

Annual Report 2004 - 2005  
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, 31st June 2005**

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

Dr Robert Howard  
Main Roads Western Australia

Mr Peter Bothwell  
WestNet Rail

Cr Vic Orchard  
Western Australian Municipal Association  
Korda Shire

Cr Steve Vallance  
Western Australian Municipal Association  
Chittering Shire

Mr Mick McCarthy  
Western Australian Municipal Association  
Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council

Mr Brian Moyle  
Western Australian Wildflower Society

Mr G Beeston  
Agriculture Western Australia

Ms Jenny Abbot  
Fire & Emergency Services Authority

Ms Kath Mathwin  
Greening Australia Western Australia

Mr Craig Morgan  
Western Power

Mr Jeff Anderton  
Conservation Council

Ms Sarah McEvoy  
Department of Environment

Mr Jeff Kong  
AlintaGas

Ms Cressida Wilson  
Executive Officer

Mr Mark Olivieri  
Telstra

Kate Jackson  
Technical Officer

### **Meetings**

During the past year the Roadside Conservation Committee continued to meet on a quarterly basis. A number of agencies working in the transport corridors have lifted their environmental game over the last year, with Main Roads redeveloping and refining their environmental checks system and Western Power introducing a new interactive environmental filter process. Main Roads is also developing a policy/guidelines on assessing trees in recovery zones. The new clearing regulations, introduced in October, have caused a flow of never ending questions. There was a change over of Executive Officer, with Mr Lamont leaving in October and Ms Wilson starting in February.

### **Finance**

The Department of Conservation and Land Management and Main Roads Western Australia each continue to pay 50% of the Executive Officer's 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.

### **Roadside Surveys and Mapping 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 processes this data and produces the subsequent maps. From January 2005 the RCC has employed another staff member 1 ½ days a week to work on the mapping.

### **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. Wagin Woolorama;
- advice to external groups, e.g. Beverly Naturalist Club;
- response to public complaints on roadside conservation matters and requests from public for information.

Close to release is a new publication titled "Handbook of Environmental Practice for Road Construction and Maintenance Works". This full colour booklet contains information on various topics essential to roadside conservation and will shortly be distributed to transport corridor managers, NRM and conservation groups, and relevant government departments.

**Student Project**

Ms Rebecca Hayes from Curtin University was taken on as a work experience student in January 2005. She proved so useful and effective for the mapping program that the RCC continue to employ her for 1½ days a week.

**Static Displays**

This year the RCC participated in Wagin Woolorama, in conjunction with Landcare, Land for Wildlife and Birds Australia's Carnaby's cockatoo recovery project. The group won the Best on Ground display this year, much to the delight of all.