

Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee Inc.

2018 Annual Report



Denmark College of Agriculture students revegetating a dairy drain with native seedlings



The Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee Incorporated (WICC)

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Acknowledgements

The Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee (WICC) wishes to sincerely thank and acknowledge all partnerships and funding organisations during the past year, in particular the Australian Government, State NRM Office, and South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. and staff.

WICC acknowledges and sincerely thanks the partner organisations and local community who have helped ensure the success of the activities undertaken during the past year of project delivery.

These organisations include, amongst others:

- The Wilson Inlet catchment community – farmers and people who undertook on ground works and who hosted, attended and participated in community activities arranged by WICC
- The partner catchment groups: Oyster Harbour Catchment Group Inc. and Torbay Catchment Group Inc.
- State agency organisations and staff: Dept of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), Water Corp, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and Department of Primary Industries and Rural Development (DPIRD)
- Local government organisations: The Shire of Plantagenet & The Shire of Denmark & City of Albany
- Educational organisations: Mt Barker Community College, Denmark Agricultural College, Denmark Primary School
- Green Skills (Denmark and Albany)
- The Green Army Team
- Gondwana Link Ltd
- Denmark Weed Action Group & the Denmark Environment Centre
- Local native seedling providers and seed suppliers
- Local Mt Barker and Denmark businesses and contractors who have been involved in project works.



Contents

Vision

Mission Statement

Management committee and Staff

Chair Person's Report

Project snapshots

(1) National Landcare Program

(2) Regional Estuaries Initiative

(3) Lindesay Link CAP: A focus on black glove wallaby and honey possum habitats

(4) Wilson Inlet Catchment Sydney Golden Wattle Project: Phase 1

(5) Nullaki Fauna Survey

(6) Annual Feral Shoot

(7) Wilson Inlet Management Strategy

(8) A look ahead

Audited Financial Statement (Attachment 1)



Our Vision¹

To manage the natural resources of the Wilson Inlet Catchment sustainably by a capable and engaged community for environmental, agricultural and social benefit

Our Mission

Enable the community to minimise their environment impact in areas that affect our catchment.

We focus on...

1. Waterways

We implement works programs in our waterways to further establish native vegetation, minimise erosion and strip nutrients

2. Sustainable Agriculture

We source and distribute funds and expertise to assist landowners to implement environmentally sustainable practices that reduce nutrient loads in the catchment

3. Biodiversity

We work with landowners to restore and maintain the natural biodiversity in the catchment through invasive species controls, native revegetation and weed control

We do this in four ways:

1. Community Engagement – We work in partnership with our community.
2. Research and Monitoring – We endeavour to understand our complex systems.
3. Education – We share our knowledge with all.
4. Implementation – We get our hands and boots dirty.

¹ Sourced from WICC Strategic Plan 2018-DRAFT



Who we are

Executive Committee

Chairperson
Deputy Chairperson
Secretary
Treasurer
Community
Community

Shaun McHenry
Iain Marshall
Laura West
Leon Delpech
Frank Hancock
John Rodgers

Management Committee

David Barr
Donna Carmen
Karen Winnett
Lorraine Naylor
Lynn Kelly Stothard
Stephen Frost
Sheryn Prior
Melissa Howe

Tony Pedro
Loris Wilson
Kirsten Beidatsh
Jenny Henzel
Leanne Tomlinson (ABP)
Chris Vogel
Kevin Collins

Advisory Members

Peter Caron (Shire of Denmark)
Karen Herlihy (SCNRM)

Contractors

Shaun Ossinger
Leon Delpech
Laura West
Heather Carter
Mark Parre

Project Manager
Treasurer
Secretary
Book keeper
Revegetation Consultant



Chairperson's Report

We have had a successful year at the Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee Inc. (WICC). WICC has had a strong focus on improving our governance, feral animal control, on farm nutrient efficiency and revegetation of our wetlands and waterways.

WICC has updated its Constitution in accordance with the recent changes that are taking effect with the Associations Incorporations Act 2015 (being voted upon at this AGM). We have also drafted new Operating Guidelines and updated our Strategic Plan which we are looking to adopt in late 2018.

