

This report is for the calendar year January to December 2016 inclusive.

Banksia woodlands TEC listed under EPBC Act as 'endangered'

The Banksia Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain were listed as a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) at the level of 'endangered' under the EPBC Act, effective from 16 September 2016. This is most welcome.

The Approved Conservation Advice released at the time of listing is an excellent document; it is clear, concise and comprehensive. It serves as a basic reference and template for decision-making and when liaising with land managers of bushland sites, state agencies and local governments. To meet the objectives for conservation of the ecological community, actions should be to protect its further loss of extent (see page 33 of the Advice). This means no more clearing of Banksia woodlands.

The challenge now is for the federal Minister to make decisions according to his own Conservation Advice.

On 5th November, the UBC was pleased to host an informal celebration of the TEC listing at Cockburn Wetlands Centre, which many of you attended.

Governance failures: Bush Forever, endangered species and communities

In our annual report for 2015 we said: *'It is time the EPA initiated a process for statutory protection for all Bush Forever Areas and their linkages. And it is time to end the urban sprawl and continuing loss of Banksia woodlands and Carnaby's Cockatoo habitat causing serious decline in their population.'* These issues have not been addressed by the EPA or by other agencies in 2016.

The WAPC has failed to complete implementation of Bush Forever as planned and has failed to ensure protection of all Bush Forever sites. A bank of sites remains under WAPC ownership. They should have been ceded to the Crown as A class reserves for conservation and allocated to a suitable conservation land manager. Instead the DPC under the Green Growth Plan (GGP) proposes to allow loss of many sites in public ownership for development and infrastructure contrary to the government's own Bush Forever Plan.

This is totally unacceptable and the UBC has met with officers from the federal DOEE to explain the fundamental flaws in the GGP. It needs to be completely revised. The Perth region is a biodiversity hotspot and it is the state government's responsibility to make sure that we have a secure CAR conservation reserve system in place.

Alarming, the GGP proposes the loss of 70,000 ha from the conservation estate in Regional Parks, Bush Forever and other Crown reserves in the Perth-Peel region. It is predicted that half the population of Carnaby's Cockatoo in the Perth-Peel region will be lost due to clearing of habitat. This is contrary to the federally approved Recovery Plan for Carnaby's Cockatoo.

Attitude of infrastructure agencies

The complete lack of respect by government infrastructure agencies for environmental attributes and government policies for Bush Forever, ecological linkages, wetlands, local bushland and associated community group and UBC advice is appalling. Main Roads, Landcorp, Water Corporation and some local government authorities are the most notable offenders. The list of issues below gives examples. Roe 8 is just one of many cases.

Engaging with Ministers

Again we have had neither regular nor individual meetings with the Environment Minister or Planning Minister. We met Minister Donna Faragher's senior policy officer once.

Environmental Weeds Action Network (EWAN)

EWAN members voted (10 September 2016) to windup their organisation and to hand over their remaining funds and web content to the UBC. It is sad to see the end of EWAN as the members had such great expertise in environmental weeds. We look forward to some assistance and an increased focus on weeds in UBC.

The refusal of DPaW and of DAFWA to take a lead role, or indeed any role in controlling environmental weeds in the Perth-Peel regions generally, remains outstanding. So this is an ongoing challenge for us all with the next state government.

Neighbourhood Nature campaign

Co-ordinated by Colma Keating, we developed a pre-election Neighbourhood Nature campaign. A special thank you to Colma for all her professional work on this. It included a workshop, briefing of Labor MPs and candidates, attendance at various meetings, and on a positive note, organising the informal celebration of the TEC listing of our Banksia woodlands. The UBC calls for an end to clearing Banksia woodlands, now a listed TEC.

No response to date from Labor and Liberals to commit to end clearing of Banksia woodlands.

