

MEDIA RELEASE

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Soil conservation works across the catchment

Farmers in the Border Rivers and Moonie areas have implemented more than 66km of contour banks and 10km of waterways to help protect 1320 hectares of agricultural land.

Queensland Murray-Darling Committee Soil Conservation Officer Vanessa Macdonald said many farmers clearly recognised the need for contour banks, and the creation of associated waterways, as an integral part of their farm management plans.

“In the past month alone, there have been eight dozers at work across the two catchments constructing 66km of contours and 10km of waterways designed and implemented by QMDC and Doug Muller from the Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM),” Ms Macdonald said.

These earth works are being implemented as part of the Sub-Catchment Planning approach adopted by QMDC to assist landholders to sustainably manage their natural resources.

“It is fantastic to see the landholders implementing coordinated soil conservation plans across the catchment,” Ms Macdonald said.

“Even though it is tempting to address erosion problems on a paddock scale, the problems of uncontrolled runoff need to be addressed on a natural catchment basis.

“The high intensity rainfall we get in this region often causes significant erosion. Earth works, when incorporated with ground cover management, can significantly reduce the likelihood of soil erosion.”

Ms Macdonald said the contours - earthen banks constructed at intervals down a slope - were designed to safely carry and dispose of water into stable natural drainage lines or designed waterways.

“These areas have the capacity to deal with the volume and velocity of water moving through the catchment,” she said.

“Waterways are especially vulnerable to erosion. This is due to concentrated runoff discharging into them, therefore, they need to be carefully designed, constructed and stabilised to reduce the impact of gullying and failure.

“Farm waterways and contour banks play an important role in the overall reduction of soil, sediment and nutrients entering our watercourses by slowing the water before it reaches our rivers and streams, thus improving the catchment’s water quality.”

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Note: Macdonald is correct.