Barkers Vale

Stopping mass movement

Landholders	Ross and Samantha Muller
Map reference	3
Land use	Grazing and bushland
Soil Erosion Solutions Grant	$8,947 (trees, fencing materials, earthworks, pipe, gravel, cattle troughs)
Landholder's in-kind contribution	$8,954 (labour, trees, earthworks, gravel, herbicide)

The site

This farm is on the footslopes of the Border Ranges. Topsoil from almost a hectare of land had slumped, creating an unstable surface and exposing subsoil clays. Underground water had saturated and weakened a layer of subsoil. The topsoil, vegetation and saturated subsoil had then slid along a less permeable subsoil layer. The underground water needed to be intercepted above the slumped area, and diverted safely downhill.

Excavating: spring tapper digging

Slip before works

The benefits

- Land slumping has halted.
- Problem groundwater has now become a useful source of clean, high quality stockwater.
- Bare land has been revegetated.

The project

- The site was fenced off from cattle access.
- The underground water was intercepted using a spring tapper and the water diverted to new cattle troughs.
- The slip area was revegetated with deep-rooted native trees.
- Rehabilitation of landslips requires technical expertise. In this case Department of Natural Resources staff designed the spring tapper and water diversion system.

The spring tapper before burial: tapper and geotextile

Landholders' experience

What was the best thing about this project?

"The funding enabled us to do it one go instead of trying to do bits and pieces over time. The reality is that if we didn't do it in one hit, then each time it rained any work completed would have been washed away with the slip. The other great part is that so many of our neighbours have been over to see 'what was going on' and this has allowed us to share what we have done with others. It's great to be able to give back too."

What was the most difficult aspect of the project?

"The rain - every time the excavator was due to begin works it rained (a lot). The ground here turns to mud and so it is impossible to access the slip site. I really thought it wasn't ever going to happen! Funny though, because we finally got a break in the weather, did the excavation works, and when we began planting we had a week of solid rain that the plants were delighted to receive - so for once we were grateful for it!"