

SCIENCE STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on **Thursday 21st March 2019**

1:00 pm | PHCC Shed

Committee – Board Members

Jan Star (Chair) Mike Schultz
Sue Fyfe Rob Summers
Bob Pond Andrew Ward

Committee – Staff

Jane O'Malley Chief Executive Officer
Steve Fisher Program Manager, Science & Waterways
Rick James Coordinator, Wetlands Science & Management

Committee - Guests

Peter Hick

Agenda

START	OFFICER	ITEM
13:00	SF	1. Welcome 2. Apologies 3. Declarations of Interest 4. Terms of Reference (Reminder of purpose: see notes below)
13:05	SF	5. Confirmation of minutes from meeting 15 November 2018
13:10	SF	6. Actions from previous meeting (see notes below)
13:15	RJ/SF	7. Ramsar Wetlands Science and Management (NLP2/RLP) 7.1. Project overview: see notes below and Figure 1 7.2. Budget (Year 1 2018/19) 7.3. Project briefs 7.4. Ramsar TAG 7.5. ECD Addendum / Ramsar Information Sheet Update/Ramsar site extensions
13:45	SF	8. Science Integration 8.1. Project overview 8.2. Budget 8.3. Progress report (see Attachment: Annual Progress Report to DPIRD)
14:00	SF	9. Science Integration: Strategies to complete outstanding deliverables 9.1. Ramsar 482 Report Card 9.2. Updated Science Strategy for Peel-Harvey Estuary and Catchment 9.3. Web portal for future access to research
14:50	SF	10. Other Business
15:00	SF	Close of Meeting

We acknowledge the Noongar people as Traditional Custodians of this land and pay our respects to all Elders past and present

Agenda Notes

4 Terms of Reference (from 1.7 Project/Program Steering Sub-Committee)

The primary function of a Project/Program Steering Sub-Committee is to provide sound governance and support to oversee the successful project delivery in accordance with Project Funding Guidelines and Service Agreement. To do this Sub-Committee Members will contribute their skills, knowledge, insight and experience to project development and delivery. Sub-Committee Members will understand the projects scope, funding guidelines and delivery requirements.

The key roles and responsibilities of Project/Program Steering Sub-Committees are to:

- Project Officer presents individual project plans to Program Manager for review for accuracy and compliance with funding requirements. Program Manager then presents them to Sub-Committee for endorsement and recommendation to CEO/Board as per delegations
- Monitor progress of project delivery
- Monitor the financial performance of the project in accordance with the approved budget
- Recommend against budget variations, for approval by the delegated officer
- Review, verify and/or endorse changes against the project plan
- Review, suggest solutions for risk and any issues critical to achieving success of project delivery
- Be part of assessment panels for grant applications or similar, as required
- Assist in resolution of conflicts
- Deliberate, make recommendations, advise and serve as an advocate for the Board
- Sub-Committee meeting minutes and/or presentations will be provided as Project and/or
- Program progress reports to the Board and/or Executive.

5 Confirmation of minutes from meeting 15 November 2018

- **Science Steering Committee Minutes on Website (see 2018_11_15_Science_SC Mins_Final)**

6 Actions from Previous Meeting (15 Nov 2018)

Item	Details	Resp.	Status
1	The project plan from the previous Science Integration Project be retained but be adapted by Steve to include any new deliverables.	Steve	In progress – see 8.3 below
2	Internally at PHCC we will refer to the 1FTE State Election Commitment Project as the Science Integration Project.	Steve	Complete
3	Arrange a meeting with DPIRD (Greg McAuliffe and Martin Clifford) in mid-January 2019 to explain and discuss the approach to completing the Science Integration project delivery	Steve	Completed – met 18 Jan 2019. See also 8.3 below

4	Form a sub-group comprising Rob, Pete and Jane to discuss development of the web portal / File Maker database	Steve	No progress – see Item 9.3 below
5	Include feedback from the Steering Committee into the design of the Ramsar Report Card and present to the Steering Committee before 30 June 2019.	Steve	No progress – see Item 9.1 below
6	Send a Save the date for the Ramsar TAG Meeting to be held in March 2019	Steve	Completed – invitations sent in February, meeting held 14 March 2019

7 Ramsar Wetlands Science and Management (NLP2/RLP)

7.1 Project overview

- This project delivers components (ii) and (iii) of our detailed Project Design “*Wetlands and people – a community restoring the ecological character of the Peel-Yalgorup Ramsar 482 Wetlands*”:
 - **Integrated collaborative management facilitated for ongoing integrated delivery and sustained action (Ramsar TAG)**
 - Community Engagement (Wetlands and People)
 - **Assess Ecological Character and address key knowledge gaps**
 - On-ground priority actions
- The project logic upon which the Project Design and MERI Plan outcomes are based is shown below in **Figure 1 (Program Logic for NLP2/RLP Project Design and MERI Plan)**.
- We recruited Rick James as the Coordinator, Wetlands Science and Management to manage Components i & iii: he commenced in this role on 14 January 2019. We also recruited Mike Griffiths as the wetlands Restoration Officer to deliver Component iv above: he commenced 11 March 2019. In the interim, Rick has been performing a hybrid of both roles

7.2 Project Budget

- The total cost of all subcomponents is approx. \$5M (\$4,996,221) spread over five financial years ending 30 June 2023.

