

## BENGALLA MINE

# Community Consultative Committee Update

### *The Bengalla CCC Newsletter...*

The material in this issue of the Bengalla Mine Community Consultative Committee (BMCCC) newsletter has been selected by the CCC representatives.

The BMCCC is comprised of community representatives and representatives from Bengalla Mine including the General Manager. This newsletter aims to inform interested community members on matters discussed during CCC meetings.

### *Dry Creek project*

In the May CCC newsletter we outlined the work to be undertaken for the Dry Creek Project which is the diversion of upstream clean water runoff around the future mining operation.

Planning for the project is progressing with construction works expected to commence in September 2015 and be completed late 2016.

Bengalla is seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from members of the Muswellbrook community to be part of a Community Reference Group for the Bengalla Dry Creek Project.

The role of the Community Reference Group member is to:

- contribute to any open forum discussions on the project;
- be an advocate for the community;
- provide a mechanism for communication and consultation with the community throughout the Project;

This is an unpaid role.

For more information or to obtain an EOI application form, contact Debbie Day, Community Relations co-ordinator at [Debbie.day@riotinto.com](mailto:Debbie.day@riotinto.com) or on (02) 6542 9511.

**Expressions of Interest will be accepted until Friday 11 September, 2015.**

### *Official Opening of Sam Adams College*

The Sam Adams College residential student facility on the Hunter TAFE Muswellbrook campus was officially opened on site at Wednesday 22 July, 2015.

Bengalla partnered with Muswellbrook Shire Council, BHP Billiton Mt Arthur Coal and Glencore Mangoola to provide funding for the project. Support was also provided through funds from the Regional Development Australia Fund and land from Hunter TAFE.

The facility provides rooms for 63 occupants and will deliver significant benefits for many Upper Hunter students over coming decades and to a range of industries including mining.

With Bengalla mine apprentices studying at the Muswellbrook TAFE, having access to this accommodation facility will help many of them on their journey towards a successful career in mining.

Jo-Anne Scarini, Bengalla general manager Operations, was invited to speak on behalf of the industry at the opening and said:

“It is great that the benefits of mining translate into community learning and infrastructure. Being able to support young people to get a start in their career is really valuable to the community and we are proud to be part of that”.



*Pictured: Jo-Anne Scarini, Bengalla general manager Operations.*

### *Soil Carbon Project*

Bengalla's Soil Carbon Community Project has been running over four years, with the aim of improving land-use and land-use outcomes in the Upper Hunter Valley. The project was undertaken in partnership with the University of Newcastle, BDM Resources, Hunter Local Land Services and 17 regional landowners. The landholders were striving to improve their soils by building soil carbon levels via changed grazing management practices. Increasing soil carbon levels by incorporating and maintaining increased organic matter offers a number of benefits to soil health. Landscape resilience and productivity are the major benefactors.

The project properties cover an area from Cassilis in the west, north to Murrurundi, east to Moonan Flat and south to Denman. In 2012, 134 baseline soil samples were taken at sites across the 17 project properties. Since that time landholders have been experimenting with different management practices consistent with conservation farming. In particular, rotational grazing, altered fertiliser regimes, direct drill pasture cropping and improved pasture species composition (increasing perennials).

All sites were re-sampled in April this year. While there were fluctuations at property and paddock scale, the overall results for the project were positive. By grouping all sites, an increase in soil carbon levels was achieved. On average an increase of approximately 1.75 tonnes of soil carbon per hectare was realised, equating to an additional 2,100 tonnes of carbon added to the soil. This represents just under 8000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sup>2</sup>-e), which under the Government's Emission Reduction Fund would equate to approximately \$110,000 in carbon credits.

Jonathon Moore, a local farmer taking part in the project, said: "The challenge was to select a number of soil sites on your property and then see if you can improve soil carbon over a number of years. We were encouraged to modify our farm management practices. Regular meetings were held. They were not only educational and enjoyable but helped to maintain enthusiasm for the project".

Project manager, Shane Curry, from BDM Resources said, "I am very proud of the project we have delivered, the community engagement has been a real highlight. Despite a couple of drier years we were hoping for an upswing in

soil carbon levels across the project sites. Although the sampling interval was only three years I'm buoyed by the increases. Most of all, and more importantly for the Upper Hunter catchment, is the enduring nature of the education the project has provided to project participants.

We now have a situation where more than 30 land managers in the catchment are challenging traditional farming practices. I have no doubt the majority, if not all will continue to implement applicable conservation practices to larger areas of their properties.

Craig White, environment and approvals specialist at Bengalla said, "It has been wonderful for Bengalla to continue to strengthen its community relationships with the Upper Hunter. The Soil Carbon Community Project enabled Bengalla to provide an opportunity for research to be undertaken regarding increasing carbon in soils and new farming practices which will provide benefits to the local farmers."

### *Work Experience for Year 10 students*

As community members, it is important that Bengalla participates in the education, career development and vocational training of young people in our community.

Muswellbrook High School Year 10 students had a chance to see what it was like to work at a mine when they recently attended Bengalla mine for a week of work experience.



*The minutes and presentations from CCC meetings are available for public viewing at the Muswellbrook and Denman Libraries. If you have an interest in any of the topics discussed at the CCC and would like further information on this topic or in future newsletters, please contact one of the members listed below.*

If you wish to attend a Bengalla CCC meeting, or would like an issue raised by one of the Committee members, please contact any of the members listed below:

**Clr Malcolm Ogg** Chairperson

Ph 65434583

**Mr Noel Downs**

Ph: 65431 288

**Mrs Jo-Anne Scarini (Bengalla GM)**

Ph: 6542 9500

**Mr Kevin Lecky**

Ph: 6541 2873

**Mrs Debbie Day (Bengalla)**

Ph: 6542 9500

**Mr Jonathon Moore**

Ph: 6547 9164

**Mr Craig White (Bengalla)**

Ph: 6542 9500

**Bengalla Environmental Hotline number 1800 674 662**