

# The Rangelands Living Skins Project & “Bokhara Plains”

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# Rangeland Living Skin Project

Gus & Kelly Whyte  
Wyndham Station  
(Wentworth, NSW)

Andrew & Megan Mosely  
Etiwanda  
(Cobar, NSW)

Tony & Meredith Thompson The  
Angle  
(Bourke, NSW)

Graham & Cathy Finlayson  
Bokhara Plains  
(Brewarrina, NSW)



Department of  
Primary Industries



Australian  
National  
University





AIM: Measure and understand productivity, business and environmental impacts of a variety of interventions and practices designed to achieve producer- and context-specific outcomes.

- **Researching** management practices that are outcome-focused on optimising livestock carrying capacity, pasture composition, ground cover and soil carbon.
- **Identifying** practical, cost-effective practices that regenerate the rangelands to support production into the future.
- **Evaluating** new ways to diversify farm income in the rangelands.

- 13 partners
- \$1.69M
- Now – 01 October 2024

- Researchers, producers, educators, carbon project managers...

**Designed in close collaboration with producers to focus on soil, plants, animals and people as the living skin of the rangelands**

Outcome based management

- Measuring
- Monitoring
- Modelling

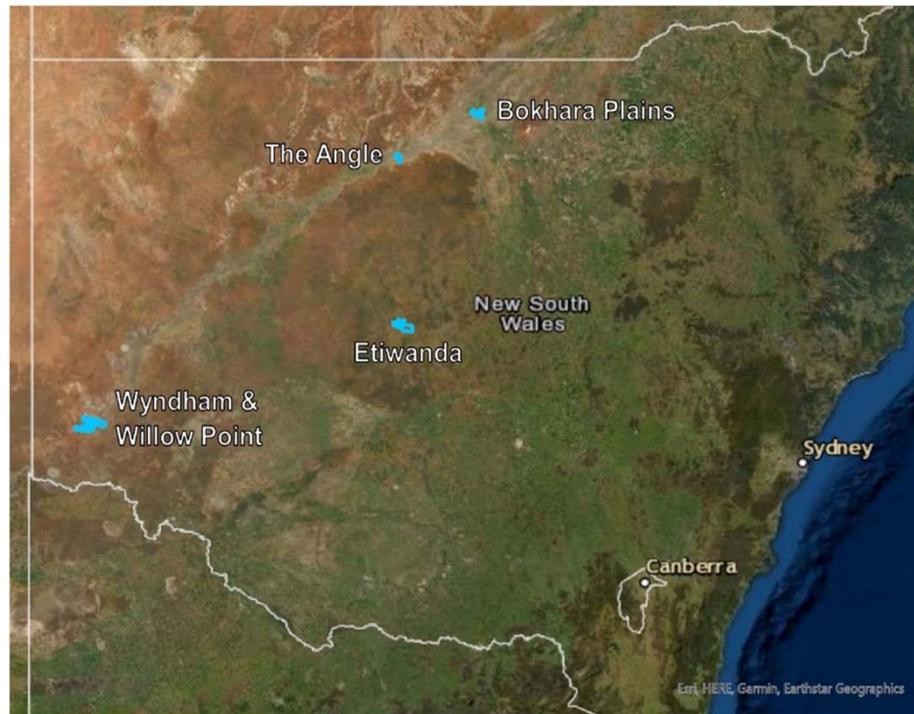
- 4 x PDS
- 20 observers
- Learn & monitor

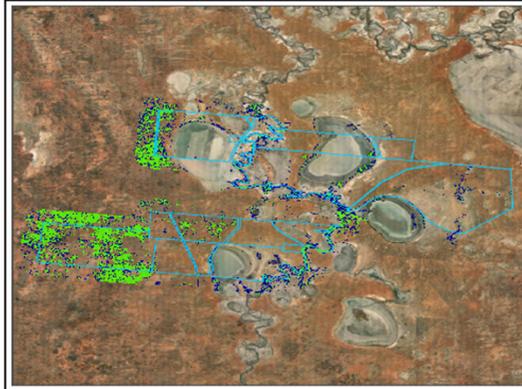
# A wide range of innovative methodologies...

- Grazing Management
- Mixed species plantings
- Introduction of perennials
- Water ponding / spreading
- Biological soil amendments
- Soil Carbon accounting & stocks.