7.3 Project Briefs

- Rick has produced a series of project briefs describing each of the tasks we need to complete in the first year (2018/19) for Components (i), (ii) and (iii).
- The Year 1 budget for Ramsar Science and Management (i.e. Components (i) and (iii)) is shown in the summary of these Project Briefs. (*Science Steering Committee Attachments on website, see NLP2 Ramsar_Sci_Coord_Project progress report_7_3_2019*)

7.4 Ramsar TAG

- The 17th Ramsar Technical Advisory Group Meeting was held on 14 March 2019. It was attended by 28 representatives of Government Departments (DWER & DBCA), Industry (Alcoa, MAPTO);

NGOs (BirdLife Australia; Conservation Council of WA); Community Groups (Lake Meilup Preservation Group, Friends of Lake McLarty; Lake Clifton Herron Landcare Group).

7.5 Ecological Character Description Addendum/ Ramsar Information Sheet / Extensions to Ramsar 482 Boundary

- A request for quote was prepared and circulated to complete the addendum for the Peel-Yalgorup System Ecological Character Description (Ramsar 482 ECD). We received two complying quotes which are currently being assessed.
- We will also update the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) for Ramsar 482 to include Threatened Ecological Communities that have been listed since 2007 (i.e. Thrombolites, Salt Marshes, Tuarts, Claypans) when the RIS was last updated
- We are currently in discussions with DBCA Wetlands (Mike Coote) for the extensions to the boundaries of Ramsar 482 proposed in 2008 to be nominated to, and accepted by, the Australian Government Department of Energy and Environment

8 Science Integration

8.1 Project overview including deliverables

- In May 2018, funding (\$345,000 over three years to June 2021) was obtained with advocacy from the Peel Development Commission through a 2017 Election Commitment for the project **Peel-Harvey Estuary 1FTE (Proj 1017-0487-2): Employ an officer to drive the process of rehabilitation of the Peel-Harvey Estuary**, also referred to as the **1FTE State Election Commitment** project within PHCC.
- Key outcomes from the Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA):
 - Manage and/or oversee rehabilitation and water quality projects to improve the ecological health of the Peel-Harvey Estuary, addressing current and future risks
 - **Establish and maintain networks with relevant researchers and research institutions in public and private sectors**
 - **Provide expert advice to PHCC and decision-makers to influence planning and policy decisions for a sustainable Peel-Harvey Estuary**
 - **Develop, maintain and communicate the Peel-Harvey Catchment Reporting (Report Card) on a regular frequency**
 - Any amended or additional key duties proposed by a Party and agreed to in writing by the Recipient and the Department
- Additional key outcomes from the Job Description Form
 - **Maintain research portal to enable access to research**
 - Prepare a gap analysis for research and monitoring and strategies to reduce the implementation gap
 - **Prepare an updated Science Strategy for the Peel-Harvey, incorporating broader catchment issues as well as Estuarine and Riverine;**
 - **Facilitate collaborative research programs to address priority research needs;**
 - Co-ordination and reporting of research undertaken in and/or relative to the Peel-Harvey
 - **Advocate for Science and Scientific research in the Peel-Harvey Catchment.**
 - Supervise and manage relevant officers to deliver waterways health programs within timeframes and budget;
 - Identify and secure funding and investment opportunities relevant to the position.

8.2 Project Budget

- The audited financial statement for 2017/18 for the DRD-funded *Science Integration Project* was submitted to DPIRD in October 2018. The final payment of \$110,000 was made to PHCC in December 2017: we will not receive any further payments from this grant
- The project funds were / are expended on salary only i.e. there is no operating component except for the audit costs.
- As of 1 July 2018, the project has been funded by DPIRD through a Royalties for Regions grant (\$345,000 to June 2021) and a contribution from City of Mandurah (\$20K for the first year). The financials to 31 Dec 2018 are shown below:

		Comments
Opening cash balance (1 July 2018)	\$133,000	\$113,000 from DPIRD (R4R), \$20,000 from City of Mandurah.
Payments	\$65,970	Salary & on-costs, Science Advisor
Receipts	\$216	Interest
Closing cash balance	\$67,246	

8.3 Progress report to DPIRD (Science Integration)

- Met with Martin Clifford and Greg McAuliffe (DPIRD) on 18 January 2019 to discuss progress in Science Integration project (2015-2019) and rollover of outstanding Milestones into the 1 FTE project (2018-2021).
 - Discussed Draft Progress Report June 2018 to Jan 2019, especially focused on outstanding Milestones
 - Agreed to submit as Final Report with minor amendments (see Attachment *20190115 Senior Scientist Annual report to DPIRD Final*)
 - DPIRD were satisfied that the intent of the project had been met and for us to roll over the outstanding Milestones into the 1 FTE project as required.

