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IN YOUR REGION

Edition 11 - 2014



Historic Signing of the Ord

The signing of the Ord Development Agreement between the State Government and Kimberley Agricultural Investment (KAI) on Friday 6 December at Parliament House represented a significant milestone in the Ord-East Kimberley Expansion project.

Department of Regional Development Director General Paul Rosair said the signing of the Agreement was

testament to the progress that can be achieved when government, the private sector and traditional owners work together.

"Through the Royalties for Regions program, the State Government has invested a significant amount of funding into this project and it is heartening to see the results coming to fruition," said Mr Rosair.

The signing of the Agreement effectively doubles the Ord Irrigation Scheme by unlocking thousands of hectares of land in the Kimberley for agricultural use.

Witnessing this historic agreement were Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation Traditional Owner Edna O'Malley and Chief Executive Officer John Hughes.

Under the agreement, KAI is required to construct on-farm infrastructure and develop and crop farmland to secure a 50-year lease over 7,400 hectares of Gooming land.

As a result of the negotiations between the State Government and KAI, regional Western Australia will benefit from the biggest agricultural development in the Kimberley region in more than forty years.



Photo L- R : Paul Rosair, Edna O'Malley - Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation, Premier Hon Colin Barnett and Gail McGowan - Department of State Development.

DG Message

2014 represents a time of change at the Department of Regional Development.

I would first like to welcome our new minister, Hon Terry Redman MLA, Minister for Regional Development; Lands; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development. He has a reputation as a strong advocate for regional Western Australia and brings a wealth of Ministerial experience to his new portfolio.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Andrew Murray, inaugural Chair of the Western Australian Regional Development Trust. He has stepped down to focus on his role as Royal Commissioner on the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. His oversight of the Royalties for Regions program and his experience, knowledge and personal contribution to the development of regional Western Australia has been exemplary. Andrew Murray has been replaced by Sue Middleton, who was the inaugural deputy chair of the Trust. She brings to the role a wealth of regional and community development experience, and strategic planning skills. Tim Shanahan becomes the Trust's Deputy Chair while Ralph Addis, Chair of the Kimberley Development Commission, joins the Trust as the representative of the regional development commissions. Peter Rundle, Chair of the Great Southern Regional Development Commission, remains on the Trust.

In addition to our continued commitment to the development of communities and infrastructure, we will be developing new initiatives to

further strengthen regional economic development.

Economic diversity is essential to the development of regional Western Australia. DRD will encourage and support innovative enterprise opportunities throughout the state, as well as tourism, creative arts, aquaculture and alternative energy. New opportunities exist in strategic agriculture in the Ord-East Kimberley, through the proximity to Asian markets, increasing skills, infrastructure, attracting investment and supporting industry development.

As always, I am impressed with the number of projects, initiatives and developments that are taking place throughout the State as a result of Royalties for Regions funding, a few of which have been highlighted in this edition of In Your Region. I encourage you to visit our website to find out more.

Lastly, and after much consideration, I have decided that this is an appropriate time to step down as Director General. I have been in this role since 2009, and serving DRD has been a great personal honour. I have been fortunate to lead a great team of dedicated professionals committed to developing regional Western Australia, and together, this team has delivered a number of ground-breaking programs, including Royalties for Regions, Pilbara Cities, Ord East Kimberley Expansion and SuperTowns, to name just four of these. Every day has been a privilege and I am proud to have played a part in DRD's record of very solid achievement.



I have every assurance that DRD's leadership team will be up to the task of facing whatever new challenges that arise for the regions and working with others to capitalise on their many opportunities. I am confident that I am leaving the Department, and regional development in Western Australia, in very safe hands.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Rosair', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Rosair,
Director General

Killara Adult Day Care and Respite Centre upgrades completed



Carers in Northam can now access enhanced respite services after the Shire of Northam completed upgrades to the Killara Adult Day Care and Respite Centre.

Royalties for Regions funding of \$3.1 million enabled the Shire to construct two new eight bed purpose built buildings at the existing Killara site including fit-out with furniture and equipment.

