

MINUTES

PHCC GENERAL MEETING



PHCC Working Together
Peel-Harvey Catchment Council

Thursday 18 August 2022 (9:00- 12:00)

At The Tuckey Room City of Mandurah 3 Peel St, Mandurah WA 6210

Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair opened the meeting at 9:03 am, acknowledging the Noongar people as Traditional Custodians of the land and paying her respect to all Elders past and present and emerging.

Present:

Caroline Knight	Chair
Darralyn Ebsary	Deputy Chair
Marilyn Gray	Treasurer
Bob Pond	Executive Committee (DWER)
Veronica Metcalf	Community Member
Sue Fyfe	Community Member
Amanda Batt	Community Member (via Zoom)
Robert Harris	Local Government Member (Inland)
Laurie Snell	Local Government Member (Costal)
Peter Zurzolo	Community Member (via Zoom)
Mark Cugley	DBCA
Andrew Ward	PDC
Nicholas Dufty	DPLH (Peel) (Observer) (via Zoom)
Suzanne Brown	Water Corporation (Observer)

In Attendance:

Jane O'Malley	CEO
Mel Durack	Operations Manager, Land Conservation and agriculture
Steve Fisher	Operations Manager, Science and Waterways
Karen Henderson	Chief Finance Officer
Kellie Beckwith	Manager of Corporate Services/Exec Support
Christine Townsend	Co-ordinator Farmers and Fauna
Janine Neeling	Administration Officer
Victoria Brockhurst	Administration Officer

Invited Guests:

Jess Beckerling	Western Australian Forest Alliance (Item 7 – via zoom)
Neil Blake	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Apologies:

Rob Summers	DPIRD
Claire Reid	Community Member

1. **Declarations of Interest**

The Chair advised that Claire Reid has requested a Leave of Absence from the board as advised due to her conflict of interest to her employment at South 32

Claire advised in an email to the Chair that there will be less potential (or perceived) conflict for both parties if she is not part of the board for the duration of the EPA's process. Although it may be sufficient to extend this leave of absence to the completion of the response to submissions phase, on reflection, she feels it would be best for both parties if we extend it through to when a decision on the project has been made by the Minister."

Moved: Bob Pond

Seconded: Marilyn Gray

That the acceptance of Claire Reid's request of absence until the Minister has determined the outcome of South 32's PER be approved

CARRIED

2. **Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting – 16 June, 2022**

Moved: Marilyn Gray

Seconded: Mark Cugley

That the minutes of the Meeting held on 16 June, 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting, with the following modifications:

- Nicholas Dufty's update on Actions be moved from his report, to Actions arising;

CARRIED

3. **Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

Refer to update of Actions table at the back of the Minutes.

4. **Correspondence**

Correspondence was posted weekly on the Members' page of the website, with emails to members advising that new correspondence had been uploaded. The Correspondence Register was tabled at the meeting.

Moved: Paddi Creevey

Seconded: Rob Harris

That Correspondence In and Correspondence Out be accepted

CARRIED

5. **Agency and Members Updates**

a. **Rob Summers, DPIRD**

Not present, no report/update provided

b. **Mark Cugley, DBCA**

Wheatbelt Region Update

Threatened Species Commissioner

Fiona Fraser the Threatened Species Commissioner visited Wheatbelt Region in June, she met with staff from DBCA and PHCC and visited a site near Dryandra where a Felixer unit had been set up on a local farm. (Posted on her Facebook site, 14 August 2022).

Swan Coastal District Update

Feral Pigs at Keralup

DBCA has continued to provide update to DevelopmentWA and highlight the importance of the feral pig control work undertaken at Keralup in recent years based on funding initially provided by Department of Communities. DBCA will work with PHCC to try and secure further funding from DevelopmentWA for control work to continue in 2022-23.

Dolphin incident

Update provided on dolphin calf that was stranded at Mandurah Town Beach on 23 June 2023 and the decision for the animal to be euthanised.

Goegrup Lake Boardwalk completed

The new and improved boardwalk at Goegrup Lake has been completed and is now open. The boardwalk has been designed to protect and enhance this sensitive and fragile environment, using modern building materials to maximise the boardwalk's life and minimise environmental disturbance during construction. The new 292-metre-long boardwalk meets current mobility and accessibility standards, and includes three viewing nodes with benches and interpretive panels for describing the area's environmental and Aboriginal cultural values.

Cameras Goegrup Lake

The final of the four cameras being installed around Goegrup Lake to help monitor dolphin strandings is being installed, now that the boardwalk has been completed. Installation of this camera will be completed by the end of August. This project is being done with the support of the PHCC and Mandurah Estuary Dolphins.

