

PERTH NRM
ANNUAL REPORT
2018



Perth NRM

NOTE: This report has been recompiled from a web format. As such, formatting and interactive components may not work as expected.

Who We Are

Perth NRM is a sustainability organisation with a focus on environment, both within our agriculture sector and as a growing city.

Our vision is;

- That the natural environment is protected and enhanced for the benefit of the community.

Our purpose is to;

- Protect and enhance our natural resources;
- Promote and support sustainable agriculture;
- Promote and support environmentally sustainable living.

As a non-profit organisation we work for the Perth community to lead a collaborative and integrated approach to natural resource management. Our work preserves and improves our natural surroundings with consideration to its interactive role in supporting our quality of life for both present and future generations.

We develop and manage projects, events, as well as building support through collaborative networks, corporate volunteering, grants, sponsorship and fundraising.

We are part of a state wide network of NRM organisations that have worked together for more than ten years and manage funded programs at a regional level as part of the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.



Chairperson's Report

This has been a momentous year for Perth NRM. Not only have we gone through the much-anticipated change in Federal tendering processes that all NRM organisations around the country have endured; but we also have a new CEO, Paul Bodlovich, who started in February 2018. Paul has welcomed the strategic guidance of the Board in focusing on Business Development, and has been able to put a few wins on the table in that regard, and has given renewed vigour to other projects, including staff leadership.

I would like to thank my fellow Board Directors for their support during this time of intense work, particularly in the lead up to Paul's recruitment. Bruce Hegge as Deputy Chair offered practical assistance during this time as well as being a great sounding board – thanks Bruce. The Board have made a decision to be more streamlined and in Steve Vanstan choosing not to renominate for a Board role, have kept down to a 6-member Board offering continuity, strategic insights and a constant engagement with risk assessment, which as all NFP's understand, is about cashflow and income diversity, as much as all the other risks. Our major risk is that we are hugely reliant on the Government grant system and as part of diversifying income we would like to be more responsive to community input on environmental management.

A key program has emerged in the 'Regenerative Farming Network' ably championed and now led by Keith Pekin, who was also our Acting CEO for four months. He has been doing a great job in bringing an understanding of how city folk are dependent on country folk, and vice versa in terms of bringing conversations to the table, supporting change in the agriculture sector and other outcomes like accessing central infrastructure, ultimately hoping to make ourselves redundant in having a farmer's-led Regen Farmers Network. Other exciting potential projects are 'Rewild Perth' that would have a big impact on green corridors across Perth supporting our biodiversity, as part of our remit for environmental sustainability both in a growing city and also the agriculture sector. We have made strides in the Food Future area thanks to the dedication of our staff in engaging intelligently in this field of food security.

The revised Federal tendering process which invited tenders from across all sectors in Australia was a big change for everyone, and was designed to focus on accessibility in permitting all organisations to put up a bid, transparency of process, and value for money in terms of the Government's dollar. The Perth NRM staff, our Acting CEO Keith Pekin, Business Services Manager Jeanmarie Collens and our new CEO Paul Bodlovich worked very hard over several months to ensure Perth NRM was ably represented in this tender process, for which the Board are immensely grateful. We have received a renewal of confidence from the National Landcare Program's support through the Commonwealth government departments of Environment & Agriculture, and the next five years financial input was within the modelling anticipated. Darrell Jones as Finance Chair was also actively involved in this process. The Board's response to risk in focusing on Business Development initiatives has seen an enthusiastic take up by Paul in the CEO role and we are delighted to see the fruits of his efforts, and look forward to the further development of his skills in this area.

The Board are working with the new CEO and his work with the staff renewing the Strategic Plan with a focus on Perth NRM as a hub – with information, resources, being a practical as well as a virtual hub and interconnecting NRM interested people in the urban area. One of our core areas of focus is the coastline, and for an urban centre that derives huge recreational facility as well as desalinated water from our oceans, it's vital that we support community capacity to do this environmental support, as the Federal government has pulled back. The partnerships that we are rebuilding with local governments through our new CEO are assisting with this, as part of Perth NRM's collaborative natural resource management initiatives.

