



Plans for Shark Bay released to guide management

ENVIRONMENT and Climate Change Minister David Templeman visited Shark Bay to launch DEC's draft management plan for the Shark Bay terrestrial reserves and proposed reserve additions.

He also launched a new website showcasing the World Heritage-listed area. DEC is now inviting public comment on the future management of the conservation lands which will increase from 125,000 to 520,000 hectares.

DEC Planning and Estate Acting Branch Manager Paul McCluskey said the new areas either already have been or would be obtained through the acquisition of pastoral land.

"The draft management plan encompasses existing reserves in the region including Francois Peron National Park, Shell Beach Conservation Park, Zuytdorp Nature Reserve, Bernier and Dorre Islands Nature Reserve and various Shark Bay Islands nature reserves," he said.

"It also includes proposed reserve additions including conservation reserves created from parts of the former pastoral leases of Tamala, Murchison House, Nanga and Carrarang as well as the proposed Dirk Hartog Island National Park and about 18 unnamed and unreserved islands, islets and rocks."

When complete, the plan will replace the current Shark Bay Terrestrial Reserves Management Plan 2008-09.

Paul said the plan also proposed new facilities and infrastructure to ensure the protection of the unique values of Shark Bay while, at the same time, improving visitor experiences.



DEC staff Rory Chapple, Clare Atkins, Paul McCluskey and Brett Fitzgerald at the launch at Shark Bay.

By Joanna Moore and Samille Mitchell

The new Shark Bay World Heritage Area website covers all aspects of Shark Bay from its World Heritage values and visitor information to its natural history and culture.

DEC World Heritage Community Education Coordinator Rory Chapple said the website

featured nearly 200 separate web pages, with major sections focusing on nature, history, World Heritage, *Project Eden* – a component of DEC's *Western Shield* wildlife recovery program – and visiting Shark Bay and Monkey Mia.

"It also has 36 fact sheets on a range of interesting local subjects from bilbies to stromatolites and seagrasses to dugongs which will make ideal resources for school students," Rory said.

"There's also an in-depth visitor guide for Shark Bay designed for travellers planning a trip to the World Heritage Area, as well as downloadable maps and brochures to help travellers find and learn about some of the bay's most popular destinations."

Rory said the website project was a key component of the Shark Bay World Heritage Area Communication Strategy and Interpretation Action Plan.

It also promoted the Shark Bay World Heritage Discovery Centre, a key tourism facility in Denham developed to help increase awareness of Shark Bay's unique natural and cultural attractions.

"The impressive interactive material on the website is an example of the information available to visitors to the World Heritage Discovery Centre," Rory said.

"For example, the site features interactive maps, videos of wildlife such as dolphins and humpback whales, wildlife sound recordings, historic maps and 360-degree panoramas of sites around the bay, giving users a 'virtual tour' from the comfort of their own home."

The website project was funded by Coastwest with support from the Natural Heritage Trust. Visit the website at www.sharkbay.org.

Copies of the draft management plan for the Shark Bay terrestrial reserves and proposed reserve additions can be obtained from DEC's Kensington and Perth offices, the Midwest Regional Office in Geraldton, the Shark Bay District Office in Denham and the Carnarvon Work Centre. Copies are also available from www.dec.wa.gov.au/haveyoursay.

Kennedy Range National Park Management Plan released

WHILE he was in Shark Bay, Minister Templeman also released the final management plan for the Kennedy Range National Park and its proposed extensions.

The plan will pave the way for the future management of the park which is about 150 kilometres east of Carnarvon.

DEC Planning Officer Clare Atkins said the plan featured proposed park additions

of 177,377 hectares, purchased through the Gascoyne Murchison Strategy and comprising the Mooka Pastoral Lease and parts of seven other adjoining leases.

Clare said the plan included management strategies for conserving and protecting the natural environment in conjunction with sustainable and low-impact visitor activities.

"The protection of the springs and

soaks that provide important habitats for invertebrates – some of which occur nowhere else in the world – are particularly important," Clare said.

