

widcorp

water in drylands
collaborative research program

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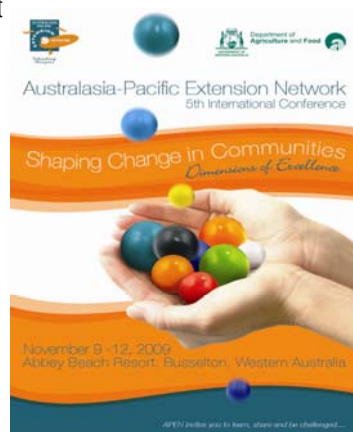
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WIDCORP presents at APEN 5th International Conference

Research Director Pam McRae-Williams presented WIDCORP research at the international conference for the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network held in Busselton, Western Australia in November .

Pam presented a paper titled 'Identifying and utilising farmer typologies for targeted practice change programs'. The presentation was based on case study research undertaken by WIDCORP in the Wimmera-Mallee. It reported on farming styles developed using data from more than 520 surveyed farmers and in-depth interviews. Farmer typology research has become a popular tool for designing farm extension programs and targeting key messages to particular farmer groups. This approach was successfully used to assist in the Farming with Pipesa practice change program conducted by DPI to capture the benefits and new enterprise opportunities arising from conversion to the more efficient piped water supply.

The Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN) is a professional organisation for extension professionals - people involved in community and rural development, adult education, communication and other related fields.



Climate Change research presented at the National Forum Rural Landholders response to climate change, Charles Sturt University

Pam McRae-Williams presented new research on farmer adaptation and adoption of innovation in response to climate change. This state wide study focused on understanding farmer perceptions, behaviour and enterprise changes in response to climate change, climate variability and greenhouse gas emissions. This work has been undertaken in collaboration with DPI. Key findings included identifying and comparing adaptation that is occurring across farming sectors /regions and by different farmer groups and recognising those adaptations that are in response to attitudes to climate change. This forum brought together researchers from across Australia.

Farewell to Dr Imogen Schwarz

All who have worked with WIDCORP will agree that Imogen's achievements since her appointment in April 2006 have been critical to our success. She has engaged with partner organisations in the development and conduct of our most significant research projects such as the understanding farmer attitudes and adoption of innovation in relation to the Wimmera Mallee pipeline. This research has included the use and further development of farmer typology theory which is now being used by DPI in practice change programs. Most recently she has completed a large state wide study on farmer's attitudes and adaptation to climate change, climate variability and carbon emissions using a similar methodology. These pieces of research have recently been presented at national and international conferences and published in journals . They are being viewed as leading research in this area.

Imogen in her new role as a mum plans to maintain her connection with WIDCORP and has been awarded an Honorary Research Fellow position with the University of Ballarat. We hope she will continue to contribute to WIDCORP and research in our region.

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Research project updates

ARC Research funding to help understand climate change

GMMWater, in partnership with Victoria University, has been successful in obtaining its second prestigious Australian Research Council grant. This research will examine the impact of climate change on water supply systems.

The project will provide the opportunity to trial and examine methods that account for a range of water sharing principles within the context of climate change, including drought events.

The three year \$365,000 project will further strengthen the strategic research links that GMMWater has with Victoria University's Institute for Sustainability and Innovation.

Dr Andrew Barton GMMWater and Honorary Research Fellow will lead this project for GMMWater—Congratulations Andrew and GMMWater.

Two significant research projects nearing completion

In collaboration with DPI, WIDCORP is putting the final touches to two significant pieces of research:

1. *Farmer behaviour and enterprise change: Supply Systems 1-6 Wimmera Mallee Pipeline Survey 2009.*
2. *Understanding farmer knowledge and attitudes to climate change, climate variability and greenhouse gas emissions*

Both outcomes of these research projects are attracting national and international attention and will form the basis for significant ongoing research in Horsham. The reports will be published on our web site early in January. www.widcorp.com

This research is building WIDCORP's reputation as leading research group in understanding farmer adaptation and adoption of innovation in the face of water regime and climate change



Yes You Can! Forum

On October 7 WIDCORP in conjunction with CRIC, *WimmeraAlive* and the Department of Planning and Community Development held a young entrepreneurs forum at the University of Ballarat Horsham.

Inspirational speakers included Brad Smith, winner of the 2009 Telstra Business Award for Social Responsibility and the Australian Young Entrepreneur of the Year. Brad runs a multi-million dollar business selling Braaap motorcycles. Local entrepreneurs Avril Hogan (Insightrix), Dave Brennan (DKB Seeds), Gary Howden (T life), Sandra Jewson (Spoons Riverside Café Swan Hill), Brad Thomas (Thumbsnappers) and Tracey Rigney (theatre & film) shared their experiences with the audience. A video link the forum can be found at

<https://tcs.ballarat.edu.au/tcs/?id=1A7B8BAB-7974-471A-8443-6D4205E9155C>

Canadian statistician in town

Usually statistics are the bane of one's research work; however for Briana Hanlon there is nothing quite as sweet as a new SPSS data file full of mysteries to reveal. Briana Hanlon brings an immense amount of enthusiasm, joy and dedication to her work, as Insightrix's senior statistician based at their Canadian office in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. WIDCORP researchers were fortunate to have Briana visit for one whole week of jam packed stats talk, analysis, and potential new interrogation of existing data.

Insightrix (Horsham), a market-research firm specialising in agricultural research, and WIDCORP have worked closely together on major surveys for the Department of Primary Industry. In particular, this research has focused on farmer attitudes, knowledge and behaviour, and identifying farmer typologies on two topics of interest: Changing water infrastructure through the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline; and Victorian farmers and Climate Change. Over the last three years, Briana Hanlon has conducted most of the data analysis on these research projects, communicating to WIDCORP via email and the occasional long-distance call. So it was with great pleasure to finally meet Briana.

