

Friends of Willunga Basin

Newsletter, March 2010
also including news from Friends of Port Willunga



The Willunga Basin Walking Trail Meeting with Council and Walker's Federation

Three of our Committee members were recently invited to take part in a meeting with Council staff and the Walking Federation of SA. At that meeting we outlined our concept of the Great Willunga Basin Walk, and were reassured by an enthusiastic response to our ideas. We are discovering that Council has a strong emphasis on constructed trails and paths which tend to be high quality and relatively short, for people with limited walking prowess. However they remain keen to assist, and strongly recommend that we have our ideas documented before their next review of Trails And Open Space in 2012. The staff also emphasised the need to get support from State Government, and now that the election is out of the way, we will do that. The local McLaren Vale Wine, Grape and Tourism association will also be consulted – they should love the concept.

The Walking Federation is much more focussed on longer distance walks and routes, and has a lot of expertise in route planning and documentation. They have a technical committee that produces detailed reports on trails, which could prove very useful to us. We explored the idea of joint walking and cycling routes, with their problems and advantages, and also the great value of linking with existing trails.

We left the meeting feeling excited about the ever expanding possibilities associated with the walk, and keen to get cracking with planning and checking the idea out.

INVITATION

This is where we need you, our members, to give your ideas and support. Please come to our meeting on Wednesday, Mar 31st in the Environment Centre, Hight St Willunga at 7:30pm, or email, write or phone us with your ideas.

e-waste recycling day Saturday 27 March 2010 9am-2pm



Looking to dispose of household electrical items you no longer want?

The City of Onkaparinga in conjunction with Zero Waste SA are offering residents an opportunity to safely and responsibly dispose of electronic waste for recycling. This event will be held on Saturday 27 March 2010 from 9am until 2pm.

Residents will be charged a small fee to cover some of the recycling costs, with both council and Zero Waste SA funding two thirds of the program.

This service is not available to businesses or for commercial quantities.

There will be two drop-off locations operating to accept your e-waste:

- Aberfoyle Park- the former Council Depot on Hub Dr next to Foodland and between Outlook Dr and Taylors Rd/Homestead Dr
- Lonsdale – Advanced Recycling Technologies (ARTs): Depot 3/13 Chrysler Rd Behind the RSPCA. Take Meyer Rd off Lonsdale Rd.

Please bring along your defunct electronic items and help keep those materials and toxins out of our environment. Over 90% of electronic material received through our e-waste collection will be recycled.

For more information, and maps of drop-off locations, go to:

<http://www.onkaparingacity.com/web/binaries?img=17900&stypen=html>

The 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide

Consultation Report

Changes to the Plan resulting from public submissions

The State government last year released the draft of its 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, and invited input from the public.

FOWB's submission to the Plan can be read at http://www.fowb.net/files/30year_plan.pdf

There were over 570 submissions, resulting in several changes to the Plan, including many sought by FOWB. Below is a summary of some of the changes which FOWB has been pleased to see introduced:

New principles have been included to ensure that the health of natural resources are maintained and enhanced by ensuring land is appropriately zoned and sustainably used for current and future generations, by planning to minimise adverse impacts and avoid irreversible damage on the natural resources, and by considering biodiversity and ecological integrity in land-use decisions.

Transit-oriented developments

Two new policies to:

- design transit-oriented developments to be walkable and cycling friendly communities that are safely connected to surrounding communities,
- require high quality open space in all transit oriented development.

Building design

Structure Plans for greenfield developments, urban infill and transit-oriented developments will set objectives and guidelines for the quality of building performance outcomes in terms of:

- climate response (for example, solar orientation, and ventilation)
- energy use
- water use and recycling
- noise attenuation and air quality
- improving the aesthetics of the public realm.
- Ensure building design can be adapted in the future to minimise new building requirements and maximise the re-use and redevelopment of existing infrastructure. This policy has been requested by Zero Waste.
- Promote a highly permeable and connected grid street structure in new growth areas and transit-oriented developments to encourage walking and cycling.

