



CALM News

COMO RESOURCE CENTRE
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
& LAND MANAGEMENT
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Official newspaper of the Department of Conservation and Land Management



SYD SHEA

It is tempting, in this first edition of CALM News to write a glowing statement on the policies and the future of the new Department of Conservation and Land Management.

However, I believe this would be inappropriate because the Minister, on behalf of the Government, determines Department policies.

The Minister will be assisted in policy development by the three Policy Councils established under the Act, the Senior Policy Group of the Department and, I hope, all members of the Department.

I cannot pre-empt the process of policy development, but I can outline some broad principles which the Government has already established and indicate how I believe the Department should respond to these principles.

The legislation and the administrative structure of the Department indicates that our role is to

manage the land vested in the Department for the public and for future generations.

This means that we must upgrade our efforts in the area of public participation so that our management is, and is perceived to be, in the best interests of the public.

Clearly, this is a difficult task, because the 'public' has a variety of often conflicting views on land management.

The demands that society make today may be incompatible with the need to ensure that our land management practices maintain options for the public in the future.

Although it is a difficult task, I am confident we have the technical knowledge and managerial skills to reconcile any conflicts over land management, while at the same time ensuring that public land is maintained for future generations.

Obviously, we are always going to be short of resources.

This means that our operations must be efficient, so that we get maximum return for the money that is made available to us.

However, we do have the capacity to earn money which can be retained by the Department.

I believe that if we adopt an entrepreneurial approach to obtaining finances, compatible with protecting our land areas, then we will be in a much better position to provide the resources we need for better land management.

I would like to develop this theme in later articles in this paper.

The most important resource we have is our staff.

I believe we have the most technically competent and dedicated staff that any Department could wish for.

I believe, however, that the potential which is provided by our staff resource can only be realised if we work together.

No single person has all the answers.

The prime purpose of CALM News is to provide a means by which people can communicate with each other.

This, I believe, is the most important initial step towards developing a team approach.

This paper is not a journal for senior staff, although I intend to use it to keep the members of the Department well informed of our activities.

I hope that every member of the Department also sees this paper as a way to put their views forward.

CALM News will, I hope, in addition to providing information about all the various jobs that staff members do throughout the State, be one of the mechanisms by which all members of the staff can contribute to developing policies for the Department.

SYD SHEA
Executive Director



Logo winner

CONSERVATION PLAN IN DESERT

by Andrew A. Burbidge, Principal Research Officer

Of all the animal groups occurring in Australia, mammals have suffered most since the arrival of Europeans.

We are all familiar with the variety of reasons put forward to explain the decline of the mammals — clearing, foxes and cats, grazing by domestic stock and rabbits, fire and so on — but there are few studies available showing which factor or combination of factors has been most important, and whether the decline can be halted or revised.

About one-third of WA is arid sandy or stony desert dominated by spinifex (*Triodia* and *Plectrachne*) grasslands.

This is the area least affected by European man and his animals and weeds — it has never been cleared or grazed by stock, nor have rabbits had any impact.

Remarkably, though, the deserts have suffered a massive decline in their once rich mammal fauna, with many species either locally or completely extinct.

In this simple environment, where few changes have taken place, a study of the causes of decline should be easier than in other parts of the State and, hopefully, it should be easier to halt or reverse the decline.

Three research programmes carried out at the Wildlife Centre have helped us come to grips with the problem.

The first was a series of biological surveys of the deserts directed by Norm McKenzie and myself between 1975 and 1979, and continued on the Nullabor Plain last year.

These surveys were the first detailed examination of the vertebrate fauna of Western Australian deserts and resulted in a good understanding of the current status of desert mammals.

Many species which had been recorded in abun-

dance by the early explorers and scientific expeditions were not found.

The second study, again by Norm McKenzie and myself, has analysed post-European changes in the status and distribution of the W.A. mammal fauna to seek patterns that might reveal causes of decline.

One interesting result of these analyses is that all species which have declined or become extinct have adult body weights between 50g and 5kg.

Within this 'critical weight range' desert mam-

Continued on Page 2



Leon Griffiths and the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Ron Davies.

\$200 bonus for Leon

A Cartographic Draftsman with the Forests Department Mapping Branch, Leon Griffiths, has won \$200 for designing CALM'S new logo.

The Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Mr Davies, presented Leon with the cheque recently.

Five designs for the new logo were considered by a committee comprising National Parks, Wildlife section of the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Design and Information branches of the Forest Department.

While some of the committee and those people consulted favoured a pictorial logo, the over-

whelming majority favoured a symbolic format.

The committee selected three designs for further development and these were submitted to the Premier, Mr Burke, and the Minister, Mr Davies for final selection.

