

CASE STUDY: Triggering trap technology in the Rangelands



One of the challenges in the effort to manage wild dogs in the Goldfields Nullarbor region are the vast distances and the countless days pastoralists and doggers alike spend checking traps to see if they have been set off and/or still actively set.

This challenge set the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association (GNRBA) on a path to investigate ways to make wild dog trapping more effective and time efficient, therefore more cost effective. It was hoped that it would also address any animal welfare issues that present where wild dogs are caught in traps.

The Ezy2C GPS Satellite Foot Hold Trap Alert/Monitoring System was identified as a potential option, so GNRBA applied for funds through the WA Wild Dog Action Plan Research and Development Fund to trial this technology, in the hope that it would help advance the wild dog trapping system currently in use across the WA Rangelands.

Ezy2C provides GPS tracking and reporting solutions, and this technology has been coupled with wild dog traps (see photo) with the intention to have a signal sent to a mobile device when a trap with a sensor unit, is set off. This alerts the person monitoring the trap, who can then visit the trap, dispose of the wild dog, reset or relocate the trap and sensor.



With the dogger or pastoralist receiving a signal wherever they happen to be (when a signal is present) when a trap is activated (see photo), it is anticipated that there would be a marked reduction in the amount of travel and time involved in checking traps to see if there is a dog trapped or the trap has been set off and no longer active. This would also result in less time where the wild dog is caught in the trap before it is found and, if necessary, destroyed, which has positive animal welfare benefits.

This project has now finished and, as with many technologies being adapted to different environments, there have been some difficulties in making sure the Ezy2C Satellite Foot Hold Alert/Monitoring System was able to work reliably in the rugged terrain where dust, moisture and animal predation is common place.

Pastoralists and doggers alike can see the huge value of such a technology so they continue working with the developers to overcome some of the vagaries presented through the project. GNRBA will continue this work to seek a positive outcome for the technology for the benefit for all individuals and organisations managing wild dog predation in WA

This work was possible with funding through the Western Australian Wild Dog Action Plan and through Australian Government's Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper, the Australian Government's plan for stronger farmers and a stronger economy.