9 Science Integration: Strategies to complete outstanding deliverables

SF needs guidance from the Steering Committee on how to proceed in meeting the Deliverables / Milestones described below.

9.1 Ramsar 482 report Card

- SF proposed the following approach as a starting point for discussion

Item	Description	By when	Resp.
1	Update Draft Report Card to include comments from previous Steering Committee meeting, and data from 2018 to provide a Draft Version Report Card for public consultation – fulfill service / outcome of NLP2 Ramsar Project	June 2019	SF
2	Identify consumers of information / audience and organise focus group with representatives of these for feedback on design and content of report. E.g. DWER, DBCA, BirdLife, Friends of groups	Sep 2019	SF
3	Incorporate comments from focus group and produce Final Version of Report Card for 2019 (i.e. 2018 data) - Completes deliverable / milestone for Science Integration (2015-2019)	Oct 2019	SF
4	Present to Steering Committee	Nov 2019	SF
5	Launch Report Card	Feb 2020	SF/RJ
5	Present to Ramsar TAG	Mar 2020	SF/RJ
6	Update report card with 2019 data	June 2020	RJ/SF

9.2 Updated Science Strategy for Peel-Harvey Estuary and Catchment

The following rationale was provided to DPIRD for completing the updated Science Strategy before the end of the Science integration Project (2015-2019) in October 2019:

It is premature to update the Science Strategy until the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project LP1500100451 Balancing estuarine and societal health in a changing environment is completed. This research project, focused on the Peel-Harvey Estuary and catchment is scheduled to be completed in 2019. Led by Dr Fiona Valesini from Murdoch University, one of the authors of the Science Strategy for the Peel Harvey Estuary published in 2010, this research project was conceived and implemented to fill the priority knowledge gaps identified in the 2010 Science Strategy to better understand the condition and threatening processes to the Peel-Harvey Estuary. Further, The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is currently preparing and Estuary Protection Plan and a Water Quality Improvement Plan, both of which be completed by 2020 and will inform the Science Strategy.

PHCC is committed to completing the update of the Science Strategy. We have been closely involved in both the ARC Linkage Project through the Science Advisor as a Partner Organisation and the protection plans with DWER. We will discuss with the Principal Investigators how to best proceed with updating the Science Strategy upon completion of these projects and initiatives. This might involve contracting Murdoch University to complete the update, however it will not be completed before October 2019.

- SF proposed the following approach as a starting point for discussion

Item	Description	By when	Resp.
1	Preliminary discussions with Fiona Valesini (Murdoch) and Malcolm Robb / Peta Kelsey (DWER) what findings from the ARC-Linkage project and Water Quality Improvement Plan could be included in the updated strategy and what the key knowledge gaps.	Sep 2019 / imminent completion of ARC-Linkage Project and WQIP	SF
2	Review our approach and Report progress in Final report to DPIRD	Oct 2019	SF
3	Define a scope for updating the document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this a complete rewrite or an addendum to the existing Science Strategy 10 years on? • Consider what consultation is required 	Feb 2020	SF
4	Prepare a request for quote and circulate – possibility that this could be funded from the NLP2 - Ramsar project	March 2020	
5	Contract successful supplier to produce Updated Strategy Document e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murdoch University / UWA • Urbaqua (Partnership agreement?) 	June 2020	SF

9.3 Web Portal for future access to research

To date PHCC has cloned the DAFWA (FileMaker) database to create a database of grey literature held by PHCC that might otherwise be difficult to find. The intention was to make this database publically available through FileMaker Server or FileMaker Cloud as well as additions we have made to the DAFWA Database. The ARC-Linkage Team has also created a web page for their project, although updates have been neither frequent nor recent.

- SF to convene a meeting of the sub-committee (see Actions from previous meeting Item 4) as soon as possible to discuss approach:
 - Does the FileMaker database fulfil the need of researchers and or satisfy / meet PHCC's intent for the web portal (implies two-way flow of information)
 - What other features and information should the web portal include?

Figure 1: Program Logic for NLP2/RLP Project Design and MERI Plan. Circled outcomes specifically apply to the Wetlands Science and Management Subproject