"The plan also includes proposals for new camping facilities and walk trails at recreation sites on the east side of the range that are accessible to two-wheel drive vehicles, while the west side will cater for low-key four-wheel

drive based camping and exploration."

"A registration system is proposed for visitors traversing the rugged four-wheel drive track over the top of the range as a means of monitoring the numbers and impacts of visitors to this remote area of the park."

Copies of the plan are available from DEC's Geraldton and Carnarvon offices or from www.dec.wa.gov.au.

New Enforcement and Prosecution Policy enhances capability

DEC's new Enforcement and Prosecution Policy will improve its ability to promote and achieve positive environmental outcomes through compliance.

The policy was drafted to help the department fulfil its role in protecting and conserving the State's environment. It also aims to provide an understanding of the approach DEC takes in enforcing the legislation it is responsible for administering.

DEC Director General Keiran McNamara said regulation and enforcement were essential to the integrity of the systems that manage the State's natural resources and protect and conserve the environment.

"The new policy, which is a combination and improvement of policies from the former departments of Conservation and Land

Management and Environment, aims to deliver enforcement outcomes through a framework of transparency and clarity while supporting equity, fairness and consistency," he said.

"The development of the policy acknowledges the need for investigative objectivity and provides recognition of natural justice, due process and public interest.

"In adopting the policy, DEC recognises that prosecution is an enforcement tool to be employed where it is the most appropriate response, after considering all the circumstances."

The purpose of the policy is to:

- provide a guide to the department in its task of enforcement and prosecution;
- provide a broad understanding of

how DEC approaches enforcement and related legal requirements;

- explain how DEC determines the appropriate offender to pursue, and the appropriate enforcement action to take in a particular case;
- provide guidance on the range of enforcement actions available to DEC;
- reinforce a community and corporate culture of positive action, accountability, consultation and cooperation with DEC; and
- foster consistent, integrated and coordinated enforcement action across all sections of DEC.

A copy of the Enforcement and Prosecution Policy is available from DEC's website at www.dec.wa.gov.au.

For more information contact DEC's Environmental Enforcement Unit on 6467 5118 or Nature Protection Branch on 9334 0292.

Environment Awards update

DEC received a record number of entries for this year's Environment Awards.

The awards, which recognise organisations, community groups and individuals who strive to protect the State's environment, attracted 99 entries – 30 more than last year.

The awards have been expanded and improved this year to better acknowledge the work of community-based groups and the nomination process has been simplified.

An overall winner will be selected from winners in the following categories:

- community achievement – individual;
- community achievement – volunteer group;
- community energy efficiency;
- prevention of littering and illegal dumping;
- environmental education and communication;
- government leading by example;
- small business leading by example;
- corporate business leading by example;
- biodiversity conservation;
- bush, land and waterways;
- coastal, marine and estuarine; and
- resource and waste management.

The winners will be announced at a presentation dinner on Saturday 11 October.

Working Together

This *Environment and Conservation News* includes an article about the *DECcrease* project that we have established. I was able to attend part of the committee's first meeting and was impressed with the enthusiasm of the members for their task of putting DEC at the forefront of sustainability in terms of our own departmental operations. Given our roles, it is important that DEC takes a leadership role and "walks the talk" in areas such as recycling, minimising energy and water use, and reducing our greenhouse emissions.

Minimising our ecological footprint as a department presents us with some real challenges. While there are obvious and simple steps we can take, some of those challenges arise from the nature of the department and the variety of its operational roles – multiple offices in Perth and around the State, limited public transport to some Perth offices, many old buildings and facilities, remote locations that rely on diesel for power, and extensive field operations using vehicles, boats and aircraft. I look forward to the committee's advice on the initiatives we can put in place, and to the response of staff so that DEC becomes an exemplar in environmental sustainability.

