



5 Rivers NRM
Working Together

Noongar Participation Plan

We acknowledge the Noongar people as Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to all Elders past and present

Document History

DATE	VERSION	COMMENTS
2016	1.0	Endorsed by PHCC 15 December 2016
2019	2.0	Endorsed by PHCC 20 June 2019
2021	3.0	Endorsed by PHCC 18 February 2021
2022	3.1	Procurement Table Updated - fig. 2 (Dec)
2023	4.0	Reviewed by Noongar Elders and Representatives (Feb)
2025	5.0	Draft submitted to DCCEEW* 5 May 2025
2026	5.1	Reviewed by PHCC and Noongar Elders (Dec 2025) Name change incorporated Submitted to DCCEEW* 22 Jan 2026

We've changed our Name

On 11 December 2026, the PHCC Board endorsed changing our name to remove all reference to Thomas Peel. Thomas Peel was heavily involved in the 1834 Pinjarra Massacre, an event that continues to have an intergenerational impact on those who still feel the trauma inflicted on their ancestors when so many innocent lives were taken.

PHCC is now '5 Rivers NRM', a name welcomed by our community as warmly acknowledged in a speech by George Walley on 11 December. We expect to take approximately 12 months to fully transition to our new name, and this Plan is one of the first to use it.

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Appendices

1. Measures and Targets (limited audience)
2. Schedule of Fees (confidential)
3. Procedure (confidential)
4. Induction Video (in progress)

*DCCEEW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Australian Government)





Walking with Winjan and Healing Bilya

The Winjan Aboriginal Corporation and 5 Rivers NRM have been walking together for many years to care for Bindjareb Boodja and to develop and grow Winjan's Bindjareb Boodja Rangers program. The Rangers program was developed to empower Bindjareb people to continue cultural responsibility to look after country, share cultural knowledge and provide training, up-skilling and employment opportunities.

5 Rivers NRM has supported Noongar cultural knowledge sharing and the Rangers to participate in a range of on-ground restoration activities within the corridors of the Bilya Maadjit (Murray River), Waangaamaap Bilya (Serpentine River) and bushland areas. Training in weed control, revegetation, flora, fauna and fish monitoring and seed collection has been provided... [read more](#)



Introduction

5 Rivers NRM recognise, acknowledge and respect Noongar People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the south-west of Western Australia.

For over 50,000 years Noongar Mobs of the Bindjareb, Wilman and Whadjuk language groups have lived here, tended the land and been sustained by its natural resources. Their spiritual, cultural and intellectual connections to the land are strong and provide opportunities to enhance management of the Region's natural resources.

This Plan has been prepared with our communities. It is designed to provide an action oriented approach to enable us to continue to 'walk together' to support the aspirations for Bindjareb Wilman Boodja, the local Noongar community across the Peel-Harvey region, and beyond.

Over the last 2 years, 5 Rivers NRM and our Mobs have enjoyed a series of yarns to inform the Plan. This includes larger community yarning circles, discussions with Mobs and with individual representatives. Our Mobs have directed us to their strategic documents, often developed with us around the table, to focus on their priorities.

