

## March 2014

The purpose of this quarterly outlook is to summarise information relevant to the pastoral industry such as current feed supplies, seasonal conditions, the development of drought conditions in central Australia and fire risk.

You can see the entire document and all districts by continuing to scroll through this file. If you are interested in selected sections, you can click on the links below.

[Summary of current situation & trends - all districts – March 2014](#)

[Northern Territory Seasonal Outlook – as at March 2014](#)

Individual District Summaries:

[Darwin District](#)

[Katherine District](#)

[Victoria River District](#)

[Sturt Plateau District](#)

[Roper District](#)

[Gulf District](#)

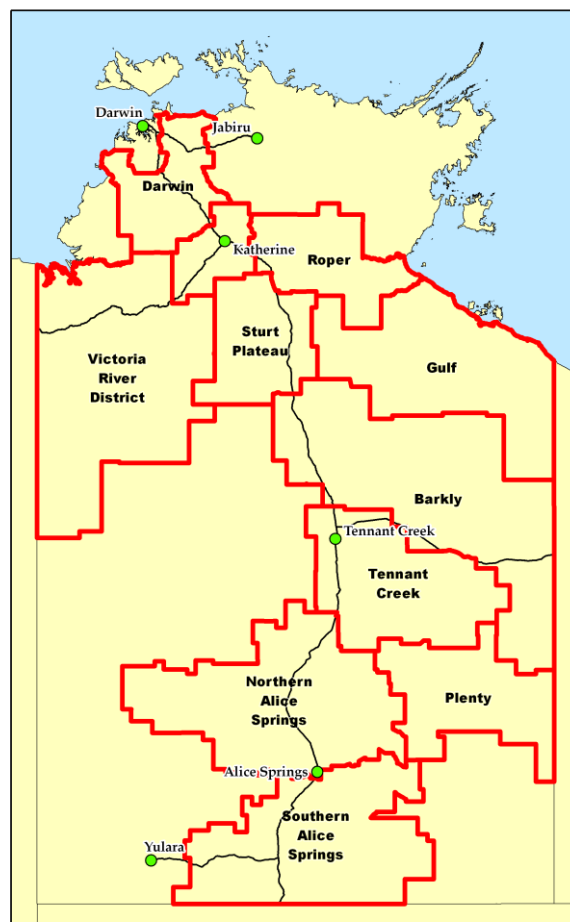
[Barkly District](#)

[Tennant Creek District](#)

[Northern Alice Springs District](#)

[Plenty District](#)

[Southern Alice Springs District](#)



## Summary of current situation & trends - all districts – March 2014

KEY

Green = low risk

Orange = watch

Red = high risk

KEY

↑ = increasing trend

↓ = decreasing trend

↔ = steady

	Northern Territory Pastoral Districts											
Indicator	Darwin	Katherine	VRD	Sturt Plateau	Roper	Gulf	Barkly	Tennant Creek	Northern Alice Springs	Plenty	Southern Alice Springs	Comments
2013/14 total pasture growth	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↓	↓	Arrows indicate trend compared to the long-term median.
Current estimated standing biomass	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↓	↔	Arrows indicate trend since previous quarter.
Current seasonal outlook	↔	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter and taking into account the forecasted model predictions.
Current fire risk	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter.

For further information about this Outlook, please contact Dionne Walsh on 8999 2178 or Chris Materne on 8951 8135

# Northern Territory Seasonal Outlook – as at March 2014

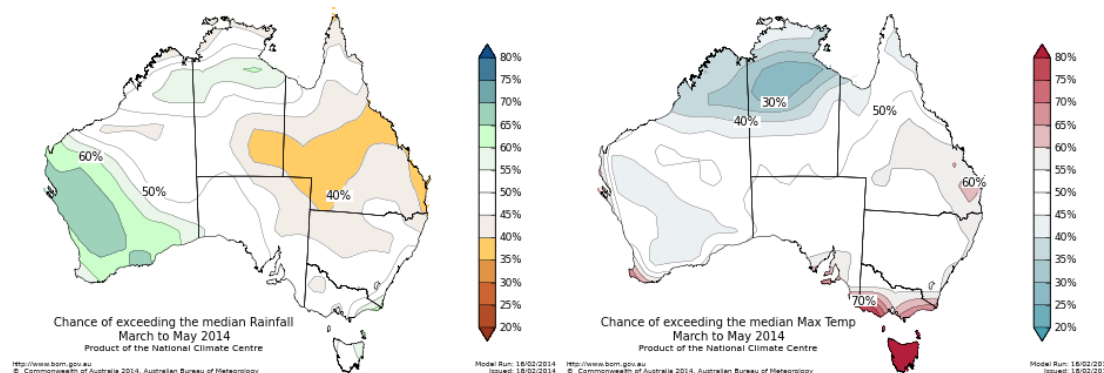
Sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology

[http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/rain\\_ahead.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/rain_ahead.shtml)

The national outlook for March 2014 to May 2014 indicates that:

- **Drier** than normal season is more likely for southeastern NT.
- **Wetter** than normal is more likely for the Katherine, Victoria River, Roper and Gulf districts.
- **Cooler** than normal days and nights more likely over the northern half of the NT.

Climate influences include neutral tropical Pacific, and local sea surface temperature patterns.



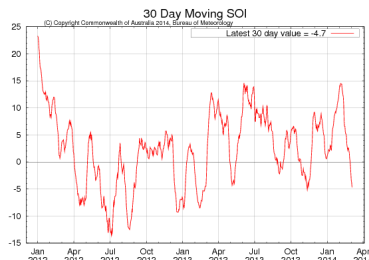
## Seasonal Indicators

### El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/>

Current outlook:

**Neutral**

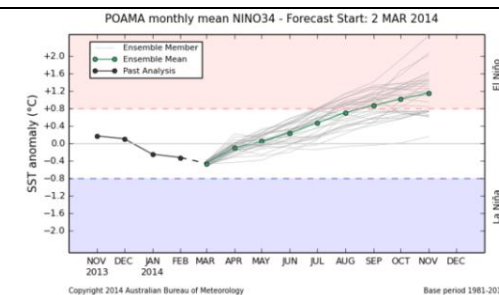


## Comments (sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology)

### ENSO remains neutral, warming expected

The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral. However, warming of the tropical Pacific Ocean is likely in the coming months, with international climate models surveyed by the Bureau showing Pacific Ocean temperatures approaching or exceeding El Niño thresholds in the austral winter. Model outlooks that span autumn tend to have lower skill than outlooks made at other times of the year, and hence should be used cautiously. Recent observations add weight to the model outlooks. The tropical Pacific Ocean subsurface has warmed substantially in recent weeks, which is likely to result in a warming of the ocean surface in the coming months.

The Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) has continued to drop over the past two weeks as was expected.



### Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)

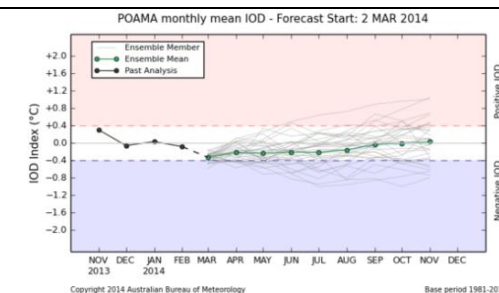
<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/>

Current outlook:

**Neutral**

### IOD remains neutral

The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) typically has little influence on the Australian climate from December to April. Current model outlooks suggest neutral IOD conditions for late autumn into early winter. The risk of a positive IOD event occurring is elevated during El Niño events.



### Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO)

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/tropnote/tropnote.shtml>

Current outlook: **Drier**

The MJO is an eastward moving "pulse" of cloud and rainfall near the equator that typically recurs every 30 to 60 days. It influences the timing, development and strength of the major global monsoon patterns, including northern Australia.