Question - Jane asked Mark if DBCA will be going on 01/09/22 to the Meeting with David Templeton

Response - Mark was unsure and agreed to contact and advise Jane.

c. **Bob Pond, DWER**

Bindjareb Dilba Protection Plan

The second meeting of the BDPP Policy and Planning Committee met on Friday 5 August. Jane O'Malley was also in attendance. As it was only the second meeting, no particular outcomes were achieved other than finalisation of the Terms of Reference. Work planning is progressing.

Departments representatives, Led by Bronte Grant also attending the Bindjareb Kaadajan Bidi Yarning Circle at Winjan on 14 July. This group is supported by Healthy Estuaries WA to provide input into the Policy and Planning Committee and to progress its own Bindjareb Gabi Wonga plan. Bronte is also assisting Winjan with its next application for the Aboriginal Ranger Program.

TNC Mussel Reefs

The DWER has been working with the TNC and other State Agencies to try to progress to Stage 2 of the mussel reef project. The approvals process remains challenging.

Estuarine Water Quality Monitoring

Recent wild weather has played a bit of havoc with the fortnightly sampling program in the last month. Fresh winter flows are evident and somewhat improving oxygenation, particularly in the Murray River.

A link to the modelled cross-sections are presented below for salinity, temperature and oxygen can be found here [Physical profiles - Healthy Estuaries \(dwer.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.dwer.wa.gov.au/physical-profiles)

The Monitoring Buoy remains operational in the Murray.

Rainfall and Streamflow

A summary for the observed July summary data is attached.



1.0 Rainfall &
Streamflow summary

Leave

I will be on long service leave from Monday 22 August to Monday 10 October. Michael Kenrick will be assisting in my absence.

Question – Paddi asked Bob with winter and the extra rain will this make a difference to the overall health compared to previous years do you think?

Response- Bob advised although wet it is not a huge increase, if heavy rain we might get more growth next season. Sue added that the wet winter are not above average.

d. Andrew Ward, PDC

1. Joint presentation PDC / PHCC to regional stakeholder group 5 August 2022 regarding restoring the Peel Harvey Waterways.
 - a. Presentation slides available from PHCC.
 - b. Some 24 slides providing background and focus areas on the potential Business case for restoration and rehabilitation works over the next 5-10 yrs.
2. Red grants open and close late August.
 - a. Focus on economic diversification, some \$600,000 available for Peel projects.
 - b. Encourage stakeholders to apply.
3. Participation in the Bindjareb Djilba policy and planning steering committee
4. Continuing with Dwellingup Futures road map in partnership with Shire of Murray.

5. PDC undertaking procurement for economic valuation of the waterways.
 - a. Financial contributions confirmed by Shire of Murray and PDC. City of Mandurah will consider the matter October 2022.
 - b. PHCC providing in kind support and potential financial contribution subject to consultants responses to RFQ.
- e. **Nicholas Dufty, DPLH (Planning) Observer**
Peel Development Commission / PHCC – Peel Waterways Business Case
 I attended the Peel Development Commission / PHCC – Peel Waterways Business Case and Valuation session on 5 August, and found the work that has been done excellent and support the direction of the project.

TNC Mussel Reefs

As raised by Bob Pond of DWER, the mussel reef project proposed by The Nature Conservancy is seeking approval to its second stage. Approval processes are complex and difficult for this type of project, given permanent works on State land, with navigation issues and planning issues to be considered. Although the intentions of the project are to improve the environment, it is important that there is appropriate rigour to the assessment process. One of the challenges is that although an 8 month period was originally indicated to assess the outcomes of the trial phase, approval to the second phase is now being sought after only 3 months since the trial phase was completed.

- f. **Suzanne Brown, Water Corporation – Observer**
 From Water Corporation: streamflow (inflows to our metropolitan dams) as follows:
 Only 15.6GL inflows up to now, so very low compared to previous years.
 (Chart provided and uploaded on Members Page of website)
- g. **Darralyn Ebsary , Deputy Chair**
 Had the opportunity to meet with two representatives from Department of Agriculture Food and Forestry and I thought they were really impressive and a great opportunity to have a discussion on how they are operating. Would like to pass back to the board a huge congratulations to our staff especially the finance team and we are consistently the first organisation in Australia that get our invoices in on a quarterly basis and explains why we get our funding on time.
- h. **Sue Fyfe, Community Member**
South 32 PER
Requested extension to 29 August to put PER response together.
 Rio Tinto court hearing was extending until 5 March 23. They received 1500 objections and 10 sediments way beyond more than they expected, and there has been no response from them currently to my objection.