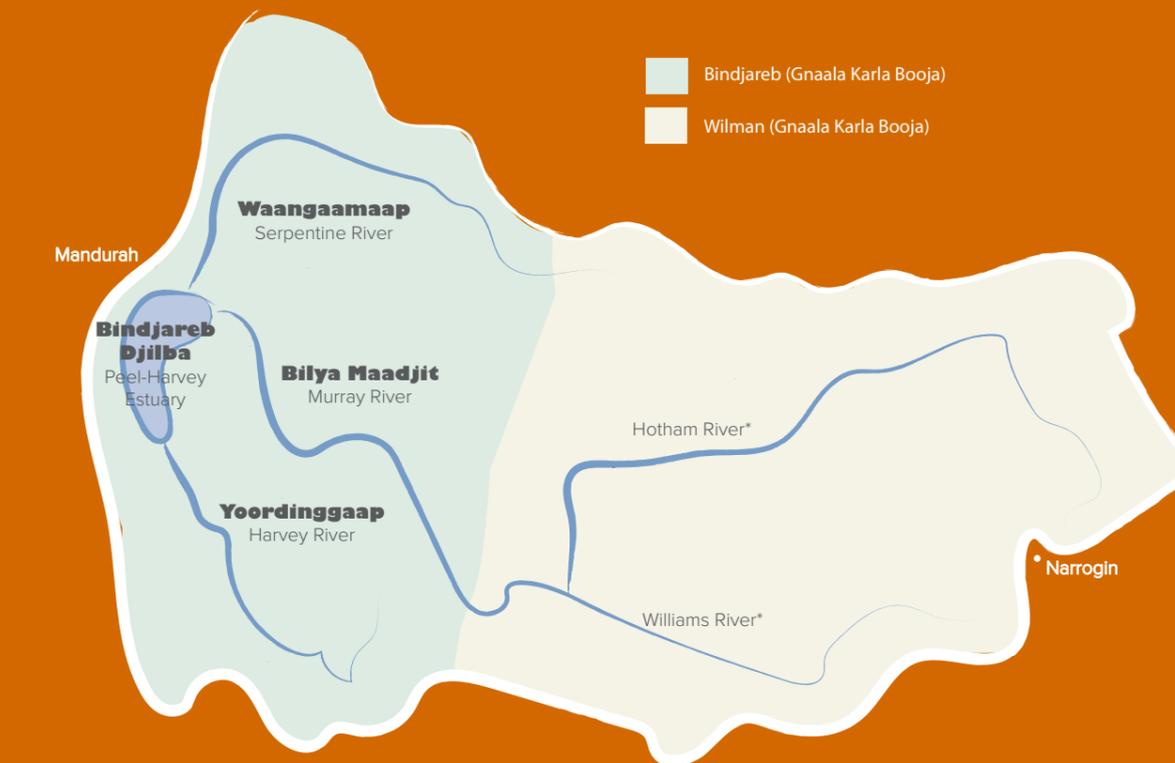
Our Plan has been endorsed by our Aboriginal Steering Committee, which includes community members of our Board. We are proud of our strong connection with our communities, built up over decades of 'walking together' towards a mutual vision. We continue to work with our Mobs and will review this Plan on a regular basis and update where necessary.

Note: The community Elders have asked us to refer to them and their community as Bindjareb Wilman or Noongar and to use First Nations people when referring to the broader Aboriginal/Indigenous community.

Geographical Scope

The Peel-Harvey Catchment covers 1,173,620 ha and includes Noongar language groups and geographical areas of Bindjareb (Pindjarup), Wilman and Whadjuk*.

**We acknowledge that a very small portion of Whadjuk Country falls within our Catchment and undertake to contact relevant Elders when undertaking works in this area.*



**Sections of the Hotham and Williams Rivers have Noongar names however the entirety of each river is not known by a single Noongar name*

Aboriginal Groups within the Peel-Harvey Catchment

Bindjareb

- Winjan Aboriginal Corporation
- Murray Districts Aboriginal Association
- Waroona Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation
- Harvey Aboriginal Corporation

Wilman

- Wilman Dryandra People Corporation



We encourage and support an environment that allows Noongar people to feel safe, secure and valued

Cultural Heritage and Values

Noongar people have a strong connection to country (Boodja), in particular to the Estuary, rivers, wetlands, woodlands and landscape features such as granite outcrops/domes. This connection to country is richly embedded in their spiritual, social and ecological history and values.

Aboriginal heritage and values are unique and irreplaceable. A number of Traditional Lorens and Government Laws and Legislation are in place to protect Noongar heritage and values.

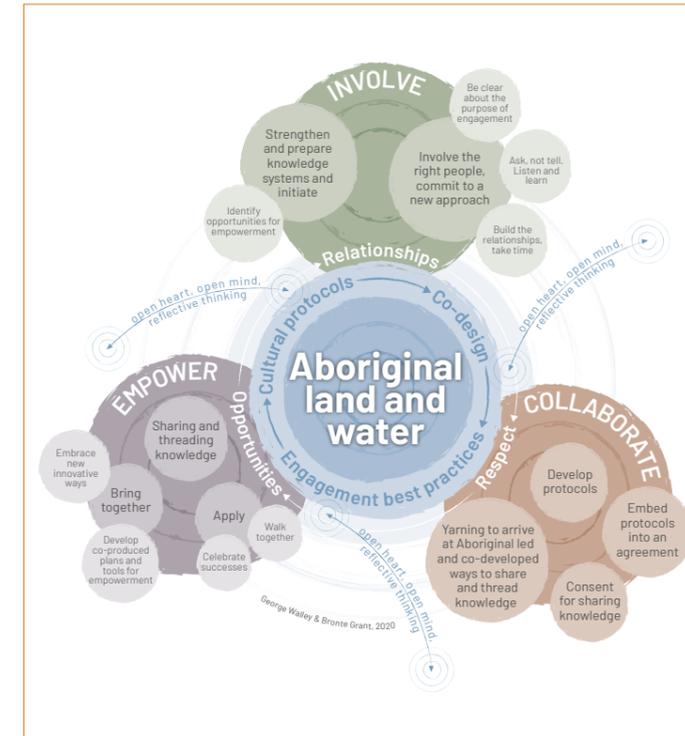
Our Noongar Participation Plan has been developed with local Noongar Elders and Representatives to guide in the protection and maintenance of significant cultural values and heritage sites while building and maintaining relationships with our local Noongar community.

