



Media Statement

2 May 2008

Community input critical to help protect Gngangara groundwater

A number of community forums have been organised to discuss an important issue that affects everyone living in Perth.

The forums are part of the State Government's commitment to develop the Gngangara Sustainability Strategy (GSS) to ensure the sustainable use of Gngangara groundwater for drinking and commercial purposes and to protect the environment.

Department of Water's GSS Program Director, Dr Melanie Strawbridge has urged people to attend the forums and get involved in what she describes as a critical issue.

"Perth is receiving less rainfall and climate modelling predicts it's not likely to get any better," Dr Strawbridge said.

"With declining rainfall and a population set to increase by 40 per cent by 2030, it is vital that we continue to look for the best ways to protect our existing water supply.

"The draft GSS will be available for public comment in 2009. However, we believe it is critical that there is effective engagement with the community to provide input into the draft as it is being developed."

Dr Strawbridge said the Gngangara groundwater system provided 60 per cent of Perth's drinking water.

She said large volumes were also used by agriculture, local government and household garden bore users, and it was an important source of water for forestry and for maintenance of Perth's unique wetlands and native vegetation.

"We will be holding a number of community forums around the metropolitan area in May and June 2008 to discuss competing land uses, present the effects of a drying climate on our groundwater resources and seek community comment on a number of proposed options.

"To register your interest in attending a community forum, go to our website at www.gngangara.water.wa.gov.au and follow the prompts for dates and venues. Alternatively contact the Gngangara Sustainability Strategy project team on 9364 6452 or gss@water.wa.gov.au."

Led by the Department of Water, the GSS is being developed with the departments of Environment and Conservation, Food and Agriculture WA, Planning and Infrastructure and the CSIRO, Forest Products Commission and the Water Corporation.

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