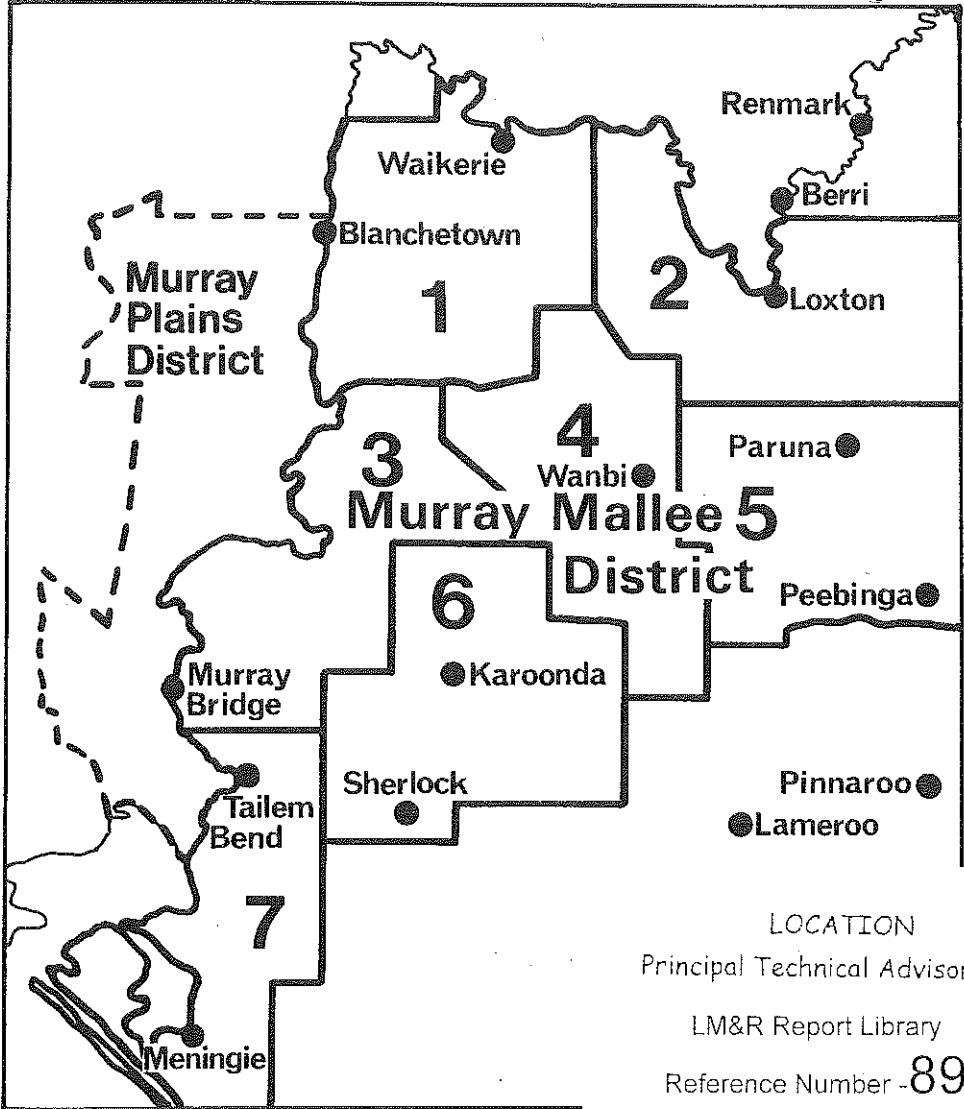


THE MURRAY MALLEE... A SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

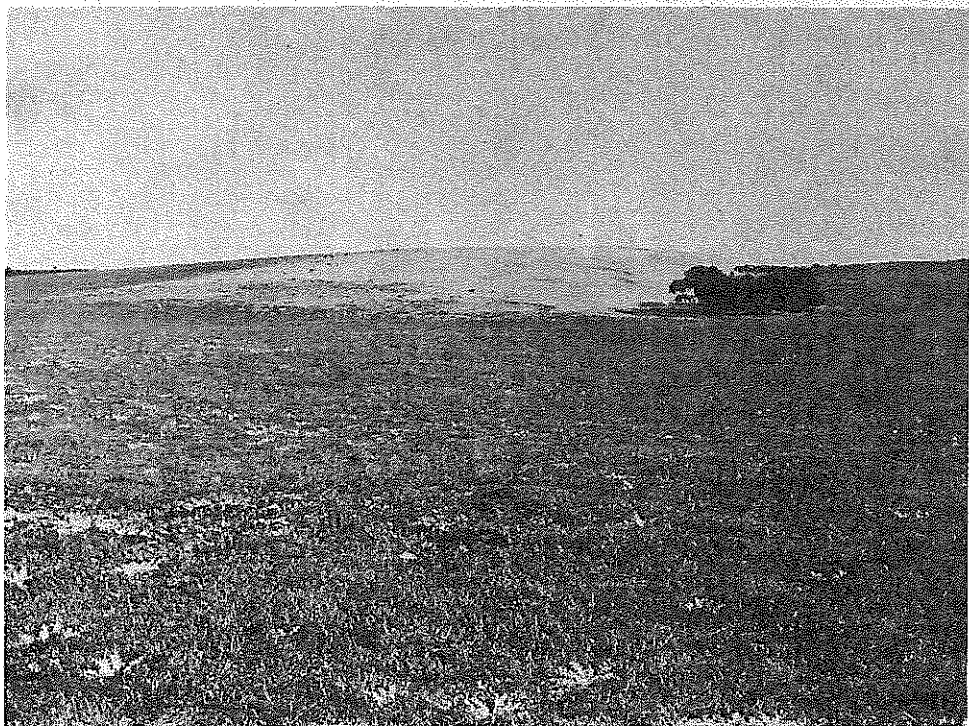
STOCK TAKE
1990



LOCATION
Principal Technical Advisor NRI
LM&R Report Library
Reference Number -89

Issued by the Murray Mallee District Soil Conservation Board with the co-operation of the Department of Agriculture, South Australia.

**Are we content
with this?**



**Or should our aim
be this...?**



This booklet

This booklet has been prepared for the information of farmers within the Murray Mallee Soil Conservation Board District. It outlines the operation of the Board and the part it plays in the soil conservation programmes in the Murray Mallee.

One thing is clear however — the Board can do little without the co-operation of the farmers in the district and we will welcome any suggestions or questions you have to put forward. You can do this by contacting any of the Board Members or the associated technical staff of the Department of Agriculture.

Members of the Board

J.A. (Jack) Meissner — New Well (Chairman)
G.C. (Geoff) Blacket — Wynarka
D. (Doug) Fullston — Mindarie
E.W. (Erwin) Hage — Bowhill
V.N. (Vic) Henschke — Malpas
R.T. (Reg) Kimber — Galga (Representing
District Councils)
M.C. (Met) Schulz — Loxton

Soil Conservation Officers, Department of Agriculture.

K. (Ken) Wetherby — Loxton
A.K. (Andy) McCord — Loxton

The need for soil conservation

Most people recognise that large areas of South Australia suffered acutely from soil erosion in the 1930-45 era.

Since the inception of the Board in this district in 1948 a great deal has been achieved in restoring the land to a stable and productive state. It has been clearly shown that soil conservation and good farming are one and the same thing and production as a result has risen markedly over the last 20 years. Most farmers can be justly proud of what they have achieved although there are still some farms which remind us how poorly the mallee can look.

Erosion can not be blamed entirely on strong winds and dry seasons; it is also an indication that soil management is below standard.

At this time, the rural economy is at a low ebb and farmers are looking anxiously for ways to cut costs. Neglecting the land will in no way improve the situation and will certainly mean a harder road to travel in future years.

The Board believes that the answer to rural problems will always lie ultimately in stable and fertile soils.

The farmer must do his part

The responsibility for the control of soil erosion is outlined in the Soil Conservation Act under State Law. The main purpose of the Act is to protect one property from drift arising from another.

