

Craig's vital mission for the mulgalands

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Evening Star Tourist Park owner Craig Alison was honoured with the South West NRM 2016 Mulga Awards tourism award for natural resource management.

BUILDING dialogue and an understanding of the mulgalands landscapes between urban travellers and rural stakeholders is a key priority for Evening Star Tourist Park owner Craig Alison.

Located outside Charleville on the Adavale Road, Evening Star guests have the opportunity to learn about how the various ecosystems in South West Queensland work, from soil types to vegetation, native species, pests, livestock management and the importance of water and water infrastructure.

Through designated workshops, seminars and on-site tours, Mr Alison demonstrates to city dwellers how mulga growth shapes South West Queensland landscapes as a native, weed and livestock fodder.

Mr Alison's mission, to educate travelers about the sustainable management of natural resources, was first recognised when he received the South West NRM 2016 Mulga Awards tourism award for natural resource management.

His message to tourists summarises the economic, environmental and social needs of rural communities to maintain themselves, starting in the paddock with sustainable agriculture.

He said the tours provided an important link of understanding between urban and rural dwellers.

“The demarcation of understanding between rural and urban residents about how we manage the landscape has been slowly growing over the past 20 years and is now at a point where understanding and appreciation of mulgalands management techniques is a wide chasm,” Mr Alison said.

“There used to be a lot of information sharing when we all had family members living in both the city and bush.

“That doesn’t happen anymore. There are lot of misconceptions based on visual stimulus of tourists driving through our landscapes and mass media in the city which relates back to lack of social connectivity.”

Located outside Charleville on the Adavale Road, Evening Star guests have the opportunity to learn about the varied ecosystems in South West Queensland.

At the end of their stay at the Evening Start Tourist Park, Mr Alison hands out extra reading materials to tourists so they can continue their outback adventure and better relate to whatever landscape they come across.

“It is like a memory bomb of knowledge that they can reference to whilst travelling or relate to when they are discussing the landscape with other visitors,” he said.

Since accepting the South West NRM Mulga Award two years ago, Mr Alison said he continues to feel passionate about the dialogue he builds with tourists when they visit the region.

“I feel almost environmentally content articulating the environment we live in,” Mr Alison said.

When tourists ask how they can help struggling rural communities, Mr Alison’s answer is simple.

“You are already helping by visiting our region because tourism dollars have beneficial flow on effects to all manner of businesses in our small rural community from the local butcher, to the coffee shop and mechanical service centres, for example.”

“The fact is they are out here and learning about us and where we call home.”