



MEDIA RELEASE

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

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Water week – A time to celebrate the successful environmental partnership that helped Watershed horse property owners improve land management practices

Water Week is that time of the year to celebrate achievements such as the three-year environmental partnership project between the Environment Protection Authority's Mount Lofty Ranges Watershed Protection Office and Horse SA.

This partnership has helped horse property owners improve their land management practices, which will result in a better quality of water reaching creeks and rivers in the Mount Lofty Ranges watershed.

The ***Prototype Environmental Management System (EMS) for the Horse Keeping Community – Implementation, Auditing and Monitoring*** project raised awareness and resulted in adoption of EMS principles among the horse keeping community within Adelaide's primary drinking water catchment area.

EPA Senior Watershed Natural Resource Management Officer Jacqueline Frizenschaf said horse property owners faced increasing scrutiny from the broader community, government and peers when it came to how they managed the impact horses had on the environment, especially in the Mount Lofty Ranges Watershed.

"Collaboration between the EPA and Horse SA on this project resulted in an understanding between government and the Watershed horse keeping community.

"Now that we both understand how to manage natural resources and horses in a compassionate and sustainable manner we can concentrate on promoting these voluntary guides as tools to aid land management and compliance matters," Ms Frizenschaf said.

As a result of the project an action planner and set of management guidelines were developed to assist property managers review current practices, identify improvements and adhere to best practice management.

The ***Action Planner for Horse Properties*** and the ***Horses, Land and Water Management Guidelines*** are now available online as part of a free information pack that focuses on how to improve horse health through better land management practices and manage regulatory compliance pressures.

"We encourage horse keepers to make use of the action planner to identify just a few key areas to tackle as part of ongoing property management. No matter how small they may seem, these efforts can make a huge difference," Ms Frizenschaf said.

The information pack examines five key areas including; maintaining groundcover to reduce erosion, planning to control weeds in pastures, restricting horse access to wet areas, preventing manure build up in paddocks and managing intensive horse keeping areas to prevent dust, mud and manure build up and pollution of stormwater and watercourses.

Ms Frizenschaf said it was critical for horse keepers in the Watershed to effectively manage their properties in order to maintain and improve water resources.

“Everyone who has horses in the Watershed has a part to play in improving water quality and reducing risks for themselves and other water users. This is critical to ensure sustainability for future generations and the ongoing wellbeing of local communities and businesses in the Mount Lofty Ranges,” she said.

The project was funded by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), EPA, Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board, SA Water and also gained support from ENVIROFUND and Land and Water Australia’s Greening Australia Exchange Program.

The next step is to ensure pro-active horse property owners are acknowledged for their efforts and the success of the uptake of the tools is monitored.

The final project report can be accessed on the RIRDC website <http://www.rirdc.gov.au/programs/hor.html>

Free copies of the **Action Planner** and the **Management Guidelines** are available from the Horses, Land and Water website www.horseslandwater.com or by contacting Horse SA on 8294 2460 or emailing horsesa@horsesa.asn.au

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