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Managing editor: Madeleine Clews

Editor: Joanna Moore

Design and production: Peter Nicholas

Telephone: (08) 9389 4002

Email: ecn@dec.wa.gov.au

Draft Forest Management Plan released for public consultation

ON 15 August, the Conservation Commission released the draft *Forest Management Plan 2014–23* for a 12-week public consultation period.

The draft plan covers a land area of 2.5 million hectares in the south-west of the state from Lancelin north of Perth to Denmark on the south coast, and seeks to find an appropriate balance for the range of values and uses of the lands vested in the Conservation Commission.

The draft plan is based on the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management.

Conservation Commission Chair Brian Easton invited the community to have their say on the next Forest Management Plan by putting forward a submission.

“The draft plan proposes additions to the Whicher National Park near Busselton, and improvements to silviculture guidelines including greater protection of marri trees as habitat

for black cockatoos, and identifies a range of sustained yields of forest products,” Mr Easton said.

“It also puts forward for comment alternative options for the management of issues such as the accounting of wood products salvaged after disturbances, silviculture for water production in selected catchments and the arrangements for public firewood collection.

“There are many pressures on our forests including a drying climate, feral pests and weeds, and these all need to be taken into consideration. That is why this plan takes a whole-of-forest management approach.

“A variety of agencies and organisations were consulted on the development of the draft plan to identify key issues, including representatives of the timber industry, conservation groups and local government.”

Mr Easton said public information sessions would be held on the draft plan in Perth and the

south-west during September, with dates and venues advertised in *The West Australian* and local papers.

“This will give the community the opportunity to clarify any queries or concerns in regard to the draft plan,” he said.

“We want to ensure the public has been given clear and accurate information before they make a submission.”

Public submissions on the draft plan will be taken into account in the preparation of the proposed final Forest Management Plan, which will be assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). The EPA's assessment report will be considered by the Minister for Environment before he approves the final Forest Management Plan.

The current Forest Management Plan expires at the end of 2013.

To view the draft Forest Management Plan visit www.conservation.wa.gov.au.



DEC officers inspect regrowth jarrah forest at Inglehope near Dwellingup.

Wildlife officers seize exotic reptiles



DEC Wildlife Officer Matt Swan holds the seized boa constrictor.

DEC wildlife officers recently seized three exotic snakes during a search of a property in Perth's southern suburbs.

The officers executed a search warrant at the Willetton residence after they received a tip-off from a member of the public.

Wildlife Officer Matt Swan said the search uncovered a milk snake, king snake, boa constrictor and a native south-west carpet python.

"The milk and king snakes are native to North America, while the boa constrictor is native to South America," he said.

"When fully grown a boa constrictor can grow up to five metres long and weigh in excess of 40 kilograms. Large females can also produce more than 40 young in one clutch.

"Exotic reptiles are prohibited in Western Australia and it is illegal to keep reptiles such as boa constrictors or milk and king snakes as pets in this state.

"Keeping exotic reptiles can result in the establishment of populations of alien species in the wild and the introduction of diseases that can have a devastating effect on our native wildlife."

Federal Customs and Border Protection National Manager Investigations Kingsley Woodford-Smith said due to the high quarantine risk, the seized exotic reptiles had been euthanased.

"The smuggling of reptiles is a cruel practice as the animals are being kept in confines far from their natural habitat," he said.

He said the maximum penalty for illegally possessing exotic reptiles under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* was five years imprisonment or a fine of \$110,000, or both.

Authorities are investigating how the reptiles arrived in WA.

People with information about the illegal importation of reptiles or who notice any suspicious activity suggesting that reptiles are being kept illegally should call DEC's Wildcare hotline (9474 9055), Customs hotline (1800 061 800), WA Police (131 444) or Crime Stoppers (1800 333 000).

News in brief

New management plan to protect Yanchep parks

On 6 August, Environment Minister Bill Marmion released a new management plan for Yanchep and Neerabup national parks and Neerabup Nature Reserve, following extensive public consultation.

"Through the management plan, visitors will gain enjoyment from the natural, cultural and social environment of Yanchep National Park and are provided with a range of nature-based recreation, education and interpretation activities," Mr Marmion said.

"It is known as Perth's natural and cultural meeting place and among the most popular parks in the state, attracting about 275,000 visits a year."

