Landcare-led Landscape Resilience

Tools and data for restoration decisions

On-farm Habitat Restoration Demo Site

Central Murray Region, NSW

OBJECTIVES

To demonstrate the private and social benefits of returning a 4ha farm paddock that is difficult to access with modern day farm machinery, to a vegetated state using best practice native revegetation principles. To use the site for field days and farm walks to promote habitat restoration in the region.

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Four hectares of land previously cleared for monoculture cropping is transformed to a grassy woodland with native species endemic to the area, including: Redgum, Yellow Box, Grey Box, saltbush, and various wattles and hopbushes. The mixture of trees and shrubs, planted as tube stock using a mechanical seedling planter, create structure and diversity, providing habitat for native wildlife.



Established tube stock planting approx. 15 years old.



Ground preparation - rip lines for planting seedlings

KEY STEPS

- Site planning: mapping, calculated plant numbers, checked existing fence is in good condition.
- Deep ripped rows to plant seedlings into. This assists with root growth and moisture penetration which increases plant survival rate. Deep ripping was completed when the ground was relatively dry.
- Selected species and ordered tube stock and tree guards 8 months ahead of time to guarantee supply at planting time.
- Sprayed rip lines in the spring and again after the autumn rain break.
- Planted seedlings using a mechanical seedling planter and watered in.
- Hand water as required based on rainfall in the 12 months following planting.

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Remember your learnings from previous planting experiences.

Plant at the right time for your climate.



A LOCAL NETWORK OF DEMONSTRATION SITES ARE BEING ESTABLISHED UTILISING 'BEST PRACTICE' RESTORATION AND REVEGETATION TECHNIQUES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE. THIS IS SHOWCASING OF THE POSITIVE ECONOMIC, PRODUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF NATIVE VEGETATION RESTORATION, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR INCOME STREAMS FOR BUSINESS RESILIENCE.

KEY LEARNINGS FROM EXPERIENCE

- Don't plant too late in the season to minimise likelihood of needing to hand water.
- Install tree guards on the same day seedlings are planted - rabbits don't mess around!
- Deep ripping encourages root growth and increases survival and growth rates of seedlings, particularly in highly modified cropping landscapes that have been compacted by machinery.
- Tube stock planting is typically more expensive than direct seeding, but the higher survival rate can make it more cost effective.
- If you deep rip when wet, the soil could compact further and create air pockets which can adversely affect seedling growth.

COST CONSIDERATIONS

- Site preparation – deep ripping, spraying and labour
- Seedlings, tree guards and stakes
- Maintenance – weed and pest control

Be mindful of powerlines - don't plant species under/near lines that grow taller than three metres.

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Australian Government | Future Drought Fund | Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporated | Holbrook Landcare Network | RGA