

News



Executive members of the Lower Lachlan Stock and Domestic and Basic Water Right Users met with the Lachlan Catchment Management Authority.

New group to lobby water rights

Frustration over water rights has seen a new group formed in the lower Lachlan region.

The Lower Lachlan Stock and Domestic and Basic Water Right Users held their formation meeting in Lake Cargelligo recently.

During the meeting they set down their agenda and elected executives. The group was formed in response to those in the community, and landholders who were denied access to the waters of the Lachlan River from last November

when a Temporary Water Order was placed on the river south of Condobolin.

Publicity officer Patti Bartholomew said they would like to see representation for stock and domestic water users present at the decision making level.

The group is also lobbying for financial help and compensation for landholders who have had to bear the costs of implementing an alternative water source after the Lachlan's flows were restricted.

Pilot program set to identify area assets

Community members have come together to pinpoint the important areas of their catchment.

A pilot program being run by the Central West Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has taken another step forward.

The Investment Framework for Environmental Resources or INFFER program is helping the Central West CMA identify and prioritise their catchment assets.

Catchment co-ordinator Jen Shearer said they began the process by holding a series of community workshops to get input from local residents on areas they considered significant.

"We got quite a good roll-up," Ms Shearer said.

From there, they gathered some 500 locations of interest.

The second step in the process was held recently with key stakeholders and experts in the field meeting in Dubbo to filter each asset.

Six teams, made up of members from the Central West catchment and environmental authorities assessed areas under the categories of native vegetation, biodiversity, land, cultural heritage, water and wetlands.

"We look at each asset and its level of significance, current threat, is it under threat and to what extent, and based on answers it gives us an idea of what areas have high signifi-



Regional director for Industry and Investment NSW Greg Markwick, Central West CMA catchment co-ordinator Jen Shearer, Central West CMA chair Tom Gavel, Sam Hamilton of Watershed Landcare, and INFFER facilitator Geoff Park.

cance," Ms Shearer said.

"This can help us improve our planning process, identify assets, and assist in reviewing our catchment action plan, and set the direction for the CMA."

Ms Shearer said in many cases, just because an area does not make it through this filtering process does not mean it will be ignored.

"Sometimes we may find we don't know enough about an area," she said.

"It might mean we need more research on the area so we can come back to it in the future."

The INFFER project, which is

also being used by the Namoi CMA, was facilitated by Victorian consultant Geoff Park.

Mr Park said this was a process which is becoming more popular with natural resource managers throughout Australia.

"The reality is there is not enough money to do everything we'd like to do," Mr Park said.

"We need to focus on projects that are significant, give significant benefits and that people can engage with.

Central West CMA chair Tom Gavel said he was impressed the amount of knowledge gathered throughout the process.



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