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I fish and I don't spread weeds

Marketing weed awareness to recreational fishers in the Northern Territory

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The Top End waterways and floodplains represent some of Australia's, and the world's, most idyllic and pristine environments. A low population, a managed fishery and a variety of fishing opportunities over a large land-mass mean that our waterways can produce a range of quality fishing experiences throughout the year. In the Top End, fishing is a valued way of life and a profession, and must be preserved for future generations. Introduced plants or weeds, however, can negatively impact on this way of life by:

- altering habitats and displacing plants and animals,
- choking or blocking waterways which affect fishing and camping access,
- altering fire and flood patterns, and
- reducing the aesthetic value or recreational experience.

Unfortunately, recreational fishers can be vectors in the spread of weeds, as they frequent areas where weeds such as Mimosa (*Mimosa pigra*), Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*),

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



THIS is Leslee Hills (and not Jill Kerby ... see correction on Page 2). Leslee is with the Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development, Darwin, Northern Territory. Email: Leslee.Hills@nt.gov.au

Parkinsonia (*Parkinsonia aculeata*) and Noogoora burr (*Xanthium occidentale*) occur.

Continued page 2...

From the editor

A grab bag of topics in this edition. Leslee Hills' feature story is a good example of well-defined and well documented extension strategy with a focus on evaluation.

Please read the information on the APEN AGM on page 4 ... it'd be wonderful to see as many faces as possible for professional and social reasons at Tatura in November.

In this edition, we introduce a "new members" page (p11). It's a good way to put faces to names and vice versa. If you're new to APEN, give your mug a plug!

Now that I'm more settled in the editor's chair, I'm happy to say this edition is 12 pages long (rather than eight). Your APEN sub is now an even better investment!

- Darren Schmidt

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The AGM will be in Tatura, Victoria, on Friday November 8. More details on page 4.

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Amanda Miller evaluates the success of these workshops in the west.

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Former horticulturist Noel Ainsworth and "re-born" extensionist Max Coster give their views on extension from the outside.

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Horticulture Australia

I fish and I don't spread weeds (cont'd from p1)

Although efforts have been undertaken in the past to raise 'awareness' levels, the lack of a extension methodology has resulted in the absence of a documented, coordinated and planned approach



CORRECTION

THIS is Jill Kerby, who wrote the article in the previous edition of ExtensionNet titled "Implementing on-ground change" (devolved grants). The photo inadvertently used last time was of Leslee Hills who penned this edition's feature article. The mix up was entirely the fault of the editor who apologises to all parties involved.

The accidental spread of weeds to 'weed free' areas is a real threat, and is one of the reasons for a weed marketing campaign targeting recreational fishers in the Northern Territory. The Amateur Fishermen's Association of the Northern Territory (AFANT) was chosen as the target group as it has a large membership base - greater than 600 - and access to members' personal details could be obtained for the survey.

The campaign comprised three stages:

- (1) Benchmarking survey
- (2) Marketing and awareness campaign
- (3) Follow up survey and evaluation.

The specific objectives of the three-stage project were to:

- (1) Determine fishers' knowledge and attitudes toward weeds
- (2) Determine whether a change in practice could be achieved as a result of an education/awareness campaign
- (3) Determine the best methods of information delivery to AFANT members.

Stage 1 Benchmarking

Stage one of the campaign consisted of a benchmarking survey to determine fishers' current awareness and attitudes toward noxious weeds. Although efforts have been undertaken in the past to raise the 'awareness' levels of fishing enthusiasts, the lack of a extension methodology has resulted in the absence of a documented, coordinated and planned approach to this issue. Sheley *et al.* (1996) point out that many educational programs are often developed and delivered without consideration of the level of interest and knowledge of the audience. Without such knowledge, educators may make false assumptions about levels of public awareness or understanding of the issues, which could result in the development of ineffective programs.

The results of the benchmarking survey assisted in identifying gaps in knowledge of AFANT members so that a communication plan and campaign could be developed to address these gaps. This was followed by a second survey to determine if any change in practice occurred.