Primary production

A new policy has been added to use measures, including planning controls, to protect important primary production areas such as the Barossa Valley, Willunga Basin and Northern Adelaide Plains.

A further policy has also been added which acknowledges the need to collocate intensive primary industries and compatible processing activities to reduce land-use conflict and achieve efficiencies in production, processing, distribution, energy efficiency and waste recycling, taking into account environmental, bio-security, infrastructure and rural amenity issues.

Comments were also received from councils on the potential impact that growth will have on primary production close to townships. In response to these submissions additional policies have been included to:

- Restrict ad hoc construction of isolated rural dwellings and subdivision of rural lands through the planned expansion of townships, density increases within township boundaries, appropriate intensification of existing Rural Living Zones and strategic designation of new Rural Living Zones outside areas of primary production significance.
- Prevent the expansion and/or inappropriate intensification of existing, or creation of new Rural Living Zones in areas of primary production significance.
- Manage the interface between primary production activities and urban areas and townships through the identification of appropriate separation buffers, screening vegetation and appropriate alignment of allotment boundaries

Transport

Integrate into Structure Plans for major transit corridors off-road shared use paths, on-road bicycle lanes, footpaths and cycling friendly streets to promote walking and cycling.

A new target has been included to maintain, extend and improve Adelaide's Bikedirect network including the development of greenways.

Infrastructure

A new policy has also been included to continue to take measures to protect coastal development, maintain beach amenity and manage stormwater discharges.

Open Space / Greenways

Additional policies on greenways have been added that:

- Develop a system of greenways across Greater Adelaide to link the open space system, enhance urban biodiversity and encourage walking and cycling.
- Develop greenways along the major watercourses and linear parks.
- Plan and develop greenways to link parks, reserves and public facilities to provide walking and cycling access.
- Identify, as part of the Structure Planning process, opportunities for greenways in transit-oriented developments, transit corridors, activity centres and new growth areas to link to local and regional open spaces, provide local biodiversity, and provide walking and cycling linkages.
- Ensure that greenways are landscaped with local indigenous species where possible and incorporate water-sensitive urban design techniques.

The following new targets have also been included:

- Incorporate greenways in all transit-oriented developments and major transit corridors.
- Complete fully connected and sealed cycling and walking routes with safe road crossings along rail transit corridors as the walking and cycling component of greenways by 2025.
- Develop and enhance waterway linear parks as open space greenways and biodiversity corridors along the fixed line public transport corridors and the River Torrens, Gawler River, Little Para River, Dry Creek, Sturt River, Pedlar Creek, Onkaparinga River, Port Willunga Creek, Christies Creek and Field River by 2036.
- Develop a coastal linear park from Sellicks Beach to North Haven by 2020.
- Develop a greenway along the length of the Adelaide to Glenelg tram corridor by 2020.

Climate Change

Introduction of policies to improve development and building energy and water efficiencies will be subject to the Climate Change, Housing Affordability and Sustainable Neighbourhoods Taskforce recommendations on how to implement the policies without sacrificing affordability.

Mitigating carbon emissions has also been investigated as part of the Plan. Various housing alternatives—from single story detached dwellings to high-rise apartments—were compared to point to the most efficient form of urban design to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In so doing, the Plan demonstrates how its range of carbon reduction initiatives could assist in attaining SA's 60% reduction by 2050 target.

The following new policies have been added to this section

- Contribute to South Australia's Target of a 60% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 through the implementation of the policies in the Plan that lead to a more compact and less carbon intensive urban form.

Bowering Hill

During the consultation process concern was raised by the City of Onkaparinga, community and business groups and individuals that the horticultural areas at Bowering Hill located within the urban growth boundary should be afforded greater protection from urban growth and residential development. LMC (the main development proponent) has now decided not to develop this area for housing.