5 Rivers NRM is committed to effective and respectful consultation, engagement and collaboration with our local communities to increase leadership and participation of Noongar communities in caring and healing country, with a particular focus on threatened ecological communities and priority places, such as our Ramsar listed wetland system.

Vision and Guiding Principles

We will:

1. Engage Traditional Owners, Elders and community leaders, Representatives and Corporations across our Catchment who speak for country through Lore, custom and Government Legislation/Regulations
2. Develop protocols for communicating and engaging with the appropriate Noongar groups and communities
3. Work with the Traditional Owners, Elders and Representatives to determine their aspirations for involvement in natural resource management
4. Facilitate connectedness and communication by maintaining and strengthening our relationships with Noongar people through increasing cultural awareness and experience of the 5 Rivers NRM Board and staff
5. Work with our communities and other organisations to build capacity for procurement and employment opportunities, including identifying and supporting skills development and training that may lead to improved employment and contracting opportunities



Bindjareb Noongar people's cultural knowledge about our estuary is our water story. From the creation time to the present time, to the future, our water story is a very amazing and important story. The interconnectedness of Spirit, Land and People brings together our cosmology, our sense of place, our homeland. Our waterways' health is connected with our own health and wellbeing.

~Extract: Bring Together, Walk Together~



Conserving culture and nature, one seed at a time

It takes hundreds of thousands of seeds to revegetate a native Woodland, however, there is currently insufficient seed available on the market to meet the demand for restoration, particularly for Banksia and Tuart Woodlands species. To address this key limitation, PHCC and the Winjan Bindjareb Boodja Rangers have collected and processed thousands of seeds from threatened Woodlands on the Swan Coastal Plain.

Banksia and Tuart Woodlands are culturally significant to the local Noongar community and together we work on Country to collect, clean and store seed while sharing cultural and scientific knowledge critical to the conservation of threatened Woodlands... [read more](#)



Legislation, Policy and Frameworks

Along with consultation and engagement, the PHCC is committed to legal and ethical responsibilities to protect Aboriginal values and heritage sites through Traditional Lore and/or Acts, Legislation, Regulations, Policy and other frameworks.

Traditional Lore relates to the custodianship of land and works to protect flora and fauna and the environment to ensure biodiversity is protected and food supplies are abundant. Traditional Lore recognises that certain Lore may apply to only men and/or women and there are sites that are sacred to communities that cannot be spoken of.

The Australian and West Australian Government's Legislation recognise the unique ties Aboriginal people have to land and provide some protection under WA's Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 and the Australian Government Native Title Act 1993.

[Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972](#)

[Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 1974](#)

[The Native Title Act 1993](#)

PHCC is legally required to comply with all statutory requirements related to existing Acts and Legislation, and ensure that contractors engaged for on-ground work are aware of their obligations under the Acts.

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00178>

In accordance with requirements of Schedule 10 of the PHCC's Deed with DCCEEW, the PHCC has identified and engaged a Cultural Broker to build cultural competency, identify areas of mutual benefit and engage in collaborative activities.

Due Diligence

Due diligence is defined as - taking reasonable care and caution or the proper actions that a situation calls for, especially those that help to avoid harm or risk.

The guidelines for due diligence are outlined in the link below:

<https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2019-04/Annexure%20D%20-%20Aboriginal%20Heritage%20Due%20Diligence%20Guidelines.pdf>

PHCC Protocols and Procedures

Our Bindjareb Boodja Landscapes ([NRM Strategy](#)) details our commitment to participation through consultation and engagement with our Noongar communities.

