

# Hotham-Williams Project REPORT



PHCC General Meeting June 2019

Melanie Durack, Program Manager, Hotham Williams

## **RLP – Numbat Neighbourhood**

**Jul 2018 – Jun 2023 \$2,174,505**

- On time and on budget.
- Community Environmental Grants 2018-2019; 5 completion visits conducted by 14<sup>th</sup> June; remaining 3 scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> June. One project variation required for Wandering Hotham Declared Species Group; feral pig control unable to occur due to dry weather and no pig activity. Extending project to 30 September. Will still achieve required 6 on-ground works for reporting in MERIT.
- Red-tailed phascogale nest box installation workshop with Wandering Primary School occurred on 31<sup>st</sup> May in Dryandra Woodland. Great event with DBCA's Peter Lacey and the Project Numbat Education Officer participating.
- 1080 baiting accreditation workshop occurred in April with 8 landholders attending.
- Proposal from Perth Zoo received to support projects under the Numbat captive breeding program; PHCC agreement to be prepared.
- WA Feral Animal Management conducted feral cat trapping in Shire of Cuballing (2 x refuse sites) in early April; 3 feral cats were trapped and euthanized. WAFAM also presented at workshop to community on the Cat Act and cat owner responsibilities.
- Reaching out to more landholders to loan feral cat traps. Now providing landholders with bait (tin cat food) and sending them \$20 vouchers to a local Narrogin store when they report euthanized feral cats.
- Farmers for Fauna project meeting held with DBCA Narrogin and Project Numbat on 28<sup>th</sup> May in Boddington. Discussing potential projects for NLP2 Years 2-5. Further discussion to be had with DBCA Narrogin and projects proposal to be presented to PHCC early July.
- Met with Noongar representatives Travis (Jock) Abraham and Daniel Kickett on 29<sup>th</sup> May to discuss with projects in Hotham-Williams (Numbat, Greening Farms and Newmont).
- Christine Townsend continues to assist with this project 2 days per week.

## **Newmont - Hotham-Williams NRM & Conservation Project**

**Jan 2018 - Dec 2022 \$500,000**

- On time and on budget to date - note potential budget exception in next point.
- Continuing with planning Hotham and Williams Rivers Action Plan & preparations for River Health Assessment. Kate Barr is liaising with the Hotham-Williams Shires to obtain landholder information for site visits and will commence contacting all landholders in the near future to request access permission. Kate is also preparing reach information for the relevant areas.
- Quotes now received for the river health works. Short \$20K in budget for the work, liaising with DWER via Steve's team to see if they can assist with River Health funding. If not, a request for PHCC will be presented to CEO.
- Mel and Jane participated in Newmont ICUN Biodiversity Review on 7 & 8<sup>th</sup> May. Involved presentation in Boddington office and then a visit to Mandurian office to meet Jane and brief tour of Ramsar area. 14 Newmont and IUCN visitors attended. Jane has requested to include in this report "[the Executive Committee] asked me [Jane] to pass on their thanks for all your hard work in this space, and recognise what this is enabling in the Hotham Williams".
- Mel attend the quarterly Newmont community reference group meeting in Williams on 29<sup>th</sup> May; advised on PHCC project work.
- Kate Barr assisting with this project 2 days per week. Kate has also been mentoring Christine and Helen with the CEG completion visits and GRID support.

**South32 - Tunbridge Gully Stage 3&4 (South32)****Jul 2018 – Jun 2021 \$78,141**

- Stage 3 weed control conducted, 2 properties not sprayed this round due to landholder logistics. Weeds in these two areas appear to be under control for now. Re-assess next stage.
- A controlled burn did not occur due to unfavorable weather conditions (high winds) and then large rainfall event.
- Planting event/s with Boddington District High School planned for July, preparations in progress.
- Mel attend the quarterly South32 Mine community liaison committee in Boddington on 16<sup>th</sup> May; advised on PHCC project work.
- Helen Parsons assisting with this project and additional other project support (Newmont, Numbat, Greening Farms) 2 days per week.

