

1.5 Community consultation

The community has played a major role in the overall direction and content of this salinity management plan. The key points of community input include:

- **Coordinating the implementation of the Lake Wellington Catchment Salinity Management Plan** (LWCSMP, 1993) through the Wellington Implementation Committee (was Wellington Salinity Group). Many of the programs for the irrigated areas in this plan are based on the successes of the current program that have had strong community influence.
- **The development of the draft South Gippsland Salinity Management Strategy** (Yarram Salinity Group, 2000). In 1994, a number of landcare groups in South Gippsland combined to form the Yarram Salinity Group. The major role of the Yarram Salinity Group was guiding the compilation of the South Gippsland Salinity Management Strategy. Many of the management

actions recommended for the South Gippsland area in the current plan have had their genesis from the South Gippsland Salinity Management Strategy.

- **The development of the draft West Gippsland Strategic Plan for Salinity Management** (Nolan ITU, 2002) involved significant community consultation. Although the draft plan was never adopted, it provided an excellent platform for the development of the current plan. The Steering Committee overseeing the plan had community representatives that guided the development of the plan. During the Public Consultation phase three community meetings were held, one each in Traralgon, Yarram and Maffra at which the public were invited to make comments on the draft plan. There were also two formal public presentations and draft copies of the report were sent to stakeholders for comment. The meetings were extensively advertised in the local newspapers.
- **Community representation on the Steering Committee for this plan.** Community representatives on the Steering Committee helped guide the plan's development.
- **Community consultation on the "public exposure draft" of this plan.** Community consultation was undertaken during three facilitated workshops in the towns of Yarram, Leongatha and Maffra on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd February 2005 respectively. Advertising in local newspapers was undertaken throughout the catchment for two weeks prior to the consultation. Prior to the consultation, copies of the Draft West Gippsland Salinity Management Plan were available to the general community on request. Copies were also sent to relevant agencies and stakeholders. An agency consultation workshop was also undertaken in Traralgon. The comments from the various workshops were consolidated and incorporated into this current version of the plan.

The CMA are committed to addressing the issues raised by community members and have endeavoured, through the Steering Committee, to respond to all issues raised during the consultation process.