



Landcare
North East
Victoria

www.landcarevic.net.au/northeast

**A resource for common land management
issues on small rural properties**

SMALL RURAL PROPERTY GUIDE



Your reasons for moving to a small rural property may be varied but if you want to connect more with the great outdoors, live a healthy lifestyle, create a more sustainable future for your family and support your local community this brochure will provide you with information on common issues and where to go for further information.



You have an opportunity to play your part in the community and improve not only your property but the surrounding landscape including nearby bushland and areas of farmland through good weed and pest animal management practices, revegetation with local native species, adopting sustainable living practices and by being a good neighbour. This brochure provides some basic information about common issues faced on small rural properties so if you want to improve your property and ensure you do not impact on your neighbours read on.

North East Victoria is a highly productive area with many agricultural industries including dairy and beef cattle, sheep and other livestock, vineyards, fruit and vegetables, berries, olive oil and more. Buying locally is not just about reducing your food miles (which is a measure of the distance food travels from where it grows or where it was raised to where you buy it) the benefits include supporting your local growers to ensure they can remain in business and having the freshest produce available for you and your family. There are local Farmer's Markets, and the North East Local Produce Guide lists almost 100 local producers who sell either directly to you or at retail outlets throughout NE Victoria.

Online at **www.nelocalproduce.com.au** and from your local landcare group or farmers market.





Weeds

Weeds and their management can take up a large percentage of your time and money if you do not approach the task correctly. Your small rural property likely adjoins farming land and you should be mindful that fences do not stop the spread of weeds. Be a good neighbour and control weeds on your property before they spread. Weeds impact the production value of your land and some weeds can make your horses and livestock sick. If left to get out of control weeds are difficult to eradicate, and may be very expensive to treat. Contact your local landcare group as there may be funding available for some weed control programs and for further general information on weeds.

See www.necma.vic.gov.au/solutions/weedmanagement for more information

Pest Animals

Pest animals impact urban and rural areas (and everywhere in between). Problems caused by pest animals include competing with native wildlife for food and shelter and preying on native animals as well as livestock. Pest animals can also spread weeds, cause erosion and degrade waterways.

Common pest animals include foxes, European rabbits and hares, feral goats, feral pigs and feral cats. There are fox and rabbit baiting programs running throughout NE Victoria, but the best approach to control is a community wide program using a number of control methods. Speak to your local landcare group to see if there are current programs running and how to become involved. The Department of Environment and Primary Industries can also provide information on pest animals.

Wild dogs are also found through the North East and pose a serious problem to goats, sheep, cattle and horses. You can make a difference to the pest animal problem by keeping your cat and dog contained (especially at night), and managing pest animals on your property.

See www.feral.org.au for more information

Native Plants and Animals

Plant lists specific to your local area have been developed and are available from your local landcare group or North East Catchment Management Authority and on line at the following link:

www.landcarevic.net.au/northeast/rif/resources/native-plant-lists

Before you remove native vegetation you should be aware that legislation exists to protect native wildlife, vegetation and natural resources. There are several pieces of legislation that may affect you, outlined here are just two. The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act) is the key piece of Victorian legislation for the conservation of threatened species and communities and for the management of potentially threatening processes. More information on this Act can be found here:

www.necma.vic.gov.au/solutions/small-rural-property-guide

The Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC ACT) is the Australian Government's central piece of environmental legislation. It provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places. When revegetating try to use local native species. Plant lists specific to your local area have been developed and are available from your local landcare group or the North East Catchment Management Authority.

See www.environment.gov.au/topics/about-us/legislation for more information

Resource Contacts

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Responsibilities

Native vegetation and wildlife, weeds, game licences

Telephone

136186
(02) 6043 7900 Wodonga
(03) 5723 8600 Wangaratta
(03) 5731 1222 Ovens
(02) 6076 3100 Corryong
(02) 6030 4500 Rutherglen

Website

www.delwp.vic.gov.au

Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

Responsibilities

Land and soil health and other agricultural programs

Telephone

136186
(02) 6043 7900 Wodonga
(03) 5723 8600 Wangaratta
(03) 5731 1222 Ovens
(02) 6076 3100 Corryong
(02) 6030 4500 Rutherglen

