

Planning for the future of the South West Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area

A report on the issues arising from the first phase of the community consultation process addressing the ongoing management of the South West Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area and a proposal to allocate 45GL of water from the aquifer to the Integrated Water Supply Scheme.

March 2003

Prepared by:

**Blackwood Project Team
Water and Rivers Commission
PO Box 261
BUNBURY WA 6231**

**Ph (08) 9726 4111
Fax (08) 9726 4100**

CONTENTS

<u>1.0 Overview</u>	3
<u>1.1 Purpose</u>	3
<u>2.0 Planning for the future of the South West Yarragadee aquifer</u>	4
<u>2.1 Why are we doing this?</u>	4
<u>2.2 What are we doing now to ensure the community has its say?</u>	5
<u>3.0 Regional Context</u>	5
<u>3.1 Population</u>	6
<u>3.2 Agriculture</u>	6
<u>3.3 Mining</u>	6
<u>3.4 Tourism</u>	6
<u>3.5 Industrial Development</u>	6
<u>4.0 Issues and concerns</u>	8
<u>Table 1. Ecological and hydrological issues</u>	9
<u>Table 2. Economic and regional development issues</u>	10
<u>Table 3. Social issues</u>	11
<u>Table 4. Water allocation planning issues</u>	12
<u>Table 5. Political and other issues</u>	14
<u>5.0 Ongoing work</u>	16

1.0 Overview

This document reports on community issues as they have been gathered by the Blackwood Project Team of the Water and Rivers Commission in response to the assessment process currently underway in the development of the management plan for the South West Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area (SWYBGA). These issues were gathered in a number of ways including:

1. Stakeholder group workshops, such as one held with the licenced groundwater users of the Scott Coastal Plain;
2. Interviews with key individuals, such as environmental, community development and Aboriginal groups;
3. Presentations to local organisations, such as Shires, Mining Companies and the Bunbury and Busselton Water Boards.
4. A series of public briefings held with the communities of Nannup, Busselton, Margaret River and Capel and Augusta.

Between 400-450 people have been involved in this first phase of the consultation process which was undertaken between the months of December 2002 through to February 2003.

The information contained herein informs and guides the ensuing stages of this resource management planning process. In this way, the process remains grounded in the concerns of the community. This document also becomes an important public record whereby the Water and Rivers Commission Community Consultation and Communications Team can report to the community how each of the issues were addressed within this management planning process.

This report is presented in a number of sections. Section 2.0 provides information on the South West Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area and why the Water and Rivers Commission is undertaking water allocation planning for the aquifer. Section 3.0 provides a brief overview of the region and provides some background and context to the issues that have been identified. Section 4.0 summarises the main issues raised, which are followed by tables outlining the specific items of concern and associated background information.

The report concludes with a discussion as to how the issues raised are being clarified, confirmed and addressed through the ongoing community consultation program associated with the SW Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area management planning.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a means of confirming and validating with the community of the South West the concerns that have been raised during the first phase of the SW Yarragadee consultation program. The Water and Rivers Commission, as managers of the State's water resources, take the issues raised very seriously, and have now implemented significant and intensive measures to clarify, investigate and quantify the concerns of the region's water users and others.

By confirming the issues raised and ensuring our understanding of what the community wants is clear, the Water and Rivers Commission is aiming to establish a strong platform from which decisions for future groundwater management in the South West can be made.

2.0 Planning for the future of the South West Yarragadee aquifer

2.1 Why are we doing this?

The Government needs to make a decision on water restriction levels and additional water source development strategies in October/November 2003. 45 GL/yr from the Blackwood Groundwater Area is one possible water source and the feasibility of this option must be confirmed.

