



The South-West Region's water activities E-Bulletin December 2009

The South-West Regional E-Bulletin provides a snapshot of some of the work the department has been doing in our region. The department covers a range of work in the South West, including:

- Planning
- Licensing
- Water information (quality and quantity)
- Waterways management



Estuarine Sampling

Planning progress

Release of the Whicher area surface water allocation plan

In September the Whicher plan was released. The purpose of the plan is to provide the department's direction on how the surface water resources in the area will be allocated and managed.

The plan was finalised following consideration of public submissions made on the draft plan.

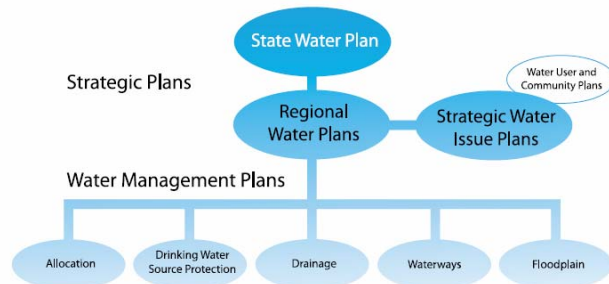
It was officially launched by the Minister for Water; Mental Health Hon. Dr Graham Jacobs.



Whicher area surface water allocation plan boundary

Other plans released this year

- SW groundwater areas allocation plan
- Upper Collie water allocation plan
- Donnybrook Water Reserve Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Plan
- Mungilup Dam Catchment Area DWSP plan
- Millstream Catchment Area (Bridgetown) DWSP plan



State Water Planning Framework

UPDATES:

- The department is finalising the *SW Regional Water Strategy* and it is due to be released in January 2010.
- The Draft *Warren Donnelly area surface water allocation plan* will be released shortly for public comment.

Water resource recovery

Warren salinity and water resource recovery

Over 2000 hectares of perennial pastures, shrubs and trees have been established by landholders across the catchment over the past two years. The work is project managed by the department, and funded by the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) through the South West Catchment Council and Southern Forests Landcare.

Monitoring of soil moisture and farm productivity associated with these plantings is funded for another 18 months. The project promotes reliable establishment and management of perennial pastures and shrubs and encourages landholders to continue to use and explore perennial based farming systems, on the basis that these will ultimately result in reductions in stream salinity.



Field day – Warren salinity perennials

Collie salinity and water resource recovery

In early June the state government confirmed approval of the continuation of the NAP funded Collie River salinity recovery project, the major part of which proposes to divert the saltiest flows from the Collie River East near Buckingham to temporary storage on an old mine void before appropriate treatment and disposal.

The Department of Water project team comprises staff from regional management and water information and water resource management divisions in Bunbury and Perth working closely together to deliver an integrated outcome for all



Trial diversion site - Buckingham

major stakeholders, internal as well as external.

By working closely with the Water Corporation and in partnership using the experience and skills of some of its project managers and engineers, planning and design has entered the final detailed design stage.

Corridors of life

The department in partnership with the Leschenault Catchment Council has completed the first year of planting for the **Corridors of Life Project** funded by the Commonwealth's Caring for our Country's Grant Scheme. The project aims to revegetate ten estuarine sites along the Collie, Brunswick and Preston Rivers over a period of two years. This year 22,650 seedlings were planted over seven sites.

Planting days were held over 19 days from June to September and the following organisations assisted department staff: Green Corps; DEC; Kingston Primary School; Bunbury Cathedral Grammar; Australind Senior High School; Collie River Valley Primary School; the Shire of Dardanup and Eaton Community.



Revegetation of the Brunswick River

Fence Road catchment survey, Dumbleyung

Department staff recently conducted a two day survey round the Fence Road catchment taking water quality tests and samples for a range of laboratory tests.

This is the first of hopefully several annual catchment snapshots which will provide important information to support the monitoring and assessment of the pilot Fence Road arterial inland drainage system.

This data will also provide information that can be used by the Salinity and Water Resource Recovery Branch in developing inland catchment water management strategies, which will assist landholders in making decisions for future catchment salinity mitigation initiatives.



Continuous conductivity meter in the Dongolocking Creek

Coastal drainage planning

A draft management response framework has been prepared to assess how additional objectives of water quantity and quality management can be integrated into the operation and management of rural drainage on the coastal plains. The framework sets up a range of scenarios with progressively more objectives and has been reviewed by targeted stakeholders. A statement of response to the comments received during the review has been prepared and will soon be released. This document will also provide a record of the work undertaken to date in this program.



Typical rural drain where livestock have unrestricted access

Macroinvertebrate project

A research project conducted by Edith Cowan University for the department's South West region is nearing completion. The project will provide information on community composition and structure of invertebrate fauna under the influence of discharge from the Leederville Aquifer system and the Yarragadee Aquifer Discharge Zone. The monitoring sites are concentrated around the tributaries of the Lower Blackwood River. Regional staff have supported the project during various field trips and gained valuable knowledge and experience.



Macroinvertebrate investigation on Blackwood River

Extended winter flows yields many useful flow validations

While 2009 will not go down in the record books as being a particularly wet winter with record floods – it did seem to last longer than usual and allowed South West staff to test out their new range of flow monitoring equipment. As a result we feel more confident with our flow data.



Measuring river flows (volume) at Bridgetown

Further information on any of the above can be obtained by contacting the department's SW Regional office in Bunbury on 9726 4111