

Partnership provides camping in comfort

by Tammie Reid

ENVIRONMENTAL education partnerships are strong between CALM Dwellingup and Morley Senior High School.

For more than 10 years, the development of Icy Creek Environmental Bush Camp, at Lane Poole Reserve in the Murray Valley, has been shared between the two organisations.

MSHS provides administration, booking and promotion services, and CALM carries out the on-site maintenance and security.

Management costs are covered by camping and amenities fees, and the site is available on a booking basis to any group with an environmental education focus.

Under a New Work Opportunities (NWO) employment scheme, Icy Creek is again in a construction phase.

Six bush camping huts, sleeping 10 per hut, are proposed, to increase the capacity of the site to cater for younger groups in the wetter months, when camping under canvas is a considerably less attractive prospect.

The timber structures are set in groups of three around a shared campfire. Four are scheduled for completion by the NWO scheme. Dwellingup CALM forest

workers Allan Clark, Ralph Staines and Bill Beach share the carpentry task of directing the standards, advising and working alongside the NWO workers.

Bill said that there was a great deal of friendly competition between work groups.

"Each group has been working on a hut, with fierce rivalry to do it quicker and better than the other," Bill said.

"For a group of people with little previous building experience, they've really done well, with two huts completed in a little more than three weeks."

The school secured most of the funding for plans, materials and equipment from its Parents and Citizens group, with generous sponsorship from ALCOA and support from Bunnings. But the project really got off the ground when NWO took up the building component and CALM Dwellingup provided on-site project management.

The program aims to give participants, most of whom come from the Pinjarra or Dwellingup areas, new building skills, confidence, and full-time job experience.

Project supervisor, Jeff Wrobel has been in the

building game for more than 30 years and he is full of praise for the work so far.

"The group is enthusiastic and puts in extra effort and attention to detail when it comes to getting the job done quickly and well," Jeff said.

The Icy Creek development will not be over when the NWO signs off in July.

Tourism and Dwellingup recreation program leader Mark Humble said that there would be some rehabilitation required on site: fencing off tracks, designing pathways and completing the other two camping huts to cater for a total of 60 people.

"A large picnic shelter is also proposed to complete the wet weather facilities—a hot water shower block and a large, open-sided meeting structure already exist from the last development phase," Mark said.

"Overall, Icy Creek will keep its low key, development flavour, and the focus will remain on education in the natural environment."

If you are interested in using Icy Creek and your group qualifies under the booking guidelines, phone Morley Senior High School's youth education officer Ian Maserai, on (09) 276 5766 for booking and facility information.



Forest workers Bill Beach, left, and Mark Humble plan tasks for the day at Icy Creek. Photo by Tammie Reid

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