Results

Out of 648 questionnaires posted, 228 were returned, or 35% of the sampled population. This figure is considered a reasonable return rate (Czaja & Blair 1996). Respondents' self rated knowledge and assessment of the seriousness of noxious weeds reveal that they knew a little or knew something about them (80%). Only 3.8% indicated that they knew a lot about weeds and 15% were not knowledgeable at all. Over three-quarters (76%) of respondents considered weeds were a serious or very serious problem. When asked to name the two worst or most damaging weeds in the Top End, 81% of respondents could name at least two weeds. *Mimosa* (*Mimosa pigra*) (76%) was mentioned most, followed by *Salvinia* (*Salvinia molesta*) (61%).

To prevent noxious weed invasion, it is important to know how weeds spread and why they are able to spread rapidly. Most of the members surveyed could name at least two ways in which weeds were spread. The most common answers were wind, water, vehicles and wildlife in that order, and to a lesser extent people and agricultural practices.

Most of the respondents did not perceive themselves as being actively involved in spreading weeds (56%). When asked to identify their current activities which might result in the spread of weeds, 46% could not think of an answer.

Many of those surveyed did not perceive themselves as being actively involved in slowing weed spread either. When asked what they could do to reduce the spread of weeds 44% of respondents could not think of anything they could do to minimise the spread of weeds.

Stage 2 The campaign

The campaign consisted of a number of products, messages and information delivery methods to AFANT members. These products included stickers, pamphlets, posters, Agnotes and brochures. Information and articles on weeds were delivered via displays, presentations, advertisements, the AFANT newsletter, weed signage and the

print media. A television segment on mimosa was also made and broadcast. A weed page was also developed for inclusion on the AFANT web site, and linked back to the department where more weed information could be found.

Stage 3 The evaluation

The following data relate to the responses of AFANT members to the second questionnaire, following the campaign. Out of the 228 follow up questionnaires posted, 94 were returned or 41.2%.

As a result of the weed awareness campaign 51.2% of respondents felt that they knew a little more about weeds than they did before the campaign. Twenty one percent indicated that they knew a lot more and 19.5% said that they knew no more than they did before.

Increase in understanding

Nearly 70% of respondents indicated that they had a greater understanding of the extent of the weed problem in the Northern Territory. Seventeen percent indicated that they knew no more than before, and 5% didn't know whether they had or not. Similar results were gained from the question asking whether respondents had a wider understanding of the impacts that weeds have on the environment: 70% indicated that they did have a wider understanding as a result of the campaign.

Preventing the spread of weeds

Seventy three percent of respondents indicated that they were more aware of how weeds are spread as a result of the campaign. At the benchmarking stage, 44% could not think of anything they could do to prevent or slow the spread of weeds, compared to 17% for the second survey. This is a considerable improvement.

Removal of weeds

Finding out whether respondents had attempted to remove weeds/seeds from their boat, motor and camping gear assisted with determining whether AFANT members had incorporated a particular skill or action as a result of gaining more knowledge.

Over 80% indicated that they had checked their boat, motor and camping gear before departing an area. This section also gave respondents an opportunity to provide examples of what they had done if they answered 'yes' to the question. One respond-

ent's reply was "Through cleaning of the boat on a sand-bar, brushing all leaves and seeds off the camper and all tarps etc".

Weed Recognition

Respondents also indicated that they had improved their recognition of Mimosa and Salvinia followed by Noogoora burr and Parkinsonia. The range of products, displays and presentations evidently had an impact in improving weed recognition. Articles in the AFANT newsletter were most seen, followed by weed signage, posters, television etc. This gives the department an indication of where best to target resources via appropriate mechanisms/tools.

It is useful to have a range of products even though some cost more than others. High cost options such as weed signage should not exclude one product over the other on the basis of cost alone.

The television segment was the 4th ranked medium seen. Television is an excellent medium for delivering information as it is visual, packaged in a form that is easy to understand and requires little thought or concentration from the audience.

So what?