### MJO progresses across the Pacific. (Issued on Tuesday 4 March 2014)

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) remains over the western Pacific Ocean and is moving into the western hemisphere. When the MJO is over the western hemisphere at this time of year it usually increases the risk of tropical cyclone formation in the South Pacific, and suppresses tropical convection activity across the tropical Indian Ocean, the Maritime Continent and northern Australia.

## Risks:

- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season (as at 1 March 2014)

Pasture Growth* (% of district)	Below Average 17%	Average 53%	Above Average 30%
	<1,000kg/ha 0%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 57%	>2,000kg/ha 43%
Area Burnt (% of district)	27% (since 1 July)		

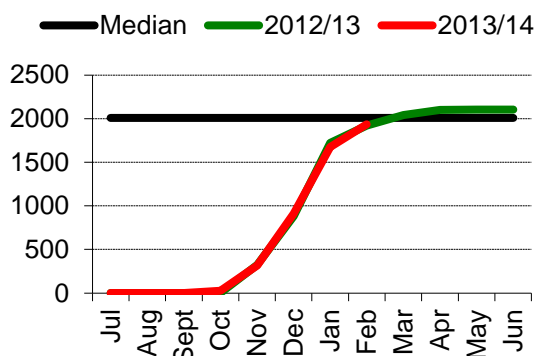


### Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 51%	Average 35%	Above Average 14%
	<1,000kg/ha 0%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 88%	>3,000kg/ha 12%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 0%	Moderate 32%	Low 66%

\* In the Top End, pasture growth tends to be similar year to year regardless of rainfall. This is because pasture growth in the Top End is typically not water-limited and keeps growing until available soil nitrogen is exhausted. For this reason, any interpretation of growth being above or below the median should be treated cautiously because the actual difference between years is relatively small.

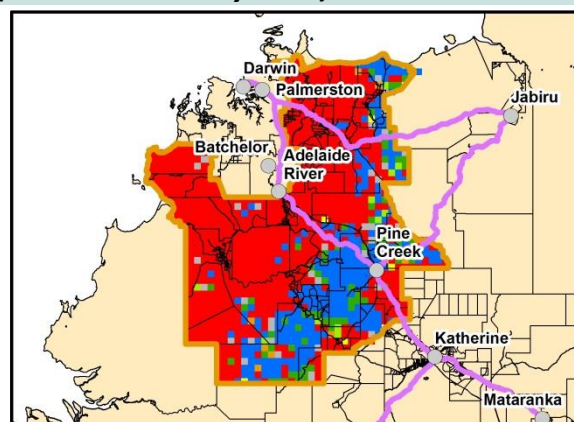
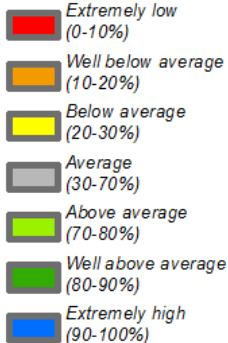
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



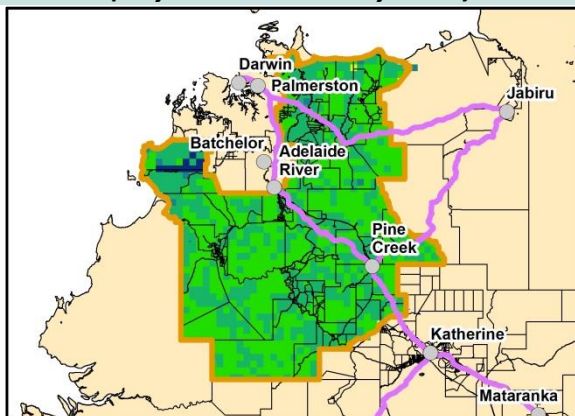
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)

#### Legend

#### Growth Probability

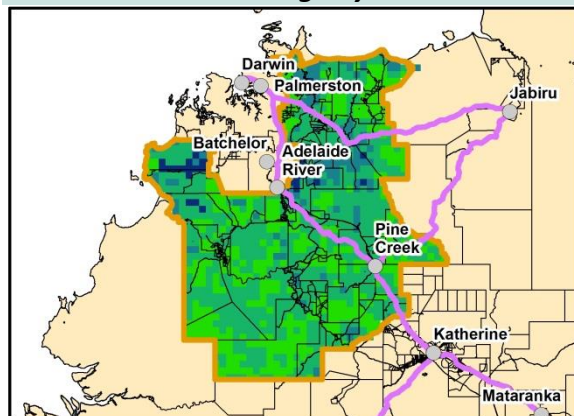
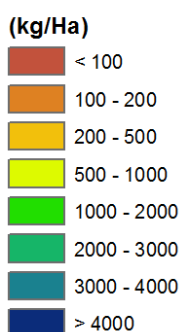


### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter

#### Legend

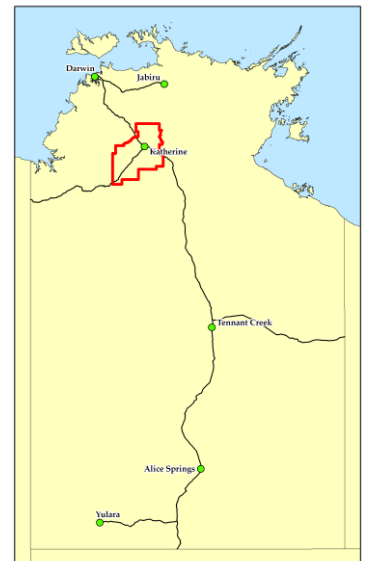


## Risks:

- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season (as at 1 March 2014)

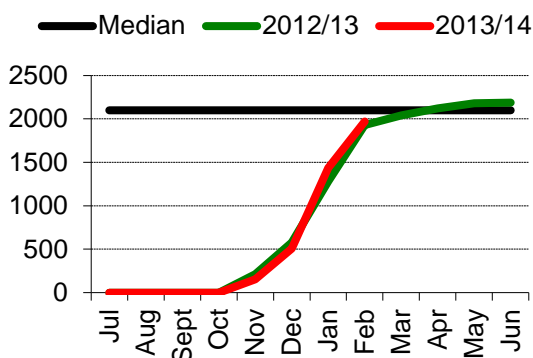
Pasture Growth (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 5%	Average 58%	<b>Above Average</b> 37%
	<1,000kg/ha 4%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 49%	>2,000kg/ha 47%
Area Burnt (% of district)	15% (since 1 July)		



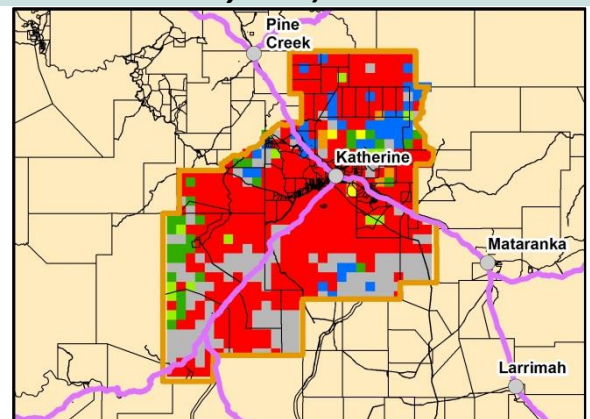
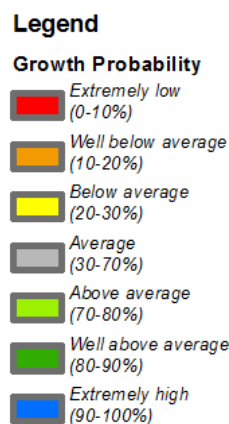
### Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 31%	Average 40%	<b>Above Average</b> 29%
	<1,000kg/ha 0%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 83%	>3,000kg/ha 17%
Fire Risk (% of district)	<b>High</b> 0%	Moderate 82%	<b>Low</b> 18%

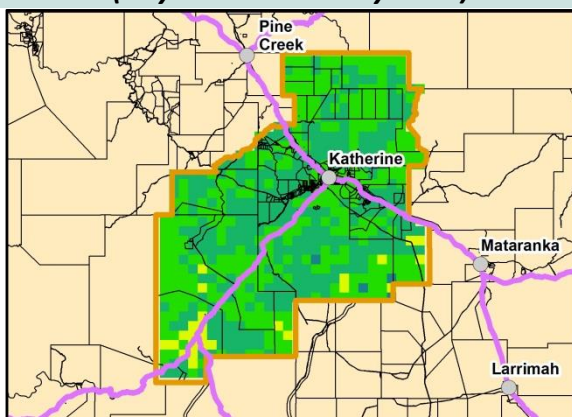
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



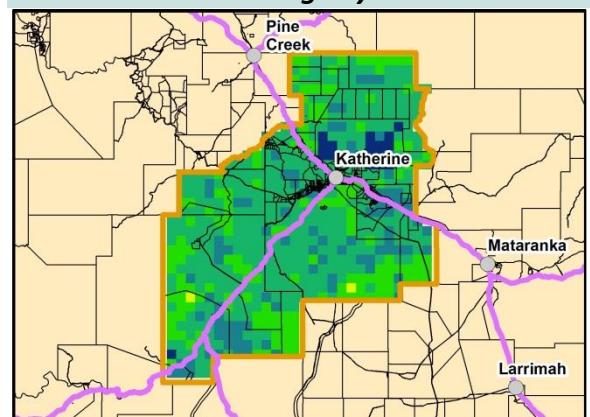
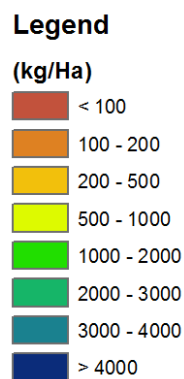
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



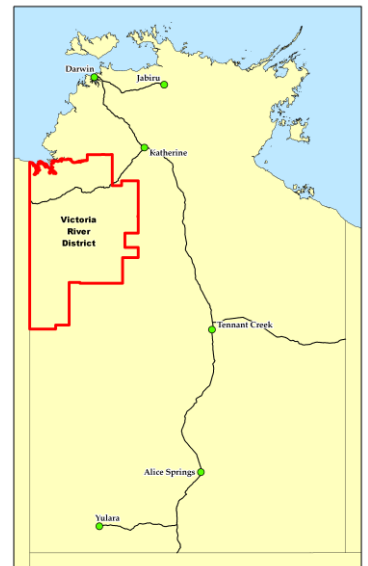


## Risks:

- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season (as at 1 March 2014)

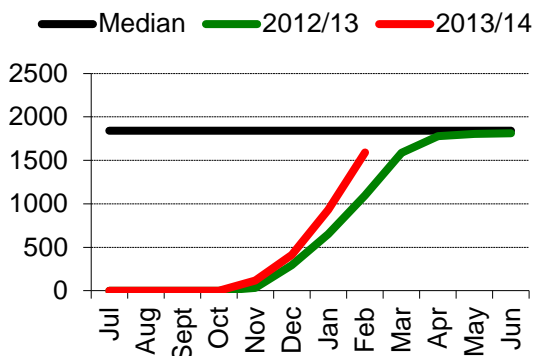
	Below Average 1%	Average 23%	Above Average 77%
Pasture Growth (% of district)	<1,000kg/ha 18%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 47%	>2,000kg/ha 35%
Area Burnt (% of district)	9% (since 1 July)		



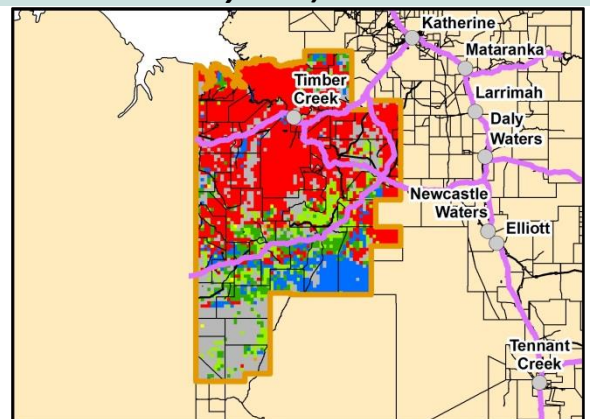
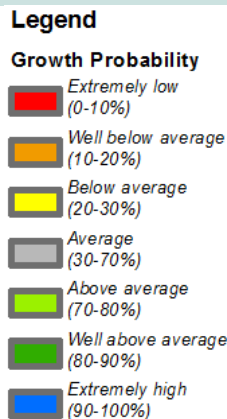
### Currently

	Below Average 24%	Average 38%	Above Average 37%
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	<1,000kg/ha 1%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 64%	>3,000kg/ha 35%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 0%	Moderate 67%	Low 33%

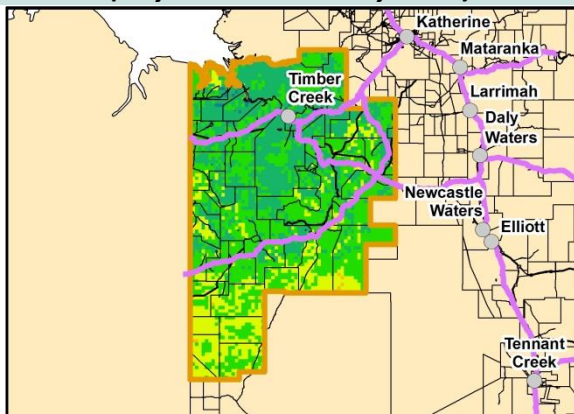
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



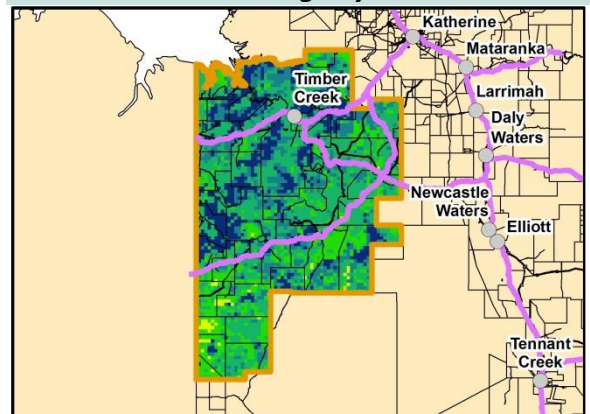
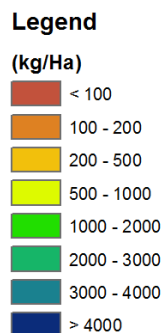
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter

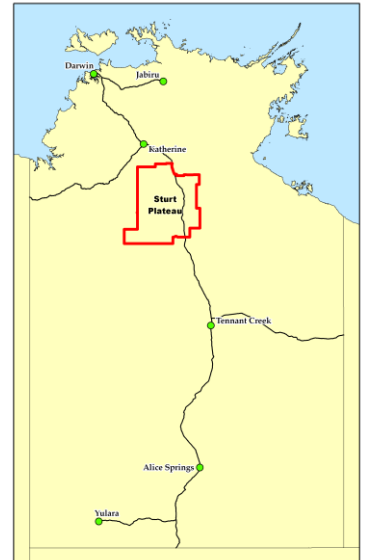


## Risks:

- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season(as at 1 March 2014)

