

HorsesLandWater



Organising a field day for horse property owners

Quick tips for busy people

HorsesLandWater

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CARING
FOR
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COUNTRY

Organising a field day for horse property owners

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Introduction

This document is aimed to be a quick guide for busy people, who have found themselves the one to organise a field day for horse owners.

It won't matter if you are a volunteer, paid Natural Resources Management facilitator or Council officer; this guide is designed to help you make a success of the day.

You may also refer to the "HorsesLandWater Communication Guide" found on www.horseslandwater.com and the "Communicating EMS in Australian Agriculture: Guidelines for Best Practice"; developed through a project funded by the Department for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry.

The purpose of the field day

As an organiser of a field day, you may or may not be directly involved in preliminary planning processes for the field day. If you are not, ask to be provided with some background, as this will help deliver the field day more closely with the original plan.

Essential considerations when planning a field day

- Why are you conducting the field day?
- Who is the target audience?
- What are the proposed outcomes (goals?)
- What is the proposed topic?
- How will this be presented in a clear, easy style?
- Who will present the field day? Someone who is knowledgeable and respected by horse property managers.
- Which site & location will help convey the best message to help achieve the outcomes?
- What time of day and how long should the field day be, to best attract horse property managers?
- How will we know if the field day has been a success?
- What's in it for the horse owners?

Scoping out the "idea"

When planning for the success of each field day, consider what the experience will need to take the participants through. It is highly valuable to contact horse owners in the district first and talk to them about the concepts set out below. This will assist to prevent assumptions and help set the range of information given out on the day.

Benchmarking - Where is the level of understanding now-before the field day?

- **Validation of assumptions in relation to horse keeping in your local area held by horse owners themselves**
 - How are horses kept, e.g. mostly yarding?
 - Are horses exercised on trails, public ground or racetracks?
 - Is there enough year-round grazing or is feed mostly purchased?
- **Level of understanding as a collective group of horse owners in relation to land management and environmental issues associated with horse keeping**
 - Are horse owners aware of any over-grazing issues?
 - Is there a history of conflict in the area in relation to environmental issues?
 - Would have most attendees been to any sort of NRM horse keeping course or field day before?

■ **How can the group be engaged to further foster the Landcare ethic?**

- After the field day, how will the participants be supported to improve their land management practices?
- Is there a way of helping the participants to share the Landcare message with other horse owners?

■ **Target setting - Where do we want to be after the field day?**

- NRM goals to be set by the horse keeping land manager:
 - After the field day, would the participant be confident in setting their own environmental goals for the horse property they manage?
- NRM goals to be supported & promoted by the local horse community/organisation (peer support):
 - After the field day, is there a way to support participants through their local horse organisation networks, even if it is to link to www.horseslandwater.com on their website, or the club to plan to run their own field day or information session for members? Successful implementation of NRM on horse properties in peri-urban areas has a component of reliance of support by social networks.
- Goals will need to take into account capabilities of horse industry group/s and attributes of typical small landholders:
 - Horse organisations at a local level are typically run by volunteers. Horse keeping is often not seen as core business or information that should be passed onto members.
 - How can the field day participants be supported to attain their environmental goals e.g. periodical field days, focus group, start a horse keepers network?
- HorsesLandWater Action Planner goals (best practice/benchmarks) to underpin the target setting:
 - Making use of the HorsesLandWater resources, developed by horse owners for horse owners.
 - Promotion of the goals in the HorsesLandWater Action Planner as part of a larger communication plan, perhaps embedded in the regional Natural Resources Management Plan, Local Government Planning documents and state or national educational material provided through horse organisations.

■ **Monitoring & Evaluation – How do we know we are being effective?**

- Support for measuring and evaluation of short & long term NRM indicators to measure on-ground environmental actions:
 - As part of planning for the field day, how will you determine the success?
- Horse properties with good land management practices will be more resilient to drought or other natural disasters:
 - How will you measure if the field day(s) have been successful as a tool to help change practices? Collect both formal (statistical, validated) and informal (antidotal, observational) data.

Field Day Planning Checklist

- talked to your stakeholder group about the plans
- determined the outcomes (what you want to achieve)
- have enough helpers to conduct the field day
- have sought any permissions/gained permits for the site
- worked out who is responsible for what`
- have developed a contact list of key people incl. mobiles
- checked for conflicting events related to horses/locally
- developed a draft program for the day
- the site plan for parking, coffee etc is written down
- risk assessment has been taken (e.g. dogs tied up)
- insurance requirements have been met
- planned for any incidents (first aid, ambulance access)
- toilets and hand washing facilities
- inclement weather/ hot weather plan
- is a public address system required (how will people hear?)
- mobility/access questions for unfit, disabled if required
- directional signs for the day
- have you planned how to cancel the day if required?
- any food safety or electrical safety issues to consider?
- have the presenters' specific requirements been met?
- volunteers have job descriptions, are briefed on roles

Promotion

Here is a quick promotion checklist to help you. Further information can be found in the recommended reading.

Flyer

- has a flyer been prepared?
- list all of the distribution sites where your flyer can be displayed.
- list all the ways that an electronic version of the flyer can be distributed.
- what websites can the flyer be uploaded to?
- what notice boards, libraries and other public information points can be utilised.

Media

- has a media release been prepared?
- has the media release been distributed?
- do you have a high quality photo ready to use by the media?
- has the media release or a "notice of event" been sent to free community information notice boards on websites, free community newspapers, the Council or radio stations?
- do you have anyone ready to do interviews or photo shoots at very quick notice?
- do you have anyone ready to be interviewed on radio, or ring a radio station?
- are you able to use Text Messaging (SMS) to spread the news?
- is there anyone with a face book, MySpace or other social networking site who can mention the event for you?
- is there any further information ready for the media e.g. speaker profile, more information on the problem/ solution being demonstrated at the field day?

Signage

- signage ready for directions on the day?
- can large signs be erected in the district, at major intersections prior to the day?

Word of mouth

- Word of mouth is by far the most powerful method of communication. Keep talking to people who may be interested in attending, ask them to pass the message on. Make sure it is very easy to find out more about your field day. E.g. refer to a sign or website.

Sample Running Sheet for a Field Day

This is a sample running sheet. You will need to add approximate times and who is responsible for each segment.

Meet & greet

Welcome participants as they arrive. Direct participants to the registration table. Provide each with a name tag, and provide an invitation to have a tea/coffee while waiting for commencement.

Welcome

Include introductions

House keeping

Provide information about toilets, first aid, any hazards

Field day overview

How the day is expected to run, when to ask questions

Field Day

The facilitator conducts the field day as planned. Volunteers will be needed to keep an eye out for any walkers lagging behind, those that may need mobility support, keep the refreshments cool/hot/topped up. Greet and brief latecomers.

Evaluation

Hand out evaluation forms, try to encourage completion at the field day, as once people have left the site, it is very hard to get the forms returned!

Field Day Closing

Thank yous, final comments.

Tidy up

Return the site to the condition required.

Checklist for the day before

- have your vehicle packed with all items the day before if possible
- contact presenters to make sure they are able to attend, know what time to arrive, know where to meet you and any other details.
- place directional signage out the night before if it will be safe (not stolen) especially if there is an early start involved the next day.
- undertaken any tasks at the site on which the field day is to be held, if this has been part of the arrangements e.g. shifting stock, clearing out a parking area.

“Box of Tricks”

This is a waterproof, easy to carry box with a clip-on lid that has lots of smaller items which will add to the success of the day. It can stay made up between field days if you are responsible for organising several.

- Name tag paper with/without plastic holders
- Hand outs/resources for the day
- Registration form/attendance record sheet
- Evaluation forms
- Volunteers have “signed in/signed out”
- Your organisations business cards, promotional material
- Small tablecloth
- Textas, marking pens
- Masking tape
- Waterproof electrical tape
- First aid kit
- Sunscreen
- Spare toilet paper
- Insect repellent
- Scissors
- String
- Spare paper large enough for quick signage
- Clipboard
- Clips, plastic sleeves for paper
- Paper towel roll
- Rubber gloves
- Disinfectant (to clean up spills)

“On the day” checklist

- directional signage has been placed out
- the site where the field day is to be held has been prepared:
 - Preferred entry & exit points signed
 - Car park areas signed
 - Signs to toilet
 - Hand washing point signed
 - Tea/coffee, refreshments set up
 - Any seating set out
 - Rubbish bins
 - PA system or other speaker requirements set up
- pre-field day briefing for key people (facilitator, volunteers, property owner)
- thank-yous are given
- tidy up duties undertaken
- Directional signage collected from roadsides

“After the day” checklist

- Thank all persons involved, including the property owner on which the field day was held
- Debrief key persons, even informally, to determine what could be improved on next time
- Summarized the evaluation forms
- Completed any other reports required (most likely if the day has some government funding)

Template for a Flyer

- **Insert Logo if available**

- **Insert field day title**

- **Insert a photo or drawing**

- **What:**
Insert a sentence saying what the field day is about.

- **When:**
Include start and expected finish times, date with year number.

- **Where:**
Include the site name, and a brief description which will help people locate the site e.g. road names, distances in kilometres from major intersections.

- **Who:**
Who is conducting the field day and guest speaker's name.

- **For more info:**
Place all contact details, include a website if at all possible.

- **Sponsorship Recognition:**
Place the logos or name of the organisation/ businesses in text that may be supporting the field day.

Template for a Media Release

■ INSERT HEADER: MEDIA RELEASE

■ Insert small logo on the top left corner, if available

■ Insert date (in _ December 01, 2008_ format)

■ INSERT MEDIA RELEASE HEADING

■ FACTS:

The first paragraph needs to be “snappy” to catch people’s attention.

What is the field day about?

Who is organising it?

Where is it happening?

When (time, date)?

■ CONTEXT:

The second paragraph gives context. Is this field day part of a series or some other larger program or strategy? Who is funding the field day?

■ WHO ARE YOU/REASON FOR THE FIELD DAY:

The third paragraph needs to have a few words about you, your organisation’s background and why the need for the field day.

■ FURTHER INFORMATION:

This paragraph needs to provide all contact details. Remember to include mobile phone, email and a website.

■ ENDS

Place this word at the end of the main body of the media release. Below this word will be information for journalists and editors.

■ Photo caption:

If the media release was sent with a photo, include a caption and information on to whom the photo needs to be credited.

■ Notes to Editors:

Use this section to include your further contact details, if there is someone available for interviews, further details related to the field day that are not in the main body of the release, links to research or facts that will provide background information for a journalist.

