



Drawing a line in the sand

On Gunbower Island, the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is making a stand. The CMA aims to protect the Murray Darling Basin's freshwater turtles from fox attack.

This place has been identified as turtle breeding territory, so it's here that they are trying to find ways to stop foxes attacking turtles.

In partnership with public and private land managers, the North Central CMA is coordinating fox control efforts through a monitoring and baiting program. This initiative is supported by funding from the Australian Government.

North Central CMA Project Manager Adrian Martins believes that while there are a range of threats to the survival of turtles in the region, foxes are the most serious.

"Sandy north-facing banks and nearby lagoons are prime turtle nest-

ing habitat, and unfortunately, we're not the only ones who have worked this out. Having acquired a taste for turtles and their eggs, foxes are continually raiding the nurseries."

"Foxes are a leading cause of turtle decline in all three species within the region. They dig up nests to feast on the eggs, and attack female turtles as they emerge from waterways to nest."

The CMA is determined to do whatever they can to protect the turtles, including fox baiting, turtle monitoring and weed control. The CMA's work includes mapping turtle nests, analysing remote sensor camera imagery from bait stations, and working to apply the results from their turtle monitoring and baiting program.

"Partnerships built on direct action and conducting the scientific research is the key, and for the turtles' sake, it's a fight we're all up for," said Mr. Martins.