Leon says the logo's shape represents the earth; the colours indicate the sky, water, soil and plants; and the internal shapes illustrate the sea, plains, breakaways and the inland plateau.

HEALTHY

A \$7,000 grant has been made available to the new Department to assist with the introduction of an innovative employee fitness and recreation programme.

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Sport, Recreation and Tourism, the money will be spent on a 'needs' survey and the organization of a pilot health and fitness programme.

The establishment work and resulting reports will be carried out by advanced students from the Department of Human Movement and Recreation Studies (UWA) under the guidance of Glen Watkins.

It is expected that the programme will co-ordinate and expand appropriate voluntary activities so that they meet the specific requirements of employees in differing work environments.

The Department's efforts may become the model for similar organizations.



The numbat — hoping to grow with the new Department.

PILOT PLANT CUTS COSTS

A portable furnace pilot plant that will significantly cut the cost of drying jarrah has been tested at the Wood Utilization Research Centre at Harvey.

Staff at the Centre, who have been working with a team from Bunning Bros. over the past two years, have successfully demonstrated the techniques of high temperature drying.

However, the cost of firing the kilns with diesel fuel has prevented the process from becoming economic.

The Centre's Manager, Phil Shedley, said the solution was to convert the kiln from diesel fuel to wood fuel, which is available as residue from the sawmill.

furniture grade timber, more uniform moisture contents, lower stock holding requirements, and reduced lead time from order to supply.

The portable furnace pilot plant, which was designed in Perth by Pyrotherm Pty. Ltd., has a wide range of features which enabled a number of tests to be concluded.

The most important of these were firing of the kiln with gas produced from burning green jarrah sawdust and the generation of heat by the total combustion of sawdust.

This has resulted in specifications being prepared for a low-cost efficient conversion of the high temperature kiln at the Centre.

By world standards the Pyrotherm pilot plant has several outstanding features:

- ★ the capacity to burn green sawdust in a single stage operation, without predrying;
- ★ the very low capital cost (less than \$100,000); and
- ★ the capacity to operate efficiently on such a small scale.

**WAFOA
Member's
Role
Assured**

The W.A. Forestry Field Officers Association is concerned that the amalgamation of the three departments to form the Department of Conservation and Land Management will affect Association members.

"The more senior members will find it difficult to part with their old identity, while the younger ones may well look upon the move as a means of broadening their horizons," said Association President, Tom Wood.

In order to overcome any problems which might arise with the change-over, a liaison has been established between the new Executive Director, Dr S. Shea, the executive committee of the W.A. Forestry Officers Association (W.A.F.O.A.) and the Civil Service Association (C.S.A.) industrial officer Mr Mel Bowler.

The first of several planned meetings has been held and the general principles of the members' role in the new Department have been discussed.

Dr Shea has undertaken to supply the W.A.F.O.A. Executive with further information as soon as it becomes available to all Forest Act staff.

Because the Executive is unable to cover all possible contingencies, feedback from members on areas of concern is welcomed.

To assist the committee, write to the Secretary of the W.A.F.O.A., G.W. van Didden, 50 Hayman Road, Como, by April 4, on any points about the amalgamation that might be of concern.

A follow-up meeting of delegates is planned, in the Gumnut Lodge, Harvey, on April 11, 1985.

YOUR PAPER

CALM News is the Department of Conservation and Land Management's new monthly staff newspaper.

We hope you will become involved in its publication by sending articles (up to 400 words), letters, photographs (with captions), minutes from meetings and items of interest to:

Address to Ian Kay
The Editor
CALM News
Department Conservation and Land Management
Como WA 6152
or phone Operations
HQ extension 329.



Members of the Banksia survey — (from left) Ron Sokolowski, Greg Keighery, Judith Brown and Jeni Alford — were particularly interested in the pale yellow colour of this *Banksia menziesii* flower growing at Woodvale.

Banksia in the spotlight

A National Survey of banksias has been launched in Perth.

The survey will rely almost entirely on the assistance of volunteers throughout Australia to compile a computerized Atlas of Banksias.

The project is programmed to run for three years.

Joint funding by the Australian Biological Resources Study and the WA Department of Fisheries and Wildlife has enabled the appointment of a national co-ordinator and a computer programmer to run the project.

They are based at the WA Wildlife Research Centre at Wanneroo.

It is appropriate that the Banksia Atlas is based in WA because 57 of the 72 named species occur in this State.

The staff at the Research Centre have six years experience in running pilot plant atlas projects aimed at developing suitable systems for a project like the National Banksia Atlas.

The project is involving interested people throughout Australia in recording the distribution, habitat and biology of banksias.

