

### Rural children to learn about NRM through theatre

Natural Resource Management (NRM) will be the focus on an innovative theatre production and visual arts exhibition that will tour to schools in the Balonne River catchment area in early December 2006.

The entertaining and creative road show is a joint initiative between the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) and the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC), who provided \$80K in sponsorship for the program.

Dr Janet McDonald is a Lecturer in Theatre Studies at USQ and says the road show is a culmination of six months work.

“Since being approached by QMDC, we have toured to schools in the Balonne catchment and asked students about their understanding of NRM, their community and their culture.

“Based on that feedback, well known USQ Director, Scott Alderdice, has created an entertaining and informative play entitled *The Doctor and Nurse Wurseys Most Amazing Hydrological Examination.*”

Focusing on such issues as the drought, farming and salinity, it is hoped that the play will capture the importance of the river system to the Balonne communities, and that it will remind people of the necessity to better manage our water.

USQ Research Assistant, Carley Commens, has been coordinating the project, including the visual art exhibition that will be showcased throughout the tour.

“With the lack of water that we currently have we want to teach the children how they can do more with less and how to better utilise their natural resources such as the Balonne River.

“The idea is to give these kids something to aim for and remind them that they must all work together with what they have to look after their catchment area.”

QMDC’s Coordinator for Communication and Education, Leisa Drury, said “as a provider of NRM services in the Balonne region, we’re very keen to support programs like this.

In managing natural resources for the future, it’s really important to raise the awareness of our youth, but also to capture the values communities already place on resources like water.”

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