This project is initially about determining how much water is available in the South West Yarragadee Formation within the Blackwood Groundwater Area (see Figure 1) to meet the Water Corporation's licence application for 45 GL/yr for the Integrated Water Supply Scheme (I.W.S.S). To enable the Commission to make this decision, a significant amount of information is required on the resource, its hydrology/hydrogeology along with the social, environmental and economic associations and dependencies attributed to this groundwater source. The Commission is currently undertaking a number of research projects to be completed over the next three months to provide this information, particularly the requirement that the water is also allocated to satisfy a range of local and regional development needs. The outcome of this process will be a draft water resource management plan, which will be released for public comment.

As part of the evaluation process, the Water and Rivers Commission is consulting with the Whicher Water Resources Management Committee and Local Government Authorities in addition to a wide range of key groups and organisations in the South West.

The draft plan will inform the Commission in its allocation decision-making. The Commission will then follow the required process to produce a statutory water resource management plan to provide the basis for future decision-making.

Government will be advised of the Commission's allocation decision, together with advice on the public issues and concerns and how they are being addressed, in October/November 2003. Preparation of the final management plan will continue over a longer timeframe.

In making its decision, the Water and Rivers Commission will take into account water requirements for the region to enable Government to make its decision on water supply sources, in line with the State Water Strategy.

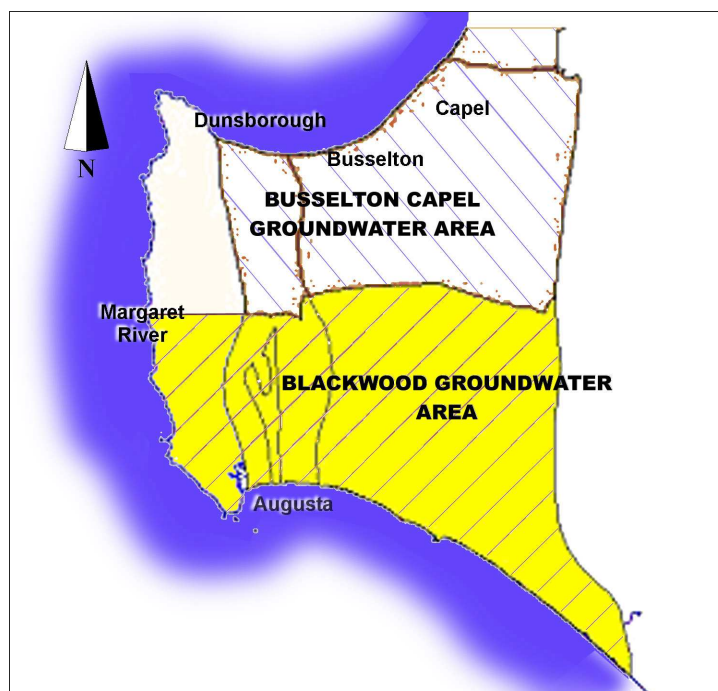


Figure 1: South West Yarragadee study area

2.2 What are we doing now to ensure the community has its say?

Based upon the initial feedback and issues raised by the South West community during the phase one public briefings and interviews, intensive research into key elements of the planning process - ecological, social and economic - has commenced. A further series of public briefings to update the community on the SW Yarragadee management planning process is scheduled for July 2003.

