

# Land Conservation Project REPORT

PHCC General Meeting – August 2020

Gene Turner, Program Manager, Land Conservation & Sustainable Agriculture



**Regional Land Partnerships (RLP) – Banksia Woodlands TEC Project**

**Nov 2018- Jun 2023 – \$1,401,428**

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*Project Officer: Jordon Garbellini Adams*

The Year 2 Quarter 4 MERIT Report and evidence was completed and submitted on time, along with the Year 2 Annual Report.

Key achievements since the last Board meeting include:

- Established an Agreement with DBCA to undertake 2.85 km of fencing at Treasure Block Nature Reserve. This enabled us to meet our fencing target for the project as the project to fund fencing at Brickwood reserve was unable to be supported due to increase in fencing costs.
- Completion of 3 hectares of revegetation at the Karu Bilya Project Site (Partnership project with PHCC's Serpentine River Project - huge thank you to Jo Garvey) to meet revegetation targets for the project. 8 Local Noongar community members were engaged to undertake the planting through the Bindjareb Middars group, with 3,000 seedlings planted and guarded across the sites sandy soils (Wetland areas were planted through the Serpentine River Project).
- Establishment of monitoring regime 'Monitoring vegetation condition changes Associated with management of Banksia Woodlands in the Peel-Harvey Catchment' to guide vegetation condition monitoring at project sites to provide essential data to evaluating the Project's outcomes and overall effectiveness. Of the five major outcomes to be achieved by the Project, two outcomes include an improvement or maintenance of vegetation condition.
- Completion of 2 events to meet targets for the project. One training event involved two local Noongar youth and PHCC Land Conservation team staff, establishing vegetation condition monitoring plots at the Karu Bilya Project site. The second event was a presentation highlighting Orchids associated with Banksia Woodlands, this presentation was provided by Landcare SJ and distributed across social media platforms due to COVID -19 restrictions.
- Established an Agreement with DBCA for winter weed control at Hymus Swamp, this agreement was in negotiations in June to be commenced on July 1<sup>st</sup> and will achieve project targets for weed control in year 3.

Year 3 Quarter 1 deliverables are underway:

- CEG visits have commenced with several landholders interested in applying for funding for artificial nesting hollows for Cockatoos (could be supported under Banksia, Cockatoo or Stewardship Projects), seedlings for revegetation and Dieback mapping and Assessment.
- Potential Public Partners have been emailed and requested to submit project proposals by 31<sup>st</sup> of August to be assessed within the same timeline as the CEG applications. DBCA have submitted two project proposals for Treasure Block and Nine Mile Nature Reserve.

- A Land for Wildlife application has been received as a result of the CEG site visits and this will be supported under the project service 'One on One Technical Advise' and be reported under this quarter.

#### **Banksia Mapping project:**

*Project Officer: Megan LeRoy*

- Bronwen Keighery has been contracted until end November 2020 to further improve the Banksia Mapping by undertaking further desktop assessment using her skills, knowledge and field data of Peel-Harvey sites where we have unknown information on presence.
- Collen Archibald had been assisting with the GIS side of the project and providing Bronwen with maps with which to assess data.

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#### **Lake Clifton Catchment Stewardship Project**

**June 2017 – Jun 2022 – \$262,500**

*Project officer: Jordon Garbellini Adams*

- The Annual LAKE Clifton Seedling Giveaway was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June, with the event adapted to be a 'Drive Through' for seedling collection. Landholders wishing to register for the event were required to complete a landholder survey as part of their registration. Over 50 Landholders attended the event and the information and feedback from their surveys will guide future events in the project.
- One new LFW application was received and followed up with a site visit (a site visit was also conducted for a previous applicant), these visits resulted in one new property being registered with the program. The newest applicant has been provided with information on weed control and appropriate species for revegetation to encourage them to commence stewardship activities on their property.

Year 4 deliverables are underway:

- CEG site visits have resulted in two landholders expressing an interest in joining Land for Wildlife, with one landholder registering for the program. Information for the property report was gathered during the CEG site visit and the report is underway.

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#### **Land for Wildlife (LFW) -State NRM funded Project**

**Feb 2019-Jun 2020 \$80,032**

- Formal project acquittal was submitted to the State NRM Office in May.

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#### **Regional Land Partnerships (RLP) – Greening Farms Project**

**Oct 2018-June 2023 \$1,078,254**

*Project officer: Paula Pownall*

The Year 2 Quarter 4 MERIT Report and evidence has been completed and submitted. The project achieved all planned Quarter 4 deliverables.

