

JANUARY 2007

# 100-year plan to Save Our Species

TWO important departmental initiatives were launched last month – the draft *A 100-year Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Western Australia* and the *Saving Our Species Biodiversity Conservation Initiative 2006/2007*.

In one of his last major announcements before the December Cabinet reshuffle, the then Environment Minister Mark McGowan said the bold strategies built on recent efforts and set the course for the future.

“WA is better placed than almost anywhere in the world to do something to improve the health of the State’s biodiversity,” he said.

“We have the financial resources to make a real impact and the awareness of the WA public to back us up.

“There is a great understanding among young people about environmental issues and the 100-year strategy will provide direction for this and future governments.”

*A 100-year Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Western Australia: Blueprint to the Bicentenary in 2029* sets 10 targets to be achieved by 2029, including the full recovery of 20 plants and animals currently listed on the State’s threatened species list.

It provides strategic direction to ensure the protection and/or recovery of the State’s biodiversity and prevent intact ecosystems, seascapes and landscapes from becoming degraded.

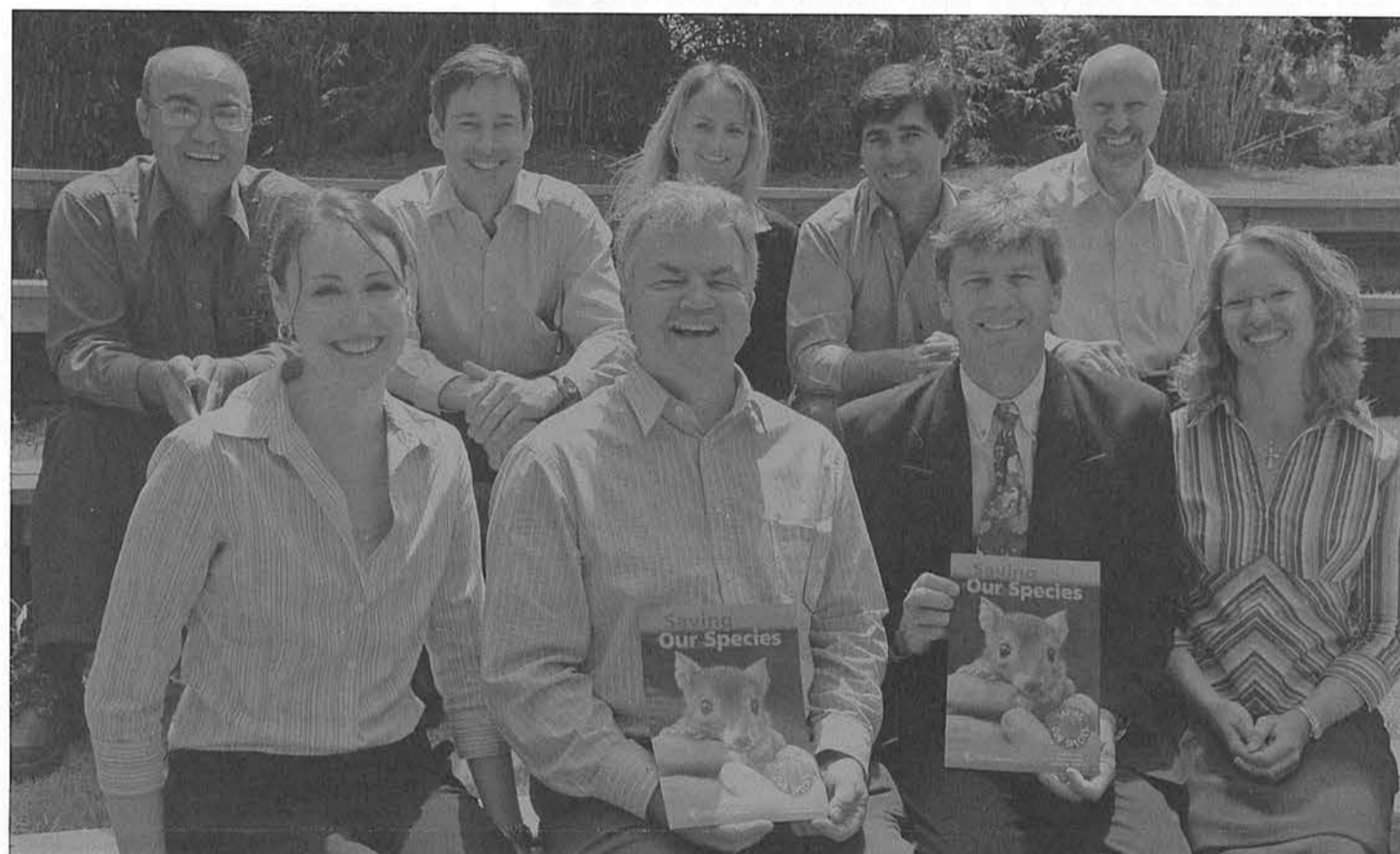
Biodiversity in WA has suffered immensely since colonisation in 1829. The strategy provides the focus to tackle the major threats to biodiversity now and into the future.