Another article reminds us about the annual Environment Awards which will be presented later in the year. Since the formation of DEC two years ago, we have broadened the award categories to better reflect the breadth of the department's activities, and this year we have aimed to increase awareness of the awards and encourage entries from "grassroots" community groups. The awards are an important celebration of the efforts of individuals, groups, businesses and government, and will culminate in a gala event in October.

Keiran McNamara, Director General



Finding out about the good earth

DEC's launch of International Composting Awareness Week on Monday 5 May promoted the benefits of compost and the ways it is made and used.

Minister for the Environment and Climate Change David Templeman joined media gardening personality Josh Byrne to launch the event at Forrest Place in Perth. The launch was followed by a public display including an expo of composts, demonstrations and giveaways.

DEC Project Coordinator Helen Kelly said hundreds of people visited the display and enjoyed its hands-on activities.

"One hundred bags of compost were given away as well as 20 passes to the upcoming ABC Gardening Expo and vouchers for native WA plants," she said.

"The main message promoted was the benefits compost can have in our local environment where it can counteract the common problem of sandy, nutrient-low soil and reduce the need to water.

"Compost reduces the need for commercial fertilisers, or other harsh chemicals, which can leach into waterways and groundwater.

"Therefore, by using compost, not only can people help reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfill, they can also combat climate change by helping to reduce greenhouse gases."

Helen said DEC was leading the way in promoting the application of compost in WA.

"The department is currently undertaking trials which support the use of compost in a variety of applications, including turf rehabilitation, roadside plantation strips and an upcoming wetland recreation project, as well as through marketing and promotional support," she said.



Acting Director Waste Management Branch Jill Lethlean (left) Anne-Marie Bremner from Encycle Consulting and DECcrease Project Coordinator James Milne at the launch. Photo – Helen Kelly

Environment and Conservation News June 2008

Published by the Department of Environment and Conservation's Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Division, Cygnet Hall, (cnr) Mounts Bay Road and Hackett Drive, CRAWLEY, Western Australia 6009

Managing Editor: Kaye Verboon

Editor: Rhianna King

Contributing Editors: Joanna Moore, Samille Mitchell

Design and Production: Peter Nicholas

Telephone: (08) 9389 8644

Facsimile: (08) 9389 8296

Printed on 100% recycled paper

Perth hosts international impact assessment conference

Environment & Conservation



DEC Director General Keiran McNamara (left), Environment and Climate Change Minister David Templeman, DEC Assistant Director Environmental Impact Assessment Warren Tacey, Conservation Commission Director John Bailey and DEC Acting Director Environmental Regulation Kerry Laszig. Photo – Joanna Moore

SCIENTISTS and impact assessment professionals from around the world converged on Perth in May for the 28th annual conference of the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA08).

Environment and Climate Change Minister David Templeman officially opened the conference on Tuesday 6 May.

More than 700 delegates from 90 countries attended the week-long forum focusing on the Art and Science of Impact Assessment.

DEC was one of the hosts of the IAIA08, in collaboration with the Federal Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; Murdoch University; the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand and the Environmental Consultants' Association.

DEC Assistant Director Environmental Impact Assessment Warren Tacey said impact assessment married expertise in science with an understanding of social and political processes.

"Impact assessment has developed as a tool for incorporating scientific and community knowledge into decision-making," he said.

"Western Australia is known internationally as a centre of excellence in impact assessment, so we are delighted to learn from our visitors and share our knowledge with them."

Conference themes included impact assessment in relation to biodiversity; climate change; health; water resource planning;

By Joanna Moore

and mineral, oil and gas exploration and development.

Keynote speaker, President of the Australian Conservation Foundation Professor Ian Lowe, talked about how impact assessment practitioners should be tackling pressing global sustainability issues.

Delegates also had the opportunity to take part in a 21st Century Dialogue, a fast-paced forum using a networked computer system that enabled all 700 delegates to simultaneously contribute views and ideas.

As part of the conference DEC Environmental Officer Melinda Macleod organised technical tours to regional areas, enabling conference delegates to experience impact assessment in action.

