

Cattlemen mustered in Central Australia

Dozens of Aboriginal cattlemen from across the Northern Territory gathered in Central Australia in August to learn about key industry initiatives aimed at improving their land.

The three-day workshop was held at Ross River Resort and on Loves Creek Station east of Alice Springs.

Cattlemen took part in practical demonstrations in the key areas of soil erosion, grazing land management, corporate and financial management, feral animal control and bush fire awareness.

The workshop was supported by the Central and Northern land councils, the Indigenous Land Corporation, Northern Territory and Federal government departments, the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association and Elders.

It aimed help managers of Aboriginal-owned properties to increase the number of cattle stocked and turned off their properties, while improving grazing land management practises, bringing increased economic income and more jobs in remote areas.

Dale Mulladad, from Santa Teresa, works on Atula Station north-east of Alice Springs. He said the participants learn from each other when they come together at a workshop.

"What I've seen here and I'll try and get that thing running over there," he said.

"You meet new people, get to see different things. It's good. It's good to see blokes from other places."

A traditional owner of Loves Creek Station, Damien Ryder feels the demonstrations on treating soil erosion will be useful for his country.

"It's a few ideas you sort of get at these sort of things," he said. "When you head back to the station you might see erosion there and you might make



Dean Pepperill from Ti Tree Station at a cattlemen's workshop on Loves Creek Station.

it better so the water can run freely to the dry areas.

"Looking at the grass to see how it grows after that soil erosion program. See if water runs in there or stops it making gutters or drains sort of thing."

Dean Pepperill is the head stockman on Ti Tree Station and also works at Willowra and Loves Creek. He said he can see how the workshop will be useful in his day-to-day tasks.

"Cattle work, bore and fencing," he said. "Especially with this soil erosion site. It makes a lot of difference looking after the land and all that."

"A bit like using them in jobs like fencing and roads. Maintaining roads, fence line and dams."

Dean said the workshop is useful for cattlemen of all levels of experience.

"Even for the other young fellas," he said. They see people working and young other fellas doing things. Yes, that'd be pretty good I think."

Des Grainer is the manager of the cattle enterprise on the Wagaman Land Trust on the Daly River.

The workshop offered his team the chance to pick up some new ideas for their country.

"It's good when other groups come together. You learn from each other and during the presentation they do something a little bit different then you pick up a new idea and that."

"It's good to see what's happening because your way may not be the right way."

Upgrades continue at Tanami Downs



An open day in October will provide traditional owners of the Mangkururra Aboriginal Land Trust with an opportunity to inspect the improvements that continue to be made at one of Australia's most isolated cattle stations.

Tanami Downs is in the Tanami Desert north-west of Alice Springs.

Development of the station is continuing well under new managers, Ken and Linda Satour, who have been in the job nine months.

They've overseen the upgrading of station infrastructure including the homestead, single quarters and surrounds.

More importantly for the cattle business, a large amount of work has been carried out on bringing the watering points back to a reasonable standard to ensure a reliable supply of water for the stock.

Yards have also been repaired and improved and the fencing around most of the holding paddocks has been repaired.

The station has carried out two rounds of mustering and further mustering will be carried out in the weeks ahead.

Herd development has also been a priority with a number of Red Braham bulls purchased from Queensland

recently.

These bulls have gone to both Tanami Downs and Mistake Creek Station. Linkages between these two Aboriginal-owned stations have steadily developed in recent times.

Further work planned for the next year includes the construction of new paddocks and the installation of VHF radio repeater towers to provide greater communication and safety for station employees.

The Central Land Council is assisting the station with the organisation of the open day for the traditional owners of the Mangkururra ALT on which the station operates.

This will provide traditional owners the opportunity to see how the development of the station, which has been helped by the investment of their own funds, is progressing.

Above: it was long days in the yards for Kenny Satour's small team before they could truck off cattle to markets thousands of kilometres away (below)

