

# Molonglo Catchment Strategy

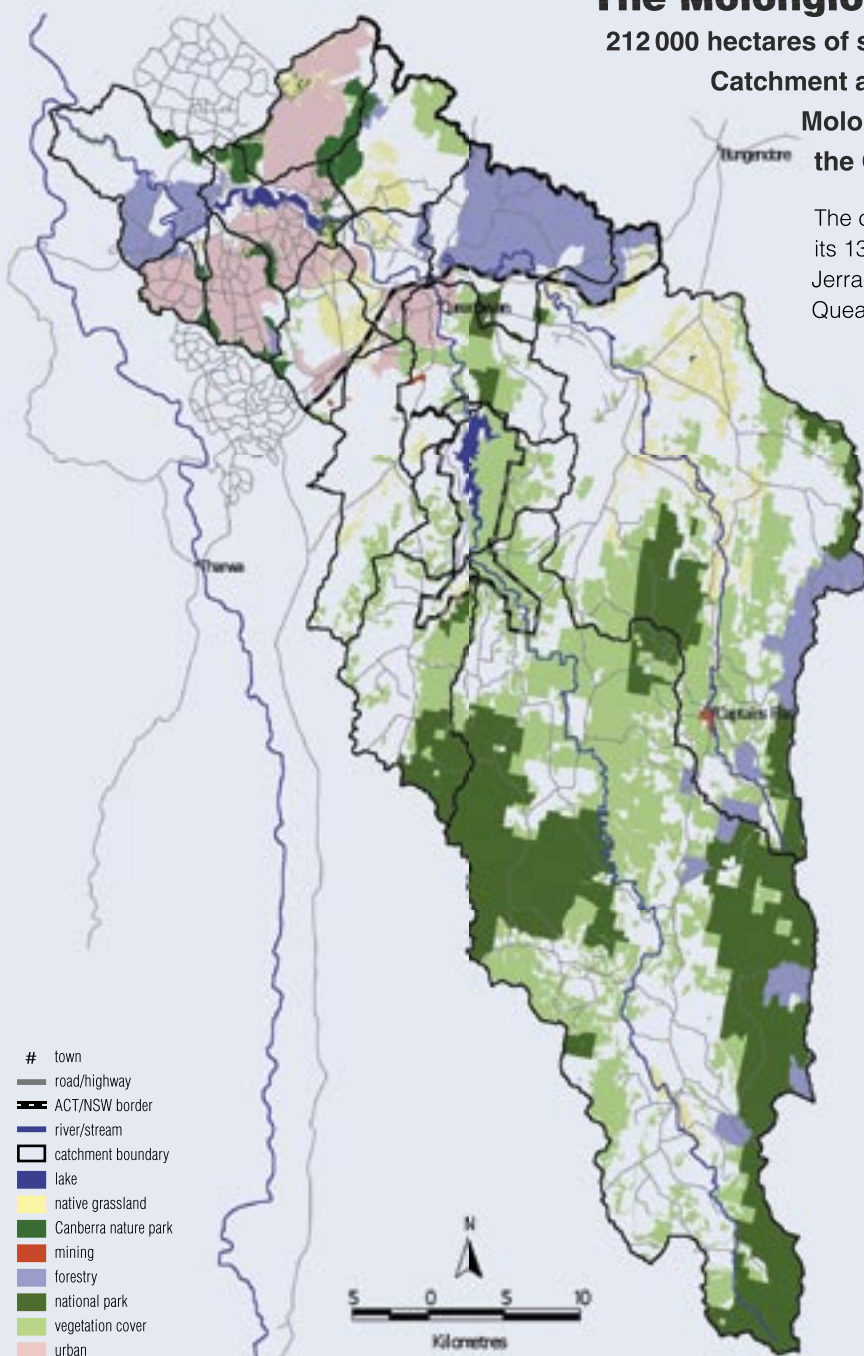
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY JULY 2005**



**The Molonglo catchment** comprises approximately 212 000 hectares of south-eastern NSW in the Murrumbidgee Catchment and includes all the land that drains into the Molonglo River and Lake Burley Griffin including the Queanbeyan River and all their tributaries.