On behalf of the whole Perth NRM Board I would like to extend thanks to Steve Vanstan for his past 6 years contributing to strategic Board discussions, and Lorica Storey who has tendered her resignation, from her role as Independent Chair of the Audit Committee; we thank her for her commitment. We also owe our gratitude to the invaluable work that Raechel Paris, as Chair of Independent Nominations Committee, has provided Perth NRM over the past 12 months. She has been fantastic in providing professional services that the organisation was in much need of, and doing this work with great integrity.

As a community, the Perth NRM Board and staff actively embrace the mission of protecting and enhancing our natural resources, promoting and supporting sustainable agriculture and environmentally sustainable living. Part of the work to promote long-term outcomes in water quality, biodiversity enhancement, healthy coastal environments, cultural heritage preservation and sustainable agricultural practices is the long-term commitment to the future, and the Board's strategy is to gather community focus on this, through private and public participation and increased communications, as well as working towards more small grant programs to be able to distribute directly to the community.

Perth NRM and all our staff work actively with a range of stakeholders including the universities, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and other government departments, as well as the private sector. Other key achievements for the organisation apart from renewed funding from the Federal government include the 20th year anniversary of SALP, the continuation of the Healthy Rivers Healthy Soils and Sediment Task Force and some measurements over the past year:

- **Over 200, 000 Plants planted**
- **Over 6,000 Volunteers engaged in NRM activities**
- **Over 4,000 Hectares involved in rehabilitation activities**
- **30 Workshops, Seminars & Events held**
- **Over 800 participants to our events**

However, the real measure is in the strength of our community involvements, the willingness of staff to go above and beyond the call of duty, the commitment of members and interested people to attend our workshops and seminars, and the enthusiasm of Board Directors to actively strategise and plan for the future of environmental sustainability in the Perth urban area. It is a privilege to be a part of Perth NRM and help move the conversation forward on how we can all better value our environmental assets.

Mariyon Slany
Chairperson, Perth NRM

Chief Executive Officer Report

It is with a great sense of pride that I present this annual report for 2017/18 for Perth Region NRM Inc. We have taken the opportunity, upon the completion of NLP this June 2018, to provide an overview of the project work that was carried out over the last three years of NLP funding in this year's report.

I came on board as CEO in February and can honestly say that it has been an amazing experience. I would like to start by thanking the Perth NRM Board for their faith in appointing me and supporting me as I have acclimatised to this new sector. My especial thanks go to Mariyon Slany who is an incredibly hardworking and passionate Chair. I cannot thank enough the staff who have been incredibly welcoming and supportive, and for teaching me everything that I know about managing natural resources (and, by necessity, will continue to do so). I have also felt welcomed by our many stakeholders, with whom we share a passion for the sustainability of our region.

This has been and continues to be a pivotal time for Perth NRM with a key element being the change in funding model for natural resource management across the country that has been implemented by the Australian Government for the next five years. This change represents a paradigm shift and one that we must ensure is turned to the advantage of our community. This applies not just to Perth NRM, as our stakeholders and community also need to understand that the Regional Landcare Program is now narrower in scope than was previously the case. RLP uses a fee for service model that targets objectives delivered through specific projects designed to meet the government's six five-year priority outcomes in the environment and sustainable agriculture space. One clear result is that much of the important work that was previously supported through the funding of organisation infrastructure and which was valued by us and our community no longer sits within the remit of our federal funding. This is on top of a steady downward trajectory in federal government funding over the past decade.

We are responding to this by focusing very much on what we can and can't deliver. We are re-envisioning our organisation from an organisational culture and values base, and at the same time looking deep into the future, to set a vision for what we want to be part of achieving in the long term. This approach is central to how we see Perth NRM being a sustainable organisation over the medium and long term. We absolutely see a role for ourselves working alongside the community in leading our city and our state towards a future that is not just environmentally sustainable in all ways but which is viewed globally as a leader in sustainability.

In the short term we are proud of the fact that we've maintained our staff base and therefore retained the capacity to meet the challenges ahead. We were able to do this because we come from a reasonably strong position both in terms of our balance sheet and cashflow, which is allowing us to change quickly and effectively to ameliorate the impact of the altered funding model. We embarked upon the 2018/19 financial year with a significant deficit projected, however that was based on fiscally conservative assumptions and already we are seeing considerable headway being made to reduce that in the current financial year. I'm confident that we will be able to isolate that scenario within that timeframe. In addition, our projected cashflow remains strong and provides us with both flexibility within our business and surety that we are not entering a phase of financial difficulty.

