

JULY, 2006

MURTHO ROAD IRRIGATORS

COMMITTEE NEWS

Welcome to the July edition of the Murtho Road Irrigators quarterly newsletter.

The committee has been very busy recently, reading the first draft of the Paringa Murtho Strategic Environment Initiative, making sure that all community comments have been included. They were pleased with the content and will soon be releasing a summary document. They are also putting together a Irrigator's Information Tour to another district. See page 4.

SAMRIC

The South Australian Murray Darling Basin Resource Information Centre (SAMRIC) provides mapping products and services to assist with the sustainable development of the region.

Supported by the Local Action Planning Association, the SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board, local Regional Development Boards, the Murray Mallee Local Government Association and the SA Government; SAMRIC aims to develop the mapping capabilities of those involved with managing the basin.

SAMRIC provides mapping services relating to water, soil, biodiversity, climate, infrastructure and property ownership, and has access to a large range of information to assist industry, government and the community. Assessment of soil types, salinity impacts, climatic conditions, crop suitability, infrastructure requirements, land use, zoning, and access restrictions can significantly enhancing decision-making capacity and provide for better resource management.

The centre uses the latest Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and can produce high quality printed and digital maps for a variety of applications. Whether its using the latest satellite imagery to produce a regional overview or areal photography for detailed property assessments GIS is a powerful visualization tool.

For more info about SAMRIC's services visit www.samric.org.au or contact the Loxton office on 85844622.



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SIS PROGRESS

While funding for Murtho has been approved and it is agreed the scheme will be built, there are many steps required before there is agreement to start scheme construction. The first step was the development of an individual Murtho Submission (initially Pike and Murtho has been submitted jointly). This was completed by the SIS group in May. The second step was a Technical Working Group "Dry Run" – This is a selected group of people from the Commission Technical Committee who aim to iron out as many possible issues from the submission before it is provided officially to the Commission Technical Working Group. The feedback from the "Dry Run" provided at the end of June focussed primarily on the following points;

- The design of the disposal pipeline
- Capital Cost Estimates
- Economic Analysis & particularly values of EC
- Potential impacts on Sunset National Park from Noora disposal basin

The detailed feedback has delayed the Murtho SIS submission to the Commission Technical Working Group, which was scheduled to take place by the 9th of July. All attempts will be made to seek out of session comment from the Technical Working Group to assist in keeping to the timelines. After the Commission Technical Working Group we will still require approval from the Commission Natural Resource Management Group, followed by the Murray Darling Basin Commission and finally the Ministerial Council. Our aim is to submit to the Ministerial Council by September 06.

The public works submission which is a State Government requirement has been delayed following the increased workload generated by issues raised in the "Dry Run". This will be focussed on once the points above are addressed.

Renee Webster

Salinity Team Coordinator, DWLBC

(Ph: 8595 2235)

CROP SURVEY'S

Its that time of year again. The crop survey process has once again commenced. Tahlee is contacting ALL growers in the Murtho district to update their crop/irrigation information now.

If you wish to get your survey completed ASAP then you are urged to contact Tahlee at the Renmark LAP office on 8586 4346 to organise a time to meet or just to inform her of either no changes or any small changes to your crops or irrigation infrastructure between July 1st 2005 and June 31st 2006.

ENVIRONMENTAL WATER DONATION

The South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board has recently made a call for individuals and organisations wishing to donate water (either temporarily or permanently) for environmental purposes.

In past years, there has been a keen interest in the donation of water to the environment, but there has not been a coordinated approach to receiving donations and ensuring that the water is being applied to priority sites. In response to community expectations, the Board has introduced the registration of interest process. The aim is to have a system that is simple, transparent and accountable to enable the donations of water for environmental purposes and, where possible, to align environmental projects with specific donations.

Registering an interest to donate using a 'Water Donation Registration of Interest' form does not bind the potential donor, it simply provides the Board with information to assist in annual planning and helps the Board understand the preferences of the water donor in relation to the use of their water and when the water is likely to be available.

Donations may be eligible for a NRM levy refund.

To assist in planning, it would be appreciated if potential donors could complete a 'Water Donation Registration of Interest' form and return it to the SA MDB NRM Board by 4th August 2006. Note the Board may make additional calls for water donations during the water use year based on environmental need.

For further information and a Water Donation Registration of Interest form, please contact the **SA MDB NRM Board on 8582 4477**.

COMMUNITY MEETING

A community meeting will be held within the next two months for the release of the Paringa and Murtho Strategic Environment Initiative. At this stage a date has not been set as we are still awaiting the finalising and printing of the final document. If you are interested in attending the meeting or would like to be notified of when the meeting will be occurring please register your name at the Renmark to the Border LAP office by calling Tahlee on 8586 4346.

CAUSEWAY ROAD - CULVERT BRIDGE UPGRADE



Before - 3 large pipes allowing for water flow



During installation



After — as it is now, increased flow and fish passage

IRRIGATOR INFORMATION TOUR

The Murtho Road Irrigators, Pike River Land Management Group and the Renmark to the Border LAP will be holding an irrigators information tour later this year. The tour is planning to see;

- **Menindee Lakes**
 - a presentation will be given by Micheal Arandt (Snr. Manager) on how the lakes are managed and future works for the lakes.
- **Great Darling-Anabranh Pipeline Project**
 - Keith Forster will talk about the fundamentals of the project, what they did, any mistakes, and what they would change
 - Dept. of Commerce (NSW Govt. managing the project) will talk about the process they went through to undertake the project
 - We will also hopefully speak to the contractor undertaking the works and view the pipeline going in (3km/day)
- **Stay the night at the Pooncarie Inn**
- **Wentworth**
 - Viewing of the junction of where the Anabranh and Darling rivers meet (pumping infrastructure etc.)
- **Lake Victoria**
 - We will see how the system operates and how water levels are maintained to sustain irrigation in South Australia

The tour will have an over night stay, with all travel, accommodation and meals paid for. The tour will leave **Friday 1st , 7am at the LAP office and return home on Saturday at approx. 1pm.**

The Murtho Road Irrigators would like to invite community members along on the tour. If this interests you please give Tahlee a call at the LAP office on 8586 4346 and register your interest.

LAP Contact Details

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