



**July 2014**

### **Putting pieces together**

DCG and Jigsaw Consulting have been putting pieces together together since 2008, offering management training and personal development courses. In what we feel is by far the most important collaboration to date, we are providing a Diploma of Counselling (CHC51712) to the people of the Desert Channels region.

Leanne Kohler, our CEO, has had many years experience in informal counselling, and has identified a need in the west for more people with understanding ears and increased skills to help ease the burdens of those who are struggling. And without a doubt, there are many throughout our rural communities who are finding the going tough.

So if you are the compassionate type, you have a desire to extend your skills and provide a service to your community, this diploma of counselling course may be a perfect opportunity.

The Diploma of Counselling (CHC51712) is a nationally recognised course that provides the first step towards a career in Counselling and entry into the counselling profession. It aims to provide you with generic counselling skills and knowledge including communication skills, a range of commonly used counselling modes, referral skills and the ability to work within an organisation in a counselling role.

The face to face component of the course begins in Longreach on the 4th of August in our conference room at 92 Galah Street, and runs for one week per month for four months. There are no upfront fees as the course is supported by VET Fee Help. Phone Sally on 1300 943 438 for more information, or visit [www.jigsawconsultinggroup.edu.au/locations/longreach](http://www.jigsawconsultinggroup.edu.au/locations/longreach).

YOU can make a difference!

### **Pigs under the pump ...**

With continuing dry times and with feral pigs congregating around the remaining watering points, now is a perfect opportunity to decimate their numbers across our region. In recognition of this, Desert Channels Group held a one day feral pig control workshop in Longreach on the 30th of June.

Lake Eyre Basin Rangers, Rural Land Officers, landholders and DCQ field staff received very valuable training and advice from Dr Jim Mitchell of FeralFix. Jim has 32 years experience in scientific based feral animal research, and is a specialist in the development and implementation of feral pig management and control techniques. He has completed numerous research projects in developing innovative control, survey and monitoring techniques and quantifying the economic and ecological damage of feral pigs.

Everyone came away with a better understanding of feral pig ecology and impacts, monitoring tools, management principles, available control techniques and bait station technology and were confident they could apply the techniques learnt at the workshop in the field.

As part of the training, a practical field component in bait station techniques was held at Rio Station - much appreciation goes to landholders Nic and Carley Walker for enabling this.

If you have a specific topic you would like to see DCQ hold a workshop on, send us an email at [admin@dcq.org.au](mailto:admin@dcq.org.au)

### **HEATing up!**

Things are starting to bubble along with the inaugural meeting of our HEAT (High-value Environmental Area Target) Program's coordination and advisory HEAT Meet Group. The HEAT Meet Group met on the 25th of June to begin developing new strategies to conserve threatened species and ecosystems, as listed under federal legislation, and ensure there is coordination of effort in subsequent work across six areas of interest.

The areas of interest are DCQ, landholders, Aboriginal community, local government, managers of protected areas (public and private) and EPBC matters (ecosystems or species listed under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999).

The specialist members are Bruce Scott (DCQ and landholder), Angus Emmott (EPBC matters and landholder), Gerry Fogarty (Aboriginal community), Jenni Gray (local government and landholder), Maree Rich (public protected area management), Steve Heggie (private protected area management) and Dr Jeff Foulkes (EPBC matters).

The expertise and knowledge of each of the members will inform future collaborative strategies to protect important environmental features within the Desert Channels region, such as species like the Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*), and ecosystems such as the threatened artesian springs located on Edgbaston, northeast of Barcaldine. These strategies will ensure that when future funding for important environmental matters comes along, the region will have projects with wide-ranging input, ready to go.

Having in place collaborative strategies to protect these species or ecosystems will place DCQ in a strong position for future funding rounds.

While a few members couldn't make this first meeting, all are keen to be moving forward with the work of providing input from their respective areas of expertise.

### **Everybody's got to have a plan**

In early July, the DCQ board endorsed the updated and revamped version of our natural resource management (NRM) plan, which will guide our investments from 2016 to 2020. This, our third five-year plan, will shortly be made available for broad community consultation and feedback.

It has been developed, thus far, around targeted community consultation, and has been reformatted to make it easier for users to understand. The scope of the plan has also broadened to include actions that will support economic development in the region, such as agriculture and tourism.

It also includes detailed management actions identifying where investment is needed in the region, and which are supported by maps showing the priority areas.

The plan is currently being formatted for uploading to our website so everyone has an opportunity to provide input. Once it is ready, we will publish notification through this newsletter and on our website, [www.dcq.org.au](http://www.dcq.org.au).

If you have any questions on the NRM plan, please contact Andrew Burrows at [andrew.burrows@dcq.org.au](mailto:andrew.burrows@dcq.org.au).

### **Modest year ends well**

Like most businesses, our commercial arm, DC Solutions found the financial year just gone to be a modest one in the face of a challenging economic environment. We continued to provide a range of clients with quality service in areas ranging from environmental surveys, weeds surveys and control, feral animal control, filmmaking, project management and communications.

DC Solutions again donated all of our profits to Desert Channels Foundation, which invests in natural resource management and environmental projects in the Desert Channels region. While DC Solutions' contribution to that cause wasn't as healthy as last year, it was still a very commendable \$79,000.

We have been told our commercial arm is unique amongst regional bodies in that it's sole purpose is to generate funds to augment the work of its parent ... this probably places it as unique amongst most commercial enterprises.

As we thank our clients and supporters for the year just gone, our staff have already launched into the new year with feral animal control, environmental reporting, filmmaking, project management, social research and communications.

### **More than meets the eye**

Desert Channels Group is more than weed control and innovation, and our Longreach office at 92 Galah Street is more than just a place where projects are managed, maps made, and Lattes for Landcare sold. It's a friendly, informative space where you can find out more about the Lake Eyre Basin and the work we do.

We have a range of interesting and informative publications from how to grow an outback garden, snakes, frogs and bush poetry of the region, weeds, fishing adventures and women succeeding in business. You can also get your very own, stunning poster map of the Lake Eyre Basin, as well as blank cards with beautiful photos of the region.

Next time you are in Longreach, pop in for a yarn, enjoy a Landcare Latte, get a little something for that special one. If you can't make it, you can always go to [www.dcq.org.au/retail-page](http://www.dcq.org.au/retail-page).

### **Shoot a feral; win a prize!**

The Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IACRC) is on the search for the best images of pest animals in action for Feral Photos, their annual photographic competition, so here is your opportunity to get a great shot of a feral, and win a prize.

"We want to raise awareness about the damage pest animals cause, and photography is a powerful tool to get the message across," said Jessica Marsh, IACRC's National NRM Facilitator.

"Through these images we can show the environmental, agricultural and social damage that pest animals cause across the country."

More details at [www.invasiveanimals.com/feral-photos](http://www.invasiveanimals.com/feral-photos).