With all this all in mind I acknowledge the incredibly important work that we do, and the fundamental role of our partners in doing it. These encompass federal, state and federal governments, environmental and grower groups, and the landcare groups of all sizes who we work with in delivering on ground work.

Thank you to our major funder the Australian Government for their critical support through the National Landcare Program.

Thank you to Erin Devlin who has done an amazing job of preparing this annual (and more!) report. I'm sad to report that after 11 years with Perth NRM Erin has recently resigned to pursue new opportunities and we wish her all the best in her future endeavours. I would also like to acknowledge Julie Tattley who resigned as Financial Controller in April, and Craig Wilson who is retiring at the end of this year after 12 years as our Coast and Marine Program Manager (South Region).

Finally I want to acknowledge the extraordinary contribution made by volunteers in the delivery of land care, and managing our natural resources. It is from these people that the strength of our movement is derived and through them that the importance of what we do continues to be emphasised.

Please enjoy reading about our year at Perth NRM.

Chief Executive Officer – Paul Bodlovich

Swan NRM Strategy

The Swan NRM Committee is the driving force for guiding the implementation of the Swan Region Strategy for Natural Resource Management. The Committee hosts 25 organisations across industry, government, research organisations, and the community. The Committee formed in 2013 to support and guide the development of the Strategy and Implementation Plan and will continue to do so for the next two years. Earlier this year, the Committee released its latest Swan NRM Implementation Plan 2018-2020.

This year, the Committee has been meeting to discuss critical NRM challenges facing the region through a series of workshops and forums. The Committee worked on the challenges faced in managing urban biodiversity and working with the local Aboriginal community. Together the Committee's collective thoughts, ideas and actions can deliver responses to our shared challenges and build a resilient, responsive, and sustainable region.

The Committee released the [Swan NRM Report](#) earlier in the year celebrating the NRM achievements from across the Swan Region. The report provides a snapshot of a wide range of actions being undertaken by a raft of NRM stakeholders, reporting these achievements against the Strategy's four action areas.

Additionally, the Committee released the long-awaited [Planning for Climate Change Report](#) providing stakeholders with summative projections and adaptive responses on climate change impacts within the Swan Region.

Perth NRM would like to thank Mr Peter Nash for his valuable contribution, guidance, and leadership as the Chairperson of the Swan NRM Committee. Peter has contributed significantly after serving two years in the role and will be resigning from the position. He will continue with the Committee as representative for the South West Group. A new Chairperson has yet to be appointed.

Perth NRM Communications

In 2017-2018 there were many developments in Perth NRM's approach to communicating its work and capabilities. The year saw us focus on our online communications in conjunction with increasing our corporate volunteering program, supporting a full seminar and workshop program and maintaining and improving upon our existing communication tools.

Reaching our Audience

The year saw us again strengthening our presence on social media through our fleet of channels. Our Facebook profile (@perthnrm) grew significantly over the course of the year, through completely organic unpaid posting. We grew our page followers to over 5,000 this year, making us a leading NRM organization in Facebook engagement. We posted 458 times over the year and engaged an audience of 444,573 in NRM activities.

The year also saw us re-launch our twitter (@PerthNRM) page, with a small number of followers that we are actively working to grow. The page is also supported by a Regen WA twitter page (@regenWA) which solely focuses on regenerative agriculture information and news for our community. We are planning on increasing the combined following of these pages, currently 255, in the coming year.

Our LinkedIn page has been used to great effect when promoting professional seminars as part of our Sustainable Communities program.

We will continue to refine our communication through social media into the next year and are currently planning a series of targeted campaigns for all social media channels relating to our recent successful Australian Government funding as well as additional Perth NRM driven sustainability project work.

Website engagement

The Perth NRM website is the main conduit for all Perth NRM information, and is supported by our monthly newsletter and social media channels.

Our website has been slowly undergoing upgrades and changes over the year to reflect our change in funding and future positioning. This includes the addition of a donations page, now open to accepting taxable donations that will be used to support sustainable environmental work in the Swan region.