Amongst the number-crunching, Briana was keen to see the Wimmera Mallee pipeline works, and visit the farmland of which she has intimate stats knowledge, as well to conquer Mt Arapiles! In addition, WIDCORP researchers took the opportunity to ask burning questions about how best to analyse their data. We hope Briana will be a regular visitor to WIDCORP.

Research Opportunities

2010 WIDCORP Research Workshop

February 2010, University of Ballarat Campus, Horsham

A two-day research workshop designed for those thinking about undertaking academic research through to early career researchers will be held at the University of Ballarat Horsham Campus.

Led by Dr Jim Sillitoe this two day workshop will focus on:

- Conceptual frameworks
- Preparing a Literature review
- Time management
- Finding a theory
- Structuring a thesis
- Opportunities for discussing individual projects

For more information email La Vergne Lehmann at

l.lehmann@ballarat.edu.au

Early Career Researcher Events/Workshops

Starting a career as a researcher when you are located some distance from your university can be daunting and at times a little lonely. One way of developing some good research networks, getting some diverse feedback on your research and finding out what others are doing is participating in some early career researcher workshops/events.

La Vergne Lehmann has attended two early career/ Phd or masters workshops this year. Both quite different but equally rewarding. The ERE (Environmental Research Event) was held in Noosa in early May 2009. The event is run by a post graduate student volunteer committee and provides a supportive environment for students to present their research and gain feedback. Guest speakers also provide some additional advice on developing a research career. Publication opportunities were also available. ERE 2010 will be held in Rockhampton in late June. See www.cas.cqu.edu.au for information

La Vergne also attended the Biennial E-CReW workshop at Charles Sturt University (CSU) in Bathurst. This was run by the CSU Land & Water along with AARES. Again students were given the opportunity to present their research. Experienced mentors from a variety of universities and the CSIRO provided feedback to students.

PhD Research Opportunities

2010 Course Fee Waiver Places at Ballarat University

The University has a number of non-scholarship funded places, which are available for part-time as well as full-time study, at PhD and Masters by Research level.

The University of Ballarat has a number of leading international researchers and provides a supportive and friendly higher degrees study environment.

Research Scholarships 2011

The University of Ballarat will have a number of Higher Degree by Research scholarships available for 2011.

The Scholarships available are:

- Australian Postgraduate Awards with stipend
- International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (course fees) and University of Ballarat Postgraduate Research Scholarships.

Expression of Interest forms and application forms for 2011 scholarship places must be lodged in the Research and Graduate Studies Office by 31 October 2010.

Application forms and further information are available from the Research & Graduate Studies Office:

Phone: (03) 5327 9508

Email HDRresearch@ballarat.edu.au

Website: <http://www.ballarat.edu.au/ard/ubresearch/>

PhD Opportunities @ RMIT University Hamilton's Potter Rural Community Research Network (RCRN) - 2010

Two Hamilton based PhD scholarships, are available as part of the RCRN project. Potential areas of research include complex systems, food security, low carbon regional futures, collaborative regional governance for natural resource management and rural innovation networks.

For more information contact Dr Kaye Scholfield on 03 5572 0500 or email : rmithamilton@rmit.edu.au

CSIRO/Deakin PhD scholarship in the Enabling Science Uptake in Coastal Zone Management Cluster will analyse coastal zone management processes in Australia and develop conceptual and adaptive approaches that will enable better science uptake by governments, thereby contributing to a more resilient and sustainable coastal zone.

For more information contact Assoc.Prof. Kevin O'Toole on 03 55633490 or email : Kevin.otoole@deakin.edu.au

Interesting bits'n'pieces

*WIDCORP staff
and researchers*

*would like to wish you all a very
merry & safe Christmas in 2009 and a
happy and prosperous new year for
2010.*



Interesting bits.....

The Nanna Revolution is here!

<http://nannatechnology.com.au/>

It's time to embrace your inner Nanna for a simpler, more sustainable life. NannaTechnology brings together the people and organisations making this happen right now.

NannaTechnology is a future of healthy, resilient and creative individuals and communities. A society positively and proactively responding to challenges. Blending the good bits from the past with the good bits from the future. To create a hybrid philosophy, focussed on simple individual actions creating healthy people and a healthy environment. This useful website has lots of tips for making your life a bit less complex and more enjoyable.



Top 10 Eco-tips for Christmas

1. Cut up old Christmas cards to create gift tags, or recycle them after Christmas
2. Decorate your house using ethical or fair-traded decorations.
3. Get a Wollemi Pine for your Christmas tree and plant outside or look after it in its pot to use again next year.
4. Select cards made from 100% recycled paper or even better send e-cards, or create your own greeting and email it out.
5. Buy presents made from recycled, renewable or ethically produced materials and with minimal packaging.
6. Use newspapers or reuse wrapping paper to wrap gifts and reduce waste, or go for wrapping paper which made of recycled paper and which has a low impact on the environment,
7. Remember less is more, if buying for kids, buy fewer better quality presents that will last, rather than lots of cheap disposable presents.
8. Purchase services rather than products. How about a massage gift voucher, tickets to an event .
9. If you have bought or received a gift that requires batteries invest in some rechargeable ones, they will save money in the long run and the environment.
10. When picking up the food for your Christmas BBQ or turkey roast, select produce which grown locally to reduce food miles, and go for organic and fair-trade if possible. Don't forget to take the reusable shopping bags.

Most importantly of all make sure you relax and enjoy the Christmas break!

2010 and Mount Arapiles - Just another challenge for WIDCORP research director Pam McRae-Williams



Visit our website for information on upcoming events: www.widcorp.com

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