

**WILSON INLET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP  
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2005 AT 1.00PM**

PRESENT: George Ebbett, Brad Pense, Geoff Findlay, Brad Kneebone, John Xanthis, Jason Froud, Dianne Harwood

In Attendance: David Rushton

The Chairman opened the meeting at 2.05pm

**1. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

Ms Lynn Heppell, NRM Coordinator introduced Ms Annabelle Bushell, Project Officer for the Wilson Inlet Nutrient Reduction Action Plan to be based at the Denmark Office. Annabelle gave an overview of the funding available.

The Chairman highlighted the need for benchmark monitoring. It was noted that potato monitoring had stopped for the time being as operators had problems with their harvesting and one grower had been uncooperative in divulging fertiliser use. It was recognised that consultation with landowners was required. Mr Rushton undertook to find out the situation with water quality monitoring. Mr Xanthis questioned if figures were available as to how much water was being extracted from the Wilson Inlet for dams and watering of stock from rivers. It was noted that this issue related to water supply and a desktop study on water use for Denmark would be carried out in the future.

The Chairman thanked Ms Heppell and Ms Bushell for their attendance.

**2. APOLOGIES:** Colleen Donnelly, Bill North, Zak Launay

**3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

Meetings held 18 May 2005 and 17 August 2005.

18 May 2005 – Members Reports – Jason Froud. - “Chairman noted that this issue would be looked at with enhancement of ‘VFLO’ program sponsored by SCRIPT”.

Following amendment the minutes of 18 May 2005 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.  
The minutes of 17 August 2005 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

Mr Kneebone referred to Item 4.2 of the previous meeting as he was still receiving reports of landowners ripping up vegetation on the foreshore. Mr Pense advised that the Shire relied on the public reporting instances of clearing however, the Shire was reluctant to prosecute as it was a long and costly process. He stated that on change of property ownership landowners are advised of boundaries and that the foreshore is not their property. New developments could be supplied with an advice sheet. An emphasis on punishment may have to be considered. Discussion took place on the review of the foreshore management plan as it was overdue. A suggestion was made to include this information into a media release to advise the community that a foreshore plan was in existence and was undergoing a review.

4.1 Floating jetties proposal – Denmark Classic Boat Association. Correspondence to the Shire of Denmark tabled. Mr Findlay noted that currently boat owners have free access to mooring in the Rivermouth and should be mooring elsewhere. There was a general lack of awareness from boat owners as to the cost involved and who was to pay for it. Mr Findlay advised of an Albany barge for sale that would be suitable to cut in half to make 2 floating jetties. He went on to say that it was a good concept proposed for the slipway and Shire issues with power and leases were yet to be addressed. It was noted that the Shire was not in a position to lease moorings due to public access. There was an issue with fixed masts and getting boats under the bridge, however this could be addressed with hinged masts.

4.2 Mr Rushton advised that WIMAG endorsed Mr Chuwen’s research proposal to investigate implications of environmental change and mortality estimates for sustaining fish populations in south coast estuaries. It was noted that Mr Paul Close from UWA is currently investigating black bream and fish larvae surveys in smaller estuaries (Torbay & Normans) and Mr Josh Brown is conducting research on recruitment indices for future commercial catches.

- 4.3 Proposal to trial eastern opening of Wilson Inlet sand bar - WISE. DoE response containing significant input from Malcolm Robb (Aquatic Science Branch) was tabled. The letter simply stated that the DoE/WIMAG position on the issue remains unchanged.
- 4.4 Rivermouth Development – results from channel survey and related matters. A comprehensive survey was carried out by Department for Planning and Infrastructure and currently with the Shire of Denmark. Acid Sulphate Soils Management Plan. Mr Pense undertook to check on progress.

Mr Xanthis organising fish cleaning facility for WIRG to build and coordinate with new slipway.

- 4.5 Status of Wilson Inlet algal bloom – health issues etc. There has been no change and remains a health concern. Mussels collected each week for testing with Dept of Health and Dept of Environment involvement.

## **5. FORESHORE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Denmark Foreshore Management Plan was due for review in 2001 and although started it was not completed. Ms Harwood gave an update of the rehabilitation work undertaken and noted that involvement from other agencies had not been successful. Plans have been in place to revegetate the foreshore at the old Wilson Inlet Holiday Park and awaiting a response from the Shire on the revegetation proposal. (Letter dated 18 July tabled). Other management plans to be taken into consideration at the time of the review.

