



PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 2nd March 2010 held at Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street West Perth, 7.30pm

This report is for the calendar year January to December 2009 inclusive.

While we may not be working directly for your group, we are working at Government level to protect our bushland and wetlands for all. We have put in lots of submissions and appeals, attended hearings, supported groups where their bushland is threatened and in their activities, responded to enquiries from members of the public, met government officers, met members of Parliament, had a disallowance motion tabled in the Upper House (Jindee), liaised with the Conservation Council and others on big picture issues such as clearing and proposed changes to the Environmental Protection Act, ran a very successful City Bush Guides course at Whiteman Park, and had a presence at Garden Week, educating the public about bushland weeds.

In 2009 we welcomed new member groups: Friends of North Ocean Reef - Iluka Foreshore, Friends of Paganoni Swamp, Friends of Wireless Hill, Stirling Natural Environment Coastcare. We are grateful for the support we received as groups rejoined and support the UBC. We value highly our growing list of supporters.

Over the years the UBC has enjoyed regular meetings with successive Environment Ministers. But not in 2009. We had just one meeting with Minister Faragher and none with the Minister for Planning; the Arts, despite promises of quarterly meetings with both. It seems the community interest in bushland is not considered important by the Barnett government. Opposition MPs and especially the Greens are readily accessible and most helpful.

Bush Forever is still no further advanced, and unacceptable land clearing continues. On the positive side, our projects have done well.

Perth Urban Bushland Fungi project

We continued our role on the Management Committee of the fungi project in supporting the WA Naturalists' Club and the fungi team at the Herbarium. DEC employed Dr Neale Bougher as Mycologist at the Herbarium on short term contracts enabling his scientific leadership of the project. Fungi surveys focussed on the Perth hills and the reports are already on the website www.fungiperth.org.au. Special acknowledgement is due to Kim Sarti for his exacting work in creating and managing Excel spreadsheets and various flow charts that attract funding and keep things on track.

There were two special highlights: the launch of '*Fungi of the Perth Region and Beyond*' by WA Chief Scientist Professor Lyn Beazley; and the fungi project was a finalist in the WA Science Awards. This is an exceptional achievement for a community science project conducted at a professional level - and it has become a role model for others interstate.

City Bush Guides

An Environmental Community grant enabled us to train 18 City Bush Guides at Whiteman Park, co-ordinated very capably by Lesley Shaw. Hon Alison Xamon MLC presented guides with Certificates recognising they had completed the UBC course. (Notably this does not provide any accredited certification). Many of the guides have signed up for guiding at Whiteman Park.

UBC Birthday Calendar

To help raise awareness of the intrinsic beauty in Perth's bushland, and to promote the beautiful photography by Margaret Owen, we decided to produce a birthday calendar. It was ready just before Christmas and it is pleasing to report that we have already covered costs from sales, and we are now in fundraising mode. Marg

is commended for her generosity and her amazing ability to inspire others through her photos and her intimate descriptions of nature.

Cockatoo publication for the International Year of Biodiversity 2010

There is widespread concern for the declining habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoos. For the International Year of Biodiversity we decided that we would attempt to produce a book about the three species of Cockatoos for general readership as there is a lack of readily accessible information.

Survey of members

According to our member survey (of 25 groups), the key issues for urban bushland are still clearing and all types of development especially roads; the lack of management and poor standards of management by local governments in particular; vandalism, inappropriate recreation (off road vehicles, tracks, trampling etc) and rubbish dumping is common. Community apathy through to abuse and general disrespect for bushland are big issues in suburban Perth. And weeds, feral animals and fire are key issues.

For the groups themselves, the key issues are funding, gaining volunteers and getting active participation from local people, and especially by younger people. Difficulties in communication with bush neighbours and local residents and developers also rated highly. Raising community awareness of the values of the bush and saving bushland are pivotal.

Groups were asked what they would like the UBC to focus on over the next two years.