The catchment as a whole is defined by aggregation of its 13 sub-catchments—Upper Molonglo, Tinderry, Burra, Jerrabomberra Headwaters, Jerrabomberra, Googong, Lower Queanbeyan, Woolshed, Kowen, Fyshwick, Sullivan's Creek, Burley Griffin and Lower Molonglo.

It includes all of the Queanbeyan City Council and parts of Palerang Council and Cooma—Monaro Council local government areas and part of the ACT. Also included within the boundary is the entire city of Queanbeyan and a proportion of the central and southern suburbs of Canberra. The population was estimated to be 130 000 in 2001.



## This summary presents the strategy's goals and actions

Goals are expressed as aspirations for 2024. The terms used in the goal statements were listed in workshops, in light of desired future management of priority issues. Priorities identify the most valued assets and the most significant threats faced by each asset. These priorities are based on the results of a series of community workshops and are aligned with current technical information. It is recommended that funding applications take account of these identified priorities.

Targets and actions were obtained from:

- community inputs in workshops
- existing guiding regional strategies
- discussions held with technical experts involved with the development of regional targets on appropriate targets for the Molonglo Catchment Strategy (MCS) and their implementation feasibility.

Performance Indicators were developed through:

- in-house discussion of measures that would best assess the progress of the MCS in reaching regional targets
- consideration of milestones for evaluating performance of the MCS implementation.



# Developing the catchment strategy

In developing the catchment strategy, Landcare groups and organisations at the local level were consulted through a series of workshops conducted throughout the catchment. Together with the planning coordinator, the host Landcare groups/ organisations were encouraged to invite a mix of people involved in natural resource management to reflect the issues of their area.

A call for public involvement in the planning process was issued in the local media and websites.

The Molonglo Catchment Strategy provides long-term direction for managing the future of land, water resources and biodiversity of the catchment, and the foundation for community investment decisions to ensure improved natural resource outcomes.

The MCS:

- sets broad goals for 20 years
- assesses threats to environmental, economic and social values

- identifies opportunities for improving natural resource management processes over the next ten years

- provides a means for stakeholders to make Natural Resource Management (NRM) investment decisions

- sets guidelines for monitoring and evaluation of progress.

The MCS aims to assist and guide the planning and action of:

- private landholders, who own 35% of the land in the catchment
- government, which manages the other 65% of land in the catchment on behalf of the community
- local and state government agencies with responsibility for natural resource management
- community groups and non-government organisations protecting and restoring the environment
- business and industry groups investing and operating within the catchment.



Molonglo Gorge

## Water asset management

### State-wide resource condition targets by 2015

**WSRCT1:** A net improvement in the condition of rivers and wetlands as assessed against the stressed rivers classification and the water quality and river flow objectives (WQO and RFO) for NSW.

**WSRCT2:** Extractions from aquifers are within identified sustainable yields.

### Draft Murrumbidgee resource condition targets by 2015

**WRCT1:** The Murrumbidgee River and its main tributaries, suspended sediment levels will be reduced so that they meet the interim NSW Water Quality Objectives.

Flows and water extractions will be managed to maintain or improve river health consistent with the River Flow Objectives (RFO) and the MDBMC Cap (to be amended to include measurable quantities of sediment reduction).

**WRCT2:** A target of less than 245 EC for 50% of the time and less than 320 EC for 80% of the time at Balranald. A salt load of less than 145 000 tonnes per year for 50% of the time and less than 325 000 tonnes per year for 60% of the time by 2010. (To be reviewed within MDBC audit)

**WRCT3:** Extractions from aquifers are within identified sustainable yields.

### MCS resource condition goal

Water in rivers, creeks, lakes and wetlands that is above the national standards for healthy ecosystems.

### MCS community goal

A collaborative and coordinated approach to benchmarking surface and groundwater quality in the catchment. Sustained community involvement in water quality monitoring to assess catchment health.

