

# Significant Environmental Benefit NEWSLETTER

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**Nature Foundation SA – SA's largest non-government conservation land owner**

*“NFSA’s Significant Environmental Benefit program assists nature conservation in South Australia—and through this newsletter we hope to share some of our experiences with you.”*

*Bob Lott – Nature Foundation SA President*

## It’s Been Raining up North

Every time it rains in the outback we are reminded of the tremendous difference water makes to the landscape. During January, Witchelina Nature Reserve received 60mm, and Hiltaba Nature Reserve had 40mm. Chris Reed, Chair of Nature Foundation SA’s Property Management Committee, says, “The growth of summer grasses is fantastic; it is still green there in some parts.”

The down-side of rain is that it also creates conditions that suit the feral pests, who are predators and competitors with native species. Chris says, “We have had contract shooters visit the properties. During January-February they shot 62 feral cats, 112 rabbits and two dingoes on Witchelina, and 45 feral goats on Hiltaba.” He adds, “We also put out baits each month, targeting foxes and dingoes.”

Buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*), an introduced, perennial pasture grass, is a problem in the creeklines on Witchelina. It is best controlled a fortnight to a month after rain, when it is fresh and green. “We wanted to make sure we didn’t miss the opportunity, so conservation volunteers and rotational managers spent four days spraying buffel grass along 15kms of creekline on Witchelina in February.”

Witchelina is run on a system of rotational managers who are rostered on for a week at a time. Their time is divided half-and-half between nature conservation works and property maintenance. Chris says, “That’s the good thing about rain: when the vegetation responds, the managers can see how their conservation work is making a difference.”



*Black Hill Dam, Witchelina Nature Reserve, full after summer rain.*

## Feral Cat Facts

The recently released *Action Plan for Australian Mammals 2012* (June 2014)<sup>1</sup> has concluded that feral cats are the single greatest cause of terrestrial mammal extinctions in Australia.

In October 2014, the Federal Environment Minister, Greg Hunt,

announced a 10-year plan to eradicate all of the significant populations of feral cats around Australia<sup>2</sup>. The Foundation has sent correspondence to Minister Hunt outlining support for the feral cat eradication plan.

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> John C Z Woinarski, <http://www.publish.csiro.au/pid/7010.htm>,

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/feral-cats-re-write-the-australian-story/5802204>

## Restoration Ecology Forum at Hiltaba Nature Reserve

Tuesday 15th to Friday 18th September 2015

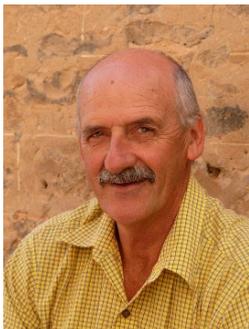
Building on the encouraging success of the 2014 Witchelina Forum, Nature Foundation SA invites resource sector representatives to its 2015 Ecology Forum, which is to be held on Hiltaba Nature Reserve in the Gawler Ranges. The four day period allows for two days on the property and travel pre and post. Having two full days on the property means there will be time to build on participant suggestions from the 2014 forum.

The forum will be a chance to enjoy the spectacular diversity of landscapes on Hiltaba, to get involved first-hand with nature conservation, and to network with other resource sector ecologists. There will be opportunity to learn more about the Foundation's conservation approach, and what is possible through third party delivery of Significant Environmental Benefits.

If you are interested in finding out more about the forum, email: [Caroline.Nefiodovas@nfsa.org.au](mailto:Caroline.Nefiodovas@nfsa.org.au)



Hiltaba's accommodation has just received an upgrade. On a recent working bee, volunteers put a ceiling in one of the cottages and gave the shearers quarters a fresh coat of paint!  
Back: Peter Collins, John Ovenden, Dave Goodenough, Fred Van der Heiden, Dave Sellar, Lange and Inara Powell. Front: Petra Van der Heiden, Maria Reed and Anne Sellar



### Introducing Chris Reed

Chris has been a Nature Foundation SA Council Member since 2012. He has also served two, 3-year terms as Presiding Member of the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board. Prior to that he was involved for three years as Chairperson of the Interim Natural Resources Management Group, and for ten years as Chairperson of the Eastern Districts Soil Conservation Board. Chris also farms the family property near Burra in the mid-north of SA, which has been held by his family for four generations.

Chris's practical know-how and considerable land management experience, are invaluable to Nature Foundation SA's SEB program. He Chairs the Foundation's Property Management Committee, which manages both the Witchelina and Hiltaba Nature Reserves.

## An Invitation from Nature Foundation SA

Nature Foundation SA is pleased to extend an invitation to interested people from the resources sector to join other interested members of our community for the launch of Watchalunga Nature Reserve, near Finnis on the Fleurieu Peninsula. Watchalunga comprises 92 ha of Fleurieu Swamp area listed as Critically Endangered under the EPBC Act 1999, and is home to the EPBC listed Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren (endangered) and the Southern Bell-frog (vulnerable).

**Saturday 21 March 2015, 10.00am – 11.30am**

Although SEBs did not contribute to the purchase of Watchalunga, NFSA is keen to demonstrate the scope of its operations on this unique property in the low lying Fleurieu Peninsula Swamp. The Hon Ian Hunter MLC, Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation will officially launch the property, and there will be an opportunity to take part in a site tour as well as relax and enjoy light refreshments.

An information flyer is available from email: [naturefoundationsa@nfsa.org.au](mailto:naturefoundationsa@nfsa.org.au), Ph: 8340 28809, RSVP essential.



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Senex Energy Limited, and WPG Resources

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