

# MINUTES: Peel-Yalgorup System Ramsar Technical Advisory Group (TAG)



Held on Thursday 8 March 2018  
At PHCC Shed, 58 Sutton Street, Mandurah

## 1. Attendance

### Present:

Jan Star	Chairman Ramsar TAG (Deputy Chair PHCC)
Bob Pond	DWER, Waterways Health
Brett Brenchley	City of Mandurah
Jenny Rose	Lake Clifton Herron Landcare Group
Jo Garvey	PHCC Natural Assets Coordinator
Kim Wilson	PHCC Program Manager
Peter Wilmot	Lake Mealup Preservation Society
Steve Fisher	PHCC Science Advisor
Bill Russell	Birdlife Australia WA branch
Sharon Meredith	PHCC Wetlands & People Officer
Bob Paterson	Birdlife WA – Peel Branch
Paul Tholen	DBCA
Alan Wright	DBCA
Mike Coote	DBCA @ ~10.30am
Paddi Creevey	PHCC @ ~10.45am

### Apologies:

Jane O'Malley	PHCC CEO
Heidi Bucktin	DBCA
Megan Sheehan	DBCA
Ian Curley	CEO Shire of Waroona
Mark Briant	Dept of Transport
Joel Batten	Alcoa of Australia
Thelma Crook	PHCC
Sam Pickering	Shire of Harvey
Natalie Lees	City of Mandurah
Neil Riches	DoEE
Zoe Morgan	MAPTO
Rebecca Cassels	City of Mandurah
Tim Nicholas	DPIRD
Fiona Valesini	Murdoch
Linda Reid	DoEE
Brett Dunn	DWER
Andrew Ward	Peel Development Commission
Jacinta Thompson	DWER

## 2. Declarations of Interest

Nil

## 3. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 16 March 2017

Moved: Bob Pond

Seconded: Brett Brenchley

**That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2017 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.**

CARRIED

## 4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

- (TAG #15 Item 6) TAG membership  
Kim raised that the State Government departmental amalgamations that came into place after the Labour Government was elected in March 2017, had the potential to negatively impact the TAG membership as it is important that the Officers from the Departmental sections (or equivalent) who implement the relevant pieces of legislation that directly affect the Ramsar Site are TAG members.

It was agreed that membership should be “legislatively-based” to meet functional needs.

Brett Brenchley re-confirmed he is the City of Mandurah representative with Natalie Lees his proxy.

Summary of actions from TAG #15 meeting of 16 March 2017:

No.	DETAILS	RESP.	COMPLETE
TAG #15 Item 6	TAG membership – see above	PHCC	Ongoing
TAG #15 Item 10	IECA – The Aquatic Ecosystems Toolkit Module 5: Integrated Ecosystem Condition Assessment has now been finalised ( <a href="http://www.environment.gov.au/water/publications/aquatic-ecosystems-toolkit-module-5-integrated-ecosystem-condition-assessment">http://www.environment.gov.au/water/publications/aquatic-ecosystems-toolkit-module-5-integrated-ecosystem-condition-assessment</a> ). Further discussion will take place at item 14.	DoEE	Yes
TAG #15 Item 15	The Fringing & Littoral Vegetation Survey was undertaken in Spring 2017. See item 12	PHCC	Yes
TAG #15 Item 5	Final PYS Ramsar TAG Communication sheet is available here: <a href="http://peel-harvey.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Ramsar-482-TAG_email.pdf">http://peel-harvey.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Ramsar-482-TAG_email.pdf</a>	PHCC	Yes

All other relevant Business Arising items are included as separate Agenda items.

## 5. Correspondence

Correspondence as listed was posted to the Ramsar TAG Members’ page of the website prior to the meeting. The correspondence was tabled at the meeting. Kim spoke briefly against each of the items. There were no particular queries.

