

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT UNIT

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CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES:

ACROSS GOVERNMENT AGENCY GROUPS

Volunteering Secretariat – Valuing Volunteers – A Shared Vision

Volunteer Policy Guidelines for Government Agencies

Volunteer Insurance and Public Liability

Ministry of Justice

Keep Australia Beautiful Council

Fauna Rehabilitation Foundation Board

Volunteering WA

Aust Association of National Park Support Groups (Parks

Volunteering Network, Australia)

VOLUNTEER REWARD SYSTEM:

The volunteer reward system is working extremely well. With over 2700 volunteers contributing 355,000 hours to work programs throughout the State, with the Department and volunteers alike are reaping the rewards.

After Auditors have checked the figures for the Annual Report, letters will be sent out to all volunteers providing contributions to departmental projects.

Those contributing:

1-49 hours received a general letter thanking them from the Executive Director

50-499 hours received a letter with volunteer pass thanking them from the Executive Director

500+ hours received a letter with volunteer pass and Landscape subscription thanking them from the Executive Director.

REVIEW OF RATIS VOLUNTEER DATABASE:

The volunteer database was reviewed approximately 12-18 months ago and deleted 2500 registrations after contacting each individual. Currently, there are 6,400 volunteers on the database.

VOLUNTEER WEBSITE:

Development of this website has commenced, although not completed. The site is listed under 'About employment opportunities, volunteer program, and us'.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AND OUTSTANDING SERVICE FUNCTION:

The annual function celebrating the Volunteer of the Year and Outstanding Service awards is held on the 3rd December (International Volunteer day and in WA Thank a Volunteer day) at 10:30am at Matilda Bay Restaurant for 100 volunteers, Departmental staff and the Minister of the Environment.

INTRODUCTORY VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT COURSE FOR STAFF:

This course is held annually for CALM staff involved with volunteers. The 2004 course has been postponed until April, May 2005

PROJECT NOTIFICATIONS:

Please ensure all new volunteer projects have been through a consultative process with staff in the relevant workplace and the Project Notification CLM 206 has all representatives sign off the notification. The project notification must have Union representatives sign off, if there is not a representative in the workplace, please ensure all staff has been advised and their comments recorded and noted on the project notification form. Project start dates must reflect the 5 weeks for the approval process to be completed.

It is a legal requirement in the awards for this process to take place.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WORK GROUPS:

The Department and Department of Justice has a MOU in place where prisoners support this Agency by building and maintaining infrastructure such as the Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Bike Trail and in other areas such as the Pilbara and the Kimberley. It would be appreciated if the projects in which the Department of Justice prisoners were involved could be acknowledged in the annual report through the same process (quarterly returns) as the Community Involvement program volunteers.

This would enable the Department to send out Certificates of Appreciation acknowledging their contribution.

EXTERNAL EVENTS:

The 4WD and Adventure Show, the Royal Show, along with training days and open days have been attended to promote and showcase the community involvement program and support the Department's volunteers.

The Royal Show Landcare display has 100 plus volunteers this year helping as project supervisors, at the campground host display, Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre with wildlife and the Bush Ranger cadets playing a major role in the display.

POLICY

A policy allowing paid staff to volunteer during work time will be researched and developed and a draft will be distributed for comment.

A review of Policy Statement No. 15 Community Involvement and the Administrative Instruction No 43, which covers the operational guidelines for volunteer activities, will be undertaken over the next few months.

A meeting with volunteer coordinators/supervisors will be arranged early in the 2005 for their input.

STATEWIDE VOLUNTEER GROUPS: (Community Involvement coordinators responsibility)

CAMPGROUND HOST PROJECT

The number of campground host volunteers contributing to the project has risen from 29 in 1998/99 to 120 in the 2003/04 financial year. This dramatic increase has also been noticeable by the recognition by park staff of the importance of campground hosts at campsites, with an increase of 9 new sites last year bringing sites available to 40 +, There were 15 sites requiring volunteers in 1998/99.

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The campground host volunteers now provide their services in visitor centres, ex-pastoral stations/leases, national parks and forest campgrounds.

CHANGES TO THE PROCEDURES:

Substantial changes have been made to the paperwork for this project last season; however, we consider everything as a work in progress and continue to look at ways to improve the process.

SITES AND FACILITIES LEGEND

The sites and facilities legend is similar to the old National Parks and Forest brochure and has been developed to show the campsites, and what facilities are available, for easy reference for volunteers and staff. It is updated every July / August to be sent out in the information package to all campground hosts on the volunteer database.

CAMPGROUND HOST TIMEHEET has also been developed to standardise contributions across the State. Park staff have been advised to allow a 12 hour day when volunteers are working in parks, unless they are away on days off, etc. as volunteers are "on call" to park visitors at any time of the day and night.

PERSONAL DETAIL LEGEND

Park staff also receive a legend with personal details of the campground hosts, including known medical conditions, emergency contact numbers, and previous host duties, to ensure the Department's duty of care requirements to volunteers is fulfilled and carried out in a professional manner.

Park managers have been encouraged to use this detailed information to choose the most suitable applicant for the position, and contact the volunteer direct to discuss their preferred options. Park staff has been advised of the need to inform this office of their decisions, with written confirmation of the placements, to the Co-ordinator at Kensington.

INFORMATION MANUALS

I would like to encourage each District office, using campground hosts to put together an information manual, (we have a few in the office), to give to volunteers after their induction/orientation. This manual is invaluable as a support mechanism for campground hosts when staff are not immediately available.

