



Field days shed light on CSG water issues

Media release: 14 October 2013

MORE than 200 landholders gathered in Roma and Miles last week to question government and CSG company groundwater experts and regulators about the predicted impacts of CSG activity on the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) as part of a series of CSG water field days hosted by AgForce Projects.

Key concerns raised by landholders during the Q&A sessions included how impacts on bores will be monitored as well as questions pertaining to the regulation and enforcement of provisions to keep tenure holders accountable for impacts on groundwater.

Landholders also heard detail about the Surat Underground Impact Report (UWIR) and government and CSG company monitoring and 'Make Good' strategies regarding the 85 bores predicted by the report to be impacted within three years and the 528 bores predicted to be impacted in the long term. Landholders were also told about the legal framework in place for any bores that experience an impact that wasn't predicted by the report.

Dulacca graziers Adele and Philip Hughes said landholders were extremely concerned about the impacts CSG drilling could have on the GAB and their stock water and irrigation bores and the AgForce Projects field days were an excellent avenue to seek information.

"This is a very emotional issue and landholders have some serious concerns," Mrs Hughes said.

"We genuinely want to hear the information, but also need to have the opportunity to have our questions answered and the Q&A panel sessions with government and CSG companies were an excellent format to help achieve this."

Mrs Hughes said it was extremely valuable to landholder knowledge to have access to CSG company representatives and GasFields Commissioners so as to hear firsthand about the concerns facing landholders.

"We need days like this and if it weren't for AgForce hosting them in our local area we wouldn't have the opportunity to address the government bodies involved or the CSG companies."

Mrs Hughes said hearing first hand from hydrogeologists about the ongoing investigations and monitoring of groundwater, possible impacts and how these will be managed was very beneficial.

"There is no doubt water levels in some areas will be affected," she said.

"So we need to find out as much as possible about this industry, and how we can best protect the resources we have on our property."

Key speakers included Randall Cox from the Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment, Josh Lean from Environment and Heritage Protection, Dave Free from the Groundwater Investigation Team (CSG Compliance Unit), Steve Ward from the CSG Compliance Unit and representatives from QGC, Santos and Origin Energy.

The field days were delivered by AgForce Projects with the support of the Queensland Government, the GasFields Commission Queensland and Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association.

Water field days will continue to be rolled out across the state. For more information visit www.agforceprojects.org.au

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