



First Hunter biobank site established

In June 2012, the Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation signed a biobanking agreement on its "Valley Arm" property in the Singleton local government area. It is the first biobank site in the Hunter Region and the first owned by an Aboriginal group. The 73 hectare site adjoins Yengo and Blue Mountains national parks. The site is part of a package negotiated by the Australian Rail Track Corporation to offset the impacts of a railway expansion project in the Hunter Valley.



"Yarrari" and "Belah" largest biobank site in NSW

Nearly 1500 hectares of land near Gunnedah was protected under a biobanking agreement in July 2012. The agreement for "Yarrari" and "Belah" covers significant areas of endangered ecological communities. The biobank site was established by Whitehaven Coal Mining Limited to offset the impacts of the company's ongoing mine operations in the Gunnedah region. Around \$1.8 million will be deposited in the BioBanking Trust Fund, generating annual payments to fund weed and feral animal control, fencing and revegetation.



Linking Landscapes \$9 Million Grant Program

Round 1 of the Linking Landscapes grants program to establish biobanking agreements on public land within the Sydney Basin bioregion recently closed. Numerous submissions were received and are now being considered. The next round will open in March 2013. Under the program, OEH will undertake the necessary biodiversity assessments and assist councils and other public land managers in establishing biobank agreements on their land. OEH will then deposit funds into the Biobanking Trust Fund so that the land manager receives an on-going annual payment to manage the site. For further information contact Kathryn Collins on 9585 6575.



BioBanking review

Public consultation on the statutory review of BioBanking ran from 10 May to 9 July 2012. The purpose of the review is to identify the strengths and challenges in BioBanking and evaluate ways to improve it. OEH has held nine stakeholder meetings and has received 50 submissions from: individuals and local community groups (21); government (14); the private sector/industry (9); environment groups (5); and a professional association. OEH is currently analysing the submissions and preparing responses to the issues raised. A final report on the review will be tabled in Parliament.



BioBanking Assessors training – call for proposals

OEH has issued a call for proposals for the delivery of BioBanking Assessor training. The three-year licence to deliver the course expired in June 2012. OEH has made a number of changes to the structure and content of the course based on experience using the BioBanking Assessment Methodology and Credit Calculator over the past few years. For more information please call Jakki Trenbath on 9995 6717, or visit OEH's website: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biobanking/assessaccredit.htm>. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday, 25 September 2012.

