

Hotham-Williams Project REPORT

PHCC General Meeting June 2020

Melanie Durack, Program Manager, Hotham Williams



RLP – Numbat Neighbourhood

Jul 2018 – Jun 2023 \$2,174,505

Managed by Mel Durack, supported by Christine Townsend (Farmers for Fauna Coordinator) 3 days/week.

- Currently working through completing Year 2 Q4 deliverables (\$179,337.50 exc GST) for reporting at the end of June, this includes:
 - o Controlling access/km x 5 (delivered through Community Environmental Grants (CEG) 2019/20)
 - o Community stakeholder engagement/Onground works x 5 (delivered through CEG)
 - o Establishing/maintaining feral free enclosures/No. enclosures x 2 (DBCA agreement)
 - o Establishing/maintaining monitoring regimes/ No. regimes x 3 (DBCA agreement)
 - o Establishing/maintaining breeding programs/No. programs x 1 (DBCA/Perth Zoo agreement)
 - o Fauna survey/No. surveys x 1 (DBCA agreement)
 - o Habitat augmentation/No. structures x 4 (PHCC)
 - o Managing disease/No. ha x 10 (PHCC)
 - o Project planning and delivery of documents/No. days x 42.5 (PHCC)
 - o Removing weeds/initial ha x 12 (delivered through CEG)
- We are on track for all of these to be completed, further details below:
 - o Community Environmental Grant Round for 2019-20: completion visits are in progress and all due have either had completion visits conducted or these are scheduled in over the next two weeks. We have been able to work through the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions with regards to intraregional travel, social distancing and appropriate hygiene protocols. Mel has been coordinating these standards with relevant project officers.
 - o Year 2 Q4 Disease management: Disease mapping has been completed in the Yornaning Dam reserve which is immediately adjacent to the Dryandra Woodlands. Shire of Cuballing have signed an MOU to allow a PHCC contractor access to conduct the work. Initial report completed and hygiene status to be confirmed following laboratory testing of field samples.
 - o Year 2 Q4 Nestbox installation for red-tailed phascogale: Four new nest boxes installed across the Hotham-Williams on private property and DBCA managed land including East Yornaning Reserve, Cuballing.
- **Community Environmental Grant Round for 2020-21:** Grant round announced on 5th June. Taking expressions of interest over June, site visits for genuine EOI's to occur over July and August. Mel is coordinating this program which covers the Numbat, Greening Farms, Banksia and Black Cockatoo projects.
- **Farmers for Fauna project:** all going well with 33 feral cats culled reported to PHCC in this reporting year. These controls are being entered into FeralScan. Additional traps have been ordered due to the interest by landholders loaning the current inventory.
- Currently in discussions with the Shire of Cuballing to support them with weed control and feral animal control through third party contractors. This has the potential to expand into the shire of Williams and Wandering and planning meetings with the respective Shires.

Newmont - Hotham-Williams NRM & Conservation Project**Jan 2018 - Dec 2022 \$500,000**

Managed by Mel Durack, supported by Kristy Gregory 2 days/week until 30th June 2020.

Final draft of the Hotham-williams **River Action Plan (RAP)** received 9th June which has been produced through a partnership with Urbaqua. The report will be provided to the Hotham-Williams Shires for their information and then HW staff to work with the Shires on planning potential projects based on the recommendations from the RAP. As previously mentioned PHCC requires further funding to engage Urbaqua for the development of detailed and **site specific concept plans** for the 8 sites which were field assessed. These will form a major component of the project proposals and will focus on technical requirements such as the location and design of stock crossings/riffles, rock pitching, access points for recreation, and modification to surface drainage, including environmental engineering concept drawings. Once the designs and cost requirements have been completed, the full project proposals (restoration plans) can be finalised for each site and further funding sought for implementation. PHCC has been in discussions with South32 to potentially fund the concept plans (with Newmont funding PHCC's FTS time), **working through a proposal to submit to South32** based on positive discussions held with both South32 and Newmont in April and the verbal commitment of longer term partnerships.

- Mel Durack will continue to represent PHCC at the quarterly Newmont Community Reference Group meetings in 2020 and is the current chair.
- The advertising for a permanent replacement for this project (replacing Kate Barr) was on hold due to COVID-19, currently agreement through the Landcare SJ board for Kristy Gregory to continue to support this role 2 days per week until December 2020 (with a review in September 2020).

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

Managed by Mel Durack and delivered by Helen Parsons working 2 days/week.

- The 4th round of weed spraying occurred over April and May with positive results.
- Planting activities with local schools look as though they can proceed with the current COVID-19 restrictions. Planning for an event early July, approx. 6,000 seedlings to plant.
- A field day on *Juncus acutus* control is planned demonstrate the work which been undertaken to control the invasive weed within a natural creekline and on farm land. This will be a jointly coordinated workshop with the Greening Farms project. Timing still to be determined.
- Mel Durack will continue to represent PHCC at the quarterly South32 Mine Community Liaison Committee meetings in 2020. South32 will be undertaking extensive consultation for their expansion project ahead of a public environmental review period which is due the second half of this year.
- Helen Parsons assisting with this project and additional other project support 2 days per week.

Hotham-Williams Shires MOU (subject to annual budget approvals)**Aug 2018 – Aug 2023****\$180,000***

Managed by Mel Durack and delivered by Helen Parsons working 2 days/week.

- PHCC is supporting the Friends of the Reserves Boddington (Inc.) with a State NRM grant application to continue bridal creeper control in Boddington's Camballing Reserve and surrounds, applications are due 15/6/2020. PHCC's support will include coordination and reporting.
- Further works at Ranford Pool in Boddington have been on hold due to COVID-19. Final works include additional rock placement on walkways and a celebration and unveiling event. This project is funded by South32 with coordination support from PHCC and the Shire of Boddington.

- Mel has been involved in a Green Canopy Committee providing advice to the Shire of Boddington on species selection and placement for seedlings to be planted within the Shire of Boddington. The Friends of the Reserves Boddington President, Robin Andersson is also a member of the committee.

Other Project Support

- Mel has been assisting Andrew with the contract documentation and delivery of the NLP2 “Protecting WA Black Cockatoos” project.
- Mel has been providing mentoring to Paula through the Greening Farms Community Environmental Grant completion visit and acquittal process. This support is also being provided to other officers involved in the CEG process.
- As mentioned above Mel is coordinating and providing support to project officers involved in the delivery of the Community Environmental Grant Round for 2020-21 which was announced on 5th June, this includes the Numbat, Greening Farms, Banksia and Black Cockatoo projects.
- Working to on-board two additional volunteers who have expressed an interest to volunteer in the Hotham-Williams.

Planned Events (and/or PHCC sponsoring or presenting) – check website

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all face to face events have been delayed until later in 2020.

- Tunbridge Gully
 - o *Juncus acutus* field Workshop (to be delivered with Greening Farms project) –TBC
- Planned Numbat Neighbourhood events:
 - o Williams Primary School Excursion to Dryandra (inc. Project Numbat) – October 2020
 - o Numbat Dig Workshop with landholders – November 2020
 - o 1080 accreditation workshop – February 2021
 - o Pest animal workshop and support – March 2021
 - o Potential Project Numbat School Incursions TBC
 - o Dieback Green Card Training (in conjunction with disease mapping) – Sept/Oct 2020
 - o Chemcert training - TBC

Communications – See most recent issues of “*Landcare Matters: Hotham Williams*” **May and June 2020 Edition** attached.

Work Health Safety

There are no incidences to report.

Melanie Durack

Program Manager, Hotham-Williams

Landcare matters

Hotham-Williams sub-catchment update



Edition 42
May 2020



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.



Hotham-Williams Rivers Health

The autumn river health assessment sampling has been completed for the Hotham and Williams Rivers by Wetland Research and Management and our Hotham-Williams Team. The field work follows the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's (DWER's) South West Index of River Condition (SWIRC) which is an integrated assessment of river health.

Six sites were surveyed across the catchment and the results from the spring 2019 and recent autumn surveys will not only provide a snapshot of the rivers health now, but also provide a baseline for future potential restoration work leading from the recommendations of the recently completed Hotham-Williams River Action Plan (RAP) produced by Urbaqua.

We will be discussing the results of the RAP and potential restoration works which could occur to improve the health of our wonderful waterways with our local Shires and the community in the coming months.

This project is made possible through funding from Newmont Boddington with additional funding from DWER (towards the river health assessments) and the Shire of Cuballing (towards the RAP).



Land for Wildlife



PHOTO: Dwarda landholders Bill and Marnie receiving their Land for Wildlife Sign

We are supporting the Land for Wildlife program which is coordinated by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. This program seeks to recognise and support landholders who have natural habitat and revegetation on their property which is able to be used by native wildlife.

If you would like to register for Land for Wildlife please contact PHCC or go directly to <https://lfw.gaiareources.com.au/lfw/>. Having a Land for Wildlife property gets you free advice on managing wildlife habitat, and makes you part of a state-wide community of private landholders conserving Australia's wildlife for the future.

Covid-19 We value the health and safety of our whole community and PHCC has made the decision to temporarily close our office to visitors. We are still working and you can reach us via phone on 6369 8801 or 0455 166 780 or via email.

Community Environment Grants (CEG)



Mel and Christine have been out and about visiting landholders who have completed their 2019/2020 CEG Projects.

There are 14 projects funded in the Hotham-Williams Sub-catchment through our Numbat Neighbourhood Project and an additional 16 through the Greening Farms Project. We have been following the Government regulations regarding Covid-19, including strict hygiene requirements and social distancing during all visits. Projects visited so far include fencing part of the Fourteen Mile Brook, replacement fencing of a linkage to Dryandra Woodland and remnant vegetation fencing.

We hope to announce another grant round in the coming months.

What's happening...

- Launch of WA Feral Cat Working Group <https://peel-harvey.org.au/wa-feral-cat-working-group/>
- Looking for activities to do with kids? Project Numbat has got you covered. Visit <http://www.numbat.org.au/kids>

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

6369 8801



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Red-tailed Phascogale Nest Box Installation

Four new red-tailed phascogale nest boxes have been recently installed in the Hotham-Williams sub-catchment. The threatened Red-tailed phascogales are a small carnivorous marsupial that inhabit Wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) and Sheoak (*Allocasuarina huegeliana*) woodlands. They were formally widespread throughout much of semi-arid and arid Australia but are now restricted to several isolated nature reserves in the south-west of Western Australia, including Dryandra Woodland, as well as remnant vegetation on private property.¹

Red-tailed phascogales generally nest in the hollow limbs of wandoo trees, the nest boxes installed were made by Wandering Primary School students and provide a safe place for the phascogales to nest and raise their young in places where natural hollows may be limited. The four nest boxes were installed in a satellite block of Dryandra

woodland, on a small remnant patch of woodland on private property near Cuballing and in the East Yornaning Reserve. This addition means that 8 red-tailed phascogale nest boxes have been installed since 2018 through the Numbat Neighbourhood Project, which is all about working together to protect threatened species.



https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/images/documents/conservation-management/pests-diseases/red-tailed-phascogale_2012.pdf

Landcare Funding Opportunity

Applications Close 31 August 2020

Funding is available for landholders in the Hotham and Williams Rivers Catchment for eligible landcare and bushcare works including:

- Fencing to protect bushland and waterways
- Weed control
- Feral animal control
- Dieback disease management
- Restoration and revegetation (seedlings and seed)
- Wildlife habitat enhancement
- Flora/fauna surveys
- On farm fodder/forage plantings
- Innovative pasture plantings
- Black Cockatoo habitat projects
- Banksia Woodland projects

Interested? Contact us to discuss your project ideas and eligibility against funding priorities

P: 6369 8801 / 0455 166 780 or
E: grants@peel-harvey.org.au

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PHOTO: Birdlife Australia

Black Cockatoos...

Do you have black cockatoos hanging out in your patch? We would love to hear from you!

In the Peel-Harvey catchment we are frequented by 3 species of black cockatoo, the Forest Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo (with distinguished red tail feathers), and 2 species of white-tailed black cockatoo, the Baudin's cockatoo and the Carnaby's cockatoo. All 3 species are threatened (the whites endangered and the reds vulnerable). To help us protect these beautiful birds we need your help to identify their nesting locations.

If you think you might know where black cockatoos are nesting in tree hollows within the Peel-Harvey, please contact Megan on 6369 8800 or email megan.leroy@peel-harvey.org.au. If you are a landholder near a nesting site, you may be eligible for financial assistance to improve and maintain habitat.

Wanted ...Do you have a Dryandra Woodland Linkage Project you would like assistance with? We'd love to hear from you! Contact Mel Durack or Christine Townsend on 6369 8801 or 0455 166 780

Coming Up...

- Completion visits for 2019/2020 landholders grants
- Expressions of interest for 2020/2021 landcare funding

Do you have an NRM event or information you would like us to promote? Please contact Mel Durack at melanie.durack@peel-harvey.org.au or 0455 166 780 or **6369 8801**



melanie.durack@peel-harvey.org.au
www.peel-harvey.org.au

