

EMS Group Gossip and Gatherings

Welcome All,

At the CMA we felt that it was important not to leave you without a link to the outside world of EMS! From time to time we will put together some serious, and some not-so-serious, snippets of information that may be of interest.

As most of you know, the Federal Government project funding for the EMS training came to an end in July.

Fear Not!

The North East CMA is committed to continue training and supporting those who have already developed an EMS and others who show interest.

OFFICE GOSSIP...and who does what...just in case you became confused with all the changes that went on a while ago...

Chris Reid is the Manager of Land Stewardship at the CMA and is the driver of EMS. He manages programmes relating to conservation on private land and sustainable agriculture matters. Chris can be contacted on (02) 6043 7600

Rom Reilly is with us for only a short time longer. She is moving on to manage a Victorian State Government Project called Northern Rural Skills Connect and will be leaving the CMA on 10 September. Rom will be training as many staff as possible at the CMA and the DPI in eFarmer over the next weeks.

Geoff McKernan will be working with Chris Reid to continue with the EMS and eFarmer programmes. Geoff has a wealth of experience, which will be invaluable to this role. He can be contacted on (02) 6043 7600 or 0429 928 654

Suzanne Johnstone joined the team in April 2008 to complete a one-year project. Her role is to..... 'develop and trial decision support tools and materials to enable Landcare groups to make informed strategic investment decisions for on ground works'. ***That is quite a mouthful!*** In practice, she has studied the available spatial mapping tools and decided that eFarmer is the most suitable. Rom is training a few pilot groups from the Kiewa Valley in eFarmer, with an emphasis on using it as a tool to apply for funding. Suzanne will then draw some conclusions and hopefully she will develop a reference tool for Landcare groups to use across Victoria.

NEWS

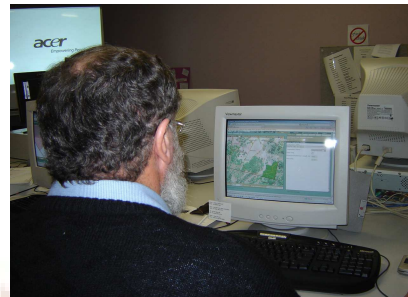
A few weeks ago we were sent a CD and some information on something called '**A Farm Sustainability Dashboard**' for our comments on its usefulness. The Sustainability Dashboard is a software application that can be used by farmers to generate a visual report of key indicators of the condition of their land and associated business. It takes into account the financial, social and environmental aspects - the triple bottom line. We

thought it was a useful tool - designed by farmers, for farmers. We have a few **free copies** for anyone who would like one. It just loads onto your computer, takes an hour or so to complete and then gives you an idea, or indication, of how you are 'travelling'. Call Chris on 02 6043 7600.

eFarmer

There are a few developments happening with eFarmer.

Based on the success of the pilot programme conducted in Gippsland, **Murray Goulburn Co-operative Co. Limited** is extending its Farm Environment Program. Using two web-based tools, **eFarmer** and **MGF@rm** combined to automate the process, the programme works together with suppliers to report upon on-farm environmental management.



There is a new layer of Imagery called **North East Imagery**, which now covers almost all of the catchment. It was taken in 2003 after the fires. If you have been using a different layer (i.e. Alpine Towong South or Ovens), it might be worth having a look at the North East layer to see if it is any better than the one you usually use. Don't forget to turn the old imagery off and the new on. If you use both you will have problems!

Genevieve Carruthers, President of the Australian EMS Association (EMSA), recently completed a study tour to the US. We have her 39 page report, but thought that perhaps the following few lines said it all.

Executive summary

Key messages from study tour:

- The EMS work being done in Australia in agricultural is well regarded.
- EMS implementation on farm resulted in positive market outcomes and also improved management of business, social and environmental responsibilities.
- Use of internationally recognised systems such as ISO 14001 and engagement in external scrutiny of performance is crucial to maintain credibility.
- Development of EMS within agencies is vital component of getting an agency's 'own house in order' prior to expecting changes in behaviour of agency clients.
- The expectation in the USA and the EU is that monitoring, public reporting and evaluation, 3rd part auditing and certification, would be the norm in the future for agriculture.

We were about to cut and paste some information from the EMSA web site when we realised that it was ALL interesting. Why not visit it yourself:

http://www.ems.asn.au/pubs/newsletters/emsa_0807.htm

Quote:

"In the EU, we prefer clearly defined management systems, such as ISO 14001 and EMAS, not things like CSR (corporate social responsibility)" - Mathias Weigand (Head of trans-media law in the Bavarian Ministry for Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection).