



**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Tuesday 3rd March 2009 held at Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street West Perth, 7.30pm**

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This report is for the calendar year January to December 2008 inclusive.

The Urban Bushland Council had another busy year in 2008. Our membership was steady and we welcomed new members: Medina Residents Group, Friends of Woodman Point, Friends of Lake Gwelup, SERCUL. We completed the City Bush Guides project from 2007, and although we did not receive any administrative funding, were able to retain our office here in Lotteries House and fund a program of activities. We had most enjoyable visits to Woodman Point, Garvey Park, and Lake Gwelup (with PUBF and City Bush Guides) due to the warm hospitality of the respective Friends groups. We also visited Whiteman Park and the Nursery run by David Hancock. Thank you to all.

The lack of funding sources for administration of umbrella groups like ours remains a major concern. We have been advised that the new Government will address this situation at least to some degree. Indeed the **Environmental Community Grants 2009** have just opened and one component is

*'support for major conservation/environmental organisations (\$120,000)'*

In the last 2 years the UBC has relied on donations, small administrative components of grants for projects, and some use of our meagre capital reserves. The UBC is most grateful to those who have generously donated. Late in the year however, we were advised that our rent would double in 2009. The Executive Committee has recommended that our subscriptions be raised by \$5 and I draw your attention to the motion to this effect.

### **Bold Park Guides**

A proposal to establish a guiding program for Bold Park was a positive outcome of our City Bush Guides project 2007. A series of meetings were held but community stakeholders were confronted by resistance from the managing authority the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA). So the initiative has been taken up under the leadership of the Friends of Bold Park Bushland working with representatives from Birds Australia, the Wildflower Society, the WA Naturalists' Club and the UBC. The Friends are applying to Lotterywest for funding to train and establish a group of Bold Park volunteer guides.

### **Perth Urban Bushland Fungi project (PUBF)**

Again the UBC participated on the Management Committee for PUBF. The lead organisation was again the WA Naturalists' Club and they received project funding from Lotterywest. This enabled employment of the same team: Roz Hart, Sarah de Beuger and Brett Glossop. Four surveys were conducted and we shall hear more later tonight when the reports are presented. Special thanks are due to the volunteer fungi leaders, survey participants, the host groups, members of the WA Naturalists' Club, Neale Bougher Mycologist DEC and staff of the WA Herbarium.

A highlight for the project was the launch of the new website by the Chief Scientist Professor Lyn Beazley. Congratulations to the PUBF team.

**Fire** In May we held a 'Fire Review' with key stakeholders and members presented case studies as a basis for discussion. Fire always sparks lively debate and hopefully it stimulated better communication and mutual respect amongst Friends groups, local FESA fire stations and land managers. Fire prevention by weed control, fire readiness and a focus on targeting arson remain key issues.

### **Bush Forever**

During the year we met with agency and Ministerial staff as well as the Minister for the Environment (Hon David Templeman) to encourage progress on the Major MRS Amendment for Bush Forever and the related

Statement of Planning Policy (SPP 2.8). We continued to advocate statutory protection for all Bush Forever sites, nature conservation as the permitted land use, no clearing of sites, much more funding to acquire sites, a mandatory requirement for all local authorities to prepare 'Local Biodiversity Strategies according to Perth Biodiversity Planning Guidelines by WALGA, and community education about Bush Forever.

We also advocated a management obligation by landholders of sites: a measure not possible under planning instruments according to DPI, but possible (we suggest) under the Environmental Protection Act. The resistance to such a requirement is remarkable. There are many sites which are degrading through avoidable neglect and this makes no sense. We presented the new Minister for the Environment Hon Donna Faragher with a proposal for a '*Bush Forever Management Unit*' in DEC ( \$2million in year 1, rising to \$5million thereafter, to co-ordinate appropriate standards of management and to provide on ground crews for DEC sites).

The good news is that in late December we were advised that the Amendment is 'ready to go to Parliament' and would do so at the next sitting in March 2009.

### **Clearing**

Land clearing and the loss of mature trees in suburbia remain issues of community concern. Members of the public contact us quite often and we do our best to help with advice and submissions.

The Clearing Regulations have failed to control clearing in the metro region, with exemptions applying liberally, clearing principles being ignored and no data collected, nor reported, on total area cleared each year. This situation is unacceptable for a biodiversity hotspot.

The UBC joined forces with the Conservation Council of WA and the Wildflower Society to present joint submissions to the Clearing Review Panel appointed by the Carpenter Government. The State election in September and change of Government interrupted the Panel's work. The incumbent Environment Minister has just last month directed the Panel to complete its work and report to Government.

During the year the UBC assisted members with campaigns and made many submissions which are listed in the attached table. The campaign to save Underwood Avenue Bushland has been quite tortuous. The UBC supported a rally organised by the Friends and we were able to brief Hon Colin Barnett about the significance of the Underwood Bush. Interestingly the Commonwealth under the EPBC Act has recommended against the Underwood proposal and also against the draft Major Development Plan for Jandakot Airport. State rejection of proposals in significant bushland was less forthcoming.

