

'Catchment sharers must be catchment carers' - a new motto

by Kate Baxter

THE Catchment Carers' Trail, recently opened by Derrick Tomlinson, MLC, on behalf of the Environment Minister Peter Foss, is the latest environmental and conservation education initiative to come from The Hills Forest.

Fifty guests, CALM and Western Australian Water Authority (WAWA) employees, and school students attended the opening celebrations, which included addresses from Mr Tomlinson, CALM Executive Director Dr Syd Shea, and WAWA's Managing Director Mr Jim Gill.

Set for success

Already trialed by local primary schools, the project is set to be a great success.

Falls Road Primary School entertained visitors at the official opening with a catchment carers' song they had composed themselves, and some excellent art displays, reflecting the many environmental and conservation issues addressed on the excursion.

More to take part

The project will be offered to schools during terms two and three in 1996, and project coordinator, Liz Moore from Corporate Relations Division, is expecting at least a

doubling of school trips to The Hills Forest taking student and teacher participation numbers to more than 2000.

Jointly developed by CALM and WAWA, the Catchment Carers' Trail is an interactive walktrail designed to broaden understanding of forest management issues and their effects on the quantity and quality of water collected from forested catchments.

Effects on community

It illustrates the importance of protecting water supply catchments, and the influence sustainable forest management has on the wider community.

Nine interactive stations will cover topics such as salinity, erosion, dieback, fire, timber production, mining, nature conservation and water supply.

Along the walk are 11 clues to the different sharers of the catchment that the students must find and interpret.

Share and care

The theme of the walk trail is 'Catchment Sharers must be Catchment Carers.'

The walk includes a tour of the Mundaring Weir treatment plant and pumping stations and takes in the Weir's history, construc-

tion and use as part of an integrated water system. It is followed by a visit to the renowned C Y O'Connor Museum.

A comprehensive set of resource notes will be sent to teachers to initiate the learning process in the classroom, brief them before they arrive on the opportunities the trail provides, and suggest an after-excursion follow-up.

Activities link in with other school programs such as WAWA's water education topic sheets, the National Soil Conservation Program's Landcare for Kids kit, and CALM's successful Discover The Hills Forest education program.

Students can further explore their understanding of the need to protect and manage forested water catchments through the learning areas of Studies of Society and Environment, Science, the Arts, English and Mathematics.

The ultimate success and educational value of the trail lies in the important linkage of environmental issues within the framework of more traditional schooling... and students who have already taken part in the project give it a definite thumbs up!

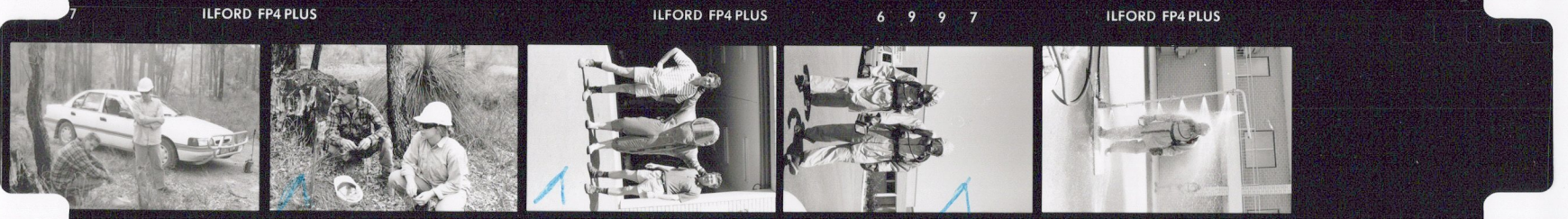


Water Authority Catchment Management Officer Steve Wilke cleans up at a boot-cleaning station before setting off on the Catchment Carers' Trail. CALM's Acting Director of Parks, Recreation, Planning and Tourism Division Jim Sharp waits his turn, while student David Chandler explains the need for walkers to clean their footwear and so reduce the spread of dieback disease. David is one of nearly 30 students who trialed the trail and is now a catchment carer.

Photo by Bill Killorn.

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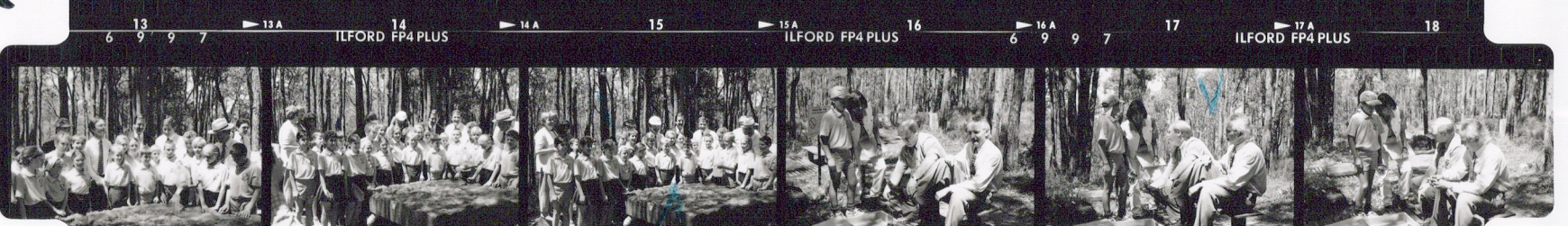
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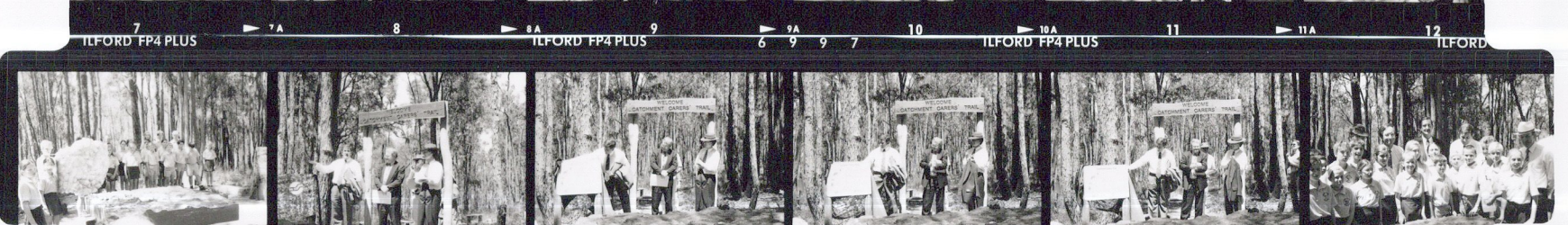
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