For more information see the full media statement.

Safer swimming for Jurien Bay

People swimming and snorkelling around the Jurien Bay jetties, pontoon and foreshore are now better protected following the exclusion of motorised vessels from the area.

DEC, with the support of the Department of Transport, has closed the area to motorised vessels in response to public concerns about powerboats and jet-propelled water craft travelling near groups of children in the water.

The ban on motorised vessels includes those engaged in fishing or approaching the shallows to anchor or beach, or to disembark passengers. Non-motorised vessels including kayaks, canoes, vessels under sail, rowboats and other paddle craft are not affected by the closure.

DEC Jurien Bay Marine Park Coordinator Matt Dasey said there had been several incidents where motorised vessels had come dangerously close to swimmers, and the community had rallied together to have the area formally declared off-limits.

For more information see the full media statement.



LITTLE winners with big ideas

A Rossmoyne Senior High School student has won a state award for her ideas on tackling litter prevention.

Year nine student Sonya Kyi, 14, won the Leading Integrated Taskforce Tackling Litter Everywhere (LITTLE) competition for her innovative and original ideas on preventing adults littering.



LITTLE is a national program being implemented by Keep Australia Beautiful (KAB). The program is tackling litter across Australia by using young people to change the littering behaviour of adults, who are Australia's main litterers.

The LITTLE competition, run by KAB WA, received 80 entries from across the state.

KAB WA Chair Mel Hay said Sonya's entry impressed the judges with her quality suggestions on litter prevention.

"Her ideas included the installation of bins on public transport, boats and in cars, small pocket bins for cigarettes, the creation of a confronting film dealing with the impact of litter, and further emphasis on the laws and fines for littering," he said.

In second place was Adam Gootkin, 10, from Carmel School in Dianella, who suggested using a famous person to promote the anti-litter message, while Jack Farmer, 12, from Cornerstone Christian College in Busselton proposed a fun run in which runners collect litter as they run and scores are based on the amount of rubbish collected.

"KAB WA looks forward to implementing some of the anti-litter strategies that the students have suggested," Mr Hay said.

The anti-litter strategies will be presented to the LITTLE taskforce, which consists of 10 students from each state and territory who promote the anti-litter message. The Western Australian LITTLE committee representative is Lachlan Moir from Broome.

DEC provides administrative, logistical and policy support to KAB WA. The program is supported by the Waste Authority through the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account.

LITTLE competition winner Sonya Kyi with KAB WA community education coordinator Cathy Hadlow.



The two invasive species (left) coral cactus or devil's rope (Cylindropuntia spp.) and (right) prickly pear (Opuntia spp.)

Targeting weeds in the Great Western Woodlands

DEC is appealing to the public to report infestations of two invasive cactus species in the Great Western Woodlands.

DEC Conservation Officer Megan Muir said reports of locations of prickly pear (*Opuntia* spp.) and coral cactus or devil's rope (*Cylindropuntia* spp.) were helping the department map the weeds' distribution.

"A control program for these species will be implemented based on our mapping, so the more information we can get about where these weeds are growing, the better," she said.

"These plants are highly visible, with *Opuntia* spp. having large, flat pads and *Cylindropuntia* spp. resembling spiny or prickly rope or coral.

"The focus on these two species is part of a wider plan to identify, map and manage priority weed and pest species in the Great Western Woodlands, with 15 weeds having been identified so far as priorities.

"This project is underpinned by the *Biodiversity and Cultural Conservation Strategy*

for the Great Western Woodlands, which was released in 2010 to improve coordination and management of the woodlands over the next decade."

The Great Western Woodlands are the largest temperate woodlands on Earth, spanning 16 million hectares and representing two per cent of Australia's land mass. The woodlands are home to almost 20 per cent of the country's known plant species.

The woodlands extend across parts of the Goldfields, Nullarbor, South Coast and Wheatbelt, encompassing Kambalda, Kalgoorlie, Southern Cross, Coolgardie, Norseman and Balladonia.

"These woodlands are a precious resource for the state and one that we must carefully protect, so that the wildlife and plant life that has existed in the woodlands for thousands of years can be preserved," Megan said.

"We urge people to report any sightings of these weeds, both in the bush and in towns, to DEC Kalgoorlie on 9080 5555."

