Do you know that Alice Springs is subject to the directions of the Declaration of Area of Erosion Hazard? When managing a rural block in Central Australia, special attention should be given to conserving the soil.

THE DECLARATION

During the late 1960's and the early 1970's Alice Springs experienced many dust problems. These were serious enough to cause the closure of the airport. In response to the problem, a dust control project was initiated with land rehabilitation works implemented over 200km² around the Alice Springs airport, including the rural areas (See Picture 1).

The rural areas and adjacent land are highly susceptible to severe erosion due to soil types and land use. In the early 1980's Soil Conservation Officers recommended that all rural and surrounding land be declared an erosion hazard area, in order to avoid recreating the severe dust problems of previous decades. In pursuance of section 17(1) of the *Soil Conservation and Land Utilization Act*, the Declaration of Area of Erosion Hazard was declared on 18 June 1984 with the support of rural block owners gained through public meetings (See Picture 2).
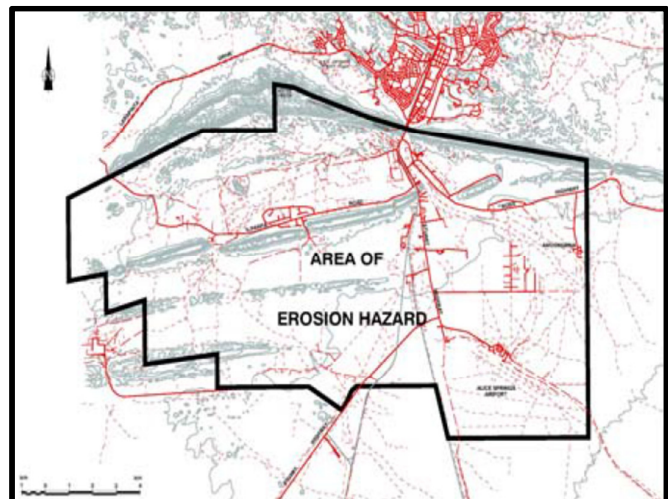
WHAT THE DECLARATION MEANS TO YOU

The Declaration requires rural block owners in the area to maintain ground cover on their respective holdings. The ground cover must be sufficient to control dust and could include grasses, small shrubs, forbs and plant litter. Trees and shrubs reduce wind speed and help reduce blowing dust.

Under the declaration the Department of Land Resource Management (DLRM) has the authority to supervise reclamation of damaged areas and to advise on land use practices within the area so as to avoid erosion.

Picture 1: Dust Control Project

Picture 2: Declared Erosion Hazard

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