Information will be sorted and analysed by computer.

The role of volunteers in assisting in the collection of scientific data is particularly relevant in Australia which has only a relatively small number of professional botanists, mainly located in capital cities.

Other projects have used volunteer assistance with great success.

The Atlas of Australian Birds was organized by the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union using about 3000 volunteers.

The botanist appointed to co-ordinate the project, Mrs Anne Taylor, said there was still a great deal to be learnt about these typically Australian plants.

She said it was not known how some species are pollinated, at what age they start flowering, or how they respond to fire.

Information gathered on the habitats that different species prefer will be useful both to horticulturalists growing Banksias for the cut flower trade and to gardeners wishing to introduce these plants into their gardens.

Anyone wishing to participate in the project can contact Anne Taylor at the WA Wildlife Research Centre, PO Box 51, Wanneroo. Telephone: (09) 405 1555.



At a recent open day held at HARVEY, Phil Shedley (Second from right) explained the workings of the gasifier to Pat McNamara (Forest Production Council); Brian Ray (Chairman Forest Products Association); Dave Evans (Minister Assisting The Minister of Forests); and Frank Campbell (Assistant Commissioner P.S.B.).

"I am confident the reduction in operating costs by the conversion will mean high temperature drying of hardwoods will become commercially viable," he said.

Some of the advantages of high temperature drying include faster drying, less splitting and warping, an improved supply of

LONG INNINGS IS OVER

The Labour Day weekend was the end of a long innings for the Mundaring Weir Forestry Cricket Club.

Not only have recent events overtaken the Club, but its home ground is to be converted into an airstrip for spotter aircraft on district fire patrols.

On Monday, March 4, a reunion of past players and supporters was held at the Portagabra cricket ground, and the final overs were played out in style.

Prominent among the players on the day was Watty Rhodes (81) retired forestry storeman and star batsman from many previous seasons.

Watty still had his eye in and kept the fielders on their toes.

Other team members included Peter Hewett and Roger Underwood (both former club presidents), John Robley, Arthur Schock, Barry Rhodes (Watty's son), and Nick Mucciarone.

The pitch (last used in the late '60s) was first prepared in the 1920's, soon after forestry began in the area, and the cricket club was involved in Hills Association competitions for many years.

With 60 years to look back on, the game renewed some great memories and the final ball came too soon.

Conservation Plan in Desert

Continued from Page 1

mammals have suffered more than those from better watered regions.

The third study, by Phill Fuller and myself, has been aimed at finding out the former distribution and time of disappearance of desert mammals by collecting and collating information received from Aboriginal people living in the deserts.

This work, which was described in SWANS Vol. 14, No. 1, 1984, has involved a series of trips through the deserts visiting Aboriginal communities and showing 'puppet' skins of the various species to the older residents.

The study has been most successful, giving us a good knowledge of the former distribution of many species (including some never seen alive by scientists) and we now know fairly accurately when the various species disappeared.

To cut a long story short, the medium-sized desert mammals — walla-

bies, bandicoots, large rodents, the native-cat, the numbat, and so on — all disappeared between the late 1930s and the early 1950s.

This was long after the arrival of the feral cat, which was present last century, but not so long after the arrival of the fox (about 1930).

However, the mammals and the fox co-existed in some places for 20 years or so and the native mammals have disappeared in places where foxes are in low numbers or are absent.

Along the northern edge of the desert foxes are a very recent arrival but the mammals disappeared some time ago.

What change does correlate with the disappearance of the medium-sized animals?

The one obvious change is the movement of the Aborigines from their traditional lands to the towns and missions.

In places where we can date the decline of the

mammals with some accuracy it correlates well with this human migration.

Why, then, should this affect the mammals?

The answer is that a land management programme which had been practised for thousands of years abruptly ceased.

Desert Aborigines managed the land with fire.

They used fire for hunting, signalling and for the regeneration of food plants, both for themselves and for the animals they hunted.

The result was a patchwork of vegetation of different ages which was most beneficial to the animals.

Patches of old, large spinifex hummocks were used for shelter, while early post-fire areas containing herbs, palatable grasses and shrubs, provided feeding places.

Areas of low fuel prevented the spread of Aboriginal fires as well as those started by lightning.

Nowadays, infrequent

but very large fires are the norm.

Fires which run for hundreds of kilometres are not unusual and have had a devastating effect on the habitat of the medium-sized mammals, destroying shelter and feeding areas alike.

Now that Aboriginal groups are returning to their land some traditional burning is once again taking place.

However, today's desert dwellers are still concentrated in settlements where there are some modern facilities and most of the country is visited infrequently or not at all.