Consequently Bowering Hill be reserved for agriculture, viticulture, tourism, tourist accommodation or biodiversity related uses. And that the land will remain in the urban growth boundary.

The full report can be read at <http://www.dplg.sa.gov.au/plan4adelaide/html/home.cfm>



Friends of Port Willunga

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www.friendsofportwillunga.com

FOWB is pleased to be able to include news from Friends of Port Willunga in this and subsequent newsletters which are now also being distributed to members of FOPW.

Southern Community Coalition Update

by

Stephanie Johnston
Spokesperson
Southern Community Coalition

March 15 2010

Bowering Hill

Many of you will be aware that an ongoing campaign by the wine and food producers, business and community groups in the Southern Community Coalition and the McLaren Vale Winemakers Association has culminated in confirmation from the state government that amendments to the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide will reserve a buffer of approximately 400 hectares of government-owned land at Bowering Hill for 'agriculture, viticulture, tourism and/or biodiversity purposes', despite the land being included in extensions to Adelaide's urban boundary two years ago. The recently released plan confirms that, albeit in very small in print!

Willunga Basin Protection

In their announcement Premier Mike Rann and Minister Paul Holloway acknowledged the need for the buffer and for further planning controls to protect the Willunga Basin's food, wine and tourism industries, an issue that was brought into focus by the passing of the Willunga Basin Protection Bill through the Legislative Council in 2009, and the community Spring Forum held in Aldinga last September.

At the instigation of the Member for Mawson, Leon Bignell, a committee of representatives from the Willunga Basin and the Barossa Region has been established to discuss protection options. That committee has requested government resources be allocated to explore options such as zoning the remaining rural land within the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale wine areas as 'historic agricultural preserves', reflecting legislation that has successfully protected and promoted California's Napa Valley since the late 1960s. The issue has become more urgent in the light of the current grape glut, and announcement of the duplication of the Southern Expressway, which are combining to create increased pressure for the rezoning of rural land for residential development. The SCC will continue to lobby for an allocation of resources to establish such legislation in the lead up to, and following the state election.

Summer Forum

Many of these ideas were discussed at the Summer Forum, attended by around 70 members of the community, and hosted by the SCC and the McLaren Vale Grape Wine and Tourism Association in early February. State election candidates for Kaurna and Mawson were invited to speak about their views on these issues. Legislative Council members Robert Brokenshire (Family First) and Mark Parnell (The Greens) also spoke. When put on the spot with a direct 'Yes or No' question from Willunga Farmers Market Chair Jude McBain, all candidates said they supported legislative protection. The mood of the meeting was then 'Well get on with it then!'

It was heartening to see support for policy making that aims to protect and enhance our food, wine and tourism regions coming from all the parties, as we aim for multi-partisan support for these ideas, as well as support across all levels of government.

The devil will of course be in the detail of how these issues are addressed in the lead up to the election, and into the next term of government.

World Heritage Status for Adelaide's agrarian landscapes

The Napa Valley story shows how regions can benefit economically, socially and culturally from the preservation and promotion of agriculture and rural landscapes, an idea supported by former United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation director Randy Stringer, who is now Professor of Agriculture and Food Policy at the University of Adelaide. At the Friends of Port Willunga AGM in January, Professor Stringer outlined his proposal that 'a mosaic of working agricultural landscapes' located in the Clare and Barossa Valleys, the Adelaide Hills and on the Fleurieu Peninsula should apply for UNESCO World Heritage listing, so unique are they in the international scheme of things. Randy believes that these family farm and vineyard landscapes are outstanding examples of distinctive land use under threat, and pointed out that World Heritage listing would bring global prestige, increased investment, new business opportunities and potential 'reputation premiums' for local products. In response Mayor Lorraine Rosenberg has organised a forum for 18 March to bring together the Mayors and CEOs of the various councils who will need to be involved in such a bid. The University of Adelaide's Environment Institute is also providing resources to support Professor Stringer's initiative.