I believe the health of our waterways is intrinsically tied to our farming practices. It is estimated that cattle (for beef and dairy) accounts for over 70% of Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorous annual contributions to Wilson Inlet (Ecotones, 2008). Furthermore, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development agricultural scientists estimate that approximately 80% of the farms sampled in our catchment have more phosphorous in their soil than what is actually required for maximum production. The release of this 'banked' or stored phosphorous can be achieved by farmers if they have the data and the knowledge to apply only what their soil needs, thus creating an environment for their plants to efficiently make use of stored phosphorous. WICC believes that by increasing farmer's capacity to improve their 'on farm' nutrient efficiency may not only improve the economic bottom line for the farmer, but also preserve the future health of our inlet.

We have now delivered two years of services under the Regional Estuaries Initiative to reduce nutrient export from agricultural land throughout the catchment. WICC has focused its efforts on farmland that has been identified as having a high nutrient export risk utilising its nutrient hazard mapping² data. Working with the community we have revegetated 7 hectares of farm drains, creeks and rivers, provided nutrient mapping on several thousand hectares of farmland and constructed 26 kilometers of stock exclusion fencing on our priority waterways.

With State and Federal government funding, we have managed to implement 1080 baiting on over 10,000 hectares of habitats utilising our Lindsay Link Conservation Action Plan; providing habitat corridors for our native fauna. We have leveraged on the success of the Western Shield Program to extend the benefits of this ongoing state baiting program by focusing on private property adjacent to 1080 baited National Parks.

We have continued with our efforts to control Sydney Golden Wattle across the catchments, leveraging in kind support from agroforestry, local government and community.

WICC has fully acquitted its Australian Government funded National Landcare Program 2015-18 Regional Landcare Partnership (RLP) with South Coast Natural Resource Management. We managed to treat 132 hectares of weeds, establish 26 colonies of dung beetles, dispatch 1035 feral animals, facilitated 18 workshops, as well as deliver a host of revegetation and waterway protection measures.

Looking ahead at the next round of the RLP, there has been some changes to the priorities of the Australian Government's focus areas. Two of the Australian Government's priorities, which are represented in our catchment area, are Threatened Ecological Communities, and, habitats critical to the protection of species listed under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999. For the Wilson

² Consultancy to Provide Land Use and Nutrient Hazard Mapping for the Wilson Inlet Catchment, Ecotones & Associates, 2008



Inlet Catchment, this has driven some of our future works to the Nullaki Peninsula and the Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh ecological community around the Wilson Inlet.

The Nullaki Peninsula is a 3,300-hectare conservation area partially protected by a 9 kilometer fence to exclude feral fauna. WICC will be looking to upgrade the Nullaki feral proof fence and deliver a comprehensive baiting program across the Nullaki Peninsula to provide suitable habitat for the protection of EPBC listed species.

Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh is recognised as an important feeding, roosting and refuge habitat for resident and migratory shorebirds. WICC will be undertaking weed control, revegetation and shorebird protection activities within these identified areas.

I will be retiring as the WICC Chairperson at this AGM as I cannot devote the time that is deserved to this position. I would like to thank Iain Marshall for acting in my position throughout the last year. Iain does an excellent job of keeping things on track while letting people have their say. Laura West will be stepping down as Secretary. I would like to thank Laura's for her professionalism and excellent attention to detail. I would also like to acknowledge Leon Delpuch for the innovation and wisdom he has brought to our Treasurer role since he joined us. Leon does an excellent job of keeping us fully legit and compliant with our obligations. Lastly I would like to thank Shaun Ossinger for his passion and ability to keep progressing WICC and its programs.

