



Save the Nature of the Kimberley

environs KIMBERLEY INC

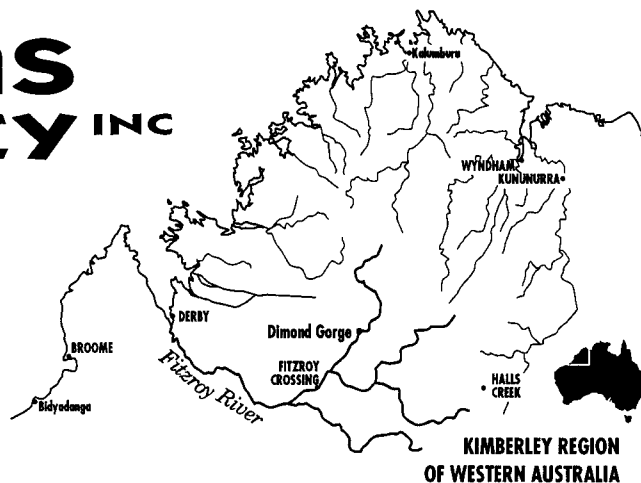
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FULL MARKS TO THE WATER AND RIVERS COMMISSION

The Water and Rivers Commission (WRC) has set up a community consultative committee on groundwater use in the La Grange sub-region, of which EK is a member. Through the excellent efforts of their consultant, Jo Ann Beckwith, and project officer Roy Stone, they have formed a representative group of twenty-plus members, with an open number of observers. It is a model of genuine consultation, which other government departments would do well to emulate.

The membership consists of stakeholders of all persuasions, including relevant business groups such as pearlivers and pastoralists, representatives of Aboriginal organizations and the affected language groups, Broome Shire Council as well as the Department of Environmental Protection and of course Western Agricultural Industries and the WRC itself. The Department of Resources Development has only observer status, since they are not local, and they chair the project coordination committee in Perth.

These diverse members not only meet, but strive to reach consensus on their decisions. This has so far been achieved without bloodshed.

There have been two meetings. The first, in May, was devoted to firming

up the group's membership and ground rules and choosing a Chairperson — John Bucknall. The second embarked on the business of assessing the feasibility and effects of groundwater extraction: the division of responsibilities between Western Agricultural Industries (WAI) and the WRC and how we ensure that the processes of assessment are as good as they need to be.

The cynic may ask, as we did, what decision-making powers this group is likely to have. It seems that, on the process side, these will be substantial.

We will have direct influence on the studies to be undertaken by the relevant consultants, will be able to scrutinize and comment on their methodology and reports, and will thus be able to make informed recommendations to government. Whether or not the agricultural project goes ahead, and under what conditions, will be decided by government, but it would be an unwise government that ignored the efforts and recommendations of such a representative committee.

Any member wishing to know more about the committee's deliberations is welcome to read the minutes of its meetings at the Environs Kimberley office, or we can send them out to you.

We will also present a summary at our June meeting.



As part of international celebrations, World Environment Day (June 5) was celebrated in Broome with a concert at Town Beach.

The concert featured a host of local, Kimberley and West Australian talent. An audience of young and old, locals and visitors to Broome were treated to the Thursday Islander dancers, the sublime tones of Ursula Yovich, (well accompanied by EK talent Joe Fox), Lulga, Josephine Mellick and Suzie Quicke, the Fringe Singers, Samantha Podeu and Anahgra as well as the funky sounds of Jammin' from Derby and Broome's own Footprince.

The three-way celebration, marking World Environment Day, the culmination of National Reconciliation Week, as well being a centrepiece of the Fringe Festival, was a fine example of community co-operation.

EK Chairperson Pat Lowe was just one of the speakers to commemorate the day.

Environs Kimberley would like to thank Ziggy Miedema for all his hard work in putting the concert together.