

ABORIGINAL NRM IN THE AVON RIVER BASIN 2009-2011

SURVEY OF THE ABORIGINAL ADVISORY GROUP 14 JUNE 2010

1. HOW DO YOU THINK SHARING TRADITIONAL BUSH KNOWLEDGE HAS BEEN GOOD FOR COMMUNITY AND FAMILY?

- Good but a bit slow. More family meetings. Aboriginal ways.
- Creates a sense of pride of culture - family and our ability to live within the wider community, and still retain our cultural practices.
- Yes. Knowledge was passed to me, and I teach my grandkids. Things weren't written down before.
- Will help knowing where we come from/who we are from generation to generation.
- Good as long as it is kept in our Family and Communities and kept safe if trusted to someone else.
- Good for family. We pass on stuff and we learn a lot at these meetings.
- I think sharing traditional bush knowledge has been good for our family and community helping them understand more about the bush to speak to someone who is an Elder.
- It depends on the individuals on what they know and want to share.
- We should be passing on the knowledge to make people aware of what's out there.

2. HOW DO YOU USE YOUR KNOWLEDGE IN CARING FOR COUNTRY?

- Careful in what you do/Caring for country. Animals talking about country etc
- Caring and sharing of our knowledge includes our practices in taking care of the environment where ever we are located.
- Sharing with families. Passing it down to the young ones.
- Pass knowledge from generation to generation.
- Pass it down to next generation and to teach them to respect it.
- Hunting: Not to take too much from one place (bush).
- Teaching the younger people in my family to care for our country.
- Passing on the knowledge and getting others involved.
- Taking people out on country and showing them what's there.

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3. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY PROBLEMS OR ISSUES WHEN USING YOUR KNOWLEDGE?

- Aboriginal ways caring and sharing (Aboriginal ways includes all aspects of bush - animals, trees, rocks, people)
- Sharing of knowledge does have pitfalls because other people want to exploit it.
- No
- Not yet but that is why I would ask my elders on certain knowledge.
- Not in my family but when it is leaked out, can be used in the wrong way.
- Young people don't like to listen or talk part in things.
- Knowing the knowledge of our culture and passing the knowledge on to our younger families to keep the knowledge on.
- None has yet.
- None yet.

4. HAVE YOU LEARNT ANYTHING FROM BEING INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT?

- Yes, bush plants names and special areas
- It's tough going because of 1. time factors, 2. some groups do not work on a voluntary basis - not enough grounding of the values of certain projects.
- No
- More about myself, family, community also significant places for and 'for me' to pass it on for generations to come.
- Yes, I have learnt the values of biodiversity, different plants and ways of dealing with things that we care about.
- I've learnt more and found the bush more interesting looking for other things other than hunting.
- I've learnt a lot of things being involved in all projects and listening to others and Elders tell their stories.
- Yes, sometimes it's good to involve others that can help and also have their opinions.
- Respect.

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5. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE US DO NEXT TO HELP CARE FOR COUNTRY?

- More identifying plants
- Majority should rule - however our waterways are important - rid ourselves of feral cats and wild dogs - foxes
- Plant more trees. Look after the environment and the animals - they have no homes without bush.
- Forming an Indigenous WNRM group to have training to be able to look after traditional sites, protection of animals and plants etc.
- Keep us informed of everything that goes on and if we can help in any way.
- Finding more sites.
- I would like for us to look after the environment. More vegetation, trees planted and the animals.
- Depends on community needs and wants.
- More information.

6. DO YOU HAVE ANY ISSUES OR CONCERNS ABOUT RECORDING OR USING TRADITIONAL BUSH KNOWLEDGE?

- not really - maybe copyright
- Yes, copyright or ownership of stories about a particular piece of information.
- Copyright. How is the knowledge going to be used? People might use knowledge they shouldn't or do the wrong things with it. Some things are just for family and can't be shared.
- I would have to consult my elders before I go ahead to do anything.
- Yes, my main concern is that we have to know that our knowledge is kept safe for the protection of the bush as well as Aboriginal culture.
- Some I keep to myself to pass on too grannies.
- Letting others know about many plants and foods in the bush.
- Yes, others may not know and use your knowledge to benefit themselves.
- Yes, sometimes.

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7. IF YOU ARE CONCERNED, WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Talk about it with elders/groups
- Provide more information on major concerns raised at the advisory meeting
- Not enough bush left for animals - either for food or for shelter - even for sheep. They keep cutting the trees down. A farmer cut down the only Salmon Gum in a paddock - beautiful tree. It made me want to go and knock on his door. He'll be punished for that.
- Talk to the elders (TO's) before moving forward. Keep elders in touch with what ever project you are involved in.
- Ensure us that the right protocols are kept and we as elders keep well involved in things.
- No
- Require the rights to protect our land and country even speaking to our elders.
- Get professional advice from people who know what they are talking about.
- Show respect to us and our culture.

8. HAVE WE SHOWN RESPECT TOWARDS YOUR COMMUNITY AND PEOPLE WHEN ASKING FOR YOUR ADVICE? WHY OR WHY NOT? ARE THERE ANY WAYS WE CAN IMPROVE ON THAT?

- Yes
- To a certain extent. However most things should be viewed from an Aboriginal perspective before any action is developed or planned.
- Sacred sites not protected even though we tell you about them. Having to ask permission to go on private land, even though it's sacred land. Gave an example of how the first cemetery in Quairading, which had relatives remains in it, was ploughed over by a farmer on his property. Shire lost map - all this shows disrespect.
- Since I have been involved you have shown the respect towards the community so far.
- NRM has shown the respect for communities within the Wheatbelt area and have always sought advice from our Advisory Group and they can only get better.
- Show more respect, about our community telling others and asking advice from Elders.
- Depends on situation and questions. Listen to people, hear what they say, then do, don't do something else.
- Respect for people and what they talk about.

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9. DO YOU THINK THAT WE HAVE BEEN GOOD AT ENCOURAGING THE COMMUNITY TO GET INVOLVED IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, E.G. FOR TREE PLANTING DAYS ETC? WHY OR WHY NOT?

- Yes
- Yes - the process ? use allow us to use available resources
- Yes
- Yes, but more can be done to encourage local community members (Information need to be put out into the community – asking what they are interested in).
- Yes, and I think that we need more of these things happening as so far everything has been successful.
- Yes
- Yes, we have told people being involved in our projects, tree planting etc. Also keep encouraging the people in our community to get involved.
- Yes
- Should be more tree planting and anything that will improve country.

10. HOW COULD BE DO BETTER IN THE FUTURE?

- Keep talking about NRM and get better understanding and better ways to work at what to do.
- Look, listen and learn - encourage less farming
- Working together - the young ones want to learn too.
- Forming an Indigenous WNRM group getting training up to be able to protect animal, plants and all Aboriginal significant sites.
- You can only do better in the future. Things can't get any worse, so 'good job'.
- Looking, learning, listening
- Keep trying and being involved in all projects that may be planned in the future.
- Keep doing what you's are doing, don't give up, keep striding for local communities involvement.
- ? more promo in different areas.