

# WICC News

## From the Chair

Stephen Frost, Narrikup businessman and WICC Chairman

Hi everyone. Welcome to the 2010 WICC Newsletter. As chair person this is a new role for me and I hope I can give justice to such an important organisation.

I have been farming in the West Narrikup area since 1979 and been involved in conservation activities on our own farm. I was also one of the founding members of the Hay River LCDC.

I am pleased to announce that I will be representing WICC at Parliament House, Canberra on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June for the presentation of the National Landcare Awards as WICC is a finalist in the Community Group Category. This recognition of our success through the NRM Awards is a reflection of the dedication of the NRM Officers Lynn and Elissa. Lynn has been with the organisation for over 6½ years and has been significant in attaining funding for on the ground for NRM projects. These

projects include the protection of our natural heritage and environment (something for our kids to appreciate) by:

fencing off bush, wildlife corridors, and tree plantings and by the establishment of perennial pastures to help prevent nutrient runoff and improve farming viability.

Another important aspect of WICC is the many hours put in by the volunteer committee members who make this type of organisation the most cost effective vehicle for getting real money on the ground for our environment. WICC needs the continued support of both individuals and local business to continue the on ground work.



Stephen Frost



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## Toshiba Community Group Landcare Award

Earlier in the year WICC was announced as winner of the State Toshiba Community Group Landcare Award at the State NRM Conference held in Geraldton.

The Toshiba Community Group Award recognizes WICC as the outstanding community group in WA that has adopted sound land management practices on public and private land and is working towards sustainable land use and enhancing or protecting an area on behalf of the community.

WICC Deputy Chairperson, Arthur Patterson, commented that, "While we never expect recognition for the work that we carry out in our catch-

ment it gives us a warm feeling to find that our efforts are appreciated by the wider community. Our success in this case can be attributed to the dedication of our staff and the great rapport that they have with the rural community. This, combined with the willingness of our landholders to invest their own resources in a range of activities directed towards 'making a difference' and improving the environment for current and future generations, has led to some remarkable achievements."

By winning the State "Toshiba Community Group Award" category WICC is now a finalist in the

National Landcare Awards to be announced in Canberra on the 24th June of this year. WICC will be competing against the winners from the other states for the honor of being the best Community Group in Australia for 2009.

Voting for the National Landcare Awards is open till 12am EST Wednesday, 23rd June 2010. Go on line to cast your vote for WICC at [www.landcareonline.com.au](http://www.landcareonline.com.au) and you can also leave a message of support.



## Winter Active Tall Fescue – Case Study

Tall Fescue is a viable perennial pasture option for landowners within the Wilson Inlet Catchment as well as neighbouring catchments which also receive high rainfall.

Kelvin and Estelle Ridgway run sheep, for prime lamb production and beef cattle, integrated with contract grass seed production. As such, they know the importance of good establishment and management of perennials to get high forage production and seed yields. In trialling tall fescue, they were looking for a perennial that would provide increased feed during autumn. Previously, the Ridgways' had included tall fescue in annual pasture mixes but did not have any established pure fescue stands on the property.

One aim of using tall fescue was to provide more autumn pasture and reduce supplementary feeding. Over 18 months, stock on the tall fescue required only half the amount of supplementary feed compared to the annual paddock (Table 1). These figures do not include grain fed from self feeders in the annual paddock in July 08.

**Table 1:** Supplementary feeding for fescue and annual paddock April 08 – November 09

Pasture type	Silage rolls	Hay rolls	Straw rolls	Total
Fescue paddock	4,500kg	5,200kg	1,500kg	11,200kg
Annual paddock	6,000kg	6,400kg	10,500kg	22,900kg

Most supplementary feeding in perennials occurred in autumn 2008 when the fescue paddock was still immature and with the sandy soil, some damage from cattle pulling plants out was a problem. Since spring 2008, this has not been an issue and supplementary feeding has been minimal.

Throughout 2008-09, the fescue paddock has had an average stocking rate of 16 DSE/ha (Table 2). This is despite the paddock being destocked for three months in 2009 due to severe water-logging. Over the same period the annual paddock only carried 11.5 DSE/ha and required double the amount of supplementary feeding to maintain the stock.

