



Northern United Forestry Group

Monthly Meeting. Raywood Hotel, 8pm Wednesday 27 September 2006

1 Welcome and Apologies

Chair John Toll declared the meeting open at 8:10pm.

Present: Rob Comer, Darren Bain, Mal Brown, Darren Kerr, Tim Johns, Andy Hay, Ken Wellard, Louise Wellard, Phil Dyson, John Toll.

Apologies: James Williams, Lindsay Cail, Ian Rankin, Mal Johnson, Prue Borschmann, Zoe Toll.

Motion: "That the apologies be accepted." Moved Mal Brown. Seconded Darren Kerr. Carried.

2 Minutes of previous meeting held 23 August 2006

Motion: "That the minutes of the meeting held at the Raywood Golf Club 23 August 2006, be accepted as a true and accurate record of what took place at the meeting." Moved Mal Brown. Seconded Darren Kerr. Carried.

3 Business arising

- ♦ Chainsaw operators course. Places also available in a second course run by the Inglewood Community centre, mid November (2 weeks after 1st course).
- ♦ Of members who applied for free places at the International Landcare conference, 2 were successful; Mal Brown and Penny Wall. Places were drawn from all those who applied.
- ♦ Sign for Leichardt complete, as is the permit from Loddon shire to place the sign. Web site needs to have a link added with the story of Mal's plantation prior to placing the sign.
- ♦ More good work on the website has been done by Phil Dyson, many members commented that they were pleased with the improvements.
- ♦ NLP funding has been applied for. The proposal is based on better understanding of the water balance on member properties with respects to climate change. This will involve measuring various elements of the water movement on properties, funding of ~\$111K has been requested with equivalent in kind from members involved. The proposal is to be circulated with the minutes. Ian Linley provided great feedback and support with compiling the proposal.

4 Correspondence In

- ♦ Permit application approval for signage at Leichardt.
- ♦ NRIG acceptance of funding application.

5 Correspondence Out

- ♦ Application for Permit for signage at Leichardt.
- ♦ NRIIG funding application.

Motion: "That the correspondence be accepted." Moved Andy Hay. Seconded Darren Bain. Carried.

6 Reports

- ♦ President's report – John Toll reported on the wood milling field day held at his property. Saw logs were collected largely from what people in the area were going to throw away or burn. Logs milled included Red Gum, Dutch elm, Silky oak, Lemon Scented Gum and Pear. Lindsay Cail performed the milling with his Lucas mill. A report on the amounts and quality of timber milled will be available on the website. Barry Donchi from Nullarbor Timbers is storing and drying the timber milled and has invited NUFG members to a field day to inspect the dried timbers in January 2007. John also reported that he has planted 1500 Tuarts (a type of eucalypt) from WA origin on his property for farm forestry/biodiversity. Planting of 3000 more trees will be conducted on Friday.
- ♦ Treasurer's report – Rob Comer reported on NUFG's income and expenditure as at 27 September 2006.

Motion: "That the Treasurer's report at 27 September 2006 be approved and that accounts received be approved for payment." Moved Rob Comer. Seconded Louise Wellard. Carried.

- ♦ Social Secretary report – not present.
- ♦ Kamarooka report – Mal Brown gave a comprehensive report on the status of the proposed animal monitoring trial comparing 200 lambs on the revegetated saline land against 200 lambs on the normal farm regime. More detail on Mal's report is attached. Phil Dyson discussed the groundwater response following rains in mid July. The watertable has remained at raised levels since that rain, overall groundwater has risen about 1m on average. About half the bores are exhibiting groundwater within 1.5m of the ground surface. No rainfall recording data has been uploaded for the last 2 months due to hardware/software malfunction.

Motion: "That the reports be accepted." Moved Phil Dyson. Seconded Rob Comer. Carried.

7 General Business

- ♦ Darren Bain presented the booklet "Productive Trees Healthy Landscapes."
- ♦ Phil Dyson stated that the "Trees for profit" program via CSIRO had produced a document outlining such information as the wood value of Occidentalis. Phil will bring a copy to the next meeting.
- ♦ John Toll mentioned a publication by K R Bootle "Wood In Australia" which gives a variety of data on the uses and physical properties of native timbers. John will bring a copy to the next meeting.