UBC Council meetings and events held 2016

- 26 February: Briefing by DPC's Simon Taylor on the Green Growth Plan (draft), David Mitchell and Geoff Barrett DPAW also present to answer questions.
- 8 March: AGM followed by Council meeting with guest speaker Dr Tom Hatton, Chairman EPA.
- 29 March: Workshop to help members write submissions on GGP and implications of GGP. Facilitator Colma Keating, Joel Peters DPC demonstrated on-line maps.
- 24 May: Ben Drew and Michael Hammond of DOW: 'Gnangara's Groundwater Future.
- 5 June: Guided walk by Cathie O'Neill of SERAG in Pelican Point.
- 29 June: David and Fleur Knowles (Spineless Wonders): Importance of macro-invertebrate biota to Banksia woodlands of Swan Coastal Plain.
- 24 August: Prof. Kingsley Dixon (Curtin Uni): What it means to live in a Biodiversity Hotspot.
- 3 September: Guided walk with Bronwen and Greg Keighery (Wildflower Society Perth branch) in Talbot Road Reserve, Stratton.
- 17 September: Guided walk in Harry Sandon Park, Attadale by Samantha Cullen of Friends of Harry Sandon Park.
- 19 October: Kate Brown (DPaW): Research findings after prescribed burn in Paganoni bushland.
- 22 November: Renata Zelinova: Connectivity: ecological linkages in Perth and Peel regions.
- 5 November: Colma Keating facilitator of Neighbourhood Nature workshop for members; followed by Celebration of Banksia woodlands TEC listing at Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre.

Team effort of Executive Committee and others

2016 has been a very busy year with the GGP out for comment, the Banksia woodlands TEC listing, and our pre-election campaign Neighbourhood Nature. All this is on top of our usual Council meetings and guided walks. Special thanks are due to our dedicated and hard-working executive committee: Secretary Margaret Owen, Treasurer Christine Allbeury, Web Manager and e-news producer Christine Richardson, Facebook co-ordinator Sara Saberi, events co-ordinator Cathie O'Neill, and Anna Le Souef, black cockatoo researcher. There are many more dedicated helpers: Editor and compiler of the *Urban Bush Telegraph*, Renata Zelinova; technician Kim Sarti, Neighbourhood Nature Campaign Co-ordinator Colma Keating, submission writers Kevin McLean, and many others who contribute submissions and attend agency meetings with us. The generous spirit of co-operation and mutual support you have all given to each other, to the UBC, and to me personally is wonderful: sincere thanks to all.

Submissions, issues and campaigns

The table below is a summary of the issues and key events that involved our attention during 2016.

No	Site or issue	Submission or action on	Outcome
1	Underwood Ave bushland BF 119	Beautiful photograph book of 3,076 signatures and comments in a petition by the Friends group to UWA to withdraw their housing proposal. Copies delivered for UWA Senate members. Site meeting early 22 Feb at Underwood with Tim Wyndham (Director Major Assessments west) and Rebecca Gee (Assistant Director). Marg Owen, Mary Gray and Lyn Jennings attended. <i>Met at 5:45am to see Red-tails leave night roost opposite Underwood bush.</i>	Copies not passed on to Senate members. ?

