasses at different rates, nozzles and pressures. To reinforce the workshop information the day will be followed by small group on-farm half day sessions where spray applicators work with their own equipment and have their questions answered, guided by an experienced operator. Dates are yet to be confirmed but will probably be sometime next May/June. To register your interest contact: Steve Welch on 6296 6400.

3. African Lovegrass Survey

African Lovegrass (ALG) is a highly invasive environmental and agricultural weed in the region. Enhanced education & improved control of ALG infestations were the main recommendations from a recent ALG regional forum run by SACTCG. It is imperative to increase community awareness and capacity to control this weed to stop large areas of the ACT from becoming monocultures. The 'Regional education on African Lovegrass - an integrated approach' project is funded under an Australian Government Community Action Grant, and will produce educational materials on the impacts of ALG, best-practice control & identify priority areas. It will also increase community participation & improve coordination in ALG control and containment.

As part of this project a survey is being undertaken along major roads in the ACT and surrounding NSW. In addition, community members are being asked to send in records of African Lovegrass (and incidental records of other invasive weeds) in other areas of the ACT and surrounding NSW, including Canberra Nature Park, suburban roadsides, urban open space, areas surrounding public buildings etc.

These records will provide a perspective on the current distribution of the species. In 2001 a similar survey was undertaken, but concentrating on the distribution of another highly invasive introduced species, Chilean Needle Grass. The results were extremely helpful in identifying areas where the species occurred, and where it didn't occur (at that stage, it was not found at all in Gungahlin). Because volunteers in 2001 also provided records of sightings of African Lovegrass, this information can assist in comparing the current distribution with the past distribution in a range of sites and across a range of land uses.

Your help is requested, to fill out the survey form at sites where you see African Lovegrass growing, but also in sites that you do not find the grass. Please feel free to contact Sarah Sharp on 0402 576412 or Steve Welch on 6296 6400 about this project. The survey form along with comprehensive information on African Lovegrass and a gallery of AG photos can be found at www.sactcg.org.au/node/348

4. Clean up Australia Day - Tuggeranong Hill

Sunday, 6 March, 2011 – 9am till noon

Tuggeranong Hill needs volunteers!

MEETING PLACE: Callister Cres gate Theodore (near power station)

Please register

at <http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/Tuggeranong+Hill+Reserve>

Hope to see you there!

5. More support for Young Farmers and Rural Women

The Federal Government is calling for applications under a new round of the *Recognising Women Farmers* and *Next Gen Farmers* grants which offer up to \$50,000 (GST exclusive) for activities that promote young people and rural women in agriculture. Read the media release at http://www.maff.gov.au/media-releases/2011/february/more_support_for_young_farmers_and_rural_women

6. Are we closer to a carbon price?

This week, Prime Minister Julia Gillard outlined the Government's plan to cut pollution, tackle climate change and deliver an economic reform to create a cleaner future for Australia. The Government has proposed that a carbon price will commence on 1 July 2012, subject to the ability to negotiate agreement with a majority in both houses of Parliament and pass legislation this year. It is proposed that the carbon price will be introduced in a two-stage plan, starting with a fixed price period for 3 - 5 years, before transitioning into an emissions trading scheme. The Government have said that every cent raised will go towards:

- assisting families with household bills
- helping businesses make the transition to a clean energy economy
- tackling climate change.

We hope that some of the money raised is directed to providing households with the feasibility to access and install various energy efficiency measures. Members of the public and interested parties who wish to provide input on this approach should contact MPCCC@climatechange.gov.au or write to:

The Multi-Party Climate Change Committee Secretariat
GPO Box 854
CANBERRA ACT 2601

To read the full announcement and download a copy of the Carbon Price Mechanism please [click here](#). As a result of confusion concerning the announcement it was later confirmed by the Government that emissions from agricultural sources, legacy waste and forestry will be exempt under the carbon pricing mechanism.

7. Earth Hour 2011

Earth Hour 2011 takes place from 8.30pm on Saturday 26 March. The Theme for Earth Hour this year is 'Going Beyond the Hour'. For the last three years, Canberra has had the highest participation rate of any Australian capital city and it would be great to repeat that success. In 2010, 58% of the ACT population participated in Earth Hour, while 100% were aware of the event. It has also brought about real results. In 2010 it led to a 5.6% reduction in the amount of electricity used in Canberra during Earth Hour, and a reduction of 17.86 tonnes in the amount of greenhouse gas emissions. This is also an opportunity for you to either start or re-energise efforts to make long-term commitments to taking action on climate change, in line with this year's theme of 'Going Beyond the Hour'.

Officially register your participation through the Earth Hour website (www.earthhour.org.au). The website has a range of information on how you can support the event.