We have also increased our output of media releases over the year and these are housed on our website for the community to read. Our events and news pages are updated constantly to reflect the work we are undertaking and to promote future events and projects.

Over the last year we launched the Food Future website, a hub of information on all of our sustainable agriculture projects, allowing visitors a more in-depth understanding of the work being conducted and the ways in which they can get involved.

Our Living Perth brand saw good traction with our Neville Passmore blogs. The blogs were well received through direct mail outs to our stakeholders and supporting posts on our social media channels and website. Even with the interest the blogs generated and the opportunity for the wider community to sign up and become 'Friends of Living Perth' we will be undertaking a review of this brand in the coming months to determine its future direction.

Targeted communications

Our stakeholders receive monthly Perth NRM newsletters, as well as targeted campaign information around specific projects. We currently inform 1,661 stakeholders of our most recent NRM project news and events via this medium.

This year has seen us focus on Perth NRM driven content only, however, statistical feedback has made us aware that our community enjoys reading about the broader NRM interests in our region and we will endeavour to include this in future newsletter communications.

On the ground spotlight

We ran a campaign to reach potential community volunteers in the Swan region during Volunteer week in 2018. The goal was to remove the barrier of 'I don't know how/where to volunteer' for those keen to participate but not sure how to start.

"Drawing on our contacts through the SALP program, Coastcare program and the sub-regions we were able to match a number of community enquiries as a result of the campaign, to community volunteering groups in the Swan region" said Abi Smalley, Perth NRM's Communication Manager.

The campaign was run through an advertising campaign in the Community News in every region of Perth, coupled with a press release and a week-long social media campaign identifying and thanking volunteering hero's to inspire the community to get involved.

"We now have a dedicated email address the community can contact us on and through that we join them up with a potential community group in their area and if possible an upcoming event they can participate in" said Ms Smalley.

The program continues and we will run a similar campaign in 2019 to once again support our programs that rely on community volunteers to achieve the amazing environmental outcomes we see around the Swan region.

Project Staff

Erin Devlin and Abi Smalley

Coastal Restoration

As we reflect on nearly four years of successful coastal enhancement and management, we are thrilled to say we over delivered on majority of our promises. The Coastal Restoration project was launched in 2015 with a focus on community engagement, weed control and natural habitat restoration with seedlings.

The project has had significant impact on the coastal regions of the Perth metropolitan areas and the visual results along our coastline are testimony to this. In quantitative terms, the revegetation component has resulted in a number of stunning statistics. These include;

- 90,485 seedlings planted into restoration sites;
- 44.8 hectares of new areas treated for weeds;
- 40 hectares of weed management in existing project areas;
- 108 erosion control structures installed, including matting, fencing and brushing, to combat erosion across 5.6 kilometres of coastline;
- 2.4 tonnes of rubbish removed from Perth's beaches.

In many sites we have seen the return of fauna species that would be absent if the environmental condition wasn't supportive. This includes species such as quenda, echidna, bandicoot, dugite, and many other species of reptiles and birds. Establishing the appropriate plant community also supports insect and bee populations which are integral to the health of an ecosystem. In some project sites we have been able to conserve – and in some cases increase – the presence of plant species such as pink fairy orchid, native pellitory, quandong and other species that have been absent from our coastal reserves for many years.

It is well documented that environmental restoration must take place over a minimum of 3 years in order to see real impact. Some of the sites we have worked on over the course of this project have seen changes from almost 100% weed cover, to a site completely restored with native coastal vegetation and limited weed invasion. Others have started from a better ecological condition, but have needed ongoing infill planting, weed eradication and site maintenance.

Community achievements and education

The life of the project resulted in 206 coastal and marine focused events being run, with 13,340 people participating in conservation activities on our coast. The most exciting part of this figure is that 8,253 of these people were new to coastal restoration activities!

Both on-ground and training/capacity building events have proven popular over the course of the project. Events have included;

- Education around restoration techniques and best practice in the field of coastal restoration;
- Vegetation and weed identification/treatment;
- Fauna awareness;
- Invertebrate monitoring;
- Impacts of climate change on coastal systems;
- Citizen science;
- Technology around data collection and monitoring;
- Current research into marine and coastal systems;
- Volunteer engagement and using social media.