The weed marketing campaign effectively raised the level of knowledge and understanding of large percentage of AFANT members about weeds, and provided the department with feedback on the best and most cost effective ways of delivering this information. With this information, the department will be able to continue marketing weed awareness to this target group appropriately and cost effectively. The total cost of the campaign excluding the department's time was approximately \$5000 to achieve changes in practice. While an education campaign such as this may not directly reduce weed outbreaks, it should still be recognised as a worthwhile investment.

Bibliography

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Acknowledgements

Leslee thanks AFANT members and John Harrison for their support of the campaign and Jeff and Cheryl Reid (Reidy's Lures) for the generous donation of lures as an incentive prize for the return of the questionnaires.

Your APEN - your network

Advance Notice Annual General Meeting

Australasia-Pacific Extension Network

Friday 8 November 2002 at 4.40 pm

The **2002 APEN AGM** will take place at the NRE Tatura Institute of Sustainable Irrigated Agriculture as part of the AAAC/APEN workshop, “**Managing in a time of climate and landscape change**”. See opposite for details.

The agenda for the AGM will be as follows:

- Welcome and apologies
- Minutes of the AGM held on 3 October 2001 at the University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba
- President’s Report
- Treasurer’s Report
- Election: Vice President
Treasurer
Committee members (3)
- Appointment of Public Officer
- Appointment of Auditor
- General business
- Close

Elections for the APEN National Executive

The position of Vice President is for election.

Those finishing two year terms and thus up for re-election to the committee for a further two year term are: Greg Cock (Treasurer), Terry Reid and Paul Ainsworth (Committee). There is also a further vacancy on the committee.

Nominations are called for positions on the APEN National Executive, to reach the APEN Secretariat by 4.40 pm **1 November, 2002**. Nomination forms are available from Rosemary at the APEN Secretariat and from the APEN website (www.apen.org.au).

General business

Notification of any other business should reach the APEN Secretariat by 4.40 pm 25 October 2002.

**We look forward to seeing as many of our members
at the AGM as possible!**

Your APEN - your network

What's happening with APEN Chapters?

Largely, what happens with chapters is up to state members, but the National Executive (NE) realise that time, money and distance can wreak havoc with the best laid plans for chapter activities.

In response, the NE have created a dedicated portfolio for chapter support. The portfolio chair is Jane Weatherley (contact details on the back page) and she's already been contacting some chapter representatives to get a feel for what members might be looking for.

"Basically, we'd love it if the chapters took off on their own accord to do whatever is geographically relevant in their own areas, but practically there are plenty of barriers to that sort of activity," Jane said.

"Western Australia and Queensland, for example, are very big states and chapter activities are expensive to organise and run," she said.

"That aside, I think it's still important for all chapters to pounce on anything that looks as though it could bring APEN members together."

Jane's portfolio aims to foster a sense of belonging amongst APEN members and to create better linkages between the NE and the chapters based on mutual assistance and communication.

Jane's lightning survey of chapter contacts has generated some interesting responses. Some members have innovative ideas about how the NE and the chapters should interact to organise activities for members.

Keep reading ExtensionNet for details, or phone Jane Weatherley if you have some ideas of your own.

Qld AGM

The Queensland chapter held an AGM on September 12 at Gatton, near Brisbane. As part of the meeting, Jeff Coutts shared some interesting results that are emerging from the National extension and education review that he is conducting. The meeting generated some debate about the implications for extension and its future. Keep watch for more from Jeff's project in future editions of ExtensionNet.

Managing in a time of climate and landscape change - AAAC-APEN workshop for consultants and advisers

The Australian Association of Agricultural Consultants (AAAC) and APEN will jointly host a workshop themed "Managing in a time of climate and landscape change" for people involved in the natural resource, agriculture and related sectors. Advisers, consultants and practitioners (in both the public and private sectors) are invited. It will commence with registration at 10.30 am for an 11.00 am start, at the NRE, Tatura Institute of Sustainable Irrigated Agriculture on **Friday 8 November 2002**.

The theme has been specifically selected to address two of the major issues facing agriculture - managing climate risk and the substantial changes in land and natural resource management essential for achieving sustainability of the environment and rural businesses.