We recognise that protocols and/or procedures for consultation and engagement may differ depending on the activity and/or the impact of certain activities on sites of significance. We are committed to recognising differences and being flexible in our delivery to respect individual community needs.

Measure and report on performance

We are committed to monitoring and measuring our performance and we will meet regularly with our local Noongar communities to ensure we are working together to meet their aspirations, where resources allow.

**UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON
THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES**



United Nations

13 September, 2007

Article 31.1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

CONNECTING

We will continue to 'walk together' with our local communities to support their aspirations for Bindjareb Wilman Boodja



What we will do



PURCHASING

We will maximise opportunities for Aboriginal businesses through our procurement practices

CONNECTING

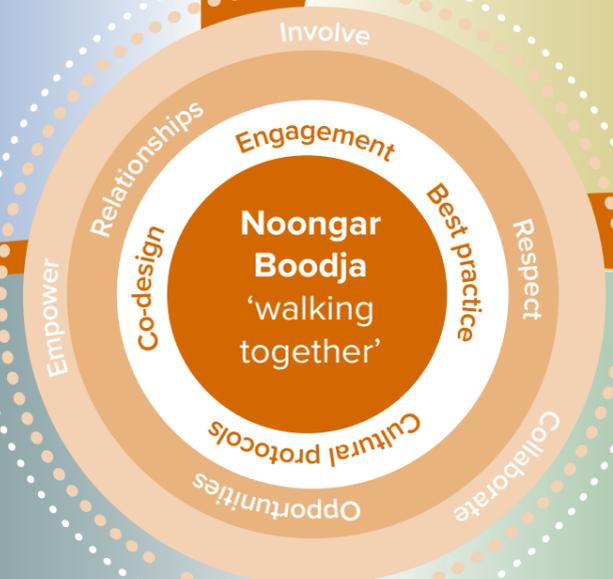
We will continue to 'walk together' with our local communities to support their aspirations for Bindjareb Wilman Boodja

- Recognise, acknowledge and respect Noongar People as the Traditional owners of lands within the south-west of Western Australia
- Develop and strengthen cultural respect, awareness and competence of 5 Rivers NRM staff and board
- Prepare an overarching Strategy to guide 5 Rivers NRM Noongar Participation

PURCHASING

We will maximise opportunities for Aboriginal businesses through our procurement practices

- Prioritise purchasing through Aboriginal business



CAPACITY BUILDING

We will support our communities to develop skills, experience and knowledge that empowers self determined opportunities

- Support our communities to identify, plan, lead and participate in the delivery of natural resource management projects and on-country activities
- Provide opportunities for communities to identify and develop skills, experience and knowledge

EMPLOYING

We will work towards increasing employment opportunities for our communities

- Increase the representation of Aboriginal people in 5 Rivers NRM employment.

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2a Support our communities to identify, plan, lead and participate in the delivery of natural resource anagement projects and on-country activities

- i Regularly meet with local Corporations and groups to determine their aspirations for involvement in NRM
- ii Support local Corporations and groups to apply for and access available NRM funding
- ii Identify and appoint a Cultural Broker to build cultural competency, identify areas of mutual benefit and engage in collaborative activities

2b Provide opportunities for communities to identify and develop skills, experience and knowledge

- i Identify and provide two way learning and training and skills development opportunities for and with the Noongar Community through the delivery of NRM projects and activities
- ii Provide opportunities for Noongar Community members to participate in conferences, workshops and training through providing resources, travel / transport, and related support
- iii Collaborate with other agencies, groups and contractors to provide training opportunities

We will continue to 'walk together' with our local communities to support their aspirations for Bindjareb Wilman Boodja

1a Recognise, acknowledge and respect Noongar People as the Traditional owners of lands within the south-west of Western Australia

- i Acknowledge the Noongar People as the Traditional Owners of this land on 5 Rivers NRM correspondence, websites, within the office and at all meetings and gatherings
- ii Use approved Noongar language and names for places, plants and animals, where appropriate
- iii Build new and strengthen existing relationships with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal Corporations and groups
- iv Provide opportunities for Traditional Owners to conduct cultural practices such as identification, assessment, management and access of cultural sites, resources, and other values, recordings of language and stories, dance, story-telling and yarning

1b Develop and strengthen cultural respect, awareness and competence of 5 Rivers NRM staff and board