The new buildings will be used for short term quality accommodation for aged clients while providing a much needed break for their loved ones and carers.

"These cottages enable the Shire of Northam to provide much needed respite; our regular guests are delighted that they have their own on-suite and

private bedroom, and provided care with dignity and respect," said Killara Manager Nicole Hampton.

"We are able to tailor our services to individual needs, provide comfortable and tasteful facilities, which is very reassuring to a carer who has entrusted their loved one to us for a short period of respite," added Ms Hampton.

"Our aim is to be able to offer short periods of respite to families within the Wheatbelt which will ultimately allow aging residents to remain in their communities, where they feel secure and independent for as long as possible," said Ms Hampton.

The upgrade of the existing Killara Centre is in the final stages and will be used for providing day care. The building has historically been used for this. However as demand for overnight accommodation grew, the building was modified. The new buildings will provide a modern facility for the overnight care of clients allowing the existing building to be returned to its original purpose.

The Avon Regional Organisation of Councils (AROC) agreed to provide funding to the project through the CLGF Regional allocations. The AROC group comprises the local authorities of Chittering, Dowerin, Goomalling, Northam, Toodyay and Victoria Plains. Lotterywest was also a funding partner.

"The Killara Respite Project is one of the first collaborations for the AROC and provides a great example of Councils recognising the needs of the entire region," said Shire of Northam President Steven Pollard.

"The new design will also allow the Shire to operate the facility in a manner that enables quick reconfiguration and access to crisis accommodation in the event of a disaster or emergency in the region," Cr Pollard added.



Photo Credit : Shire of Northam

Gourmet Escape set to star

"Australia's - and the world's - best chefs, food writers and gourmands descend on Margaret River to celebrate the region's fine craft beers, wines and artisan produce."

With reviews like this from the Lonely Planet's 'Greatest Australian attractions' and the title of 'Best Regional Event: WA' from the Australian Event Awards, it is no surprise that the Margaret River Gourmet Escape continues to grow in size and success.

The Margaret River Gourmet Escape is a celebration of the state's fresh produce, gourmet delicacies, world-class wines and laidback lifestyle.

This festival program includes satellite events such as indulgent long lunches, a pop up beach BBQ restaurant, exclusive dinners, wine tastings, masterclasses and much more, all showcasing the Margaret River Wine Region and Western Australia as a world-class food and wine destination.

An outstanding line-up of celebrities partake in the festival every year, many of whom return in consecutive years. In 2013, the world's most recognisable chef, Heston Blumenthal, was the star of the festival, along with Rick Stein,



Alex Atala, Sat Bains, Shane Osborn, Neil Perry, Tetsuya Wakuda and Adriano Zumbo.

Tourism WA Eventscorp Executive Director Gwyn Dolphin said last year's Margaret River Gourmet Escape festival was an outstanding success.

"The Gourmet Village at Leeuwin Estate Winery attracted nearly 10,000 patrons and many of the satellite events held throughout the region were sold out," said Mr Dolphin.

"The four-day event also attracted significant local, national and international media coverage which

gave the Margaret River Wine Region and the entire state, a huge profile boost.

"Gourmet Escape has instantly become one of Australia's premier food and wine events and we confidently expect it to develop into one of the best in the Asia-Pacific Region in the next few years."

Photo Credit : Margaret River Gourmet Escape

The Department of Regional Development supports the Margaret River Gourmet Escape through Eventscorp's Regional Events Program, which is funded by Royalties for Regions.

Regional Investment Executive Director Andrew Mann said events such as Margaret River Gourmet Escape are vital for regional communities because they not only add vibrancy to a community but they also attract visitors and help stimulate the local economy.

"Western Australians know that the food and wine we produce is among the best you will find anywhere in the world and now, through Margaret River Gourmet Escape, we're showcasing it to chefs and foodies from around the globe," Mr Mann said.



Photo Credit : Margaret River Gourmet Escape

Wharnccliffe Mill Bush Retreat redevelopment a boost for eco-tourism in Margaret River

Eco-tourism in the Margaret River region received a boost with the opening of the redeveloped Wharnccliffe Mill Bush Retreat in Bramley National Park.