We have coordinated field trips and bus tours for volunteers in order for groups to learn from each other and share challenges and success stories, and we have produced resources for the wider community in order to promote the messages of habitat-appropriate vegetation and supporting biodiversity – i.e. a Guide to Planting Coastal Gardens and a Coastal Weed Identification manual.

Participants gained new skills, knowledge and awareness in many fields that were targeted for capacity building during these events. These included;

- New developments in plant propagation and seed science;
- Restoration techniques;
- Weed eradication of specific species and alternatives to herbicide use;
- Current research in marine and coastal management issues;
- Coastal vegetation response to fire episodes;
- Identification and monitoring of invertebrate populations;
- Citizen science;
- Usage of apps;
- Drones and other forms of data collection/monitoring;
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS);
- Use of social media and volunteer retention and recruitment.

We have engaged over 100 schools over the 7 stages of this project, totaling over 4,000 students who have been actively involved in coastal restoration and conservation work over the Perth region. Students have been educated as to the vulnerable and dynamic nature of coastal dunes systems, learning about threats to coastlines including climate change, sea level rise, invasive flora and fauna species, human impact, loss of biodiversity and many other issues. We have targeted the extent and impacts of marine and coastal debris, particularly plastics, and have collected and contributed data to the Australian Marine Debris Initiative through activities.



Program partners

The Perth NRM Coastal Program works with numerous industry and corporate organisations as well as many community groups to achieve the level of success seen in the Coastal program.

Over 30 organisations contributed to the Coastal Restoration project since the beginning of this project. Volunteers have been engaged in planting and weed removal activities, marine debris collection, site maintenance, fencing and erosion control, and have gained a better understanding of the importance of protecting our coastlines and returning ecological resilience to coastal areas. Many groups have chosen to return to assist with the Coastal Program in consecutive years, forming an ongoing relationship with the Coastcare volunteer groups and investing significant staff hours to the restoration projects.

With the ongoing assistance of Perth NRM Coastal staff, Coastcare groups, Friends of groups and land managers report that they have been able to access and successfully implement grants for coastal restoration to the additional value of approximately \$150,000 per year, an exceptional outcome for all involved.

On the ground snapshot

The Stirling Natural Environment Coastcare (SNEC) team can be found anywhere from Brighton Beach to Trigg on any given week during the year. Their work spans across 6.5kms of coastal foreshore and the dedicated group are always welcoming of assistance. Perth NRM joined corporate volunteers from Woodside one morning at two sites to lend a hand to a small team of SNEC volunteers.

“What many people don’t realise is the sites require on-going maintenance” said Perth NRM’s Coastal Manager Adeline Morrissey.

“This site in Brighton, on secondary dunes, was recently planted with 700 plants, now we are here to infill with another 180 plants where they didn’t make it. On-top of that, with the help of corporate volunteers we have managed to plant 2,700+ spinifex plants at South Trigg and make a start on some weeding.”

This sort of work would take community groups days to complete without the much needed assistance of corporate volunteers. Perth NRM coastal managers Craig Wilson, Kate Sputore and Adeline Morrissey work with groups year round to ensure they receive the extra hands needed to get the work done.

Project Funding

This project is supported by Perth NRM, through funding from the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program as well as the WA Planning Commission, Town of Cambridge, City of Joondalup, City of Stirling, City of Wanneroo, City of Cottesloe, City of Cockburn, City of Fremantle, City of Rockingham and the City of Kwinana.

Project Partners

Corporate volunteering organisations have included: Woodside, Price Waterhouse Coopers, Telstra, Rio Tinto, BP, Tronox, proAlliance, Konica Minolta, Alcoa, and the University of Western Australia (residential colleges), Stantec and Expedia.

Community Groups

Community groups that have actively worked with Perth NRM on restoration activities include: Cottesloe Coastcare Association, Cambridge Coastcare, Stirling Natural Environment Coastcare, Friends of Sorrento Beach, Mullaloo Beach Community Group, Friends of North Ocean Reef/Illuka Foreshore, Quinns Rocks Environment Group, Friends of Fremantle Beaches, Kennedy Bay Coastcare, Singleton Coastcare, and Friends of Mosman Park Bushland and West Coast Coastcare.

