



Newsletter

September 2005

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Using the Perils of Global Warming to Steal Water

Our guest speaker for September is known for her 'take no prisoners' approach to defending the facts, often in highly charged environmental debates. Jennifer Marohasy is the Director of the Environmental Unit with the Institute of Public Affairs and, since taking that position in July 2003, has become best known, perhaps, for her work on the Murray River. Join Farm Writers' members and guests to hear Jennifer fuel a discussion on *how global warming is being used to steal water*.

Jennifer has published articles in international and Australian scientific journals, and is also known for her fortnightly column in *The Land* newspaper.

For some time Jennifer believed there was a need for a new environment movement: "an evidence-based, solution-focused movement that values open discussion and debate". So she did something about it. She has been involved with the Australian Environment Foundation (AEF) since its inception, previously as Chair, and now as an active member.

Jennifer has worked and lived in some of the world's most challenging and sensitive ecological systems, looking for opportunities to contribute to environmental protection.

In 1997, she took on the job of Environment Manager for the Queensland Canegrowers organisation, working with an industry operating in a sensitive environment – between "reef and rainforest". It was here that Jennifer developed her dislike for anomalies between fact and fiction in environmental campaigns.



Jennifer Marohasy, Director of the Environmental Unit at the Institute of Public Affairs.

Jennifer grew up on a cattle station in the Northern Territory. After completing her first "science" degree at the University of Queensland, she worked for three years in Madagascar. She was awarded a PhD in the mid-1990s.

Concerned that public policy on environmental issues is increasingly driven by moral crusading, rather than objective science, Jennifer Marohasy will again provide important, and likely controversial, counterpoints in revealing the truths behind *how global warming is being used to steal water*.

To book go to the website:
www.nswfarmwriters.org/BOOKINGS.htm.

Register on-line for lunch on Friday 30th September with Jennifer Marohasy.

Corporate Member of the Month: **ANZ Bank and Hassall & Associates**

Venue: The MENZIES Hotel, 14 Carrington Street, Sydney.

When: Friday 30th September 2005 at 12pm for 12:30pm

Cost: \$55 per head, or voucher, for members. **\$65 per head for all non-members.**

Register: BEFORE 5:00pm on Wednesday 28th September, on-line at <http://www.nswfarmwriters.org> or by emailing bookings@nswfarmwriters.org, or by phone to Fiona Dewar, (02) 8204 3856.

Late cancellations: Phone Fiona Dewar (02 8203 3856) or Jamie Graham (0418 479 434)

Website sponsored by Telstra Country Wide NSW

Telstra's Defence: There is Something to Build Upon

Contributed by Alan Dick of *The Land*

Our guest speaker at our August lunch meeting, NSW managing director of Telstra Country Wide, Roger Bamber, offered a spirited defence of Telstra's record in servicing the bush.

It's been a hot national topic, with a stray Queensland senator for The Nationals managing to extract a promise from the Federal Government of a \$3.1 billion kitty in the event of full privatisation of Telstra to ensure telecommunication in the bush stays comparable with that in urban areas.

While acknowledging there was still a lot to be done, Roger said that there was plenty to build on with, for example, fibre optic cables branching out from many regional centres.

"It is not about providing it all from scratch," he said.

He was "fairly confident" the \$3.1 billion commitment The Nationals have extracted from the Federal Government would produce a good result.

"There is a lot of infrastructure that it could leverage off."

He also said that he would compete aggressively for whatever services were put to tender from the fund.

He acknowledged that there was a need to spend more money on mobile phone coverage around Australia and to provide more terrestrial broadband coverage.

Telstra Country Wide could build on the already extensive fibre optic map and install more mobile and microwave towers. He said 93 per cent of the 1,640 exchanges in New South Wales were connected by fibre and a lot of fibre ran out from exchanges in country towns.

The message should be, not how the current state of bush telecommunications was but, how good it was.

Mr Bamber had high praise for the high bandwidth incentive scheme (HIBIS), which he said was the best government program he had encountered in his long time in the industry.

Under the scheme individuals can apply for a satellite service from any one of the eight operators and the government will provide an incentive payment for each service.

Small towns can also get together and, provided there were enough users (in Telstra's case, 40), can obtain



Roger Bamber, Managing Director of Telstra Country Wide, NSW.

financial support through HIBIS for an ADSL box in the local exchange that provided a service through copper wires.

Another point he made was that Telstra was not interested in running fibre optic cables on existing telegraph poles in bushfire prone areas because of its experience in bushfires in the Hunter Valley, around Cooma and in Canberra, where the overhead fibres had been destroyed while underground fibre optic cables had been unharmed. *Alan Dick.*

Thank you to our corporate members of the month, NSW Farmers and iMC.

Website sponsored by Telstra Country Wide NSW.

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Diaries

October 28th: the 2005 Annual General Meeting of Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc will be held at 11.00am on Friday, 28 October 2005 (immediately prior to the October seminar) at the Menzies Hotel, 14 Carrington Street Sydney

November 17th: Join Mark Davidson of Tamburlaine Wines and Paul Foster at a special event at the Country Embassy - 6:00pm, Thursday.

December 7th: the ever-popular Christmas lunch.

☞ Know a speaker you'd like to hear at a Farm Writers' event? Email us: suggestions@nswfarmwriters.org