The tours covered mining, refining and rehabilitation; Aboriginal culture; sustainable tourism; urban renewal; industrial synergies and sustainable fisheries and offered an opportunity for Western Australia to showcase some of the internationally groundbreaking environmental initiatives.

A post-conference tour visited the Murchison, Pilbara and Coral Coast areas.

"We are delighted that staff from DEC regions helped out by hosting a number of stops on this fascinating look at outback WA," Warren said.

Conference delegates practise what they preach

INTERNATIONAL delegates visiting Perth for the International Association of Impact Assessment conference (IAIA08) offset the carbon emissions associated with their travel and accommodation by taking part in tree planting at Yanchep National Park.

DEC, one of the hosts of the conference, provided access to the park so conference delegates could get their hands dirty and personally plant trees.

Conservation Commission Chairman and planting program coordinator John Bailey said more than 120 conference delegates each paid an additional \$40 to take part in the carbon offset activity.

"Forty dollars was the average cost of offsetting emissions generated by one conference delegate," John said.

The money was used to assist the tree planting program and other ways to offset

the delegates' emissions.

"The seedlings, which have been cared for by volunteers at the park, were specially selected to restore a degenerated tuart and banksia woodland," John said.

"The activity provided a great opportunity for conference delegates to participate personally in the planting of native species in the park.

"This is not only a practical and meaningful way to contribute to the carbon offset program for IAIA08, but a wonderful opportunity to experience the Australian bush and learn about our natural and cultural heritage."

Delegates, volunteers and park staff planted about 700 trees before taking a tour of the plant nursery where volunteers care for the native seedlings used for rehabilitation.



DEC staff, IAIA08 conference delegates and volunteers at Yanchep National Park. Photo – Christie Mahony

Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach talks start

A COMMUNITY engagement program to support planning for new marine parks and reserves in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions has begun with public information sessions held in Broome, Eighty Mile Beach, Port Hedland, Karratha, Onslow and Perth during April.

DEC Marine Conservation Officer Judy Davidson said the sessions were successful in raising awareness in the community about the project and the ways in which people can be involved in the planning process.

"About 60 people attended the information sessions and 18 local businesses were visited," she said.

Judy said during the information sessions people were generally positive about the proposal to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the region.

"The majority of people wanted to see their area protected so they could continue to enjoy and use the coast in the future for activities such as fishing and nature appreciation," she said.

The Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach coastline is a unique and diverse area that supports significant mangroves, coral reefs, sponge gardens, seagrass beds, seaweed meadows, barrier and offshore islands, protected lagoons, deltas, rocky shores and sandy beaches.

By Joanna Moore

"These diverse habitats are home to marine turtles, dugongs, whales, dolphins, seabirds, fish and many colourful invertebrate species," Judy said.

The area is important to Indigenous people because it has extensive outdoor rock art

galleries and other significant sites.

"Protecting the marine environments of the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions through the creation of parks and reserves is part of the State Government's commitment to establish a world-class marine parks and reserves system in WA," Judy said.

"We also want to develop opportunities and linkages for the local community, such as future management arrangements

with Indigenous people and benefits for local businesses, industries and tourism ventures."

The areas support a growing mining and petroleum industry, commercial fishing, pearling and aquaculture and many recreational uses, all of which will be considered in the creation of new marine parks and reserves. The initiative also contributes to offsetting environmental impacts associated with the proposed Gorgon Gas Development on Barrow Island Nature Reserve.

A Government Interagency Working Group has been established to develop the proposal. As well as staff from DEC, it includes representatives from the departments of Fisheries, Industry and Resources, Indigenous Affairs, Planning and Infrastructure, the WA Museum, Office of Native Title and Tourism WA.

Extensive community and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken during the planning process.

For more information visit www.naturebase.net/pilbara80mile or contact the Marine Policy and Planning Branch on 9336 0100 or email pemb@dec.wa.gov.au.

Interested community members can be listed on the branch's contacts database.