#### In Quarter 4:

- 6 x On ground works (Completion of 2019-2020 Greening Farms (GF) Community Environment Grants (CEG))
- 1 x monitoring regime (document to monitor the progress of GF project over 5 years).
- 3 x Farm surveys
- 3 x Communication materials

Year 3 deliverables are underway:

- 1 x Dung Beetle Field Day, Lowlands, Swan Coastal Plain (SCP)
- 13 x site visits on the SCP for potential GF CEG projects.
- 9 x site visits within Hotham Williams (HW) for potential GF CEG projects.
- 5 x GF CEG applications without site visits
- 3 x Communication materials

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#### **Regional Estuaries Initiative (REI): Fertilising the Farm**

**2019/20: \$46,000**

*Project Officer: Megan LeRoy*

- 87 farmers in the Peel-Harvey Catchment have undertaken the “Fertilising the Farm” soil testing project since program inception in 2016.
- The new program renamed “Healthy Estuaries” in replace of “Regional Estuaries Initiative” will see the continuation of the “Fertilising the Farm” project for another 4 years.
- In 2020-21, a DIY soil sampling program will run in conjunction with the sampler supplied program to encourage farmers to build capacity to undertake sampling themselves. Peel-Harvey Catchment are aiming for 18 farmers, of which 50% will be undertaking the DIY program.
- Expressions of Interest for “Fertilising the Farm” soil testing program close on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020. 16 farmers have applied (as of 7 Aug 20), of which 8 are return farmers.
- Reviewed proposal and provided feedback to REI Project Officer on proposed system upgrades for the following dairy farm in the Peel-Harvey: Piggot’s Dairy.
- Submitted a response to the revised Code of Practice for Dairy Shed Effluent in WA to Jenelle Bowles, Regional Manager, Western Dairy.
- Worked with panel Agronomists to assist farmers with follow-up agronomic/fertiliser advice post Soil Testing Workshop.
- Completed post-surveys for 2018/19 program participants.
- Participated in Catchment Officer catch-up (via Zoom).
- Participation at PRG meeting 11th June (via video link).
- Participation at cross-catchment “Fertilising the Farm” wrap up sessions.
- PHCC Facebook posts
- Wattle and Quoll newsletter articles, including Announcements

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#### **DWER Smartfarms Project uPtake**

**2019-2022: \$90,000**

- One trial continuing in Peel-Harvey catchment at Sel Williams property, where a lysimeter is measuring nutrient loss from pasture on his low PBI soils
- Media Statement released on outcomes of 2019 trials: <https://estuaries.dwer.wa.gov.au/fertiliser-trials-protecting-waterways-and-farmers/>
- Results on local soils consistent with National Guidelines for Better Fertiliser Decisions for Pastures, giving local farmers confidence in the data for local fertiliser applications.

### **Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF) & Sustainable Agriculture projects – NLP2, \$130,000 p.a.**

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*Project officer: Paula Pownall*

On the 18th of June the RALF officer co presented to the Peel Development Commission on Peel Harvey Catchment Council (PHCC) sustainable agricultural engagement within the Peel Region.

Training:

- Black Cockatoo Training
- 4x4 driving course

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of June the RALF officer presented to Wandering Farm Productivity Group in Wandering.

The year 2 RALF annual report was submitted to Canberra on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

The 2020-2021 RALF work plan was reviewed and submitted to Canberra on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

Joined the National RALF Dung Beetle Community of Practice on Facebook.

### **Regional Land Partnerships (RLP) Black Cockatoos Project**

**2019 – 2023: \$380,000**

- The Year 2 Quarter 4 MERIT Report has been completed and submitted. The project achieved all planned Quarter 4 deliverables.
- Worked with Birdlife Australia to produce a monitoring protocol to survey Black Cockatoos in the Peel-Harvey Catchment across the project timeline.
- Advertised the availability of funding for private landholders for on-ground works (2020-21 financial year) to improve the habitat and resources available for nesting cockatoos.
- Located sites and prioritized potential on-ground works at 2 known Carnaby breeding locations on the Swan-Coastal Plain associated with Banksia Woodland TEC (Lake Clifton & Marlee Reserve).
- Located a potential breeding site in the Hotham-Williams catchment
- Liaised with the community on potential nesting areas within the Peel-Harvey using a call-out on social media and newsletters
- Undertook staff training for 5 officers & 1 volunteer, with Birdlife Australia, on monitoring/survey techniques
- Consulted with 2 indigenous groups on the Swan Coastal Plain and Hotham-Williams area on the Cockatoo project
- Created 1 work plan, 1 revised OSH plan and other supporting project documents.

## Events (PHCC and/or PHCC sponsor or presenting)

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Due to Covid19 restrictions, face to face events have been limited, however some web-based events have been scheduled.

## Work Health & Safety

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- There are no incidences to report.
- Gene Turner is now WH&S focal point for PHCC, handing over from Jordon Garbellini Adams.
- Planning underway to install Emergency Exits in all office spaces in accordance with AS2293.
- Planning underway to inspect and tag all Electrical devices in all office spaces in line with OHS Regs 1996.
- Inspection of all Fire Extinguishers completed.

## Planning submissions, advocacy, support to partners

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- Nothing additional to report.

*Gene Turner*

*Program Manager, Land Conservation & Sustainable Agriculture*