Funding Opportunities

Community Water Grants Open July 1
Round 2 of the Australian Government’s Community Water Grants opens on July 1, and will close again on 25 August. Grants of up to $50,000 are offered for on-ground projects that will play a positive role in tackling Australia’s water challenges. The format is quite different for this round, with all applications required on-line. Information on the projects that received funding under the last round is available on the website, and previous applicants are encouraged to seek feedback on Round 1 applications to assist in preparing applications for Round 2. To get information on your previous application, call 1800 780 730, and for guidelines and an application for Round 2, visit the Community Water Grants website.

$250,000 in Funding for Special Projects under Round 2 of Community Water Grants
This round of Community Water Grants provides the opportunity to seek funding of up to $250,000 for project meeting certain additional criteria. Community Water Grants will continue to offer grants of up to $50,000 for projects meeting the general criteria, however, some projects may be eligible for up to $250,000 if additional criteria are met. The additional criteria are outlined through this link to the CWG website, but remember, the project will also have to meet all of the general criteria as well. For further information, visit the website, or phone the CWG hotline: 1800 780 730.

Recreational Fishing Grants – Round 3
The Recreational Fishing Community Grants support local initiatives that protect coastal environments, and enhance recreational fishing and tourism through on-ground activities, education and awareness raising. Funding of up to $100,000 is available, with applicants required to contribute at least half of the total cost of the project in cash or in-kind support. Councils, community groups, schools and other organisations are encouraged to apply before the closing date of 28 July. For more info, visit the Recreational Fishing Community Grants website.

Volunteer Small Equipment Grants (VSEG)
The Volunteer Small Equipment Grants offer funding of up to $3000 to help community not-for-profit groups to purchase small equipment to support volunteer activities. Applications should be submitted on-line by 21 July. For more details visit the website.

Awards

Collex Plastic Bag Reduction Awards
The Plastic Bag Reduction Awards, sponsored by Collex, are open to community groups, schools, businesses and all levels of government who have shown a commitment to minimising the impact of plastic bag litter. If you know of any initiatives that address the issue of plastic bags, find out more about the awards on the Collex website.
News

Councils Invited to Comment on Draft Australian Weed Strategy
The National Weeds Strategy was launched eight years ago, and the Australian Weeds Committee are now reviewing the goals and objectives of the strategy, with the aim of publishing a nationally agreed revision, known as the Australian Weed Strategy, in 2007. Councils and other stakeholders are invited to comment on the draft strategy, which is available on the Weeds Australia Website, or a hard copy can be requested from the Secretariat by e-mailing the Secretariat. The closing date for public comment is Monday 17 July.

Repeat Testing of Water Quality on King Island
Repeat testing of water from the Upper Grassy Dam on King Island have shown that all levels of heavy metals, including lead, fall within the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. This latest round of tests support the results of samples taken from the dam in April, despite discrepancies with samples taken from the same area in May. The Tasmanian Public and Environmental Health Service will review the situation and consider if further testing for heavy metals will be required.

Grants Boost Tasmania's Forest Industry
Thirteen projects will receive a total of $1.5 million funding in the first round of grants under the Tasmanian Forest Industry Development Programme and the Tasmanian Country Sawmills Assistance Programme. Both programmes are part of the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement announced by the Prime Minister and Premier last year. The grants will fund projects that will help the timber industry adjust to changes arising from the agreement.

New Coastal Website for Natural Resource Managers
The Coastal CRC has launched a new website to assist Local Government in managing natural resources within the coastal zone. The website includes a series of fact sheets and capability matrices which provide relevant information on various coastal NRM issues and the tools and resources that are available to manage them. Although the Coastal CRC finished up at the end of June, it is still possible to access information through their new Coastal Zone website.

Tasmanian Government gets Tough on Litter
The Tasmanian Government has proposed new legislation for the control of litter. Developed in consultation with stakeholder groups, including local councils and the community, the draft Bill can currently be viewed on the Environment Division website. Proposed changes include the introduction of a Litter Hotline modelled on the Victorian system, allowing members of the public to report littering offences through a public reporting system.

