

Project News



Esperance Operations

Sustainable land management is a key issue in rural areas. The ability to utilise the land in a sustainable, environmentally responsible manner is important to the long term viability of farming in Australia. GHEMS has been working hard in the Esperance region to assist property owners to get the right balance between economic return, sustainability and environmental conservation.

The Boyatup Swamp wetlands located east of Esperance just north of the Cape Le Grand National Park is an important wetland that has been recognised by the Department of the Environment (DoE) and the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). This wetland area is located on a series of agricultural properties, two of the major priority wetlands are located on Robin Downs a property owned by Director Greg Hill. Thimora, a property owned by another GHEMS client, is immediately adjacent to the wetlands and is managed as part of the catchment area.

The economic returns from the cattle and fat lambs on Robin Downs are supplemented by forestry plantations and native seed production. GHEMS is working to establish high water use perennial pasture on the property, which combined with the forestry plantations,

will serve to reduce the incidence of waterlogging of the soil, a key concern raised in the Boyatup Swamp report commissioned by the DoE and NHT. Remnant bush fencing works are underway, with the assistance of grants, to also protect the Boyatup Swamp wetlands.



New improved GHEMS website

We would like to invite you to have a look at our new improved website. Here you will find a great deal of information about GHEMS, our projects and the services we offer. As with all websites it is a work in progress so keep checking it regularly for updates as well as the next instalments of Project News.

GHEMS would like to thank Liz and all the staff of Staying in Touch for their efforts in producing the website.



ghems

revegetation
environmental

Spring 2006

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Funny Photo

GHEMS Team - Winter 2006

Services

- Rehabilitation and revegetation
- Environmental planning and consulting
- Native seed recovery
- Bio-diversity reporting
- Forestry establishment and management
- Mulching and erosion control

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Project: Stirling-Harvey Redevelopment Scheme – Rehabilitation Monitoring Report and Revision of Completion Criteria, WA 2003 - 2007

Client: Water Corporation

As part of the redevelopment of the catchment areas for the Stirling-Harvey dams the Water Corporation has undertaken a range of rehabilitation works in the area. GHEMS has been responsible for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of the rehabilitation since 2003. This involves onsite examination of the flora and fauna through the use of GPS plotted transects and quadrants providing a comprehensive cross section of the rehabilitated areas. The data from these plots is then collated and assessed against completion criteria set in accordance with Department of Environment objectives.

GHEMS, through consultation with the Water Corporation and CALM, have outlined new completion criteria for the site. This new criteria has taken into account the peculiarities of this area.

Preparation of the new assessment criteria and the ongoing monitoring is undertaken by our Environmental Scientists who utilise the wealth of botanical reference material and experience within GHEMS.



Project: Monitoring Survey of Revegetation of The Lakes, WA

Client: BGC Quarries

An area of 2.39 hectares of native bushland was cleared in December 2001 by BGC Asphalt/ Quarries (BGC) in the Lakes, near the intersection of the Great Eastern Highway and Great Southern Highway. GHEMS was commissioned by BGC to undertake monitoring of the recovering vegetation.

The areas have not been revegetated manually but rather through the natural process of recruitment from within the site. The monitoring undertaken by GHEMS is to review and assess plant establishment, species diversity and natural regeneration. In order to undertake the monitoring the area was divided into two distinct sectors and a third control sector was established in the adjoining undisturbed bushland. We set up GPS plotted transects across the areas and undertook surveys of the vegetation. This included stem counts and species identification.

GHEMS is happy to report that the methods used in the monitoring process have enabled us to gain valuable information on the management of natural regeneration of bushland sites.



Project: Gidgee Gold Mine – Environmental Monitoring and Reporting, WA

Client: Legend Mining Ltd

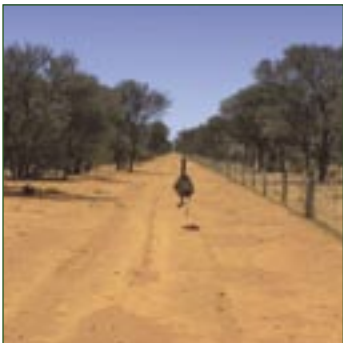
GHEMS has a long track record at the Gidgee Gold Mine with Greg Hill undertaking environmental consultancy for the mine as far back as 1994.