App. No.	DETAILS
	Appendices 1a&b: National Ramsar Implementation Plan
1a	App1a_0029_2017_1603_AusRamsarImpPlan - letter

1b	App1b_Ramsar Implementation Plan-Feb 2017_KW – detailed response
Appendices 2a&b: Communication Education Public Awareness (CEPA) Plan (National)	
2a	App2a_0030_2017_1603_AusCEPAplan - letter
2b	App2b_National CEPA Action Plan 2016-2018-draft-V5_KW – detailed response
3	Point Grey New Science : App3_0123_2017_0921_PointGrey_Final&Attach – new science since 2011
Appendices 4a,b&c: Tuart Woodland TEC conservation advice consultation& submission	
4a	App4a_draft-conservation-advice-tuart-woodlands-ec
4b	App4b_0161_2017_1204_PHCC submission TuartTEC
4c	App4c_Att1_PHCC_DetailComment_TuartTEC – (other attachments available on request to PHCC)
5	Appendix 5: DBCA Yalgorup National Park - 1,001 hectares to be added - <a href="https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2018/01/Yalgorup-National-Park-to-be-expanded.aspx">https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2018/01/Yalgorup-National-Park-to-be-expanded.aspx</a>
Appendices 6 a & b: PYS Wetlands & People Plan	
6a	App6a: Wetlands & People Plan for the Peel-Yalgorup System, A CEPA Action Plan for Ramsar Site 482 (PHCC, 2017) - <a href="http://peel-harvey.org.au/wp-content/uploads/WPP_Final.pdf">http://peel-harvey.org.au/wp-content/uploads/WPP_Final.pdf</a>
6b	App6b: Wetlands and People Plan – Summary <a href="http://peel-harvey.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Summary_website.pdf">http://peel-harvey.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Summary_website.pdf</a>
7	Appendix 7: Lake McLarty Action Plan
8	Appendix 8: Aquatic Ecosystems Toolkit. Module 5: Integrated Ecosystem Condition Assessment. (Citation: Department of the Environment and Energy (2017). Aquatic Ecosystems Toolkit. Module 5: Integrated Ecosystem Condition Assessment. Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy, Canberra. <a href="http://www.environment.gov.au/water/publications/aquatic-ecosystems-toolkit-module-5-integrated-ecosystem-condition-assessment">http://www.environment.gov.au/water/publications/aquatic-ecosystems-toolkit-module-5-integrated-ecosystem-condition-assessment</a> .

***Correspondence was accepted.***

## Review progress Against Strategies & Actions – reports from Groups on activities undertaken in past 12 months

### 6. Lake Clifton Herron Landcare Group – Jenny Rose

- 2017 has been mainly a maintenance year after works of 2015 & 2016, focussing on Tree Guard maintenance and removal where appropriate, etc
- There was a concentrated effort to assess successful areas and gaps.
- 800 Juncus pallidus planted in furrow lines were very successful; cell-tray seedlings had low survival rates
- Works included a trial with 6 different planting approaches/variables - furrow, auger, 70 mm tube stock, fertiliser tablet, bentonite, tree guard, weed mat.
- From visual assessment the furrowing was the most important variable; where no – furrow – very poor growth and health
- Kangaroos eat Juncus (as demonstrated by their growth to the top of but not beyond the coreflute guards, therefore leaving the guards in place for another year)
- Furrows = lush and solid – no obvious difference between the plantings
- Furrowing will be baseline onground works preparation requirement for the future and cell-tray seedlings will not be used.
- Tube stock from ‘Natural Area’ have proved the best quality
- LCHLG will only plant local provenance and correct locations in landscape hence, future plantings will be dominated by Gahnia, Juncus, Agonis flexuosa and Tuarts
- New State NRM grant to continue in ‘blank’ area; they queried ‘Why can’t the community plant the plants’ – a lack of understanding of the resources, logistics required for (and appropriateness or otherwise

of) a community planting day into such a site to ensure effectiveness of planting. Without Green Army teams it will be necessary to pay for future planting in most instances

- YNP Rangers have installed a new gate into area B which is really helpful for access and access control.