Let us not be satisfied, however, with merely containing erosion within farm boundaries. Surely we must work towards complete stabilisation of all land in the Murray Mallee.

To do this we must all play a part – both in doing the work necessary and fostering the idea among friends and acquaintances in our district.

Much has been achieved in the past 20 years, but there is still more to do. The danger of wind erosion is always with us.

To prevent a recurrence of the widespread and prolonged erosion of the past will require constant vigilance and the whole-hearted co-operation of all landholders.

Soil conservation districts

Five such districts have been established so far.

Murray Mallee
Murray Plains
Upper Eyre Peninsula
Yorke Peninsula
West Broughton.

These districts are administered by Soil Conservation Boards consisting of seven men. Areas outside these districts are administered by the Soil Conservator who heads the Soil Conservation Branch of the Department of Agriculture, Adelaide.

Soil Conservation Districts are only established when there is an expression of local opinion supporting the proposition.

Section 6A of the Soil Conservation Act reads:

“At least three-fifths of the occupiers of land in any area may present a petition to the Minister praying that the area shall be constituted a Soil Conservation District.”

The people of the Murray Mallee were among the first to take advantage of this opportunity to do something positive about their soil problems.

The Soil Conservation Board

Experience all over the world has shown that soil conservation can not be achieved without the active co-operation and interest of the people. No government in a democratic country should be called upon to do things for people that they can reasonably do for themselves – and in many cases do better! A government dominated system, as well, loses much of its appeal to farmers.

For these reasons the administrative duties relating to the Soil Conservation Act have been largely placed in the hands of local people elected to a Soil Conservation Board.

Each District has a Board consisting of:–

- Six members nominated by the State Advisory Committee on Soil Conservation to the Governor through Executive Council.
- One member actively engaged in local government nominated by all district councils associated with the area.

For convenience the District has been divided into seven territories (see frontispiece) and the State Advisory Committee aims to have one Board Member representing each territory.

ALL BOARD MEMBERS ARE FARMERS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN FARMING IN THE DISTRICT.

Duties of the Board

The Board is a co-ordinating body for district soil conservation matters and has the responsibility of seeing that the State Advisory Committee on Soil Conservation is correctly informed on matters affecting the district.

Its main duties are as follows:

- 1) To get people interested and informed on Soil Conservation.
- 2) To collect information as to erosion and soil conservation within its district.
- 3) To make any investigations requested by the Minister of Agriculture or the Advisory Committee.
- 4) To make reports and recommendations on soil erosion and soil conservation matters. For example seeking out methods of vermin control or ways in which the service to farmers could be improved.
- 5) When a soil erosion dispute arises between two neighbours and one brings the matter to the Board, to hear all persons concerned and work out a reasonable solution (Outside of Board district, this is administered by the Soil Conservator).

Local Committees

With seven Board members representing more than 8,000 square miles of country, it is apparent that they are fairly remote from a majority of farmers. Each Board member represents a Territory of a thousand square miles or so and can not possibly keep in touch with it all. For this reason the Act allows the appointment of Local Committees to provide closer contact with other farmers within a Territory. Local Committee members can channel farmer opinion on any matter concerning soil conservation to the Board and later even to the Minister of Agriculture. As well, information can be passed back from the Board to farmers.

The members of the local committees are the eyes and ears of the Board and without them it could not function.

Duties of a Local Committee

The duties are to assist the Board with the performance of their duties on a local basis.

- 1) To get people actively interested in soil conservation within its territory (and informed of any new techniques).
- 2) To keep abreast of the state of soil erosion in its territory.
- 3) To make investigations, reports or recommendations on soil conservation matters to pass on to the Board as requested.
- 4) To bring farmers problems relating to soil conservation to the attention of the Board.

