



managing native
vegetation
and biodiversity

improving farm profits
through biodiversity

LandWater & Wool

Shaping the future



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research project: **CENTRAL VICTORIA**



Profitable wool production and improved native vegetation - a healthy marriage in Victoria

More than half of Victoria's wool growers have remnant native vegetation on their land, according to a recent survey of 1500 wool growers.

The survey, which was commissioned by the *Land, Water & Wool* (LWW)* initiative, also found that of the 58 percent of Victorian wool growers with native vegetation on their farm, two thirds believed it was useful to production.

Productive management of native vegetation is an increasing priority for wool growers in parts of Victoria. Many Victorian wool growers manage their native bush/scrub or native grasslands differently to other areas of their farm because they perceive there are environmental and production benefits.

This research project, *Marrying Wool Business & Native Biodiversity*, will help to identify productive, practical solutions for native vegetation focusing on the Ararat Hills, Maryborough-Lexton and Springhurst regions.

Project origins and objectives

The project is part of *Land, Water & Wool* initiative, which will focus on sustainable wool production in Australia.

As part of LWW, *The Marrying Wool Business & Native Biodiversity* project will provide information for wool growers in Victoria and south-east Australia.



The specific objectives of the project are to:

- **identify** the capacity of wool growers to invest in conservation of native biodiversity, using current resources;
- **assess** the impact of investing in conservation work on wool properties' cashflow and farm profitability;
- **determine** what assistance is required (such as resources, dollars, information etc) for wool growers to invest in conservation of native biodiversity;
- **identify** the best, most practical ways of managing native biodiversity while maintaining on-farm cash flow, productivity and other management goals; and
- **assess** the on-farm costs and benefits of undertaking any conservation work.

**Land, Water & Wool* (LWW) is a joint investment between the wool industry's peak research and development body, Australian Wool Innovation Limited, and the nation's premier investor in natural resource management research; Land & Water Australia.

Native Vegetation and Biodiversity is one of eight *Land, Water & Wool* sub-programs. The others include:

- Benchmarking and Evaluation
- Sustainable Grazing on Saline Land (SGSL)
- River management and water quality
- Managing climate variability
- Managing pastoral country
- Future woolscapes
- Sustainable Grazing Systems Harvest Year



DATE: AUG 08



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RESEARCH PROJECT: CENTRAL VICTORIA

Key outcomes for wool growers

- An **active** network of wool growers in Victoria to share information about producing wool for biodiversity and profit.
- An **improved** understanding of wool growers' attitudes and management practices to conserve and enhance on-farm biodiversity.
- An **array** of practical, profitable management solutions for managing native biodiversity.
- A **profile** of the economic and biodiversity characteristics of innovative wool growers in three study regions.
- **Best** management practice materials, booklets, web-based material, videos, guided farm tour manuals.

fast facts on Central Victorian wool country

Average annual rainfall:
500 – 600mm

Soil types:
Sandy loams of low fertility and often poorly drained outcrops. Some alluvial soils are found on the flatter parts.

Altitude:
30m to 300m

The study area

The project team will focus on nine commercial wool properties across three regions of central Victoria. These regions are Ararat Hills, Maryborough-Lexton and Springhurst.

Ararat Hills: Farms in the Ararat Hills will demonstrate the importance of retaining and enhancing native pastures and trees.

Maryborough Lexton: Farms in the Maryborough Lexton area will demonstrate the financial impact on the farm business of enhancing biodiversity.

Springhurst: Farms in the Springhurst area will demonstrate the on-farm costs and benefits of utilising native pastures for production.

These case study properties will help identify how native biodiversity and sustainable wool production can occur simultaneously, and will be utilised to communicate results to other wool growers across Victoria and more widely in Australia.

The shaded area below indicates where these research sites have been established as part of the **LWW Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Project**.

This area is characterised as being foothill country consisting of hills, low hills and some flats country. The soil types are generally fragile or light and the substantial landclearing in the past, has contributed to large areas of soil erosion and low productivity. Native pastures and vegetation occur in much of this country. The LWW program is addressing both productivity and environmental health issues to aid better management of this area.



project partners:



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Order information about other Land, Water & Wool Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Projects:

- **Making more from your native pastures** PF 030 477
- **What do native vegetation, quality wool and healthy profits have in common in the Northern Tablelands** PF 030 479
- **Our reputation for quality wool in the Northern Midlands rides on the sheep's back - and on the health of our native vegetation** PF 030 480

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