



Working Together

Working Together in the South West is making fantastic progress. There has been a great level of interest from our members and the wider community.

We have received support from the following businesses which have opened their doors for Aboriginal Youth through either employment, traineeships, work experience or information sessions:

McDonalds
 Bunbury Geogrphe Chamber of Commerce & Industry
 Dolphin Discovery Centre
 Gravity Etc
 Laser Electrical
 Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre-Volunteer Program
 Preece Constructions
 Ngalang Wongi
 South West Aboriginal Medical Service
 Bunbury Forum Shopping Centre
 South Western Times

Some exciting recent events include Cultural Competencies Training by the Noongar Boodjar Language Cultural Aboriginal Corporation, Employers Open Day at the Bunbury Regional Prison, Job Active Services Round Table Meeting, AWDC 'How well do you understand the Aboriginal people you employ' workshop and an IBA Business Information Session.

Keep an eye out for some upcoming events that Working Together will be hosting and supporting in the next few months that will include Cultural Tours, Cultural Awareness and a variety of workshops.

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Myalup Wellington Water

The Collie Water project aims to assist the recovery of Wellington Dam, supply fresher water to irrigators in the Collie River Irrigation District (CRID) and replenish aquifers in Myalup.

At Wellington Dam on January 12, the then Premier Colin Barnett announced a WA State Government funding contribution of \$37 million over four years for Collie Water.

Harvey Water General Manager Geoff Calder has been assisting irrigators between Dardanup and Waroona and running the cooperative for many years.

Having recently announced he will be leaving the position, Business Focus asked Geoff to explain what Collie Water is all about...

The overall Myalup Wellington Water Project (MWWP) is estimated to cost over \$350 million and will take between five and seven years to construct.

The project was developed by Collie Water under the Water for Food Program run by the former Minister for Water Mia Davies and the Department of Water.

Collie Water is a partnership between Harvey Water and Perth-based Aqua Ferre, a subsidiary of the Pendulum Group.

Wellington Dam's salinity problem stems from the middle of last century when clearing in the Collie River catchment caused classic WA dryland salinity, resulting in an average of 90,000 tonnes of salt washing into the dam each year.

Although the dam water salinity is not enormously high, at about 1200 mg/l, it is the cumulative effects of salt building up in the soil which has caused problems for Collie irrigators.

About 20% of CRID irrigators have been so dissatisfied with the quality and cost of the water, they no longer irrigate. If the water issue is not fixed, there is the real prospect of a flood of members resigning and use from the dam virtually ceasing.

The MWWP is an industry-led project with debt and equity funding from private sources totalling more than half of the required funds, including \$30m from Harvey Water. The balance is subject to approval from the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund.

The MWWP's key technical step is to prevent high salinity water entering Wellington Dam each winter, by diverting



Geoff Calder

it into a coal mining void.

That water will be treated in a small, modular desalination plant, piped to Harris Dam and then sent to the Great Southern. The sale of this high quality water is the key economic step in the MWWP.

Within three to four years this diversionary tactic could reduce Wellington Dam's salinity to around 500 mg/l of total dissolved solids (TDS), which is suitable for higher value, irrigated agriculture enterprises.

The better-quality water from Wellington Dam will pass through a new, smaller Burekup Weir and drive a new piped water supply system to service the CRID.

Water will arrive at the farm gate under enough gravity-fed pressure to drive any known irrigation system, and make it easier for irrigators to spread water across their properties. The use of clean, green, eternal and free gravity is a key aspect of the project.

The Myalup Irrigated Agricultural Precinct (MIAP) is an important vegetable producer, but it is running into problems with water quality and quantity. These problems will be overcome by extending the CRID pipeline to supply water from Wellington Dam to Myalup.

Independent economic analysis of the MWWP, shows that it produces a strongly positive benefit over the cost of construction.

In simple terms, Harvey Water believes that this project makes better use of water we already have, which is just common sense as our climate continues to dry.

As well, it fits squarely with Harvey Water's strategic vision of "using our access to water to promote regional economic development".