The strategy will build on initiatives that have already begun as part of the two-year \$15 million biodiversity blitz – *Saving Our Species*. It will also tackle salinity, altered fire regimes and climate change.

*Saving Our Species* has been designed to tackle key conservation issues to achieve significant long-term results from a short-term, strategic focus.

Action themes have been developed for pest animal control, the State cane toad initiative, weed eradication and control, management and control of *Phytophthora* dieback, threatened species and ecological communities’ recovery and biological survey and research.

Projects in these themes have been made possible by an additional \$12.75 million of



DEC Director of Nature Conservation, Gordon Wyre (front, second from left) with (back row, left to right) Frank Mansillas, Winston Kay, Kyla Ford, John Carter, David Coates, (front row, left to right) Melanie Harding, Nigel Sercombe and Kellie Agar. Photo – Rhianna King

new funds over two years and some internal funding within DEC.

The program supplements ongoing conservation work by DEC in collaboration and cooperation with community-based groups such as natural resource management organisations, WWF and others.

*Saving Our Species* invests in on-ground biodiversity conservation action now, tackling threats to biodiversity and preventing the need for a far greater level of expenditure in the future if the problems are left unchecked.

Western Australians are being urged to provide feedback on the strategy, which is available from DEC offices or from DEC’s website at [www.naturebase.net](http://www.naturebase.net). Submissions on the draft should be emailed to [biodiversity@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:biodiversity@dec.wa.gov.au) or posted to our Kensington office.

## \$40 million river plan launched

A \$40 MILLION plan for the Swan and Canning rivers has been launched.

The draft Healthy Rivers Action Plan marks a new direction for the future of waterways.

The draft plan is now in the middle of a four-month public comment period.

New initiatives in the draft plan include:

- a river health program (\$10.59 million),
- a healthy catchments program (\$10.59 million),
- a drainage nutrient intervention program (\$5.87 million),
- a riverbank program (\$7.36 million),
- a healthy rivers action plan program coordination (\$1.7 million),
- a land use planning program (\$1.25 million),
- a river science program (\$1.7 million) and
- a river guardians program (\$1.4 million).

The plan’s focus is to reduce nutrients and to tackle global issues such as the impacts

of climate change.

It also promotes more research into fish, such as herring and cobbler, and crustaceans such as the western school prawn, where the Swan River Trust works in partnership with the Department of Fisheries and others to improve the species’ health and population.

A total of \$700,000 will be spent on the river science initiative to establish better partnerships with universities and research institutions to develop solutions to water quality problems.

The Trust will also work with the Peel Harvey Catchment Council to develop new approaches to regional issues such as climate change and algal blooms.

To comment on the action plan log on to <http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/healthyivers>

People are welcome to become volunteer guardians to help establish the projects. Call the Trust on 9278 0900 to register.

## New Minister



NEW Environment Minister Tony McRae is settling into his new job.

He was pictured between DEC’s Blackwood District Fire Operations Officer Tony Mennen (left) and Blackwood District’s Fire Coordinator John Tillman during a visit to Kirup to discuss fire issues.

He was first elected to WA Parliament as the Member for Riverton in February 2001 and was re-elected in February 2005.

His strengths lie across Parliament and the electorate in the environmental, economic and social areas.

Between 2001 and 2005 he was Acting Speaker of the WA Parliament and Chairperson of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee.

In 2002 he chaired an inquiry into the

Bellevue hazardous waste fire and WA’s system of training and TAFE colleges.

