



13 June 2017

Benefits clear to see following upgrades to exclusion fence at Lake Benanee, near Euston

Western Local Land Services has played a pivotal role in promoting the re-establishment of *Casuarina obesa*, commonly known as Swamp She-oak, on the foreshore of Lake Benanee which is currently the last known population in NSW.

The population at Lake Benanee had come under threat after an exclusion fence that was installed several years ago to protect the species from overgrazing by rabbits and livestock had begun to deteriorate.

Also in recent times, the rabbit population in the area had increased significantly.

The Swamp She-oak is currently listed as endangered under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*, making the preservation of the population at Lake Benanee very important.

Western Local Land Services employed the services of an indigenous natural resource management business to undertake fence maintenance and upgrades while also undertaking rabbit control works surrounding the exclusion plots.

Based on initial estimates, rabbit control surrounding the exclusion plots, which included fumigation and warren destruction, has reduced the population in the area by approximately 80 per cent.

Western Local Land Services Senior Land Services Officer, Kade Small was ecstatic with the outcomes that have been achieved.

“It is great to have the fence restored and to further increase exclusion, a larger apron design that prevents rabbits from digging under the fence was used,” Mr Small said.

“The apron design involves a length of the mesh or material that is used in the fence, running along the ground which prevents rabbits and other animals from digging under the fence or at the base of it and causing further damage.

“Techniques such as this will likely assist the Swamp She-oak population recruit as suckers (new plants shooting from the roots of existing trees) have been heavily grazed in recent years.

“Being the last known population in the state it was very important this work was carried out and we are hoping it will continue to replenish the population into the future.”

While the fence upgrade and rabbit control works have been completed, Western Local Land Services will continue to monitor the site for any changes to the exclusion fence or condition of Swamp She-oak.

If you have a natural resource management issue you'd like to raise, please contact your nearest Western Local Land Services office or visit www.ils.nsw.gov.au/western for further information.

This project was funded through Catchment Action NSW.

Media contact: Charlie Whiteley 0428 679 974