		Management Targets		Actions			
		Draft Murrumbidgee CAP	ACT NRM Plan	Community capacity	Investigative	On-ground	
WATER QUALITY	WMT1	By 2015 assist land managers and communities to: protect and enhance 1500 km of streambank using native riparian vegetation for bank stabilisation and runoff filtration.	WMT3 Reduce the intensity of and the volume of urban stormwater flows.	1.1	By June 2005, expand the community water quality monitoring network by implementing the Molonglo Catchment Health Indicators Project (M-CHIP) in all sub-catchments.	1.4	By 2006 secure resources to further develop the sediment and nutrient load map series (Section 10) for all sub-catchments.
	WMT2	By 2015 assist land managers and communities to: along those stream reaches which yield the highest sediment and nutrient loads, control streambank and gully erosion using structural control works covering a total length of 50 km.		1.2	By June 2005 involve six schools in the M-CHIP.	1.5	By 2006 use GIS and existing bore/piezometer information to assess the current depth to groundwater in all sub-catchments
	WMT6	By 2015 assist land managers and communities to: reduce the water quality impacts of urban, industrial and rural residential development throughout the Murrumbidgee catchment.		1.3	By 2005 develop a water quality monitoring strategy that includes methods for delivery of meaningful trend data to the community.	1.6	By June 2005 assess willow removal priority reaches in all sub-catchments.
SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY	WMT6	By 2015 assist land managers and communities to: reduce the water quality impacts of urban, industrial and rural residential development throughout the Murrumbidgee catchment.	WMT2 Reduce potable water use through water efficiency, sustainable water recycling and the use of stormwater and rainwater.	1.12	By 2007 undertake a catchment wide community education and awareness campaign about the role and value of environmental flows.	1.14	By 2006 develop a farm dams map series to quantify current water holding in all sub-catchments.
	WMT7	By 2006 assist land managers and communities to maximise environmental outcomes according to requirements of the Water Sharing Plan.	WMT4 Environmental flow allocations that meet the needs of aquatic ecosystems.	1.13	By 2007 use research to develop a strategy and inform the community on water sensitive urban design principles.	1.15	By 2006 use the M-CHIP to assess the effect of the current environmental flow regime on ecosystem health.
GROUNDWATER	WMT7	By 2006 assist land managers and communities to maximise environmental outcomes according to requirements of the Water Sharing Plan.		1.16	By June 2006 develop a community education program on sustainable use and management of groundwater in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.	1.17	By June 2005 expand the M-CHIP to a defined Piezometer network for groundwater monitoring throughout the catchment.
	WMT12	By 2015 extractions from aquifers to be within identified sustainable yield.				1.18	By June 2006 collaborate with government to develop a groundwater map series to assess depth to groundwater in the catchment.
SALINITY	WMT10	By 2015 assist land managers and communities to: increase perennial vegetation in the 12 priority sub-catchments with the aim of reducing the predicted mean annual mid catchment salt load by 12 000 tonnes at Wagga Wagga without a reduction in annual flow.	ST1 Determine the extent of known and potential salinity risk in rural and urban areas. ST2 Increase perennial vegetation in saline and potentially saline catchments to reduce recharge.	1.20	By 2007 develop a community awareness program on the symptoms and signs of salinity in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.	1.21	By 2006 secure resources to further develop the salinity hazard map series (Section 10) for all sub-catchments.
						1.19	By 2006 engage councils to establish bore meters on 50 private bores in rural residential subdivision areas.
						1.22	By June 2006 in priority sub-catchments identified by the Salinity Hazard map series: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus establishment of perennial pastures including native spe</li> <li>• revegetate with appropriate native species.</li> <li>• retain, protect and regenerate native vegetation</li> </ul>

# Biodiversity asset management

## State-wide resource condition targets by 2015

**BSRCT1:** A net increase in extent and diversity of native vegetation cover.

**BSRCT2:** An increase in the extent and diversity of native vegetation cover of riparian zones (within the Draft MCAP 2005, this target is addressed under the water asset through WRCT1 and WMT1).

