

## **CARBON PLAN HAS HILLS**

### **LIVE AGAIN**

*A report by Kathleen Donaghey published in the Gold Coast Bulletin on 6<sup>th</sup> May.*

SCOTT Hunter hopes the bare hills just outside Rathdowney will soon be green with trees as carbon offset schemes ramp up native planting in old farming country.

On the 400ha Minjelha Dhagun farm he manages, another 60,000 native eucalypts have just been planted by a company that sells carbon offsets to those with a green conscience. The new trees will counter-balance car pollution from individuals and companies, such as Telstra and AAMI, which pay for the service. Victorian-based Greenfleet, which also sells the carbon offsets to the Queensland Government for its car fleet, paid for the trees and their planting.

"It's always been the dream of the people who own this land to heal it, if you like, bring it back as much as possible to what it was before European settlement," said Mr Hunter. "If we were to try to plant this many trees ourselves it could easily be \$60,000 for the trees alone, plus the labour -- it could easily cost you \$90,000. This way, Greenfleet gets the carbon credits and we get the trees."

Minjelha Dhagun farmhands will now voluntarily weed and monitor the eucalypts.

Buying carbon credits or offsets is a growing trend among individuals and businesses that want to reduce emissions in a roundabout sort of way. A Greenfleet spokeswoman said about 12,000 individuals and 1000 companies Australia-wide were already offsetting their carbon emissions by paying Greenfleet to plant

trees. Greenfleet then finds willing organisations and farms to provide the land and care for the plants.

Federal Climate Change Minister Penny Wong has detailed a timetable to begin national emissions trading in 2010, starting with a round of consultations with industry and organisations between now and next month.

A Green Paper will be publicly released in July. Ms Wong said emissions trading would put a cap on the amount of pollution Australia would produce.

Until such a scheme gets up, however, land lovers like Mr Hunter are keenly taking advantage of the free trees. Minjelha Dhagun is nestled at the foot of Mt Barney. The farm is a co-operative of eight indigenous clans from the Yugambah language group.

Over the years, trees have been gradually planted to stop erosion and to welcome back wildlife to the land, which for too long had been bare from clearing and grazing. "Now we have birds and wallabies again and you also see koalas."

However, Mr Hunter said few farms were yet to follow their lead, although that would change if it became possible for land owners to directly earn money from the offsets.

## **AERIAL SPRAYING** **INVESTIGATIONS CONTINUE**

A number of government agencies continue to investigate the aerial spraying incidents which allegedly caused property and environmental damage in the Kerry and Darlington areas in April and May of this year. Among the agencies investigating



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# NEWSLETTER

August 2008



*"The Logan-Albert Waterways will be an increasingly healthy ecosystem supporting the livelihoods and lifestyles of residents and visitors."*

the incidents are the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, the Department of Health and the Department of Natural resources and Energy. Until the investigations are completed, little will be known about actual damage, and further action.

A meeting in May facilitated by LACA, and chaired by Andy Grodecki (President, LACA), provided a forum for community members to air their concerns. The meeting was also attended by representatives of state and local government, and the debate centred on discussing what had actually happened, and what should be done about it.

As recently as last month, LACA requested that government agencies provide a statement about the progress of the investigations. As yet, there has been no response.



### LARC WEBSITE



Members are reminded that the LARC website is fully operational. Please take the time to revisit the website regularly, and consider using it to profile your group's activities by submitting a page with relevant content, photos and logo. Please contact LARC for help with this.

### LARC MEMBERSHIP

All healthy organisations require regular renewal of the membership and the serving executive. A letter has been emailed to LARC member organizations inviting them to identify ways to improve participation in our association, and requesting:

- A review of the role of representatives to LARC
- A formal engagement with all the organisations across the catchment

from each sector to provide information about the work of LARC and invite their additional representation to LARC.

- A review of known organisations in each sector to identify new or obsolete organisations.

*Thank you to those who have responded.*

The new NATIONAL WATER WEEK website has been launched! Start planning and register your water conservation and education activities now!  
 Visit: [www.nationalwaterweek.org.au](http://www.nationalwaterweek.org.au)  
 Sponsorship opportunities available.  
 Contact AWA Communications Manager on (02) 9467 8416.

### **For Your Diary**

<b>Regional Planning Forum 19 August</b>
<b>Wildlife Expo.</b> 12 -13 September. Beaudesert Information and Arts Centre
<b>2008 SEQ Living Landscapes Forum</b> 10-12 September, Boonah
<b>Landcare Week 1-7 September</b>
<b>Coastcare Week 1– 7 December</b>

### **Meeting Schedule**

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Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 7:00 pm (AGM)

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Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 7:00 pm

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#### **Executive meetings:**

6<sup>th</sup> October; 1<sup>st</sup> December

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#### **Request for contributions.**

Please send news, photos, and details about coming events for inclusion in regular newsletters to:

[shirley.chambers@bigpond.com](mailto:shirley.chambers@bigpond.com)

**This space reserved for your group's updates!**