In Riverton he chairs the Canning River Regional Park Community Advisory Committee, is vice-Patron of the Willetton Sports Club and is active in many local organisations ranging from the Riverton Youth Forum to the Riverton RSL.

He is a trained mediator and has a BA from Murdoch University.

He came to Western Australia in 1980 to work as an electrician in the Pilbara iron ore industry. He was industrial relations and training adviser to Premier Peter Dowding between 1985 and 1991 and the National Native Title Tribunal’s Director of Research and Information between 1996 and 2000.



# Working Together

Welcome to the first edition of Environment and Conservation News for 2007 – and the start of DEC's first full calendar year.

If 2006 is any indication, we can expect this year to be another interesting and busy time with plenty of new opportunities and challenges.

Last year saw many changes in the way in which we work. Just as we began the year, former Minister Judy Edwards announced she would be stepping down from Cabinet and we were soon welcoming a new Minister, Mark McGowan. While our time with Minister McGowan was relatively short, it was extremely productive.

In May, the Minister announced the merger of DoE and CALM to take effect on 1 July. The weeks that followed were busy times for many people who put in some extraordinary efforts to achieve the merger within the tight time frame.

Since then, changes have flowed across the department and the new structure is taking shape. In particular, considerable effort has been put into developing single finance and human resources systems, and preparing for integration of information systems.

At the same time, it's been business as usual and we've seen some excellent results from a variety of projects and announced a range of important decisions to help conserve and safeguard the future of our environment.

We start the new year with another new Minister for the Environment, Tony McRae, who also has the new portfolio responsibility of Climate Change. The profile of climate change has increased significantly in recent times. It is an issue which affects many parts of our work, and one which will require input from a number of areas in 2007 as we work with the Minister and Government to develop policies and strategies to address the issue.

I take this opportunity to thank all staff for their contributions during 2006 and look forward to a productive and rewarding 2007 for DEC – it's encouraging to see the increasing recognition for the work we do and just how important it is.

Whether it is a global issue such as climate change, a statewide issue such as conserving biodiversity or a local problem such as controlling emissions from an industry, the advice we give and the actions we take will continue to be important in protecting and conserving Western Australia's environment.

**Kim Taylor**  
Acting Director General



# Award wins a pat on the back

**DEC CAN pat itself on the back after its success in tourism and business awards in the past few months.**

A partnership with a theatre company, the establishment and maintenance of the Bibbulmun Track, the well-run tourist venture at Yanchep National Park and the establishment of a training program for enforcement officers were all described as outstanding at different award ceremonies.

## Barking Gecko

A partnership with the Barking Gecko Theatre Company won DEC the WA Business and the Arts Partnership Award for a first-time partnership.

The partnership allowed the Department to contribute to the arts while raising awareness of environmental issues when it liaised with the company to produce *The Feather Surfers*, a play about three wingless fairies who lost the ability to fly because of environmental degradation.

DEC marketing manager Jarrod Greenwood said Barking Gecko approached the department with a script and a proposal to put on a play about environmental management.

DEC staff and Barking Gecko joined forces to develop the play's script to achieve the right balance of humour, entertainment and a pertinent educational message.

"Our staff were involved throughout the entire productions, including script development," Jarrod said.

The play was presented in metropolitan and regional areas, giving DEC staff and families in different parts of the State the chance to enjoy the production.

## Premier's Award

A submission about the way we train our inspectors to deal with issues and clients was a finalist in the Premier's Awards' Government and Public Sector Improvement category, being selected from more than 30 competitors in the field.

The Regulatory Officers' Training Course is run by DEC and WA Police to train inspectors before they receive their authority cards.

"It was quite an accolade to become a



Jarrod Greenwood with the WA Business and the Arts Partnership Award. Photo – DEC

finalist because the program resulted from the need to train people and enhance their understanding of what's required of them," DEC's Environmental Enforcement Manager Tony Potts said.

## WA Tourism and business awards

The Bibbulmun Track won the WA Tourism Awards' Most Significant Tourist Attraction in WA category while, at the same awards ceremony, Yanchep National Park took out the Heritage and Cultural Tourism category for its commitment to indigenous culture.

Yanchep National Park also won the City of Wanneroo's Business Award, the Sun City Tourism Award, while a school's involvement in one of its education programs, the Yanchep Fire Recovery Program, won the City's Environmental Excellence Award.