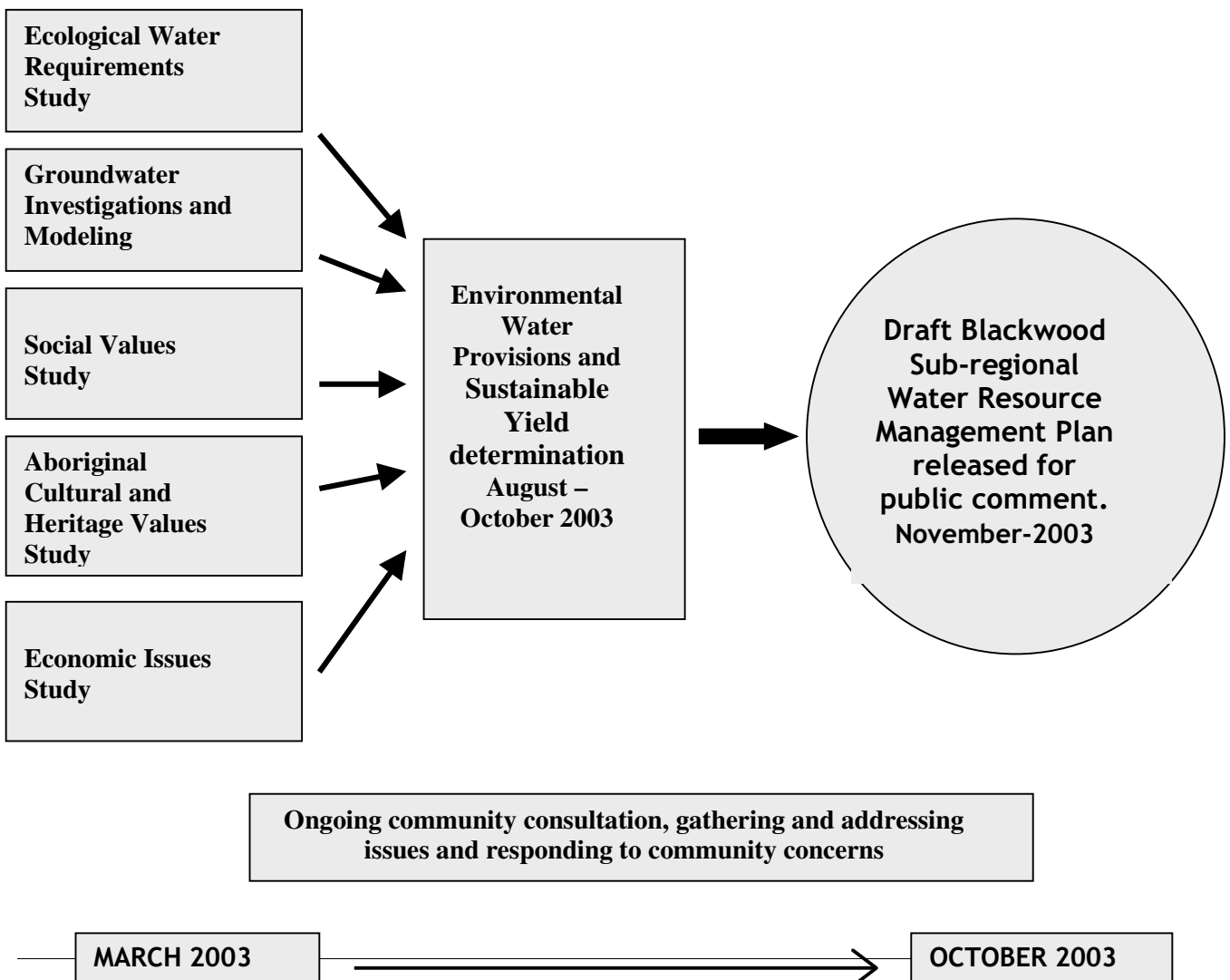
Meetings with licensed groundwater users are also planned. We are working to develop a range of opportunities for the region's local governments to raise the range of issues they may have in relation to the exporting of water from the South West region to the I.W.S.S.

We are listening to the community and have integrated into the investigation and planning process the issues the community are concerned about in considering the SW Yarragadee as a potential new water source'

Issues raised by the community and reported herein are vital to developing a water management plan that is balanced and grounded as a result of the rigorous scientific investigations and in the process of addressing the ranging and very real concerns of South West residents. Notably, these issues will be addressed within the context of the State Water Strategy in ongoing planning for the region's water and water supplies.

The following diagram outlines key components of the ongoing investigation and planning program for the aquifer. The content of these components is based directly upon the issues raised by the community during phase one of the consultation program. These issues are provided and discussed in Section 4.0.

Figure 2: Research and investigations project components



3.0 Regional Context

Recognising the general context within which issues have been raised by existing water users, other stakeholders and the general community is vital to ensuring the issues are adequately translated into ongoing work plans.