The question arises, then, as to whether we can manage the land as did the Aborigines, especially in the desert National Parks and Nature Reserves.

If we can, then we should see a resurgence of species which still remain in very low numbers, such as the Dalgyte and Mulgara.

In addition, we should be able to reintroduce species extinct in the deserts

but remaining elsewhere, such as the Woylie and Numbat.

The obvious method of management is to use aerial burning technology to mimic traditional Aboriginal practice.

Local Aborigines are likely to strongly support such a programme because the mammals are a very important part of their cultural heritage, being associated with many of the 'dreamtime' stories of creation.

The formation of the Department of Conservation and Land Management has provided an opportunity to start work on this project.

Recent advertisements for a Research Officer and a Technical Officer (Aboriginal Liaison) are the first step.

The next will be to work out how to tie up our knowledge of the mammals with the expertise in aerial prescribed burning available in the former Forests Department so we can start to manage the deserts with fire.



• Bruce Beggs • Norman Halse • Prof McComb • Pat McNamara • Roger Underwood • Peter Hewett • Joe Havel

CALM PROCLAIMED

The Conservation and Land Management Act was proclaimed by the Governor of Western Australia, Professor Gordon Reid on Friday, March 22.

Under the Conservation and Land Management Bill 1984 three controlling bodies have been established.

They are the Lands and Forests Commission the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority and the Forest Production Council.

The State Government has announced the following appointments to these bodies:

the Department of Botany, University of Western Australia in 1963; Associate Professor in 1977, and Head of the Department of Botany in 1980.

In 1982 he was appointed a Joint Director of the Centre for Water Research.

Other positions held by Professor McComb include Research Associate with the Atomic Energy Commission, Michigan State University; Editor, Journal of the Royal Society of Western Australia; Editorial Advisory Committee, Australian Journal of Botany; Wet Lands Advisory Committee, Department of Conservation and Environment; Deputy Chairman, Herdsman Lake Management Committee; and World Wildlife Fund, Scientific Advisory Committee.

WAYNE BAILEY
Mr Bailey is a cray fisherman at the Abrolhos Islands.

He is a former member of the Australian Fishing Industry Council and the Mid-West Regional Development Committee.

He was nominated for a position on the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority by the Geraldton Fishermen's Association.

NORMAN HALSE
(Deputy Chairman)

Mr Halse joined the Western Australian Department of Agriculture as a Research Officer in the Plant Research Division in 1951.

He was appointed Chief of the Plant Research Division in 1970, Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture in 1983 and Director in 1984.

In June 1983 he was seconded to the Premier's Task Force on Land Resource Management in the South West.

Scientific research has taken Mr Halse to the US, Canada, Libya, USSR, Nigeria, Iraq, Syria and China.

NATIONAL PARKS AND NATURE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

NORMAN HALSE
(Chairman)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR A.H. McCOMB
(Deputy Chairman)

Professor McComb was appointed a Lecturer with

of the Wildflower Nursery at Wanneroo, the biggest native plant nursery in the Commonwealth.

He is a life member of the Australian Conservation Foundation and the W.A. Nurserymen's Association and a former member of the Wildlife Authority.

He has had a number of articles on native plants published.

JOHN MUMME
Mr Mumme is the Headmaster at the Collic Senior High School.

He has vast teaching experience throughout the State, but has lived in Collic for 20 years.

Mr Mumme was elected to the Collic Shire Council in 1966 and has been Shire President for the past eight years.

He is a member of the Collic Land Use Working Committee.

ALAN FEWSTER
Mr Fewster is a farmer and apiarist at Muchea.

He is a Deputy Chairman of the Australian Honey Board (Beekeepers' Section) and President of the Beekeepers' Section of the Primary Industry Association.

Mr Fewster is also a former member of the National Parks Authority.

RORY NEAL
Mr Neal has been employed by the National Parks Authority of W.A. since 1979.

Since 1981 he has been a National Park Ranger at the Walpole - Nornalup National Park.