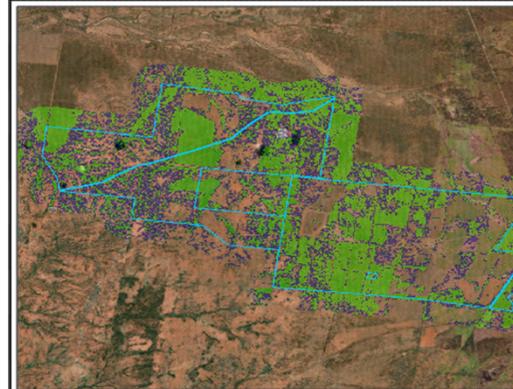


# RLS - Producer Demonstration Sites

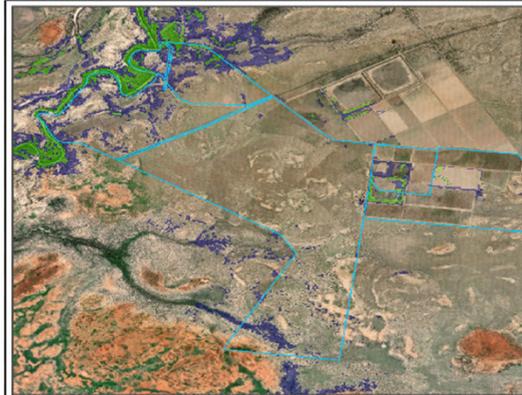




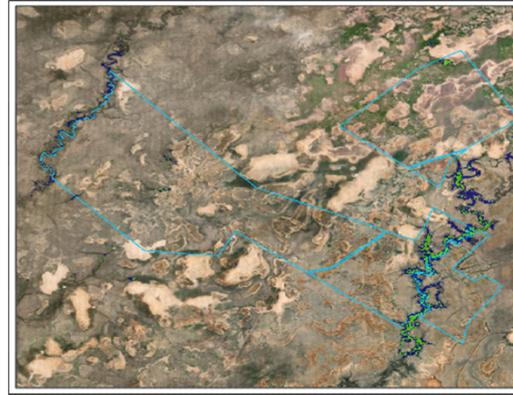
**Wyndham Station and Willow Point woody cover**



**Etiwanda woody cover**



**The Angle woody cover**



**Bokhara Plains woody cover**

## Rangelands Living Skin Major activities for 2021

- Baseline measurements on Producer Demo Sites – soil, vegetation, livestock and business
- Establish carbon estimation areas
- Retrospective analysis using remotely sensed imagery
- Design replicated field trials
- Refine management interventions including: no-kill cropping, multi-species pastures, hard-seeded legumes, ponding, ripping and microbial-rich composts
- Four core producers: monthly RCS coaching, 6mo soil biology coaching
- Grazing Clinics, Soil biology workshops, Field Days
- Engage 20 observers
- Start designing citizen science component
- Project resources: fact sheets, videos and project articles

For more info and to get involved:

<https://www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/Grazing-pasture-management/rangelands-living-skin/>

<https://soilsforlife.org.au/rangelands-living-skin/>



## Get involved in the project and keep track of progress

- **Get involved** in this project and you will get answers yourself through on farm trials and sharing knowledge with other producers and researchers.
- **Observer group (20 ppl):** learn alongside other practitioners and researchers, and test and refine your management goals through training, field days, fact sheets, case studies and networking with neighbours.
- **Keep in touch group:** receive project updates, results, and information on field days and workshops.

**For more info:** project webpage will be on MLA website shortly (EOI form), or contact [susan.orgill@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:susan.orgill@dpi.nsw.gov.au) (M: 0428424566) or [mplumbe@mla.com.au](mailto:mplumbe@mla.com.au)

