

A new pipeline scheme

In December 2011 Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd were granted Federal funding for a new Wah Wah Stock & Domestic Pipeline scheme. Under this scheme, the existing open channels and ground tanks feeding the Wah Wah District will be replaced by a system of troughs, fed by pressurised pipelines.

This new pipeline scheme will affect approximately 150 properties covering over 300,000 hectares to the north of Hay, and is anticipated to reduce transmission losses during water delivery.

More information about the scheme can be obtained from Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd. <http://www.mirrigation.com.au/>



*Above: Sheep drinking from a ground tank.
Right: water delivered by open channel.
Photos: M. Herring*

Interested in getting involved?

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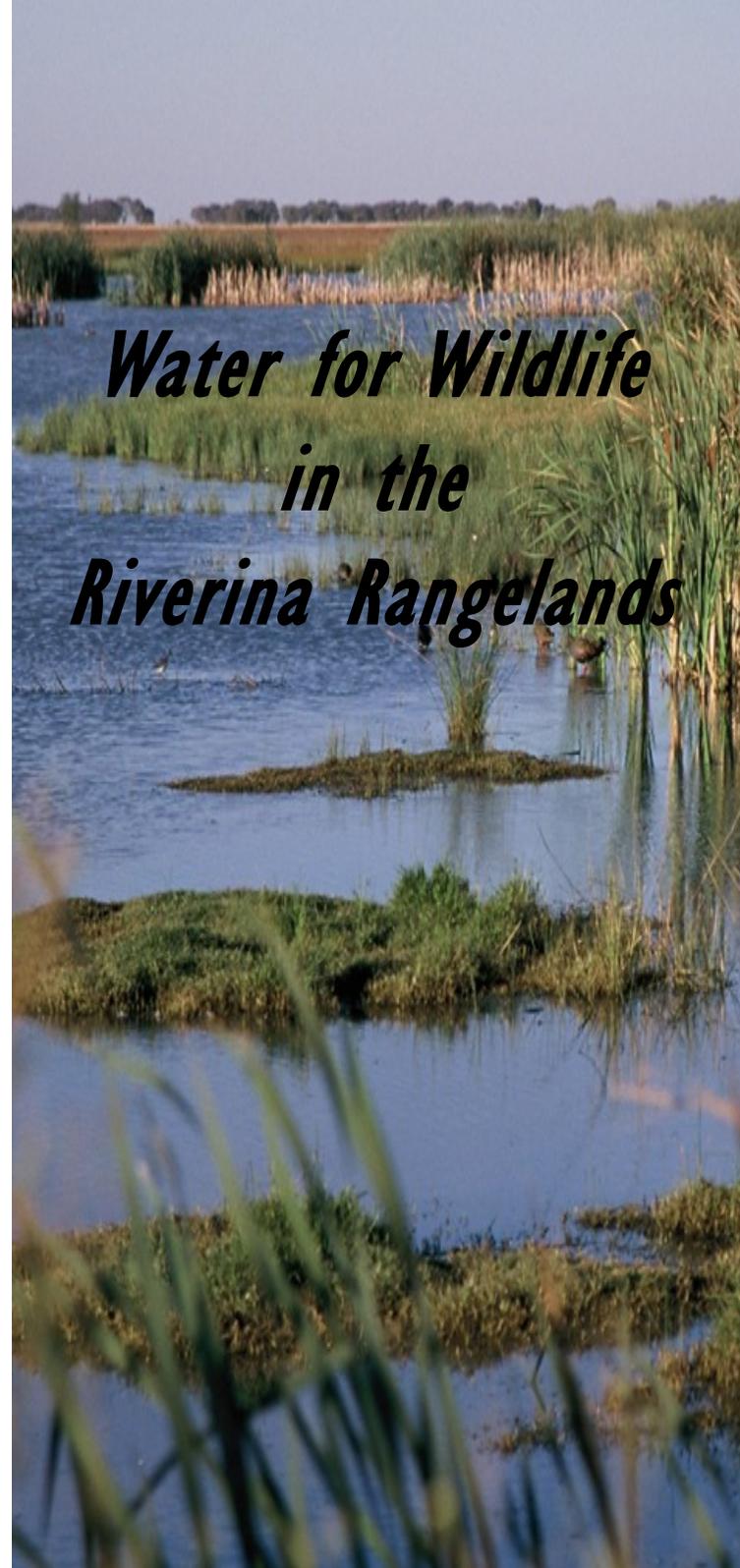
Regional Landcare Facilitator

Hosted by Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporated
for the Murrumbidgee region



Hay Trees on Plains Landcare

*Cover: A healthy farm tank doubling as a small wetland.
Photo: M. Herring*



*Water for Wildlife
in the
Riverina Rangelands*



Left: The Australasian Bittern is a threatened species that relies on inland Wetlands - including well vegetated farm tanks - for survival. Photo:

Wah Wah Wildlife: From Tanks to Troughs

When the new Wah Wah Pipeline scheme was proposed, members of Hay Trees on Plains Landcare and the Western Wah Wah Water Users Association became concerned about what impacts this may have on local wildlife. With assistance from Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority, ecologist Matthew Herring was hired in September 2011 to assess the wildlife value of tanks in the Wah Wah District. This survey discovered almost 100 species of native birds, frogs, mammals and reptiles associated with Wah Wah tanks, including the threatened White-fronted Chat.

A summary of Herring's findings was published in the document *Wah Wah Wildlife: From Tanks to Troughs* and presented to members of the local community at a family information evening hosted by Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc in January 2012. Suggestions for on-farm options to mitigate habitat loss resulting from the new pipeline system were presented alongside the findings of the ecological survey. This information will be utilised and expanded upon as part of the Caring for Our Country *Water for Wildlife in the Riverina Rangelands* project.



Native hens. Photo: K. Beattie

Water for Wildlife in the Riverina Rangelands

In July 2012 Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc and Hay Trees on Plains Landcare received a Caring for Our Country grant to fund the *Water for Wildlife in the Riverina Rangelands* project.

The goal of this project is to demonstrate a number of options available to local landholders to mitigate the impact on native wildlife of the new Wah Wah Stock & Domestic Pipeline.



A harp trap for surveying bats in a tank near Hay. Photo: M. Herring

Who can get involved?

Private landholders whose properties will be affected by the Wah Wah Stock & Domestic Pipeline Scheme will be given first priority for involvement in the project. However, the best-practice guide and community workshops will be accessible to all interested members of the local community.

What will be done?

Best-practice Guide – An ecologist will be contracted to develop a best-practice guide to implementing wetlands and ponds as wildlife refugia on public and private land. This will be made freely available to members of the local public.

Tanks to Wetlands – Existing tanks on properties will be assessed according to their current and potential value as wildlife habitat. Selected tanks of high ecological value will be converted into constructed wetlands and retained as habitat.

Wildlife Ponds – Earthworks, vegetation with locally indigenous wetland species, and fencing will be carried out to construct several small ponds on private land, close to existing tanks. These ponds will serve as refugia for wildlife when the tanks are eventually decommissioned.

Community workshops – Two workshops, including field visits to the converted tanks and ponds, will be delivered free of charge to interested landholders in the Wah Wah District. These workshops will present the information and reasoning behind the project and the best-practice guide, and will assist landholders in developing the skills and knowledge to implement similar mitigation measures on their own properties.



Photo: David Webb