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		<p>Under GGP, site 119 is shown as urban class of action.</p> <p><u>Ministerial approval of UWA development was valid for 5 years and has now lapsed.</u></p> <p>UBC Letter 12 June to WAPC requesting WAPC acquisition of whole BF site 119 with MRIF.</p> <p>UWA applied for extension of state approval.</p> <p>UWA Chancellor said they need the \$100 million to fund UWA's 'refreshment'.</p>	<p><i>Meaning not clear. Many conservation areas occur in urban zoned land.</i></p> <p><u>Letter from WAPC Chairman accepting that state government approval has expired, and that Commonwealth approval under EPBC Act never achieved.</u></p> <p>Extension approved but gap in dates. EPA Chairman refused to meet with Friends of Underwood for explanation of questionable extension.</p>
2	<p>Strategic Assessment Perth & Peel Region: Green Growth Plan (GGP)</p>	<p>1. Mary Gray met with DOE staff in Canberra to express our concerns and failures in the GGP documents. Carnaby's population decline; Bush Forever not completed, has stalled and offsets not transferred to conservation estate. Banksia woodlands not considered listed as required being on FPAL.</p> <p>2. UBC reps met with DOE staff Bruce Edwards, James Barker, Tim Wyndham 1 June 2016 in Perth. We presented key concerns (failure to include Bush Forever as CAR reserve system, clearing of 26,500 ha Carnaby's bushland habitat, clearing of pines, contrary to Carnaby's Recovery Plan, potential loss of 70,000ha of conservation lands, failure to include Banksia woodlands as if a listed TEC). We gave them copies of many informative community submissions. Many incursions into BF sites proposed via odd terminology: eg infrastructure will 'intersect' with 191 out of 282 BF Areas.</p> <p>3. No maps provided. UBC requested maps and time extension for submissions.</p> <p>4. UBC held workshop facilitated by Colma Keating to help people prepare submissions as documents <u>so confusing</u>. Maps presented by Joel Peters of DPC.</p> <p>5. <u>UBC attended field trip 21 July organised by DPC to Gnangara pines area.</u> UBC attended Workshop by DPC held 13 September post field trip.</p> <p>6. <u>UBC folk attended many meetings with groups and agencies to discuss shortfalls, omissions, errors. Failure to recognise Bush Forever program as a CAR reserve system, failure to ensure all BF sites protected and many proposed to be lost or reduced and fragmented.</u></p>	<p><i>DOE advised if population of endangered species declines >10%, listing should be 'uplisted'. Applies to Carnaby's.</i></p> <p><i>Huge areas of feeding habitat to be cleared – (>30,000ha) considered a significant loss 'within the context of a species decline'. ~50% loss in Carnaby's population predicted.</i></p> <p><i>UBC requested extension of time and maps to be made available</i></p> <p><i>Lots of detailed submissions lodged.</i></p> <p><i>On-line maps presented at workshop.</i></p> <p><i>Simon Taylor, Adam Byass of DPC taken on field trip to Forrestdale area with Friends of F and UBC to show key management issues.</i></p> <p><i>Limestone TEC areas to be protected with no mineral exploration or mining permitted.</i></p> <p><i>Areas of pines already harvested and not revegetated over past ~20 years leaves legacy of extensive net loss of Carnaby's forage and roost habitat. Serious failure of government.</i></p> <p><i>Bush Forever proposed to be 'unravelling'. BF is the 'great barrier reef' issue of the west.</i></p>

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3	New Biodiversity Conservation Bill	No scientific advisory committee in the Bill for listing rare species and communities. Community groups asked for this as seen as essential. Numerous deficiencies in the Bill well described in the EDO White paper and by The Leeuwin Group. Mary Gray was a speaker at the Research Week seminar at ECU Joondalup.	<i>Community advice ignored. No such committee in the final Act. Minister has ability to approve a species can go extinct. Lots of ministerial discretion in the Act.</i>
4	Bush Forever	UBC's 'Call for Action' Oct 2015 handed to Minister Jacob. Five UBC reps met 21 October with Jason Gordon - Policy Officer to Minister Faragher concerning various BF sites and need to purchase last blocks, finalise with conservation land manager and protect them. BF Sites discussed: Anstey-Keane Damplands, Harrisdale Swamp, Cottonwood Cres BF additions, Underwood Ave, Farrall Rd Stratton BF 309. Also general planning failures in BF sites.	<i>Ignored. Implementation still stalled. Ignored in GGP. Disappointing that Minister Faragher and Tim Hillyard did not attend. Harrisdale Swamp being finalised with restoration works by WAPC. No action on other sites.</i>
5	Shenton RPH redevelopment by Landcorp	Landcorp display shows high rise and new roads in bushland linkage Landcorp referred the worst case scenario with <u>all bushland cleared</u> to federal govt under EPBC Act. This is different from the proposal presented to community. UBC met WAPC Chairman and DOP staff 20 April and showed evidence of conflicting advice from EPA, and proposed clearing of best quality bushland in linkage. UBC met EPA Chairman and OEPA on inconsistent advice. UBC made a deputation to WAPC committee seeking protection of the entire ecological linkage. Advised that the plan has been modified but we were not told how, so we were addressing the committee without knowing the final plan.	<i>Consistent advice to retain the linkage totally ignored. 'Stop the clock' requested because of this discrepancy ignored. Declared not a Controlled Action under EPBC Act despite 80 submissions to DOE Chairman WAPC expressed concern and committed to seek advice from EPA Chairman. No significant changes and WAPC and Minister approved plan with high rise and roads in linkage.</i>
6	Freeway extension through Neerabup National Park	QREG notified Minister Jacob of non-compliance by Main Roads with Ministerial conditions and offsets.	?
7	Ocean Reef Marina + development in BF 325	Marina proposal being formally assessed by EPA. Is in Minister Jacob's electorate and he declared a conflict of interest and will step aside as Minister for the decision on the proposal.	<i>Minister to step aside of his role to decide on EIA.</i>
8	Banksia woodlands TEC assessment and listing	UBC commented on the well written draft description of the ecological community. Deadline for final advice from Scientific Committee to Minister is 31 July 2016. Then Minister has 90 days to make his decision on listing. Scientific Advisory Committee recommended listing as 'endangered' Approved Conservation Advice with the listing by Minister is comprehensive but clear and concise - an excellent document which provides a manual for decision-making on Banksia woodlands conservation and protection.	Advice lodged with Minister before deadline. <i>Minister decided to list the ecological community as 'endangered', listing effective 16 September 2016.</i> UBC held a celebration of the listing at Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre, Greg Keighery and Mary Gray spoke to the listing and cut the cake!

