

31 July 2007

WESTERN CMA BOARD HOLDS INFORMATION SESSION IN WILCANNIA

The Western Catchment Management Authority (CMA) Board will hold an information session to outline river projects in the Wilcannia area during its bi-monthly meeting in Wilcannia on August 7 and 8, Western CMA Chair, Rory Treweeke, said today.

"The information session will be held at 12.15am on Wednesday, August 8 at the Wilcannia Rural Transaction Centre and I welcome anyone interested in hearing about the projects or wanting to raise natural resource management issues for discussion with members of the Board," he said.

The Western CMA is undertaking a number of projects to improve the river.

It has contracted the Department of Primary Industries to assess rehabilitation options for a stretch of approximately 60km of the Darling River around Wilcannia. They have started assessing the area and will develop a river rehabilitation plan which will identify priority areas for rehabilitation with activities such as resnagging and riparian protection.

Sam Davis of Department of Primary Industries will address the meeting about the status of this project.

Wilcannia stormwater infrastructure is also scheduled for improvement with the installation of three gross pollutant traps planned, which will significantly improve the quality of stormwater entering the river around the town.

"The Western CMA has been established to ensure the community has a significant say in how natural resources are managed and this is just one avenue of making sure local people are heard," Mr Treweeke said.

"The Western CMA rotates its board meetings around the Catchment to ensure we keep in touch with local issues.

"As well as the broadscale projects undertaken, including an aerial assessment of the Darling riverbed and a mesquite control operation undertaken in conjunction with the Lower-Murray Darling CMA in the Milparinka, Wilcannia and Broken Hill area on properties totalling 540km², local landholders have accessed funds to improve natural resources on their properties through our incentives program, which is now in its third year.

"Our open sessions allow us to hear first-hand whether we're doing our job effectively for local people.

"It is important to remember that while the Western CMA has funds available to improve water quality and riverine habitat, the responsibility for administering extractive access to water, water-sharing and flow management on the Barwon-Darling and other rivers throughout the Catchment rests with the Department of Environment and Climate Change, not the Western CMA," Mr Treweeke said.

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