**Hotham-Williams Shires MOU****Aug 2018 – Aug 2023 \$180,000\***

\*Subject to annual budget approvals.

- Mel attended the Shire of Williams and Cuballing Council meetings in May to present the work which has been conducted in their local communities and the NPL2 and Newmont secured funding. Good feedback. Look to meet with the new Wandering CEO in the near future.
- PHCC has been supporting Friends of the Reserves – Boddington (Inc.) and Shire of Boddington with the coordination of the Boddington Ranford Pool restoration project. The project is funded by South32 Worsley Alumina (and Shire of Boddington). All construction works including landscaping, rock pitching, access steps, conversation pit has been conducted. Planting event to be held late July.
- Kate Barr and Christine Townsend presented at the Peel Bright Minds Pop-up Science Café on 6<sup>th</sup> June in Boddington. The event was well attended; 25 people. Great feedback from the community on PHCC's work in the community.

**Other – Greening Farms Support**

- Hotham-Williams team conducting the Greening Farm CEG Hotham-Williams project farm inspections and acquittal paperwork with landholders (8 projects in Hotham-Williams). See Andrews Report for more information.
- Avril Baxter and Helen Parsons conducted a Land for Wildlife visit to a property in Boddington; draft report received. See Andrews report for more detail.

**Events (to August) (and/or PHCC sponsor or presenting) – check website**

- All events for NLP2 Phase 1 have been completed.
- Planning for NLP2 Stage 2 events in progress and will advise the board via event calendar of event dates.
- Planting events being planned and will also advise dates in due course.

**Communications** – See most recent issues of *“Landcare Matters: Hotham Williams”* attached

**Work Health Safety**

There are no incidences to report.

Melanie Durack

**Program Manager, Hotham-Williams**

# Landcare matters

## Hotham-Williams sub-catchment update



**PHCC** Working Together  
Peel-Harvey Catchment Council

Edition 31  
May 2019



NRM is the management of natural resources such as land, water, soils, plants and animals. It brings together land use planning, water management, biodiversity conservation and sustainability of industries such as agriculture, mining, tourism, fisheries and forestry.



## Saltbush Field Day

PHCC hosted a Saltbush field day on Monday 8th April on 3 vastly different Saltbush production areas surrounding Cuballing. Dustin McCreery of Chatfields Nursery shared insights and knowledge into the management and benefits of saltbush.

The event was attended by 10 very engaged farmers who were keen to understand site selection and stock management.

Key Saltbush insights included:

- It can make up to 30% of a sheep's diet and can fill the autumn feed gap

- Saltbush is resilient and can be grazed quite hard
- Planting increases production of marginal or salt-affected lands and lowers water tables
- Selection of species/varieties should be based on soil type and location; trial different species in different locations
- Start small to learn how best to fit it into your farm and grazing management
- Anameka Saltbush has been selected for its agronomic traits, palatability to sheep and nutritional value. It needs to be ordered at least 1 year in advance



Dustin McCreery of Chatfields Nursery showing participants the finer points of the Saltbush plant

## Feral Cat Workshop "The Cuballing Cougar"

Local Cuballing landholders and residents recently attended a Feral Cat Workshop titled 'The Cuballing Cougar'. We were able to see a live feed of the feral cat trapping that was taking place at the Cuballing and Popanyinning refuse sites.

It was very interesting (and concerning) to learn how feral cats carry diseases such as toxoplasmosis and sarcocystis, which cause ewes to abort lambs and cause cysts in their meat. This results in huge economic losses to sheep farmers.

Working together to control feral cats will help to stop the spread of these

diseases and also help to protect native threatened species, like our precious numbat, from predation.

Thank you to WA Feral Animal Management for running the workshop and to everyone who attended.



## 1080 Baiting Workshop



Seven proactive farmers completed their 1080 baiting accreditation training at the DPIRD Office in Narrogin on 11th April.

Thank you to Mike Clark from DPIRD who taught landholders how to safely use 1080 to control introduced animals, including foxes, to protect stock and threatened species from being predated.

