



# GIS for catchment planning and reporting

With the evolution of Landcare from small issue focussed community groups to medium sized business-like catchment 'organisations', there is mounting pressure to be more accountable for activities and funds.

The Woody Yaloak Catchment Group is no exception. Now managing significant funds on behalf of numerous funding bodies, keeping track of where different resources have been allocated is hard enough, but maintaining an up-to-date record of the outcomes or achievements is a real challenge.

The solution was to look to IT and an integrated Geographic Information System (GIS) that would be able to store all the relevant information in a form that anyone could access at the push of a button.

## Applying for funds

One of the roles of the Woody Yaloak central committee is to identify funding sources and match them to the group's priorities.

Chairman of the funding sub-committee, John Carr, said the GIS greatly assisted in the planning process.

"The GIS planning at an individual and local group level is very useful but we can amalgamate this information to provide a summary of what works are planned for the catchment," John said.

By identifying regional or state priorities as a layer in the GIS, the Woody group can identify areas within their catchment that may be eligible for funding assistance.

"In our applications we can show the planned works visually over-lapping with the regional priorities, while also simply adding up the amount of works that are proposed," he said.



The GIS is a fantastic tool which has revolutionised the way the Woody Yaloak committee approach any funding submission.

"It really is a fantastic tool which has revolutionised the way we approach any funding submission and could easily be used by similar bodies."

**Reporting on works completed**  
As a follow-on from the benefits of identifying priority areas, one of the real strengths of the GIS package is its capacity to store completed projects' details on the system.

Troy Missen, one of the neighbourhood group coordinators, said that the follow-up support after a project has begun is an important link between the Woody group and the landholders involved.

"When a landholder in Woody Yaloak claims some money for completing a project, we always inspect the work done" Troy said.

"As we do the inspections, we are able to record the details of the project, the quantities and costs, landholder contribution and take a photo of the site"

"Progressive photos of the sites from before the works are started, and subsequently over time, is an extremely powerful way of showing our progress."

"In the future we will probably do the recording with a global positioning system as well."

## Woody Yaloak Technical Fact Sheet

The site's information and photos are easily and quickly loaded onto the group CIS system and can be amalgamated by the committee when having to report on projects.

"If the committee needs to report to a funding body, we can simply add all the project details to give total quantities, landholder contribution and identify where it occurred in the catchment," Troy said.

"Over time the visual representation of where works have been done can be really impressive"

### Contributing to the information age

"One of the most important contributions the CIS has made for partnership relations, is the ability of the Woody Yaloak Catchment Group to contribute information (collected at a grass roots level) in a professional form that is compatible with local, regional and state planners' software."

Alice Knight, Chairman of the Woody Yaloak Group, explained that in the past, the information has often been from the top down.



**The group will share amalgamated financial information, but if there is a request about details for a single landholder, the Woody Yaloak committee and the landholder will decide whether that is appropriate or not.**

"Here are the regional salinity hot spots', 'here is a statewide weed map', 'here is a local roadside weed plan' and so on,"

"The community members now have the same tools and can contribute with local information - here is our local area - here are the weeds that we have controlled - here are the salinity areas that we have treated."

"The ability to demonstrate our achievements to our catchment partners is very important. To show our needs clearly, and how they fit with local, regional and state priorities is crucial to our success in maximising future funding opportunities," she said.

### Privacy

One of the challenges for the group was the issue of sharing potentially sensitive data from individuals. The Woody Yaloak Committee is very conscious of the need to ensure the landholders private information about projects is kept within the group.

"We have to strike a balance between reporting factually to our supporters and ensuring privacy for the individual." 'In some instances individuals are providing us with financial details they prefer weren't made available to anybody," Alice said.

The group's policy is to share amalgamated financial information and maps publicly, but if there is a request about details for a single landholder, the Woody Yaloak committee and the landholder will decide whether that is appropriate or not.

### For more information contact;

**For more information about the CIS contact:**  
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The Woody group now has the capacity to feed information into the system - here are our salinity hot-spots and here are our achievements.