Judy Davidson (centre) and West Kimberley Project Officer Sharon Ferguson (right) talk to an interested community member at one of the information sessions. Photo - Leanne Thompson

Tighter controls for brickworks

FOLLOWING a review the department carried out last year, DEC has issued new licences to the State's six major brickworks to tighten controls on emissions.

The licences for the brickworks, three of which are in the Swan Valley, require the brickworks to reduce emissions from their kilns.

DEC Environmental Regulation Director Robert Atkins said the department carried out the review of the licences to ensure that emissions from the brickworks were environmentally acceptable and reduced to as low as reasonably possible by using best practice technology and being managed through consistent and enforceable conditions.

"The review also included extensive public consultation on the draft licences, environmental assessments and an appeal period," Robert said.

"The amended licences will continue to ensure appropriate limits and targets are applied to regulate emissions in line with DEC's Brickworks Emissions Policy released in 2005.

"This policy includes requirements for the major

brickworks at Midland, Malaga and Bellevue to install new technology to reduce emissions."

The two major companies operating in the region are complying with the 2005 brickworks policy by undertaking a program of replacing old emissions scrubbers with new technology which is continuing to reduce emissions. The last of the new pollutant abatement equipment is required to be installed by the end of this year.

"DEC is conducting a 12-month study of background air quality in the Midland area and once the results are available, the department will further review the brickworks' policy and licence conditions," Robert said.

"DEC is committed to ensuring that industry complies with air quality standards and that local communities are not subject to unacceptable emissions from factory processes."

Details of the review and the new licences are available on the department's website at www.dec.wa.gov.au or by contacting the department on 6364 6500.



Air Quality Branch Environmental Officer Anthony Horton with a high volume sampler, an active sampler DEC uses to measure total suspended particles and heavy metals. Photo - Nigel Howard

Recycled product directory launched

RESEARCH published by DEC last year showed Western Australians want to do the right thing on recycling and now an online recycled product directory is making informed decision-making easier.

Developed by the Buy Recycled Business Alliance and supported by funds from the Western Australian

Landfill Levy, the recycled product directory is a national database of recycled products.

It provides insight into the range of recycled products available and raises awareness of the many applications of recycled material products.

Speaking at the Western Australian launch, Minister for the

Environment and Climate Change David Templeman said the new internet-based directory was a valuable resource for companies seeking to promote their products and for companies, government agencies, community groups and individuals seeking to buy such products.

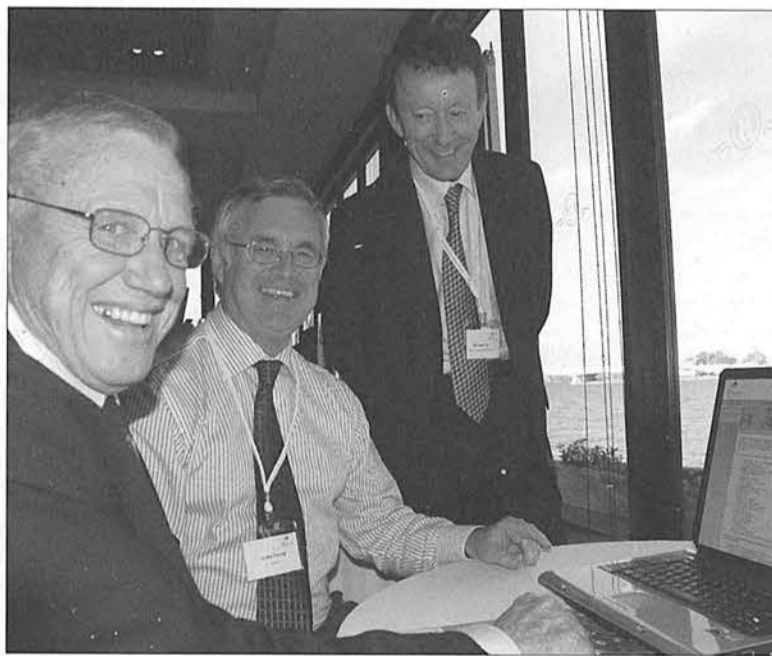
DEC Acting Director Sustainability Michael Kerr said results of the first comprehensive State-wide survey into community recycling behaviour and attitudes had shown that Western Australians wanted to do the right thing on recycling but WA had some way to go in recycling.