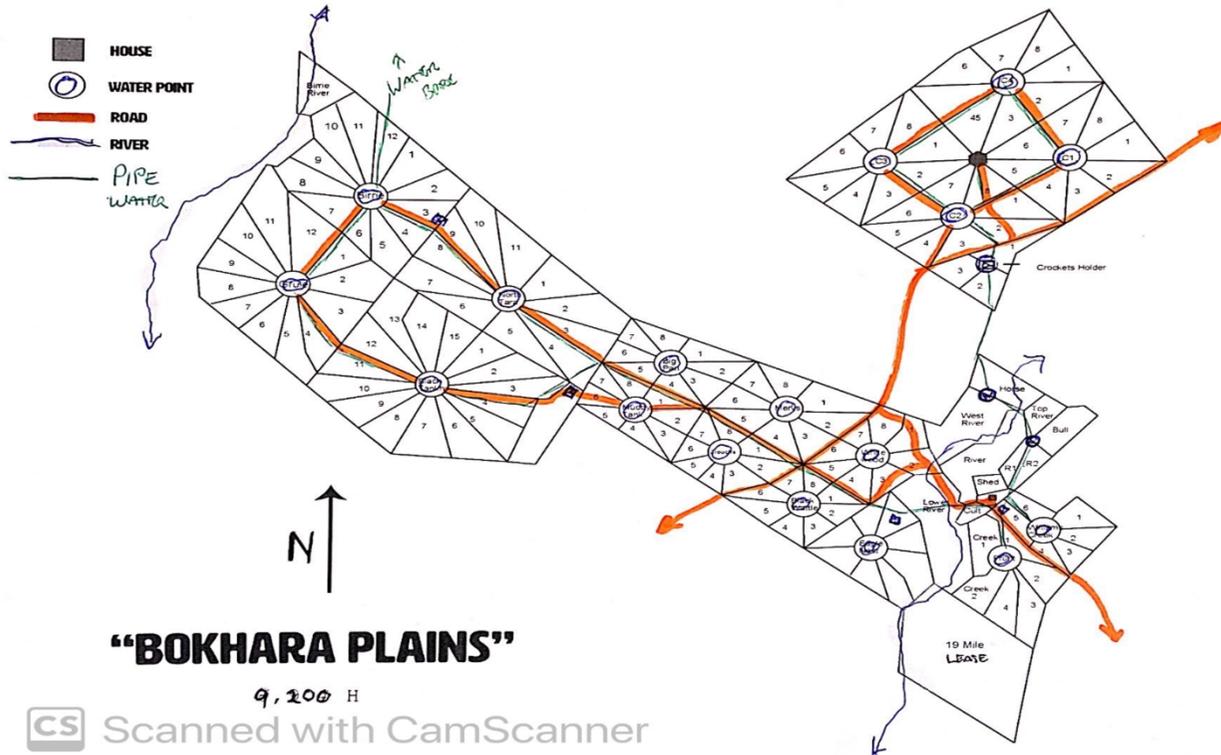
# Producer Focus – “Bokhara Plains”, Brewarrina

## Graham, Cathy & Harriet Finlayson

- Own 9,200 H
- Agist on another 9,000 H
- Cattle Breeding
- Sheep Trading
- Organic Certification
- Intensive Cell Grazing



# “Bokhara Plains” & “Crocketts”



# Why we changed the way we do everything

- Bought Bokhara Plains in 1999.
- The Millennium Drought 2001 – 2007.

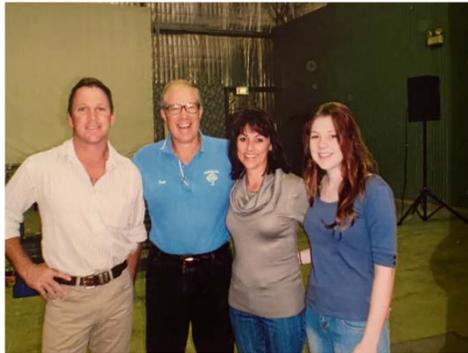


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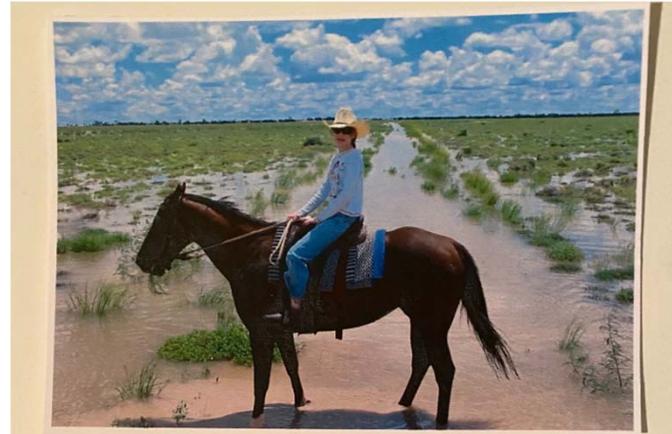
- Frustration with degradation then 'reading a book'.
- RCS and Executive Link.



