



Save the Nature of the Kimberley

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Media Release

22nd May, 2007

Monitoring in Roebuck Bay finding low levels of seagrass

The Roebuck Bay community seagrass monitoring project has been successfully running now for two months. Environs Kimberley (EK) and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) are joint managers of the Coastwest funded project.

Ms Danielle Bain is the project's coordinator: "About 20 volunteers have signed up for the monitoring project, which is a fantastic response from the Broome community".

"Volunteers have recorded information about the seagrass at three sites – Town Beach, Simpson's Beach off Demco Drive and adjacent to the slipway at the Port.

"We are finding very low levels of seagrass, recording less than 1% cover for the majority of the sites," Ms Bain said.

"We are hoping this is just a normal phase of growth for this time of year. Based on natural growth cycles of seagrass in Queensland, we did expect seagrass levels would be lowest at this time of year. However, we are expecting the density will increase again around September or October.

"These findings demonstrate why it is so important that we collect baseline information on the seagrass beds in Roebuck Bay. At this stage we are not able to draw conclusions about whether the low levels of seagrass are normal for these areas of Roebuck Bay at this time of year as we don't have data from other years to compare it to," Ms Bain said.

The seagrass monitoring project will be looking for future funding so that data collection can continue over the long term. The data collected is entered into a National Database administered by Seagrass-Watch, a world-leading organisation in community seagrass monitoring which is based in Queensland.

Anyone from the community is welcome to become involved in the project. If you are interested, please contact Danielle Bain on 91927741 or 0414 841519 or email: dans_al@westnet.com.au

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