Earth Hour Awards have been introduced in 2011. The Awards recognise individuals or organisations that are making a difference to the environment. Individuals or teams can apply themselves, or be nominated, in the following categories:

- Young Panda Award
- Workplace Champions Award
- Future Makers Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Education Award

8. Festival of the Forests

March 20 is set to be an exciting day in the forests of the National Arboretum Canberra with activities for the whole family featuring:

- wondrous, free, guided, fun walks featuring different forests - see how the forests have grown;
- Creative Spirits program of indigenous storytelling, tracking, music making, dancing and crafts;
- tethered balloon rides (weather permitting);
- continuous free hop-on, hop-off bus tours, with guides to tell you about the site;
- passport activities for children;
- interactive displays including about the International Year of the Forest, sustainability and conservation;
- free crafts for the children;
- free kite making and displays;
- key exhibits from the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia;
- free shuttle bus access to activity points;
- guided walk and boat visit to arboreta and gardens starting at Royal Canberra Golf Course - cost approx \$20 - bookings essential on 62887656

This is a construction site and sturdy footwear is recommended.

9.30am to 3.00pm Sunday 20 March

Entry by donation

National Arboretum Canberra, entrance off Lady Denman Drive (underpass of Tuggeranong Parkway).

Contact: (ph) 0406376711 or visit www.canberraarboretum.org.au

Southern ACT Catchment Group will be represented at the Catchment & Landcare Association tent. Interested in helping out – contact Steve Welch 6296 6400

9. Conferences of interest

Registration for the 2011 NCCARF conference is now open:

Date: 6th April - in conjunction with Greenhouse 2011 conference

Location: Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns, North Queensland

People who previously expressed an interest to attend will still need to register using the form here:

<http://www.nccarf.edu.au/conference2011/register-to-attend-the-2011-nccarf-conference>

Delegates attending Greenhouse 2011 will also need to register separately to attend the NCCARF Conference.

Registration is free, but space is limited. If you find you are no longer able to attend please contact us at nccarf@griffith.edu.au so we can reallocate your place. The draft program can be found here:

<http://www.nccarf.edu.au/conference2011/2011-program>

Other conferences which might be of interest are below:

- *Inspiring Science, Inspiring Australia Conference: Telling Australia's brilliant stories*

Melbourne, Australia

28-29th March 2011 <http://iaconference.com.au/>

-3rd International Conference on Climate Change: Impacts and Responses
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
21-22 July 2011 <http://www.Climate-Conference.com>
- 2011 LOICZ -Open Science Conference -Coastal systems, Global Change and Sustainability
Yantai, China
12-15th September 2011 <http://www.loicz-osc2011.org/index.asp>
- Ecological Society of Australia 2011
Hobart, Tasmania
21-25th November 2011 <http://www.esa2011.org.au/index.asp?IntCatId=14>
-2011 International Congress for Conservation Biology
Christchurch, New Zealand
28th Nov - 2nd Dec 2011
<https://www.conbio.org/Sections/Australasia/Meetings.CFM>

10. RabbitScan Mapping Website re-launched for farmers and communities

On Australia Day, the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre in partnership with many key groups released a new and improved RabbitScan website and mapping tool (under the FeralScan program) for farmers, community groups and anyone with a rabbit problem across Australia. Building on the RabbitScan Citizen Science Challenge in 2009 and the ABC Feral Month program (January 2011), the improved RabbitScan website provides a resource for landholders, community groups and pest control officers to map sightings of rabbits, record the damage they cause, and record the control techniques being used to manage rabbits in their local area.

Anybody will be able to use RabbitScan to create a Rabbit Management Map for their property or local area, to assist with on-ground rabbit control and to measure changes in rabbits in response to management actions. The website also provides links to possible funding support, online resources and rabbit control information. Importantly, any sighting data reported in RabbitScan will help to provide a national overview of the rabbit problem for deployment of future control techniques, such as bio-control. To learn more or join RabbitScan, go to www.feralscan.org.au/rabbitscan

11. Landshare Australia - Connecting growers to people

Landshare Australia brings together people who have a passion for home-grown food, connecting those who have land to share with those who need land for cultivating food. The concept of Landshare began in the UK, launched through the River Cottage television program in 2009, and has since grown into a thriving community of more than 57,000 growers, sharers and helpers across the country. Now that Landshare is here in Australia, we welcome you to come and take part in this fantastic initiative. Landshare is for people who:

- * Want to grow vegetables but don't have anywhere to do it;
- * Have a spare bit of land they're prepared to share;
- * Can help in some way – sharing knowledge, lending tools, etc;
- * Support the idea of freeing up more land for growing;
- * Are already growing and want to join in the community;

<http://www.landshareaustralia.com.au/>

12. Request for Offers for Actions for Clean Water (ACWA)

The Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is inviting Request for Offers from suitably qualified providers for Production of a plan to guide actions to improve water quality in the Upper Murrumbidgee River catchment.

The project will undertake all work necessary to develop a plan of action in 1, 3 and 10 year time frames to improve surface water quality and reduce turbidity in the Upper Murrumbidgee River catchment. Actions may include on-ground works, education, promotion, and policy and program development by private sector, government organisations and individuals. Request for Offer documentation and specifications are available on the Murrumbidgee CMA Website

http://www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au/getinvolved/tenders/actions_for_clean_water.aspx

Specific enquiries can be directed to Matt de Jongh, Catchment Coordinator, Murrumbidgee CMA on Phone: 02 6229 7711 mobile: 0429 463 481 or email: matt.dejongh@cma.nsw.gov.au

Applications close 4.00 pm Friday, 11 March 2011.