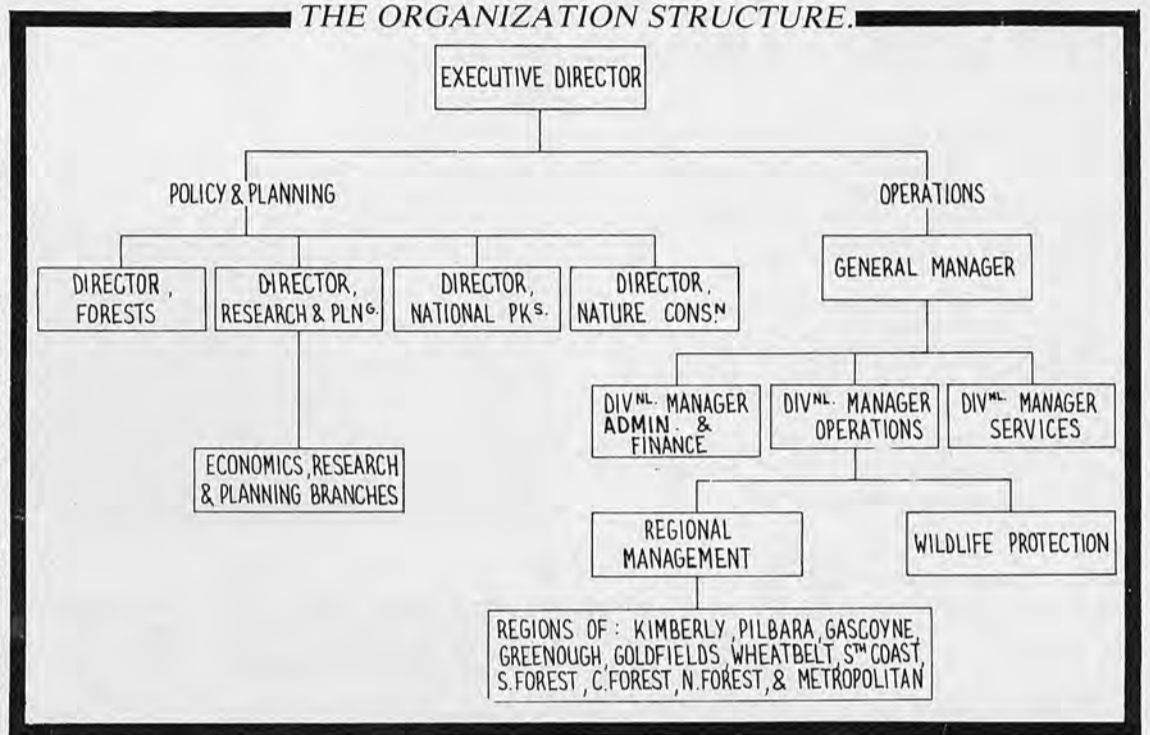
Mr Neal is currently a Vice President of the Hospital Service and Miscellaneous Workers Union, being the Ranger's representative on the Union.

IAN MALEY
Mr Maley is the Managing Director of Wilderness Equipment.

In 1975 he carried out a survey of the major rivers in the South West for the Department of Conservation and Environment.

In 1983 he was the field leader for an expedition to Walcott Inlet in the Kimberleys by the Australian and New Zealand Scientific Exploration Society.

Mr Maley is President of the South West Forest Defence Foundation, and a member of the Australian Conservation Foundation.



FOREST PRODUCTION COUNCIL

KENNETH KELSALL
Mr Kelsall is the Director of Engineering with the Metropolitan Water Authority.

He holds the degree of Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) from the University of Western Australia and is a Fellow of the Institute of Engineers.

GEOFFREY AIREY
Mr Airey practised forestry in W.A. for six years in the areas of research, administration and teaching.

For the past 17 years he has been involved in the horticulture industry in Manjimup.

Mr Airey was elected to the Manjimup Shire Council two years ago and is a former branch President and current Vice President of the Primary Industry Association (Vegetable Section).

He is the Shire's representative on the Agricultural Protection Board, Vice President of the Manjimup Chamber of Commerce, a farmer representative on the State Irrigation Commission and a member of the Manea Pine Committee.

RON POLLARD
Mr Pollard is a Beekeeper at Gingin.

He has been a member of the Beekeepers' Section of the Primary Industry Association since 1979 and has served one year as junior Vice President and four years as senior Vice President.

He has also served a term as president of the Honey Industry Council.

Mr Pollard is also the deputy to the State producer representative of the Australian Honey Board.

BOB BUNNING
Mr Bunning is a Director of Bunnings Ltd; General Manager of Bunnings Timber division; and a Director of WA Chip and Pulp.

He is currently chairman of the Australian Timber Producers Council; a past chairman of the Forest Products Association of W.A.; a member of the management committee of the Forest Products Association of W.A.; and Vice President of the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention.

ROD McINNES
Mr McInnes is the Regional Group Marketing Manager for Westralian Forest Industries.

He is a member of the Forest Products Association and the Radiata Pine Association of Australia.

ARDINO GOSATTI
Mr Gosatti is Managing Director of Inglewood Products, a company he established more than 25 years ago.

He was a member of the Timber Utilization and Forestry Resources Task Force and has been carrying out research into the drying of sheoak with the Forests Department.

