

## TI TREE WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Ti Tree WAC meeting # 32 of 2/11/06

Held at DPIFM Research Farm, Ti Tree.

#### Introduction

Chairman Andrew O'Bree opened the meeting at 9:35am and welcomed attendees.

Present: Andrew O'Bree, Peter McKeand, Neil Feazey, Sam Miles (proxy for Allan Cooney)  
NTG Staff: Mark Pierson, Max Rittner, Geoff Kenna, Dean Salter, Daryl King, Dave Maynard  
Visitors: Richie Hayes, Tony Scrutton (part), Bill Coburn, Laurie Lipson  
Apologies: Allan Cooney, Trevor Sowman, John Childs, Bob Millington

#### Agenda Item 1 - Introduction

- 1.1 Dave Maynard introduced Gabby Hargreaves, the new DPIFM Industry Development Officer.
- 1.2 Chairman acknowledged Bob Millington's absence – Chairman to write a letter of thanks.

#### Agenda Item 2 - Minutes

- 2.1 The draft minutes of meeting #31 were circulated prior to the meeting and tabled at the meeting.

#### Motion

*The draft minutes of meeting #31 held at NRETA Conference Room, Alice Springs at 8:40am on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2006 are endorsed as a true and accurate account of proceedings.*

**Moved: Peter McKeand**

**Seconded: Geoff Kenna**

**Carried: unanimously**

#### Agenda Item 3 - Correspondence

- 3.1 Out – RNWS Application (Chairman's email of support).
- 3.2 In – NWC acceptance of RNWS application.

#### Agenda Item 4 - NRETA Controller's Update

- 4.1 Mark Pierson asked whether NRETA could combine the TTWAC EO position with ASWAC EO position.
- 4.2 Mark Pierson was thanked for his efforts and asked to continue as EO until a new EO could be recruited.
- 4.3 Max Rittner was to do a 'manual' check of Ti Tree Basin pipes and meters some time in the new year.
- 4.4 The Controller's letter on compliance standards for backflow prevention was read and discussed.
- 4.5 The Ti Tree Basin Water Resource Strategy workplan status report was discussed.
- 4.6 The "WAC newsletter" would double as an annual report for the WAC.
- 4.7 The annual report for the WAC would be posted on the NRETA website.
- 4.8 Chairman's letter (not presented) on WAC activities for 2005-06 is to be included in the WAC newsletter.
- 4.9 Crop area statistics would be compiled once a year and included in the WAC newsletter.
- 4.10 Water usage graphs would be produced twice-yearly in August and February.

#### Agenda Item 5 - Broken Meters

- 5.1 Ti Tree WAC to assist NRETA to develop draft policy and guidelines for next discussion at next meeting.

#### Agenda Item 6 - Annual Health of the Basin Report

- 6.1 Mark Pierson circulated a 'Plain-English' summary of the Health of the Basin Report prepared by Anthony Knapton and discussed some of the key points. Peter McKeand questioned the accuracy of the groundwater model. Geoff Kenna questioned the emphasis on water quality issues.

### Agenda Item 7 - Review of Monitoring Requirements

- 7.1 Mark Pierson said that a technical report was being finalised in time for next meeting.

### Agenda Item 8 - DPIFM "Advice and Extension"

- 8.1 Geoff Kenna said that additional information was supplied to Ooloo Farm Management in relation to estimated water usage for growing mangoes at Ti Tree. Geoff provided advice to suggest that 18ML/ha/yr was required.
- 8.2 Peter McKeand was interested to know whether an application was received for water at Jabiru Farm. Mark Pierson said that an approach had been made but that he was not in a position to comment further on the matter.
- 8.3 Geoff Kenna reported that annual rainfall had been well above the average for the last 12-month period.
- 8.4 Geoff Kenna reported on the Indigenous Economic Development program which was progressing well.
- 8.5 Geoff Kenna said that he had approaches from Ali Curung to do something similar there – facilitating a partnership between Anmatjere Council and industry
- 8.6 The employment training program facilitated OHS training in conjunction with Charles Darwin University and Table Grape Growers of Australia. In time this may lead to a program of formal traineeships and accredited apprenticeships for local industry. Mark Pierson asked if this was purely industry focussed and whether a training program could be developed for water monitoring. Geoff said that water could be part of it but only if industry needs are met.

### Agenda Item 9 - Centrefarm Update

- 9.1 Sam Miles gave an update in Allan Cooney's absence.
- 9.2 Ali Curung has been signed off by TOs. Now it has to go to CLC and Minister to endorse a 90 year head lease.
- 9.3 6-Mile had been signed off last week. Centrefarm has the management contracts in hand.
- 9.4 Willowra, Utopia & Pine Hill – significant regional development. Centrefarm has access to the land but now needs access to capital. The idea would be to develop infrastructure and lease to an operator then get locals involved in production.
- 9.5 It is expected that Centrefarm would be developing 8,000ML of horticulture by March next year. CLC land owners own the land which will be leased to Centrefarm then sub-leased to growers.
- 9.6 Allan Cooney is to give a full report at the next meeting.

### Agenda Item 10 - General Business

- 10.1 Dave Maynard tabled the Northern Territory Horticulture Association's (NTHA) sustainable agriculture guidelines and drew attention to the sections on soils and water. NTHA is requesting feedback from WAC members. Dave to email a copy of the guidelines to all members.
- 10.2 Dave Maynard talked about the review of the Natural Resource Management Board's Regional Investment Strategy (RIS) – e.g. water metering/monitoring, soil management, irrigation scheduling/soil moisture, etc...
- 10.3 Mark Pierson mentioned that the National Water Commission was meeting in Darwin to talk about water allocation planning – Ian Lancaster had put in a good word for the Ti Tree Strategy Review grant application.
- 10.4 Mark Pierson said that NRETA continues to implement the National Water Initiative in the Northern Territory and that an implementation plan was available on the NRETA website. Ian Smith (NRETA Executive Policy Unit) had requested feedback for the Ti Tree WAC.
- 10.5 Max Rittner talked about NRETA Maps and said that it would improve our ability to assist with bore information and other enquiries. Eventually it will be available to the general public on the NRETA website.

Close of Meeting: 11:15am

*Next meeting: 9:30am Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February\* 2007 @ NRETA Conference Room – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Alice Plaza*

*Next meeting: 9:30am Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007 @ DPIFM Research Farm – Ti Tree Farms*

*Next meeting: 9:30am Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2007 @ NRETA Conference Room – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Alice Plaza*

*Next meeting: 9:30am Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2007 @ DPIFM Research Farm – Ti Tree Farms*

***\*Note: this date looks likely to be changed to 1:00pm Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007 @ NRETA Conference Room***