If you are interested in completing your 1080 training later in the year please contact Christine on 0455 166 780 or [christine.townsend@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:christine.townsend@peel-harvey.org.au)

## The 2019 State NRM Community Stewardship Grants are open!

Supporting community-based projects that serve to protect and restore the local environment. Applications close **Monday 10th June 2019**. More information: [www.nrm.smartygrants.com.au](http://www.nrm.smartygrants.com.au)

## Coming Up...

**30 APRIL State NRM Community Stewardship Grants Workshop**

Do you have an NRM event you would like us to promote? Please contact Mel Durack at [melanie.durack@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:melanie.durack@peel-harvey.org.au) or 0455 166 780



# Landcare matters

## Hotham-Williams sub-catchment update



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## Tunbridge Gully Update



Spraying of *Juncus acutus* (Spiny Rush) has been completed for the 3rd year in Tunbridge Gully. It has been encouraging to see the extent of the weed greatly reduced since the Tunbridge Gully Restoration project commenced in 2016 thanks to funding through South32 Worsley Alumina.

The burn off which took place last autumn to reduce the dead biomass and seed head has exposed regrowth of the weed making it easier for young plants to be targeted with herbicide. Planning for a second controlled burn is underway with the local volunteer fire brigades and will hopefully occur in the coming weeks.

## Local Shire Visits



Mel has been out in May talking to the Shires of Williams and Cuballing about the work we've been doing in their local communities. Mel spoke about our now secured 5 years of funding from the Australian Governmental National Landcare Program and Newmont Boddington Gold and how this will benefit the community.

PHCC is working with the Boddington, Wandering, Cuballing and Williams Shires through the formalised Hotham-Williams Shires Memorandum of Understanding.

## Wandoo Crown Decline and Lerp

You may have observed a decline in the crown health of wandoo trees recently. This is largely due to a reduction in rainfall and increasing temperatures causing the trees to become stressed and vulnerable to insect infestations and associated pathogenic fungi. Single paddock trees and road side trees are more likely to suffer from crown decline, possibly due to the fact there are less of the insects' natural predators.

The beetle, known as *Cisseis fascigera*, can cause decline in wandoo crowns. The adult beetles lay their eggs on the bark of twigs in summer, the eggs hatch and the larvae bore a tunnel down the twig and branch, which results in branch death, particularly in autumn.

Lerp (psyllid) can affect stressed wandoo trees, they are sap sucking insects which attack leaves causing discolouration and defoliation. *Eucalyptus rudis* known locally as flooded gum, are also commonly affected by lerp especially in creek lines and river systems. Most trees can cope with high lerp numbers for a couple of

seasons, climate is one of the main factors that influence the growth and decline of lerp populations.

Wandoo crown decline is more prevalent in dry autumns and most trees are able to recover from the associated insect infestations. An unintentional cause of tree decline can sometimes be caused by spray drift from herbicide applications.

If you would like more information see the links below or call us on 0455166780.

<https://library.dbca.wa.gov.au/static/FullTextFiles/922431.pdf>

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/pest-insects/native-plant-pests?page=0%2C1>

[https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/sites/all/modules/custom/seed\\_tools/pestweb/907120914.html](https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/sites/all/modules/custom/seed_tools/pestweb/907120914.html)

<https://cms.canning.wa.gov.au/Latest-News/2017/10/24/03/53/Psyllids-attacking-Swamp-Gums>

Thanks to Peter White from DBCA for this information.

## Coming Up...

**MAY** Dryandra Woodland Phascogale Nest Box installation with the Wandering Primary School students

**MAY/JUNE** Completion visits for the 2018/2019 landholder grants

**JUNE 6** Peel Bright Minds Pop up Science Café in Boddington

**SEP/OCT** River Action Plan field work and health assessments for the Hotham and Williams Rivers

Watch this space for the 2019/2020 potential grant opportunities

Do you have an NRM event you would like us to promote? Please contact Mel Durack at [melanie.durack@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:melanie.durack@peel-harvey.org.au) or 0455 166 780



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