- i Effective cultural inductions are provided to all Staff and Board
- ii Contemporary cultural induction resources are available on the 5 Rivers NRM HR platform
- iii Strengthen 5 Rivers NRM staff and board connections and relationships with Bindjareb and Wilman Traditional Owners and Community
- iv Traditional Owners engaged and cultural knowledge and ecological values exchanged as part of project planning and delivery

1c Prepare an overarching Strategy to guide 5 Rivers NRM Noongar Participation

- i Review, update and monitor delivery of the 5 Rivers NRM Noongar Participation Plan (NPP) in consultation with Bindjareb and Wilman Traditional Owners, Elders, Representatives and Corporations
- ii 5 Rivers NRM Steering Group Committee established and meeting regularly to review NPP activities and evaluate success against targets and outcomes

We will work towards increasing employment opportunities for our communities

4a Increase the representation of Aboriginal people in 5 Rivers NRM employment

- i Adapt recruitment processes and encourage communities to apply for employment positions with 5 Rivers NRM positions with 5 Rivers NRM
- ii Identify barriers to employment and provide training and mentorship/support opportunities to build confidence
- iii Provide work experience / volunteer opportunities for communities with 5 Rivers NRM
- iv Meet or exceed the Australian Government target of 4% of our NHT funding to be expended on indigenous employment, either through direct employment, or subcontracting of services to a First Nations enterprise that employs First Nations people

