

President:
Tony Fowler
Ph: 9293-2283
fowlerak@iinet.net.au
Vice President
Steve Gates
smgates@tpg.com.au
Ph: 9293 2915



P.O. Box
656
Kalamunda,
W.A., 6926

Nature Reserves Preservation Group, Inc.

Date: 9 October 2014

TO: Rhonda Hardy

CC: Tamara Wilkes Jones, BCC: NRPG Committee

Subject: Shire Communication breakdown.

Dear Rhonda,

I am writing this with a strong sense of déjà vu and an even stronger sense of disappointment. In August two of our members made a presentation to senior staff on internal communication breakdowns and their impact on the work of Friends groups. I now have to report yet another such breakdown, resulting in yet more damage to the revegetation work carried out by the Friends of Poison Gully.

The initial problem was caused by a storm toppling a large tree into Poison Gully creek. The damage to revegetation and creek banks was caused by the machinery operations of Shire operational staff or contractors. The environment section was totally unaware of either the initial problem or the subsequent work, until a Friends group member alerted the Shire Bushcare Coordinator to the activity on the creek.

I understand an appropriate protocol is in place but was not followed. There is little NRPG can do but to emphasise, yet again, the need for the environment section (in this case there is a Friends group so, the initial contact would be the Bushcare Coordinator) to be fully informed of ANY work on, or likely to impinge on, bush reserves.

We have a dedicated environment section and, whilst the operations staff were no doubt eager to rectify the problem of the fallen tree as soon as possible, their failure to adhere to the established protocol left the environment section out of the loop.

I can think of few instances of on-ground operations where the environment section should not be advised and/or involved. Given the Shire's avowed intention, through its biodiversity project, environmental and planning strategies, to protect and enhance the natural assets of the Shire, the need for their involvement would seem obvious.

NRPG and Friends groups work closely with the environment section and, for many members, that section is the first point of contact with the Shire. An acknowledgement of their importance to the reputation of the Shire should be demonstrated through the structure of internal protocols. I would welcome your assurance that the lesson learnt from this latest mishap will be hammered home, to prevent a repeat.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Fowler

President