**Board and Local
Committee
Members**

Territory 1

J.A. (Jack)	Meissner	—	New Well
M. (Murray)	Castle	—	Notts Well
L. (Len)	Micke	—	New Well
R. (Ron)	Micke	—	New Well
A. (Albert)	Noll	—	Waikerie
A. (Allen)	Pese	—	Naidia
B. (Bert)	Schmidt	—	Lowbank

Territory 2

M.C. (Mel)	Schulz	—	Loxton
V. (Vic)	Altman	—	Paruna
J.N. (John)	Cass	—	Pata
M. (Merv)	Drogemuller	—	Moorook
H.A. (Alwin)	Nitschke	—	Loxton North
W.M. (Mel)	Schulz	—	Wunkar
F. (Gus)	Zimmerman	—	Taplan

Territory 3

E.W. (Erwin)	Hage	—	Private Bag, Mannum
D. (Doug)	Buller	—	Murray Bridge
E. (Eric)	Buller	—	Murray Bridge
R. (Rex)	Fiegert	—	Murray Bridge
O. (Otto)	Frahn	—	Mannum
M. (Mike)	Kluge	—	Private Bag, Mannum
A. (Arn)	Pedler	—	Copeville
F. (Fred)	Steinborner	—	Perponda
M. (Maurice)	Wilhelm	—	Mannum

Territory 4

D.J. (Doug)	Fullston	—	Mindarie
L. (Lyn)	Byerlee	—	Sandalwood
L. (Laurie)	Evans	—	Mantung
J. (John)	McCabe	—	Mindarie
D. (Don)	Reichstein	—	Galga
R. (Dick)	Sneider	—	Halidon
L. (Leo)	Vonthethoff	—	Halidon
G. (Geoff)	Williams	—	Caliph
R. (Reg)	Kimber	—	Galga

Territory 6

G.C.	(Geoff)	Blacket	—	Wynarka
D.J.	(John)	Byerlee	—	Sandalwood
D.	(Des)	Dutschke	—	Karoonda
J.	(Jim)	French	—	Karoonda
R.	(Ray)	Hunt	—	Marama
A.	(Allan)	Jones	—	Lowaldie
C.	(Chris)	Maywald	—	Sherlock
C.	(Clem)	Mickan	—	Karoonda
M.	(Morris)	Rosensweig	—	Perponda
K.	(Kev)	Yelland	—	Lowaldie

Territory 7

N.	(Nigil)	Brookman	—	Meningie
J.	(Jim)	Cowan	—	Poitulloch Station, via Tailem Bend.
J.	(John)	Dinham	—	Naturi
R.	(Richard)	Harvey	—	Yalkeri Station, Nar- runga.
S.	(Sandy)	McFarlane	—	"Stornaway", Menin- gie.
C.	(Clem)	Wilks	—	Meningie

Territory 5

V.	(Vic)	Henschke	—	Malpas
P.	(Peter)	Cass	—	Malpas
J.	(Jack)	Flavel	—	Meribah
O.	(Mick)	Gladigau	—	Alawoona
K.	(Ken)	Griffiths	—	Alawoona
H.	(Harry)	Nordhausen	—	Peebinga
J.	(Jack)	Schubert	—	Paruna

The Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture maintains a regional office in Loxton of which the Soil Conservation Branch is an integral part. The branch exists to provide farmers with advice on farm planning, erosion control, soil fertility, fertilisers and other matters relating to soil conservation. The officers are there to help, not to 'police.' Their function is to supply technical advice whenever it is needed.

These officers are in close contact with the Board and its local committees to whom they provide secretarial assistance as well as technical information.

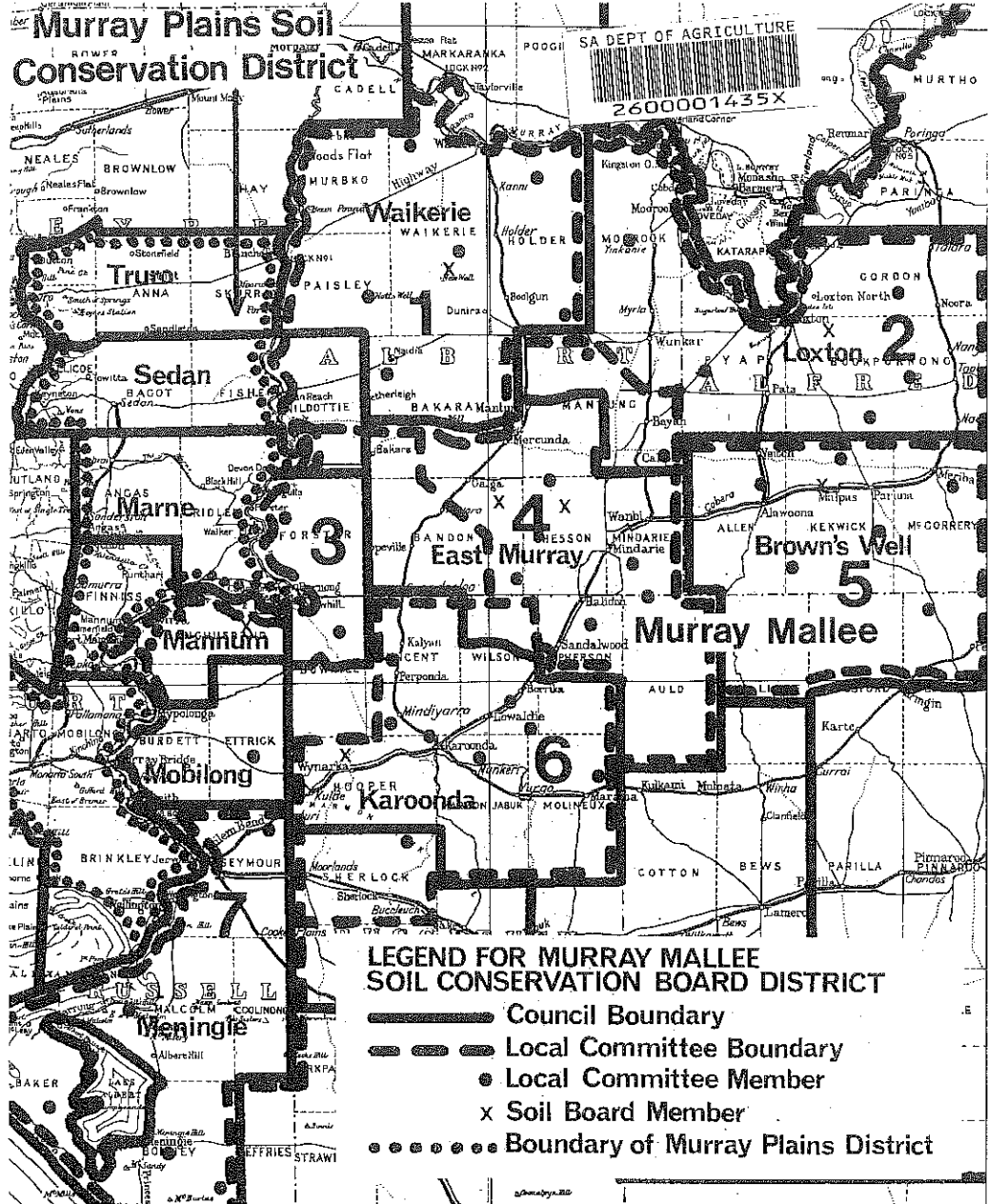
The Board








Left—Right: Jack Meissner (New Well), Doug Fullston (Wanbi), Geoff Blacket (Wynarka), Reg Kimber (Galga), Mel Schulz (Loxton), Vic Henschke (Malpas), Erwin Hage (Bowhill).

Murray Plains Soil Conservation District

SA DEPT OF AGRICULTURE
2600001435X



LEGEND FOR MURRAY MALLEE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD DISTRICT

-  Council Boundary
-  Local Committee Boundary
-  Local Committee Member
-  Soil Board Member
-  Boundary of Murray Plains District

© Commonwealth of Australia

The Murray Mallee... A Soil Conservation District

A Soil Conservation District is a means of developing interest and action in soil conservation. It functions through its District Board and local committees, whose members are practical farmers, supported by officers of the Soil Conservation Branch of the Department of Agriculture for technical advice.

The success or failure of a Soil Conservation District depends on the extent of voluntary co-operation it receives from the individual landholders within its area. Each member of the rural community is responsible for preserving the soil resources of South Australia.