The morning session of the workshop features presentations from Dr Peter Whetton, CSIRO Climate Impact Group and Dr Martin Barlass, NRE Agricultural Industries. Following lunch, participants are invited to attend one of the following concurrent workshops:

- Climate change and risk management
- Environmental stewardship
- Future landscapes
- Accreditation of adviser and consultant practitioners.

The speakers on climate risk and landscape change will present challenging addresses to set the scene for a collaborative approach between industry and government in South-Eastern Australia. The organisers have specifically encouraged the speakers to present ideas on the pivotal role of adviser and consultant practitioners within the change management process. The presentation will be peppered with examples to provoke the audience and so set the stage for engaging discussions in the afternoon workshops.

At the conclusion of the workshop (4.40 pm) both organisations will conduct their Annual General Meetings.

For those wishing to continue their networking and for those staying overnight, an informal dinner will be held in Shepparton. On the Saturday morning a program of two farm visits in the Tatura-Shepparton area is being arranged to illustrate some of the concepts discussed in the workshop.

For a registration form, please contact either Abigail Henderson at AIAST on 03 9815 3600 (email ahenderson@aiaast.com.au) or Rosemary Currie at APEN on 02 6024 5349 (email rcurrie@albury.net.au).

Interstate participants may like to link their travel with an international conference. The **10th International Open Space on Open Space** commences the next day at Marysville, Victoria. You will be able to interact with practitioners from across the world who use Open Space Technology, the process APEN used to conduct part of our international conference in Toowoomba last year. Harrison Owen, originator of the process, is a confirmed participant as well as others who have proven the worth of this process in transforming organisations and businesses. Further information, including the registration form, is at www.openspaceworld.org/osonos.html. The early bird registration date has been extended to 30 September 2002 for APEN members.

More chapter news over the page: WA Brain Dominance workshop.

Brain dominance w'shops

WA Chapter self-analyses

Amanda Miller

APEN WA Chapter

The Western Australia Chapter of APEN in partnership with CAT2 Consulting have provided two professional development days. The first workshop held at the University of Western Australia attracted 15 participants largely from agriculture and natural resource management backgrounds. The second workshop was co-ordinated by APEN's WA Chapter for the WA Department of Agriculture. This second workshop was for middle and senior managers of a Regional Management Team.

A total of 30 people attended the two workshops. More workshops will be run in regional locations as demand dictates.

The key to the workshop was the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument. At the APEN International Conference in Albury in 1997 this tool was offered as a workshop session by Kerry Cochrane. It was from this exposure that APEN WA investigated the use of this tool for a series of professional development workshops.

The Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument

This tool helps organisations enhance learning, think creatively, understand diversity and build effective teams. It is a flexible diagnostic tool that is constantly developed and modified to take into account the results of continuing brain research.

The HBDI

The HBDI is designed to help you understand what people mean when they say, "I like the way you think!"

The HBDI is a leading thinking styles assessment tool that identifies your instinctive approach to thought: Emotional, Analytical, Structural or Strategic.

What you gain

Your personal thinking preferences influence your communication, decision-making, problem solving and management styles. Understanding the implications of your thinking preference is like an awakening - where the obstacles to your goals are dismantled and the ladders to your growth are infinite.

More than another assessment tool

Twenty years of research and innovation stand behind the validity of the HBDI. It has been the subject of independent validations, dissertations and scientific papers. A summary of HBDI discussions can be found in *The Creative Brain*, by Ned Herrmann, founder of the HBDI and Herrmann International.

The HBDI picks up where other assessment tools leave off. Identifying your thinking style is just one phase. Where most assessments end with a single findings report, the HBDI offers valuable range of applications.

How it works

The HBDI is a 120 question diagnostic survey. Your answers indicate your thinking

The HBDI is designed to help you understand what people mean when they say, "I like the way you think!"

Kathryn Egerton-Warburton (APEN member) and Carol-Anne Thacker (CAT2 Consulting) the course presenter at the Brain Dominance Workshop at the University of Western Australia.



style preference. Scoring results are free of value judgment and cultural bias. Because it is a self-analysis, most people immediately recognise their results as accurate. You will receive a full colour profile, accompanying interpretation booklets that explains the profile and scores in detail, and a discussion of the implications your results have for business and personal life.