## 7. City of Mandurah – Brett Brenchley

- On City managed estuary land there has been a focus on revegetation and restoration. There is an emphasis on updating Management Plans as the current ones are not operationally friendly. Priorities for updated management plans include Island Point and the 28ha reserve on Hexham Close that the City purchased under the bushland buyback scheme.
- Fairy Tern Sanctuary – a great partnership project with CCWA and PHCC (others?): Zero nesting this year; interpretive signage coming
- “Joseph & Dulcie Nannup Trail” and boardwalk opening along the Serpentine River is a real highlight. The boardwalk will remove foot traffic from the samphire; also the maintenance works to maintain the limestone path was also causing degradation. Credit to Nat Lees for the superb celebration for the opening. The project was funded by Lotterywest and PHCC initiated through the R2R project. Department of Lands named the trail from Pinjarra Road to Lake Goegrup after Uncle Harry Nannup’s parents
- Storm Water retrofits – in the last 5 or 6 years focus lost on this important approach to improve quality of water entering the estuary ; the City is keen to step this up again  
\$100k Leura Street catchment Dawesville with an aim to retain the water higher up in the Catchment  
Next – Wanda Street, Coodanup’s stormwater catchment
- WQ monitoring in water bodies in the City’s parks is traditionally driven by Algal blooms and odour complaints. In the past nutrient binders have been applied to the lake/water body. City is looking at smarter approaches by finding and addressing the sources of nutrients  
Cox Bay is hyper eutrophic, very poor Dissolved Oxygen; anoxic conditions leads to bad smells from the lake. \$25,000 spent to upgrade aeration and solar panels – battery in a stainless steel box provides 24hrs operation and odour is now under control.  
Main nutrients is from residents feeding ducks! City of Adelaide signage example of ‘thank you for not feeding me’  
Jan Star – local residents’ roles  
Jenny Rose – Food dispenser?  
Brett – Signage is being developed that indicates appropriate actions and what food is OK (if any) to feed the birds
- Community has raised issue of the City to ban balloon releases. City would like the State to take the lead as it has done with the Plastic bag ban (which may just lead to larger thicker bags being distributed). PPG has helped lead the charge against plastic waste having supported the installation of sea bins for the marina. CoM position – State level issue; balloons – need a State law as well
- Jenny R – queried the need for mosaic burning at Island Point; low level burn with good moisture levels  
Brett – Controversial issue – appropriateness TBD. Warrangup Springs burn caused negative feedback due to the Western Ringtail Possum habitat there  
Bob Paterson – Unique spider orchids at Island Point  
Paul Tholen – Can’t protect distinct populations whether fire supports or damages the orchids  
Bob Paterson –commented that Coodanup Community Centre - Car park destroyed orchids

## 8. Lake Mealup – Peter Wilmot

Peter spoke to his presentation which is available on the PHCC Ramsar TAG web page. In summary:

- Nutrients all above LACs’s; Nitrogen has dropped
- No pH LAC set – typically now 7-8
- Algal blooms in autumn - *Microcystis* in 2015-16; green algae in 2017
- Water levels stopped the lake drying out in 2016 and 17  
Aug 2017 – overfilled lake (due to a weir operational issue); Local lake flooding & drain backup lead to neighbour concerns
- Weir maintenance undertaken in February ready for winter 2018 – water leaving lake after high water event in August 2017
- DBCA have installed some new signs warning of the algal risk

- Weed surveys – members and coordinated sweeps supported by PHCC have decreased Cotton bush risk and we are making progress keeping on top of the weeds
- Pigs seen intermittently – no action to date; watching and discussing with DBCA
- Revegetation after weir commissioning (PHCC supported) results - Good sedges, paperbarks poor, Eucalypts good and screening the weir
- Algal blooms – internal eutrophication issue due to release of P from sediments. There is a management challenge in regard to management of ASS versus nutrients. The ideal would be to manage to almost dry each autumn. But it is easy to lose control of levels such as in November 2017 when there was a big rainfall event. Over the past 6 years – only had target water levels half the year. In 2016 the lake nearly dried after a long summer, triggering acidity. Summer rainfall events such as in December 2012 result in overly high autumn levels.
- Management actions – (from presentation):
  - Lake Mealup TAG oversight.
  - Monthly water level and quality monitoring.
  - Annual Shorebirds 2020 counts; plus ad hoc waterbird counts.
  - Flow and hydrology investigations.
  - Signage installed to warn visitors about potentially harmful algae.
  - Weed surveys and control work – typha, cotton bush, watsonia, arum lily.
  - Vegetated floating islands to provide roosting and breeding habitat – under consideration.
  - Feral animal control – Foxes; Pigs
  - Revegetation
- Some future challenges/opportunities – (from presentation):
  - Defining and achieving a water level regime to optimise water quality.
  - Providing additional habitat types for birds that use emergent vegetation.
  - Potentially integrated water level management with Lake McLarty.
  - Resourcing – particularly human resources!

