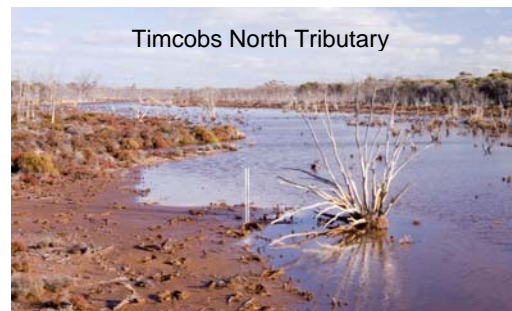
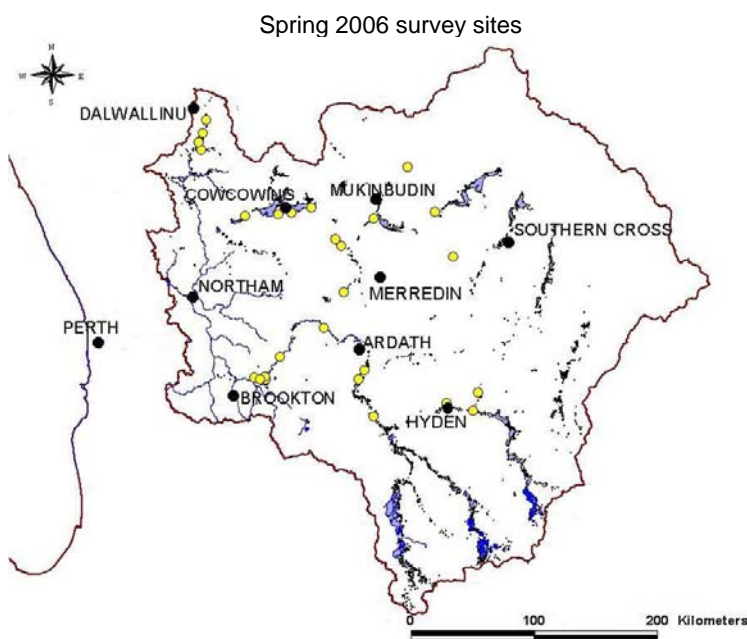


ND001 Avon Baseline Wetlands survey 2006

On behalf of the Avon Catchment Council (ACC) and as part of the Avon Natural Diversity Alliance (ANDA), the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is 'baselining' the natural diversity of the Avon catchment. This involves the collation of existing data and knowledge about terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity within the catchment, with the aim of identifying important species and ecological communities, including wetlands.

The aquatic component of Baseline aims to classify all wetlands within the Avon catchment by conservation value. The project has a large field component, which began in 2006 with a spring survey of 29 wetlands throughout the Avon catchment. A range of water quality and biological variables were sampled in spring 2006 including basic water chemistry, metals, nutrients, microalgae, aquatic invertebrates, aquatic plants and waterbirds.

The 2006 wetland survey formed part of the data collection process for the development of a new wetland classification system tailored to the Avon catchment, and also helped to increase knowledge about the effects of acidification on Avon catchment wetlands. The 2006 survey was undertaken in collaboration with the Department of Water's Engineering Evaluation Initiative (EEI) study of drainage water acidification through targeted fieldwork at EEI sites and a few additional wetlands. The pH of these sites ranged from acidic to neutral. All 29 wetlands surveyed occurred in cleared catchments and their conservation values were generally medium to low.



Over the coming months, the new wetland classification system will be further developed and refined, and a broader wetland survey, targeting both high and low value sites, is planned for spring 2007. Riparian vegetation for the 2006 and 2007 sites will be surveyed in spring 2007.

For further information please contact the Department of Environment and Conservation on (08) 9405 5100, or the Avon Catchment Council on (08) 9690 2250.



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