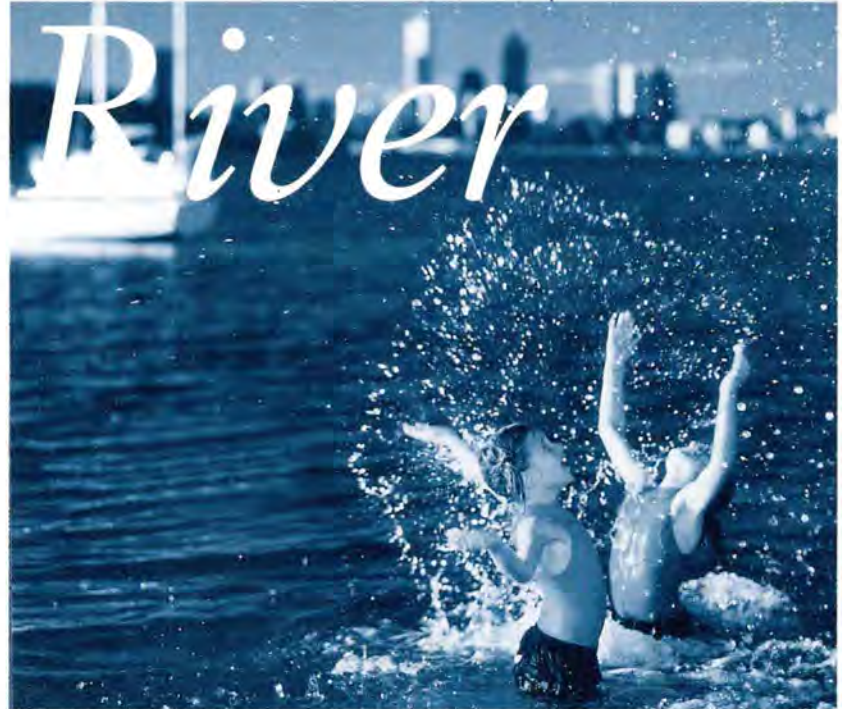




## Action for the



The Swan-Canning Cleanup Program *Draft Action Plan*, commissioned by the State Government in 1994, has been released by the Minister for Water Resources, Dr Kim Hames.

The plan is open for public comment until 15 October 1998.

The *Draft Action Plan* recommends an integrated range of strategies over five years, involving the community, business, Federal, State and Local Governments, the Swan River Trust and other organisations in actions to reduce algal blooms in the rivers.

Comprehensive proposals cover direct action in the catchment and state-of-the-art techniques to change conditions in the river.

"I believe the *Draft Action Plan* is one of the most important initiatives in the history of management of the Swan-Canning river system," Dr Hames said.

The four-point core program involves:

- **Supporting Integrated Catchment Management to reduce nutrient inputs**  
(Core program cost over five years \$9.9 million)
- **Improving planning and land-use management to reduce nutrient inputs**  
(Core program cost over five years \$1 million)
- **Modifying river conditions to reduce algal blooms**  
(Core program cost over five years \$3.5 million)
- **Monitoring river health, filling critical gaps in knowledge and reporting progress to the community**  
(Core program cost over five years \$2.1 million)

"Everyone in the community has a direct interest in protecting the Swan and Canning rivers," said Dr Hames.

"We are talking about a beautiful and highly-treasured asset, valued by the people of Perth for its landscape, conservation, recreation, tourism, commercial and heritage values."

Dr Hames said the plan was not developed in isolation but was part of a State and Federal initiative tackling problems affecting the wider Swan-Avon catchment.

"No matter how effective and successful remedial actions are on the coastal plain, they will be compromised if the greater Avon catchment is not rehabilitated and returned to better health," he said.

The cost of the core recommendations is \$16.5 million over five years. Other actions which depend on the result of trials or research could cost up to a further \$9.2 million.

The *Action Plan* is based on building on existing activity and providing opportunities for industry and community involvement.