BRIAN RAY
Mr Ray is General Manager and a Director of Whittakers Ltd, and is the current Chairman of the Forest Products Association.

By profession, Mr Ray is a Civil Engineer, being a member of the Institution of Engineers (Australia).

PAT McNAMARA
Mr McNamara has been the Acting Conservator of Forests since 1983. He joined the Forests Department in 1953.

In 1959 he was appointed Divisional Forest Officer at Pemberton and in 1964 Working Plans Officer at Head Office in Perth.

Following promotion to Superintendent in 1967, he became Chief of Division, in Operations 1969; Assistant Conservator, Operations in 1973; and Deputy Conservator in 1976.

GRAHAM SHEPHERD
Mr Shepherd is Group General Manager of Westralian Forest Industries Ltd.

Before taking up his current position, Mr Shepherd spent six years as a Director of Consulting Practice with Peat, Marwick and Mitchell.

TONY WHEATLEY
Mr Wheatley is Managing Director of Independent Forestry Services Pty Ltd and Timber Treaters WA Pty Ltd.

He is the W.A. representative on the Australian Forest Development Institute and a member of the Timber Preservers Association.

Mr Wheatley has made two overseas study trips — to the United States and Germany — to look at forestry industries.

RON GILMAN
Mr Gilman is the General Manager of Amalgamated Timber Products and Woodworld.

He is an Associate of the Australian Society of

Accountants and has a background in corporate accounting and finance.

DON SPRIGGINS
Mr Spriggins is the Acting Manager of the Central Forest Region.

He has had a long association with the forestry industry, dating back to 1953 when he attended the Victorian School of Forestry at Creswick, and later the University of Melbourne where he gained a Bachelor of Science (Forestry).

Mr Spriggins has vast experience with both the Victorian Forest Commission and the Forests Department of W.A.

Between 1980 and 1983 he was the W.A. Chairman of the Institute of Foresters.

He has been particularly involved with the preparation of policy statements on wood utilization.



SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS

The following senior staff appointments have also been announced:

- Executive Director — Dr Syd Shea;
- General Manager — Mr Roger Underwood;
- Director of Forests — Mr Peter Hewett;
- Director of Nature Conservation — Dr Barry Wilson;
- Director of National Parks and Recreation — Mr Chris Haynes.

Recreation role vital in country

Conservation, recreation, production and protection will be vital activities in the Department of Conservation and Land Management's new Central Forest Region.

As well as the inherent conservation and recreational values of our area

conservation interests have been well provided for by the preservation of some excellent examples of the region's vegetation communities.

The aim will be to especially manage and conserve these for the benefit of present and future generations.

Some of the most interesting of these reserves include the Ludlow Tuart Forest, Milyeannup, Whicher and St. John Brook (all representatives of Donnybrook Sunkland vegetation types); Mullalyup, Noggerup and the Lane-Poole Jarrah Reserve (jarrah types); and Boranup (the most westerly occurrence of Karri in W.A.).

More than 200,000 people visit the forest areas each year, with most visits being made to the Collie River Valley, Blackwood River, Boranup and ir-

rigation dams in the Harvey district.

Coupled with the large numbers of visitors to the Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park and Yalgorup, recreation management will continue to be a most important task in the Region.

Annual jarrah sawlog production will amount to about a quarter of a million cubic metres.

From the 31,000 ha of pine forests in the Region, the Wesfi particle board plant at Dardanup is supplied with 170,000 cubic metres a year, equivalent to about 25 truck loads of pine logs a day.

A recently constructed pine sawmill — also at Dardanup — has an intake of 30,000 cubic metres a year and this supply will steadily increase.

Work on jarrah forest stand improvement has been carried out over the last year in several districts.

This work will continue with the aim of greatly increasing the productivity from high quality jarrah sites.

At Harvey, an experimental research sawmill will soon be operating and, in conjunction with the timber industry, is expected to provide some valuable data on sawing and seasoning techniques.

Work at Harvey will lead to the utilization and marketing of species and small sized material cur-