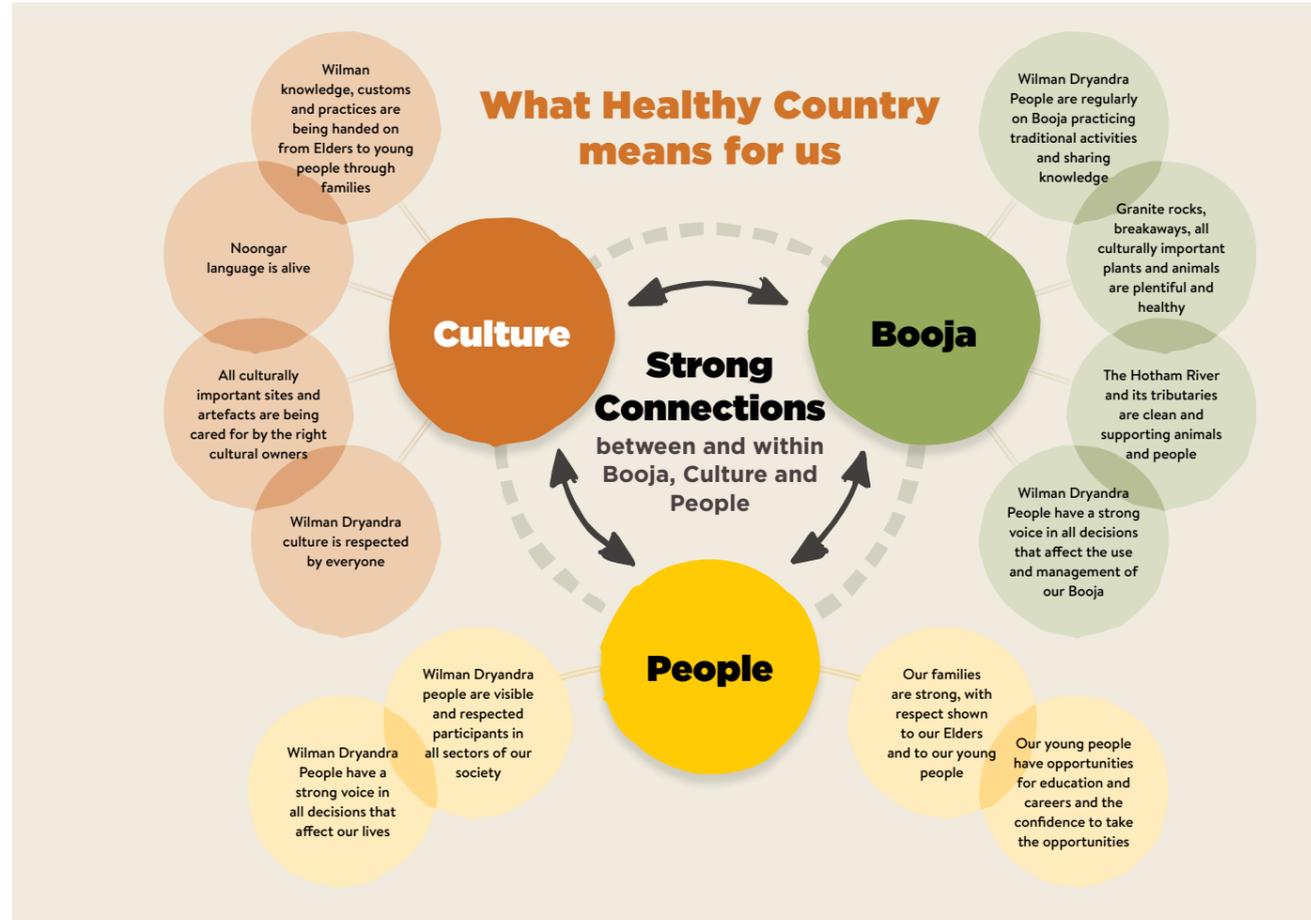


We will maximise opportunities for Aboriginal businesses through our procurement practices

3a Prioritise purchasing through Aboriginal businesses

- i Identify Aboriginal businesses and ensure they are provided opportunities to quote for and/or supply goods and services
- ii Identify and provide preferential procurement opportunities for Aboriginal businesses including Ranger Groups where there is demonstrated capability and capacity to deliver project activities in accordance with 5 Rivers NRM procurement policy
- iii Develop a strategy to communicate procurement opportunities and support processes for Aboriginal businesses
- iv Meet or exceed Australian Government target of 4% of our NHT funding to be expended on the value of goods and services provided under the Deed





- Restore Hotham River and its tributaries**
 - Wilman Dryandra people have commenced restoration of important places along the river, and within 10 years people are swimming in healthy pools again
- Carry out cultural surveys and mapping of waterways.
 - Establish a formal partnership with Peel Harvey Catchment Council (PHCC) to ensure Wilman Dryandra people guide the restoration and interpretation/signage at sites along the Hotham River and other waterways within Wilman Dryandra Booja.
- In conjunction with PHCC carry out regular water quality monitoring in river pools.
 - Convene or participate in annual meetings with PHCC, DBCA & landholders to review water quality monitoring outcomes and anticipate additional actions that may be required to improve water quality and offset further impacts of climate change.

Extracts: Wilman Dryandra Healthy Country Plan 2023

Testimonials

"Winjan Aboriginal Corporation would like to acknowledge the support PHCC has provided to Winjan, especially for the past 3 years when Winjan has been applying for the Government of Western Australia Aboriginal Ranger's program, which had a successful outcome in 2020. The Winjan Ranger's Program will commence in February 2021 and will provide employment and training for 2 part time Rangers and 1 part time supervisor."

PHCC has previously worked with Winjan to support training for employment such as Chem Safe and seed collection projects and has committed to continue this partnership through the Ranger's program.

PHCC has supported Winjan in the presentation of 'Walk and Talk' community events. These events have been very successful and we are grateful for PHCC's support in enabling Winjan to engage with the community in a meaningful way.

PHCC understand the desire of the local Aboriginal community, which is to increase capacity for employment of local people and has supported skills and training activities to assist in this outcome.

PHCC has been working closely with the local Bindjareb Noongar community and in particular Winjan for over 25 years, through their land management activities and training programs which have ensured that local Aboriginal people are part of the on country works across this region."

~ Franklyn Nannup, Winjan Aboriginal Corporation 2021 ~



Extract: Bindjareb Djilba Kaadadjan Bidi Road Map

References

PHCC Binjareb Boodja Landscapes, *A Strategy for Natural Resource Management in the Peel-Harvey Regio*,

Government of Western Australia Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Premier and Cabinet (30th April 2013), *Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Guidelines, Version 3*.

[http://www.Department of Planning, Land and Heritage \(DPLH\).wa.gov.au/](http://www.Department of Planning, Land and Heritage (DPLH).wa.gov.au/)

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/cultureheritage/ddcop/ddcop-ForestsNSW.pdf>

<http://www.noongarculture.org.au/>

Wilman Healthy Country Plan

Bindjareb Djilba Kaadadjan Bidi Road Map

Winjan Strategic Plan

Disclaimer: 5 Rivers NRM provides this document to assist in the processes of participation through consultation and engagement with the local Noongar communities when undertaking NRM activities. Use of this document to guide participation, consultation and engagement does not constitute legal requirement, nor fulfil external party legal responsibility. 5 Rivers NRM takes no responsibility for the use of the information by third parties.



Australian Government

This project is funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and delivered by 5 Rivers NRM, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel