



Connecting Corridors and Communities *Restoring the Serpentine River*

The Peel-Harvey estuary receives water as its life blood from the Serpentine, Murray and Harvey Rivers, which are in turn fed by a network of more than 4000 km of smaller streams and drains on the Swan Coastal Plain. This network of waterways is vital to the economic development of the region as well as providing important ecological benefits and services to the community. They also have cultural significance to the local Noongar people.

Despite their economic, environmental, social and cultural importance, less than 1 per cent of the waterways assessed in this network are in good condition with the overwhelming majority affected by significant disturbances since European settlement in the 1830s from agriculture, urban expansion, conversion of streams into an artificial drainage network and dam construction. Along with these past and current pressures, the rivers also face emerging threats from the impacts of projected declines in rainfall and sea-level rise brought about by climate change.

The development of the Serpentine River Action Plan (RAP) is a vital component of the *Connecting Corridors and Communities - Restoring the Serpentine River* project funded by the Alcoa Foundation. In combination with aerial monitoring using a helicopter, scientists from the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council (PHCC), Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and Urbaqua Ltd and a group of volunteers from Alcoa and the broader community worked their way along 38 km of the river from Lowlands Nature Reserve downstream to the Peel-Harvey Estuary, identifying its key assets and attributes, threats to its health and potential and priority for restoration. These observations are summarised in the RAP which sets a baseline for the current condition of the river and enables us to measure the improvement in river health as a consequence of our actions. The RAP guides us in our future restoration works to provide the vita lifeblood to the Peel-Harvey estuary.

FUNDING PROGRAM

Alcoa Foundation

PHCC PROGRAM

Science and Waterways

PHCC PROJECT

Connecting Corridors and Communities: Restoring the Serpentine River

FUNDING

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| Alcoa Foundation (to develop a River Action Plan to set priority restoration actions for the Serpentine River) | \$59,000 |
| Urbaqua (in-kind) | \$34,000 |



REGIONAL COVERAGE

Ramsar Wetlands, Coastal & Nearshore; Coastal Plain

PROJECT MANAGER

Jo Garvey

STEERING COMMITTEE

Bob Pond, Marilyn Gray, Rob Summers, Mark Cugley, Howard Mitchell

STAKEHOLDERS

Private and public land managers, Urbaqua Ltd, Bindjareb community, Government agencies, Alcoa Volunteers and Community Volunteers

BENEFICIARIES

Private and public land managers, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Bindjareb Community



“ Looking after our waterways makes our spirit strong. The river’s name is Bilya and bilya also means umbilical cord. The Bilya sustains life for humans, marine life, land animals, water birds and plant ecosystems; the healthier the river [and umbilical cord] is, the healthier all life is. If the umbilical cord is sick then we will be sick.”

~ Noongar Elder, Harry Nannup ~

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Data Collation and Review
- Mapping
- Reach Assessments
- Field Work
- Coordination/training
- Strong, long-term community relationships established
- Development and completion of the River Action Plan which has recommended priority actions for future works

LOCATION

Serpentine River and surrounds – Lowlands Nature Reserve to Peel Estuary (38 km stretch)

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Undertake onground works as per the recommendations in table 1 of the Serpentine River Action Plan

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Via social media, TV, Radio, Newspapers, Newsletters, Media Releases.

VOLUNTEERS

- Alcoa Graduates
- Community volunteers

LINKS TO OTHER PROJECTS

- REI
- NLP

