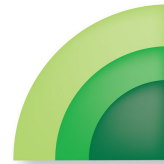




## Border Watch (Mt Gambier)

Thursday 15/11/2007

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# Spotlight on water policy

BY CHRIS OLDFIELD

CURRENT water policies, usage and regulations are the focus of a photographic initiative spanning the region.

Called PhotoVoice, the project is led by Professor Jennifer McKay and researchers Ganesh Keremane and Adam Gray representing University of South Australia Centre for Comparative Water Policies and Laws.

As part of the The PhotoVoice Exercise disposable cameras and a diary will be handed to participants.

"The diary has a number of themes or topics that we'd like the participants to consider," Mr Gray said.

"The participant then uses the camera to take a photo that illustrates what they think or feel about the listed theme.

"At the end, all of the participants will get together to look at each other's pictures and discuss the topics collectively.

"They will also decide as a group which photos are then used to make up the exhibition."

Contracted to research water issues by the Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation

Futures, the academics are studying the perceptions and attitudes among large volume water users on current water policy, usage, and regulations.

Mr Gray said there were two Case Study regions - the South East of South Australia and the Murrumbidgee region in New South Wales, around Coleambaly.

Mr Gray said the entire research project was expected to take a total of about two years and PhotoVoice was an important component.

The team is using six methods of collating information including:

- Literature review - articles, government reports, and other documents relating to water.

- Media review - monitoring of local media, primarily print media.

- Targeted content analysis - an analysis of the content of specific documents.

- Online survey - enabling residents in the region to take part on-line in a survey about current water policy, usage, and regulations.

- PhotoVoice exercise - to

gather data that is less traditional in nature.

- Targeted interviews - some specific individuals from various sectors of the community, agriculture, and industry will be interviewed formally.

"With these six methods we should be able to identify whether specific sectors or groups have a commonality of attitude," Mr Gray said.

"For example, the irrigated agriculture farmers might all say pretty much the same thing about 'x', but everyone from the softwood industry might say something totally different.

"Identifying what the various points of view are is very important for achieving successful and sustainable management of water resources.

The exhibition will be on display in the case study regions and at the Adelaide Fringe Festival.

A workshop will be held at the SE Natural Resources Management Board office on December 14.

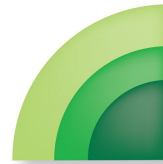
For details call Mr Gray on 8302 7099, fax 8302 0992, or email adam.gray@unisa.edu.au.



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UniSA Centre for Comparative Water Policies and Laws  
Professor Jennifer McKay and researcher Adam Gray in Mount  
Gambier recently.