

Annual Report 1999-2000

The Roadside Conservation Committee



Terms of Reference

To coordinate and promote the conservation and effective management of native vegetation on road and rail reserves for the benefit of the environment and the people of Western Australia

Mode of Operation

The care, control and management of most public road reserves in this State is vested in a local government authority under the Local Government Act or the Main Roads Western Australia under the Main Roads Act. The Roadside Conservation Committee (RCC) has no powers to regulate for, or enforce, the protection of roadside vegetation.

The RCC's approach to its task is set by the words "*To coordinate and promote*" in its terms of reference. This is entirely based on cooperation, liaison and the voluntary acceptance, by all who work in the roadside environment, of management practices which maintain a safe and efficient road system, while concurrently ensuring the sustainability of the many values present within the roadside.

Three interrelated means are used to pursue this aim:

(i) Promotion in various ways, including providing useable information such brochures policies, manuals and guidelines, of the multiple values of remnant vegetation, along road and rail reserves.

(ii) Funding and encouraging research on issues relevant to the management of linear reserves, particularly to clarify their various values, and to seek innovative methods for managing them so as to ensure the sustenance of remnant vegetation within transport corridors.

(iii) Collating and providing information and advice on the management of cultural and natural resources present within road and rail reserves.

RCC Membership, June 31st 2000

Dr Ken Atkins (Chairman)
Department of Conservation and Land
Management

Dr Robert Howard
Main Roads Western Australia

Mr Peter Bothwell
Westrail

Cr Brian Kavanagh
Western Australian Municipal Association
Shire of Bridgetown-Green bushes

Cr Tony Ietto
Western Australian Municipal Association
Esperance Shire

Mr Mick McCarthy
Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council

Mr Brian Moyle
Western Australian Wildflower Society
Mr G Beeston
Agriculture Western Australia

Ms Sue Davis
Fire & Emergency Services Authority

Mr Nathan McQuoid
Greening Australia Western Australia

Mr Craig Morgan
Western Power

Ms Roni Oma
Water Corporation

Mr Dean Solmundsen
AlintaGas

Mr David A Lamont
Executive Officer

Meetings

During the past year the Roadside Conservation Committee met on a quarterly basis. A salient feature of the year was a workshop entitled Vision 2000. This was attended by more than 40 attendees with the majority of them being drawn from community groups. The purpose of the Vision 2000 is to:

- to ensure that the RCC is fulfilling its obligations under its terms of reference
- review past operations of the RCC;
- to ensure that the RCC is relevant to prevailing community requirements and or expectations, and
- to provide RCC members with the opportunity for input into strategies for the RCC to achieve its objectives.

Finance

The Department of Conservation and Land Management and Main Roads Western Australia each pay 50% of the Executive Officers salary. CALM also meets the cost of servicing the RCC, including the provision of office space, telephone, postage, secretarial support, insurance etc. The RCC has no financial administration functions.

GIS Mapping and Roadside Surveys of Conservation Values

This project has been ongoing since 1987 and involves organising local community groups to survey the roadsides within their local area. Training and support is provided for the volunteer surveyors. Data from these surveys is entered into a computer database in the RCC office. CALM's Geographic Information Section of the Information Management Branch now processes this data. The GIS maps for the Shires of Corrigin, Gnowangerup, Harvey and Woodanilling have been completed, and presented to them to assist with management of road reserves therein.

A feature of current roadside surveys has been the desire by local community groups to map the occurrence of environmental weeds on roadsides. This is now an integral part of all roadside surveys and provides a useful overview of the individual species present as well as an overview of the extent of weed infestation. Surveys are currently being completed in the Shires of Kojonup, Jerramungup, Dumbleyung and the City of Albany.

Liaison and Public Relations

The RCC has continued to liaise with state and local government and community groups, e.g. Greening Australia WA, landcare groups, Main Roads WA, FESA and CALM on roadside conservation issues.

These included workshops at Margaret River for Edith Cowan University and National Carbon Accounting Strategy, presentations to Bushcare Officers, Mallee Fowl Preservation Group, Kojonup LCDC, TAFE training course for road workers at Beverley and input in the development of training for MRWA Surveillance Officers. Information regarding roadside conservation has been disseminated by a variety of mediums, e.g.

- written material for print media, eg, Community Newspapers, Western Wildlife etc;
- radio talks e.g. ABC Regional Radio;
- displays at country shows, e.g. Dowerin, Wagin;
- advice to external groups, e.g. Local Government Work Supervisors Association.
- response to public complaints re roadside conservation matters and requests from public for information.

In November 1999. Greening Australia (Qld) hosted a Transport Corridors Management Conference in Brisbane. As the WA Roadside Conservation Committee is a lead agency in linear reserve conservation in Australia it was approached for input and the Executive Officer was asked to present a paper at this conference. He provided a paper entitled “**Roadside flora, what’s it worth?**”. The paper detailed financial incentives for retaining roadside vegetation with an a case study of wildflower tourism in the Shire of Morawa.

Student Project

The RCC is currently sponsoring a Geography Honours student from Curtin University, Ms Kristy Oliver, who preparing detailed roadside management plans for roads of high conservation value or strategic importance within the Shire of Chittering

Static Displays

Throughout the year the RCC participates in a number of venues with static displays of varying themes. Displays have been provided at venues such as Dowerin Field Day and Wagin Woolorama. The importance of salmon gums on road and rail reserves as nesting habitat for the white-tailed black cockatoo has been a theme that is currently being used. During the year the RCC renewed their display system and this has greatly enhanced the standard of presentation.

Training

During the last year there has been a strong demand for training by local government and community groups on roadside conservation matters. As a result of this the RCC has collaborated with C Y O’Connor TAFE and has presented courses to staff from the following Shires:

Beverley,	Wickepin	Plantagenet	Cranbrook	Wagin
Wandering				
Woodanilling	Kellerberrin	Nungarin	Merredin	
Trayning	Albany			

Gnowangerup Denmark Jerramungup

At the Annual Conference of the Local Government Work Supervisors Association (Mid West Region) the RCC provided a

presentation on Special Environmental Areas on roadsides. Representatives from the following Shires attended:

Irwin Mingenew Mullewa Perenjori Three Springs
Greenough
Chapman Valley Morawa.