Community Owned Renewable Energy (CORE)

What is CORE?

A foundation project of the Climate Change Strategy, the Community Owned Renewable Energy (CORE) project seeks to support the uptake of renewable energy by the community within the City of Onkaparinga. Having researched a range of different technologies at different scales, as well as governance, financial, technical and regulatory factors, three options for further investigation have been identified.

Option 1:

Bulk Buying

Council would appoint renewable energy product suppliers and promote them to the community to participate in a cheaper bulk-buying alternative to an individual purchase. Products would include photovoltaic panels and possibly solar hot water systems.

Option 2:

Mini Sun Farm

Photovoltaic systems between 10 to 30kw would be built on top of schools, public buildings or in vacant land. Residents would have the opportunity to buy a share in the project. These projects could be suited to community members or local investors that would like to install their own solar power system but are unable to do so on their own homes and are seeking a fixed rate of return.

Option 3:

Community Energy Precinct

A small to medium scale renewable energy facility to be constructed and operated on a commercial basis. It may include a mix of wind and solar power. The community may have the opportunity to become equity partners.



Submission by FOWB to City of Onkaparinga Green Energy Future

Friends of Willunga Basin (FOWB) greatly welcome the interest of the City of Onkaparinga in an investigation of the 'CORE' proposal and their 'Our Energy Futures' strategy. We are encouraged that, despite the recent prevalence of 'climate change scepticism' abroad in the community, Council continues to realise the essential requirement to move our communities towards a carbon neutral and sustainable energy future.

We believe it vital for Council to act as a model and a facilitator. These projects will be of great assistance. We endorse Council's current purchases of renewable energy and plans to expand it, and the proposals of the Energy Futures Strategy. We are fully supportive of the notion of a Lonsdale Clean Energy Precinct.

We are very keen to be kept involved in further investigations into the CORE concept, and want our enthusiastic endorsement of the notion of community/council joint involvement in renewable energy to be noted.

FOWB supports Council's decision to further investigate the three options of bulk buying, mini sun farms and a Community Energy Precinct concept made at its December meeting.

FOWB have some experience of the reticence of many individuals to participate in buyers groups for photovoltaic and solar hot water installations. This has mainly been due to concerns about the financial management and capacity to deliver by volunteer organisations, despite an apparently good track record. Thus we are extremely supportive of measures which would promote confidence in bulk purchasing of such systems, such as Council sponsorship. In particular the use of solar water heating appears to give one of the best carbon reduction in relation to cost, and should be strongly encouraged.

FOWB are also aware of many people with an interest in a photovoltaic installation who do not have a suitable roof space, orientation or clear solar access. We believe such people would constitute a good market for the mini-sun farm concept. This option would also allow small scale participation and 'ownership' for individuals with limited means.

The positive experience of community support for the Bendigo Bank suggests that were option 3 followed for a larger scale renewable energy facility that there would be a good level of support.

FOWB were supportive of the proposed Myponga Wind farm. While acknowledging that there were some environmental costs involved, we felt the benefits greatly exceeded the costs. We also believe that the level of opposition to that wind farm was reflective of a highly organised minority that does not represent broad community consensus. None the less, we feel that introduction of larger scale wind projects is problematic in the present social environment and that other forms of renewable energy are preferable in the short term. This is regrettable due to the abundant wind resource we have and the superior cost effectiveness of generation using wind turbines compared with solar. Perhaps the oil refinery site does present one option that would not generate excessive community opposition to a wind installation.

FOWB request that the City of Onkaparinga gets involved in the State Government review of feed in tariffs, in particular to expand the size of installation eligible and to promote the concept of gross feed-in tariffs.

In relation to the idea of biomass generation, we believe there should be evaluation of feedstock other than waste. There are good options for a large amount of purpose grown material where leaf and stem wood could all be used. Existing woodlots (for example on the Willunga Escarpment) and future woodlots on creek lines and perhaps Council owned land could be utilised.