The \$1.2 million redevelopment received Royalties for Regions funding of \$91,000 as part of the State Government's Naturebank program – a joint initiative between the Department of Parks and Wildlife and Tourism WA to assist with the development of high quality, environmentally-sensitive tourism experiences in WA's national parks and reserves.

Once a pine mill and then a budget accommodation and camping facility, the upgraded Wharnccliffe Mill Bush Retreat provides affordable, sustainable group and family style accommodation in one of the state's premier tourist destinations.

The upgrades include additional accommodation and refurbished facilities including a café, kiosk, library and commercial kitchen catering to large groups.

Wharnccliffe Mill also offers a nature-play space and an Aboriginal-themed

meeting place, with cultural learning experiences presented by Aboriginal guides.

The Naturebank program aims to position WA as a premier eco-tourism destination and increase nature-based experiences in some of the state's most extraordinary locations.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob officially opened the upgraded Wharnccliffe Mill Bush Retreat in January.

Yalgorup campground upgrades

More campers can now stay at Yalgorup National Park as a result of recent upgrades to Martins Tank campground.

The campground's expansion and upgrades were made possible due to Royalties for Regions funding of \$1.3 million, along with \$70,000 from the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

The campground has been redesigned and expanded to cater for people with caravans, camper trailers or camper vans as well as providing for the

traditional tent based camping in parks.

In addition to the increased number of camp-sites, the campground also features new amenities including a camp kitchen, two communal fire pits, picnic tables and pathways.

The improved camping facilities means more families and visitors will be able to experience the park's natural beauty, particularly the internationally recognised Peel-Yalgorup Ramsar wetland.

The upgrades were part of the State Government's \$20 million Conservation Parks Infrastructure and Roads initiative to improve opportunities for people to enjoy affordable accommodation when visiting Western Australia's national parks.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob officially opened the upgraded Martins Tank campground in January.



Photo : Martins Tank Campground

Affordable community housing in Albany

More community housing options are now available in Albany with the completion of 12 two-bedroom units for eligible seniors and people with disabilities.

Royalties for Regions funding of \$1.88 million was allocated to the Great Southern Community Housing Association (GSCHA) to assist with the construction of the houses in Mira Mar. The total cost of the project was \$3.6 million.

The properties were built and will be managed by GSCHA to help alleviate the growing demand for community housing in the Great Southern region, particularly as more retirees are moving to the region.

"The completion of these dwellings is a great outcome for the community, especially for residents who can now reside in close proximity to essential services and amenities," said GSCHA Chief Executive Officer Kaz Sternberg.

"There continues to be a growing wait-list for affordable housing in Albany and the demand for affordable two-bedroom housing is high at around 130 applicants as of February 2014. Our goal is to continue to increase the availability of community housing options for people in need over the next three to five years."

The construction of the units will assist tenants to participate in the wider community, relieve pressure of families

caring for family members with a disability, build community capacity and create a safer region by providing secure housing.

Each unit features an energy efficient design to help keep utility bills down, as well as quantum hot water units, solar power and inverter air conditioners. Adaptable design, including hobless showers, wheelchair accessibility and reinforced bathroom walls for the installation of hand rails will help to provide an improved quality of life for tenants, and facilitate the concept of "aging in place".

Corrigin Regional Medical Centre upgrade attracting more patients

The provision of health care services in Corrigin has improved as a result of upgrades to Corrigin's Regional Medical Centre.

Renovations to the medical centre included the addition of two new consulting rooms, office, universal access shower and toilet, and improved access for people with disabilities.

As well as increasing in size, the new centre has also extended its opening hours due to an increase in patient numbers.

The completion of the Corrigin Medical Centre upgrade has had a positive impact on medical services in the region. The centre can now

accommodate medical students and other specialist medical professionals to the region, providing a variety of services within the same facility.

Shire of Corrigin CEO Julian Murphy said the upgraded centre meant that residents no longer had to travel long distances to access patient and specialist care.

The project received funding of \$250,000 from the Royalties for Regions Country Local Government Fund along with \$54,176 from the Shire of Corrigin.