The responses were:

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| • lobbying politicians | 16 |
| • more money for management | 12 |
| • community awareness | 11 |
| • ending clearing | 10 |
| • Bush Forever | 10 |
| • getting media coverage | 7 |
| • fire management | 6 |

There was a strong focus on local government and the need to lobby them for increased resourcing of management and improved management. *'Lobby on behalf of Friends Groups on local issues particularly with local government who don't like to listen to small groups'; 'lobby local government to smarten up what they do in urban bushland areas'*

Many thanks to everyone who responded to the questionnaire. It is very helpful for the Executive to have input as to how we can best focus our limited resources. It has been very handy to be able to slip in your views and concerns when we are talking with politicians and government folk.

Many thanks to our dedicated and hard working Executive members who work so well together as a team. We have done our best to support groups who come to us for information and to provide a voice for the bush. It is really the energy and passion of member groups which provide the collective voice and wisdom of the UBC.

UBC Events

- Demonstration of Urban Monitor by Dr Don McFarlane CSIRO during Conservation Week (1 April) at the Leeuwin Centre.
- At Garden Week (16-21 April) a display of ~35 bushland weeds which are garden escapees. Good public interaction.
- UBC speaker M Owen at *'Bring Back the Bush to Mosman Park'* (24 May).
- Visit (9 August) to Stirling Natural Environment Coastcare (SNEC) achievements in coastal dunes restoration.
- Bungendore Bush Breakfast in Bungendore Park (8 Nov) and launch of *Birds of Bungendore* book, by Professor Lyn Beazley, WA Chief Scientist.
- Support to EWAN Seminar *'Community Weed Needs'* at Canning River Eco Education Centre Cannington (19 Nov)
- Launch by Bronwen Keighery of the UBC's *Birthday Calendar* with photography by Margaret Owen, at the Henderson Centre Star Swamp, at the Christmas function (5 Dec) held by the Northern Suburbs and Perth branches of the Wildflower Society of Western Australia.

UBC SUBMISSIONS and ISSUES 2009

In establishing the Urban Bushland Council, one of the key objectives was, and still is, to seek statutory protection for urban bushland. The introduction of Bush Forever in December 2000 with a 10 year implementation plan was a major step toward that goal. The statutory recognition of Bush Forever sites and related lands, however, in the MRS Amendment, *has still not been passed by parliament*. Acquisition and management of sites is progressing, but is far from complete.

We have continued to support groups in their campaigns to retain areas and to manage them. The table below is a summary of the issues that came to our attention during 2009.

| No | Site or issue | Submission or action on | Outcome |
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| 1 | Clearing Regulations Review panel | Substantial joint submission with CCWA, Wildflower Society, Wilderness Society | Middle report ignored most of our recommendations |
| 2 | Jandakot Airport | EPBC Act -Proposed clearing 167ha nationally significant bush, rich in orchids incl <i>Caladenia huegelii</i> . Extensive submission by Friends of Ken Hurst Park | |
| 3 | Aust's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2020 - consultation draft | DEWHA presentation in Perth No targets so nothing to be measured and evaluated. Poor document, backward step from 2001-2005 objectives & targets | Letter of concern by many eastern states scientists - Prof Arthington and Simon Neville. UBC concerns similar. |
| 4 | Baldivis Swamp, City of Rockingham | Appeal against Proposal to burn swamp not assessed by EPA. Useful discussions with David Moort. EO City of Rockingham who opposed burning | Appeal dismissed. but UBC recommendations included in Minister's informal advice |
| 5 | Perth Airport Master Plan and Environment Strategy | UBC submission on new drafts. UBC opposed to any further clearing | |
| 6 | Lots 47, 56 Tomah Rd Welshpool | CCW wetland, linkage on E side SCP, Southern River veg complex. Appeal against clearing permit. | Adjacent Lot 46 (same CCW) already cleared after EPA EIA with offset purchase of Ioppolo Rd Chittering |
| 7 | Gnangara Mound | Draft Gnangara Mound Sustainability Strategy (GSS) – workshop. Over abstraction of groundwater for public supply and private bores resulting in <i>loss of veg & wetlands</i> , Acid Sulphate Soils and acidification at the water table. No meters for private use so total use unknown. | UBC advocates meters on all private and public bores and payment per volume used; opposes agricultural uses on intake areas to Mound. Final GSS not yet released. |
| 8 | Roe Highway stage 8 | Submission to DEWHA. Public Rally well attended by local community. Save Beelir Wetlands Group formed; North Lake Residents Action Group proactive. | Controlled action under EPBC Act. Formal assessment by EPA New local MP (Lab) opposes Roe 8 |
| 9 | Brigadoon near Bells Rapids | 450 ha of semi-rural subdivision into 1.5 – 5ha blocks, +400ha to be added to Walyunga National Park. V large Marri trees at risk, important migratory path for Carnaby's Cockatoo, & habitat. Support to Brigadoon Progress Association | Controlled action under EPBC Act. Threat to integrity of Bells Rapids. Extreme risk in event of wildfire |
| 10 | Woodvale Local Structure Plan | Attended meeting at City of Wanneroo (From 2008) | |

