

Want to enjoy a rural lifestyle?

The *Living and Working in Rural Areas* handbook is based on the experiences of the NSW North Coast rural community. These experiences provide ideas and practices that:

- help you achieve a healthy life and productive rural environment
- avoid difficulties and disputes with your neighbours.

The handbook contains practical suggestions, resources and checklists to support community harmony in our rural areas, build positive neighbourly values, and create and maintain vibrant, healthy and productive rural communities.

If you want to know more, download a copy of the handbook from the NSW DPI website or contact NSW DPI Wollongbar. Details are on the back of this brochure.

Further information

Living and Working in Rural Areas

A handbook for managing land use conflict issues on the NSW North Coast

Download from the web at

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/pubs/north-coast-land-use>

Copies of the handbook are also available from:

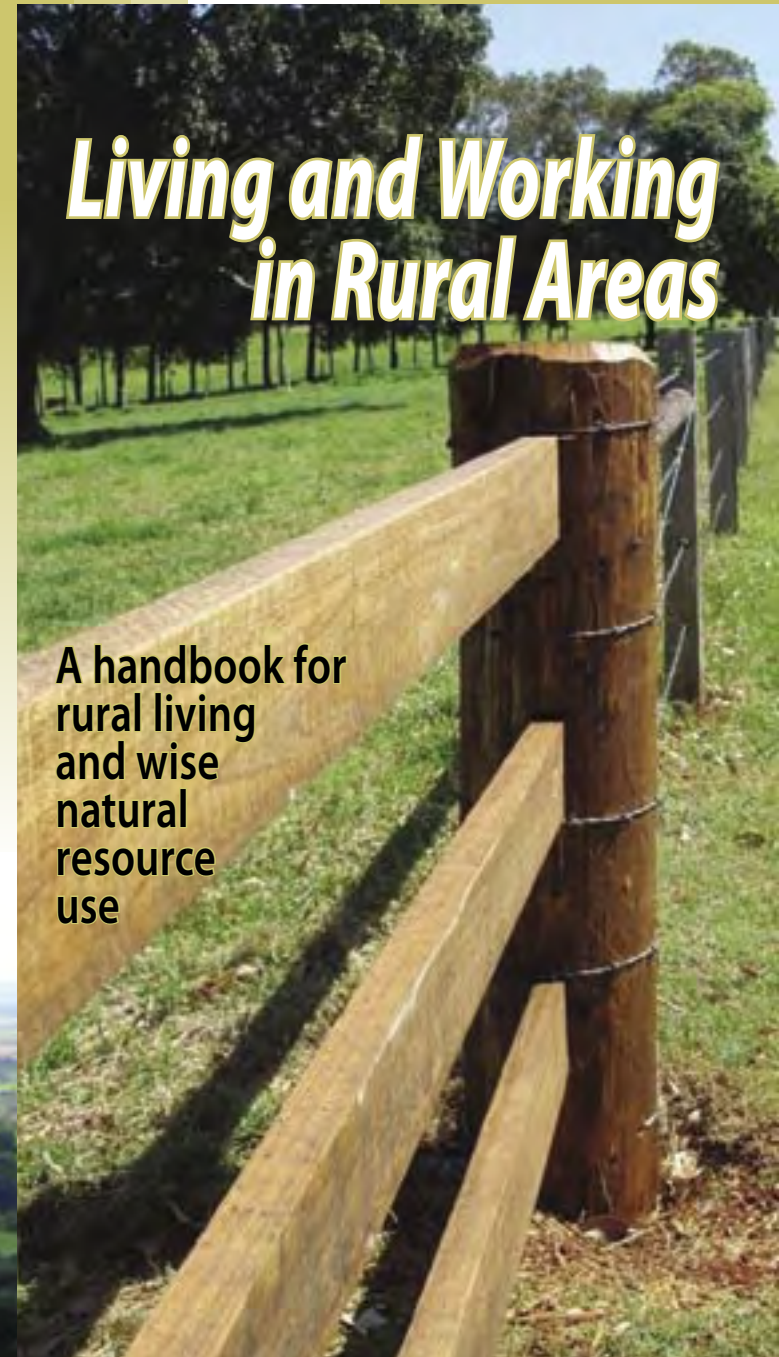
NSW Department of Primary Industries
1243 Bruxner Highway
Wollongbar NSW 2477