James Hansen

Warning!

If you have developed a perception that the recent strength of climate change deniers in the public debate means that human-caused global warming is no longer a threat to the planet, then you have been seriously misled. At a lecture given by Jim Hansen, head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space studies and noted climatologist, "After Copenhagen: Looking for Real Solutions" (Convention Centre in Adelaide on 11th March) there is now no shortage of strong evidence that the world is warming, and doing so quickly. But there is also, according to Jim Hansen, a tremendous "gap" between what is understood by scientists about global warming, and what politicians and the public know about this problem.

Hansen, who recently published a book called "Storms of my grandchildren" about the effects of global warming on the planet, was determined to pass on to his audience two things about the world's changing climate: that the planet is near "tipping points" for runaway climate change; and that the best way to prevent this is through putting a price on carbon. In saying that he believes the planet is nearing "tipping points", Hansen referred to three different indicators: the melting and break-up of polar ice sheets, the current rate of species extinction, and the thawing and release of methane hydrates (vast banks of undersea and subterranean frozen methane, an extremely potent, albeit shortlived, greenhouse gas).

According to Hansen, it is difficult for scientists to accurately tell us exactly when runaway climate change will occur because a major component of the world's natural cooling system, the ocean, contains such a large volume of water that it resists the warming effect of the planet's atmosphere. However, the ocean is now starting to warm and that same inertia that has, in the past, prevented the planet heating up, will in the future act to keep warming things up. As such, even rapid and comprehensive action now to reduce carbon emissions will not immediately shut down the heating that is already occurring and will continue to occur after carbon emissions are reduced.

In relation to the heating effect of the oceans, Hansen is most concerned about the potential for the disintegration of the polar ice sheets. He does not believe that a melting of the ice caps will lead to a benign (as in slow) rise in sea level. The paleoclimate history of the earth shows that in the past the sea has risen as rapidly as a metre in a couple of decades. However, should the disintegration of the polar ice sheets really occur, sea level rise will continue for hundreds of years, and for many metres.

In spite of these gloomy possibilities for the future of planet Earth, Hansen does not think we should give in to the inevitable. He still thinks we have time to take action even at this late stage. Apart from putting a price on carbon so as to cost in the damage it is doing to the planet, Hansen has four technical priorities for action on global warming:

1. Energy efficiency
2. Develop renewable energy sources

3. Pursue the development and deployment of 3rd & 4th generation nuclear power

4. Carbon sequestration

Following Hansen's lecture there was an open question and answer session. Naturally enough, two main issues dominated: nuclear power and Hansen's opposition to cap and trade carbon schemes (such as the one proposed by the Rudd government called the CPRS).

Nuclear power

Hansen was keen to stress that he is not an unthinking supporter of nuclear power. However he believes that on the evidence available, the only realistic price-competitive rival to the base load power provided by coal is that of nuclear power. He was also supportive of developing forms of renewable base load power but asserted that there are no examples yet available that show that this can be achieved, hence the "cleanest" existing competitor to coal, is nuclear. It is important to remember that Hansen's opinion that nuclear power is an option for future electricity generation is informed by his understanding of just how severe a threat global warming is, and just how little real time he believes we have left to tackle carbon pollution. In other words, Hansen believes that burning fossil fuel is so great a threat to the future of the planet, that without plausible base load alternatives, we need to adopt nuclear (but hopefully 3rd and 4th gen nuclear).

The real hope for nuclear power in Hansen's opinion lies in the direction of 4th generation nuclear power. 4th generation nuclear power purports to consume the nuclear fuel in the process itself (thereby getting rid of the waste and potential weapons proliferation problem), and uses a reactor that cools with liquid sodium instead of water. By way of an anecdote, Hansen mentioned that in 1994 the US President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore turned down funding for the building of a 4th Generation power plant by Argonne Laboratory, thereby losing many years of potentially low carbon power development.

