



# Private Property Rights & Resources

## FREE WORKSHOP

Farmsafe WA will be conducting FREE Noise Injury Prevention and Management workshops which in conjunction with the Ear Science Institute and the Lions Hearing Bus will include FREE hearing tests! The locations: Beverley and Northam on 07<sup>th</sup> March followed by Corrigin and Quairading on 08<sup>th</sup> March. For more information and to register visit [www.farmsafewa.org](http://www.farmsafewa.org) or call PGA on 94794544.

## REMEDIAL PLANTINGS

At a recent Wheatbelt Planning Strategy meeting an officer from the Department of Environment and Conservation made it clear that anyone who had taken any money from DEC for tree planting will be subject to Section 51a of the Environmental Protection Act which will in effect remove the use of that land from agriculture.

Accepting any payment will in fact invoke a conservation covenant or agreement to reserve under section 30b of the *Soil and Land Conservation Act*.

We believe the landholders are not being adequately informed by DEC of the consequences of accepting the funding to carry out remedial work on their land.

It is vitally important that land owners fully understand the intent of the regulation and the ramifications of their decision to accept funding.

## WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACT

The drafting of the Water Resource Management legislation is required under the terms of the National

Water Initiative which was signed by WA when Geoff Gallop was the Premier. The National Water Commission has released a report entitled "Australian Environmental Water Management Report -2010" in which the NWI stated that the required legislation was drafted in the 2009 -2010 financial year. We have written to the Minister for Water requesting the release of the draft for public comment. In respect to the draft legislation we would seek clarification on the following:

- Are all existing rights in water to be transferred into the new legislation?
- Is environmental water to be included or excluded into a consumptive pool arrangement under the new Act?
- Is Water Trading to be market based?
- Are any reductions of volumes in water allocations subject to compensation by the Government.

## WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

The Economic Regulatory Authority (ERA) was charged with providing advice to the state government on the level of charges that should be levied on water users for services relating to the commercial use of water. We are particularly concerned with the advice provided to the ERA by the Department of Water in relation to the charges applied to allocation planning, environmental water planning, ground-water and surface water assessment.

We consider that these activities have a large component of "public good" so consideration should be given to recovering the associated cost from within the department.

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY GRANTS 2011

The State Government has allocated \$1.53 in grants for projects involving:

- Biodiversity conservation
- Sustainable catchment management
- Bush Forever sites
- Support for major conservation/environmental organisation
- Protection of high-value areas by landholders on private land.

Individuals, local community groups or organizations may apply for funding.

## GOOD NEIGHBOUR POLICY REVIEW

The findings from the Report into DEC's Management of Former Pastoral Leases has renewed interest in DEC's Good Neighbour Policy. A review of the policy has now been instigated and members are encouraged to contact PGA with any issues or comments in regards to the policy. Your feedback will be considered for inclusion into a proposed submission to the Government.

## BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

A draft state Biodiversity Conservation Strategy was produced several years ago but there appears to have been limited progress since that time. The Environmental Stakeholders Advisory Group (ESAG) which was convened by Donna Faragher produced a report in December 2009 and we are now awaiting the release of the recommendations in the form of a green paper that we can respond to.

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