A generic package of corporate information is currently undergoing review and will be available to support regional/district information packages. Several regions/districts have already put a manual together; they are Shark Bay, Geraldton, and Regional Parks.

CAMPGROUND HOST TRAINING:

Training courses were added to the program and starting in March this year, four courses were made available to 40 campground host volunteers over a two-week period. The courses were:

Basic fire awareness

Radio awareness Kimberley and Pilbara

Senior 1st Aid

Honorary CALM officer training.

CAMPGROUND HOST INFORMATION DAY:

The Information day is an annual event where new and experienced campground host volunteers can get together and exchange information and learn more about the Department. There were 80 participants last year, including five park supervisors attending. The Park supervisors gave a

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short information exchange to the participants and generally filled their campsite rosters for the coming camping season.

All participants receive a manual with copies of each presentation and any new brochures informing them about national parks, a workshop or presentation of interest to the volunteers is held in the afternoon. Last year it was the Outback Safety and Bushcraft course.

CAMPGROUND HOST TRAIL

The Finke Gorge National Park in the Northern Territory and the Department of Environment and Heritage in South Australia is very interested in having their State's campsite areas/national parks promoted to campground host's by this Agency. This "trail" was discussed in 2000 when we held the 3rd National Conference for the Australian Association of National Park Support Groups.

WAIVER OF CAMPING FEES:

The Director of Parks and Visitor Services approved a waiver of camping fees for campground host volunteers for 12 months free camping after their initial contribution to the project. The Campground Host volunteers have greatly appreciated this gesture from the Department.

WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS

We currently have 235 registered wildlife rehabilitators and 954 volunteers with wildlife rehabilitation as their interest across the State.

- (1) Registered wildlife rehabilitators have attended the 2day course, and
- (2) Have volunteered under the umbrella of a registered rehabilitator or rehabilitation centre until they are proficient at caring for injured wildlife, and the principal officer of the rehabilitation centre or mentor will/has provided a written reference to that effect,
- (3) The last requirement is for a Wildlife Officer to assess their ability, knowledge and facilities.
- (4) There is a different criteria from remote or country applicants, unable to attend the Basic Wildlife Carers/Rehabilitators course

Volunteers with wildlife as their interest, may or may not have completed the wildlife carer's course, and prefer to help out in a rehabilitation centre or care for wildlife at home.

WILDCARE NEWSLETTER:

This newsletter is distributed to Regional and District Wildlife Officers, registered Wildlife Carers/Rehabilitators, volunteer carers, veterinarians, and reptile removers. The Chamber of Minerals and Energy is distributing this newsletter electronically to environmental officers on mine sites across the State.

WILDLIFE CARERS CONSULTATION GROUP:

We have held 15 meetings to date, with the 1st group wildlife carer representatives now finished their two-year placement and a new group in place. We are currently preparing a draft Code of Practice for wildlife carers and should have it out for comment in the near future.

BASIC WILDLIFE CARERS COURSE:

In 2003 the Department and the senior vet staff at the Perth Zoo developed a new course. There is much more emphasis on zoonotic diseases and health and welfare issues. This year an advanced Wildlife Carers course was held in July, and a Regional basic course at Busselton in October.

WILDLIFE CARERS IDENTIFICATION CARD:

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This card is for registered wildlife carers only and will have a passport photo, name and signature on it to identify them as volunteers. This is due mainly to members of the public challenging the volunteers when capturing or relocating native wildlife. The ID card has a zoonoses alert and telephone number for accessing information when a carer presents with generalised symptoms to their G P.

WILDLIFE CARERS LIST:

The Wildlife Carers list has been published and paid for by Nature Conservation. The Wildlife Carers List is for registered wildlife carers, local government offices, and CALM offices and Wildlife officers. With the WILDCARE helpline operating less copies will be published and carers encouraged to use the helpline as information becomes quickly out of date.

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION GRANTS:

A copy of the criteria and application is mailed out to all registered wildlife carers and wildlife rehabilitation centres throughout the State when available.

PAYMENT FOR WILDLIFE PUBLICATIONS:

Nature Conservation has provided funding for:

The WILDCARE newsletter

The Wildlife Carers List

Wildlife Carers Identification Card

WILDCARE helpline bumper stickers

WILDCARE HELPLINE:

The WILDCARE helpline has 22 volunteers, and is available to the public on a 24 hour 7 day roster. It is working extremely well. During office hours the service is from the Kensington office, with after hour's calls being called forwarded to private homes. From 5:00pm Friday a rostered weekend volunteer takes calls at their home or mobile phones until 8:00am Monday morning. On long weekends, they take the extra day also.

Volunteers have been provided with training sessions and manuals with after-hour's response procedures for emergencies including for large animals such as emus and kangaroos, and marine mammals with Wildlife Officers' mobile telephone numbers.

HONORARY CALM OFFICERS TRAINING PROGRAM:

The Honorary CALM officer program training for the first participants was held in July 2003 for members of Track Care and WA4WD Club, and March 2004 these were from the 4WD clubs, campground host and several Bibbulmun Track maintenance volunteers are completing the training. Volunteers will be selected from peak volunteer groups.

Honorary CALM Officer training includes:

CALM's administrative arrangements,

Introduction to and overview of CALM,

CALM Act

Managing for Biodiversity

Dieback Management

Managing for Nature Based Recreation and Tourism

Dealing with illegal Activities

Communicating with the Public

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WESTWHALES:

For stranded cetaceans

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

Employees volunteering in work time

Corporate Volunteers