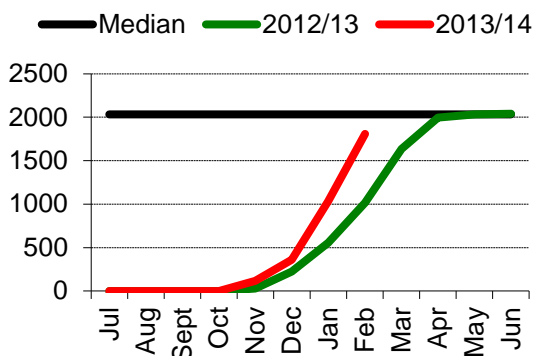
Pasture Growth (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 5%	Average 28%	<b>Above Average</b> 68%
	<1,000kg/ha 11%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 61%	>2,000kg/ha 28%
Area Burnt (% of district)	6% (since 1 July)		



### Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 8%	Average 50%	<b>Above Average</b> 42%
	<1,000kg/ha 4%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 81%	>3,000kg/ha 15%
Fire Risk (% of district)	<b>High</b> 4%	Moderate 88%	<b>Low</b> 8%

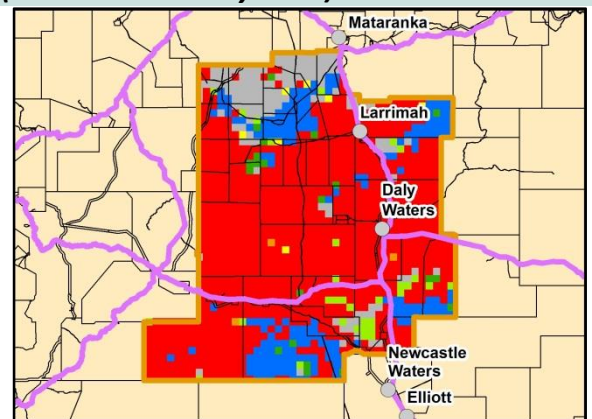
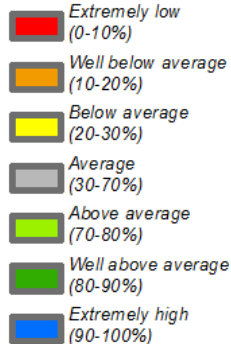
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



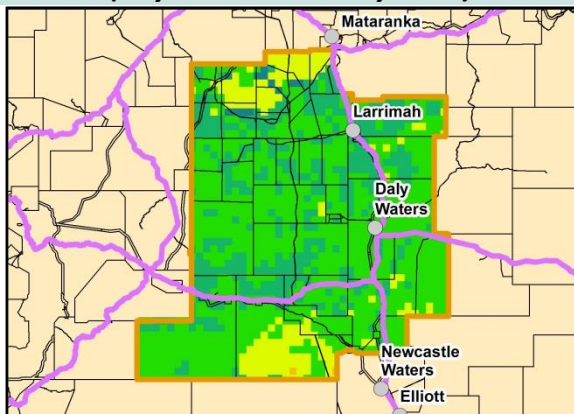
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 –May 2014)

#### Legend

#### Growth Probability

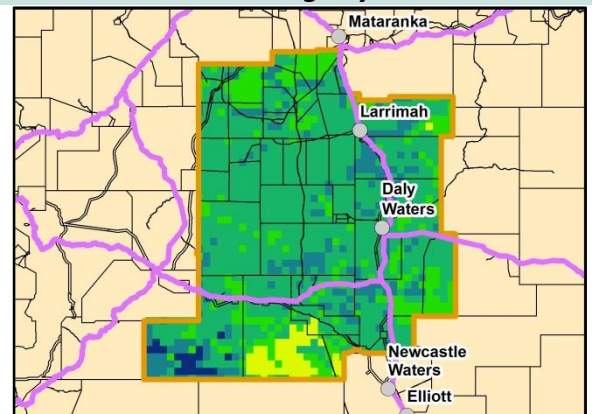


### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter

#### Legend

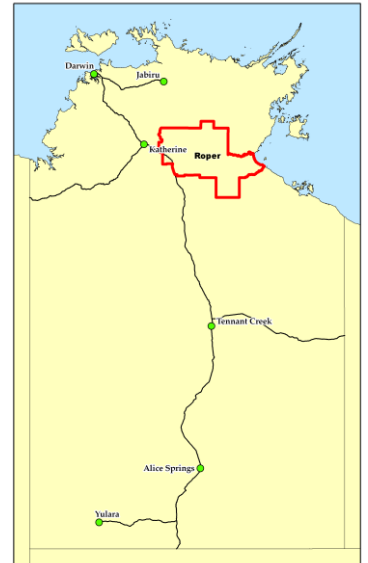


## Risks:

- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season (as at 1 March 2014)

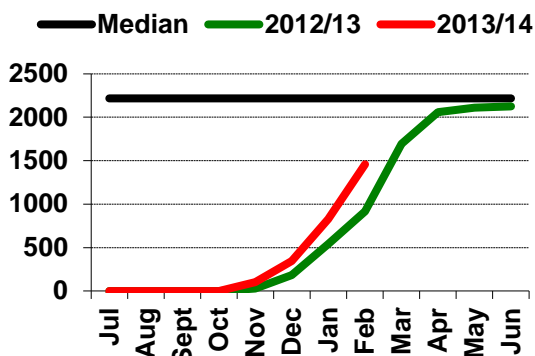
Pasture Growth (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 2%	Average 60%	<b>Above Average</b> 38%
	<1,000kg/ha 16%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 57%	>2,000kg/ha 27%
Area Burnt (% of district)	8% (since 1 July)		



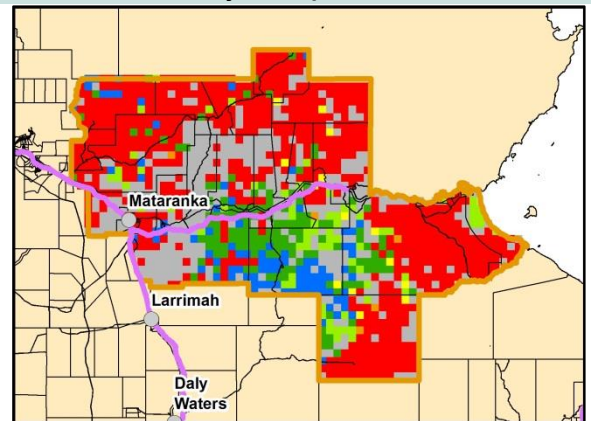
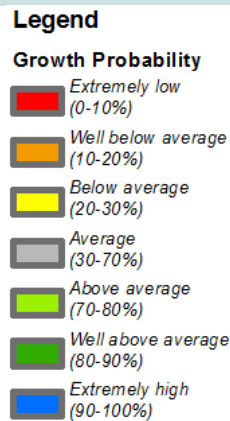
### Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 13%	Average 59%	<b>Above Average</b> 28%
	<1,000kg/ha 0%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 72%	>3,000kg/ha 28%
Fire Risk (% of district)	<b>High</b> 22%	Moderate 75%	<b>Low</b> 3%

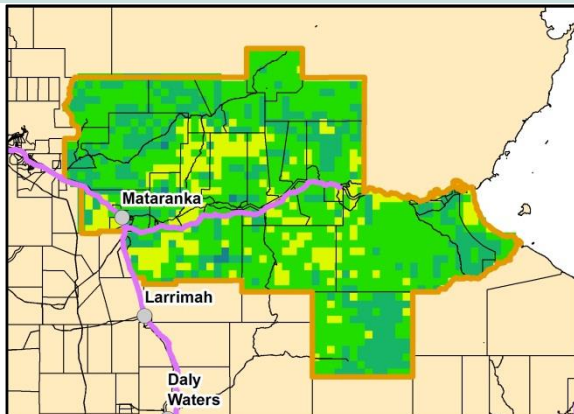
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



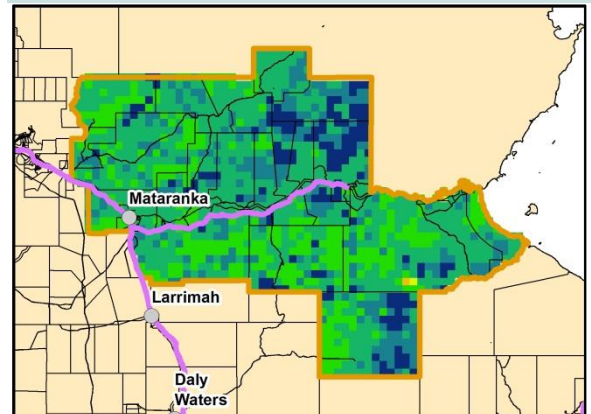
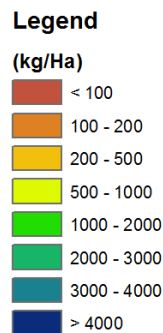
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



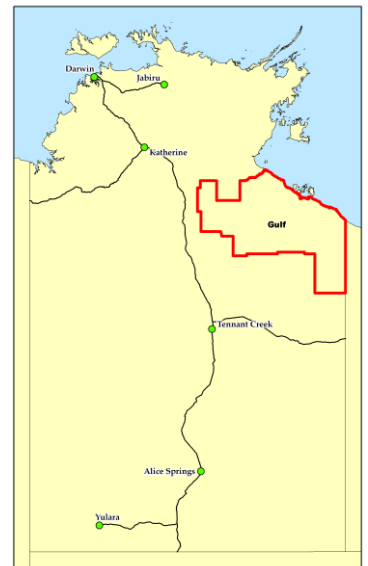


## Risks:

- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season (as at 1 March 2014)

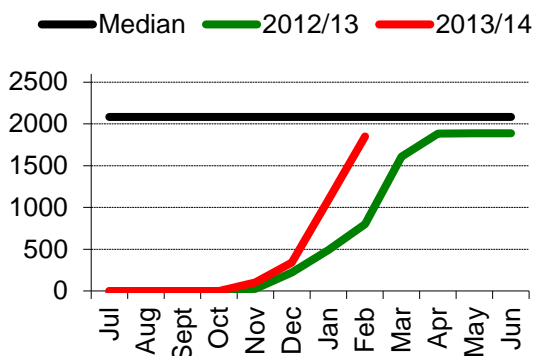
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 1%	Average 24%	Above Average 75%
	<1,000kg/ha 13%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 47%	>2,000kg/ha 39%
Area Burnt (% of district)	6% (since 1 July)		



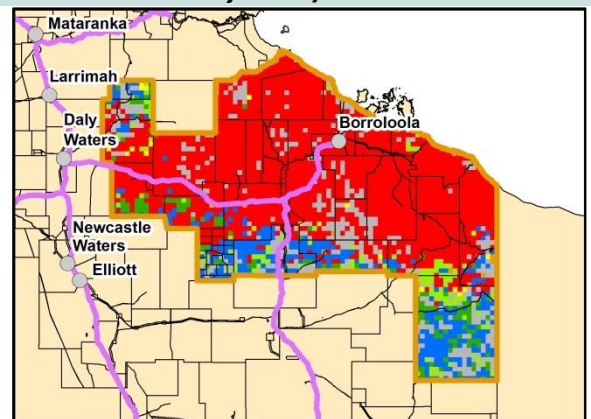
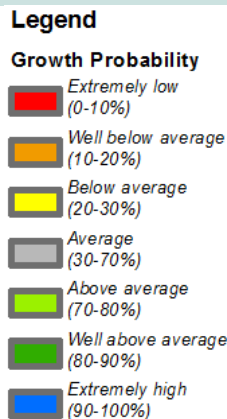
### Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 9%	Average 45%	Above Average 46%
	<1,000kg/ha 2%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 63%	>3,000kg/ha 35%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 19%	Moderate 78%	Low 3%

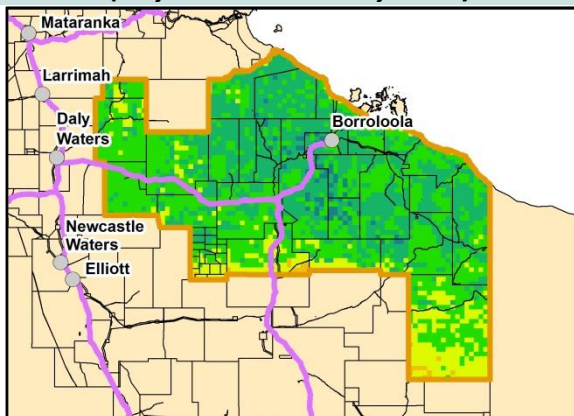
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



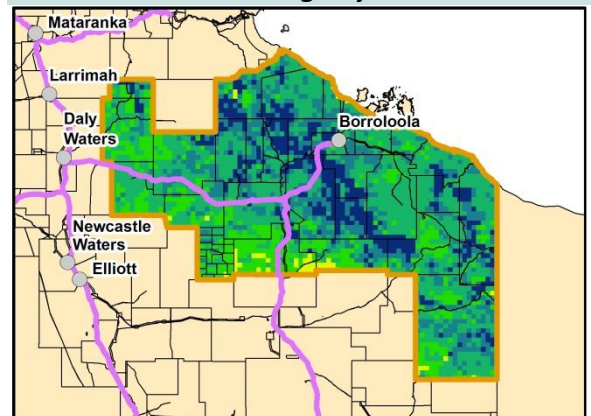
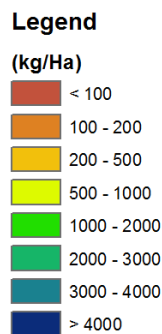
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



## Risks:

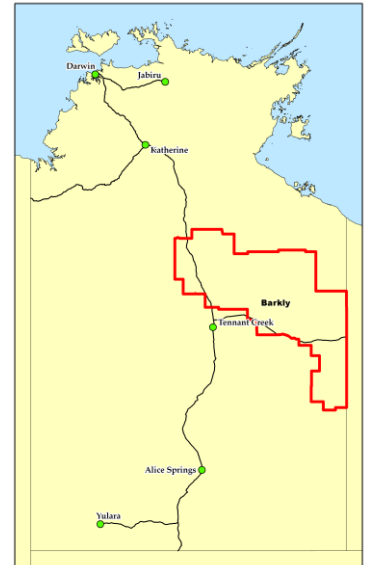
- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season (as at 1 March 2014)

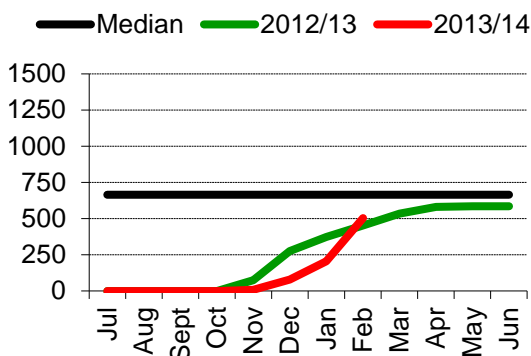
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 5%	Average 65%	Above Average 30%
	<500kg/ha 49%	>500 & <1,000kg/ha 42%	>1,000kg/ha 9%
Area Burnt (% of district)	1% (since 1 July)		