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| 11 | Paganoni Swamp BF site 395 | SW & Peel Structure Plan shows rezoning of 48ha Tuart woodland -managed for conservation by DEC- to urban for transit oriented development Meeting of Friends of Paganoni, UBC & others with Chair WAPC | |
| 12 | Lot 1 plan 3841 Maida Vale | Appeal against proposed clearing | Proposal withdrawn |
| 13 | Ranford Rd, City of Armadale | MRS minor Amendment to rezone to urban, includes Shepherds Court Reserve. Hearing Committee | Advised at hearing that no intention to clear the reserve and reserve to be retained and managed by City of Armadale |
| 14 | MRS Omnibus Amendment - Bush Forever sites | Series of minor changes in ~15 LGAs Submission on addition of small block on Dianella Drive to be added to BF site 43 Cottonwood Cres- with advice from Friends of Dianella Bushland | |
| 15 | Lowlands | New power lines and clearing proposed through Bush Forever site. | No formal proposal yet |
| 16 | Underwood Ave Bushland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lobbied local MLA Bill Marmion with FOUA - Sought WAPC support to acquire lot for sale on Bedbrook Place in Greenway no 19 - letter to Cancer Council requesting retention of large Jarrah, Tuart & understorey connection through proposed carpark - UBC & Friends of Underwood Ave met Appeals Convenor - Picnic rally with students outside site - met DEC Director Nature Conservation Gordon Wyre re Cockatoos in PMR & Underwood bushland <p>In SAT, UWA v. City of Nedlands over failure to progress ODP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forensic experiments by Dr Ian Dadour with dead pigs in Underwood - letter to UWA requesting removal of beehives | <p>Minister decided appeals on EPA assessment, 2 grounds upheld re 1: Carnaby's Cockatoos; 2: Fire management plan. Minister has not yet made a decision on the proposal. Proposal was subject to controlled action under EPBC Act but no proposal before Commonwealth</p> <p>Case dismissed, no jurisdiction by SAT</p> <p>Beehives removed by UWA</p> |
| 17 | Environmental Protection Act Amendment Bill | Various changes to reduce opportunity for public scrutiny of proposals via third party appeals. EDO advice sought | EDO advice received. Workshops etc with CCWA to be held 2010. Greens to propose amendments |
| 18 | Standing Cte on Public Administration - Recreation Activities within Public Drinking Water Source Areas | Proposal to open up water supply catchments to recreation opposed. Introduces vegetation degradation by trail bikes, weeds, Dieback; increases fire risk and degrades water quality | |
| 19 | Lot 7 Buffalo Rd Parkfield | Appeal against level of assessment on proposal for sand mine - 'not assessed' by EPA, to be handled by Pt V Clearing regulations. Area subject to EPA Bulletin No 4. | (NB From 2010: Appeals Convenor advised that on review EPA wanted to formally assess and Minister will be advised to remit the proposal to |

