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Public backs Southern Suburbs Railway

traffic congestion as positives. Opening the southern corridor and environmental improvement were increasingly mentioned.

There was little difference in answers from the general survey sample and those respondents living relatively close to the railway route.

People in the southern suburbs, though, felt better informed about the project and were more likely to get their information from local papers, project signs, newsletters and shopping centre displays.

Pollster Keith Patterson said the people of Perth clearly had strong support for the rail link and recognised it would benefit the whole southern corridor, not just Mandurah.

“People are not unaware of the problems that a project of this size and complexity will encounter, but this has not overshadowed the advantages,” he said.

“In my assessment, people are accepting of the inevitable heavy cost of such a significant project and even to an extent the prospect of cost blow-outs and delays.

“They seem able to wear the short-term financial pain and look to the longer-term benefits for the development of Perth and support the investment in infrastructure for the future.”

New MetroRail uses the survey data to monitor public perceptions of the project. It also monitors the effectiveness of the public information and communications programs carried out by the project and its construction contractors.

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Rockingham residents come out for Spring Festival

“Residents are becoming more aware of the project and their questions are more specific in nature such as where access paths to stations will be and about traffic deviations.

“One of the positive aspects of taking part in community events such as this is that it reminds us that the project does have overwhelming public support.”

Bridge widening goes over river

The widening of the Mt Henry Bridge to take the Southern Suburbs Railway will see work move over the Canning River during December.

The widening is being achieved by effectively building a second bridge – 15 metres wide and capable of carrying three lanes of traffic – on the western side of the existing structure. There will also be a breakdown lane and a walking/cycle path.

The two bridges will overlap but not actually touch. From the roadway they will appear as one continuous surface, with the railway accommodated on the western side of the original bridge.

The bridge-building technique being used is known as “incremental launching” where 25-metre segments are hydraulically jacked out onto piers from a casting bay on the southern embankment. The reinforced concrete segments are made on site.

Each segment launch takes about five hours to complete and is scheduled about a fortnight apart through most of 2005.

During construction, a combination of temporary and permanent piers will be used to support the 26 segments required to form more than 600 metres of bridge length.

Ultimately the temporary piers are removed, leaving the new nine spans and permanent piers to mirror those of the original bridge. The main navigational span – at river level – will be about 75 metres wide.

A temporary groyne has been constructed adjacent to the southern bridge abutment to aid the construction of bridge piers and to provide a load out point for marine-based piling operations.

The groyne has been built using about 3600 cubic metres of material that was



The Mount Henry Bridge works

retrieved from the excavation of the Mt Henry Bridge casting bay. To protect the river environment, a silt curtain has been installed between the imported sand and river to trap water borne particles.

When construction is finished the groyne will be removed and the area will be reinstated.

The barges currently located in the river will be used over the summer months to

assist in building the piers for the new bridge.

As bridge work progresses there will be a periodic northbound lane closure when marine pile capping and pier work occurs.

To ensure safety, tric blocks will be placed on the existing bridge to protect motorists and workers throughout the Mt Henry Bridge extension.

Environmental management plans for public review

Environmental management plans for the Southern Suburbs Railway are available for public review until 4 January 2005.

The plans include:

- Construction Environmental Management Plan – Perth to Mandurah (Package A)
- Visual Amenity, Rehabilitation and Landscape Management Plan
- Fauna Management Plan
- Wetlands, Hydrology and Drainage Management Plan
- Bushland Access Management Plan

The review period enables key stakeholders and community members to have direct input into the environmental planning process.

To access the plans go to www.newmetrorail.wa.gov.au or contact Colin Stedman on 9326 2541.

Grass trees saved for rail landscaping



Excavator operator Ray Poole, Contracts Coordinator Bevan Curley and Supervisor Boots Kilroy with the grass trees saved for rail landscaping

Thousands of grass trees and zamia palms removed from the rail alignment in the Rockingham area are being saved for use in landscaping and rehabilitation works.

Some trees have already been replanted directly into City of Rockingham heritage areas but the majority are being transplanted to a holding property at Karnup.

Consultant Greg Hill from GHEMS Revegetation Environmental Services in Bassendean, said it was the largest undertaking of its type as far as a recovery of remnant bushland.

“When we first came on board we had to come up with a methodology based on recovery operations undertaken historically,” he said.

“Time was against us and the schedule of works had to be done in a very short time frame.

“The logistics of transplanting 5000 grass trees and 2000 zamias — plus another 1000 or so to allow for mortality — and then find the right sort of land to transplant them to and nurse them for up to a two-year period, was a big challenge for us.

“There are also dieback considerations to adhere to.

“We have an excellent crew working on it and have applied all of our resources including 20 tonne excavators and a large front-end loader loading into a semi-side tipper.”

At the farm, the workers have trenched out and replanted the grass trees in ‘tram line’ trenches.

Farm Supervisor “Boots” Kilroy said that it was very important to keep the water up to the transplanted trees.

“When they were first transplanted, they needed to be watered in well and often, otherwise they wouldn’t take,” he said.

“After they’re bedded they need flood irrigation once a week.”

Boots and his team have catalogued the trees to ensure they all go back to the same general area they came from.

Greg said GHEMS was very happy to be involved in a project of this magnitude and environmental importance.

“The areas near Dixon Road that we are recovering from are unique, dense, sweet spots for grass trees and the whole operation was a wonderful initiative,” he said.

“They really did require preserving. Now we have to look after them and with the right methodology and appropriate nutrients and nursing.

“The transplant operation causes the grass trees to go into shock, however we have every confidence they will be able to be moved again successfully.”

Greg said the whole technical process had been documented and a huge amount of information had been gained during the operation.

