



OCFS volunteers assist the Department for Environment and Heritage with a prescribed burn to help protect feeding habitat for endangered cockatoos.

Controlled burn to protect wildlife

A PRESCRIBED burn was conducted last Friday on a privately owned farm near Lucindale to help protect rare feeding habitat for the endangered South East Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo.

Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) bush management advisor Luke Geelan said the 60 hectare burn would help avoid the entire patch being lost in a wildfire, which would severely limit future food sources for the threatened species.

An estimated 1200 to 1400 South Eastern Red-Tailed Black Cockatoos remain in Western Victoria and the South East and they only eat seed from three species of plants - buloke, brown and desert stringybarks.

Mr Geelan said the process for the burn started when the landowner Rob Loechel talked to DEH about the fire regime that he and his father had implemented on their property east of Lucindale.

"It was then a matter of developing an appropriate fire management plan for the heritage agreement, identifying why the prescribed burn should occur from an ecological perspective, and obtaining the necessary approval from the Native Vegetation Council," Mr Geelan said.

The burn was a joint effort between DEH, the SA Country Fire Service (CFS) and Mr Loechel.

Desperate need for foster carers



BY ANELIA BLACKIE

(Email: anelia@thw.com.au)

AROUND 400 annual requests for foster care placements have been received in the South East in the past two years, but with only 36 current foster families, the need has gone unmet.

In a joint effort to recruit more foster carers, Anglican Community Care (ACC) and Baptist Community Services will run information sessions in the South East this week and next week.

According to ACC marketing manager Anne Hinkly-Tyler, children need foster families for various types of care - family based care for short or long term, emergency and respite stays, or carer couples who reside in the child's home on a part time basis.

Children need foster care when they are unable to live at home and when care provided by a relative or someone they know, is not an option," Ms Hinkly-Tyler said.

Mount Gambier foster carers Amanda Waye and husband Scott, who have cared for about 100 children in the past 18 years, described it as a rewarding experience.

As parents of three biological children, the Waye family have been able to balance family life with three or more full time foster children in their home and more on weekends or one day a week.

"The reward comes when you know the children are safe, loved and cared for and when they have dealt with past problems to the best of their ability," Ms Waye said.

"They have given me a great understanding of neglect and the effects it can have on children ... they have taught me more than I could learn from books."

Ms Waye believed most people could be successful foster carers if they could come to terms with not knowing all the answers.

"Learn to say sorry, accept that you sometimes can't solve all their problems and know you will sometimes get angry when they misbehave," Ms Waye said.

"The only time it becomes really hard is when they are all sick at the same time ... just like in an average household when biological children get sick."

Ms Waye admitted she often cried with some of the children when they struggled through painful memories from their pasts.

"When I see pain, fear or anger in their eyes and I hold them, we cry together and I feel their pain."

"And when it is time for them to leave my home, I don't say goodbye because I make sure we stay in touch."

A fostering information session will be held tomorrow in the Leadlight Room, Institute Building in Mount Gambier from 12.15pm to 1.45pm and another session from 5.15pm to 6.45pm at the City Hall on June 17.

Millicent residents have a chance to learn more about fostering during an information session from 12.15pm to 1.45pm on June 17 at the Community Club, Davenport Road.

For more information on foster care or on the fostering information sessions, phone Anglican Community Care on 8724 9211.

The 2008 State Budget

Action now for the future of regional South Australia

The State Government knows that South Australia's regions are vital to the State's economy but that they've been doing it tough because of the drought.

That's why we'll continue our commitment to assist rural communities to recover with funding of \$9.8m in the next financial year.

This year's State Budget delivers continued support for the regions with more than \$200 million provided for new initiatives, on top of ongoing commitments in health, education, and justice.

It includes a significant investment to upgrade the State's rural roads, including the freight transport network.

Key initiatives include:

- \$11m to support the significant growth of minerals exploration and mining in SA.
- \$27.1m to maintain and improve the rural road freight network.

- \$29.4m to seal road shoulders on the worst performing rural road sections.
- Hospital upgrades at Berri, Whyalla and Ceduna.
- \$2.6m to replace two BreastScreen SA mobile units so that more women in country South Australia can be screened for breast cancer where they live.
- \$800,000 towards the replacement of ageing school buses in regional areas bringing the total bus replacement program next financial year to \$1.8m.
- \$1.8m to establish a third SA Regional Arts Centre for Culture. Local rural communities and regions will again be invited to bid to be designated as the Centre.
- \$15.9m over the next four years to base a large high volume helicopter, such as an Aircrane, in SA during the bushfire season.



Government of South Australia
www.premier.sa.gov.au

JAU 06/06/08 PM



Devoted foster carer for the past 18 years, Amanda Waye.

Picture: ANELIA BLACKIE.