Staff

Craig Wilson, Adeline Morrissey and Kate Sputore.

Cultural Heritage

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage program, launched in 2015, engaged with the Noongar community in NRM activities to raise awareness and increase knowledge of environmental practices in the Swan region.

The impressive highlights of the program include;

- 1,327 volunteers participating in cultural heritage themed activities;
- 1,180 new participants at events and activities;
- Engaged 521 Aboriginal people in regard to Traditional Ecological Knowledge and NRM;
- 52 events held; and
- 12 on-country visits.

Key project work

Perth NRM project managers worked with Noongar Elders and Community Leaders to provide hands-on, practical learning sessions for the Noongar community. We shared the skills and knowledge necessary to carry out land management activities, including;

- Treatment of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* dieback disease;
- Native flora and fauna identification;
- Management of waterways;
- Weed control;
- Coastal dune restoration;
- Rehabilitation of wetland riparian vegetation; and
- Native flora salvage and relocation.

All activities included Traditional Ecological Knowledge and traditional land management practices. During training for NRM activities, we surveyed the participants and learned that;

- 85% gained new NRM information at the event;
- 61% will use the information they learned in a work or private setting;
- 48% would be interested in working in NRM; and
- 43% currently do some form of landcare activity.

This indicated that the NRM activities organised offered new and useful knowledge to help the participants discover more about land management.

As part of the field based events the Noongar community shared with us their knowledge, culture, and experience. This allowed us to develop new resources and activities to increase community awareness of Traditional Cultural Values and Ecological Knowledge in the Swan region. The developed and widely distributed resources included;

- 500 copies of A Guide to Aboriginal Consultation and Engagement in the Swan Region;
- 600 copies of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Forrestdale Lake book;
- The Noongar Database of Traditional Ecological Knowledge;
- 11 educational videos on Noongar culture and Traditional Ecological Knowledge;
- 5 Noongar language learning activity sheets;
- 6 voice recordings for the Noongar Six Seasons;
- 3 interpretive signs informing the community of Traditional Ecological Knowledge through QR coded traditional Noongar stories;
- 10 QR coded traditional Noongar stories and Traditional Ecological Knowledge for walking trail signage across the Karda Biddi Trail; and
- 2 Banners celebrating Aboriginal culture.

Beyond written and recorded resources, we engaged with community through a series of programs and activities targeted at all ages and abilities. The two most successful programs included the Noongar Six Seasons Walks series and the Noongar Education Program.

The Six Season walks were held for each of the six seasons and the information shared at the walks was season specific. They were conducted at Sites of Significance where Noongar people would have traditionally resided at that time of year and Elders were employed to share Traditional Ecological Knowledge with the participants. Since the series began over 190 people have participated in the walks. The Noongar Education Program was targeted towards school aged children in both primary and secondary school. A Noongar business specialising in cultural education was engaged to deliver the program with support from Perth NRM staff on site. The program covered Noongar history, traditional lifestyle, Traditional Ecological Knowledge of flora and fauna, the Six Seasons, and Noongar language. The secondary school program also offered mentoring for Aboriginal students to help them develop a stronger sense of self as an Aboriginal person in current multicultural Australia, and practices around traditional Men's or Women's Business.

Throughout the duration of this program we attended eight schools and engaged 725 students from kindergarten to year 11. To celebrate the completion of each program students were encouraged to participate in a cultural celebration with bushstucker food and traditional dance and song. To widen our engagement with the local Noongar community, we also attended events centred around the celebration of Aboriginal culture, such as NAIDOC. At these events we were able to speak with many Aboriginal people, forge partnerships, and share the previously listed resources we had developed.

On the ground – Clontarf Hill and trail signs

A major component of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program was the recognition and better protection for an Aboriginal heritage site, or Site of Significance. An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Significance Assessment ("the Assessment") was conducted for Clontarf Hill in the suburb of Beaconsfield, 15.5km south west of the Perth CBD within the local government area of the City of Fremantle. It is a historical site that holds mythological and spiritual significance for the Noongar people and it was a place of ceremony. The hill also plays an important environmental role as it is part of a habitat linkage for native flora and fauna.