 There was also an article in the Australian magazine, by Kingsley Dixon talking about our group Forest defenders, was a very good article.

Action: Jane to send copy of “Undermined” article featuring Kingsley Dixon that was in the Australian on 13 August to the board.

i. **Veronica Metcalf, Community Member**

Roadside Vegetation

There is no more information to report today, as this is a big issue and timely, Veronica will arrange to catch up with relevant stakeholders and be ready to report at the next board meeting.

j. **Rob Harris - Local Government Representative**

Waterlogging/Salinity

Average to above average rainfall this winter after a wet 2021 has resulted in waterlogging, local flooding, and potential salinity problems. This has impacted at a local government level with road construction delayed, existing roads undermined by road base becoming saturated, and poor drainage on local subdivisions. The increasing use of heavy transport on public roads places more pressure on quality road construction which is already compromised by the increasing cost of materials and labour shortages. It is however aesthetically pleasing to see streams flowing and floodplains covered in water!

Feral Pigs

Becoming a significant threat to the environment and also to farmer biosecurity (7 piggeries in the Cuballing Shire). Despite a vigilant shooting and trapping program numbers will be hard to contain due to ideal breeding conditions.

Potential Growth of Upper Catchment Communities

Significant interest regarding housing in shires of Williams, Boddington, Wandering, and Cuballing. Geographical advantages with proximities to metropolitan areas and also to inland attractions which have become increasingly popular post covid. Challenges for local government ie planning, fire control, environmental impact.

Discussion – Darralyn advised that Feral Pigs are a problem and look like they are about to explode on the roads (from being hit) and this is going to be an issue to come.

Darralyn also mentioned that there was a Rural Towns Program around 7 years ago , which was a system of monitoring bores and measuring salinity water table issues in several rural towns, she is unsure if anything eventuated on from this program.

k. **Laurie Snell - Local Government Representative**

Fruitco table grape company

Are proposing an accommodation camp for 250 workers at their table grape vineyards west of Hamel, Waroona Shire. The Shire of Waroona is carefully considering this as it is located next to the Waroona Main Drain and the sewage treatment plant will need to have the correct capacity.

6. **Guest Speaker - Neil Blake , Assistant Director, Program Delivery North and West, Biodiversity Conservation Division, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water**
“The NLP is in its final year and a new program is due to commence from 1 July 2023. We are aware of the need to provide certainty to regional delivery partners, including Peel-Harvey Catchment Council, so that you can plan for the next phase with staff and volunteers. We can assure you that the Government is carefully considering its priorities for the next phase, taking into account the findings of the National Landcare Program Phase 2 Review (available at <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/land/national-landcare-program-phase2-review>). At this stage, we anticipate decisions on priorities and funding for the next phase will be made in the forthcoming October Budget context.”

Neil also praised PHCC for how well this is managed and run and high praise for all the PHCC work that they do.

The board thanked Neil Blake for his update, Members were provided the opportunity to ask questions of Neil in the morning tea break due to being time conscious.

Action: Jane to send Neil copy of framework for the "Waterways Restoration" Business Case (10 year funding program), being prepared in collaboration with PDC, City of Mandurah, Shire of Murray, DPLH and DWER

7. Guest Speaker Jess Beckerling - WA Forest Alliance
"South West Forests Update"

The board thanked Jess Beckerling for her presentations, Members were provided the opportunity to ask questions.

Question – Paddi advised that she admired the way that Jess keeps progressing with the aim to protect our forests. She asked have you had interactions with members of government and have they a level of understanding and implication of damage?

Response – Jess advised that voices are being heard "but we are up against it, she advised she was heartfelt to hear that the Rio Tinto hearing that the Shire have been writing directly to the Minister of the mines asking for the tenement's to be rejected. "None of this is going to be easy and we need to make the biggest impact that we can. Two things we need to do is direct to the EPA and direct to the ministers to make this a very powerful policy the government can't ignore" Jess said

Action: Jess to provide copy of her presentation and links to submissions and website.

Brief group discussion after with regards to the PER and the request for extensions and the evidence of what the process has been from 2006 to now. With the EPA visit this week the timing is good for us to discuss and let them see how what effects this is having.

