



Scramble for funds

THE Pilbara Development Commission has received a massive number of submissions from local community groups seeking funding through the Regional Grants Scheme, an initiative of the Royalties for Regions program.

The scheme, announced in late February by Regional Development Minister Brendan Grylls, has seen \$40 million in State funding made available to volunteer and business groups, educational institutions, philanthropic foundations and community organisations through the Royalties for Regions scheme.

The grants are administered through WA's nine Regional Development Commissions.

The Pilbara Development Commission had a total sum of \$4.4 million allocated for the scheme and chairman Stan Martin said the commission received 70 submissions for funding.

These submissions will now be summarised by the Pilbara Development Commission before the board meets to decide which will be granted funding.

"It's a huge number and we've got a lot of work ahead of us to sort through the submissions and find the most worthy applicants," Mr Martin said.

"Without wanting to preempt any decisions, I would say we would look extremely favourably at any projects that are already well advanced and are looking for that extra fund-



Pilbara Development Commission CEO Stephen Webster and chairman Stan Martin have received 70 submissions seeking funding from the new regional grants scheme.

ing.
 "Of course we need to prioritise projects that will be of benefit to the whole community and these submissions do have to address certain selection criteria, which is where the summaries provided by the PDC staff will come in."

Commission chief executive officer Stephen Webster said the most pleasing aspect of the scheme was Regional Development Minister

Brendan Grylls' enthusiasm to get the funding into the community as quickly as possible.

"We will be notifying applicants if their scheme has been approved by June 30 and funding will be delivered as soon as possible because the Minister is very keen to get these programs off the ground," Mr Webster said.

Mr Webster also encouraged organisations that did not apply or that missed out, to

reapply for the second round of funding in July.

"This is only the first step, and we will be providing feedback to applicants on how their submissions can be improved," he said.

"The next round of funding is in July and there will be a further round of funding in early 2010, so we would encourage applicants to get a business plan together and get ready to submit their applications."