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		UBC asked when briefings will be done by DOEE to government agencies, LGA's, community groups.	<i>No response as yet</i>
9	Gnangara Mound groundwater decline	UBC met with DOW to hear about their review of the Groundwater Allocation Plan UBC emphasised over-abstraction is the key issue and reduced allocations essential to reduce drawdown.	<i>Ben Drew, Mike Hammond of DOW gave presentation at UBC meeting describing their review process.</i>
10	Dianella bushland media zone redevelopment of Channel 7	City of Stirling failed to properly manage impacts of adjacent Channel 7 development on Cottonwood Crescent bushland (BF 43). Management plan not updated or implemented. Met City of Stirling staff on site to explain issues.	Edge effects could have been avoided.
11	Lots 1 & 2 Gay Street Dianella, Channel 9	Lot 1 is part of additional Bush Forever Area no. 4 which was supposed to be added to BF 43 Cottonwood Crescent but was not rezoned to P&R with the rest of Channel 9 bushland.	
12	Mangles Bay Marina/Pt Peron BF development	WAPC Major Amendment hearing attended 25 May 2016. UBC emphasised that WAPC would be held responsible for likely destruction of CE TEC Lake Richmond thrombolites – the only known such assemblage. A living museum of origins of life on earth.	? not decided by end of 2016
13	Perth's Urban Forest concept	Greens launched a project called: Perth's Urban Forest, a WA2.0 Project at a well-attended public meeting.	Good concept, supported by UBC.
14	Bush Forever (BF) - ongoing	UBC produced a table showing 'actions' for each site in the GGP. This was compiled from various maps. Bush Forever introduced as government policy in 2000 for completion by 2010. GGP undermines BF. <u>Operational funding for DPAW to manage sites:</u> Needed in operational budget (not just project funding). Suggested Regional Teams for PMR under the District Structure and with support from Urban Nature. OK for some sites to be managed by LGA's	<i>GGP proposes to permit many developments and infrastructure incursions into BF sites that are already in public ownership. Shows likely extensive destruction of Bush Forever sites and implementation over long periods contrary to BF policy and plan for CAR reserve system.</i> <i><u>Operational funding for management must be allocated by government</u></i>
15	Balannup wastewater pressure main through Anstey-Keane Damplands, BF 342	Water Corporation persists with its proposal despite the local road proposal being rejected by EPA/Minister for Environment as environmentally unacceptable in formal EIA. Could easily be avoided by locating the pipeline around existing roads, or better still by upgrading the Harrisdale Pump station and pumping direct to wastewater treatment plant to south west.	
16	Farrall Road BF 309	Support to Blackadder Woodbridge Catchment Group in objections to Local Structure Plan by City of Swan. Destruction of wetland vegetation and water course.	<i>Clearing is contrary to government BF policy of presumption against clearing on eastern side of Swan Coastal Plain</i>
17	Lathlain oval development	Community objection to large mature trees including Eucalypts proposed for removal for ovals – black cockatoo habitat.	
18	Scarborough MRA redevelopment	MRA road proposal through coastal dunes in 2 x BF sites. New group: Friends of Trigg Beach formed to oppose these roads in coastal dunes. MRA proposed to take over vesting of the 2 x BF sites from City of Stirling. Considerable community	<i>City of Stirling deferred their decision at successive</i>