Pricing carbon

Hansen thinks that putting a price on carbon is the single most important thing we can do at the moment, to foster change to our carbon consumption patterns. He thinks that "cap and trade" carbon schemes similar to the Australian government's CPRS will not work and prefers a carbon tax. His version of a carbon tax called a "Fee and dividend" scheme would tax carbon at the point of production and return the money collected immediately to the citizens of the country where it is collected. Given that the price of carbon-generated power will increase quickly due to the "fee and dividend" tax, citizens would soon allocate their funds to reducing their carbon consumption.

He was strongly of the opinion that "cap and trade" systems, or market-based trading systems are too easy to fiddle with, and would not make the necessary gains in carbon pollution reduction.

In Hansen's opinion there are only two countries that ultimately really matter in the carbon pricing debate: China and the United States. In Hansen's opinion, when these countries act, the rest of the world will follow.

Should you wish to follow up on Jim Hansen's thinking or challenge him on his ideas, his weblink is

<http://www.columbia.edu/~jeh1/>

Likewise, the Sydney lecture that Jim Hansen gave is available at Slow TV

<http://www.themonthly.com.au/james-hansen-looking-real-solutions-after-copenhagen-2342>

Richard Bennett

Nuclear Energy Debate

A posse of FOWB Committee members headed to Adelaide Uni for a debate organised by the Hawke Centre and entitled: **Is nuclear energy the answer – are we asking the right questions?** This important debate for people with an interest in the environment was excellent, with proponents of fourth generation nuclear reactors promising a safe and almost unlimited power supply from fast breeder reactors. The alternative view of the hazards and uncertainties of reliance on nuclear technology, plus the opposing view was well put: that over-consumption will never be solved just by generating more energy. It remains certain that this topic will be a hot one in Australia for many years to come – let us hope the heat is productive!

Gulf Troubled Waters Forum

FOWB were invited to take part in a full day forum on St Vincent Gulf issues held recently. David Gill and Chas Martin gave a presentation outlining the issues impacting on the Gulf that FOWB has dealt with. In particular we discussed how acting as a community group can give impetus for actions to happen rather than just be talked about. Our support for moves to hold and clean water running off the hills and plains (such as the enhancement of The Washpool) were a focus. We were pleased with a good level of interest in our talk, but the strongest take home message that day remains the fragility of our coast and its vulnerability. The Gulf is a waterway with minimal exchange of water with the sea and has an ecosystem adapted to very low levels of nutrients. The message is clear – keep the Gulf as clear of pollution as possible.

More about water on next page . . .



Chookarloo – Kuitpo Forest

Update to the article in our January newsletter:

In recent discussions between community members that complained to the Minister about the future of historically important hardwood compartments following the destruction of trees in the vicinity of Kuitpo Forest headquarters, there has been some very positive developments.

Following discussions, ForestrySA has decided that it will be developing a comprehensive forest management plan for its forest reserves in the Mount Lofty Ranges, including Kuitpo, commencing in 2011.

ForestrySA also advised that the areas of interest to the community will not be clear felled pending this

management planning process, and that the areas will be identified on their systems as an exclusion from general harvesting operations.

The community petitioners indicated that the above actions are acceptable and have offered to be actively involved in the consultation process.

We will keep FOWB members informed of progress, but if you have any questions or would like to be involved in the community process regarding these important recreational forest areas, please contact Richard Bennett.

Photograph taken at Chookarloo 4 March 2010

WATERFLOWS IN THE WASHPOOL CATCHMENT AND THE HEALTH OF MARINE ECOSYSTEMS IN GULF ST VINCENT.

The Washpool water catchment includes the hills face between Sellicks Hill and a point 3 or 4 km from Willunga and the plains below down to the coast. Its northern limit at the coast is Quinliven Rd, Pt Willunga. Its original drainage was to the area to the east and south of Aldinga Scrub, where it was held in extensive wetlands behind coastal dune fields. From there it moved slowly overland and through a shallow aquifer under the Aldinga Scrub, towards the principal coastal outlet in the vicinity of the Washpool. A lot of water from the Sellicks Hill end of the catchment is believed to have accumulated in the Washpool and Blue Lagoon, via sheet flow rather than defined creeks.