Five key issues have been identified as underlying the future of the South West Region: population, agriculture, mining, tourism and industrial development. These issues generically fall within the regional development context of many of the concerns that have been raised by the community. It is essential that ongoing social, economic and environmental discussions and analyses in relation to the South West Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area are considered with this information in mind, in order that the concerns of the community are adequately addressed and articulated within the context within which they were raised.

3.1 Population

At 30 June 2001, the population of the South West Region was 129,925. This made up 6.8 per cent of the State's population. This growth represented an increase of 2.4 per cent over the previous year, compared to 1.3 per cent for regional WA and 1.4 per cent for WA as a whole over the same period.

Over the 10 year period (1992-2001) the South West population grew from 104,663 to 129,925. Annual growth varied from 1.3 per cent to 3.3 per cent per annum, averaging slightly over 2.3 per cent - above the State average of approximately 1.7 per cent per annum. Medium Scenario Population Projections (by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure) for the period 2001-2031 suggest the South West will grow to 218,000 by the year 2031.

These figures clearly indicate increased demand for local and regional water use will be likely over coming years. This context relates directly to other areas of concern - including production and development issues outlined below.

3.2 Agriculture

In 2000, agricultural production in the South West Region was valued at \$473 million, which was 10 per cent of the State's total agricultural production by value (ABS).

In the SWYBGA, the Scott Coastal Plain, which is largely underlain by the SW Yarragadee aquifer, is identified as being a regionally significant agricultural area exhibiting a high level of productive capability. Two constraints to agriculture in the Scott area have been identified - supply chain issues (such as access to markets), and *reliable access to water*. To maintain the region's contribution to agricultural production, activities such as irrigated horticulture on the Scott Coastal Plain are essential.

3.3 Mining

For the 12 month period ending December 2001, total mining activity in the South West Region was valued at \$790 million (Department of Minerals and Energy). Water-related implications for growth in mining in the region include direct issues such as access to water for processing purposes and industry expansion.

3.4 Tourism

Tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the economy of the region, with water-based lifestyle attributes being significant motivators for the tourist market. Overnight domestic visitors to the South West Region in 2000 spent \$422 million (WATC). While tourism has not, to date, appeared frequently in the issues raised, the implications of its current size and pending growth for the South West are included within current culture and recreational values and issues raised, in addition to potential increases in regional water use to support tourism-related ventures.

3.5 Industrial Development

As at June 2002, there were 13 major industrial projects under construction in the South West Region, valued at \$689 million and another 5 committed valued at \$462 million (Access Economics). As with mining, agriculture and tourism, increases in regional wealth associated with economic development are likely to have implications for water demand, directly and indirectly.

3.6 Summary

The current and potential growth for the south-west is significant, and its dependence on ensuring a guaranteed water supply is widely appreciated. This paper presents the issues according to the planning process outlined in Figure 2. The Water and Rivers Commission understands the context within which many of the issues have been raised by the SW community, and considers it essential in the ongoing planning for water use in the region that the background to the issues of the community is kept in mind in the planning process.

4.0 Issues and concerns

The following statements and questions summarise the concerns and recommendations made by stakeholders and the community during the first phase of the SW Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area consultations. Aspects of these issues being considered in the components of the investigation and management planning process are listed on the following pages.