**In conclusion** I wish to acknowledge the tireless and hearty work by the UBC Executive Committee and their loyal support. We have done our best to provide a voice for the bush. The Urban Bushland Council is the network of member groups. Congratulations to all of you on your fine work in and on behalf of your local bushland.

## UBC SUBMISSIONS and ISSUES 2008

| No | Site or issue                         | Submission or action on  | Outcome  |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1  | Jandakot Airport                      | Draft Major Development Plan by Jandakot Airport Holdings (JAH)  | <b>DEWHA/Cth Minister for Environment recommended to Transport Minister the proposal not proceed</b><br>(proposal then withdrawn)  |
| 1A | <i>ibid</i>                           | 28 ha cleared in 2007 without approval   | No action by Cth or State  |
| 1B | <i>ibid</i>                           | Meeting with DEWHA about conservation issues including endangered species under EPBC Act <i>Caladenia huegelii</i> , Carnaby's Cockatoo  |  |
| 2  | Channel 9 bushland<br>Dianella        | Mirvac on site consultation with Friends of Dianella Bushland & UBC  | Mirvac survey reveals TEC, high conservation value. Community objection to housing made known to Mirvac. Report not available to Friends or UBC  |
| 2A | <i>ibid</i>                           | UBC request DEC's WATSCU assesses for TEC, threatened flora  | DEC refuses to supply assessment to UBC on grounds Mirvac refused permission. Advised TEC present, identity unclear as in transition zone  |
| 3  | Molloy Reserve<br>(adjoins Ch 9 bush) | Supported City of Stirling proposal to seek inclusion in Bush Forever  | Added to Bush Forever  |
| 4  | Gnangara Mound                        | Sustainability Strategy  |  |
| 5  | Bells Rapids,<br>Brigadoon            | 1050 ha proposal by Peet with 50% clearing, threat to water table.<br>Support to Brigadoon Progress Association  | Article by Daniel Hatch with photo in the West Australian. Under EPBC Act, deemed a controlled action because of the cockatoos.  |
| 6  | A-K Reserve                           | -Legislation for Athletics stadium and basketball stadium in place.<br>UBC appeal against conditions set with Clearing Permit<br>Letter of complaint to Appeals Convenor about bulldozing before appeal had closed   | Clearing Permit granted.<br>Old Tuarts bulldozed, linkage now very narrow. Bulldozing took place before appeal period closed.<br>Clearing considered not illegal   |
| 7  | Guildford cemetery                    | Appeal against clearing permit. Earlier EPA Bulletin had rejected similar proposals  | Minister approved clearing   |
| 8  | Underwood Ave<br>Bushland             | -Referral to Cth under EPBC Act for Carnaby's Cockatoo<br>-Public Rally held at Shenton car park area. Colin Barnett present and sought info on differences of Shenton, Bold Park<br>-Further info requested by Cth from UWA<br>-Later: amended offsets advertised by UWA.<br>-Demonstration by students and supporters at UWA. Media present. | Colin Barnett (in opposition) briefed on differences and conservation values<br><br><b>Draft recommendation by DEWHA/Environment Minister that proposal not proceed. Proposal withdrawn by UWA the day after draft Report placed on the DEWHA web site.</b><br>No decision yet by State Environment Minister |