Major advantages

The adaptable HBDI allows for your growth and change. Its flexibility offers more than personal profiles. Additional HBDI reports depict the composition of groups and can reveal what is fueling or debilitating that group.

Using the HBDI.

The HBDI helps people understand such things as:

- Themselves
- Mental diversity – turn differences into advantages
- Learning & teaching styles in yourself and in others
- Management styles and how they affect others
- Communication – to improve interaction with others – individually, in teams, and in large groups
- Relationships and developing effective teams
- Colleagues, associates, superiors and subordinates
- Creativity as a natural mental resource & how to build an environment in which it thrives
- Enhanced creativity & innovation
- The HBDI is only available through an HBDI Accredited Facilitators.



To find out about The HBDI Licensed Distributor and Accreditation Process, contact Herrmann International Australia on phone 61-2-9880-2333 or email thinking@herrmann.com.au



Anne Jones and Sandra Maynard trying to sell each other their idea of a perfect holiday. The challenge was that they have different thinking styles.



Course presenter Carol-Anne Thacker works with course participants Jenny Crisp and Vanessa Stewart on the application of HBDI to their work.

Run an event with your Chapter

This is a professional development tool which is good fun with great learning, and it can easily be hosted by chapters. There are course presenters all around Australia. Either contact HBDI direct or contact Amanda Miller at amiller@agric.wa.gov.au or phone 08 98651205 and she can help your chapter get a workshop running for your members.

Old dog uses old tricks in new extension role

APEN member *Noel Ainsworth* has a long history in horticulture extension, but recently transferred his skills to the World Wide Fund for Nature. ExtensionNet asked him about his new role and how often he called on his knowledge of extension principles



Noel Ainsworth is Regional Manager (North) WWF Australia. Email is nainsworth@wwfqld.org

“Extension as a discipline doesn’t need an image change or defined purpose. It just needs people to be creative and to have the drive to go and utilise invaluable skills.”

Noel’s new role

As Regional Manager at World Wide Fund for Nature, my role is to integrate the conservation programs active across the north of Australia. This means motivating and linking the teams to make best use of WWF skills, resources and portray a united image.

Different job, same worries

The challenges facing WWF mirror those facing community education or extension. They include:

- The basic realisation that people solve problems, not science.
- The need for multiple channels of communication to reach a multitude of stakeholders all of which have different preferences.
- Funding dollars are limited and will not fall into your lap. We must be creative and ambitious to meet our organisational and personal goals.

Skill sets

The ‘raft of extension skills’ as I came to know them while working for the Department of Primary Industries in Queensland are universal skills applicable to a wide range of professions. These include the interpersonal, communication, planning and project management skills. Sometimes the extension models are of reduced value.

All staff in WWF are ‘extension flavoured’, it’s just that some are better at it than others. The only difference in the conservation sector, particularly the non-government organisations, is that they have natural resources or ecology science underpinning their work as opposed to agriculture.

Extension from the outside

Now that I’m outside the agricultural extension sphere, I’m coming to think that the challenge to extension workers is to every now and then look at bigger picture problems. Don’t get too reductionist or constrained by limits imposed by those around you. Be creative and strive to lead much bigger projects where you are striving to make real changes for the long term benefit of your stakeholders.

Extension as a discipline doesn’t need an image change or defined purpose. It just needs people to be creative and to have the drive to go and utilise those invaluable skills. This might mean developing recommendations for ministers, supporting the development of advertising campaigns for industries, or running SWOT analyses for whole industries or regions. You might really want to make changes to organic, bushfoods, minimal processing, packaging or what ever. The essential element is to seriously engage the clients and get change happening. So go to the RDC’s, find out what their ideas are, flesh them out and put them into action.

Extension is best served by demonstrating how people are creatively engaging their skills through case studies to showcase the diversity that is possible across industries. Seed ideas!

ENET

NOEL’S PLUG

WWF Australia is working to prevent our precious wildlife from vanishing forever - and we need your help. Together, we can make a world of difference. Freecall 1800 032 551 or go to www.wwf.org.au