Tel: (02) 6626 1200

E-mail: wollongbar.office@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Living and Working in Rural Areas

**A handbook for
rural living
and wise
natural
resource
use**



If I'm moving to a rural area what do I need to know?

When you move to rural areas, especially for the first time, you need to do your homework! There are lots of issues to consider before making a rural property purchase or moving to a rural area.

Chapter 2 of the *Living and Working in Rural Areas* handbook contains two important checklists to help you do your homework and make informed decisions:

- a rural property wish list
- a rural property inspection checklist.

What types of questions might I ask myself?

- What kind of rural property am I looking for and why?
- What are my personal goals, needs and wants?
- How far from key services and a town centre do I want to be?
- How much time and money can I put into the property?
- What are the neighbouring land uses? Do they worry me at all?

What does 'duty of care' mean for me as a rural landholder?

As a landholder, it is important for you to be able to carry out your rural activities in line with best practice standards and relevant laws and regulations. This is your 'duty of care'. How do you find out what all this means?

Chapter 3 of the *Living and Working in Rural Areas* handbook helps you to understand what your duty of care obligations are by:

- guiding you through duty-of-care and good neighbour issues
- providing a checklist for avoiding land use disputes at the property level
- listing recommended resources and contact details.

How can I avoid neighbour disputes in rural areas?

Many issues arise in rural areas, and sometimes they result in disputes between neighbours. There are also many regulations that address these issues – and everyone has a different attitude to life.

It is normal to be overwhelmed by the complexity of regulations and expectations!

Chapter 4 of the *Living and Working in Rural Areas* handbook helps you take control of these issues by tackling them one by one, and pointing you towards the relevant law or organisation for more information.

For every issue, the handbook advises you to:

- do your homework – become and stay informed
- be part of the community – engage with your neighbours
- don't rely on rumour – seek expert assistance or advice
- have realistic expectations – aim for workable solutions.

There are so many rules and laws: What is really important?

Land use laws, policies and plans affect all our everyday activities in rural areas. They are designed to enhance rural living and sustainable land use. All landholders and land managers need to know which laws affect their activities, and how to work within the law.

Chapters 5 and 6 of the *Living and Working in Rural Areas* handbook summarise the legal and planning system to help you understand what laws, policies and plans affect you.

The two important systems of regulation you need to be aware of are:

- **The planning system and local environment plans** – This is the key planning tool used by local Councils to guide rural land use and development. You need to know and understand how it works. **Chapter 5** helps you do this.
- **Development control and buffers** – These are widely used planning tools designed to minimise the effects of one land use on a neighbouring one. **Chapter 6** describes development control plans and how buffer zones can be used. Easy-to-use tables provide examples of minimum recommended buffers for different land use combinations.

Is communication important?

To resolve issues and solve problems, we need to talk and listen. Good communication fosters cooperation and collaboration, and encourages good relationships between people by creating workable solutions to issues.

Chapter 7 of the *Living and Working in Rural Areas* handbook highlights how effective communication between people is crucial in resolving disputes.

The handbook provides advice on how to be an effective communicator and best solve problems.

- Develop relations with neighbours early on and before disputes arise.
- Don't fly off the handle – think, talk, and then act.
- Is an issue getting to you? Talk to someone you can trust about your concerns.
- Focus on really important things, not the minor or occasional issues.
- Open your mind. Acknowledge others' views and opinions.
- Need help and assistance? Reach out and ask for help.