



## NEWSLETTER 2 January 2013

### **Annual General Meeting**

The inaugural AGM of the Gingin Water Group will be held on Wednesday March 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Granville centre committee room. This will be an open public meeting where a panel of experts will give a short talk based on their water experience and the importance of a local community based organisation .

A quorum of members must be in attendance to ensure the GWG is manned for the next year. The current Committee is willing to restand but will only do so if there is sufficient demand.

### **Issues and Comments for the Committee. Form on website.**

At the December meeting of the management committee it was decided that it is time the GWG changed its focus from water licensing matters to become more of a community conduit to some of the major industries and intensive farming operations that have the potential to influence the water cycle at a local level. These developments often take years to come into being and then their effects to the water may not become noticable for years after that. The local community needs to keep an official line of communication open to all these developments so that a trusting and educative relationship can ensure , and hopefully problems foreseen and addressed.

For this approach to be effective the community need to send its thoughts and issues to the Committee.

There is a form to do this on [www.ginginwater.org.au](http://www.ginginwater.org.au) . Download the form fill it in and email it back . Attach pictures and charts , maps etc which can be used to form a local baseline set of water data against which we and future committees can measure any changes going forward.

**Our ability to track , understand and control changes in our LOCAL water cycle is only as strong as the local community's desire to get involved. Your GWG committee needs local information and encouragement.....NOW.**



## **Communications commenced with proponents of Minerals Sands operation and Gingin Regional Landfill firm**

In response to the move to establish a local community presence in the large developments that are taking place in our water cycle the GWG Committee has had preliminary discussions with both of the above firms. Image Resources have large mineral sand mining tenements in and around Gingin. They propose extensive mining, initially at their Boonoonaring site, and if successful continuing for many years. The potential to influence local water is considerable. Rigorous science and modelling is being undertaken in these early stages to ensure that the industry can continue safely. At our December meeting the Managing Director encouraged the GWG initiative and promised full access to their monitoring and development program.

Similar discussions with Chris Griffen of Veolia Environmental Services were welcomed and similar assurances were given that GWG would be given similar full access to the monitoring and development process leading up to and well beyond the establishment of the Gingin regional landfill at Fernview.

Both these developments sit on top of the sands of the Mirrabooka aquifer which provide the mound springs that charge the Gingin and Moondah Brooks, and further south the Lennard Brook, as well as some important water licenses out of the superficial aquifer in that north eastern region. Our strong relationship with the scientists of the Dept of Water lead us to believe that the DoW does not have the understanding it would like of the recharging of surface water in that area, particularly as it works in the drying climate we have.

GWG can play an important part in the process, BUT ONLY IF local farmers supply baseline, and even historical, information about the water levels on their properties.

The DoW does not have the local data in this area.

## **Gingin Surface Water Allocation Plan**

Remember this plan? It was released in April 2011. This was before the formation of GWG. Gingin had no local organisation capable of following the development of this report, which is so fundamental to the social well being of Gingin residents. Imagine living without the many freshwater brooks and streams which run through our land.



Chittering Landcare did make a submission commenting on the insufficient amount of water allocated for the benefit of the environmental assets attached to these surface water sources. The Report concluded that no further water licenses would be issued from the surface water, and in fact many of the sources had been OVER allocated and measures were being taken to reduce the water take. Since the reports release there has been serious drying of the twelve surface water resources described with some parts now completely dry and most others, if not all, showing the lowest flows ever.

The DoW has a legal obligation, written into the Report, to evaluate the Surface water plan's success on an annual basis. The process of evaluation is clearly defined on page 21 of the report.

GWG views very seriously the fact that this first evaluation has not yet been done. This is particularly concerning to the local community considering the low flows of the summer of 2011 (the year of the report, but NOT considered in the report), lower again in 2012 and due to be the lowest ever in 2013.

**This alone is sufficient reason to attend the AGM to ensure you set up a community organisation capable of existing and functioning well into the future.**

Go to [www.ginginwater.org.au](http://www.ginginwater.org.au) and press the direct link to the Department of Water site. This opens at the Gingin groundwater section and read down the page to the link to the Surface Water Report. Read page 21!

## **Gingin Groundwater Allocation Plan**

Gingin Water Group was set up and Incorporated in part to follow the development and release of this ground water plan. The Committee is very well qualified to oversee the work of the chairman to develop the understandings of the science involved and build up the relationships required to have an input, on behalf of the community, in the attempt to address local water issues.

An NRM grant of \$15,000 granted by the Northern Agricultural Catchment Council, administered by the Moore Catchment Council, to allow GWG to make a submission, on behalf of the local community, to this Water Allocation Report. Part of the grant was to be used for



purposes of public communication and education in the process . The website [WWW.GINGINWATER.ORG.AU](http://WWW.GINGINWATER.ORG.AU) was set up to be the main facilitator for the information flow.

**Come to the AGM and tell us how you want the site improved.**

The Groundwater Plan has NOT BEEN released despite being years overdue.

The 15K grant cannot be extended into the next financial year and the Groundwater Plan will not be released in draft form before the election. The local community deserves an explanation in a region which is experiencing serious local water table reductions and surface flow restriction.

I have received reports of farmers bores and soaks actually drying up!

**This sort of information needs to be recorded on a local register. Do not be afraid of admitting to this . Do not assume that winter rains will resolve the situation and do not accept this as the norm.**

**Collectively there must be a plan to help you. Are a few deep communal bores the answer. Who pays? Whose fault the Gngangara mound leakage problem reducing water south of Gingin Brook road?**

**Attend the AGM to strengthen the voice of your Gingin Water Group Inc.**