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People Working Together for a Healthy Environment

Media release

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NRM PLAN MILESTONE FOR SUB-CATCHMENT



Peel-Harvey Catchment Council Chair Jan Star A.M. (bottom right) and team preview the Natural Resource Management plan for the Hotham Williams catchment; Site 2 of the major Rivers 2 Ramsar biodiversity project.

A milestone natural resource management (NRM) plan for the Hotham Williams catchment has been developed.

The Hotham Williams Plan, created by the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council (PHCC) in partnership with the local community, is intended to provide a framework for Landcare in the Hotham Williams. PHCC Chair, Jan Star A.M. said the Hotham Williams draft NRM Plan will drive priority actions identified by the community.

“Natural Resource Management (NRM) is not simply about management of the environment, but management of natural resources which underpin agriculture, tourism, recreation and entire landscapes. This plan addresses the health of the communities, farming enterprises, land, water and wildlife of the Hotham-Williams Catchment which directly impacts into the Ramsar-listed lower Peel-Harvey estuary. Agricultural productivity increases under good landcare, which assists our farmers,” said Jan Star.

“Natural resource management in the Hotham Williams sub-catchment is developing very well. The foundations for the plan came from recommendations out of the Hotham-Williams Catchment Business Case developed in 2014.”

“We’ve been able to undertake a total review of the local community’s NRM views and needs, holding landholder meetings and workshops in Cuballing, Wandering, Williams and Boddington. These gave us valuable feedback and data.”

Jan Star said ideally the Hotham-Williams community will take the Hotham Williams NRM Plan as a starting point for future work and local NRM coordination.

“The Hotham-Williams NRM Plan sets out the future for Landcare in the 573,000 hectare sub-catchment over the next 5 to 10 years and possibly beyond. It includes 10 proposed goals for natural resource condition, and 23 possible future projects suggested through community consultation.”

The comment period has closed and after these are considered the final plan will be released later this year.

The NRM Plan is part of the Rivers 2 Ramsar project. The Australian Government has committed over \$3.5 million to restore ecological corridors across the Peel-Harvey catchment to re-establish habitats for native fauna. The overarching project - which encompasses the Hotham Williams catchment - is named Rivers 2 Ramsar to reflect the linkage between the region’s rivers and Ramsar-listed wetlands and is occurring concurrently across six priority sites in the 11,940km catchment.

The large scale biodiversity project is on schedule to finish in 2017 and is having significant social, economic and environmental benefits. This project is supported by the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council through funding from the Australian Government.

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