During the development of the Assessment, 14 Noongar Elders and community leaders were engaged to provide background and input. Organisations that were engaged with included the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, City of Fremantle, City of Cockburn, The Whadjuck Working Group, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage – Aboriginal Affairs section, Main Roads, the Friends of Clontarf Hill, various community members, and staff at Perth NRM.

The Assessment provided information on the site's ethnographic and archaeological background, geology and geomorphology, hydrology, flora and fauna, and history. It involved surveys of the area that provided an opportunity for Aboriginal and wider community participation through site surveys, sharing of ecological and historical knowledge, and the collation of information. As a result, the environmental aspects of the site were addressed and the awareness of the community increased.

While Clontarf Hill is currently registered by the City of Fremantle and has a listing in the State Heritage Register (Registration ID 22923), it is not listed as a site of Significance and afforded the corresponding protections. While the site is not currently under threat, the Assessment was a pre-emptive measure to record and secure its value and to be used to achieve cultural heritage listing in the future.

In addition to our work at Clontarf Hill, signs containing historical cultural knowledge and QR codes that link to stories of Traditional Ecological Knowledge were installed at the high recreational use areas of The Terminus at the start of the Bibbulmun Track in Kalamunda, Perry Lakes in Bold Park Reserve, and Lesmurdie Falls in the Mundy Regional Park.

These signs have the potential to be accessed by tens of thousands of users per annum. The 2017 annual report of the Bibbulmun Track Foundation reported 80,000 walkers using the track for day walks with over 190,000 users recorded as walking the full length of the trail. This means that the sign at The Terminus in Kalamunda, which is an end point of the trail, has the potential to reach over 190,000 users each year, 53% from Western Australia, 24% overseas visitors, and 23% from interstate Australia.

As well as the three signs placed by Perth NRM, we also contributed to Traditional Ecological Knowledge recordings that have been included as QR codes on a further 10 signs for the Karda Biddi Trail, part of the Whadjuck Trail Network. The Karda Biddi Trail is 10.6km long and stretches from Rosalie Park, Kings Park and then follows the river to Claremont. This is a very high use area for recreational and tourist purposes, with 6.3 million visitors recorded at Kings Park for the year 2016-17 and hundreds of people utilising the river foreshore daily.

On the ground snapshot

Makuru is the Season of First Rains and our Six Season walk with Elder Neville Collard lived up to its name. The Perth NRM Six Season Walks series aims to celebrate every Noongar season in an area that the Noongar people would have traditionally resided in at that time of year.



Enthusiastic attendees met at *Matagarup* (Heirisson Island) decked out with raincoats, umbrellas, and gumboots. After breathing the smoke from a Smoking Ceremony and hearing Elder Neville's words of welcome, the group followed the path along the *Derbarl Yerrigan* (Swan River) and were greeted with the sight of *kwilana* (dolphins), *marli* (black swans), pelicans and darts. Elder Neville shared the story of how the *marli* turned black, how the *Wagyl* (Rainbow Serpent) created and still protects the *Derbarl Yerrigan*, and the history behind *Matagarup*.

Elder Neville showed those on the walk how camp would have been set up amongst the *kondil* (sheoaks) to keep dry, how a *mia mia* (shelter/tent) could be made amongst the trees and shrubs, and how food would have been caught from the river. As the group rounded the island and reached the statue of Yagan, Elder Neville shared the historic figure's story and all the children in attendance were fascinated by the lightning bolt on Yagan's back.

As the walk came to a close and the group reached the carpark, the skies once again opened and the rain fell, a fitting farewell for our Makuru walk.

Project Funding

This project is supported by Perth NRM, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

Project Partners

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC), Bindi Bindi Dreaming, Wirrpanda Foundation, The Whadjuck Working Group, The Dieback Working Group, Elders from the Noongar Community, City of Armadale, City of Cockburn, City of Fremantle, City of Gosnells, City of Wanneroo, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage – Aboriginal Affairs section, The Department of Main Roads, Conservation Volunteers Australia, the Friends of Clontarf Hill and South Eastern Regional Centre for Urban Landcare.

Staff

Ingrid Sieler and Sharon Munro