

Annual Report 2000 -2001
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 are 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 2001

Dr Ken Atkins (Chairman) Department of Conservation and Land Management	One Position Vacant (country elected member) Western Australian Municipal Association
Dr Robert Howard Main Roads Western Australia	Cr Tony Ietto Western Australian Municipal Association Esperance Shire
Mr Peter Bothwell WestNet Rail	Mr Mick McCarthy Western Australian Municipal Association

Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council

Western Power

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

Ms Roni Oma
Water Corporation

Mr Dean Solmundsen
AlintaGas

Mr Jeff Mustard
Fire & Emergency Services Authority

Mr David A Lamont
Executive Officer

Mr Nathan McQuoid
Greening Australia Western Australia

Mr Craig Morgan

Meetings

During the past year the Roadside Conservation Committee continued to meet on a quarterly basis. The increasing public awareness of the value of roadside vegetation has resulted in a noticeable increase in the public complaints about alleged excessive clearing of remnants in transport corridors. It is apparent that a number of agencies working in the transport corridor environment are not aware of the values associated with this vegetation or unwilling to provide adequate protection for it.

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 data collection. 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. Data from these is used to generate a series of maps that indicates roadside conservation value, remnant vegetation on adjoining landscape and weed infestations of roadsides. CALM's Geographic Information Section of the Information Management Branch now processes this data. A notable feature of this year has been the mapping of the City of Albany because roadside infestations of eleven

weeds environmental weeds were mapped in a series of overlays and also the physical size of the area surveyed.

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. 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;
- 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 December 2000 the RCC released a new publication titled "Guidelines for Managing Special Environmental Areas in Transport Corridors". This full colour book has had universal acceptance by all who work in the transport corridor environment and provides practical information regarding the legislation and management guidelines for special environmental areas, e.g. rare flora, Aboriginal and European heritage sites and Flora Roads.

Student Project

Ms Kristy Oliver, an RCC sponsored Geography Honours student from Curtin University, has completed her roadside management plans for roads of high conservation value or strategic importance within the Shire of Chittering. The thesis prepared by Ms Oliver was awarded highly commended by Curtin University and awarded the equal highest marks ever awarded for an Honours thesis.

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 Local Government Work Supervisors Association AGM, Dowerin Field Day and Wagin Woolorama. This years static displays have included an interactive computer based presentation based on a variety of themes, e.g. Value of Roadsides, Managing linkages in Transport Corridors