## DEC awards

Besides being among the winners, DEC also organised a range of important awards and events including the State Environmental Awards, the popular Tidy Towns competition and awards to the most outstanding of its 3900 volunteers.

# Tidy Town

**THE town of Cue has won the top honour at this year's State Tidy Towns Awards.**

The remote community took out the spot after it was named the Midwest/Gascoyne regional winner, while the Pilbara town of Tom Price received a special commendation for its Tidy Towns program.

Keep Australia Beautiful Council chair Mel Hay said Cue's win was recognition of the commitment, dedication and enormous amount of hard work by all sectors of the community.

It was particularly strong in its water conservation and cultural identity projects. The community demonstrated that size and remoteness is no barrier to making a positive difference to its town and to the environment.

"The whole community should be proud of what it has achieved," Mel said.

Tom Price earned a Special Commendation from Tidy Towns for its strong ethic of volunteering throughout the town and the diversity of community groups.

Other winners were Cuballing (Peel), Walpole (South West), Wongan Hills (wheat-belt), Kambalda (Goldfields/Esperance), Denmark (Great Southern) and Bindurk Hideaway

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# Volunteers' services honoured

**DEC VOLUNTEERS clocked up more than 470,000 hours in the past year – the equivalent of more than 250 full-time workers.**

DEC Director of Sustainable Forest Management Paul Jones told a gathering of departmental volunteers at Crawley that he admired this type of work.

"You volunteer to do something you love, which is something that I would like to do when I have a bit more time – post work!" he said.

Wildlife rescue experts, campground hosts, visitor centre volunteers, wildflower specialists, carpenters, national, marine and regional park friends group members, bushland rehabilitators, walking track specialists, turtle taggers and flora experts gathered to receive awards at DEC's annual awards ceremony.

DEC has 3900 volunteers ranging from campground hosts at remote national parks and stations between Purnululu and Cape Arid (98,000 hours of time) to wildlife volunteers who tend for sick animals in their own homes, night and day.

Paul presented Volunteer of the Year awards to Charles Waters and George Roscoe for their work on Penguin Island, and to Bibbulmun Track Foundation volunteer Edith Thomas for her office and track



DEC's Community Involvement Coordinator Marg Buckland (centre front, above) was pictured with the love of her life – her volunteers.

Surrounded by this year's DEC award-winning volunteers, she celebrated 21 years with the organisation and said the best part of her job was that she worked with wonderful people.

"Mine is probably the most worthwhile job in Western Australia," she said.

"I've got everything – the people and the environment. Everything I really enjoy in life is in my job." Marg coordinates the activities of 3900 volunteers who volunteer as campground hosts, wildlife carers, flora experts, track and trails friends groups, national park volunteers and regional park assistants.

Paul Jones, DEC's Director of Sustainable Forest Management, is fifth from left, in the back row.

maintenance activities.

Outstanding Service Awards were presented to a selection of Yanchep National Park volunteers including:

- the three-person tram crew of Chris Hall, John Kemp and Dave Greig, who are restoring

a vintage tram for the park;

- the six-member wildflower garden volunteer group of Carol Hall, Suzi Logue, Chas Elam, Mary Elam, Lynn Perry and Walt Logue, who maintain the wildflower gardens and keep them looking beautiful;

- Ron Ward who has taken his carpentry skills to the park;
- invertebrate specialist Maureen Keady, whose knowledge of and expertise with insects in the park is exceptional; and
- park wildlife rehabilitator Trevor Nicholls.

# Bibbulmun Track wins award

**BIBBULMUN Track Executive Director Linda Daniels said winning the 2006 Significant Tourist Attraction Award at the WA Tourism Awards was a fantastic recognition of its economic benefits to the State.**

The track stretches nearly 1000 km between Kalamunda near Perth to Albany on the south coast and is one of the State's tourist and recreational drawcards.

"Visitors from all over the world are coming to WA to walk the Bibbulmun Track," Linda said.

DEC is the track manager and works in partnership with the Bibbulmun Track Foundation.

The Bibbulmun Track's award will be entered into the National Tourism Awards to be announced in February 2007.



# Goldfields work completed

By Steve Toole

**DEC crews and dozers from Manjimup, Pemberton, Northcliffe and Kalgoorlie, with the assistance of local contractors, workers and traditional owners from Wiluna, have completed one of the Goldfields Region's biggest projects in recent times.**

The projects were part of the Remote Region Nature Conservation Employees assistance scheme and the new Biodiversity Conservation Initiative.

