

HorsesLandWater Peri-Urban Project

Identified needs for horse industry research and development in the area of horse keeping and Natural Resources Management



www.horseslandwater.com

HorsesLandWater

PO Box 483
Plympton SA 5038
Phone (08) 8294 2460
Email horsesa@horsesa.asn.au
Web www.horseslandwater.com

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Action Planner for Horse Properties
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Overview

In 2007, the Australian Department for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry funded a project which had the primary role of engaging horse keepers on small properties.

Funded through the National Landcare Programme Targeted Initiatives Programme, it was titled 'Managing Livestock Pressures in Sensitive Peri-urban Environments'.

The Project proponent, Horse SA, gave it the working title of 'HorsesLandWater Peri-urban Project'.

The HorsesLandWater project engaged horse owners, government agency representatives and researchers in state forums conducted in South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Tasmania.

Participants were asked what they considered the future investment areas should be for research and development related to horse keeping and Natural Resources Management.

The ideas were evaluated, combined and sorted by the HorsesLandWater Project Steering Committee. The projects have not been ranked. Where a topic was mentioned more than once, a number has been placed in brackets after the topic.

These ideas are to be widely distributed for any interested researcher or agency for consideration.

Topics

- 1 Models for mentoring horse property owners in sustainable Natural Resources Management practices. (2)
 - 2 Case studies of community-driven Natural Resources Management improvements on public land under the care and control of horse-related organisations. (2)
 - 3 Internet portal collating horse keeping and Natural Resources Management information specifically related to small holdings.
 - 4 Natural Resources Management Action Planning for horse keeping communities.
 - 5 Horse industry media communication compendium. (3)
 - 6 Economic modelling around horse keeping systems with and without Natural Resources Management improvements.
 - 7 Guide to investment in environmental works on small holdings with horses (investment vs environmental outcome expected).
 - 8 Shelter belts for horse properties in different rainfall zones. (3)
 - 9 Horse health issues linked to environmental living conditions (e.g. toxicity), and horse keeping practices leading to increased incidence of sand colic, horse keeping systems and the presence of worm burdens (moving from anecdotal to science-based). (2)
 - 10 Establishment of a research-based small holdings/collection of participating holdings which can then have open days. (3)
 - 11 Best grasses for horses in differing rainfall zones and/or soil types. (4)
 - 12 Sociology study – profiles of horse owners most likely to take up improved Natural Resources Management actions on their horse properties. Profiles can be developed of those that are more likely to need assistance/open to failure. (3)
 - 13 Review of Federal Government policy relating to Natural Resources Management and the environment to consider if there is perceived or real isolation/non-recognition of peri-urban small holdings, especially in relation to those containing horses. (3)
 - 14 Research into the range of grants and tax relief measures available to small property owners/horse owners in the area of Natural Resources Management and the environment and improved land management practices. Provide advice to government on where there could be further opportunities made available. (3)
 - 15 Undertake a gap analysis to determine what typical Natural Resources Management information is available for farmers and should be available (in customised form) to small holdings and in particular, horse owners.
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- 16 Comparative analysis of horse keeping systems in selected parts of the world and their direct or indirect contribution to improved Natural Resources Management. (2)
 - 17 Dictionary of terminology linking key horse keeping terms and key Natural Resources Management terms.
 - 18 Capacity building among horse owners on small holdings (as it was felt that this differs from farmers).
 - 19 Ideas for "less than ideal land" (as horse keeping is pushed further and further out due to residential expansion, prime grazing land is lost and forced into poorer quality areas).
 - 20 Advanced Natural Resources Management manual for commercial horse properties. (2)
 - 21 Guide for Local Government planners on parameters for assessing Development Applications for horse keeping and the use of Property Management Plans for improvements in Natural Resources Management.
 - 22 Horses and fencing: include survey on fence types and injuries, fencing for land classes, fencing layouts for best management of both horses and the environment, fence line tracking.
 - 23 Guidelines for property design and management linking horse keeping systems, Natural Resources Management and Biosecurity. (2)
 - 24 Evaluation of the 'Dry Sheep Equivalent' (DSE) measurement tool to see if it is the most accurate/margin of error/there is a better formula in relation to horses, which are not ruminants.
 - 25 Review of the trend by an increasing amount of Local Government/Shires to manage land through regulation of the number of stock per hectare and how this impacts on social/economic/community vs good Natural Resources Management models. (2)
 - 26 Study of engagement models utilised by Natural Resources Management Boards/Catchment Management Authorities across Australia to determine effectiveness in engagement of small (horse) landholders and their immediate representative bodies. What evidence is found in Natural Resources Management Plans? Are small landholders recognised formally through seats on committees? – or there by default wearing "another hat". (3)
 - 27 Cost benefit analysis of good land management practices (sustainable grazing) vs hand feeding of horses.
 - 28 The Ultimate Study of Horses, Dung Beetles, Earth Worms and Composting.
 - 29 Effects of the use common farm chemicals on horses in differing horse keeping systems.
 - 30 Guidelines on what are good horse keeping practices. (4+)
(Many felt disassociated from neighbours and Local Government due to unreal expectations. A simple guide similar to what is available for keeping dogs and cats.)
 - 31 Guidelines for typical horse facilities in selection/upgrading in key environmental areas linked to energy conservation, water conservation, recycling etc.
 - 32 Using GIS to assist in sustainable property planning for small holdings.
 - 33 Urban geography project to provide forecasting tools, based around small holdings in peri-urban areas.
 - 34 Case studies of Councils with significant horse keeping issues and how these have been fully or partially resolved.

General enquiries:

Julie Fiedler
HorsesLandWater Project Manager
PO Box 483 Plympton South Australia 5043
Email horsesa@horsesa.asn.au
www.horseslandwater.com