Our current work for Legend Mining Ltd involves the preparation of a range of environmental reports to satisfy various reporting requirements for the gold mine and associated workings, and also the pastoral lease that the mine is situated on. The reports for 2005 included the Annual Environmental Report, Pollution Reporting (National Pollutants Index), Pastoral Lease Management Plan, Water Monitoring, and the Revegetation Action Plan. In the past GHEMS has also prepared Biological Surveys, and Notices of Intent.



The production of the reports utilises the services of a number of our qualified staff particularly our Environmental Scientists Venicia Giannasi and Fiona Johnson. Venicia and Fiona will be spending a week onsite in September this year in preparation for the next reporting period. The reports require observations of a range of GPS transect plots across the site to examine flora, fauna, erosion, dust levels and water quality. This information is then collated and reported on with reference to previous findings and assessment criteria.

Legend Mining Ltd has recently contracted GHEMS to undertake the environmental reporting for their newly acquired Mt Gibson Gold Mine.



Project: South Cardup Landfill – Streambank Assessment, WA 2003 onwards

Client: WA Landfill Services

Commencing in 2003, GHEMS, on behalf of WA Landfill Services, has been conducting periodic reviews to outline any impacts that landfill activities may be having on the banks of a section of an intermittent stream that runs through the site.

When the landfill started operating in 1999 the natural course of the stream through the landfill site was realigned in order to minimise the possibility of runoff and potential contamination from the landfill site. GHEMS was contracted to undertake periodic assessments of the streambank area to ensure that it remains free from contamination and erosion.

The focus of GHEMS in examining the area is to determine the level of impact on streambank vegetation. In order to do this a range of on-site information is required, including rainfall data, water quality data, stream bank steepness, erosion, siltation, soil cohesion and the health and density of vegetation. This information is then collated and reported back to WA Landfill Services along with any recommendations for action that may be required.



Project: Geraldton Southern Transport Corridor, WA 2005 to 2008

Client: Thiess

The last few years have seen considerable development in the Mid West region of WA, in particular in and around the City of Geraldton. With the expansion of the port facilities, changes to the rail infrastructure, and a booming housing market the road infrastructure around Geraldton was struggling. As a result the state government has undertaken a program to improve the roads in the area. A major component of this is the Southern Transport Corridor for the main southern access point to Geraldton.

Thiess were awarded the contract for the works and subcontracted the revegetation and landscaping works to GHEMS. As a result GHEMS has completed in excess of 50 hectares of surface preparation works; prepared and sowed over 200 kilograms of native seeds; planted around 150,000 tubes and potted plants; and reticulated and landscaped an additional 2.6 hectares.

GHEMS will be responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of these works until handover at the end of 2008.

A distinct problem in Geraldton is harsh coastal conditions with severe winds and marginal rainfall. GHEMS, working with Thiess, has sought to overcome this through the use of mulch to minimise water loss, and cover crops to protect the surface and emerging native seedlings from the winds. GHEMS has also allowed the weeds to grow on to provide additional protection to the natives in the initial stages before applying targeted chemical control once the natives were established. Another problem at Geraldton was a large rabbit population on adjoining lands; this has been overcome through improved fencing, tree guards and some baiting.



Funny photo!

Can you see the Old English Sheepdog?

Australian Native Seeds Online

www.AustralianNativeSeeds.com.au



A recent addition to the GHEMS range of services is our new retail website offering Australian native seeds. The new website offers a wealth of information on up to 1,000 different species of Australian plants. This information includes flower colour, soil preference, habit, recommended uses and flowering times. There is also more information and photographs on each plant available from the website via links to the brilliant digital herbarium "Florabase" put together by CALM.

The easy navigation on the Australian Native Seeds Online website allows you to search for the plant you need by name, flower colour, size and a whole range of other criteria. You can place your orders online and know that you will be receiving the highest quality seeds as used by GHEMS in our own projects and by a range of our clients including many nurseries.

Australian Native Seeds Online is a registered business name of GHEMS Holdings Pty Ltd.

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GHEMS Team - Winter 2006