### Currently

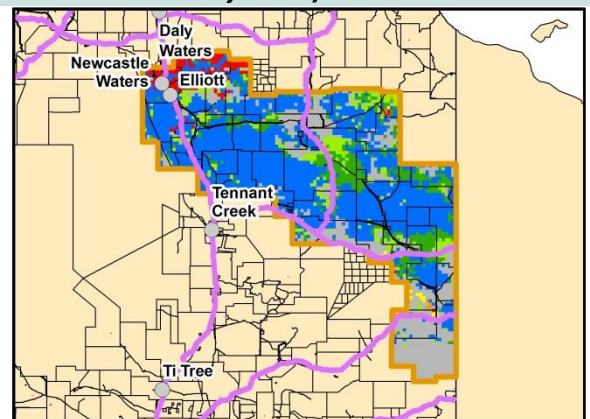
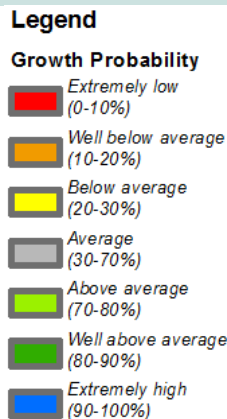
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 10%	Average 67%	Above Average 23%
	<500kg/ha 22%	>500 & <1,000kg/ha 38%	>1,000kg/ha 41%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 45%	Moderate 51%	Low 4%



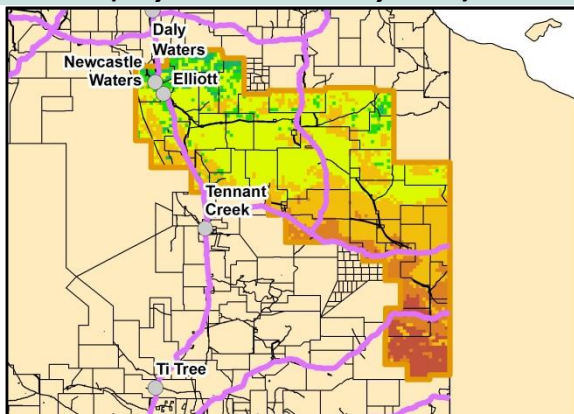
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



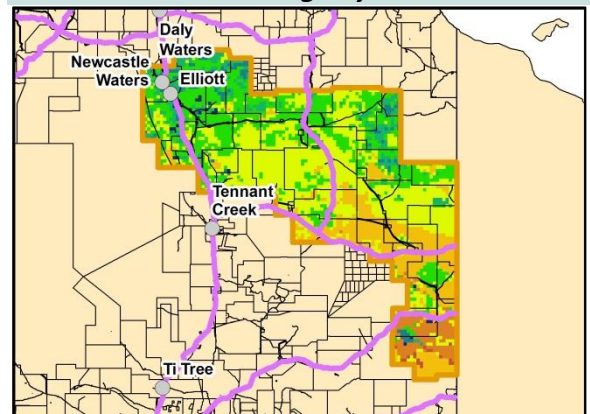
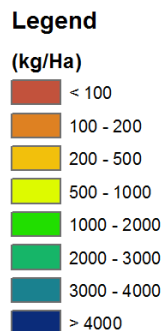
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter

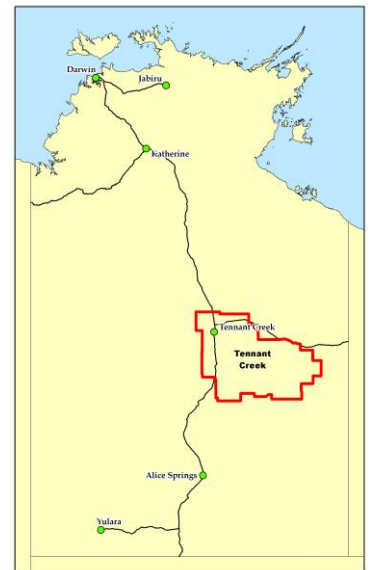


## Risks:

- None to report

### 2013/14 Wet Season (as at 1 March 2014)

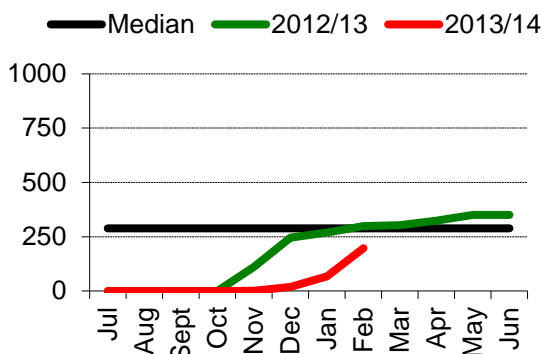
Pasture Growth (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 10%	Average 76%	<b>Above Average</b> 14%
	<250kg/ha 65%	>250 & <500kg/ha 24%	>500kg/ha 10%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1% (since 1 July)		



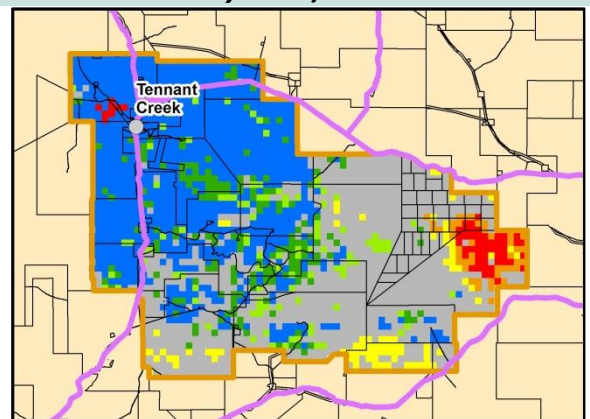
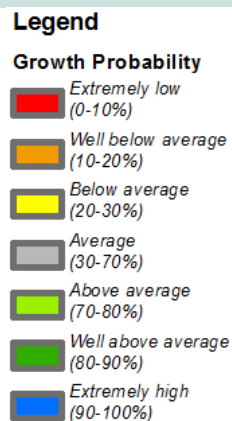
### Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 23%	Average 67%	<b>Above Average</b> 10%
	<500kg/ha 20%	>500 & <1,000kg/ha 34%	>1,000kg/ha 46%
Fire Risk (% of district)	<b>High</b> 84%	Moderate 15%	<b>Low</b> 1%

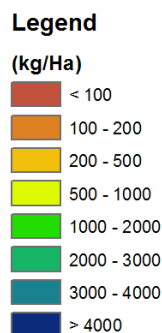
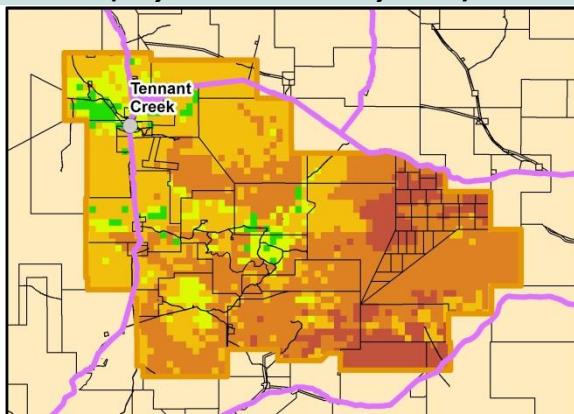
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



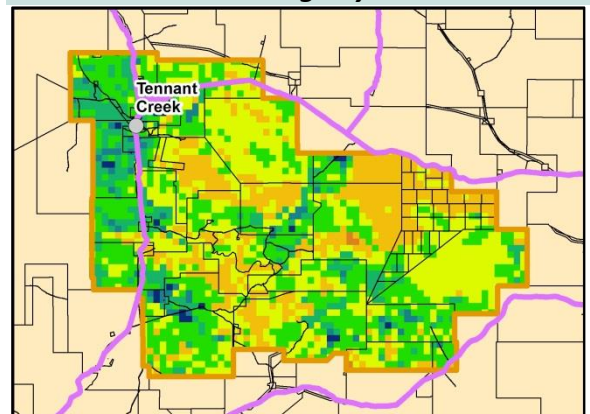
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter





## Risks:

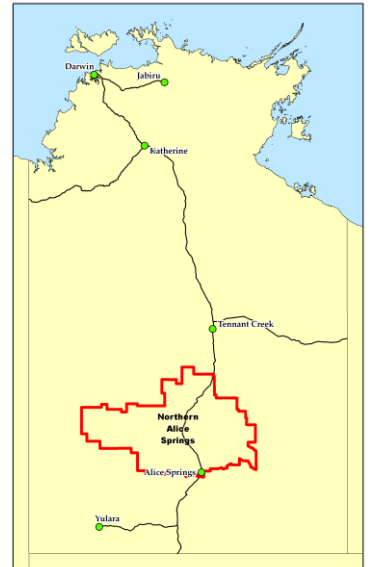
- As at 1 March, 89% of the district had high fire risk

### 2013/14 Season (as at 1 March 2014)

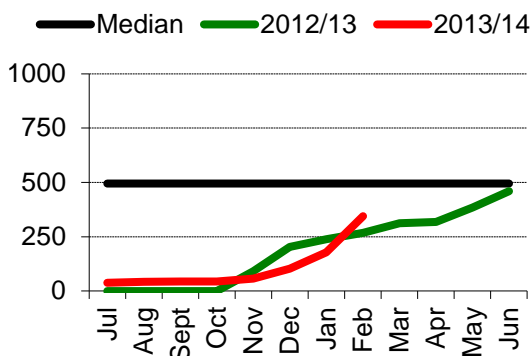
	Below Average 3%	Average 75%	Above Average 22%
Pasture Growth (% of district)	<250kg/ha 32%	>250 & <500kg/ha 38%	>500kg/ha 30%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1% (since 1 July)		

### Currently

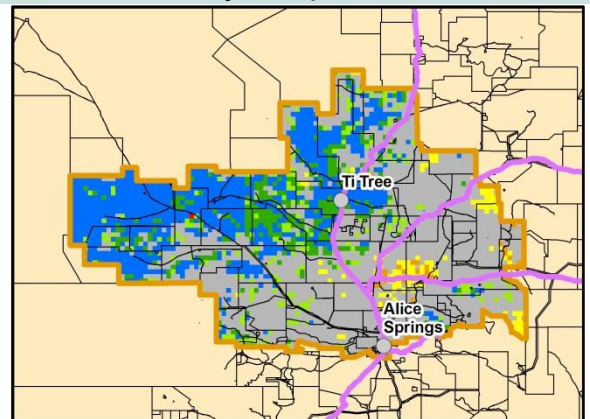
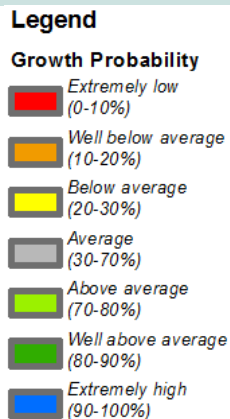
	Below Average 8%	Average 82%	Above Average 10%
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	<250kg/ha 2%	>250 & <1,000kg/ha 45%	>1,000kg/ha 54%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 89%	Moderate 11%	Low 0%



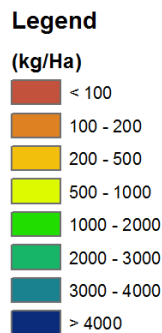
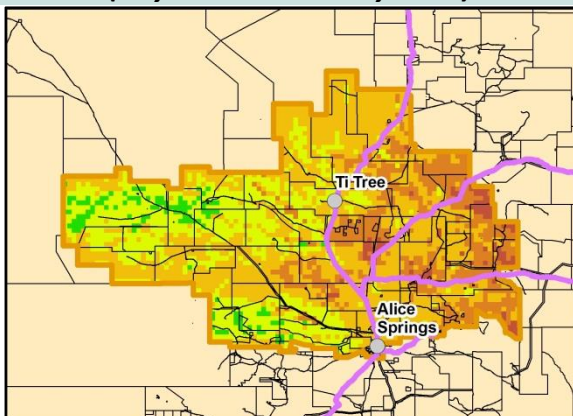
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



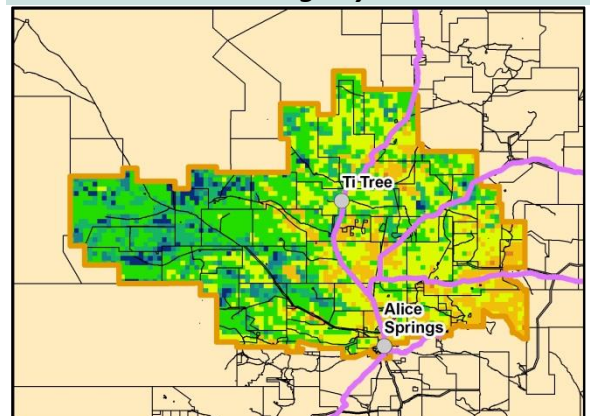
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter





## Risks:

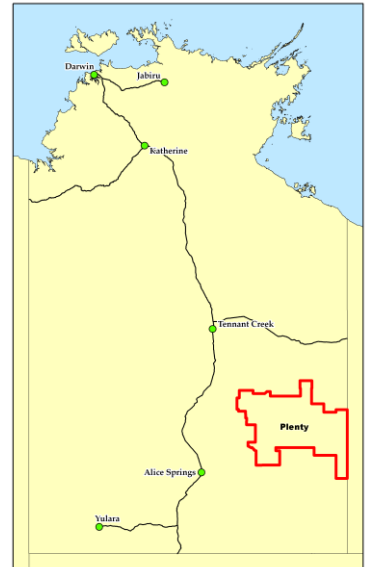
- The district is experiencing a poor season. As at 1 March, 60% of the district has had below average pasture growth and 29% of the district has below average total standing dry matter

### 2013/14 Season (as at 1 March 2014)

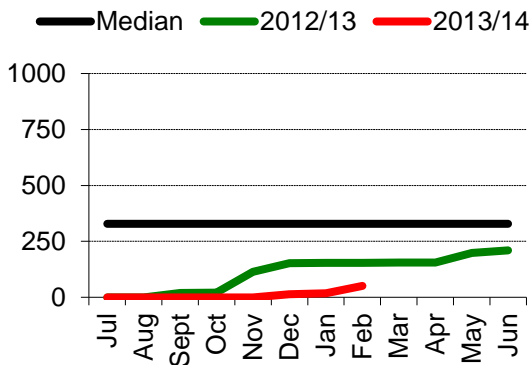
	Below Average	Average	Above Average
Pasture Growth (% of district)	60%	40%	0%
	<250kg/ha 99%	>250 & <500kg/ha 1%	>500kg/ha 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	0% (since 1 July)		

### Currently

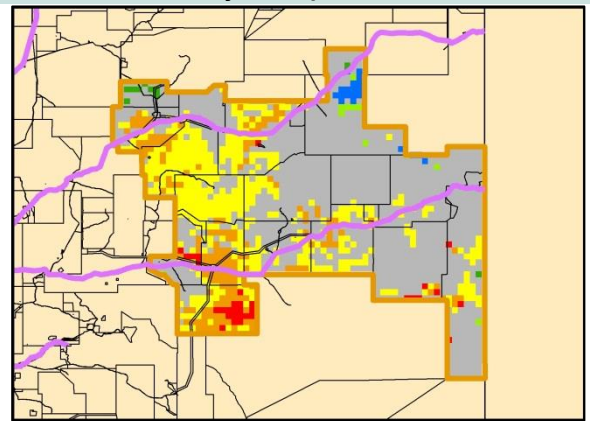
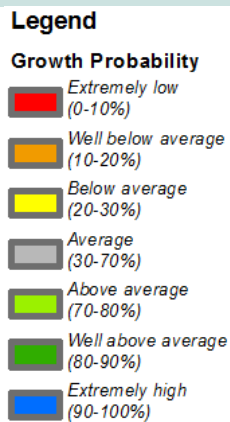
	Below Average	Average	Above Average
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	29%	61%	10%
	<250kg/ha 15%	>250 & <1,000kg/ha 65%	>1,000kg/ha 20%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 55%	Moderate 43%	Low 1%



