

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2009

### **South Coast in the spotlight for coastal awards**

Three exceptional groups and projects from the South Coast NRM region have been named finalists in this year's Western Australian Coastal Awards for Excellence.

Coordinated by the Coastwest Program on behalf of the Western Australian Planning Commission, the awards recognise achievements in planning, management and protection of WA's unique coastal and marine environments.

The finalists from the South Coast region are the Fitzgerald Biosphere Group and Friends of the Wellstead Estuary Group for the Wellstead Estuary Project; South Coast Management Group for *Southern Shores 2009-2030: a strategy to guide coastal zone planning and management in the South Coast Region*; and the Marine Futures Project (see attached backgrounder for project overviews).

South Coast NRM chief executive Rob Edkins congratulated the finalists on their achievements and wished them luck for the final ceremony at the WA State Coastal Conference Dinner on the 8<sup>th</sup> October.

"It's great to see recognition of South Coast groups and projects for their fantastic contribution over the past few years. We can clearly see the benefits of this work with threatened species like the Hooded Plover gaining protection in the Wellstead Estuary among many other achievements," he said.

"South Coast Management Group deserves recognition for the great work it does along the South Coast. It is a remarkable group in that the five local government authorities work together with communities to protect our entire pristine coastline."

Mr Edkins described Marine Futures as a great example of how communities can work together with researchers, private industry and government to achieve successful outcomes.

"Initiated by South Coast NRM, Marine Futures was the largest Natural Heritage Trust project of its kind and has achieved beyond all expectations. It provides a valuable benchmark for future marine research, planning and management around the state."

Mr Edkins also wished to recognise the other individuals, groups and projects that were nominated for their coastal and marine conservation achievements along the South Coast.

Nominees Brad Kneebone and Jean Brenton were recognised for their individual contributions; Lowlands Coastcare Group for outstanding community group effort; The Wellstead Estuary Project for coastal project partnership; and Management of Natural and Cultural Resources in the Recherche Archipelago for research or education.

**ENDS**

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**The not-for-profit South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. is the leading regional group for natural resource management on the South Coast of Western Australia. Funding is provided by the Australian Government and the Government of Western Australia.**