



Project Snapshot

Land Manager's Name:	Reece and Gina Boyne
Property Size:	10,000 ha
Location:	Koorda
Annual Rainfall (mm):	270 mm
Enterprise Mix:	Cropping and sheep
Soil Types/Vegetation Types:	Red Clay, Wodjil Sand, Loam

Key Messages

- **Be careful not to over clear because in the long run it won't improve cropping efficiencies.**
- **Don't let a landscape be lost to degradation. Seek advice and act quickly to maintain good soil health.**
- **Oil mallee belts provide excellent wind breaks which give annual pastures the opportunity to establish so they can be utilised by livestock.**

Wind battered slopes

Reece Boyne comes from a long line of farmers. His great grandfather started farming 'Tarapan', the family's home farm, back in 1907. The Boyne family decided to expand the business in the 1970's, purchasing 'Adrook'. In recent years the Boyne's had seen some of the cropping paddocks being battered by the elements. They knew that replanting trees would be necessary to provide protection from further erosion. "Being on an upper slope in the landscape and having no wind breaks it was very exposed to wind and water erosion", Reece explained. "Less sheep could be stocked in the paddock and it was harder for the crops to establish due to the constant strong winds". Their local Natural Resource Management Officer was aware they were looking for funding to help them with the venture so when Wheatbelt NRM announced the Soil Conservation Incentives Program they were one of the first know.

The Boyne's successful application meant they were able to plant 13,500 oil mallee (*Eucalyptus loxophleba lissophloia*) seedlings across the paddock. One belt was sown across the width of the paddock at mid slope (1,590 m) and another two belts were positioned mid to upper slope (2,025 m and 2,040 m). "We were very pleased that we had the opportunity to revegetate the paddock with oil mallee belts. With less erosion and more feed on offer we have the possibility to increase stocking rates in the future as soil health improves," Reece said. Using existing GPS lines allowed Reece and his wife Gina to plant the seedlings supplied by Koorda Tree Farm Nursery in the same direction as previous furrow lines. By planting the oil mallee seedlings into a sown crop they had some shelter from the wind and little weed pressure. Low rainfall (93 mm) during the growing season, however, did make establishment a little challenging.

Lessons Learnt

Not only did the Boyne's benefit from the grant financially, they also gained knowledge along the way. "The Project Support Officer provided us with

valuable information and advice on how to plan other revegetation projects in the future", Reece mentioned. "For example we now know what species are best suited to the certain soil types on our property". Although the Boyne family have been busy revegetating the farm (e.g. salt affected and eroded country) since taking on ownership of the property, the project also gave them more experience using modern technology which complimented the cropping program.

What's ahead...

The Boyne family look forward to planting more tree belts throughout the paddock and others paddocks at risk to reduce wind speed even more. Reece said, "We have to protect our soil health or productivity will continue to be limited". As the oil mallees don't need to be fenced off once established the Boyne's also believe the tree belts will provide good shelter for their sheep grazing in this paddock.

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