## 9. Peel-Harvey Regional Estuary Initiative – Bob Pond

- REI – DWER trialling modified clays in Punrak Drain, and Ironman Gypsum (IMG) in Gull Road Drain – no results as yet
- Bronte is doing some trials with Pinjarra SHS and IMG as a soil modification for growing native plants.
- PHCC – Mayfield drainage interventions to hold back water within landscape - 9 identified, 3 to proceed in 2018;
- Peel Main Drain – not at construction yet, still finalising approvals. Involves constructed off-drain swales, for water treatment (avoiding Clay Pans of Swan Coastal Plain TECs)

*The meeting broke for morning tea at 11:00am and resumed at 11:10am*

## 10. PHCC– Steve Fisher, Kim Wilson, Sharon Meredith, Jo Garvey

The PHCC report “PHCC YEAR IN REVIEW” was tabled (See meeting papers “Item 10\_PHCC\_Report\_2018\_03\_08\_SF\_SM\_KW\_JG”).

Steve (presentation 10a – see Ramsar Tag webpage)) and Kim (presentation 10b) spoke to the report through their presentations.

Topics discussed included *inter alia*:

- Point Grey Marina Proposal – new science
- Ramsar 101 Master Classes
- Alcoa Foundation Connecting Corridors and Communities: Restoring the Serpentine River
- Program to improve the ecological health of Peel-Harvey waterways to enhance fish habitat.
- “Wetlands and People Plan for the Peel-Yalgorup System” launched
- Shorebird ID Training and 2020 Count Feb 10/11 2018
- Peel-Yalgorup Littoral and Fringing Vegetation monitoring
- Various other highlights

## 11. Other reports:

Steve Fisher addressed the following three items, as stakeholder group reps weren't present in speaking to his presentation (11).

- ARC Linkage Project- Balancing estuarine and societal health in a changing environment - Steve
- Marine Stewardship Council Accreditation Peel-Harvey Fishery - Steve
- Lake Clifton Thrombolite Recovery Group
  - Following the presentations Paddy Creevey commented on the level of depth of work, the broad engagement of people. PHCC staffs' strong influence in policy work developing projects and relationships and outcomes
  - Steve Fisher – noted the strong links with Fisheries and RecFish West and that these relationships are developing further
  - Jan Star – Commented on the increase in fish numbers versus ARC Linkage – leading to query if the results are 'abnormal'. Hopefully ARC Linkage findings will corroborate with Fish Harvest Strategy.
  - Michael Coote – queried that any proposed Thrombolites work would involve more detailed discussions around project design if funded. SF confirmed this would be the case.
- Lake Mc Larty Working Group/TAG – Action Plan –
  - Kim noted that the Action Plan was tabled as part of the correspondence. This was an agreed approach facilitated by PHCC, developed with DBCA and FOLM (Friends of Lake McLarty). Kim then asked Michael Coote if he wanted to say anything in regard to Lake McLarty.
  - Michael could only speak indirectly. He referred to Peter Muirden's work studying hydrology and noted Peter had reported the cracking of sediments with extended drying times. Consequently, ASS conditions appeared to be forming in sediments. This seemed to be resulting in MBO appearance and the terrestriation of the lake bed, thereby removing wader habitat. Peter's conclusion; drop in H<sub>2</sub>O levels is leading to a drop in ground water levels. It is unknown whether impacts are from decreasing rainfall (less inflow) or greater abstraction or both? Future allocation planning – longer term will likely be needed. There has been a suggestion for supplementation being pursued through a project proposal for consideration by SAPPR. No simple solution of a diversion of an existing drain as was the case at Lake Mealup. Extra water will remove the changes this is time dependent as in the longer-term acidic changes may occur that are difficult to reverse. Funding being sought for feasibility statement of supplementation with regard to allocation plans and involving landholder consultation.
  - Paul Tholen pointed out that last 200m of drain of the Lake McLarty section still needs to be surveyed - maybe some levelling work and rehabilitation; and ideally some more monitoring bores; Peter Muirden is making a request re access to some monitoring stations.
  - Bob Pond mentioned a licencing review and the potential to increase the frequency with which bores are monitored.
  - Kim stated it was her understanding the sub-group of the Lake McLarty Working Group (TAG) had not yet met to Action Plan item W4 "Reach agreement of water quality and water quantity objectives for the lake".
  - Bob Paterson pointed out that a funding application had not been successful. A DBCA drilling rig (FPC equipment) was possibly available to install piezometers . Heidi Bucktin has transferred to the wetland section. FOLM will continue their work.
  - Paul Tholen pointed out that a number of bores already exist. First priority is to access them and then determine others in strategic locations on the Lake.
  - Michael Coote explained Heidi has a role coordinating management of Ramsar; he will encourage her old TAG role as much as possible. Region will look for extra support to replace Heidi and continue the work she undertook.
- Shire of Murray – Herron Point Management Plan; Delta Islands
  - Kim explained in regard this item that PHCC had been consulted with, and contributed to, the drafting of the Herron Point Management Plan which was currently open for public comment. On-ground works are also being undertaken on the Delta Islands by the Shire, in part through NLP funding via PHCC.