8. Staff Projects Updates

A. "Numbat Neighbourhood and Dryandra Woonta"

(Christine Townsend - Coordinator Farmers and Fauna)

B. "Wetlands and People – on ground restoration activities for Ramsar 482"

(Presented by Steve Fisher on behalf of Katy Montgomery Wetlands Restoration Officer)

The Board thanked Christine & Steve for their most excellent presentations. Darralyn added great thanks for the good work that is being done and gave examples of landholders and their experience that she has been made aware off.

The Chair thanked Steve again for all his input and hard work over the years as this would be his last board meeting.

9. **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer spoke to her report and Reports provided, considered read – Seeking endorsement of 2022/23 Budget. Marilyn confirmed, Audit is September 5 & 6. PHCC preparing going well, travel claims increased 0.78 PKM from 0.72 PKM. Things are tracking well and there are no concerns.

Moved: Bob Pond

Seconded: Rob Harris

That the Board endorse the 2022/23 Budget as presented

CARRIED

Moved: Bob Pond

Seconded: Darralyn Ebsary

That the Treasurer's report be endorsed as presented.

CARRIED

10. **Chief Executive Officers Report**

The CEO spoke to her report (with supporting slide presentation), providing updates on the team, projects and other highlights. The full report was provided with the Agenda:

WHS Audit – Numbat Neighbourhood (August 2022)

Congratulations to Mel, Christine, Karen and the team for passing on all relevant criteria in the WHS Audit of the Numbat Neighbourhood Project. The Contract Assurance Section of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment engaged Muru Management Consulting to undertake an independent review of our compliance with the health and safety requirements of the RLP Services Agreement (clause 44.4a), including policies, procedures and records (clause 44.4 b). This included a desktop and onsite audit. The team passed with flying colors and Tony Perry from Muru was very helpful in presenting to the team and suggesting ways to streamline some of our processes and sharing relevant information to assist ourselves and our community.

National NRM Regions CEO Forum – Canberra (19 & 20 August 2022)

I attended the National NRM Regions Forum on 19 and 20 August (see attached Agenda). This was the first time the CEO's have come together for a couple of years and while there were some absences because of COVID and disrupted flights it was a very positive couple of days. Highlights have been summarised by NRM Regions as being:

- Andrew Macintosh's (Australian National University on Natural Capital & Environmental Services Markets) evangelical endorsement of regional NRM organisations and the essential role they play
- The positivity of the DAFF and DCCEE staff we heard from (as many of you said, there was a strong sense of regional NRM being valued) including Andrew Metcalfe's presentation as departmental secretary of the new DAFF
- Talking with senior government officers at the networking drinks (they showed up and very engaged)
- The energy generated by Minister Plibersek's National Press Club talk through our first lunch
- And, of course, hearing from each other, sharing ideas and generating momentum.

Through Senator Louise Pratt's office I secured a meeting with Minister Plibersek's Senior Advisor for Water Michael Wrathall and Kathy Eyles, Assistant Director | Ramsar National Focal Point, Wetlands Section | Commonwealth Environmental Water Office, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water at Parliament House. This was a very productive meeting with discussions on the challenges and opportunities we are facing. We discussed our proposed Business Case, the need for the Water Resources Management Act to proclaim areas for environmental water provisions and Kathy is following up on what will now happen with the Pt Grey commonwealth approval. This was particularly good timing, give Minister Plibersek's National Press Club address with respect to the National State of the Environment Report and provided an opportunity to impress the collective ability of the 54 NRM Regions to play an increased role in assisting to meet the Commonwealth objectives for better protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance.

Influence key decision makers for better catchment governance

Business Case – Restoring the Health of the Peel-Harvey Waterways (~\$110 million over 10 years, from 2025) – In collaboration with the PDC, we held the first consultative meeting for the Business Case on 5 August (see presentation attachment and handouts). Attendees included Simon Taylor (DWER); Malcolm Robb (DWER); Nicholas Dufty (DPLH); Ben Dreckow (City of Mandurah); Andrew Ward and Stefan Chappel (PDC); Steve Fisher and myself (via zoom). The proposal for the Business Case was well supported and PDC are getting quotes for the Economic Analysis/Economic Contribution Analysis.

Bindjareb Djilba (Peel-Harvey Estuary) Protection Plan Policy and Planning Coordinating Committee – The second meeting was on 5 August and there is good collaboration to look at the priority actions.

EPA Board Meeting & Site Visit – Mandurah 18 & 19 August – The EPA have accepted our invitation to host an EPA Board meeting in Mandurah (18th), followed by a site visit on the 19th. We aim to take them for a flight over the coastal plain and Northern Jarrah Forest.