Photo L-R : Hon Mia Davies MLA, Lynette Baker - Shire President and Julian Murphy - Shire CEO.

Improved engagement and economic development for Aboriginal Communities

In December 2013, the Department of Regional Development (DRD) facilitated a workshop with members of the Aboriginal Economic Development and Governance Sub-committee (AEDGSC) and Warren Mundine, Executive Chair of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council.

The purpose of the workshop was to set key priorities and develop a strategy that will deliver improved outcomes in economic development, governance and engagement for Aboriginal communities, which will be achievable over the next one to three years.

The workshop's guest speaker was Warren Mundine, Executive Chair of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council, who gave some personal insights on these issues, as well as his perspective on the emerging Commonwealth agenda on Aboriginal affairs.

Attended by representatives from a range of government agencies and including members of the Western Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council, the workshop focused on leveraging opportunities that arise from activities occurring at the local, State and National levels, in order to build economic and governance capability



Photo L- R : Warren Mundine, Jenni Collard - Executive Director Business and Social Development, DRD and Paul Rosair.

and opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Attendees were given the following questions and asked to formulate and agree on three priority actions on a topic of their choice.

- What are the key focus areas and opportunities in economic development for Western Australia?
- What are key focus areas and opportunities for governance in Western Australia?
- What are key focus areas and opportunities for Aboriginal engagement in Western Australia?

Their priority actions were then discussed, opening up an avenue for further engagement amongst attendees.

It is proposed that the priority actions arising from this workshop will help form the basis of a proposed work plan for the newly established AEDGSC. This sub-committee falls under the auspices of the State Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee.

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Historic Collie railway footbridge restored and reopened



Photo L-R : Cr Wayne Sanford -Shire President, Hon Colin Holt. MLC, Hon Mick Murray MLA and Nola Marino MP- Federal Member for Forrest.

One hundred years of Collie history has been restored, supported by the Royalties for Regions program through the Country Local Government Fund.

Despite some very hot weather, a large local crowd turned out as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Regional Development, Colin Holt

MLC opened the newly restored Collie railway footbridge – a great reminder of how prominent the railways were, particularly during the first half of the 20th century.

“Collie people are proud of their history, and this bridge is a monument to the rich history of the railways in Collie,” said Shire President Wayne Sanford.

“This restoration is an outstanding effort, and is a much needed safe crossing for the current freight line,” Cr Sanford added.

This restoration of the 1958 railway footbridge represents a link with the original 1912 footbridge and the substantial railway system that supported the coal and timber industries.

The footbridge was classified by the National Trust along with the adjacent

railway goods shed in February 1988 and Interim Listed on the State Register of Heritage Places in 1992.

“The restoration will provide safe access across the tracks for residents, especially school children who live on the other side of town,” Mr Holt said.

The \$0.95 million project received \$0.66 million through the Country Local Government Fund (CLGF) Individual, which helps local governments in regional Western Australia to build and maintain their infrastructure.

Collie has received \$3.7 million in CLGF Individual funding from Royalties for Regions since 2009 which has been applied to 24 separate projects to improve capital infrastructure in the town.

Westlink

Westlink is a Western Australian Government owned and operated television station.

It produces both live broadcasts and pre-recorded programs, providing an innovative communication tool that can help you engage rural, remote and regional communities.

Live programs can feature audience interaction via telephone or email feedback, and production options are also available for on-location filming.

Managed by the Department of Regional Development, the studio is

operated by experienced television professionals who are available to discuss your production requirements.

Broadcasting via satellite on the Viewer Access Satellite Television (VAST) platform on Channel 602, anyone in Australia with a VAST satellite receiver can watch Westlink. There is no need for an internet connection.

Westlink is available at over 100 Community Resource Centres, 50,000 sites in Western Australia and 150,000 sites across the rest of Australia.



Westlink can assist customers with the planning, booking and delivery of programs and also offers very affordable rates.

Programs broadcast include State, Federal and Local Government non-political messages, training courses, general information, health and well-being and, arts and entertainment.

For more information, please contact Westlink on 1800 99 11 11 or email westlink@drd.wa.gov.au.

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