



## Rural Page

# Remnant Inland River Red Gums Assessment

by Annabel Lugsdin

The Riverina is known for its rich deep-rooted stands of River Red Gums prominent in the sweeping bends of the Murrumbidgee River. For every mile the river stretches there are countless eucalyptus trees to be seen. Throughout the district there are unique stands of River Red Gum trees that no longer interlink with the surface water courses of today, like those you see at the Sixteen-Mile Gums travelling between Hay and Deniliquin. These Inland Red Gum stands are as iconic to the area as the flat horizons and endless sunsets. For generations these stands have provided relief for travellers and stock who pass by every day as well as having historical and Aboriginal cultural significance. Native mammals, birds, reptiles and insects also utilise the inland Red Gum stands (alive and dead trees) for habitat as well as food, protection and water.

As iconic as the Sixteen Mile Gums are there has been limited focus on the Inland Red Gum's significance and poor documentation on the remnant patches scattered around the district. Many are on private landholdings in a fragmented configuration growing along the prior streams from the Palaeozoic era. Sadly, Inland Red Gums around the district are now in a dieback phase with overlooked health decline occurring in well-known and unmapped stands. Remnant

stands like the Sixteen-Mile Gums have been slowly retreating with existing trees dying with some to little regeneration occurring while others stands have vanished completely from the landscape.

Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporated have recently received a \$15,000 grant through the Bjarne K Dahl Trust, a trust designed to specifically protect and enhance eucalypts, to undertake a project to map the distribution of the Inland River Red Gum and the health of the stands across the Riverina Plains. This project is being launched to coincide with National Tree Day this week.

The project aims/objectives are as following:

1. Identify the GPS location of the remnant Inland River Red Gums to create a map of their distribution
2. Capturing the oral history of the site (if applicable)
3. With permission from the Landholder a site visit to assess the stands for:
  - a. Size
  - b. Health
  - c. Regeneration
  - d. Seed
  - e. Diversity
  - f. Weed Competition
  - g. Pest Animal Competition

h. Management Plan (if required)

The project guidelines are as follows:

1. Trees must be naturally occurring (shelter belts and plantations are excluded from the project)
2. Remnant stands must not be connected to a permanent natural surface water supply e.g River or flowing stream
3. Sites need to be at least 10-15kms away from the river.

Cassandra Smyth is the Project Officer undertaking the data collection of the sites with assistance from Annabel Lugsdin, Hay Rangelands Local Landcare Coordinator. The project involves the interaction of the local community and primary producers to assist in identifying the location of the sites around Hay. Cassandra and Annabel are asking for Landholders and the community to contribute in identifying and providing access to the scattered remnant stands of Inland Red Gums across the Riverina. There will be a map available in the Local Land Services office for everyone to come in and mark their known stand of Inland Red Gums on their property. Alternative you can contact Annabel on 0428 549 647 or via email, [alugsdin@mli.org.au](mailto:alugsdin@mli.org.au). Cassandra is also available via email [cassmysyth@hotmail.com](mailto:cassmysyth@hotmail.com) if you would like more information on the project.

### ROAD TRAIN ACCESS EXTENDED FOR CARRATHOOL BRIDGE

NSW Transport Minister Duncan Gray has confirmed that conditional road train access (with a permit) would be extended for another month – with permits now valid until September 30.

RMS has lifted the weight limit from 62.5 tonnes to 75t for this period (with conditions).

RMS provided the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator with pre-approved consent for road trains travelling over Carrathool Bridge at a maximum mass of 75 tonne transporting cotton modules. The

## Solar pumping: the economic & enviro rewards

Energy is one of the fastest growing on-farm costs. The CRDC-funded

Improving energy efficiency on irrigated cotton farms project

But not for cotton grower Andrew Gill of Narromine.

The installation of a solar diesel hybrid irrigation bore pump on his Central West NSW farm Andrew decided to install a solar diesel

## \$2million Quad Bike safety rebate

Member for Murray Adrian Piccoli said that rural workplaces across the region will be able to apply for a rebate of up to \$500 to implement safety measures aimed at reducing quad bike tragedies and injuries on farms.

Mr Piccoli said the rebate was announced at the