

SGSL TRIAL SITE SUMMARY #2b



DETERMINING THE PRODUCTIVE POTENTIAL OF SALT LAND PASTURES

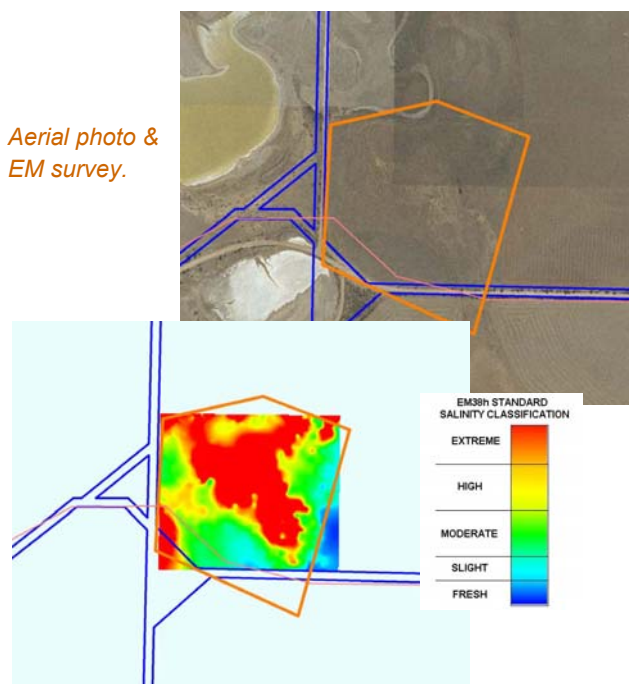
Tumby Bay Agricultural Bureau, Eyre Peninsula

Research Objectives

To determine the productive potential of puccinellia, tall wheat grass, saltbush and lucerne pastures.

To derive best management practices to promote good plant growth and the most appropriate grazing regime to gain maximum productivity.

Aerial photo & EM survey.



The Trial

- Varying topographic relief on the site provides differing salinity conditions suited to the establishment of:
 - lucerne on higher ground,
 - saltbush on saline but relatively drained land,
 - tall wheat grass on lower ground, and
 - puccinellia on low-lying saline scalds.
- Establishing a mix of saltland pastures also provided an opportunity to boost the biodiversity values of neighbouring native vegetation and wetland areas.
- In 2003 puccinellia was sown, however non viable seed resulted in failed establishment.
- Discouraged by this failure and a drought the following year, trial activities have been put on hold.

Fast Facts

Location:

Tumby Bay, Eyre Peninsula

Soil Type:

Sandy loams to loams, over more clayey subsoils

Rainfall:

350mm

Pasture Base:

Puccinellia, tall wheat grass, saltbush and lucerne

Landscape:

Coastal creek flats

Results

- Trial work on this site was beset by a series of bad results.
- In the first phase of establishment non viable puccinellia seed was sown, resulting in failure.
- A drought followed in 2004, and no trial work was undertaken.
- Following these bad results, the landholder became disheartened and no saltland pasture establishment was undertaken in 2005.



Variable salinity conditions on the site should suit a mix of saltland pastures, providing the opportunity to boost both grazing production and biodiversity values.

Where to from here?

- Despite losing interest in 2005, the success of saltland pasture establishment (particularly puccinellia) experienced by nearby landholder Geoff Kroemer (see “Trial Site Summary #2a”) has encouraged the landholder to further develop the site.
- While establishment will occur too late to be fully supported by the current SGSL Project, know-how and contacts obtained through the SGSL Project will be valuable for future site development.
- Germination testing of future seed sources will help save future heartache.

Want to know more?

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