They were on two former pastoral leases — the 245,094 ha Lorna Glen (Matuwa) and adjacent 321,812 ha Earahedy (Kurra Kurra), 150-200 km to the north east of Wiluna. (Matuwa and Kurra Kurra are the traditional names for the former stations).

The two former pastoral leases were bought in 1999 and 2000 for inclusion in the State's conservation reserve network as conservation parks and are managed by a joint management working group of traditional owners from Wiluna.

The projects involved a series of reserve management works to control feral animals and wandering stock and complete the conversion of the former stations to conservation reserves. Project work included:

- Clearing old boundary fence lines with the dozers working in tandem and grading the alignment with the neighbour's grader to prepare for new fencing.
- Construction of 59 km of new boundary electric fencing as arranged with neighbours on a 50:50 basis under the good neighbour policy.
- Clearing of additional old fence lines and new fence lines in preparation for additional future fencing.
- Filling-in of several old wells and small dams, earthworks at rubbish tips and homestead sites and associated rehabilitation works.
- Completing the removal of the artificial waters by filling in nine main dams and several smaller dams, with the dozers working in tandem. As part of this work the crews caught and relocated 157 dinner plate turtles which were found in the dams.
- Crews also assisted in some prescribed burning of research plots on Lorna Glen.

The first stage was completed over 35 days with a change of shift for the fencing crew via aircraft direct to Lorna Glen from the south-west and a break for the dozer crew using flights from Wiluna.

The DEC volunteer caretakers based at Lorna Glen catered for the crews on the fencing project at Lorna Glen where the crews were accommodated at the homestead bunk house. The dozer crew involved with the works at Earahedy bush camped under the stars.

The next stage of the project will be completing the remaining 250 km of required boundary fencing in conjunction with neighbours and through use of contractors.



Dozer operators (from left) Mark Rado, Steve Rule, Gerard Barnsby and Kane Lunzy with some of the dinner plate turtles which were relocated at Earahedy. Photo – Steve Toole

# Swarbrick a whole team effort

**THE Walpole Wilderness Discovery site at Swarbrick was officially opened in November.**

DEC staff put in a superhuman effort to ensure that everything ran smoothly on the opening day.

Artwork by local artists Lorena Grant and Alan Clarke was installed in the forest, its unique style testing the ingenuity of conservation employees who were asked to install it.

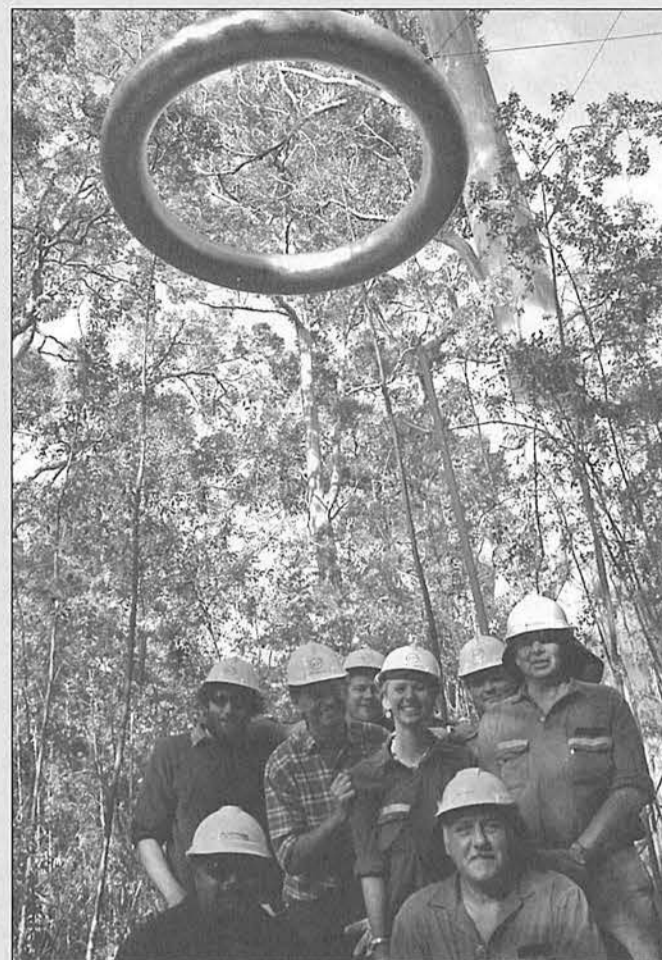
DEC's landscape architects, interpreters and work crews constructed the Wilderness Wall of Perception – a 39 m, three m high mirrored wall engraved with quotes reflecting perceptions about wilderness and the forest.