So like the original water regime on the Adelaide plains, winter rains were held behind dunes and gradually filtered through the dunes, except for extreme rainfall events.

Problems which we now have in the Washpool catchment have come about mainly from overdrainage.

See list below.

- (1) Siltation of Aldinga Reef, because urban stormwater has been sent directly to the coast against the natural gradient.
- (2) Potential damage to coastal ecosystems (particularly seagrasses) from winter stormwater plumes entering the gulf via the Washpool, Cactus Canyon and Pt Willunga Creek outlets.
- (3) Loss of water supply to shallow aquifers under Aldinga Scrub, which makes its vegetation more stressed and fire prone.

(4) Reduced inundation time for the Washpool Lagoon with consequent loss of food supplies and breeding opportunities for water birds, some of which visit annually from the northern hemisphere.

(5) Flooding issues in the vine and hobby farm areas between the Aldinga Scrub and South Rd, which in topographic terms constitute a flood plain. These problems will tend to get worse with further urbanization in Aldinga.

SUGGESTED SYNERGIES

(1) RE ESTABLISHMENT OF WETLANDS AND DRAINAGE SWALES EAST OF ALDINGA SCRUB could retain, slow down and treat storm water entering the gulf, extending the inundation season of the Washpool, potentially recharging the Aldinga Scrub aquifer and minimizing flooding problems in that locality. Installing Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR), could make recovered water available for community amenities, community gardens and city farms.

(2) VEGETATION CORRIDOORS AND WATER RETENTION ALONG FLOWLINES all the way up the catchment to the hills face.

A proposal to do this is detailed in the document entitled: "RANGE TO SCRUB --- VEGETATION CORRIDOORS FOR THE ALDINGA PLAIN"

It would allow for the establishment of bio-corridors to re-establish links between the native vegetation on the hills and the Aldinga Scrub which is presently isolated. Such a corridor could incorporate a series of small to medium leaky ponds and wetlands, thereby detaining more runoff water in the landscape, rather than have most of it rush out through the Washpool outlet.

For the full version of this proposal see the Friends of Willunga Basin website: www.fowb.net



Some notes from the recent

Conservation Council meeting

by Rob Bickford

FOWB representative on the Council

The Environment minister (Jay Wetherill), the shadow minister (Michelle address the 16 point environment agenda that was put together by the Conservation Council, the ACF, the Wilderness Society and the Nature Conservation Soc.

Not surprisingly, the differences between the individuals in front of an audience of conservationists was not very big; there was much agreement in principle, but the unstated reality is that none of them has a big voice in cabinet., and Michelle Lensink said frequently that she could not count on party support for several issues, such as extending marine parks, protecting Arkaroola and the Simpson Desert.

Jay Wetherill's responses can be seen on the CCSA website at http://conservationsa.org.au/files/media/labour_response.pdf

They highlight the scope of actions rather than new \$ commitments; emphasising the implementation of landscape-scale planning, the NatureLink program linking areas of biodiversity, and extending sanctuary zones in marine parks. State Labor insists that the MDB should be managed by an independent, science-based board, not a single Federal minister, who would inevitably favour the Eastern states; the Libs agree with Tony Abbott that a Minister should control it.

All supported the protection of Willunga Basin by legislation; the Libs would fund biodiversity programs in the Adelaide Hills before committing anything to remoter areas (Simpson Desert).

All said Greenhouse targets were pointless without Federal legislation.

All showed a degree of unreality over the Olympic Dam expansion; Labor said a new Indenture Act would be drawn up setting new environmental parameters; Libs would ask BHPB to "reconsider their options" on Point Lowly, while the Greens want BHPB to mine the Copper and Gold only, returning the Uranium to the ground.

