



managing native vegetation and biodiversity

improving farm profits through biodiversity

# LandWater & Wool

## Shaping the future



Australian Government  
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research project: **NORTHERN TABLELANDS  
NEW SOUTH WALES**



### What do native vegetation, quality wool and healthy profits have in common in the Northern Tablelands of NSW?

Quite a lot, as it happens!

The NSW Northern Tablelands is a significant producer of high quality fine wool. It covers 2.5 million hectares and approximately two-thirds of the region is natural pasture carrying an estimated two million sheep.

Productive management of native vegetation is an increasing priority for the region's woolgrowers. Natural resource management issues such as native tree dieback, unpalatable invasive weeds, gully erosion, compromised riparian vegetation and water quality, vertebrate pests and a decline in native biodiversity have the potential to impact on farm productivity and profitability.

This project, **Profitable Wool Production & Biodiversity**, will focus on the grazing and natural resource management practices of woolgrowers in the Northern Tablelands. It is part of the *Land, Water & Wool* initiative.

*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



Photo courtesy of SNELC Ltd.

The specific objectives of the project are to:

- **demonstrate** the compatibility of commercially successful profitable wool production and conservation of native biodiversity using case studies;
- **identify** using monitor farms, the specific biophysical and socio-economic links between wool production and biodiversity conservation;
- **highlight** profitable conservation practices for woolgrowers in temperate regions from the case studies and the monitor farms;
- **encourage** adoption of profitable conservation practices among woolgrowers in the Northern Tablelands and climatically comparable regions; and
- **use** the research results as the technical basis for marketing initiatives or an industry-coordinated environmental management system if appropriate.

#### Demonstrating the benefits

Many wool growers in northern NSW have profitable enterprises characterised by high levels of native biodiversity.

These have been achieved by investing in a wide variety of management practices to enhance farm profitability as well as native biodiversity.

Management practices have included:

- grazing management of natural pasture including continuous grazing and phase (cell and rotational) grazing in different situations;
- tree management such as protecting and enhancing woody vegetation, developing windbreaks and wildlife corridors, plantation forestry and agroforestry; and
- river & water management including protecting riparian zones and farm dams and creating and protecting wetlands.



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### Key outcomes for wool growers

- **Vibrant**, active and informed network of wool growers across the Northern Tablelands of NSW.
- **Improved** understanding of wool growers' attitudes and levels of adoption of management practices to conserve and enhance on-farm biodiversity.
- **Profile** of the economic and biodiversity characteristics and innovative management practices of several properties.
- **Understanding** of the biodiversity and socio-economic features of local wool properties.
- **Knowledge** of the relationships between biodiversity, wool profits, the resource base and management.
- **Best** management practice materials, options and alternatives in brochures, booklets, web-based material, videos and guided farm tour manuals.

Wool growers who adopt practices appropriate to their enterprise can anticipate increased profitability through improved production and protection of the resource base.

Improvements in soil health, water quality, nutrient and vegetation management resulting from a whole-farm approach to enhancing biodiversity offer numerous on and off farm benefits.

### Project management

A steering committee of local wool growers and members of the Southern New England Landcare Coordinating Committee Inc (SNELCC) will ensure the project targets wool growers' needs and delivers practical outcomes. Project co-ordinator is Associate Professor Nick Reid from the University of New England.

#### fast facts

on Northern Tablelands NSW

##### Catchment:

Border Rivers, Gwydir, Namoi, Upper North Coast, Mid North Coast

##### Predominantly summer rainfall:

700mm Western parts

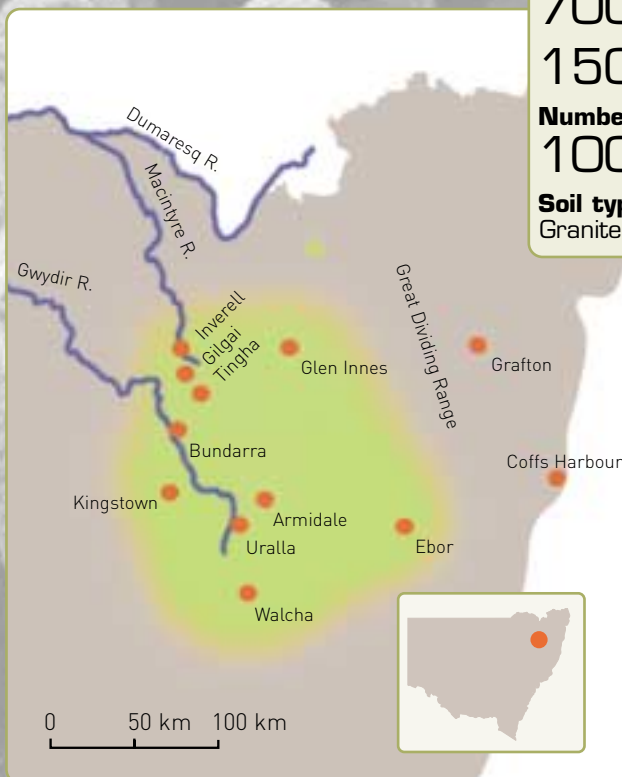
1500mm Eastern parts

##### Number of wool growers:

1000

##### Soil types:

Granite, Trap, Basalt



### The study area

The shaded region indicates the study area in the New England Tablelands of northern NSW.

It includes wool growers from Glen Innes in the north to Glen Morrison in the south, Ebor in the east and Kingstown in the west.

### For further information, contact:

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

- **Profitable wool production and improved native vegetation - a healthy marriage in Victoria** PF 030 478
- **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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