**Table 2:** Stocking rates of Resolute tall fescue compared to annual pasture; April 2008 – August 2009.

Stocking rate	Resolute tall fescue	Annual pasture
DSE days per hectare	7,450	5,520
DSE per hectare	16	11.5

Overall the fescue has been a great success. It has turned a difficult wet paddock around, increased the production substantially and has decreased the need for supplementary feeding. Kelvin and Estelle have been very happy with the paddock and are planning to plant more.

By  
Ronald  
Master,  
DAFWA  
Albany



Tall fescue in Nov 09

## BestFarms Workshop

WICC recently held a 2 day BestFarms workshop in Albany on the 28th and 29th May.

BestFarms was developed to assist landholders in managing environmental impacts on their properties and to gain recognition for their environmental stewardship. The BestFarms Project began in 2005 and has already conducted numerous workshops for over 350 participants; helping to change land management practices and protect the environment across the South West of WA.

Each BestFarms EMS workshop shows participants how to identify

the environmental impacts on their property and to develop, implement and monitor an action plan which will provide a systematic and sustainable approach to profitable environmental practices for the long term.

Workshop numbers are kept small to allow greater one-on-one access to facilitators by participants.

Landowners from Western Australia to the eastern states are using this planning system. The great thing about the EMS planning is that it suits any landowner; from planning the vegetable patch on a 1 acre property up to large, broad acre farming.

WICC hopes to hold future Best-

Farms workshops for those who missed out. If you're interested or would like further information contact Elissa on 98482955.

By Elissa Stewart WICC



BestFarms 2010 workshop group

## Upper Hay Strategic Catchment Project

In 2006, community consultation and technical analysis, was used to develop a plan to assist in containing salinity in the Upper Hay sub catchment of the Wilson Inlet Catchment. The Upper Hay Catchment Plan is a community developed action plan that compliments the Wilson Inlet Nutrient Reduction Action Plan (WINRAP) by providing strategic direction for implementation and coordination of activities that will contain salinity and improve the health of the catchment landscape and water quality of the Wilson Inlet, its waterways and associated wetlands.

This catchment plan represents only one step in a longer term vision for the catchment. Key areas were tackled to give landholders an accelerated start for implementation of works to tackle nutrient, salinity, soil and biodiversity issues. This plan also established participative Research and Development sites to look at key soil health and nutrient management issues with a view to driving practice change. The aim was to have a long term plan that could be implemented by the landholder over a realistic time frame.

South Coast NRM Inc provided \$991,365.91 of funding through the Regional Strategy 'Southern Prospects'. Of this funding \$829,355.77 was spent on on-ground works. Refer to table 1 that outlines the achievements of the project.

Table 1: Completed on ground works

On- ground activity	activity completed
<b>Perennials</b>	3191.2 ha
<b>Biodiversity fencing</b>	148.6 km
<b>Stock crossing</b>	47
<b>Alternate Water points</b>	45
<b>revegetation</b>	117.5 ha
<b>engineering</b>	47.8km
<b>Soil tests</b>	66
<b>Liming</b>	1675.2ha

This project focused on activities addressing the following key issues in the Upper Hay Catchment: water depth target ranges; salt and nutrient loads (water quality); water logging; recovery and protection of riparian vegetation and protection of significant biodiversity assets. This included the employment of the Project Officer which was essential for community engagement and capacity building to implement and manage the project.



Ronald Master from DAFWA inspecting with the farmer a recently constructed stock crossing over the Hay River.

By Lynn Heppell  
WICC

## Lake Saide Revegetation Site Progresses

Lake Saide is located near Youngs Siding playing a strategic role in nutrient management within the Saide sub-catchment. The main land uses in the area include; grazing, seed potatoes, hobby farms and residential properties. The western flood plain foreshore of the Lake has been used for growing seed potatoes for the last 50 years.