A Steering Group group was established to undertake the review, consisting of the following people:

Shire Engineer or CEO

Dave Rushton

George Ebbett

Di Harwood

John Xanthis

Emma Huxley

## **6. RECREATIONAL BOATING FACILITIES SCHEME**

- 6.1 Under the Recreational Boating Facilities Scheme, three applications received for consideration, Oyster Harbour, Shire of Denmark (Poddy Shot) and Walpole. Following regional assessment, Poddy Shot recommended and results available in approx 6 – 8 weeks.

## **7. WIMAG REVIEW**

The Chairman gave an update from the meeting held on 17 August and listed the roles and responsibilities and features identified for the group. Appointments would be made up of the following:

Local commercial fishing interest

Local environmental group

Foreshore interest

Local tourism interest

General community (2)

Local Government – Shire of Denmark and City of Albany

Shire of Denmark Environmental Officer

Dept of Environment

Water Corp

Dept for Planning & Infrastructure

Dept of Fisheries

Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee

All members of WIMAG to have voting rights.

Terms of appointment – 3 years with 1/3 replacement each year.

WIMAG would remain an advisory group to decision making agencies but generally would not make decisions on proposals.

Code of Conduct to remain the same.

Support and responsibility – Dept of Environment to provide secretarial support and the Shire of Denmark to provide venue.

Terms of Reference, possibly a MOU.

A rigorous selection criteria to apply.

The status quo with public open forum i.e. open and closed sessions.

Concern expressed about voting rights i.e. personal view or departmental view.

Resolved to have a 3 month time limit on the review with a draft terms of reference and to finalise by Christmas. An advisory group and not a decision making group therefore not accountable. WIMAG only accountable if it provides advice to the government. Should be expertise represented.

## **8. NRM REGIONAL STRATEGY FUNDING**

Mr Rushton gave an overview of the outcomes of the SCRIPT Regional Strategy and associated Investment Plan relevant to projects within the Wilson Inlet catchment, focusing on the implementation of the Nutrient Reduction Action Plan. Over \$200,000 has been designated to WICC for implementation of the Action Plan this year to fund projects such as streamlining, drains, point source, remnant protection, monitoring and weed control.

Mr Kneebone expressed concern as to nutrient input into Lake Saide and the urgency to address potato farms and a nutrient monitoring program to establish levels going into the inlet. He noted the option of either buying out or relocation of the farms.

## **9. WILSON INLET NUTRIENT REDUCTION ACTION PLAN**

9.1 Mr Rushton referred to the Action Plan updates provided to WIMAG members and tabled report document.

9.2 Mr Rushton advised that the boat tour for the NRM Conference was no longer an option and a bus tour was planned to visit 6 sites. Figures are unknown at this time until all registrations have been received.

## **10. MEMBERS REPORTS**

**Geoff Findlay** – Nothing to report.

**Brad Pense** – Nothing to report.

**Dave Rushton** - Membership of WIMAG – Some of the community positions are due for renewal in December although it is hoped that the review will be completed by this time.

**Dianne Harwood** – Carrying out a weeding program on foreshore of Poddy Shot through Coast Care funding with Shire of Denmark. Weeds identified – Arum Lilies, Watsonias, Fig tree, Hop tree, Dolichos pea, Lantana, Asparagus S Candens, Bridal creeper. Funding is available to pay for labour and neighbouring volunteers also assist.

**John Xanthis** – Using the whiteboard, John drew a sketch indicating wave and sand movement into the bar and near the opening. Quite a lot of sand build up is occurring at the eastern end of the opening due to a number of recent storm events.

**Brad Kneebone** - The track into the camping/recreational reserve on the inlet side of South Coast Highway has been chopped up with vehicles and very muddy. Vehicles continuing to drive over rushes and approx 5 metres between track and waters edge. Branches broken off paper barks and could be catalyst for vehicles to make new tracks. Dave and Brad to conduct site visit to assess the situation prior to consultation with relevant Shire personnel to explore possible management options.

**Jason Froud** - Fisheries Minister released outcomes of South Coast Regional Fisheries Strategy and can be accessed on line. Recreational fishing rules of South Coast will change on 1 Jan 2006 and bag limits for fish will change. The key species affecting Wilson Inlet is pink snapper and recreational net fishing rules to also change. A public education program will be conducted.

Tabled 'A five year Management Strategy for Recreational Fishing on the South Coast of WA Paper No 194.

**George Ebbett** – Item from the Marine Working Group meeting – advance the tender process for Fisheries Management sub program, Independent Estuarine Fisheries Research to monitor in priority inlets. Tenders have gone out.

Meeting closed 3.00pm.

**NEXT MEETING:**       **16 NOVEMBER (special meeting of WIMAG to be held on the 26<sup>th</sup> October to discuss review)**