"We need more ways and means of enabling the community to easily and conveniently recycle products that can be recycled," Michael said.

"Tools such as the recycled product directory promote resource efficiency, waste avoidance and resource recovery. The directory will help people become more 'waste smart'."

Executive Director of the Buy Recycled Business Alliance Lara Barclay said WA, which had been the most proactive in supporting the initiative, was the first State to launch the directory.

The Recycled Product Directory is available online at www.brba.com.au.



(Left to right) Waste Management Board Chairman Barry Carbon, Amcor State Recycling Manager Jamie Young and DEC Acting Director Sustainability Michael Kerr try out the online recycled product directory. Photo - Joanna Moore

Two cities Living Smart ...

DEC's Office of Climate Change has launched a Living Smart program in Mandurah and Joondalup.

The 12-month trial program, run in conjunction with the Department for Planning and Infrastructure and cities of Joondalup and Mandurah, will help 15,000 householders fight climate change by reducing their carbon dioxide emissions by up to five tonnes a year and save them up to \$2,000.

Office of Climate Change Director Steve Waller said the program provided practical information on how greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced at a household level.

"The program will involve householders receiving advice and home environmental consultations that will enable them to reduce their carbon emissions by

an average of 10 per cent," Steve said.

"Advice will range from steps as simple as switching off unnecessary lights to using a bucket to catch the first flow of cold water in the shower - there really are so many small and simple measures people can take to make a real difference."

Currently, household consumption of energy, water, waste services and car travel directly accounts for about a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia - about 14 tonnes per household per year.

The \$1.5 million Living Smart program is a key initiative of the Premier's Climate Change Action Statement released in May last year.

By Samille Mitchell

DECrease committee leads the way

THE DECrease project committee will prevent almost one tonne of greenhouse gases being produced through each of its fortnightly meetings by holding meetings through video-conferencing.

Following the inaugural meeting of the DECrease project committee, whose representatives travelled from around the State to attend, it was decided that future meetings would be held using video-conferencing facilities.

The decision was made to ensure the committee's activities are aligned with the DECrease aim of having DEC lead by example in minimising its negative environmental impacts.

State-of-the-art video-conferencing equipment is available to metropolitan

DEC staff at the Kensington and Crawley offices and also at some of the department's regional offices. Regional and district staff in offices without the equipment usually have access to community telecentres in their towns.

DECrease Project Coordinator James Milne said after a few minutes of getting used to not having everyone in the same room, the meetings ran the same as normal.

Video-conferencing is only marginally less interactive than a normal face-to-face meeting. The camera operator can zoom in on individuals who are talking and people can still make use of a white board and PowerPoint presentations which everyone can see.

"With this sort of technology available

to just about all DEC staff, I think we can really look at DEcreasing our need to travel so much, especially on recurring occasions such as the project committee meetings," James said.

Use of video-conferencing equipment can be organised by contacting Regional Services Advisor John Skillen on 9442 0318 or john.skillen@dec.wa.gov.au. John can also arrange training in making the most of video-conferencing meetings.

The DECrease committee is currently working on the DECrease Strategy and Action Plan which, among other issues, will identify means of minimising non-essential travel and maximising the use of alternatives such as video-conferencing equipment.

Course for wildlife carers



CCG member Julie Waller and CCG member and DEC officer Tony Howard practise tube-feeding birds (please note that this bird is deceased). Photo - Kate Macgregor/CCG.

DEC recently helped the Cape Conservation Group (CCG) and the wildlife care group, CARE, organise a wildlife rehabilitators course in Exmouth.

Twenty-eight people of all ages attended the course including local long-term wildlife carers as well as some new faces keen to learn about helping injured wildlife.