- The natural landscape, such as Lake Jasper, the forests, rivers and its associated biodiversity will not be compromised. Other environmental impacts, such as those on marine ecosystems where the aquifer flows to the sea must be considered.
- Future generations are not to be limited in their own development aspirations and rights to the environment (intergenerational equity).
- How much water is in the aquifer? Where does it recharge? How do we know what the recharge rate will be?
- Will climate change predictions and their implications for recharge be considered?
- What will be the implications for existing groundwater users?
- Heritage and cultural qualities - both Aboriginal and European - are not to be compromised.
- Regional development aspirations for local towns and businesses can not be negatively affected as a result of the proposed extraction and exporting of water.
- Agriculture, mining and other economic drivers of the regions are not to be limited by any proposal to export water.
- Are there potential trade-offs for the South West community?
- There are significant concerns within the community about existing urban water use and wastage.
- There is widely held philosophical opposition to the transferring of “water and wealth” from the South West to the metropolitan area. Other water supply options need to be carefully considered and information provided as to the factors taken into account when making the decision on water supply sources.
- The community is concerned that the research and planning timeframe is too short.
- There is concern that the Water Corporation’s proposal for 45GL is a *fait accompli*. Competition policy implications of the water supply proposal have also been raised.
- Who will make the final decision on the next major water source for Western Australia? What criteria will be used.

These and other concerns and issues are now being investigated and factored in to the water allocation planning for the SW Yarragadee aquifer. Specific issues and questions raised are provided in the following tables, roughly categorised into ecological and hydrological, economic and regional development, social, water allocation and planning, and political and other issues. The “community concerns and questions” section provides background to the issues which are now being addressed in the second phase of the consultation and investigation program.

Issues are listed in no particular order. The issues and background have provided the basis upon which the consultancies planned to undertake the ongoing investigation and planning have been prepared. The Community Consultation and Communication Team has developed its process to work with the relevant consultants and investigations and planning teams to ensure that the Issues are addressed within the respective work schedules.

Table 1. Ecological and hydrological issues

ISSUE	COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS
Precautionary principle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The research timeframe is regarded by the community as too short to complete the required environmental assessments.
Relationships with other aquifers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What relationships exist between the aquifers and what is the possibility of there being aquifer draw down? What potential impact(s) may occur to the Northern flowing system of the Southern Yarragadee as a result of extracting groundwater from the Southern flowing system Has there been consideration of surface water management and possible improved water use (to reduce waterlogging and other surface water management issues) of the shallower aquifers particularly on the Scott Coastal Plain.
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is concern that the ability to accurately predict the impact of climate change upon the region will lead to unreliable determinations as to what the Sustainable Yield may in fact be. The community has emphasised that the immediate and longer-term impacts of climate change on recharge of Yarragadee are largely unknown. There is concern that the modeling may not sufficiently account for past the major climate change events that have occurred over the last 10,000 years. The importance of applying the precautionary principle is exemplified with this issue.
Recharge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is it now? Where are the recharge sites? What is the recharge rate expected to be? How can we be certain that recharge rates will be achieved and sustained? How long does it take for the recharge to reach the aquifer? What is the age of the water across the aquifer?
Impact on forests and nature reserves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the forest environment be adversely affected? Monitoring systems should include determining indicator plant species and their responses, including flowering patterns and leaf colour changes, to any sustained decline in available soil water? Photo monitoring points should be established throughout the forests to ensure that a range of monitoring techniques is established and habitats are assessed.
Salt water intrusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is concern, particularly from the Busselton and Augusta communities, that changes in the hydraulic head may lead to salt water intrusion into the aquifer.
Acid sulfate soils risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The risk of increase in acid sulfate soils if soils dry out exposing the soil to oxidation processes is very high, particularly given the experiences at the BHP mine at Beenup. The pyrite concentration is very high, as compared to other regions in Australia, hence the risk of oxidation is therefore a significant risk for this region. Is there a minimum soil moisture status that guarantees that oxidation processes will not occur
Impact on Lake Jasper & other surface water expressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative environmental impacts on Lake Jasper are deemed unacceptable due to aboriginal heritage.
Impacts on marine habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What, if any, impact is likely on seagrass habitats, and other coastal habitats, should there be decreased discharge from the aquifer into the ocean? Would the breeding and migratory patterns of salmon, or other marine species, be influenced as a result of decreased discharge into the ocean?
Blackwood River salinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Blackwood River is a highly valued resource and feature of the south-west landscape. There were many comments as to possible impacts on this system. In particular there were concerns as to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible impacts that may occur within the vicinity of where the Yarragadee discharges into the river system. The impacts that may occur should salt water intrusion extend into the river system.
Aquifer salinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there hypersaline sites within the aquifer or sites at risk of becoming saline should drawdown occur?

