



Project Snapshot

Land Manager's Name:	Woolah-wah Aboriginal Corporation
Property Size:	645 ha
Location:	Bakers Hill
Annual Rainfall (mm):	450
Enterprise Mix:	Cattle and hay
Soil Types/Vegetation Types:	Gravels and clay

Key Messages

- **Passing on knowledge and skills is important to shape positive attitudes towards the environment.**
- **Saltbush grows well in wet salt affected areas.**
- **Saltbush should be grazed regularly enough to stop them becoming woody and unpalatable, but not damage the crown of the plant.**
- **Revegetation projects can have a greater impact if community members are involved.**

Their story

Approximately ten years ago the Indigenous Land Corporation divested Coobabla Farm in Bakers Hill to the Woolah-Wah Land Aboriginal Corporation and the Hayward family. Since becoming land managers, the family have been working towards increasing the sustainability of the property. While most of the farm is leased out for hay production and grazing, the family would like to get to a position where they are working the farm independently.

The Woolah-Wah Land Aboriginal Corporation has linked up with Wheatbelt NRM many times before to undertake projects not only to restore the land's natural beauty, but also to offer Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth with opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills in relation to sustainable land management practices. Being an Aboriginal elder Denis shares a deep connection with the land and has boundless knowledge to pass onto the future generation about Aboriginal culture.

Denis is also a member of the Wheatbelt NRM Advisory Group, a responsibility he takes every seriously. During a visit to the Northam office he heard firsthand about the availability of Caring for our Country funds for tree plantings through the Soil Conservation Incentives Program. Like many properties across the Western Australian wheatbelt, Coobabla Farm is affected by areas of salinity and waterlogging, so funding was sought to assist them with the cost of revegetating a 4.5ha site.

Working together to get the job done

To stop the further spread of salt and to reduce the site's susceptibility to waterlogging, 9,000 saltbush (*Atriplex nummularia*) seedlings were provided through the program. In June 2012 the site was prepared by contractors who ripped and sprayed the ground to improve the chances of good establishment. The seedlings were then hand planted by the family and the Northam Senior High School

Bushranger Cadets

As predicted the saltbush is growing well. In fact, it is the wetter areas that are growing the fastest. The Hayward's are excited to see the site transform over the next few years. Denis said, "We're hoping the trees will stop the salt from creeping back up the hill and give us productive grazing opportunities". He added, "We eventually want to run sheep in the area, which is why we've fenced it as well." While his daughter Karen said, "Once the plants are bigger, I look forward to seeing an increase in the occurrence of some smaller birds and in the area".

Future Plans

The family will continue to revegetate the property with locally grown seedlings and seek the assistance of Wheatbelt NRM to ensure that they are compatible with soil types. In particular they would really like to focus on bush tucker plantings over the next few years. "It is important this knowledge isn't lost", Denis said. "For this reason we really enjoy being involved with local school kids". Their long term goal is to run a viable farm, focused on agricultural production, as well as building habitat for native fauna.

Acknowledgements

Northam Senior School Bushranger Cadets
Wheatbelt NRM



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