

# MANAGING VEGETATION IN TSRs

## overview of the project

Travelling Stock Reserves (or TSRs) have been an integral part of rural Australia for more than 150 years and continue to be important today as supplementary grazing areas in times of drought, bushfire and flood. The Australian Network for Plant Conservation (ANPC) delivered a series of six workshops for land managers and TSR Rangers to support the management of remnant vegetation communities which often survive in these reserves. The overall aim was to improve biodiversity conservation on TSRs with a particular focus on box gum woodland, an endangered ecological community.

The workshops included a mix of theory, practical and field activities and were developed and presented in collaboration with local experts from a range of agencies. Two comprehensive course modules were developed focussing on remnant vegetation management and plant identification.



Field visit during the Guyra workshop

## how the project was carried out

The majority of TSRs are managed by the Crown Lands Division of NSW Trade and Investment, however there are many other stakeholders with an interest or expertise in TSR management. Workshop presenters were sourced from Local Land Services, Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Primary Industries, Landcare, Great Eastern Ranges Initiative, Hunter Councils, Local Government, Greening Australia, and CSIRO. In all, 42 local experts were involved in delivering the training.



Plant identification during the Guyra workshop

Two day workshops were held across the state between 2011 and 2013 in Wagga Wagga, Bathurst, Guyra, Scone, Deniliquin and Canberra. Workshop organisers liaised closely with TSR Rangers (the primary target audience) and the focus and content of each workshop reflected identified training needs. The first four workshops focussed on managing remnant vegetation. The last two workshops in Deniliquin and Canberra had a major focus on plant identification after it was found that TSR managers identified this as a major hurdle to effective management.

Two comprehensive course modules were developed to support the workshops. Both modules engaged participants with a mix of theory, practical, and field activities, and can easily be adapted for delivery in specific locations. Workshop participants were provided with a range of supporting material including a CD of ANPC's publication *Plant Conservation — approaches and techniques from an Australian Perspective*, and a bibliography of the management of remnant vegetation in TSRs and road reserves.

## outcomes now and in the future

Training in the management of remnant native vegetation and plant identification for grassy ecosystems was delivered to 179 stakeholders including staff from Local Land Services, local government, Rural Fire Service, Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Primary Industries, and various community groups and consulting companies.

Many of the state's TSRs support remnant grassy box woodland communities which are now endangered. All six workshops included field visits to grassy box woodland sites and the workshop content was tailored towards managing these and other grassy vegetation communities. The delivery of this training will contribute to better management of these endangered ecological communities.

## benefits, challenges & lessons learned

Workshop registrations were lower than expected during the first year of the project leading to a broadening of the workshop to encompass remnant vegetation in general (not just in TSRs). Further revision occurred after the fourth workshop when it was found that many TSR managers struggled with plant identification and considered this a major barrier to effective management. A shift in focus to plant identification resulted in a considerable increase in attendance for the last two workshops, particularly for TSR Rangers who were the target audience.

The second module on plant identification in grassy communities has been particularly successful and was used to develop a further workshop in Victoria in late 2013. The Australian Network for Plant Conservation plans to further extend the delivery of this module into other areas of Australia in 2014.