**BSRCT3:** A net increase in connectivity across terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

**BSRCT4:** A reduced risk of species, populations and ecological communities becoming threatened.

**BSRCT5:** A net reduction in the abundance of and area affected by invasive species and no new invasive species have become established.

## Draft Murrumbidgee resource condition targets by 2015

**BRCT1:** Manage for biodiversity conservation a minimum of 30% of the remaining area of each of the terrestrial native vegetation classes and related habitats of the Murrumbidgee Catchment.

**BRCT2:** Increase the extent, diversity condition and connectivity of inland aquatic ecosystems in the Murrumbidgee Catchment.

**BRCT3:** Maintain the population of locally rare (indicator) species and threatened species within the Murrumbidgee Catchment.

**BRCT4:** Reduce the population of environmental pests and the area affected by environmental weeds within the Murrumbidgee Catchment.

## MCS resource condition goal

Land and water environments that are rich in species diversity and self-sustaining with a good quality range of amenable habitats.

## MCS community goal

A catchment community that is aware of the value of a biodiverse environment, who strive for habitat protection, work towards eradicating pests and integrate biodiversity considerations into future planning to minimise threats

		Management Targets	ACT NRM plan	Action	Community capacity	Investigative	On-ground	
		Draft Murrumbidgee CAP						
WEEDS	<p><b>BMT1</b> All areas of identified high conservation value (HCV) will be managed for conservation by 2015.</p> <p><b>BMT3</b> Regionally endangered and regionally vulnerable vegetation classes will have a minimum of 25 000 ha of native vegetation planted with a corresponding increase in diversity and condition by 2015.</p> <p><b>BMT5</b> Listed terrestrial and aquatic threatened species, populations and endangered ecological communities will be managed for biodiversity conservation for the life of the CAP.</p> <p><b>BMT6</b> Identified environmental weeds and/or populations of environmental pests in all MCMA project sites will be controlled and suppressed by 2015.</p>	<p><b>BMT2</b> Minimise threats to threatened species posed by invasive plants.</p>	2.23	By June 2005 attain resources to assist volunteers become 'ChemCert' accredited.	2.27	By 2006 secure resources to develop a weed extent map series for all sub-catchments.	2.29	By June 2005 develop an in-principle agreement with local councils and relevant state agencies to establish a 'chemical share fund' for coordinated control of weeds in priority areas including roadsides, travelling stock reserves and properties adjacent to state forest.
			2.24	By 2005 ensure that all catchment projects that require weed removal (especially willows) place an appropriate emphasis on succession planting and planning for follow-up control.	2.28	By June 2006 develop a Molonglo Catchment weed management plan. The plan shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focus on priority weeds in the catchment that are having a detrimental effect on those species and communities listed in Appendix 1</li> <li>collaborate with industry and government to highlight emerging aquatic weeds in all sub-catchments</li> <li>prioritise weeds in terms of their extent, impact on biodiversity and potential economic cost to the community</li> <li>provide management and control options for priority weeds in both an urban and rural context</li> <li>provide the basis for continuing cooperative weed management.</li> </ul>	2.30	By June 2005 develop a willow management plan for the riparian zone from the Molonglo Gorge to Scrivener Dam.
			2.25	By June 2006 facilitate three 'educate the buyer' workshops to inform potential rural subdivision buyers of their NRM responsibilities.	2.26	By 2006 develop and implement a weeds education and awareness strategy. The strategy shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focus on priority weeds in the catchment that are having a detrimental effect on those species and communities listed in Appendix 1</li> <li>have strategies to engage the community in education programs</li> <li>have defined communication goals and strategies</li> <li>assist the community to identify priority weeds and access further information.</li> </ul>	2.31	By June 2006 remove invasive willows from 10 km of streams in the catchment.
