Calici – West Australian Rabbit Control & Awareness
Project 2018-2020

PROJECT CODE: HE1CAL

Project Overview

Contracted by South Coast NRM on behalf of DPIRD

Identify and release the K5 virus on "up to 14" sites in the Wheatbelt Natural Resource management region.

Be a regional point of contact for rabbit control and information dissemination.

Conduct awareness raising events (x2).

Annual rabbit counts at release sites.

Quarterly progress reporting.

GIS/spatial information for project activities.

What this means:

15 land managers releasing K5 over 16 sites and conducting associated rabbit monitoring.

Map 1

How did it go?

- Overall 338 rabbits were counted pre-release and 107 post release a reduction of around 68% which is considerably higher than the national average of 42%.

- Wheatbelt NRM engaged 16 landholders across the Avon River Basin for the release of the virus in 2018 (see Map 1). All were provided with the virus during autumn 2018.

- All landholders have undertaken and completed the online training required to handle and release the virus on their properties.

- 14 landholders released the virus during autumn 2018, one landholder released the virus in late October and the final property owner released the virus in November 2018.

- 13 out of 14 landholders of the autumn release have provided the pre and post (1 month) release monitoring data to this point (see Monitoring data below).

- One landholder has not been able to undertake monitoring due to time constraints but has anecdotally indicated he has not seen a significant change in rabbit numbers after the release.

- Eight landholders indicated that they noticed a marked drop in numbers in the area around the release site. The results of the other 8 sites were highly variable and no noticeable effect has been notice by the landholders at the time of latest contact.

January to March 2019

- Sourced some more vials

- Waiting for rabbit numbers to increase to the point where release is useful

- Identifying more sites

- Building this work into project plans