Developing a Hawkesbury-Nepean Animal Ready Community

Utilising BNHCRC research as part of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Risk Management Strategy

HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN VALLEY ANIMAL READY COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP: Madeleine Dignam, INSW [Project Manager]; David King, Elizabeth Gardiner, Katie Moulton, NSW SES; Todd Hinde (Event Manager); Linda Hanlon, Linda Dedovic, GSLLS; Leeanne Raines, NSW DPI; Christine Smith, ABEC; Jenny Bigelow, Warren Hole, Blue ARC; Jackie Carr, HCC; Mel Taylor, Macquarie University/BNHCRC.

OVERVIEW

• The Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley (HNV) is the most flood exposed region in New South Wales.
• Up to 134,000 people live and work on the floodplain (INSW, 2017) and it is home to an estimated 10,000+ horses* (NSW DPI, 2019).
• Large animal owners, especially horse owners, have been identified as a community on the HNV floodplain at increased risk in a flood.
• The HNV Animal Ready Community (HNV-ARC) working group was formed to identify ways to support emergency preparedness and resilience in this at-risk community.
• Using the expertise of team members, including prior community-related utilisation activity and findings from BNHCRC research, the working group developed a range of resources for animal owners in the Hawkesbury-Nepean region.

OPEN DAY – FOCUS ON HORSE CARE AND SAFETY

• The HNV-ARC working group organised a ‘Horse Care and Safety’ Open Day in July 2019 for local horse owners.
• Event focused on the bond horse owners have with their animals.
• Used masterclass sessions on horse training and Large Animal Rescue demonstrations to promote emergency preparedness messaging.
• Further support provided at stands by INSW, NSW SES, NSW RFS, NSW DPI, and GSLLS. Local equine veterinarian from ABEC also attended.
• More than 100 horse owners attended. All received an event bag with emergency preparedness information.
• BNHCRC researchers undertook evaluation. Some quotes from attendees are provided below.

“I think I’m reasonably well prepared, but I hadn’t really considered what if I’m not home – and therefore having my neighbours prepared as well – that’s really quite a significant thing I hadn’t thought about until today.”
“I’ve learnt a lot... it’s made me re-think what my emergency plans were... maybe I wasn’t quite as prepared as I thought.”
“I’d like the suggestion... if you’re up in the highlands and at bushfire risk, get friendly with someone down in the flood zone where it’s less fire risk!”

Hawkesbury Show, 10-12 May 2019

Open Day, 14 July 2019

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