Presenters included expert wildlife rehabilitators June Butcher and Sue Turner, Perth Zoo veterinary nurse Rae Joy and DEC Exmouth Wildlife Officer Brad Daw.

Brad said the course covered a wide range of subjects including the ethics of being a wildlife rehabilitator, initial assessment and care, disease management, basic anatomy, specialist feeding techniques, viability and euthanasia issues, record keeping, handling, husbandry and rehabilitation for release.

"Getting injured wildlife to an experienced carer immediately was identified by the presenters as critical," Brad said.

"As a survival mechanism, injured animals may not show symptoms of injury in the presence of predators, or when feeling threatened, which includes being confronted by humans.

"This means, by the time the animals show obvious signs of damage, it is often too late."

In terms of carer safety, the presenters emphasised the importance of being aware of threats posed by sick wildlife infected with diseases such as psittacosis and lyssavirus.

Brad said there had been recent media reports in Exmouth which downplayed the risks of lyssavirus, which is found in wild bats.

"Unless people have been vaccinated against rabies, they should not handle or approach wild bats," he said.

"Two wildlife carers in Australia have died as a result of lyssavirus exposure to bats."

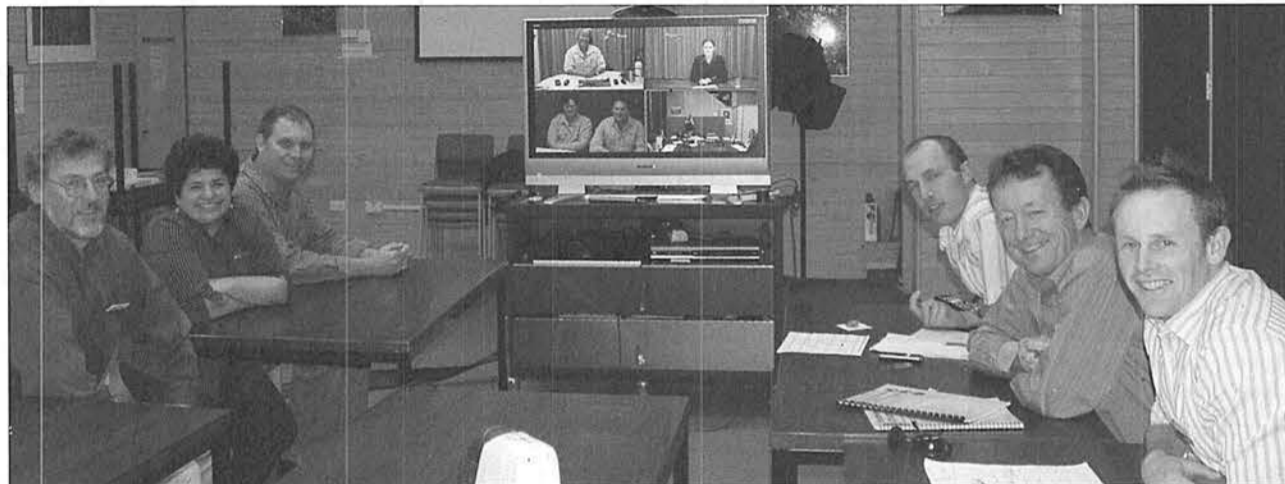
Brad said Exmouth was lucky to have an active group of dedicated wildlife carers who gave a great deal of their time to care for injured wildlife.

"At this time of year, we have many instances of euros and red kangaroos being hit by cars and the local CARE group does a fantastic job looking after joeys. It can take a year of constant care to rehabilitate them for release," he said.

Brad thanked Chevron, which jointly sponsored the course with DEC through its Community Spirit Grants scheme, and Kate Macgregor of CCG who wrote the funding application and handled the course administration.

If people find sick or injured wildlife in the Exmouth area they should contact the Exmouth Wildlife CARE group on 0437 118 180 (24-hour line) or the DEC Exmouth Wildlife Officer on 9947 8000 during business hours.