FERAL ANIMALS	<p><b>BMT6</b> Identified environmental weeds and/or populations of environmental pests in all MCMA project sites will be controlled and suppressed by 2015.</p>	<p><b>BMT2</b> Minimise threats to threatened species posed by feral animals.</p>	2.32	By June 2006 develop and implement a feral animal education and awareness strategy. The strategy shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focus on priority species in the catchment</li> <li>assist the community to access further information</li> <li>have defined communication goals and strategies</li> <li>have strategies to engage the community in education programs</li> <li>simplify the legislative requirements of feral animal control and management in peri-urban environments.</li> </ul>				
REMNANT VEGETATION MANAGEMENT	<p><b>BMT1</b> All areas of identified high conservation value will be managed for conservation by 2015.</p> <p><b>BMT2</b> Regionally depleted or well retained vegetation classes will have a minimum of 75 000 ha managed for conservation by 2015.</p> <p><b>BMT3</b> Regionally endangered and regionally vulnerable vegetation classes will have a minimum of 25 000 ha of native vegetation planted with a corresponding increase in diversity and condition by 2015.</p> <p><b>BMT5</b> Listed terrestrial and aquatic threatened species, populations and endangered ecological communities will be managed for biodiversity conservation for the life of the CAP.</p>	<p><b>BMT1</b> Protect and improve the biodiversity value of significant ecological communities.</p> <p><b>BMT4</b> Urban biodiversity and integrated urban ecological function targets developed and implemented.</p>	2.33	By June 2005 establish a Molonglo community revegetation guide to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>promote coordination between groups</li> <li>provide appropriate species lists on a sub-catchment and landform basis</li> <li>have defined communication and education goals.</li> </ul>	2.34	By 2006 secure resources to develop a remnant vegetation map series for all sub-catchments.	2.36	By June 2006 use existing mapping to identify and protect 20 ha of remnant vegetation.
					2.35	By 2007 develop a Roadside and TSR remnant vegetation map series that highlights their conservation value.	2.37	By 2007 ensure all revegetation projects in the catchment consider species selection and suitability guidelines.
							2.38	By June 2006 provide fencing incentives to protect 100 ha of remnant vegetation and create wildlife corridors.
RIPARIAN RESTORATION	<p><b>WMT1</b> By 2015 assist land managers and communities to: protect and enhance 1500 kilometres of streambank using native riparian vegetation for bank stabilisation and runoff filtration.</p> <p><b>WMT2</b> By 2015 assist land managers and communities to: along those stream reaches which yield the highest sediment and nutrient loads, control streambank and gully erosion using structural control works covering a total length of fifty kilometres.</p> <p><b>BMT4</b> Degraded sections of the Murrumbidgee River and/or its tributaries will have 20 km of native aquatic habitat established maintained and improved by 2015</p>	<p><b>BMT3</b> Wetland and Riverine management policies and management actions to meet determined aquatic ecosystem targets developed and implemented.</p>	2.39	By 2006 ensure NSW Fisheries and Environment ACT are involved in riparian project development.	2.40	By 2006 secure resources to develop a riparian condition map series for all sub-catchments by 2006.	2.45	By June 2006 provide incentives to establish 20 stock watering points away from streams.
					2.41	By June 2005 prioritise riparian sites of regional significance or local importance that require protection, rehabilitation and/or ongoing management.	2.46	By 2007 exclude and control livestock access to 10 km of streams and wetlands.
					2.42	By June 2007 liaise with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and Environment ACT to investigate options for the control of native fauna (wombats) in riparian zones.	2.47	By 2007 retain and reintroduce large woody debris (snags) to five km of streams where necessary to enhance fish habitat.
					2.43	By June 2007 develop low impact recreation guidelines for riparian areas.		
			2.44	By 2006 develop streambank and gully erosion control plans at a property scale for four priority sub-catchments.				

# Land asset management

## State-wide resource condition targets

**LSRCT1:** By 2015 there is a net reduction in productive capacity lost due to salinity; acidity; erosion; acid sulphate soils; invasive species.