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		opposition to the MRA road proposal through the coastal dunes.	<i>meetings after many community members asked questions and objected.</i>
19	Roe 8 Highway extension: Rethink the Link	Court ruling on Roe 8 that EPA's assessment and approval was unlawful was appealed by state government in Supreme Court of Appeals.	<i>Government appeal upheld.</i>
20	Sub-regional structure plans by WAPC - ongoing	UBC 5 minute deputation 15 August to WAPC on our submission. Emphasised failure to include <u>their own BF policies and plans</u> as CAR reserve system, failure to ensure all BF sites legally secured for conservation. Unfinished business of WAPC and government.	?
21	York-Merredin Road widening by Main Roads	Submission was made in 2015 against granting of a clearing permit. Appeal by UBC 21 July against granting of clearing permit (CPS 6800/1) which is at variance to 5 and possibly another 3 clearing principles (out of 10). Met with Appeals Convenor 22 September and made strong case for a permit to be refused based on the spirit and intent of the regulations.	<i>Permit recommended to be granted. Appeal ignored. Clearing permit granted. Failure in governance as a permit is contrary to the words of the regulations.</i>
22	Groundwater recharge pipeline by Water Corp	Meeting 14 October of 4 UBC reps with Water Corp concerning the location of the pipeline. We recommended avoiding placement through BF, and relocating the pipeline on the east side of Wanneroo Road to avoid significant edge effects and root disturbance in BF. Also no dewatering at all and instead use wet construction techniques in order to avoid impacts of ASS.	?
23	Bayswater wetland	After initial clearing of wetland vegetation (large paperbarks) at Bayswater, work ordered to stop by Donna Faragher (Minister for Planning). New group formed: 'No Houses in Wetlands' Rally held 11 October at Parliament House well attended. Speakers against clearing of wetlands.	<i>Ministers Faragher and Jacob spoke and received a rowdy reception. Chris Tallentire made commitment to restore the wetlands EPP if Labor elected.</i>
24	Maddington-Kenwick SEA Precincts 3A & 3B	Industrial estate proposed and approved adjacent to Adjacent to Brixton Street Wetlands, BF 387. Not assessed by EPA despite significant hydrological impacts possible and likely.	<i>Could affect Brixton St Is Wetlands GDE: No provision for prevention of dewatering and hydrological impacts on wetland ecosystem.</i>
25	Lots 55 & 56 Cottonwood Cres Dianella	Former Channel 10 land and Lot 56 now owned by same developer. Structure Plan proposal ignores presence of patch of Banksia woodland TEC in Lot 56, and ignores DPaW advice to retain it as natural POS. Also inadequate consultants advice assumes the patch is not a state TEC SCP 20(a). UBC submission to City of Stirling recommends retention of bushland patch as is TEC SCP 20(a), and no levelling of house sites. Instead retain natural land slope, increase density to high rise as views spectacular.	<i>Further botanical survey and report by Friends of Dianella show Banksia woodland is state TEC SCP 20(a).</i> <i>Proposal should have been referred under EPBC Act as Banksia Woodlands TEC.</i> <i>Outcome not yet decided.</i>