

MEDIA RELEASE

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Going from locals to champions

Community leaders from across the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin have recently completed a four month course to go from active locals, to champions for their communities.

The inaugural Natural Resource Management (NRM) Champions course was delivered by the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC) and partially funded through FarmBis.

QMDC's Community Training Coordinator, Sandy Robertson, said "the course was designed as a leadership course for community leaders to help them better represent their communities in the natural resource management field, championing the environmental needs of their communities locally, but also at higher government levels."

The course included four workshops, taking participants to different venues across southern Queensland, including the conference facilities at the Bunya Mountains, and the Happy Valley retreat near Stanthorpe.

The courses covered personal development, communication skills, leadership, community engagement in natural resource management, achieving the triple bottom line, and local, regional and global natural resource management issues.

"The different venues provided a great opportunity for the champions to come together in the right sort of learning environment to cover these topics, also giving them the chance to learn from each other," she said.

Mark Beasley, a fourth generation beef producer at Chinchilla, said the course had proved to be a great learning experience.

"I try to take a holistic view of farming and this program has given me a greater appreciation of how natural systems and communities interact. It will have real long term benefits," he said.

The next round of the NRM Champions will begin in Toowoomba early in 2008 with an open forum where the 2007 participants will present their experiences to anyone who may be interested.

"This will be an opportunity for people who may be thinking about participating in NRM Champions to learn a bit more about the course first, and to hear what progress has been made by the first round candidates as a result of participating," said Sandy.

For further information, or an expression of interest form, email Sandy at sandyr@qmdc.org.au.

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Images



Caption: Six of the nine Champions. Front row from left to right, Ashley Volz, Harley West, Tammy Caldicott, Alex Kennedy and Mark Beasley, with Stephen Plant and QMDC's Community Training Coordinator, Sandy Robertson, in the back.