## Draft Murrumbidgee resource condition targets

**LRCT1:** By 2015 improve soil health across the catchment by:

- a Maintaining soil pH greater or equal to five (CaCl<sub>2</sub>) in areas where acidity has been induced
- b Increasing the duration of groundcover levels above 70%, and 50% for sandy loams, by at least one month a years across land used for agricultural production
- c maintaining or reducing the extent of dryland salinity outbreaks within the 12 priority Murrumbidgee sub-catchments at or below 2001 levels
- d improving water efficiency use of crops and pastures to 80%
- e increasing the adoption of perennial pasture by 40% across land used for agricultural production
- f maintaining or reducing water table levels in urban landscapes and in areas adjacent to infrastructure critical to rural communities and agricultural production.

## MCS resource condition goal

Grazing management that excludes stock from riparian areas, maintains groundcover and makes best use of holistic farm management principles.

## MCS community goal

Community involvement in riparian protection, rehabilitation and identification of soil erosion hotspots.

## Management targets

### Draft Murrumbidgee CAP

EROSION

- WMT1** Protect and enhance 1500 km of streambank using native riparian vegetation for bank stabilisation and runoff filtration.
- WMT2** Control streambank and gully erosion using structural control works.
- LMT1** By 2015, assist land managers and communities to lift to and maintain a minimum of 70% ground cover for ten months of the year on land classes IV, V, and VI.
- LMT3** By 2015, assist land managers and communities to lift and maintain a minimum of 70% ground cover for nine months of the year on land classes I, II, and III.

SOIL STRUCTURE

- LMT8** By 2015, assist land managers and communities to lift to, and maintain topsoil at pH 5.0 (using Calcium Chloride test) on land classes I, II, III and IV where acidity has been reduced.
- LMT5** By 2015, assist land managers and communities to lift the percentages of perennials in the pasture phase of farming systems (land classes I to IV) from 10% to 50%; and non arable land (land classes V to VII) from 40% to 80%.

GROUNDCOVER MANAGEMENT

- LMT1** By 2015, assist land managers and communities to lift to and maintain a minimum of 70% ground cover for ten months of the year on land classes IV, V, and VI.
- LMT3** By 2015, assist land managers and communities to lift to and maintain a minimum of 70% ground cover for nine months of the year on land classes I, II, and III.

### ACT NRM Plan

- BMT3** Wetland and Riverine management policies and management actions to meet determined aquatic ecosystem targets developed and implemented.
- SHT2** To benchmark current soil acidity relative to natural levels by 2006.
- SHT3** Soil fertility maintained to support perennial pastures in order to prevent erosion, and by 2006 a target for soil fertility will be developed.
- SHT5** Maintain a minimum of 70% ground cover for nine months of the year on land classes I, II, and III.
- SHT4** Maintain a minimum of 90% groundcover for twelve months of the year on land classes IV, V and VI.

## Action

### Community capacity

- 3.48 During 2005 continue to facilitate the implementation of programs to extend best practice grazing management systems including Prograze and Sustainable Grazing Systems emphasising soil health issues.
- 3.49 During 2005 develop management plans with landholders for erodible landscapes in five priority erosion hazard sub-catchments.

- 3.53 By 2006 implement Prime Pastures I and II to assist land managers in the farm planning and technical aspects of establishment of perennial pastures.
- 3.54 By 2006 develop and facilitate the delivery of an information package that promotes the role of native pastures on acid soils.

- 3.56 By June 2007 encourage and facilitate participation in LandScan and Healthy Soils—Healthy Landscapes program.
- 3.57 By June 2006 co-host three groundcover and pasture management field days in priority erosion hazard sub-catchments.

### Investigative

- 3.50 By 2006 secure resources to further develop the Erosion Hazard map series (Section 10) for all sub-catchments.
- 3.51 By June 2006 develop a program to assess the effectiveness of past erosion control measures on farms, streams and reserves.

- 3.55 By June 2006 undertake extensive paddock and soil testing program of pH and other soil chemistry parameters to enable benchmarking and better on-going soil management in five priority sub-catchments.

- 3.58 By 2007 use aerial photography to highlight priority sub-catchments for improved groundcover management.

### On-ground

- 3.52 By June 2006 initiate soil stabilisation works in five priority erosion hazard sub-catchments.

- 3.59 By 2006 engage 10 rural landholders to increase stubble retention practices and encourage minimum tillage as an on-ground trial.