Table 2. Economic and regional development issues

ISSUE	COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS
Local and regional future water needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring there is enough water allocated for future regional development has continually been identified in the consultation process as fundamental to the future of the South West and the acceptance of the SW Yarragadee allocation plan. Facets of this include ensuring impacts on agricultural productivity and mining in the SW are favourable. • Philosophical opposition to the transfer of water and wealth to Perth and equity issues associated with this have also been raised. • Why does this proposal not appear in the Draft Regional Policy Statement for WA? • Will there be a net benefit for the region?
Future population growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As noted above, there is a widely held view that future water needs for the region must be met before any inter-regional transfer of water occurs
Competition policy issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern regarding COAG and National Competition Policy implications from the appearance that WC will solely be allocated the bulk of the sustainable yield. • Independent water boards have expressed concern about the possibility of WC supplying water to their areas in the future without similar opportunity for themselves to expand into WC-supplied areas. • Appearance of preferential government treatment of WC, and that government and WC are “one and the same” on this issue.
What’s in it for us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What economic benefits will accrue directly to the region? Possibility of a financial return to the local or regional community? Royalties? • A locally run environmental trust (as per the Harvey River Trust established by WC) has been suggested as a possible trade-off which will provide for local environmental activities while recognising the ecological footprint and socio-environmental implications of the SW Yarragadee proposal. • A financial commitment to regional development has been raised as a potential trade-off.
Future water supplies for local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the IWSS be expanded to supply SW communities? • Certainty of water supply within the region is a key issue arising across the South West. • May have positive implications for local areas.
True cost of water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern that dollars and cents are driving the issue and that other factors need to be determined and assessed. This relates to triple-bottom line accountability.
Centralisation/ Decentralisation concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential clash with stated State Government policies relating to decentralisation: perception that this could be at odds with the stated goal of developing rural and regional WA. • Policy suggestions have included the option of bringing people closer to the water resource for improved environmental, social and economic outcomes for the region rather than transport the resource at greater economic, social and environmental costs
Impacts on individual properties & operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the increased extraction affect existing bores or availability of soak-provided water? • Potential economic costs to existing SW Yarragadee licencees who may have to modify their existing bores if the aquifer level lowers • Potential compensation issues: Who will pay if negative impacts upon existing users arise?
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five-year projections for agricultural water use are seen as insufficient. It has been suggested that studies should focus on a minimum of 20 years to accommodate realistic planning for agricultural development. • Farmers produce food because of availability of this high value resource (water). To put a price on it will restrict agriculture. • What guarantees would be put into effect to protect SW farmers given predicted production demand increases?
Research capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the current WRC research capable of providing the level of information required for the agricultural and economic studies?

Table 3. Social issues

ISSUE	COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS
Aboriginal heritage and cultural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aborigines have lived here for 50,000 years without seeing man-made disasters• Water is sacred in Aboriginal culture. The impact on this sanctity in general, as well as the impact on Aboriginal heritage sites, requires investigation.• Are there native title or heritage act implications that need to be addressed?• This proposal is considered to be 'mining' by Aborigines. Are there royalty implications?
European heritage values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What heritage implications for the non-Aboriginal community exist?
Swimming / Fishing /other recreational values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recreation considered central to this region. The Nannup public briefing in particular noted the centrality of springs and waterways to the social structure. The community wants assurance that this proposal and the water allocation planning do not impinge upon their social and recreational activities.
Impact on recreational reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will there be direct impacts upon places of recreation?
Social justice and equity issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This relates directly to the philosophical notion of "our water" and the perception that water and wealth will be transferred out of the region. Numerous concerns relating to equity within this context were raised.