Tasmania to Establish an EPA
The State Government is investigating an appropriate model for establishing an Environmental Protection Authority in Tasmania. The aim of the EPA would be to ensure the independence and transparency of Tasmania’s environmental management system. The establishment of an EPA will require amendments to the Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act (1994), which are expected to be introduced to parliament in the new year.

Ministers Agree to Further Action on Plastic Bags
Enivonment Ministers from around the country met last month to discuss environmental issues ranging from climate change and energy to heritage. One of the outcomes of the meeting was a renewed commitment to phasing out the use of lightweight plastic bags, predominantly used by supermarkets, by the end of 2008.

Workshops

Profiting from Resource Efficiency Seminar
As part of the Tasmanian Government's Living Environment Program (LEP) a two-day seminar on Cleaner Production and Environmental Management Systems will be run during July in both Launceston and Hobart. Although the seminar specifically targets Small-Medium Enterprises, much of the information will be of benefit to Councils. Contact Jenni for more information on the seminar dates and speakers.

Fostering Sustainable Behaviour Workshops
Many of you may have attended the Fostering Sustainable Behaviour workshops with Doug McKenzie-Mohr in Launceston early 2005. These extremely beneficial workshops look at how to move toward sustainability more effectively by promoting behaviour change in people and organisations. Doug McKenzie-Mohr will be back in Australia later this year to present a series of introductory and advanced workshops on community-based social marketing, including a Hobart workshop at the Hobart Function and Conference Centre on from the 28-30 November.
Insight

Riverbanks See Light, Not Weeds
Willows and gorse were stopped in their tracks at a recent weed management workshop and field day. Over 70 participants and guest speakers from Zeehan to Hobart saw demonstrations of the latest techniques in controlling these problem weeds.

“As a farmer, willows and gorse are causing me all sorts of problems and I always thought they were hard to control. I was amazed at how effective some of these techniques can actually be”, observed Richard Archer of Brickendon Farm.

Organised by Northern Midlands NRM North Facilitator, Marta Vergara, the field day was held at Brickendon Farm on the Macquarie River near Longford on 11th May 2006.

“It was great to see local farmers, Landcare group members, weed and plant nursery contractors, vegetation technical staff and NRM Facilitators get together to network and share ideas on how these techniques can be used”, Marta commented.

“This was also an opportunity to learn how to access funding and resources such as work teams and even using local nurseries to revegetate weed controlled areas with local understorey plants. Follow up weed control is the key”.

Marta Vergara, NRM North Facilitator from Northern Midlands Council with field day participants listening to Bruce Knight discussing the gorse mulching Meri Crusher at the field day.

Northern Midlands Council’s Deputy Mayor Don McShane and Planning and Development Manager Graham Judge were happy with the turnout of people. “Control of weeds such as gorse and willow costs the local farming community thousands of dollars each year in the Northern Midlands. With extra funding we’d be keen to integrate our efforts with those of local farmers and landcare groups”, Don said.

Willows lining just 1km of river can use over 12 million litres of water in a typical summer. That’s around 5 full size Olympic swimming pools worth of water for every kilometre of trees.

After the field day, Northern Midlands Council organised a meeting with local Longford landowners on 18th May to discuss willow management issues in the South Esk and Macquarie Rivers. For a copy of the full article on this field day containing details of guest speakers and contractors using innovative weed control techniques, please contact Jenni Rigby, LGAT NRM Facilitator.

(Article provided by Alister Mackinnon, Regional Industry and Landcare Coordinator, NRM North)
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Conferences

Repair, Reconstruction and Reconciliation – EIanz Conference
The Tasmanian Division of the Environment Institute of Australia & New Zealand is holding its annual conference in Hobart on Friday 4 August at the Old Woolstore Hotel. The conference will cover a range of environmental topics, including storm water management, reuse of bio-solids, odour impact assessment and sustainability reporting by corporations. Early bird discount registrations close 14 July. Contact Philip Milin, conference chair, for a copy of the program and registration form.

Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA)
The SEGRA 2006 Conference (which celebrates SEGRA’s tenth year) will be held in Launceston from 26-30 August. SEGRA brings together national and overseas experts and key decision makers from both government and industry to discuss regional issues and emerging trends. The conference program and registration details are available from the Segra website.

If you no longer wish to receive this electronic newsletter, please e-mail Jenni at the Local Government Association of Tasmania.
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