**Monitoring reports against Limits of Acceptable Change – M&E Sub-committee – not convened prior to TAG due to NLP2 Tender commitments**





**12. Littoral and Fringing Vegetation Assessment Spring 2017 (PHCC) – Kim Wilson**

Funding was secured via PHCC’s NLP funded “Protecting Peel-Harvey’s Natural Assets” project (\$17,400), supplemented by PDC \$18,000 and Shire of Murray \$5,000 to enable the Peel-Yalgorup Littoral and Fringing Vegetation monitoring program to assess extent and condition to be undertaken in Spring 2017 (Hale J. and Kobryn H. 2017, Peel Yalgorup Littoral and Fringing Vegetation, Extent and condition, a report to the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council). This is the first time resources have been available to undertake the full program (extent and 18 transects). Jo Garvey as Natural Assets co-ordinator facilitated the monitoring survey including initial ground-truthing by Steering Committee members Mike Schultz and Peter Hick along with Jo, then securing funding and engagement of consultants. For more detail see PHCC Year in Review Report Item 8 and Slides 24, 25 and 26 of presentation 10b.

**13. Shorebird 2020 Count 10/11 February 2018 (PHCC/Birdlife WA (Peel branch) – Kim Wilson**

Only preliminary results are available.

Shorebirds counted across all sites:	<b>36,995*</b>	 (LAC = 20,000)
Hooded Plovers - breeding:	<b>39</b>	 (LAC = 60 3 out of 5 – <60 2014 & 2015; >60 2017)
Red-necked Stints – 1%:	<b>4,419</b>	 (LAC = 3,200)
Sharp-tailed Sand Pipers – 1%:	<b>1,183</b>	 (LAC = 1,600 - <1600 since 2012 except 2014)

For more detail see PHCC Year in Review Report Item 7 and Slide 27 of presentation 10b. \*Current total of 36,995 is a preliminary total, not official final for 2018.

**14. Report Cards: IECA, Proposed ECD and ME& Guide Review**

Kim explained PHCC is trying to secure funding to review the ECD (2007) through an addendum to update the LACs which were data deficient in 2007 and in turn the M&E Guide (2008) and Ramsar Site Management Plan (2009). Michael Coote explained that Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS) are now done through an online reporting system. WA first state to put something into the system. Future updates can go straight into online system.

**15. M&E LAC Sub-committee meeting date (early May)**

Kim will approach stakeholders to provide monitoring data. Once compiled this will inform the report card that the Science Advisor is developing. The content

**16. Other Stakeholder reports/ business/next meeting – Thursday 14 March 2019**

Nil

**17. People of NRM Videos Heidi Bucktin, Jenny Rose, Milly Formby**

Kim concluded the meeting by playing:

- People of NRM Videos:
  - Heidi Bucktin
  - Jenny Rose
- Milly Formby Wing threads video- [www.wingthreads.com](http://www.wingthreads.com) – Kim explained through a connection Sharon has made, PHCC and the City of Mandurah are in discussions to see if the City’s sponsorship of Milly’s “test flight” around Australia in a microlight (before embarking on the EAA Flyway) may see her leave from and return to Mandurah/Ramsar 482. What potentially fantastic support for Milly and promotion for our site.

*The meeting closed at 1.00pm and members were invited to share a light lunch.*

Chairman: .....

Date: .....