# Community building management

## State-wide resource condition targets for 2010

**CSRCT1:** Information systems and training programs in place to meet CMA's identified needs to deliver better NRM outcomes.

**CSRCT2:** Communication networks and other strategies are established that lead to strong community commitment to better NRM outcomes

## Draft Murrumbidgee resource condition targets for 2015

**CRCT1:** Progressively build the MCMA's effective engagement of identified key stakeholders, with 100% of key stakeholders aware of the MCMA's role in NRM by 2006.

**CRCT2:** Increase the engagement of the traditional owners in NRM and increase the wider community's understanding of indigenous values in NRM.

**CRCT3:** Achievement and improvement in community capacity to deliver NRM outcomes by increasing skill, knowledge and adoption in NRM activities.

## MCS community goal

A catchment community armed with the knowledge to make justifiable decisions, who are prepared and willing to think regionally, act locally and promote the Landcare ethic.

## Management targets

### Draft Murrumbidgee CAP

RAISING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

- CMT6** Enhance the knowledge and skills of landholders and the wider community to adopt profitable and sustainable farming systems.
- CMT7** By 2006, establish and build an effective communication framework.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

- CMT1** By 2010, build a NRM best practice knowledgebase to assist decision-making.
- CMT2** Increase the capacity of the community to be engaged in NRM by identifying risks, impediments, drivers and opportunities
- CMT3** Encourage the integration of CAP targets within the planning framework of relevant organisations including local government.
- CMT5** By 2006, engage traditional owner communities to ensure cultural heritage values are incorporated into broader NRM planning and process.

CROSS BORDER COMMUNICATION

- CMT3** Encourage the integration of CAP targets within the planning framework of relevant organisations including local government.
- CMT7** By 2006, establish and build an effective communication framework.

COOPERATIVE PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT

- CMT3** Encourage the integration of CAP targets within the planning framework of relevant organisations including local government.
- BMT3** Regionally endangered and regionally vulnerable vegetation classes will have a minimum of 25 000 ha of native vegetation planted with a corresponding increase in diversity and condition by 2015.
- BMT5** Listed terrestrial and aquatic threatened species, populations and endangered ecological communities to be managed for biodiversity conservation for life of the CAP.

### ACT NRM Plan

- CBMT4** Develop strategies to encourage the community to take responsibility for the impact of their activities on the environment.
- CBMT1** The community to have access to information, skills and knowledge required to undertake activities towards achieving the targets in the NRM plan.
- CBMT2** Implement a strategy for investment to support environmental outcomes through cost sharing.
- CBMT3** Develop and implement an ACT communication strategy that is aligned with the Murrumbidgee Catchment Communications Strategy.

- CBMT2** Implement a strategy for investment to support environmental outcomes through appropriate cost sharing.

## Action

### Community capacity

- 4.60 By 2006 develop a media engagement plan and network contact schedule.
- 4.61 By June 2006 develop guidelines on volunteer recruitment and engagement strategies for existing community groups.
- 4.62 By June 2005 expand the Molonglo Waterwatch program to include five new schools in macro-invertebrate surveys.
- 4.63 By 2006 develop a Landcare short film that highlights the importance and success of community action in the catchment.

- 4.65 By 2006 engage the indigenous community through relevant agency staff to highlight the important features of the cultural landscape in the Molonglo.
- 4.66 By 2007 continue to support existing community planning initiatives by: assisting with implementation; facilitating cross border cooperative arrangements; engaging new project partners; promoting on-ground initiatives to attract sponsorship and labour resources.

- 4.68 By 2006 ensure that the ACT Communications Strategy continues to foster cross border communication.
- 4.69 By June 2005 foster and help establish communication and constructive working relationships between catchment community support staff.
- 4.70 By June 2005 facilitate the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the catchment group and the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority and the ACT Natural Resource Management Board.

- 4.72 By 2007 develop a communications process that ensures the catchment community has the opportunity to engage in meaningful consultation with government.

