

WELCOME TO THE CHAPMAN ESTUARY TIMES

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Chapman Estuary Times Newsletter. This newsletter provides the community with an update on the status of the recommended actions identified in the Chapman River Estuary Reserve Action Plan 2022-25. The newsletter will be uploaded to the City's website every second month.

What's been happening in the Estuary?

On Monday 10th of June, due to high rainfall over the weekend, the river mouth broke at the Chapman River estuary.

On the same day, the City's Environmental team undertook a Walkthrough of the Chapman River Estuary with local Yamatji Traditional Owners (TO's) and Sticks and Stones Cultural Resources Management representative.

The TO's were shown all Management Actions undertaken to date and future proposed works in heritage areas. Discussions were around ground disturbance footprints when undertaking Management Actions such as rabbit warren destruction, installation of trail signage, prickly pear removal, revegetation site preparation work, revegetation planting, recreational seat replacement and fencing realignment. The TO's were supportive of all proposed works.

The Walkthrough with local TO's was a requirement to gain necessary approvals under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 1972 to undertake ground disturbance works within known Registered Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sites.

Site preparation has been undertaken along Swan Drive in the lead up to Chapman River Friends (CRF) community planting day. Check out Upcoming Events for more information.

Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) staff, City of Greater Geraldton (CGG) staff and CRF volunteers recently visited the Estuary to discuss vegetation mapping of the local Threatened Ecological Subtropical and Temperate Saltmarsh community. NACC

are currently gathering information, and mapping, all Saltmarsh communities across the greater Northern Agricultural Region (NAR) that will contribute towards a Regional Saltmarsh Management Plan and assist in future management and conservation decisions. To find out more, visit NACC's website.

What's been happening at the Chapman River Regional Park?

Site preparation will be undertaken in the coming weeks in the lead up to rehabilitation planting in the park at Tappak, Wattle Walk and Wren Island sites.

Rehabilitation works to restore the surface along areas on Wattle Walk trail will be undertaken in July to correct the damage caused by machinery from the bushfire event last year.

Due to inconsistent messaging and the recent permanent trail closure, trail header signage will be renewed around entrances to Chapman River Regional Park.

UPCOMING EVENTS



- Join CRF for a planting day along Swan Drive at the Chapman River Estuary. Saturday 22nd June, 9am. Meet at the Swan Drive Carpark, corner of Swan Drive and Chapman Road.
- Boxthorn Blitz workshop Beachlands. Saturday 6th July, 9am to 11am. Meet at 101 Fraser Street, next to the Geraldton Christian Outreach Centre.
- Boxthorn Blitz workshop Sunset Beach. Sunday 7th July, 9am to 11am. Meet at Sea Star Cove col-de-sac.
- Boxthorn Blitz workshop Cape Burney. Saturday 20th July, 9am to 11am. Meet at Cape Burney beach carpark.
- [Plastic Free July](#) 1 to 31 July.
- [NAIDOC Week](#) 2 to 9 July.
- [National Tree Day](#) Sunday 28 July.



BREAKING RIVERS



The river mouth broke at Chapman River Estuary. Photo Chapman River Friends

FOAM FORMATIONS IN THE RIVER

Natural foam build-up in streams and rivers is more prevalent after rainfall. When it rains, more water moves through the ground, dissolving organic matter such as leaves, sticks, and tannins. This dissolved organic carbon (DOC) interacts with the moving water, forming tiny air bubbles. These bubbles create areas of lower surface tension, where foam stabilises at the surface. Turbulence from waves, currents and wind cause the surfactant molecules to trap small bubbles that make up the foam.

Foam formations can become quite large and it can appear as though someone has emptied a container of detergent into the water. Natural foam (most common) has a slightly fishy or earthy scent and usually persists downstream of a turbulent water site and is light and fluffy. Foam caused by a pollutant will have a slimy feel and smell aromatic. Even though it may appear undesirable, a certain amount of organic matter and the foam it may produce is essential for healthy rivers due to the energy, nutrient, food, habitat, refuge areas, structure and complexity it adds to a stream system (State Government of Victoria).

Please find more information here [River Detectives Fact Sheet](#).

If you suspect that someone has illegally discharged waste or pollution into our water ways please lodge a report through the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation website here [Environment Watch](#) or call the Environmental Watch hotline on 1300 784 782.



Foam in the Chapman River. Photo Chapman River Friends

DID YOU KNOW?

The river mouth, also known as the estuary's entrance, regulates the exchange of water between the ocean and the estuary. Some estuaries are permanently open to the ocean which determines the rate of water flow and volume from upstream. Other estuaries, like the Chapman River and Greenough River estuaries, open periodically to the ocean in response to high rainfall or tidal activity and are influenced by evaporation rates and river inflows.

PARK TRAIL BROCHURE

Chapman River Regional Park Trail Network brochure. Download the brochure [here](#). It is also available on the City's website.



MANAGEMENT ACTIONS UPDATE

E2 Weed Control

Recommended Action: Weed Control

Action to Date: Upcoming Boxthorn Blitz workshops. See Upcoming Events for more details.

E7 Opportunities for revegetation

Recommended Action: Opportunities for revegetation

Action to Date: Chapman River Friends are hosting a planting day along Swan Drive at the Chapman River Estuary. 300 local provenance plants grown at the Community Nursery will be planted to infill the existing vegetation.

S2 Trail Renewal & Closure

Recommended Action: Closure of southern trail between Charles Street and Chapman Road

Action to Date: With no room for a land-based trail on this stretch of the river bank the City will be installing 'Trail permanently closed' signage. During the walk through with Traditional Owners it was identified that this was an important woman's site which isn't registered on the ACHknowledge Portal and protection of the area was important. City officers have contacted the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage to identify what additional works can be undertaken to protect the site over and above the trail closure.

S3 Signage – Review signage and install/remove signage as required

Recommended Action: Develop a signage plan consistent with messaging, education and compliance.

Action to Date: The Environmental team is currently working on a collaborative signage project with Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation (YSRC) that highlights the Estuary's cultural history and importance to local Aboriginal people. This project is in the initial planning stages.

New trail header signage will be installed to reflect the permanent trail closure between Charles Street and Chapman Road.

P1 Investigate Reserve Status/creation of 'Regional Park'

Recommended Action: Apply for the Vacant Crown Land parcel (VCL) management to be vested with the City.

Action to Date: The City has initiated the application process for the vesting over the Vacant Crown Land parcel that runs south of the river near Chapman Road bridge to the river mouth. This should make it easier to undertake works in this land parcel if it is vested to the City.



Pelican at the Chapman River Estuary. Photo Chapman River Friends



Breakaway rock formations near Fairfax entrance in CRRP creating natural bird baths. Photo Chapman River Friends

ONE FINAL NOTE!

Seed is locally sourced and grown at the City's Community Nursery for the City's coastal and natural areas rehabilitation planting projects. A group of dedicated volunteers assist the City's Community Nursery officer to propagate and grow up to 20,000 seedlings each year. Meet the City's Environment and Sustainability team handing over approximately 8000 plants to local contractor, Parscape, who undertakes most of the rehabilitation planting in our high value natural areas.