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| 9  | Jindalee                                      | MRS Amendment to remove P&R reservation from coast and replace further inland, enabling more housing and car parks on coast. Attended WAPC hearing  | Not decided by 31/12/08   |
| 9A | <i>ibid</i>                                   | Letters to EPA Chairman 29.5.08, 11.10.08 and to Minister for the Environment, Youth 13.11.08 requesting formal assessment of the whole area of Jindalee  | No reply to letters as at 31/12/08  |
| 9B | <i>ibid</i>                                   | Alerted DEWHA to cockatoo habitat and the fact that the proposal had not been referred  | DEWHA compliance officers informed  |
| 10 | Lake Clifton - Lake Preston area              | FRAGYLE formed, support to their campaign   |   |
| 11 | Fiona Stanley Hospital site                   | Referred to Cth under EPBC Act<br>Extensive submissions by UBC, Friends of Ken Hurst Park and Wetlands Conservation Society   | Considerable offsets required by Cth for Carnaby's sets a precedent                               |
| 12 | Changes to Assocns Incorp Act                 | UBC attended meeting on draft model as rep for environment groups   | Significant changes from original proposals: no Public Officer, also other changes                |
| 13 | Perth Airport                                 | -Environ Consultative Group (ECG), input to new Environ Strategy<br>-Attended Master Plan workshop<br>-withdrew from ECG as UBC contributions ignored, process not consultative, thus waste of time                           |   |
| 14 | Yunderup                                      | Housing proposal, Acid Sulphate Soil (ASS) high risk. Referral under EPBC Act   | Controlled action under EPBC Act for migratory birds  |
| 15 | South Yunderup, Murray River mouth area       | DEC workshop (by Groundwater Hydrology staff) on Acid Sulfate Soil (ASS) and site visit. Damage alarming: drains pH 2<br>Contaminated sites now barren resulting from river dredging  | New housing built on 'hot' site with drains pH 2.<br>Powerful demonstration to workshop attendees |
| 16 | Iopollo Road, Shire of Gingin                 | Application for clearing 50 ha: Area Permit Lot 26 diagram 65445 Breera Shire of Gingin, Stock Piling 50ha (CPS 2440/1<br>Impacts on Chandala Swamp & creek, P3 & P4 flora, waterbird habitat, ?TEC, in Ellen Brook catchment | Application withdrawn,<br>New proposal likely   |
| 17 | Anstey-Keane Dampland Forrestdale BF site 342 | City of Armadale proposal for road through BF site. Second most plant species diverse area on SCP in PMR.<br>Requested local MP (Alannah MacTiernan) direct Council to withdraw proposal. Referred to EPA as PUEA             | Proposal not withdrawn.<br>EPA formal assessment at PER   |
| 18 | Forrestdale stage 4                           | Objection to Minor MRS Amendment to rezone rural Lots 53, 54 to urban & PP High School. Site with wetlands adjoins Anstey-Keane Damplands (BF 342)  | Not decided as at 31.12.08<br>(Objection dismissed Jan 09)  |
| 19 | Stephenson Highway road reserve in Bold Park  | Meeting of Friends of Bold Park Bushland & agencies with Minister for Planning, & Giz Watson to seek removal of road reserve.   | Verbal agreement by Minister.<br>?Outcome   |

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|    |   | UBC support. No justification in terms of traffic  |   |
| 20 | Parks & Protected Areas Forum (national organisation) | UBC input to agenda  | 'Agenda for Action' released after national conference in 2007  |
| 21 | Lake Gwelup Reserve BF site 212                       | Community forums held by City of Stirling. Support for elevation of reserve status to 'A' class reserve  |   |
| 22 | Drovers Place Wanneroo                                | 34ha site adjacent to Yellagonga Regional Park . Submission City of Wanneroo. MRS minor rezoning Amendment, wetland part CCW and adjoins CCW, wetland buffer   | Not assessed by EPA Rezoning not yet decided. City of Wanneroo vote that Structure plan is satisfactory subject to modification |
| 23 | Ranford Rd/Southern River Rd Forrestdale              |  | Small additional area added to Bush Forever based on UBC advice   |
| 24 | Hepburn Heights Bushland                              | The Story of Hepburn Heights by Alan Lloyd and Friends of HHTs Bushland. Letter of support and liaison with City of Joondalup  | City of Joondalup grant of \$10,000 to help publish   |
| 25 | Clearing Regulations Review Panel                     | Together with CCWA, Wildflower Society made oral presentation to Panel on 11 & 18 August   | Work by Panel suspended after election in September. New Minister undecided at 31.12.08   |
| 26 | Western Power Transmission lines to Hills etc         | Liaison and support to Graeme Rundle in lobbying for review with less impact on bushland   |   |
| 27 | Spraying of sumps in Cities of Joondalup & Stirling   | Requested progress report on DEC investigation (started 2007)  | DEC advised nothing to report as yet  |
| 28 | Telstra site Landsdale                                | Application for permit to clear 1701 native trees. Site visited: Bassendean Central & South vegetation in excellent condition, with CCW wetlands. Submission 30.10.09 to Nat Veg Conservation Branch, DEC. Recommended purchase of bushland blocks opposite side Alexander Drive as offset | Clearing permit granted but number of trees reduced by 40   |
| 29 | Carnaby's Cockatoo                                    | DEC seminar Dec 1 and review of recovery plan. Carnaby's continuing to decline   | Draft recommendations for recovery sent to participants for comment   |
| 30 | Lots 37 - 47 Tomah Rd Welshpool                       | Banksia woodland and transition to wetland (Tomah Swamp). Requested DPI/WAPC purchase site for conservation as advertised for sale.  | Action not known  |
| 31 | Bedbrook Place Shenton Park                           | Requested DPI/WAPC purchase as part of regionally significant ecological linkage Shenton bushland - Underwood - Bold Park  | No action by DPI. No reply to letter of 28.12.08.   |
| 32 | Ken Hurst Park  | 90% Banksias died. Deaths blamed on dewatering for construction of road and rail   |   |
| 33 | Nowergup, City of Wanneroo                            | Appeal 25 March re clearing of 17 ha for turf production   | Permit granted with slight change in condition.   |