### Investigative

- 4.64 By June 2006 establish post willow removal trial revegetation sites in priority sub-catchments.

- 4.67 By June 2005 develop a Landcare trailer to provide groups with necessary equipment for on-ground activities.

- 4.71 By 2006 assist with the cross border rollout of the Healthy Soils—Healthy Landscapes Program.

- 4.73 By 2006 continue to develop the public land management buffer zone map series and review recommended actions with government.

### On-ground

- 4.74 By 2006 engage 20 land-holders in a cooperative weed reduction program extending from priority roadside sites.

- 4.75 By 2006 engage 20 landholders in a cooperative feral animal reduction program extending from priority forestry sites.



On the whole, the environmental health of the catchment is declining. With pressures including the growth and expansion of major urban centres and rural residential areas, human activity will make even more demands on the catchment's natural resources. Many of the existing threats the catchment currently faces will intensify.

The MCS aims to improve the health of all landscapes by 2024. Healthy environments have good quality air, water and soil, and viable ecosystems to maintain these.

This will not be easy, and the choices to be faced are difficult ones. The MCS will attempt to guide investment to improve environmental health, buffer the environmental impact of demands for higher living standards and a rising population and determine what specific targets are achievable, given the current trends in environmental condition.

The natural environment of the Molonglo Catchment has its limits. To be sustain

able, economic use of natural resources should respect these limits and work with, rather than against natural processes.

The MCS strives to encourage land managers to choose those practices that are economically viable whilst sustaining their natural asset base. The catchment group acknowledges that profitability and sustainability are not mutually exclusive and that this approach is ultimately the only way agronomic enterprises can truly maintain long-term profitability in an environmentally conscious manner.

There must, however, be a realisation that broad scale sustainable economic use of the catchment's natural resources is the responsibility of the whole community.

This goal hinges on the further development of an underlying 'environmental ethic' that is widely accepted in the catchment community.

The catchment is currently experiencing an expansion of rural residential estates, which is likely to result in some re-zoning

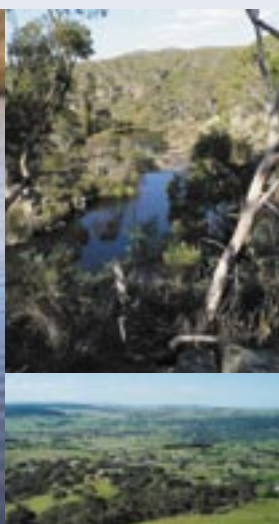
of traditionally 'farmed' areas, in the next 20 years. On the whole, new rural residential residents may not immediately understand the way the landscape is managed which poses some challenges in terms of weed management, water quality and feral animal management. However, new residents do bring new ideas, a new set of knowledge and more resources.

The catchment group acknowledges that expansion of these areas will cause some conflict between adjoining larger land managers and even within the estates themselves. However, all residents share a passion for where they live which is a building block for creating a cohesive knowledge-sharing network.

Likewise, new skills facilitate new ideas and given that most of the answers to the riddle of 'sustainability' are yet to be invented, these small communities are in fact a 'breeding ground' for innovation.

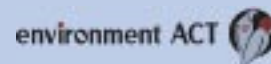
The MCS aims to establish new partnerships between the community and government and enhance those networks which are perhaps experiencing a loss of direction because of changes to the regional planning framework and institutional amendments.

**Photos clockwise from left: Jerrabomberra Wetlands, located at the junction of Jerrabomberra Creek and Lake Burley Griffin, may come under increasing visitor pressure with in-fill development in adjacent Kingston. Queanbeyan River at Urila, photo by Val Wiseman. Rural residential development in the Molonglo Valley, Carwoola.**



## FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on the strategy and how to get involved is available from the Molonglo Catchment Group:  
[www.molonglocatchment.com.au](http://www.molonglocatchment.com.au)  
[coordinator@molonglocatchment.com.au](mailto:coordinator@molonglocatchment.com.au)  
 PO Box 1573 Fyshwick ACT.



The Molonglo Catchment Strategy has been produced with funding assistance from the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and the ACT Government