"I really would like to thank everyone involved, particularly the crew from Walpole and William Bay who built most of the wall in our local workshop," Parks and Visitor Services' Frankland District Coordinator Allison Donovan said.

"They spent a lot of time and care in making sure the site looked superb." During the next few months more artwork and finishing touches will be incorporated.

More than 150 people attended the open day which was part of a collaborative effort between the Southern Forest Arts Group and DEC.

"Locals were positive about the impact the site would have on tourism in the area," Allison said, adding that visitors should take the 500 m walk through the old growth karri forest to the Wilderness Wall of Perception.



Celebrating the successful installation of the artworks were forest conservation workers from the Frankland District. They were (front row left to right) Warren Taylor and Wayne Rowe and (back row left to right) Justin Ettridge, Ric Donovan, Shaun McHenry, Carol Ebbett, Dave Hulcup and Rick Cuttriss. Photo – DEC

**MEET Moora District's conservation employees (from left) Emma Clingan, Stephen Buitenhuis, Pauline Phillips and Matt Dadd.**

Together they have cleared and upgraded tracks, installed signs in marine and national parks, removed weeds from nature reserves, created firebreaks and worked on prescribed burning programs.

They are some of DEC's 40 conservation employees employed throughout WA.

Fauna monitoring, setting up traps, installing water tanks, constructing walktrails and recreational sites and taking on occupational health and safety roles are all in a day's work for most of them.

"It's very diverse around here,



especially with the marine and national parks," supervisor Matt said.

The jewels in the crown of the District's eight national parks, 90 nature reserves and marine park

include Coomallo Nature Reserve, Nambung National Park (the Pinnacles Desert) and the Jurien Bay Marine Park which attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Photo – Sue McKenna

# Protecting groundwater

**DEC's Steve Appleyard has added internationally-published author to his repertoire, after writing several chapters for a book published by the World Health Organisation (WHO).**

The book, Protecting Groundwater for Health: Managing the Quality of Drinking-Water Sources, will help communities around the world reduce the terrible loss of life and disease caused by poor sanitation and drinking water.

About 1.1 billion people do not have access to a safe drinking water source within reasonable walking distance of their homes. This, combined with poor sanitation and inadequate hygiene practices, is causing about 1.6 million deaths each day. For each death, many more people become ill (often seriously), particularly children who bear much of the burden of diarrhoeal and other water-related diseases.

Steve contributed to the book by working at home over many Fridays

on his day 'off' work. As the preparation of the book was coordinated by the German Environment Protection Agency (Umweltbundesamt), Steve also had to survive on school-boy German for many weeks in the former East Germany (where everyone learnt Russian at school), five minutes walk from the Czech border.

He said the East Germans had a great sense of humour and were incredibly tolerant of the degree to which their language was mangled.

As Steve is a hopeless masochist, he is helping prepare two other books for WHO on drinking water protection which should be published within the next two years. The current book is available in a hard-cover edition from UWA Publishers, or can be downloaded in a series of PDF files from the WHO website at the following URL: [www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/publications/protecting\\_groundwater/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/protecting_groundwater/en/index.html)

# Pinnacles building begins

**THE development of new visitor facilities, including an interpretive centre at the Pinnacles Desert in Nambung National Park, 250 km north of Perth, is surging ahead.**

Work started on the new facilities in August.

The new facilities will cater for an expected increase in visitors to the Pinnacles from 225,000 a year in 2005, to 350,000 in 2010 with the expected completion of the Indian Ocean Drive between Lancelin and Cervantes.

Architectural firm Woodhead International was appointed to assist DEC in the design of the new facilities after extensive research and broad consultation with the tourism industry, local community and other government agencies.

The interpretive centre will showcase sustainable development and enrich the experience of

visitors to the area. Buildings are of 'passive solar design' to minimise energy use in heating and cooling. Power will be provided with a Remote Area Power System (RAPS) incorporating solar and diesel generated power and there will be 12 flushing toilets, incorporating an ecofriendly primary treatment facility.