WA Feral Cat Working Group – see Operations Manager, Conservation & Agriculture report. The Symposium is scheduled for February 2023, at UWA.

Public Environmental Reviews – South 32 Worsley Alumina – The team, lead by Mel Durack and Karen Bettink are doing a fabulous job pulling together this huge task. This has been an enormous process and we have engaged several consultants to assist. A two week extension has been provided which gives us a little more time. Please see our website for more information <https://peel-harvey.org.au/south-32-per/>. We have recently been informed that South 32 have a previous conditional approval for an additional 8,000 ha of clearing, under Ministerial Agreement 719, subject to a Biodiversity Investment Scope to the EPA (without community consultation). We are trying to understand how this works and the impacts, particularly how the cumulative impacts of the proposed expansion will take account of this additional clearing.

Moved: Marilyn Gray

Seconder Darralyn Ebsary

That the CEO's Report be endorsed as presented.

CARRIED.

11. Chairman's Report

The Chair spoke to her report as provided with the agenda, she added that the Department of Agriculture Forest and Fisheries meeting was fantastic and thanks to everyone involved. She also advised that Jane's performance review had been completed and she was pleased to say Jane has accepted a further 12 month contract.

Moved: Darralyn Ebsary Seconded: Rob Harris

That the Chairman's Report be endorsed as presented.

CARRIED

12. Other Business

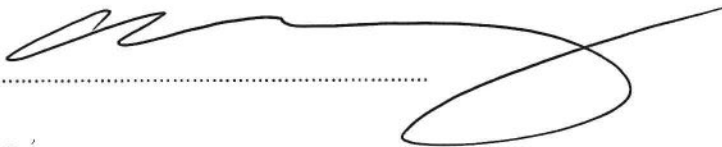
Jane advised that we are hoping that by the AGM Meeting our shed will be back in use as we are working hard with COM to get this back in full working order.

13. Confirmation of next meeting date

The next meeting is a General Board Meeting scheduled for Thursday 20th October 2022.

The meeting closed at 12.05pm

Chair:



Date: 20.10.22

Actions arising from General Board meeting held on Thursday 18th August 2022 (this meeting):

Minute No.	Details	Responsibility	Action
7	South West Forests Presentation Update - Jesse to provide copy of her presentation and links to submissions and website	Jesse Beckerling	Requested
5.h	"Undermined" article featuring Kingsley Dixon 13 August 2022 Jane to send copy of article to board members	Jane O'Malley	Completed - emailed to board 30/08/2022
6	Waterways Restoration Business Case Jane to send Neil Blake a copy of the framework for the "Waterways Restoration" Business Case (10 year funding program), being prepared in collaboration with PDC, City of Mandurah, Shire of Murray, DPLH and DWER.	Jane O'Malley	Completed - emailed to Neil 01/09/22

Actions arising from General Board meeting held on Thursday 16th June 2022

Minute No.	DETAILS	RESP.	ACTION
G.7/06/22	Feral Pig Management – Keralup Jane to work with Mark Cugley (and Jesse Rowley) to encourage Development W.A. to continue with the feral pig control across Keralup (to try to keep pig numbers from escalating again).	Jane O'Malley	Completed - It was agreed that Jane and Mark with work together and provide updates as they arise. Board are happy for this to be removed from actions until updates are available
G.7/06/22	Roadside Vegetation - Veronica Metcalf to provide an outline of the road clearing issue to a future Board meeting, with recommendations/suggestions for an appropriate representative to present to the board on future plans and implications so the Board can understand the issue and can decide on next steps and any engagement with Main Roads.	Veronica Metcalf	In Progress - Veronica will obtain more information as this is a big issue and timely and will aim to provide an update at the next board meeting

G.7/06/22	<p>CRC Time – Project Pitches - Peter Zurzolo to arrange a meeting with Jane O’Malley, Steve Fisher & Mel Durack regarding PHCC having input and looking over project pitches from the CRC-Time Peter is working with and South32, focussing on tangible and risk components</p>	Peter Zurzolo	<p>Completed</p> <p>Peter and Jane to discuss further at Governance Steering meeting and to confirm what is required and deal direct</p> <p>Board are happy for this to be removed from actions until updates are available</p>
G.7/06/22	<p>Turf Farm Proposal - PHCC to review the proposal for Lot 1 Riverdale Road, Cookernup and determine whether we can put in a submission</p>	Jane O’Malley	<p>Completed</p> <p>Laurie is closely following Harvey shire and Waroona and will give us updates as they arrive.</p> <p>Board are happy for this to be removed from actions until updates are available</p>