Questions from the audience were disappointingly tame.

- All candidates support "Peak Everything"
- Greens think Algae/diesel is a great option for farmers
- Trevor ---- of Aldinga Bay Assoc asked about protection of bird species from cars on beach; all parties supported protection for particular cases
- I asked if any candidates could support the Southern Freeway proposal, undercutting the \$1.5 billion being spent on the railways; both JW and ML said they could find no logic in it, but that they would build it anyway. The Greens had no opinion!

From Plains to Plate

The Future of Food in South Australia

A symposium jointly organised by the Hawke Centre and Friends of the Earth

One of FOWB's main objectives is to retain the rural character of the Willunga Basin. It is ideally situated to be the food bowl for Adelaide, especially in a future where escalating fuel prices brought on by diminishing supply will necessitate that food be grown as close to major population centres as possible.

So it was with great interest that members of FOWB committee attended the opening night of the Plains to Plate symposium which brought together individuals, community organisations, academics and representatives of local government to share ideas that could form the basis of a solution to food security issues; with the possibly of establishing a national food policy.

The three main speakers shared a wealth of food experience with listeners, Gay Bilson as a restaurateur and gardener, Claire Nettle as an educator and coordinator of community garden schemes and Grahame Brookman, also a food educator and founder and operator of the Food Forest, an award winning organic permaculture farm at Gawler.

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Produce for sale at the Willunga Farmers Market



continued . . .

Claire Nettle, spoke about grassroots initiatives for food justice, discussing her experience of community gardens, kitchen gardens in schools, food co-ops and farmers markets. There is now a fast growing national, social movement around food. . . of community food systems, including co-ops and community gardens (of which there are more than 40 successfully operating in SA already) and some councils in SA are already involved in the development of policy around community food gardening.

Grahame Brookman spoke passionately about the effects that climate change and the dying Murray-Darling system will have on food production in SA, about the importance of recycling 'poo water' for food crops, the potential to use parklands for food production. . . of creating TODs to minimise the encroachment of urban development into agricultural land, of controlling the growth of population – 3 people are born every second! He stressed the inextricable link between fossil fuels and the food we eat: that the food we eat has more impact on the planet than anything else we do: that we must take personal responsibility for what we consume.

All speakers stressed the importance of eating locally produced food, of the importance of farmers markets to sustaining agriculture.

Although there are aspects of the future which appear bleak, all speakers spoke with optimism and enthusiasm about the possibilities available to us now to ensure food security for the future.



This newsletter is written, compiled and published by the committee of Friends of Willunga Basin Inc.

www.fowb.net Letters to the editor are welcomed!

Views expressed do not necessarily represent those of Friends of Willunga Basin Inc.

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Or emailing to: info@fowb.net

Or by phoning:

David Gill: 85562289 or

Rosie Knott: 85564203

Friends of Willunga Basin MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

There is an annual fee of \$8 (concession \$6, family \$10).

Members have voting rights at general meetings, and are eligible to stand for office.

Please post to: PO Box 710 Willunga SA 5172

Main Objectives

Friends of Willunga Basin actively endeavour to:

- Retain natural and heritage assets
- Restore damaged ecosystems
- Keep housing within present urban growth boundaries
- Ensure planning precedes development
- Retain agriculture as the primary land use east of South Rd
- Promote sustainable lifestyles
- Achieve legislative backing for the above objectives.

I hereby join as a FRIEND OF WILLUNGA BASIN and declare my support for retaining the natural and rural character of the Willunga Basin as stated in the objectives listed in the brochure.

Title Name: (Surname)

(First Name):

Address:

p.code phone

email

(This will not be disclosed to any third party)

Payment enc. \$

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Tick if you wish us to post you a receipt
(please enclose self addressed envelope)

If you would like to add a few dollars to your payment by way of a donation it would be really appreciated.