Table 4. Water allocation planning issues

ISSUE	COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple bottom line (social-economic-environmental) accountability does not appear evident in decision-making this far. • Compatibility with the State Sustainability Strategy was widely questioned. • Importance of invoking the precautionary principle
Transparency in decision-making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will be assessing all of the options for the IWSS? Is it the government or WC? What are the terms of reference? What are the criteria? Will they be published? • Will an independent organisation assess the information? • Opportunity for establishing a community based technical peer reference group to review data and independently consider findings and recommendations?
Sustainable yield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much water is available in the Yarragadee aquifer - both total capacity and sustainable divertible yields?
Research timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six month study of the aquifer and groundwater system is seen to be insufficient • Longer term study required for more intense understanding of the aquifer
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many participants emphasised the importance of monitoring existing bores - public and private - to document if water table drawdown occurs.
Beneficial water use criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who determines them? • Whose values? • Who decides? • Issuing and licensing procedure seen as inequitable, favouring political pressures and/or large scale corporate ventures.
Competition policy issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per the "Economic Issues" section, concerns were raised about COAG and National Competition Policy implications from WC solely being allocated the bulk of the sustainable yield. • Concern about possible WC supply of water to areas currently supplied by independent water boards was also raised.
Security of existing water allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders are keen to ensure their water allocations are maintained and their rights preserved. • Current water allocation processes are deemed to be not sufficiently flexible or of reasonable tenure to enable longer term planning and investment. Current licensing is seen to be inflexible. • There is also concern that the WC allocation may expand once infrastructure is in place i.e. not limited to 45GL • Domestic groundwater users in the Nannup region who technically do not have licenses are concerned that their access to water may be restricted or affected negatively. • Will the increased extraction affect existing bores or availability of soak-provided water?
Certainty of water supply within the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering for local and regional future water needs is seen as essential. • Will local towns who are not currently linked to the IWSS be able to access the system in the future? • Can this water be used for Dunsborough and give some of the Leederville back to agriculture in the fully allocated districts of Busselton groundwater?
Philosophical opposition to Perth accessing South West water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is considered to be only a short-term fix; failing to address deeper issues of unsustainable consumption patterns - i.e. water wastage and poor water use practices such as the watering of lawns. • Other water supply options for Perth's future & WA were frequently discussed and numerous questions and suggestions made. • "Us vs them" - parochial ownership of "our" water. • Long term trends and predictions for current and future water use in Perth and the implications of this for future demand from the SW Yarragadee and other regional water supplies were commonly raised throughout the region.
Long term water resource planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was commonly raised that WRC appear to be reactive in relation to water planning. Strategic planning for water resources is not seen to be evident. • Concern that WRC actions are being driven by WC.
Conflict with other State Government policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apparent incompatibility of the State Water Strategy with State Sustainability Strategy and Regional Development Policy.

"First in first served" water allocation policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The apparent "first in first served" approach seems to lack strategic depth in the allocation of water. • This approach is seen to fail to focus on high value water use. That is, it does not look at best possible use of the resource.
Water reform commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be a clear indication by government that water reform is real and that this assessment is not topping a system that continues to require overhauling.
More Aboriginal input and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to incorporate indigenous expertise into ongoing monitoring and management of the water resource?
Contingency plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What plans will be put in place to ensure no environmental harm is caused by the draw down? • What contingencies will be put in place (for water supply?) should the water run out or be significantly diminished?
Licence conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What licence conditions will be placed on the WC if the licence is granted? • How will they be applied and will these conditions be audited/monitored? • Will these results be regularly published?