- The new facilities will:
- cater for visitors' needs;
  - provide better access for disabled and mobility restricted visitors;
  - provide interpretation of the Pinnacles and other features of Nambung National Park including the areas geological, ecological and Aboriginal heritage values;
  - provide information on, and promote other nature-based attractions in the region; and
  - help ensure efficient, effective

management of vehicle and pedestrian circulation.

Careful planning has enabled the Pinnacles, one of the State's major tourist attractions, to remain open throughout the work. With the first stage of the car park now completed, further disruption to visitors is likely to be minimal.

The foundations for the interpretive centre and greatly improved toilet facilities were laid in early September. The walls are on their way up, and the centre is on track to open in May 2007.

This significant investment, combined with the soon to be completed \$1.5 million scenic drive through Lesueur National Park, will help to raise the profile of the Turquoise Coast and promote the environmental values of this naturally diverse and magnificent region.



## Briefly...

### New facilities in Goldfields

One of the Goldfields' most popular recreational areas, Cave Hill Conservation Park, has a new boardwalk and viewing platform.

The camping and day-use area, 90 km south of Coolgardie, is renowned for a natural cave on the side of a large granite outcrop. The boardwalk and viewing platform were designed and completed to minimise the possibility of injury from a cave collapse.

The design work was done by DEC's design and landscape unit while conservation employees from the Perth Hills District at Jarrahdale prefabricated the structure, spending a week on the task.

### Experts discuss tuart and wandoo decline

More than 300 woodland experts from around Australia met in Mandurah to discuss the decline of WA's tuart and wandoo trees.

Research and industry partners at the Woodland Decline Symposium included DEC, Murdoch and Edith Cowan universities, and the Wandoo Recovery Group.

Tuart is widespread in WA and is found on the Swan Coastal Plain in a 400-km band from Jurien Bay to east of Busselton. Extensive clearing has reduced its incidence to 35 per cent of its original 111,600 ha. A rapid decline of tuart occurred in the Yalgorup area from the mid 1990s. This was caused by pathogens, low nutrient levels, altered fire regimes and native insects.

Wandoo is a significant species endemic to, but declining in, the south-west.

### DEC supports WA Collaboration

DEC's Sustainability Branch has given \$42,000 to the WA Collaboration, a partnership of leading community organisations committed to a sustainable future.

WA Collaboration provides a network and forum for the community and non-government sector to be actively involved in advancing sustainability.

Director General Keiran McNamara presented a cheque to Conservation Council of WA Director Chris Tallentire, who accepted it on behalf of the WA Collaboration. The money will be used to fund a project coordinator who will liaise throughout the community, convene forums to consider and advance sustainability issues, maintain a website and also promote ideas through other media.

Sustainability Division's Principal Policy Officer Terry Lewis said the WA Collaboration included the Conservation Council, Council of Churches, Ethnic Communities Council, Council of Social Services and many local community groups that had joined forces to help shape and promote the sustainability agenda for our State.

"It is a supportive network that works to raise public awareness about sustainability, acts as an intermediary between the community and government and develop partnerships with the private sector," he said.

"Providing these funds is one way DEC supports this group. DEC staff also provide advice on WA Collaboration's projects and support its initiatives wherever they can."

More information about WA Collaboration can be found at [www.wacollaboration.org.au](http://www.wacollaboration.org.au).

# Access for More Trail opens

**WHEELCHAIRS, prams and 'gophers' turned out in force for the launch of the first section of the \$550,000 Cape to Cape walk trail to cater for people with disabilities.**

They took their chance to enjoy the Access for More Trail under the watchful eyes of landscape architects from the Department of Environment and Conservation, who designed and created the track.

More than 150 people arrived at the Cape Naturaliste lighthouse to try the new 2.2 km section between Cape Naturaliste and Sugarloaf Rock.

DEC provided \$370,000 for the project with the balance coming from the Commonwealth Tourism Development Program, the South West Development Commission, Trails West through the Ministry of Sport and CoastWest through the Department of Planning and Environment.

Dunsborough resident John Byatt, who was on the Cape to Cape Steering Committee, and South West MLC Adele Farina officially opened the track.

