

# Wheatbelt South Regional Profile 2013



## Overview of the Region

Wheatbelt South Region's prime objective in the management of the road network is to provide and plan for infrastructure that allows safe, convenient and comfortable vehicle movements to; from; and within the region.

### Area

The WBS Region covers an area approximately 55,402 square km (2.2% of the State) and comprises 19 local Government authorities.

### Road Length

Road Type	Road Length (km)	% of State
National Land Transport Route	0	0.00%
State Road	1,600	11.94%
Local Road	17,182	13.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,782</b>	<b>12.55%</b>

### Population

The Region's population was estimated as 22,728 in 2011 (1% of the State population). The population of the Wheatbelt South Region is projected to grow gradually, coinciding with the development of hobby farm subdivisions in the western shires. (Source: *Main Roads Western Australia Regional Digest 2011-12*).

### Economic Activity

Wheatbelt South Region's economy is principally based on agriculture. Other activities with the region are mining, construction, retail sales, manufacturing and tourism. The Gross Regional Product in 2010-11 was estimated to be \$2.5 billion (Source: *Main Roads Western Australia Regional Digest 2011-12*).

### Strategic View of Road Use

**Mining** – A small proportion of the economy is based on mining. The Boddington operation poured its first gold in September 2009 and produced its first one million ounces in March 2011. Bauxite mining north east of North Bannister is planned to commence within the next 10 years. Also, a large deposit of kaolin has been discovered east of Wickiepin.

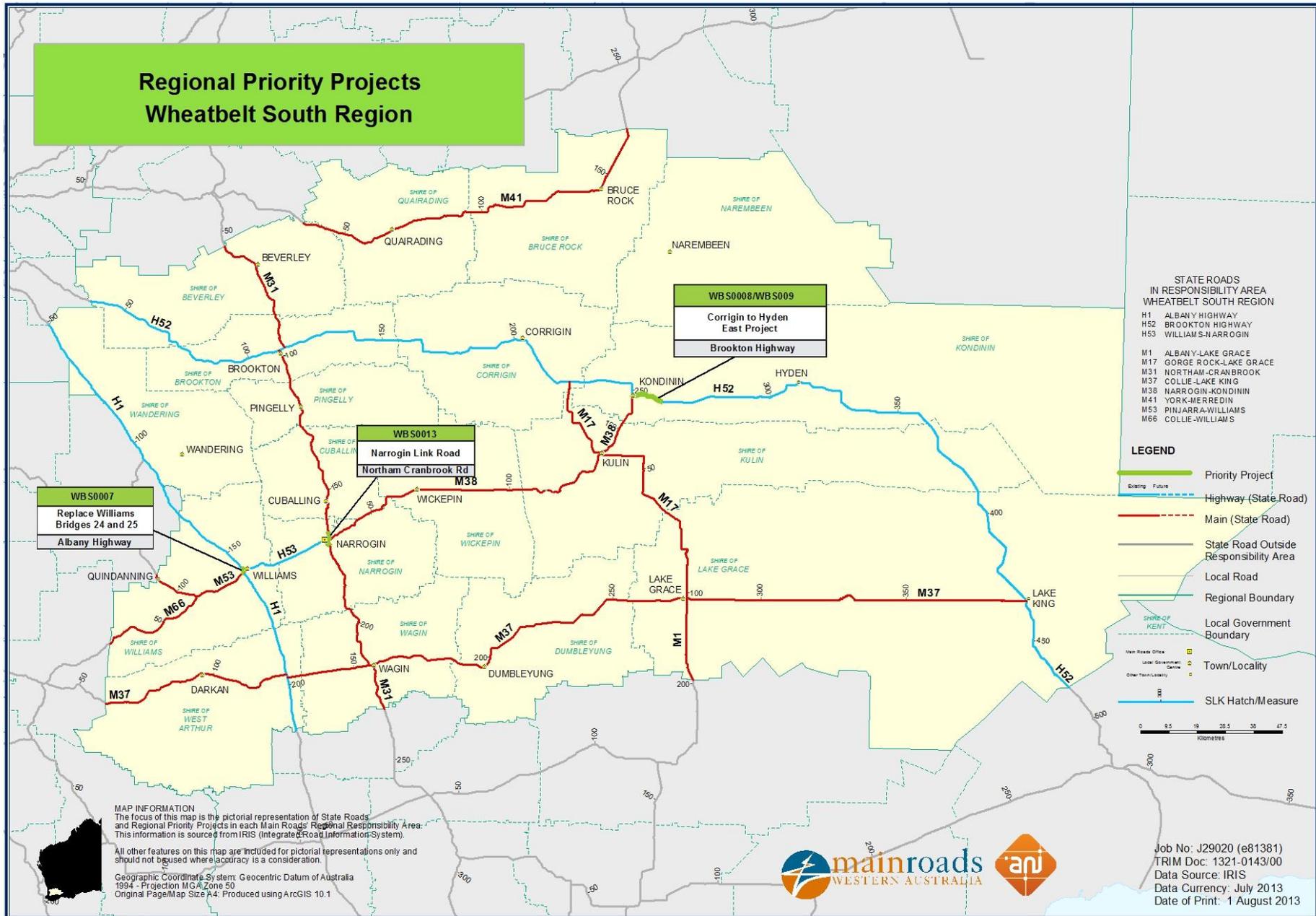
**Pastoral/Agriculture** – Agriculture is the most significant economic sector in the Region. Over 20% of the State's total grain is grown in the Wheatbelt South. Wool and livestock makes up 8% of the Region's economic activity. The oaten hay industry has matured in recent years with specialist growers aiming to produce a top quality product from high yielding crops suitable for high value export and domestic markets. This is a growth industry in the Wheatbelt area.