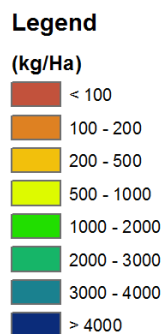
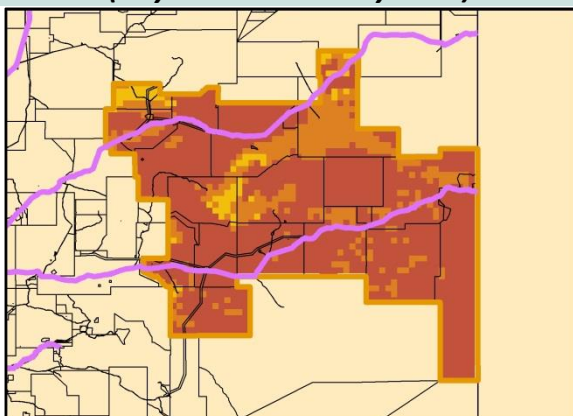
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



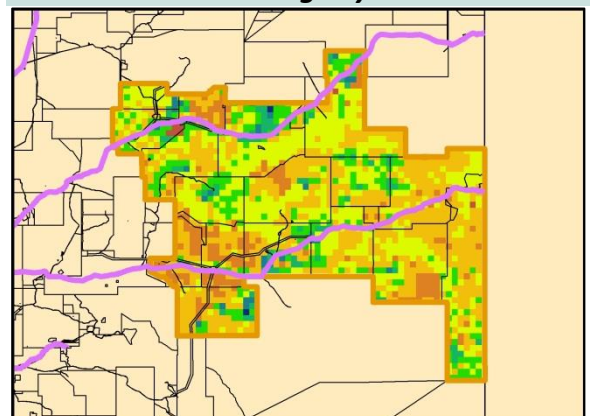
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



## Risks:

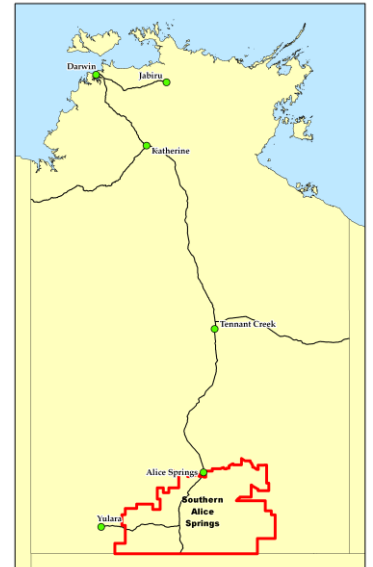
- The district is experiencing a poor season. As at 1 March, 61% of the district has had below average pasture growth.

### 2013/14 Season (as at 1 March 2014)

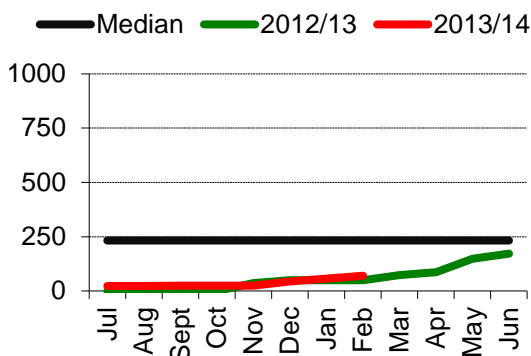
Pasture Growth (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 61%	Average 39%	<b>Above Average</b> >1%
	<250kg/ha 89%	>250 & <500kg/ha 10%	>500kg/ha 2%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1% (since 1 July)		

### Currently

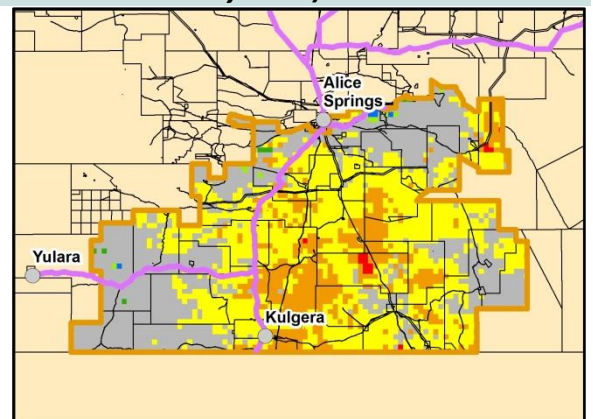
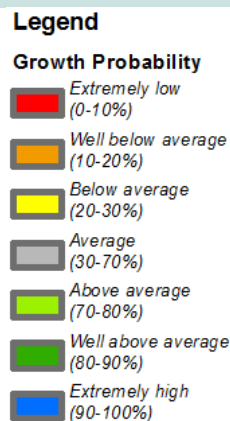
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	<b>Below Average</b> 18%	Average 64%	<b>Above Average</b> 19%
	<250kg/ha 6%	>250 & <1,000kg/ha 63%	>1,000kg/ha 31%
Fire Risk (% of district)	<b>High</b> 74%	Moderate 26%	<b>Low</b> 0%



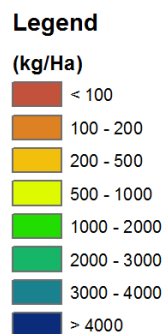
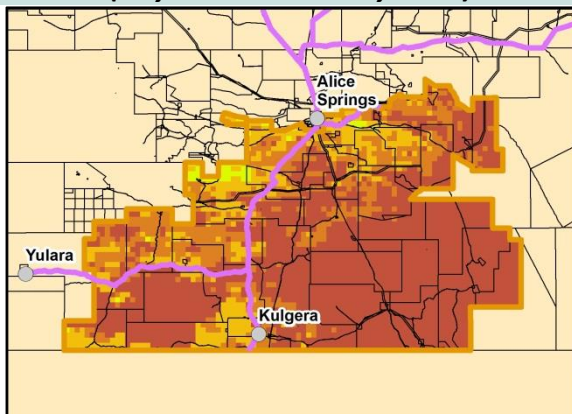
### Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



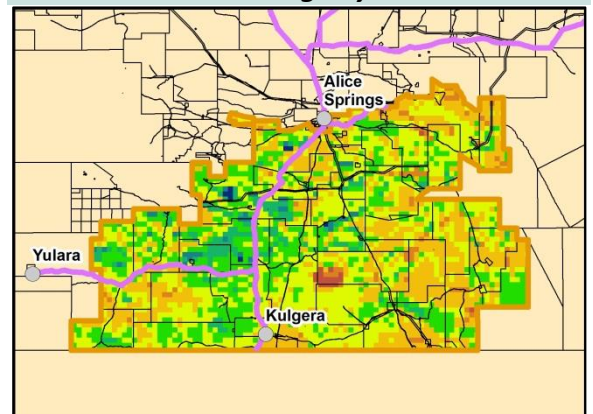
### Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (March 2014 – May 2014)



### Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 – February 2014)



### Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



## Pasture Information

The pasture and fire risk information in this document is derived from AussieGRASS. AussieGRASS is a model that simulates pasture growth and standing biomass using climate data, vegetation mapping, fire history and regional estimates of grazing pressure. The model can be used to track simulated pasture growth and total standing pasture biomass at the landscape scale.

Note that the model does not use stocking rate data for individual properties. Where stock numbers are significantly higher or lower than typical for a district, model estimates of total standing dry matter may be erroneous.

## Disclaimer

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