13. Building Soil Carbon Workshop

If you are a land manager or primary producer with an interest in building soil carbon as a way of managing the effects of climate change, you should come along to workshops being run by the Organic Federation of Australia and supported by the ACT Regional Landcare Facilitator Initiative and the ACT Natural Resource Management. Besides building soil carbon, the workshop also deals with "best practice" methods to mitigate the effects of climate change.

DATE: 27th March 2011

TIME: 9am – 4pm

PLACE: The Shakespeare Centre for Scouting - Camp Cottermouth, 1435 Cotter Road, Stromlo ACT

COST: FREE - The ACT Natural Resource Management Council will subsidise the costs of this workshop to participants.

The workshop will be delivered by Tim Marshall from TM Organics. Tim is Deputy Chair of the Organic Federation of Australia, and has visited more than 3000 organic and organic in conversion properties in 25 countries. He is also the author of numerous books and articles and is a lively and engaging presenter.

The workshop covers

- background to climate change
- how to build the long-lasting forms of soil carbon, humus
- farming strategies that maintain production and sequester

REGISTRATIONS TO:

Sally McIntosh, sally.mcintosh@act.gov.au 62052913 Mobile: 0410 154 126

RSVP by 23rd March 2011 (*for catering purposed*)

14. Friends of Grasslands - Indigenous values workshops

Connecting the community to natural values & resources in the landscape – The workshop will be led by Rod Mason, respected Ngarigo elder and natural resource scientist, and formerly with NSW National Park and Wildlife Service.

Workshop 1 Making string, glue and baskets (Thurs-Fri, 10-11 March, Garuwanga)

Learn:

- How to find, gather, dry and prepare materials.
- How to make string, glue and baskets, important tools and equipment for Indigenous people.
- How to identify plants, their properties and ecology (where to find them and when), and the significance of these plants to Aboriginal people.
- The language used for them and how the plants form part of Aboriginal living and culture.

Date, time & costs

The dates chosen are Thurs-Fri, 10-11 March, and Wed-Thurs, 20- 21 April, from 9.30 sharp to 4.30 each day.

The cost is \$25 for lunches and morning and afternoon tea. For those wishing to stay at Garuwanga before, during or after the workshop, accommodation is free.

To inquire and register please contact Geoff Robertson (geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au or 02 6241 4065).

15.Draft – National Serrated Tussock Strategic Plan released

The draft National Serrated Tussock Strategic Plan has been released and is now open for public comment. The draft Plan builds on previous Strategic Plans and creates a framework to better coordinate management of serrated tussock across Australia. Bronwen Wicks, the National Serrated Tussock Coordinator, is happy to answer any questions, clarify anything that is unclear or give a broader context to what the strategy is trying to achieve. She can be contacted on (02) 4828 6632 or bronwen.wicks@industry.nsw.gov.au. Comments can be made via the website. To look at the document and make comments please go to: <http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/serratedtussock/>

16.The Adequacy of Environmental Releases to the Upper Murrumbidgee River

The Snowy Scientific Committee, has released a report into environmental flows into the Upper Murrumbidgee River from Tantangara Dam near Adaminaby, finding that the river gets only half the environmental flows it needs from the Snowy Mountains with no strategy in place to improve its health. The Snowy Scientific Committee was established under the Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997, to provide advice to the NSW Government on the adequacy of releases of water for environmental reasons following assessment of available information.

For a copy of the report, follow the links:

http://www.snowyssc.org/pdf/ssc_4-2010-adequacy-e-releases-to-upper-murrumbidgee.pdf

17.Websites

Thanks to Deb Kellock the Southern Act Catchment Group website has been undergoing an extensive revamp. Part of the new site includes a shared calendar, so if you send Steve or Martin your events (workparties, etc) We'll ensure they are added to the shared calendar.

The following local websites may interest our members:

- ACT NRM Council - www.actnrmcouncil.org.au
- UMCCC - www.umccc.org.au
- ACT Landcare - www.actlandcare.org.au
- Southern ACT Catchment Group www.sactcg.org.au
- Molonglo Catchment Group www.molonglocatchment.com.au
- Ginninderra Catchment Group www.ginninderralandcare.org.au
- Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach www.upperbidgeereach.org.au

18. Radio Landcare

For an interesting update on local landcare listen to:

2XX FM 98.3 Tuesdays 9 - 10am

QBN FM 96.7 Sundays 8 - 9am

Southern ACT Catchment Group has a regular spot on 2XX every third Tuesday of the month. Contact Steve or Martin if you have a desire to be involved. On Tuesday 19th April, members of the Coleman Ridge Park Care Group will be on air to help celebrate the group's 20th birthday.