In 2006, at the end of an agricultural lease, the vesting of Location 7169 was moved to the Department of Water for the purpose of Landscape Protection. A project in conjunction with the Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee was developed to return this site to native vegetation as a self-sustaining, functioning wetland ecosystem. The project addresses a number of the actions of the Wilson

Inlet Nutrient Reduction Action Plan, including; Action IF5: Encourage protection and enhancement of the Inlet's fringing native vegetation.

The successful revegetation of this site required significant weed control prior to the reintroduction of local native species as the weed burden was large, having built up over a number of years. As the site is flooded for much of the year the opportunity for site preparation is small and timing to gain access with machinery to plant the native seed is critical to the success of the project.

In early February 2010 the site was prepared for seeding. A machine scalped soil to 5cm depth to clear rows of land for planting. The seed,

a mix of native species from the area, was then spread in the rows. Given the aggressive weeds in the area, this method of planting provides a clear space for the native species to establish. The first signs of native vegetation seed germination can now be seen with the first native acacias coming through.

Seedlings will be planted in some areas of the site where the advantage of having more established native plants will be needed. For the continuing successful revegetation ongoing weed control will be necessary while the plants are becoming more established.

By Mieke Bourne Dept of Water.

# Lotterywest-Waterways Protection and Restoration Project

One of WICC's newest projects, the Waterway Protection and Restoration project was implemented in October 2009. With an overall budget of \$180,300, the aim of this project is to protect and restore waterways and riparian vegetation within the Wilson Inlet Catchment, to improve the quality of the water entering the inlet. Monitoring and studies of tributaries within the catchment have identified the Cuppup, Sleeman, Little River and Sunny Glen creeks as having high nutrient exports and as such are the focus of this project.

On ground works to achieve tangible results include erecting fencing to exclude stock; revegetation with local native plants; and the establishment of deep rooted perennial pastures. Establishing deep rooted perennial pastures improves the uptake of nutrients due to their longer root systems when compared with annual grasses and this also improves water usage reducing the recharge into the waterways. The project will also promote activities to increase landowners awareness of effective nutrient management through soil testing and workshops.

Fencing works are currently well underway and autumn perennial pastures have been sown. Site preparation for revegetation sites is progressing and planting will start in July.



Newly completed waterway fencing

If you would like to be a part of this project then contact Elissa on 98482955.

## QUICK CONTACT DETAILS

### Denmark Office

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### Financial assistance:

Through the Waterway Protection and Restoration Project as well as other funding we can help you build your farm to be more environmentally responsible.

### Waterway protection

- **Fencing of drains and creeks**  
Up to \$2000/km of fencing
- **Stock crossings & watering points**  
Up to \$1,000 for a crossing and a watering point depending on construction
- **Vegetated buffers**  
\$450/ha to provide bank stabilisation, nutrient removal and wildlife habitat.
- **Deep Rooted Perennial Pastures**  
\$60 per hectare is available to help establish suitable deep rooted perennial pasture species.
- **Soil Testing**  
\$25 subsidised soil test kits are available. Retail at \$220! Don't Guess...Soil Test

## South Coast NRM WINRAP Funding Wrap Up

From July 2005 to Oct 2009 WICC received over \$910,000 from South Coast NRM Inc to implement the actions identified in the Wilson Inlet Nutrient Reduction Action Plan. The Action plan has been identified as a key target in the Regional Strategy (WINRAP). This funding enabled the continuation of the projects from the previous NAP project but with the scope of being able to achieve more on ground works with the substantial funding.

The WINRAP Project engaged over 120 Landholders who have successfully achieved:

Activity	Overall achieved
Fencing waterways	122.55 km
Associated stock crossing	62
Alternate water points	56
Fencing remnant vegetation	23.55 km
Perennial pasture establishment	551.5 ha
Flood plain revegetation	46.4 ha
Waterways revegetation	65.1 ha
Soil testing	160 kits

The success of the WINRAP relies on the cooperation of all of us who live or work in the catchment. However, the plan identifies a number of key groups who have pledged their cooperation in implementing the Wilson Inlet Nutrient Reduction Action Plan:

*Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee, South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc., Department of Water, Shire of Denmark, Department of Agriculture and Food WA, Shire of Plantagenet, City of Albany, Water Corporation, Wilson Inlet Management Advisory Group, Fisheries WA.*