*"Everyone in  
the community  
has a direct  
interest in  
protecting the  
Swan and  
Canning rivers"*

Minister For  
Water Resources,  
Dr Kim Hames, MLA



Find out more about the *Draft Action Plan* and how you can have a say.  
See page 4.

Care and maintenance of the catchment and river environment extends to – and depends on – future generations, as acknowledged by the Draft Action Plan.

The plan recommends strengthening the Ribbons of Blue program to provide better support for school and community education programs in the Swan catchment.

Ribbons of Blue is a school and community education program focussing on monitoring water quality, understanding the results and converting this into action, such as stream or wetland restoration.

Appointing full-time, rather than part-time, co-ordinators in the Swan Catchment, and providing additional technical support for teachers and community groups for water quality monitoring, will be of great benefit.

Through curriculum-linked field activities, students develop knowledge, skills and values to help them become environmentally aware responsible citizens.

There is also a flow-on effect to parents, teachers and others



**education**

for the future

Students from Woodlands Primary School sample water quality in Jackadder Lake

at schools, as well as people in local government and community groups associated with joint projects.

Individual teachers are central to the program's success. The availability of helpful resources, professional development, and support for their projects greatly enhances teacher, then student and community involvement.

Find out more about Ribbons of Blue on the internet <http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au/ribbons> or phone (08) 9278 0300.

## ACTION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE RIVER



The Swan Catchment Centre is a one-stop-shop for information and technical advice.

Recommendations in the Draft Action Plan will strengthen the Catchment Centre's role in supporting community involvement in decision-making and practical activities.

The Swan Catchment Centre welcomes your enquiry:

187 Adelaide Terrace, East Perth

phone: (08) 9221 3840

e-mail: [saicc@wrc.wa.gov.au](mailto:saicc@wrc.wa.gov.au)

Riverlink website:

<http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au/swanavon>

### COMMUNITY AWARENESS

## Everybody has a role

The Draft Action Plan proposes a public awareness campaign, to be coordinated by the Swan River Trust, to raise community awareness about the river and its links to the catchment.

A high-profile campaign, involving television, press, and widespread distribution of information, will empower people to play their part in the cleanup through their own behaviour at home (for example wise water and fertiliser use) and at play. The Taskforce

believes that most people care about the future of the river and wish to do the right thing to ensure its health. Targeted, simple and practical information, made widely available, will

raise awareness of how individuals can do their bit.

Copies of posters on how you can help are available from the Water and Rivers Commission, phone (08) 9278 0300.

# a groundwater resource base

Good catchment planning is critical to the management of algal blooms in the Swan-Canning river system. The nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) responsible for the algal blooms reach the rivers via surface water and, less obviously, groundwater.

In November 1997, the Water and Rivers Commission started a three year NHT funded project to collect and interpret groundwater information both to evaluate the transport of nutrients through groundwater and to tackle salinity problems.

The **Swan Hydrogeological Resource Base and Catchment Interpretation** project will draw together the existing hydrogeological (groundwater) data in four priority sub-catchments of the Swan Catchment, investigate gaps in the information and present the findings in map, diagram and report form appropriate for land managers.

Close liaison with the community to identify issues, obtain data and distribute information is integral to the project. It is important to know the location of bores in the priority catchments to develop a program for sampling groundwater to clarify the movement of nutrients.

The Ellen Brook catchment, as a major contributor of nutrients, was given the highest priority for investigation followed by the Brockman River catchment. The Canning and Southern River catchments will be investigated in the next two years.

Supervising Hydrogeologist Robin Smith and hydrogeologists Rezina Shams and Robert Panasiewicz addressed the Ellen Brook Integrated Catchment Group in November last year to outline the proposed program.

The role of the project in addressing salinity issues was discussed recently at a meeting with members of Landcare and catchment groups in the Brockman River catchment.

Further community presentations will be made as information grows on

the connections between the groundwater, river water, salinity and nutrient transport.

For more information, contact the Water and Rivers Commission Groundwater Information Section on (08) 9278 0731.