Kind Regards,

Shaun McHenry
CHAIRPERSON
WILSON INLET CATCHMENT COMMITTEE INC

Project Snapshots

| Funding Provider | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-------------------|---|--------------|--------------|--|---|-------------------------|
| Federal via SCNRM | NLP | | | RLP (NLP 2) | RLP (No contract in place) | |
| Federal | | | | NLP Smart Farms -Small Greener Pastures | | |
| Federal via DWER | | | | NLP Smart Farms-Large 6 X 3 year soil trials | | |
| R4R via DWER | Regional Estuaries Initiative | | | | | |
| SNRMO | SGW Phase 1 | SGW Phase 2 | SGW Phase 3 | Wilson Inlet SGW Phase 1 | Proposed LL CAP Biodiversity Coordinator (Have rolled SGW control and 1080 baiting into this) | |
| | | | | Nullaki Fauna Survey (auspicing only) | | |
| Shire of Denmark | WIMS Funding | WIMS Funding | WIMS Funding | WIMS Funding | WIMS Funding (Proposed) | WIMS Funding (Proposed) |
| Acronyms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCNRM – South Coast Natural Resource Management • DWER – Department of Water Environment and Regulation • R4R – Royalties for Regions • SNRMO – State Natural Resource Management Office • REI – Regional Estuaries Initiative • RLP – Regional Landcare Program (portion of NLP which is going through SCNRM to WICC) • NLP – National Landcare Program • LL CAP – Lindsay Link Conservation Action Plan: A focus on black glove wallaby and honey possum habitats • WIMS – Wilson Inlet Management Strategy • SGW – Sydney Golden Wattle | | | | | |



(1) National Landcare Program (NLP)

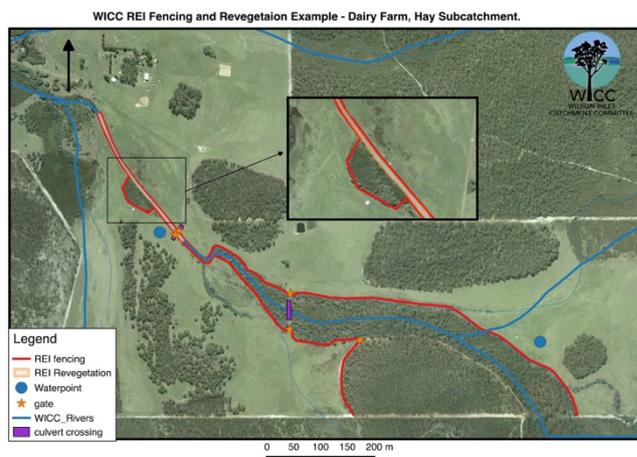
The NLP was one of WICC's flagship programs, focusing on biodiversity, soil health and coastal waterways. WICC used its current planning documents (Lindesay Link CAP, WICC Strategic Plan and Wilson Inlet Management Strategy) in the implementation of the NLP outcomes in order to deliver natural resource management across the Wilson Inlet catchment from July 2015 to June 2018. This program was fully acquitted and independently audited in July 2018. WICC over-achieved on all of our contracted outputs with a \$32 overspend on the 3 year, \$487,000 program.

| Contracted | Achieved |
|---|--|
| 30 Ha of upper catchment weed control | 84 Ha achieved with follow up controls in Monderup Reserve, Govvie Dam and several other sites |
| Dispatchment of 300 foxes | 610 foxes, 40 cats and 385 rabbits dispatched |
| Dung beetle establishment on 10 properties | Established 26 colonies of winter and spring active dung beetles strategically across catchment. |
| 6 kms of erosion control in lower catchment | 6.3 kilometers achieved. Kordabup River (Parrys Inlet) has now been mostly fenced off. |
| 5 Ha of riparian rehabilitation in lower catchment | 7.86 Achieved |
| 12 Ha of weed control in the lower catchment | 48 Ha Achieved (mostly hand weeding near waterways) |
| 15 workshops and farm field days | 18 workshops / field days held |
| Soil Health Trial Establishment and Nutrient Mapping on total of 6 Properties | Microbial sampling and analysis trials on approximately 29 properties throughout catchment |