The new section is 1.5 m wide and will be extended to a length of 3.5 km within a year.

Blending into the natural landscape it covers rough terrain and features a steeper section with steel handrails and timber decking to let people negotiate the slope. Every 30 m there is a 2 m resting platform.

DEC Marine Planning Officer Neil Taylor said the idea for designing a section of track for people with disabilities began many years ago when people started asking which sections of the track they could travel.

"At the time we didn't have anything that was suitable," Neil said, adding that the support of people with disabilities on the work had been inspirational.

"We plan to begin working on other sections of track to make it a world-class facility for people with disabilities," he said.

The Cape to Cape walk trail is 135 km long and attracts thousands of visitors each year.



The first users of the Access for More Trail at Cape Naturaliste. Photo - DEC

## AirWatch poster competition raises student awareness

DEC's AirWatch team successfully raised children's awareness of the benefits of sustainable fuels through its statewide Biodiesel Breakthrough poster competition.

AirWatch coordinator Mena Gilchrist said she was pleased with the strong response to the competition, which attracted more than 100 entries from around the State.

"I think it was an effective springboard to encourage students to investigate alternatives to petrol and to understand the impacts of fuel choices on the environment," Mena said.

"The winners used creative, informative designs to promote biodiesel - a fuel source derived from plant or animal fat-based oils - as an environmentally-friendly alternative to diesel."

"Their entries highlighted the reduced air emissions and cheaper fuel costs associated with biodiesel

compared to diesel."

Mena said students from two City of Canning schools scored top marks in the competition.

"Year 7 Burrendah Primary School students Natalie Then and Alison Soon won the primary school category while Year 8 Rossmoyne Senior High School student Nur Haziqah Jumali finished first in the secondary school category," she said.

"Nur used a clever comic strip idea to illustrate biodiesel's economic, health and environmental advantages, while Natalie and Alison used eye-catching sketches and mnemonics to create their informative poster."

"Their winning designs are proudly displayed at all of Gull's WA service stations that sell biodiesel blended fuel."

Mena said the trend towards renewable fuels was gathering momentum, and was likely to continue to grow as people

became more informed of its benefits.

"Pure biodiesel can reduce unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter by half and almost completely eliminate sulphur emissions compared to diesel fuel," she said.

"It requires no alteration to a car's diesel engine to accommodate the change in fuel and its use can reduce pressure on landfills by using waste cooking oils that would otherwise end up in the waste stream."

The AirWatch program is a national initiative aimed at developing students' environmental awareness, specifically about air pollution.

Through AirWatch, students from around Australia are learning about air quality and what they can do to keep it clean.

For more information on the AirWatch program, contact Mena Gilchrist on 6467 5168.

## Decade's work honoured

**MORE than 150 people attended a celebration in Albany to mark 10 years of the Land for Wildlife program in the South Coast region.**

Landholders, consultants, agency people and volunteers took part. The venue was decked with wildflowers and banners on environmental themes produced by local schoolchildren.

Land for Wildlife Officer Sylvia Leighton thanked everyone for their cooperation, while the program's leader Penny Hussey spoke about the achievements and the management of nearly a quarter of a million hectares of LFW sites.



DEC's Land for Wildlife Officer Sylvia Leighton with Professor Steve Hopper, formerly CEO of the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority at Kings Park and now CEO at Kew Gardens in London. Photo - courtesy Albany Advertiser.

## Enforcement policy now in place

**A SOUND framework is in place to deliver environmental enforcement actions for DEC.**

The framework provides open, accountable and consistent enforcement assessment and decision making at the regional level, using a Local Environmental Enforcement Group (LEEG) to assess environmental incidents. The LEEG, a region-based panel of review, was used successfully by the former Department of Environment to deliver the effective management of more than 2000 confirmed environmental incidents that required assessment and management each year. The group is responsible for:

- assessing and prioritising incidents for investigation;
- coordinating and monitoring

investigations;

- reviewing evidence; and
- determining investigation enforcement outcomes in accordance with the Enforcement and Prosecution Policy.

It was developed in response to the potential severity, environmental harm and widespread community concern from environmental incidents and to ensure appropriate investigations are carried out.

The LEEG panel is generally chaired by the regional, district or program manager and includes team leaders and a member of the Environmental Enforcement Unit. It is also open to other staff who have responsibilities or particular expertise in the area under discussion.