

Day trip for doctors

GOULBURN branch of NSW Farmers Association recently held a lunchtime barbecue at Tony and Sue Morrison's Breadalbane property, 'South Raeburn'. This was to give ANU Rural Clinical Medical students who are undertaking part of their training in Goulburn an opportunity to meet some farmers in a social setting. Pictured are the students with hosts Sue and Tony Morrison and Goulburn Branch chair of the

NSW Farmers' Association Margaret Cameron. More than 30 people, including Dr Tony Whelan and his wife enjoyed the sunny Saturday afternoon, during which Tony showed visitors aspects of his modern shearing shed, together with some of his Dohne sheep. Margaret outlined some of the safety issues which could lead to farm injuries treated by rural doctors in surgeries and hospitals.



• RURAL INSIGHT: Breadalbane grazier Tony Morrison (centre) hosted ANU Rural Medical Clinic students at his property, along with Goulburn branch chair of the NSW Farmers Association Margaret Cameron (right).

Call for GM to control the weeds



By DAVID COLE

THE terrible plight that serrated tussock presents to our local government area was discussed at last Tuesday's council meeting, with one councillor raising a motion to investigate an environmental levy specifically targeted at noxious weeds control.

In the preamble to his motion, Cr Geoff Kettle said noxious weeds in the local government area were out of control.

"It's been a slow insidious thing, exacerbated by the drought...to date little has been done about it," he said.

"If the out of control noxious weeds are not brought back under control they will destroy our farming landscapes within 10 years...then the problem will be 10 times more expensive to fix."

He said Goulburn Mulwaree is in one of the most sensitive water and farming catchments in Australia.

"Now is the time to start chemically controlling serrated tussock...we need our senior staff on board with the appropriate responsibilities of weed skill and management," he said.

General manager Chris Berry said the council currently did this. Cr Deniz Sturgiss added that the Goulburn Mulwaree shire had been mapped for weeds.

But, not all councillors could support part of the original motion, which referred to transferring the weed control from planning to the general manager.

Cr Nina Dillon said: "if we start handing everything over to the general manager then where do we stop?"

The motion was re-introduced and passed without this clause.

The final motion was that council: • Immediately increase the level of awareness amongst landowners to the importance of controlling serrated tus-

sock at this time of the year.

• Directors within their departments be responsible for the control of noxious weeds within their land portfolios and include in their job arrangements key performance indicators of accountability on weeds control in line with private landowner responsibility and accountability, and

• Initiate the immediate investigation of an environmental charge or levy specifically targeted at noxious weeds control.

After the meeting, member of the NSW and ACT Serrated Tussock Working Party Stewart Thompson said he was disappointed they did not pin the responsibility onto a single person in council.

"It is important that weed management becomes a priority issue not just for council directors in their role as land managers but also the general manager of the council," Mr Thompson said.

"His role is clearly defined within the Local Government Act as he is the only conduit between councillors and staff.

"The decision at the last council meeting to not bring noxious weeds management under his control is inconsistent with the council's management structure and the legislative relationship between the general manager and councillors.

"The community needs confidence that there is a process and a chain of command within council that can help lead the community by demonstrating that there are workable plans in place in council and means of measuring them and the results."

Mr Thompson said the spread of serrated tussock has reached a scale not seen before, during the drought conditions of the last seven years.

He said serrated tussock covered more than two million hectares of land in southeast Australia and had the potential to spread even further.

The NSW government currently commits \$8.5 million annually to the noxious weeds campaign.

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- Cr Geoff Kettle

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After 26 years of providing our customers with excellent service, ActewAGL's agent - Betta Electrical and Gas Goulburn - will close at the end of August.

ActewAGL would like to thank Keith, Robyn and staff for being a first-class agent for our products and services during our long association.

ActewAGL remains committed to maintaining our retail outlet presence in Goulburn and continuing to provide you with local customer service.

We are in the process of engaging a new agent and will update you with their details in the coming weeks.

Until we have identified our new agent, you can pay your natural gas and electricity bills in person at your local Post Office, by mail, direct debit or BPAY. Details about these payment options are outlined on the reverse of your bill.

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For all other account enquiries please call us on 13 14 93 and we'll be happy to help. We wish Keith and Robyn all the best for the future and look forward to introducing Goulburn's new ActewAGL agent to you soon.

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