

Fresh future for water: Salinity management for public water resource protection in Western Australia

The Water and Rivers Commission has lead responsibility for salinity management in five Water Resource Recovery Catchments under the State Salinity Action Plan. The current approach is based on partnership with the community for mutual benefit.



**WATER
AND RIVERS
COMMISSION**

Reaching the water quality targets for Water Resource Recovery Catchments

What are we doing?

The Commission's management of these catchments is based on partnership with the community for mutual benefit.

How?

Targets for catchment water balance and drinking quality water in each of the Recovery Catchment rivers will be set.

Property and catchment plans based on robust salinity risk assessments are to be prepared.

Land management decisions will be made on Best Practice information endorsed by Recovery Teams that have strong local community representation.

Solutions need to combine farming system productivity with water quality management.

Cost sharing arrangements will be negotiated based on a private benefit: public benefit ratio.

Win-Win outcomes

Landholders have the potential for increased profitability as an outcome of better catchment management for salinity control.

The government should meet the needs for public water supplies in a cost effective way.



Wellington Dam

Warren Salinity Catchments Recovery Team

Wade Andersen	William Harvey	Digby Stretch
Peter Coffey	Glen Mead	Mark Synnot
Chris Evans	Tom Muir	Rob Wilson

Wayne Tingey	<i>Water and Rivers Commission</i>
John Glauert	<i>Agriculture Western Australia</i>
Rod Simmons	<i>Department of Conservation and Land Management</i>

Collie River Catchment Recovery Team

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John Platt (Bunbury), Brett Ward (Albany)

Regional Information Officers:

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Alex Waterhouse

Right hand half of this panel is scrap
as **Recovery Catchment Teams** panel
is only A3 size

Lucerne

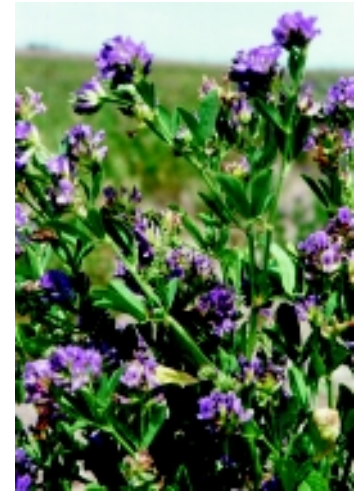
A water management tool to combat salinity

Major benefits for salinity management are expected where farmers are able to establish lucerne. Substantial reductions in groundwater levels have been shown where lucerne is grown. Uses of lucerne include cutting for hay, fattening lambs, supplementary feed and rotational grazing.

Farmers in three water resource recovery catchments are being provided with an opportunity to develop their skills in establishing lucerne.

The demonstrations are on the properties of five growers in the Collie catchment, nine in the Upper Warren and ten in the Kent Catchment.

The Water and Rivers Commission will share the establishment costs for this demonstration. The farmers are being supported in their venture with agronomic information from Agriculture Western Australia and WA Lucerne Growers Association.



Lucerne

*(Photo supplied by
Lisa Blacklow)*



Drilling rig in action with samples

***Right: Airborne geophysics—
helicopter and “bird”***

Mobrup

Salinity risk assessment

Groundwater investigations to establish salinity risk into the future in the Warren Recovery Catchment are paving the way for effective catchment planning.

Mobrup, near Kojonup, is one of six sub-catchments in the Warren Recovery Catchment. It is also WA’s second oldest LCDC.

Mobrup is the first sub-catchment under the Commission’s Salinity Management Program to develop a catchment plan. A salinity risk assessment is the first step in the catchment planning process.

Data on water quality, watertable level and depth to basement rock from a Water and Rivers Commission drilling program and information on salinity distribution and structures such as dykes and faults provided by airborne geophysics will be used to produce a salinity risk map.