News from the Regions

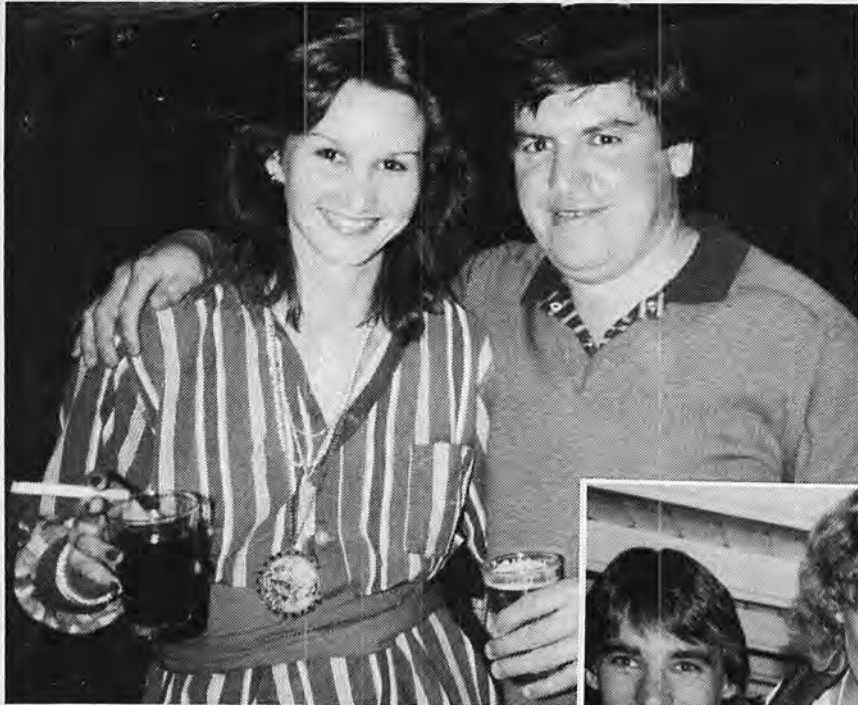
rently unsaleable. Fire, disease and noxious weed control will also continue as important activities.

In the Collie District, reforestation of former farm land on the Collie River catchment will continue at the rate of about 800 ha a year, with the long-term aim of lowering the salinity levels of Wellington Dam water.

To carry out all these activities to a high standard and ensure the correct management of other activities, for example coal, bauxite, sand and tin mining, will require all the skills and knowledge of all people in the Region.

To the existing 117 officers (excluding 26 Bunbury based specialists who have Departmental responsibility), and the 248 wages staff in the five districts, only five National Park rangers and two Wildlife officers will be added.

This means that the fostering of good links with the public and voluntary groups will be important, and the Department will have to encourage a "responsible concern" in the community towards activities that the Department will have limited resources to deal with, for example, vandalism and rubbish dumping.



SOCIAL NEWS

Above: Bob Simpson rescued this fair maiden from the other pirates on the recent social club River Cruise, and he's not telling anybody where he has hidden the 'treasure.'

Right: Scott Samuels and fellow cartographer Caroline Greenhalgh make ready to walk the plank.



HQ Seminar

Senior Regional and Operations staff in the Department of Conservation and Land Management met for the first time at Como Headquarters in February.

During the three-day seminar, the group studied proposed Departmental and regional structures, tidied-up regional and district boundaries, discussed the regional system and examined the responsibilities and special problems of each region in turn.

Visiting speakers provided an update on research and planning, wildlife investigation and enforcement, radio communication, budgets, industrial arrangements and Aboriginal contact.

There are now several areas for urgent follow-up to ensure a smooth transition of responsibilities in regions.

The most important is the organization of staff and employee orientation days to ensure everyone in the new Department understands their new responsibilities and the chain of command.

A National Parks Rangers' Seminar is scheduled for early April.

Regional system introduced

The regional system of management will be a major feature of the new Department of Conservation and Land Management.

Eleven regions have been designated, each with a high degree of autonomy.

They are named Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne, Goldfields, Greenough, Wheatbelt, South Coast, Southern Forests, Central Forests, Northern Forests and Metropolitan. (Final boundaries are shown on the map).

The major advantage of regional management is that it retains the benefits of a small organization, while providing access to the services that can only be provided by a larger integrated organization.

Regions will be responsible for the management of all departmental lands and for conservation of flora and fauna within their boundaries.

Various categories of land, for example, State Forest, National Park and Nature Reserve, will be managed differently, in accordance with approved policies and management plans, and with the guidance of experts in

specialist branches and research.

A regional group will be set up at each region's headquarters.

It will comprise the Regional Manager and an officer representing each major function in the region.

These functions might include operations, administration, planning, wildlife management, and research or extension services.

The regional group will plan and guide all work in the region.

