

BETTER OPTIONS FOR FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVES

Four-wheel-drivers have been given greater involvement in managing CALM's tracks and better access to CALM-managed land.

A Memorandum of Understanding between CALM and Track Care WA, the umbrella organisation for the State's recreational four-wheel-drive associations, was signed at the Four-Wheel-Drive and Adventure Show in South Perth late last November.

The Memorandum of Understanding sets out guidelines on the behaviour of four-wheel-drivers in State forests, national parks and other CALM-managed land.

Four-wheel-drivers will receive information about responsible ways to use the bush, flora, fauna and tracks, and information about closures, openings, logging and proposed burns.

In the past, many of these tracks weren't designed for wide recreational use, so there were management problems when four-wheel-drivers began to use them.

"We'll continue to monitor any disturbance to wildlife, physical damage to tracks, noise and dust pollution, the aesthetics, littering, fire risk, health



and hygiene, and the need for facilities," CALM's Director of Parks, Recreation Planning and Tourism Jim Sharp said.

Photo - Marie Lochman

CONSERVATION COMMISSION UP AND RUNNING

A new direction for the management of Western Australia's conservation estate began last November with the creation of the Conservation Commission of Western Australia.

The new Commission will meet public demand for a separate, independent body to oversee the management of State forests. The Commission will be the vesting body for all conservation lands including national parks, nature reserves, conservation parks, multiple-use State forests and timber reserves.

Responsibility for native forest and plantation commercial activities has been transferred from the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) to the new Forest Products Commission.

The Conservation Commission has its own

staff, including an auditing section that will monitor CALM's implementation of management plans as well as the harvesting activities of the Forest Products Commission.

Allied to the new direction is a strong commitment to build on the public participation processes and to facilitate more public involvement in conservation.

The new Commission's members are:

- Campbell Ansell (Chair), Company Director;
- Tom Day (Deputy Chair), chair of the former National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority (NPNCA), who will provide continuity between the former and new authorities;
- Pat Barblett, founder and chair of Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco Tourism and member

of the former NPNCA;

- Dr Jennifer Davis, Head of the School of Environmental Science at Murdoch University;
- Glen Kelly, Project Officer with the Aboriginal Lands Trust;
- Barbara Morrell, Farmer in the Shire of Kent, member of the State Salinity Council and member of several community landcare and catchment management groups;
- Graeme Rundle, Secretary, WA National Parks and Reserves Association and member of the Conservation Council of WA; member of the former NPNCA;
- Rodney Safstrom, Environmental Consultant and the Chair of Greening Australia; and
- Dr Joanna Young,

consultant on forest pathology and forest management.

CALM will be responsible for the integrated management of conservation lands and waters, including State forests and timber reserves, fire control and hazard reduction burning.

The Department's key functions include preparing management plans for consideration by the Conservation Commission, as well as providing scientific advice and drafting policy in relation to sustainable management, including sustainable levels of forest resources production.

The Conservation Commission can engage researchers when developing policy and, in particular, it will promote and facilitate the involvement of the community.

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LANDSCOPE



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Armed with sketch pad, pencils, pens and paints, an intrepid group of artists set off on a brand new LANDSCOPE expedition. See 'Awash with Colour' on page 28.



Most of us only know of the exotic pest ants that invade our kitchens. But what of the great Australian ants? See page 23.



Ningaloo Marine Park and Cape Range National Park lie side by side in our north-west corner. Read about how they are managed on page 17.



Four more conservation reserves now offer greater protection to areas in and around the Mitchell Plateau. See 'Parks of the Plateau' on page 48.



Scientists continue to develop ways to locate, track and trap animals for research. See 'Tools of the Trade' on page 41.

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COVER

For many years, the decline of frogs in various parts of the world has puzzled conservationists. A breakthrough came in 1996 when scientists isolated a new kind of fungus that infects and may kill frogs. Western Australian research now under way is beginning to answer some initial questions about the fungus and its impact on our unique frogs. See 'In Pursuit of the Frog Fungus' on page 10.

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