- ♦ Mal Brown mentioned on behalf of Trevor Barker that the 2nd generation landcare grants were again asking for proposals. Ken Wellard took a copy with respects applying for the education elements of the funding on behalf of the group.
- ♦ The Landcare dinner at St Arnaud was attended by NUGF members, they found the evening to be an excellent networking event.
- ♦ Rob Comer gave an update of the status of the sandalwood plantation being trialled on his property. Acacia was direct seeded as the host plant, and sandalwood planted close by.
- ♦ Darren Bain spoke about the Farm Forestry field day at Charlton. The event was well attended (80 people) and included events such as the milling of a large red gum saw log. Shaun Quayle and Paul Turnbull both presented on the day.

8 Meeting closed at 9:07 pm

9 Next Meeting

Raywood Golf Club, 8pm Wednesday 25 October 2006.

NUFG Kamarooka Project

Progress report to NUGF September 2006 meeting

1) Grazing trial

Approval sought for project under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*.

Continued to liaise with Max Campbell, Executive Officer Wildlife and Small Institutions Animal Ethics Committee (WSI AEC), and Alan Fried, Bureau of Animal Welfare, DPI, Attwood.

I have submitted the following documents to Max Campbell:

- 1) Identification of Organisation and Eligibility Criteria for Access to the AEC Service (2 pages).
- 2) Application for Approval to Conduct Research and Teaching Using Live Animals (15 pages).

I have submitted the following document to Alan Fried, Bureau of Animal Welfare, DPI, Attwood:

- 1) An application for the issue of a Scientific Procedures Fieldwork Licence (4 pages plus fee).

WSI AEC meeting is on 12 October 2006. We should know the outcome soon after 12 October.

Biometrics

- Met with Biometrician Leigh Callinan, Bendigo Scientific Data Analysts, who has agreed to continue advising the project and assist with data analysis and interpretation, pending WSI AEC approval.
- Leigh has provided sets of random numbers for sampling lambs.

Blood sampling

- Met with Dr Alan Campey, Veterinarian, who will take the blood samples before and after the trial, pending WSI AEC approval.

Lambs and the trial

- Gathered brief farm history and details of lambs from Andy Hay. Actual start date of trial, pending WSI AEC approval, will depend on regrowth of saltbush.
- Delivered weigh crate and load bars to Andy Hay on 12 September.

2) Farm Forestry Plantation

- On 12 September Don and I replanted 300 *E. occidentalis* in the 2005 plantation.
- James Williams offered to spray competing ryegrass using a selective herbicide.

3) Communication

- Continued work on Communication Strategy (almost complete)
- Continued work on Ian Rankin's powerpoint presentation for the International Landcare Conference on 11 October 2006.

4) Project Management

- Submitted an updated Project Schedule for 2006/07 to Paula Camenzuli, NCCMA, on 15 September.
- Developed application for 2006/07 Natural Resources Innovation Grant funding of \$111,400 for farming systems research on NUGF member properties in response to climate change. Input provided by Ian Rankin, Phil Dyson and Tim Johns.

Mal Brown
27 September 2006

Kamarooka Groundwater Monitoring Report and website development

September 2006

Phil Dyson

- (1) Groundwater monitoring was not completed for the month of August as a consequence of me (Phil) being ill with a bad case of flu.
- (2) Rainfall records for the past two months have been downloaded but at present there is a small communication problem with the hand held recorder preventing the information from being uploaded to the computer. The problem is being discussed with the manufacturers and we expect it to be resolved in the near future. No data will be lost as a consequence of this malfunction.
- (3) Manual watertable measurements were completed on 26 September and the results appear in graphical format at the end of this report. In general the rise in watertable experienced following the mid July rainfall has persisted and watertables are around one metre shallower than they were prior to the event.
- (4) The watertable records show that the salinity problem is sensitive to rainfall. It is very apparent that drought induced deeper watertables beneath saline land are likely to rebound with any return of normal seasonal rainfall patterns.
- (5) The tree plantations are now reaching a level of maturity that may dictate a level of watertable control. Watertable measurements over the next two to three years will be particularly interesting in this regard.

Website development

- (1) The revised and restructured website continues to attract favourable comment and is seen as a great improvement.
- (2) Vegetation survey page has been re-structured, and a trial 'movie' approach has been adopted.
- (3) A new page has been added under 'Farm Forestry' discussing the trial milling recently conducted at Gunbower.
- (4) NUFG meeting minutes continue to be loaded to the website under 'About NUFG

NUFG members should feel free to contact me (Phil) to discuss potential additions to the website. You can call me on 5442 2631 or e-mail me at pdyson@netcon.net.au.

Kamarooka Watertable Monitoring (Manual)