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| | | | EPA for formal assessment.) |
| 20 | Fire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaison with FESA about fire management in 5 sites: Landsdale Conservation Park, Star Swamp, Forrestdale, Signal Hill, Lightning Swamp. - Amendments to Bushfires Act closes loophole on arson in bushland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UBC project not funded, too late in year for on site meetings with all stakeholders except at Signal Hill. Arson in bushland now subject to severe penalties including life imprisonment |
| 21 | Graceful Sun Moth | Surveys in March co-ordinated by Nicole Willis | |
| 22 | Spraying of sumps in Cities of Joondalup & Stirling | Investigation by DEC under environmental harm legislation | Ongoing. |
| 23 | EPA administrative procedures | Revised procedures | Only 2 levels of assessment, and only one with public comment period (PER). Other changes |
| 24 | Planning threats to 5 Bush Forever sites: Bold Park, Paganoni, Ocean Reef, Anstey-Keane Wetlands, Beeliar Wetlands | Presentations by group representatives to Chairman WAPC Gary Prattley, & Tim Hilliard concerning conflicts between conservation and planning land uses. | |
| 25 | Perth Biodiversity Project & SW Biodiversity Project | Lobbying to support continuing funding through State NRM process after Cth NHT & CC funding ceased. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perth Biodiversity Project fully funded by NRM for 2009/10. - SWBP not funded. - Launch of PBP Planning Tool (GIS) for LGAs by Minister for Planning |
| 26 | Bush Forever | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued to lobby for MRS Amendment for BF and related lands & SPP 2.8 to be presented to Parliament - Advocated to DEC Swan Region and Minister for a Bush Forever Management Unit in DEC (building on Urban Nature) - lobbied for common signage for all sites to be progressed to fruition - lobbied for protection of Greenways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MRS Amendment & SPP still not presented despite promises - no progress on proper funding for management co-ordination - designs done but no further progress - no progress |
| 27 | Carnaby's Cockatoos | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Western suburbs flock monitored by Marg Owen, Paddy Berry - DEC commenced project to map metro feeding and roosting sites to determine which bushland areas are essential for survival of Carnaby's. BAWA involved. - Appeal to State Environment Minister and to DEWHA on DAFWA proposal to remove pines because of infestation by European House Borer | <p>Results of survey by P. Berry & M. Owen published in the WA Naturalist</p> <p>UBC decided to publish a book in 2010 on the 3 species of Cockatoos to raise public awareness of their plight. Ron Johnstone invited to be the lead author, photos by Tony Kirkby. Funding to be sought.</p> |
| 28 | Errina Rd BF site 493 | TEC present, DEC wishes to manage the | Management authority not |

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| | Alexander Heights | site but no funds, City of Wanneroo interested also Resolution by WAPC/DOP of boundaries and tenure far too slow (9years) | decided. Site degrading by neglect, no fence, fire, abuse by locals as housing encroaches |
| 29 | Donovan St bushland Augusta | Under threat for housing. Campaign by active local group. PUBF survey of fungi conducted for local group | Report produced on Biodiversity Survey of Donovan St Bushland, talk by Don Bradshaw. |
| 30 | MRS Amendment 1152/41 Jindalee | Rezoning of coastal BF site zoned P&R to urban, & swapping of conservation area to allow car park and buildings in coastal setback. UBC letter to all MLCs | Giz Watson MLC Greens moved disallowance motion. Not carried. Labor did not support disallowance. |
| 31 | Limestone Extractive Industry and Batching Plant Lot 1 Wanneroo Rd Nowergup CRN 222186 | Appeal against EPA level of assessment 'not assessed'. Regionally significant Tuart Woodland, includes TEC 26a. Adjacent to Neerabup National Park & Nowergup Lake Nature Reserve BF 383. Active local group, many submissions to City of Wanneroo planning proposal | Local group influenced Council to reject local planning proposal. Appeal against EPA assessment not yet decided. |
| 32 | Anstey-Keane Wetlands, Armadale | City of Armadale propose local road through wetlands, no2 site on SCP for flora biodiversity. Referred to EPA Walk in site guided by David James with local MP Tony Simpson MLA, Alison Xamon MLC, & Friends of Forrestdale | Article in <i>Landscape</i> by Friends of Forrestdale. Formal PER Assessment by EPA |
| 33 | Groundwater Replenishment Trial by Water Corporation | Proposal to inject recycled wastewater to deep aquifer. GRT Community Advisory Panel -invitation for community representatives | Mary Gray appointed to Advisory Panel, seeking community views and concerns about aquifer recharge |