

CATCH UP



**NORTH EAST
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY**

NEWS FROM THE NORTH EAST CMA

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR RIVER TENDER

Land managers in the Ovens River valley can now apply for funds to look after the environmental health of river frontage on their property. Expressions of interest for the innovative River Tender program close on **28 February**.

An auction-style incentive program, River Tender is funded through the Victorian Water Trust and managed by the North East CMA. Through River Tender, landholders and leaseholders submit a bid to undertake works that will improve river health, such as weed control, stock management and fencing, erosion control and native vegetation restoration.

All bids are compared after the closing date with funding allocated to works that offer the best value for money – not simply the lowest bid.

Land managers who make a successful bid receive an initial payment followed by annual payments over five years on completion of works setout in a management agreement.

"River Tender directly assists people that work and live right next to the river", explained Jane Roots, River Tender Project Manager.



"The first round of River Tender was a huge success with landholders signing up to management agreements that will protect the health of almost 800 hectares of floodplain property and 60 kilometres of river frontage."

For more information about River Tender, contact the North East Catchment Management Authority on 02 6043 7619, email: RiverTender@necma.vic.gov.au . or visit the CMA website at www.necma.vic.gov.au

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first issue of 'CATCH UP' – a new monthly bulletin that aims to give you a concise update on the North East CMA's key projects and strategic directions.

Looking ahead into 2006

We are developing some exciting new projects through the 2006-07 Regional Catchment Investment Plan. With funding secured from Natural Heritage Trust 2, our Investment Plan Project Development Group will oversee;

1. An investigative study into the impacts of climate change on natural resource management assets in the north east;
2. Development of an integrated land environmental management program and;
3. Formalisation of the regional local government environment network.

These projects align with the CMA's strategic investment priorities and offer significant benefits for the North East community.

The start of 2006 also brings new people 'assets' to the CMA and wider region.

We welcome Lachlan Campbell, our new Sustainable Agribusiness Project Manager. This position is funded by the National Landcare Program and is hosted by the CMA in partnership with Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum.



*Sarah Nicolas,
Chairperson*



Left: Round Two of River Tender will cover works in the main stem of the Ovens River, as well as Reedy Creek, the Buckland Valley, Devils Creek and Morses Creek in the Upper Ovens area.

Diverse, Healthy Landscapes, Vibrant Communities

OUR CATCHMENT ASSETS

North East Victoria is a region rich in natural and people assets. It contributes 38 percent of total water to the Murray Darling system and the Region's industries inject an estimated \$3.24 billion to the Victorian and national economy each year.

With more than 55 percent of the North East classified as crown land, its many National Parks, Wilderness Parks and Historic Reserves are home to a diverse range of flora and fauna.

The North East Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is the organisation responsible for co-ordinating integrated catchment management and sustainable land and water use across the Region.

A document titled the North East Regional Catchment Strategy is an important planning tool for the CMA and land managers in the Region.

The CMA developed the Strategy in conjunction with the community. The Strategy guides the CMA's annual investment decisions and details community-endorsed

management actions and resource condition targets for six key areas:

1. Land
2. Water
3. Biodiversity
4. People
5. Climate and Atmosphere, and
6. Built Environment

The CMA's 2004/2005 Catchment Condition Report is a new way of reporting against the goals and targets listed in the Regional Catchment Strategy. It is also a stand-alone report on the condition and management of land and water resources in North East Victoria.

In future issues of CATCH UP, we will feature extracts from the latest Catchment Condition Report and highlight the current condition and future outlook for each of the six assets identified in the Regional Catchment Strategy.

Emma Mongan, Water Quality Officer

FROM THE TEAMS

Strategy and Partnerships

This newly formed team covers a number of program areas, including: Regional Catchment Investment Plan, Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Framework, North East CMA Advisory Committees, Landcare Co-ordination, Regional NRM Co-ordination, Indigenous Liaison, Rural Land Stewardship, Environmental Management Systems.

Corporate Services

In late 2005, the team replaced and upgraded all servers in line with the IT Support Services Strategy and the growing needs of our Birallee Office. This upgrade has brought new and improved changes to the way the CMA manages, protects and backs up its information.

Water Program

The team is working on a wide range of issues, including; Environmental Water Reserve Legislation, roll out of the Integrated Management System (IMS) across the organisation, selecting consultants for the wetland strategy & gaining access to crown land management information to assist with works implementation.

The works teams have been busy following up on willow/weed regrowth on previous work sites, negotiating and developing landholder partnerships and completing inspections for Assistance Requests resulting from flash floods and sustained high flows during the Spring months.

KEY DATES

28 FEBRUARY Closing date for River Tender Expressions of Interest. Tel: Jane Roots, Project Manager. (02) 6043 7619 email: RiverTender@necma.vic.gov.au

1 MARCH Soil Health Annual Event - "Soil Restoration to Improve Productivity" - an Ovens Landcare Network initiative. Venue - Whorouly Community Recreation and Function Centre (Footy Oval), Memorial Park Drive, Whorouly (20 minutes south of Wangaratta) Bookings - Ovens Landcare Network. Tel:03 57282105 email: jhermiston@bigpond.com



Did you know ?

There are approximately 2300 agricultural properties in the North East, covering a total area of 829,000 hectares.