Outside Exmouth, community members who find sick or injured native animals should call the WILDCARE Helpline on 9474 9055 for advice and to be directed to the closest available wildlife rehabilitator, reptile remover or veterinary service provider.



(From left) Robert Hughes, Navaz Dakin, Jeff Richardson, Julian Ilich, Michael Kerr and James Milne meet with non-metropolitan based DECrease project committee members Kirsty Dixon (in Denham), Hannah Hampson (in Bunbury) and Anne Lillie and Jeff Kimpton (in Manjimup) through the video-conferencing equipment at Kensington. Photo - Joanna Moore

DEC targets Canning Vale water polluters

CONCERNED local community members have alerted DEC officers to evidence of water pollution, leading to a crackdown on illegal waste discharge into Canning Vale drainage systems.

Oily sludges and detergents were found in the lakes and drains that form part of the Banister Creek system.

DEC Pollution Response Coordinator Ken Raine warned that people who illegally discharged waste into Banister Creek could receive substantial fines.

DEC officers are using drainage maps and forensic techniques to track down people who may be polluting the creek unknowingly.

"We have found a number of businesses that have allowed pollutants such as oil, food wastes and detergent to enter their drains," Ken said.

"People are often unaware that Perth is a city built over natural streams which have, in many places, been replaced by stormwater drains.

"These drains lead to our precious waterways and eventually the Swan-Canning river system.

"People sometimes don't connect the fact that washing pollutants down a drain in a commercial area car park will eventually see them run into a creek a kilometre away. This affects the native wildlife that lives at the creek."

Ken reminded business owners that it was an offence under the Environmental Protection Act to allow pollutants to enter drains or soak into the soil. Environmental Field Notices and \$250 on the spot fines are being issued to offenders who have caused or allowed minor discharges.

He said that cases of serious pollution could result in fines of up to one million dollars in court and even a jail term of up to five years.

He urged companies to check on their waste disposal practices and ensure they complied with legislation.



Pollution Response Officer Dale Stanton inspecting and sampling drains on commercial sites in Canning Vale. Photo - Peter May

Carnaby's black cockatoos released

TWENTY-TWO endangered Carnaby's black cockatoos were released into the wild in May - the biggest release of rehabilitated black cockatoos undertaken in Western Australia.

DEC and wildlife rehabilitators from the Black Cockatoo Rehabilitation Centre released the birds at Yanchep National Park.

DEC Nature Protection Branch Senior Investigator Rick Dawson said the Black Cockatoo Rehabilitation Centre was made up of a dedicated group of volunteers who worked closely with DEC and the Perth Zoo and specialised in the care of sick, injured and orphaned red-tailed black cockatoos and white-tailed black cockatoos, including Carnaby's and Baudin's cockatoos.

"The centre and its staff are to be commended for their efforts in caring for black cockatoos," he said.

"The work being done with black cockatoo rehabilitation has been amazing, with tremendous results."

Rick said the rehabilitation and release of the endangered birds were important parts of the recovery plan for the species.

"It was a great sight watching the largest flock of rehabilitated white-tailed black cockatoos to be released into the wild fly away," he said.

"The release has been a milestone and we are keen to keep track of the rehabilitated birds. Bands and microchips have been placed on the birds to monitor their progress and gauge the success of the release.

"DNA samples also have been taken to aid monitoring and identification programs for the species.

"In the past 12 years, 90 Carnaby's black cockatoos have been released in small groups of up to 13."

The number of white-tailed black cockatoos, which includes Carnaby's and Baudin's cockatoos, has declined in the past 50 years due to a loss of habitat and a low rate of reproduction, which averages only 0.6 chicks per breeding pair each year. They are endemic to the south-west of WA and individuals have a lifespan of between 25 and 50 years.

Carnaby's black cockatoos are an endangered species under both Western Australian and Commonwealth legislation.



Representatives from the Perth Zoo, DEC staff from Yanchep National Park and volunteers from the Black Cockatoo Rehabilitation Centre release the Carnaby's black cockatoos. Photo - Cameron Craigie