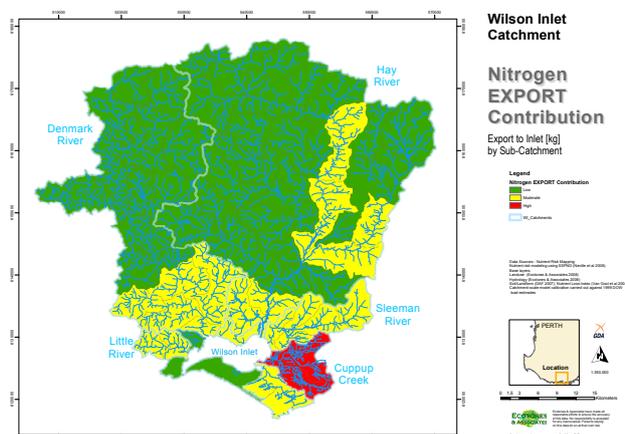
(2) Regional Estuaries Initiative

The Regional Estuaries Initiative is a 20 Million Dollar Royalties for Regions Program dedicated to reducing nutrients across six Southwest estuaries. WICC has been contracted by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) to carry out:

- 40 kilometers of riparian stock exclusion fencing,
- 12 Hectares of riparian revegetation
- Whole Farm Nutrient Mapping on 25 properties a year throughout the catchment, and
- a series of education workshops and events.



Overview map of stock exclusion and revegetation project on a dairy as part of our REI program



WICC has focused its work on areas identified in its 2008 Nutrient Hazard Mapping. We have over achieved on all of our contracted requirements to date. WICC has been working closely with the DWER and DPIRD to carry out this program. These agencies have mentored WICC throughout the program delivery to ensure we have access to the best science and practices based on lessons learned nationally and internationally.

Last financial year WICC carried out under this program:

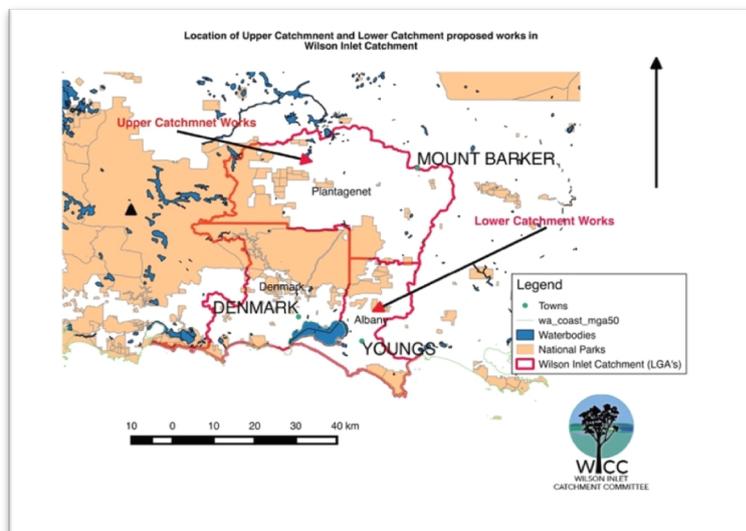
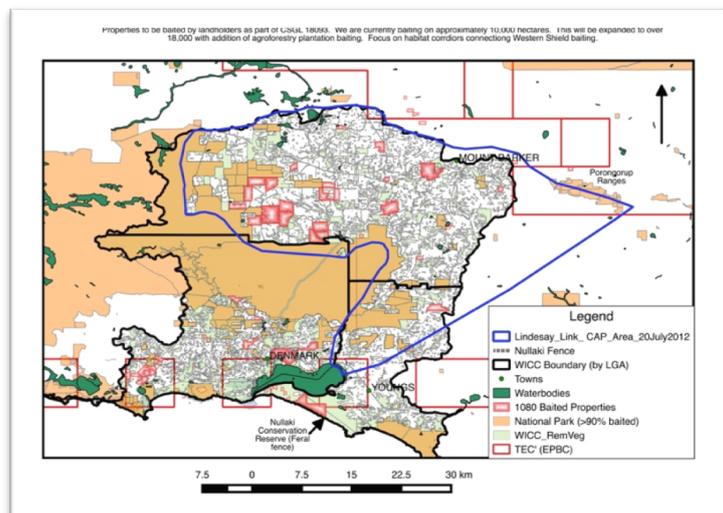
- 25 landholders throughout the catchment to carry out whole farm nutrient mapping in order to improve their nutrient efficiency and reduce nutrient export into Wilson Inlet,
- constructed 26 kilometers of stock exclusion fencing, and
- rehabilitated 7 Hectares of agricultural waterways (creeks, drains and rivers) to strip nutrients and reduce erosion.