Table 5. Political and other issues

ISSUE	COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS
Water reform commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be a clear indication by government that water reform is real and that this assessment is not supporting a system that continues to require overhauling. • There is concern that an investment in establishing the Yarragadee as a water source is short-term and reactive. • Longer-term solutions, such as desalination, are generally regarded as a more appropriate expenditure of public funds and a sound long-term investment in water supply.
Preferential treatment of WC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political pressures associated with the securing a long-term reliable water supply have led to a community perception suggesting that the Water Corporation is receiving preferential treatment in its application. The shared view is that the Corporation should be treated the same as all applicants. • There is concern that the Water Corporation, with its apparent vested interest, and because it is funding the investigation is driving and managing this process leading to the management plan..
Representativeness of Whicher committee - some concern that WWRMC is not fully representative of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Whicher committee is a recent entity but has been ascribed a substantial responsibility in its role in the endorsement and ensuring transparency and rigour is maintained throughout the planning and investigation process. While committee members are largely well known throughout the south-west region, the role of the Whicher committee is less well understood. • There are concerns that there is a representational imbalance on this committee, given the decision it must take and the role it has in this process. The community have noted they would prefer there be broader shire representation; that other water users, not largely grape growers be represented; indigenous water requirements are acknowledged and greater technical expertise be reflected in the membership. • Some organizations, concerned as to the influence Whicher, a water users group, is having in this process and have added their view that it would appear as though the Water and Rivers Commission are handballing their responsibility in water management planning decision-making.
Other water supply options for State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is ongoing comment as to the other options, such as desalination, the Kimberley pipeline and Officer Basin. Information on the cost comparisons between options, energy requirements and viability of each option in the longer term, is needed to enable the community appreciate the wider context influencing the decision-making process.
Information for the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The south-west community have, resoundingly, requested they remain involved and informed throughout the assessment and investigation process. Reasons for this involvement range for purposes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Transparency in decision-making; ➢ Rigour in the analysis and interpretation; ➢ Self-interest is protected and potential not stifled; ➢ Accountability is maintained; ➢ Genuine concern for the south-west, its future as well as its natural and cultural heritage.
A 'Water Wise' Perth population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved metropolitan understanding on issues related to water supply, particularly the fact that regional communities have adapted to irregular water supply. • Regional communities have adjusted their water use habits to ensure water is available to other regional communities; • People in the South West regard their water use management as both conservative and profitable. There is a view that appreciation of the way water is used in regional Australia is not shared in the metropolitan area.
Issues related to WC funding this, "done deal" impression and potential for community feeling that their input is not valued.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Water Corporation and State Government are considered by the public to be working together to ensure the water supply scheme goes through. • The community largely believes that WC are guaranteed the 45GL, and there is concern about how much more water the Water Corporation may apply for in the future. There is widespread concern that 45 GL is just the beginning. Does the WC have plans to apply for more water from the Yarragadee?
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that the timeframe for assessing the Yarragadee is too short.
Strategic issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a fear that all eggs are being put in one basket with water sources concentrated in the South West.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic disadvantages of water supplies concentrated in one area.
Quality of life factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will quality of life factors (social, recreational values) be applied when developing the plan?
Use of the 45GL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community wants to know what the water will be used for. This relates to the philosophical (and real) concern with urban water wastage. • What proportion will go to city or country through the IWSS?
Intergenerational equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the need to consider future generations' social, environmental and economic welfare underlies concerns of much of the SW community.

Issues raised throughout this phase of the consultation process from the South-West community may be broadly summarised under the general headings of 'Risk management' and 'Certainty of Supply'

5.0 Ongoing work

The issues raised are being clarified, confirmed and addressed through the ongoing community consultation program associated with the SW Yarragadee Blackwood Groundwater Area management planning.

Please feel free to contact us at the address below if you would like further information on the research program, wish to clarify issues, or would like to bring other issues and concerns to our attention.

Blackwood Project Team
Water and Rivers Commission
PO Box 261
BUNBURY WA 6231
Ph 9726 4111
Fax 9726 4100
Email blackwoodproject@wrc.wa.gov.au

www.wrc.wa.gov.au/whicher