

## GrazingFutures Narrative

### Maps and Apps at Mitchell

On 29-30 July, members of the Mitchell Landcare group hosted and attended two on-property events including Mulga Belt, approximately 30 minutes south of Mitchell, and Havelock approximately 30 minutes to the north.

Both events were well attended by livestock (cattle, sheep and goat) producers and neighbours, and like most events of this format, attendees appeared more comfortable in asking questions and participating in group discussion.

Presentations on the day included:

**Jed Sommerfield** (Extension Officer, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries) discussed property management maps, both digital and hard copy. This included practical examples of a wall map, what it can display and how producers can use it to make better plans and decisions. He also featured mapping apps, mapping functions and related information, for use by producers in the paddock to make more informed, accurate decisions.

**Rachel Buckley** (Natural Resource Management Officer, Department of Resources) presented the functions and content of the Department of Resources website. This included the current vegetation management codes, vegetation management maps, the use of these maps and what these maps mean for producers on the ground.

As part of her role with Mitchell Landcare, Maree Tulley organised with Rachel to create a Supporting Map including regional ecosystem labels for all property owners in attendance. Maree, with assistance from Rachel and Jed, then worked with the attendees to download the mapping app and their map, to their phone. The attendees were then able to see their property on their phone, have a practice and ask questions while still at the workshop.

Naturally, there were some unforeseen complications and not all attendees were successful in downloading the app, or the maps. However, the majority did and generally speaking this was a successful process. Lessons learnt from this process included: ensuring the correct cords are available for transferring files; checking attendee devices can support the technology; and, not relying on Wi-Fi or hotspot for high speed transfers.

Judging from the questions asked during the presentation and comments on the feedback forms, attendees were very interested in the presentations and related well to the content delivered which will result in on-ground practice change. Examples of planned changes and comments:

- maps and apps will be used for veg management, property directions and stock management.
- Better management of ground cover, fodder harvesting etc.
- Better planning with printed maps, visual aids and digital images.
- Look forward to using the mapping apps to apply to our property
- (more information) carbon – independent advice and methodology.
- Great group/peer sharing of ideas and issues.



- Hold more events to keep us up-to-date. Really good day, needs to be more like this to keep people up-to-date.

Comments which identified areas for improvement are:

- More mapping services.
- A more in-depth session on how we can map our own property ourselves rather than sending it off
- Being notified of changes to the vegetation management legislations
- Stop the side conversation
- Would have been better to have more focus on this area (Brigalow and Pine) rather than mulga country – comment from attendee at Havelock.

From conversations on the day and feedback received, there are several attendees who are interested in follow-up, and there are potential case studies in the next 6-12 months as producers implement changes on their properties. Case study examples range from a wall map showing infrastructure for simple record keeping and planning; ground truthing mapping for timber harvesting; and calculating and monitoring stocking rates.

A summary of the workshop attendees and feedback is included in Table 1. Table 2 details the size and variety of livestock operations represented at both workshops.

Table 1. Participant feedback from Mulga Belt and Havelock workshops.

	Attendees	Businesses	Satisfaction rating (1-10)	Value rating (1-10)	New knowledge /skills (% of attendees?)	Change average (1-7)*	Change very likely (attendees?)
Mulga Belt	10	4	9.4	9.2	100	6.1	4
Havelock	15	10	8.1	8.2	100	5.8	1
<b>Totals and averages</b>	<b>25 (total)</b>	<b>14 (total)</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5 (total)</b>
*Change scale (1-7). 1 - very unlikely to 7 - is very likely.							

Table 2. Participant feedback from Mulga Belt and Havelock workshops.

	Producers new to GF	Hectares	Cattle	Sheep	Goats	Wool bales
Mulga Belt	5	54,405	10,670	2,000	17,500	50
Havelock	9	325,430	32,610	70,000	7,000	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>379,835</b>	<b>43,280</b>	<b>72,000</b>	<b>24,500</b>	<b>550</b>

Additional noteworthy points include:

- The facilities at Mulga Belt rival and surpass many town halls. Jodie Noon's dance studio seen in the photos below, is a large room with a professional grade projector which projects a large clear image. It can be seen in the background of the group photo (Figure 6) that there is another building under construction. When completed this will be a catering, kitchen and entertaining area, making this a fantastic venue for future events.
- In attendance on both days were representatives from the Rural Fire Service, Wayne Ford and Adam Moss. From conversations with them and their feedback forms, they will be in contact to collaborate in the future. They are especially interested in the Department of Environment and Science Long Paddock services. The capacity to remotely measure and

monitor ground cover, tree cover and bare ground in relation to mitigation burns and fuel load monitoring is vital to some of their decision making processes.

This event was organised and facilitated by Maree Tulley of the Mitchell Landcare Group and delivered in collaboration between the Department of Resources and Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.



Figure 1 & 2. Attendees at Havelock.



Figure 3. Rachel Buckley, presenting at Havelock



Figure 4. Jed Sommerfield presenting at Mulga Belt



Figure 5. Attendees and presenters at Mulga Belt





Figure 6. Jodie Noon's dance studio and projector.

Created by: Jed Sommerfield

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