As part of the Whole Farm Nutrient Mapping program, each farmer participates in a detailed survey before and after their participation in the program. The purposes of these surveys is to identify barriers and constraints to nutrient mapping and implementing best management practice in regards to nutrient application and rates. The surveys also help us to identify if we have effected behavioral change amongst the farmers participating in the program. We are currently doing follow up surveys and it would appear that most farmers who have participated in the program to date are now applying less Phosphorous and applying more customised mixes of fertilisers to target other deficient elements (and soil pH) to help release the Phosphorous already banked in their soil.

WICC would like to thank DWER and DPIRD for their support and mentorship they have provided so far in the delivery of this excellent program.

(3) Lindsay Link CAP: A focus on black gloved wallaby and honey possum habitat³

This is a two year, \$100,000 State Natural Resource Management Office (SNRMO) program focusing on implementing strategies identified in the Lindsay Link Conservation Action Plan (CAP). The CAP prescribes 'nested ecological indicators' (indicators) to monitor the effectiveness of its implementation. WICC is currently focusing on the indicators of black gloved wallabies and honey possums. We are currently using camera trap photo monitoring throughout the catchment to steer our baiting efforts. The highest identified threat to these indicators is feral foxes and cats. As a result, we are currently baiting on over 10,000 Hectares of habitat across 54 private properties.



Indicative locations of Sydney Golden Wattle works in Wilson Inlet catchment for 2017/18

This

project is delivering

- 154 Hectares follow up control and 32 Hectares of primary control in Lower Catchment,
- Follow up control on 210 Hectares in Upper Catchment,

WICC and Green Skills remain committed to tackling SGW throughout the catchment. WICC has applied for the 2019 State NRM Grant to provide follow up treatment for this program.

³ This program expires in December 2018. WICC has applied to the State NRM Office to continue funding this program

(5) Nullaki Fauna Survey



Sandra Gilfillan with Nullaki Community members installing a pit traps

Moving forward, WICC will be delivering biodiversity services across the Nullaki Peninsula in order to provide a feral free habitat for our native fauna. In order to measure our success and steer future works in this area, WICC is auspicing the newly formed Nullaki Conservation Group to carry out baseline fauna surveys at sites across the Nullaki Peninsula. This will also include community spot lighting surveys to establish the presence / absence of ringtail possums. Local macropod ecologist, Sandra Gilfillan, has been contracted to carry out these works with the assistance of Nullaki community members.

(6) Annual Feral shoot

Approximately 54 landholders were engaged to dispatch 126 foxes and 17 cats and 66 rabbits. Congratulations to the Nunijup Crew who culled 31 Foxes and 13 Cats. A special thanks to Ray's Firearms in Albany for providing financial support. The annual fox shoot has become a WICC tradition.



(7) Wilson Inlet Management Strategy



The Shire of Denmark funds WICC to continue the implementation of the Wilson Inlet Management Strategy (WIMS). This year we utilised our funding to purchase seedlings to revegetate areas identified from our Wilson Inlet Foreshore Flora Surveys. These seedlings were planted by volunteers from the Wilson Inlet community. We also carried out weed works on Wilson Inlet riparian vegetation. WICC would like thank the Shire of Denmark and community members who donated their time to help protect our inlet.

(8) A Look Ahead

The year ahead will see WICC implementing four major programs:

- The Regional Landcare Program (as prescribed above), and
- The Regional Estuaries Initiative (REI)
- Wilson Inlet Catchment Sydney Golden Wattle Project: Phase 1



- National Landcare Program Smart Farms Trials (3 year phosphorus trials on 6 farms throughout catchment)
- National Landcare Program Smart Farms (Small) nutrient mapping (Greener Pastures program)

WICC has applied to the State Natural Resource Management Office (SNRMO) for a Large Capacity Grant to carry on its 1080 baiting, weed works and feral shoots. If successful, this grant would fund a WICC Biodiversity Coordinator for two years to carry out biodiversity works throughout the catchment.



Audited Financial Statement

(See Attachment 1)