With Alan Savory and Jody Butterfield 2011

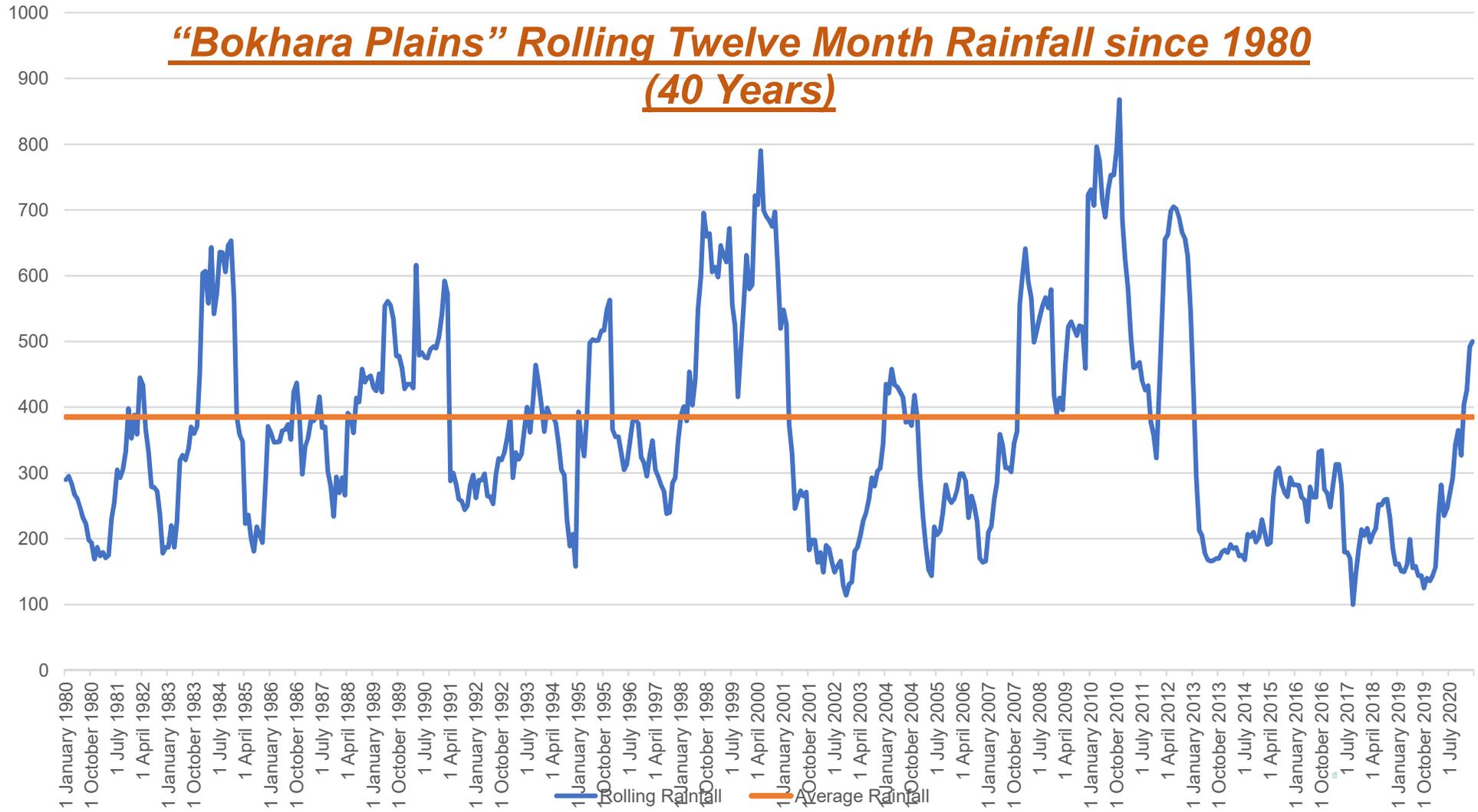


- Finally, some good years and great progress 2008 – 2012.
- Then having half our average for 96 months.





**“Bokhara Plains” Rolling Twelve Month Rainfall since 1980**  
**(40 Years)**





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*Are we hurting or healing with this?*



# *Big Pan 2004 (380mm year)*



*It is not just rain that's needed....*



*Good 'regenerative' management with cattle creates beneficial change...*





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- Stepping into the corporate world to scale up regen ag with SLM.
- Focusing back on the home block again.



# Grass based genetics from Pharo - USA



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# Take home messages

- Improving the Ecology is our biggest free kick in the Rangelands
- We can produce one of the healthiest, most nutrient dense foods on the planet with Red Meat
- With the right genetics, the right management systems and the right vision we can produce healthy food, be profitable, regenerate carbon back into our landscapes, repopulate regional areas & win over the public goodwill.

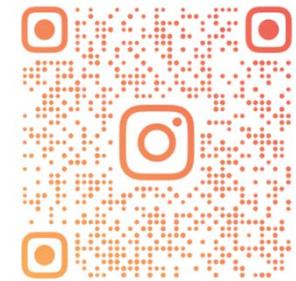
**All at the same time.**



# Tools and resources

1. [Carbon Neutral 2030 program overview](#) and [carbon accounting tool](#).

2. [Producer Demonstration Site](#) program.



[BOKHARA.PLAINS](#)