Website

www.economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au

Parks Victoria

Responsibilities

Parks management

Telephone

131963

Website

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

North East Catchment Management Authority

Responsibilities

Works on waterway permits, floodplain management advice, sustainable agriculture and biodiversity projects, land and soil health

Telephone

(02) 6043 7600

Website

www.necma.vic.gov.au

Landcare North East Region

Responsibilities

Landcare coordination

Telephone

(02) 6043 7600

Website

www.landcarevic.net.au/northeast

Goulburn Murray Water

Responsibilities

Licences for take and use of water, irrigation, dams and bores, blue green algae reporting

Telephone

(03) 5833 5500

Website

www.g-mwater.com.au

Environment Protection Authority (EPA)

Responsibilities

Licences/approvals for waste disposal, advice on waste, chemical spills, pollution, reporting for littering, fish kills

Telephone

1300 372 843

Website

www.epa.vic.gov.au

Urban Water Authorities: North East Water / East Gippsland Water

Responsibilities

Urban water & sewage connections

Telephone

(02) 6022 0555
(03) 5150 4444

Website

www.newater.com.au
www.egwater.vic.gov.au

Country Fire Authority (CFA): North East Area

Responsibilities

Fire emergency
Vic Bushfire Info Line
District 23 - Wangaratta
District 24 - Wodonga

Telephone

000
1800 240 667
(03) 5721 4122
(02) 6056 3022

Website

www.cfa.vic.gov.au

State Emergency Service (SES)

Responsibilities

Emergency services

Telephone

132 500

Website

www.ses.vic.gov.au

Land Management Information and Resources

There are many on line resources available that provide information on land management issues. A selection of particularly useful apps and on line tools are listed here:

www.necma.vic.gov.au/solutions/small-rural-property-guide

This interactive mapping tool allows users to zoom in on their property and access information about Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC's), threatened flora and fauna.

The museum of Victoria has developed a field guide app which combines detailed animal descriptions, photos and sounds to provide a valuable reference that can be used in all environments:

www.museumvictoria.com.au/discoverycentre/mv-field-guide-app

Weed ID: The Ute Guide application is designed to assist farmers in the identification of the most common weeds found in paddocks throughout Australia. **www.grdc.com.au/Resources/apps**

A Field Guide to Pest Animals of Australia app has been developed by the Invasive Animals CRC, and contains species profiles for 53 of Australia's worst pest animals, including: species descriptions, photo galleries, footprints, audio calls, maps, control techniques, quick links to plenty of pest control resources: **www.feral.org.au/mobile-phone-apps**

Information on chemicals including permits and stopped, cancelled and archived products can be found on the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority's iPhone app: **www.apvma.gov.au**

Links to the above information and more via **www.necma.vic.gov.au**

Farms can be dangerous

Most rural land is private property, so please observe all signs and if gates are closed they are closed for a reason – do not open gates without permission. Potential hazards on farms include:

- Farm machinery
- Stock moving
- Farm operations, weed spraying, mowing, fencing
- Feral animal control - the use of traps, poisons and shooting as a means of control, represent a hazard to unauthorised persons and animals

See **www.farmsafe.org.au** for more information

Fire

Victoria has extreme fire danger days every summer. Be fire ready by planning what you would do in a bushfire situation. Simple things you can do to prepare your home for a bushfire including locating woodpiles away from your home, clearing leaf litter from around your home, cleaning out your gutters regularly and managing your vegetation.

See the **Complete fire ready kit on the CFA website:**

www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/fire-ready-kit



Landcare groups in North East Victoria are involved in a wide range of activities, including community education & awareness, biodiversity protection and enhancement, erosion and salinity prevention and control, soil health management, water quality protection, pest plant and animal management, agricultural production improvement, land management knowledge transfer and social networking. Joining a landcare group gives you access to a range of information and support including local knowledge about land management, expert speakers on a broad range of agricultural topics, access to funding sources, equipment to hire and many other benefits. There will likely be a landcare group existing in your area, and new members are always welcome.



Find out more about your local landcare group
www.landcarevic.net.au/northeast/groups

Find solutions to frequently asked questions about land management issues
www.necma.vic.gov.au



The Regional Landcare Facilitator program is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture .
The North East Regional Landcare Facilitators are hosted by the North East Catchment Management Authority.