## building

### on current activities

The Swan-Canning Cleanup Program Draft Action Plan recognises the extent and variety of existing activities being undertaken by government and community organisations.

Community organisations and special interest groups such as Ecoplan, Men of the Trees, Greening Western Australia, the Conservation Council, Wildflower Society, Environmental Weeds Action Network, Urban Bushland Council, Wetland Conservation Society and the WA Naturalists Club are a focus for people with conservation interests.

The Swan River Trust's Rivercare Directory (1996) lists over 30 community rivercare groups in the Swan catchment, and catchment groups are active and growing. All groups play a vital role in managing the river catchment.

Under recommendations in the Action Plan, support provided to catchment and community groups through the Swan Catchment Centre will be strengthened. The Centre offers meeting rooms, access to computers and the internet, technical advice, opportunities to publicise activities and technical and administrative support for catchment groups.

Training in best practices, for example in drain and stream restoration techniques and weed control, will allow groups to develop and share skills. Building the base of community support for conservation projects will assist groups to recruit volunteers and to set directions consistent with other initiatives.

#### Be a waterwise gardener

- Water early in the morning and give plants only what they need
- Drain paved areas to garden beds or soakwells to recharge the groundwater
- If you have a garden bore, use the water wisely

#### Be an ecological gardener

- Plant local trees and shrubs in your garden and road verge – they provide habitat for wildlife and use less water
- Mulch garden beds – you will use less water and fertiliser, promote healthy growth and see worms thrive

#### Be a pollution conscious gardener

- Take special care with pesticides and herbicides – they can harm insects and birds, nature's pest controllers, and they may eventually wash into your local wetland, killing frogs and other wildlife

# wetlands

## focus for

# schools

School students are invited to take part in the 1998 Water and Rivers Commission competition Focus on Wetlands.

To grab a share of the \$2000 prize pool, primary and secondary students choose a wetland near their school and develop an action plan to show what it is like, what they have discovered and what steps to take to protect it or restore it to a healthy environment.

Entrants are encouraged to visit the wetland, contact local councils and community groups for information, and show their findings in a poster. Students will make a model

of how they would like the wetland to look in the future.

Each winning entry will receive a certificate and \$250 for the school to use to extend learning resources or on an excursion. A grant of \$1000 will be awarded to an outstanding entry to support implementation of the project.

Entries close on 7 August 1998.

*For more details on the Focus on Wetlands competition, phone the Water and Rivers Commission on (08) 9278 0300.*

## Working Together

The Swan-Canning Cleanup Program task force includes representatives of: Swan River Trust, Agriculture WA, Ministry for Planning, WA Estuarine Research Foundation, WA Municipal Association, Water and Rivers Commission,

Swan-Avon Integrated Catchment Management Coordinating Group, Water Corporation, Department of Environmental Protection, CSIRO Division of Land and Water.



water on the web

The Swan Catchment Centre's 'Riverlink' Website has been updated and everyone is encouraged to surf it.

The site now contains more community and current natural resource information. Regular updates are planned. The Riverlink pages are an initiative of the Swan Avon Integrated Catchment Management Program.

<http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au/swanavon>

The Swan River Trust's website has a new look and is a convenient way to access the Swan River Landscape Atlas and information about the Swan-Canning Cleanup Program Draft Action Plan.

<http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au/srt>

The Water and Rivers Commission website is a resource for the bigger picture of water resource management in Western Australia, and has useful links to other 'watery' sites.

<http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au>

# ACTION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE RIVER

**Your chance to have your say on an Action Plan to clean up the Swan-Canning rivers and estuary.**

The Swan-Canning Cleanup Program Draft Action Plan has been released by the Minister for Water Resources for three months public comment.

- Copies of the *Draft Action Plan* can be viewed in your local library or at the Swan Catchment Centre, 187 Adelaide Terrace East Perth
- Copies of the plan, or a summary brochure, can be obtained free of charge from the Swan River Trust, or check our internet site <http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au/srt>

**Contact the Swan River Trust on  
(08) 9278 0400 for more information**