They will prepare estimates and works programmes, control and supervise activities, imple-

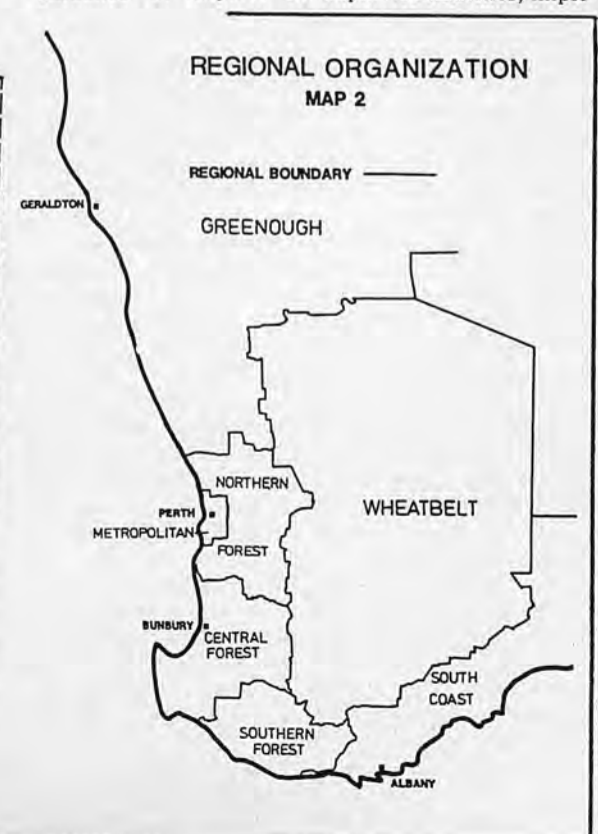
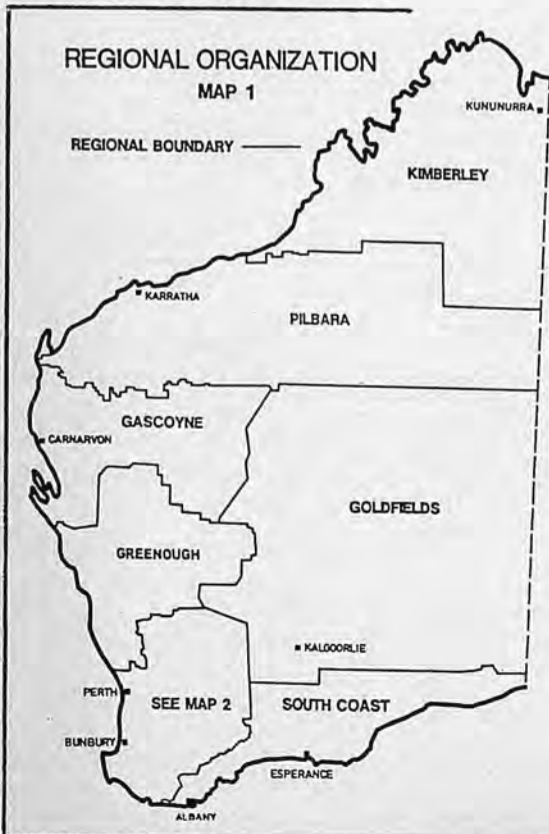
ment the Conservation and Land Management Act, assist the preparation of management plans, provide community services, and liaise with local government and other agencies.

These tasks will either be carried out by regional officers or will be delegated to district office staff.

A further key role of the regional group will be the provision of a focal point for interaction between research and operations.

The Regional Manager for each of the 11 regions will report directly to the Assistant General Manager, Operations.

This will ensure that there is direct access from each of the regions to senior management.



Royal Commission looks at new Act

An Honorary Royal Commission into Land Management in WA has been set up by the State Government.

The Royal Commission comprises the Hon A. A. Lewis, MLC, (Chairman), the Hon V. J. Ferry, M.L.C., and the Hon F. E. McKenzie, MLC.

Its terms of reference are:

- ★ The effectiveness of the operations of the Department of Conservation and Land Management, the Lands and Forests Commission, the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority, and the Forest Production Council.

- ★ The need for the continuation of the functions and the statutory bodies.

- ★ A cost benefit analysis of the operations of the Department of Conservation and Land Management to ensure that additional Government funding is being utilized in the most efficient manner.

- ★ Other matters the Royal Commission considers relevant to the operations and effectiveness of the Conserva-



Hon A. A. Lewis, MLC

tion and Land Management Act, 1984.

The Royal Commission will report to State Parliament before the end of the year.

Commissioner Lewis said he was keen to hear from anyone who could contribute to the inquiry.

He said he would like to have an input from the various land management agencies that were amalgamated following the passing of the Conservation and Land Management Bill.

The Commissioners were available to travel anywhere in the State to take evidence.

Trees Award

A preliminary meeting conducted by the Australian Forest Development Institute (AFDI) was held in Perth recently to discuss the formation of a Tree Farmer of the Year Award.

The group agreed to consult the Department of Conservation and Land Management, the Greening of Australia Committee (administers the John Tonkin Award) and the ABC (Tree Care Award) regarding the timing and promotion of the new incentive.