**Tourism** – Tourism has grown steadily and has considerable potential for diversifying the regional economy. The region boasts a number of attractions, including the nature-based attraction of Dryandra Woodland and a popular wildflower season. The region also has one of the State's most popular day trip destinations in Wave Rock.

**Regional Traffic** – Road usage within the Wheatbelt South Region is highly dependent on agricultural production and diversification, which may vary dramatically from season to season depending on climate and commodity prices.

# Wheatbelt South Region Priority Projects

## Regional Priority Projects Wheatbelt South Region



## **Brookton Highway – Corrigin to Hyden East (Karlgarin Hills Sections)**

### **Project Description**

Widen and realign substandard sections of road.

### **Program Outcome**

Infrastructure for Community Access

### **Local Government**

Kondinin

### **Electoral District**

Wagin

### **Project Location**

Brookton Highway 252.05 SLK – 291.6 SLK.

### **Background**

This project is on a major inter-regional route, connecting the Wheatbelt to Perth and Esperance. Tourists from Perth and overseas, in cars, cars with caravans and in coaches, use this route to access tourist attractions around Hyden, notably Wave Rock. Heavy vehicles are also common on this route.

### **Current Status**

The narrow seal widths of less than 6.2m result in high maintenance costs, in particular for shoulder grading and edge repairs. This road is a heavy haulage route and in order to provide a safe road, for the heavy vehicle and passenger vehicle mix, a seal width of at least 7 metres is required. School buses use this section twice daily during the week. Due to the increasing reliance on road trains there is pressure from the transport industry for this route to become a road train route.

### **Benefits and Justification**

This project will result in a substantial reduction in shoulder and seal edge maintenance costs, as well as a significant reduction in crashes. There will also be an improved service and lower transport costs for grain, livestock and freight cartage and tourist bus operators.

# Narrogin Link Road

## **Project Description**

Upgrade road network so that road trains can pass through Town of Narrogin without the need to break down.

## **Program Outcome**

Infrastructure for State Development

## **Local Government**

Narrogin

## **Electoral District**

Wagin

## **Project Location**

Various State Roads

## **Background**

This project is located on the principal north-south route through the region and connects areas of significant population throughout the Great Southern and Southern Wheatbelt to Northam and the Avon Valley in the north. The route also performs an important function in the transport of grain, fertiliser and general freight within the Region.

## **Current Status**

Heavy vehicles currently have to use Narrogin Town streets which are disrupting the development of the town, degrading traffic and pedestrian safety, preventing road trains from passing through town, causing noise and dust problems and damaging roads not designed for high axle loads.

## **Benefits and Justification**

This project will result in improved amenity for the residents of Narrogin, significantly improved traffic and pedestrian safety on town streets, freight transport efficiency, encouragement of business development within Narrogin and encouragement of visitors, both for business and tourism.

## Albany Highway – Replace Williams Bridges 24 & 25

### Project Description

Replace two bridges on Albany Highway (Williams River and Coalling Brook).

### Program Outcome

Road Efficiency Improvements

### Local Government

Williams

### Electoral District

Wagin

### Project Location

Albany Highway 157 SLK – 159 SLK.

### Background

This project is on the main connecting road between the Metropolitan Area and Albany in the Great Southern Region. The road carries grain, wool, stock and general freight and is also a significant route for the tourist industry. Albany Highway is a gazetted road train route.

### Current Status

The two road bridges within Williams town site are aging and require significant structural works to maintain serviceability. There is a risk that load restrictions will be placed on these bridges in the near future.

### Benefits and Justification

This project will result in maintenance of freight transport efficiency, a significantly less likelihood of load limits being imposed or traffic being disrupted due to future maintenance works and reduced maintenance costs.

