

LOWER VASSE RIVER MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP COMMUNIQUE (POST MEETING OF 13 JUNE 2022)

1.0 Introduction

The City's Lower Vasse River Management Advisory Group (LVRMAG) met on Monday 13 June 2022. A range of matters of interest to the community were addressed at the meeting, including:

- Introduction of new community member, Mr Jonathan Leach;
- An update on the Stage 1 Sediment Removal project;
- An update on Mexican water lily control; and
- Discussion regarding potential development of a 'business case' for grant funding and future pathways for broader Lower Vasse River Restoration.

Brief summaries of key points related to each of these matters are provided below.

2.0 New community member

The Group welcomed the new community member, Mr Jonathan Leach. Jonathan lives in Busselton with his family and has had a long interest in water and waterways matters. Jonathan has also been involved in golf course management in both the UK and Australia, and is a past superintendent of the Busselton Golf Club. That experience required him to develop a knowledge of water quality management, especially as the Busselton Golf Club makes use of treated wastewater from the Busselton Wastewater Treatment Plant, as part of its overall water supply strategy.

3.0 Stage1 sediment removal

An update was provided to the Group on completion of the first stage of sediment removal in the Lower Vasse River. Approximately 600 tonnes of sediments were removed over the course of 7 weeks. The area dredged spanned from the Causeway Road Bridge to upstream from the pedestrian bridge, on Peel Terrace.

Outcomes from the water quality monitoring program and an outline of some of the challenges encountered during the works were presented to the Group.

The sediments will continue to dewater for an additional 6-8 weeks. After which they will be tested for the presence of acid sulphate soil, treated if required and transported off site for reuse.

The Group supported for Stage 2 of sediment removal to go ahead in 2022/23 upstream from the Causeway Road Bridge. The City confirmed a funding application to State NRM Community Stewardship Program had been submitted to undertake a 3rd stage of sediment removal upstream from the Strelly Street Bridge.

3.0 Mexican water lily control

Mexican water lily were sprayed in various locations in the river as per recommendations from the Lower Vasse River Waterway Management Plan. The objectives of the annual control program are to

gradually reclaim open waters between lily patches, targeting important bird habitats and to prevent invasion of new areas.

5.0 Future pathways for broader Lower Vasse River Restoration.

The Group discussed future pathways for broader Lower Vasse Restoration which may include one or more the following initiatives –

- Sediment removal beyond the three stages already committed to;
- Construction of one or more treatment wetlands;
- Large-scale application of a phosphorus binding clay; or
- Other potential water quality improvement treatments.

Key challenges associated with determining and then implementing a preferred pathway include –

- Uncertainties around what strategies, or combination of strategies, will be most effective;
- Identifying and then obtaining environmental approvals for some potential strategies; and
- Securing sufficient funding, both capital and operational.

The Group committed to a longer workshop session on this topic at its next meeting. It is envisaged that there will be some broader community and stakeholder engagement later in the year, prior to the Council being asked to consider the preferred future pathway.

6.0 Access to further information

Group members and members of the public can also find information relating to the River and its management on the City and Revitalising Geographe Waterways websites, via the following links –

- Wetlands and Waterways » City of Busselton
- Lower Vasse River - RGW (dwer.wa.gov.au)

These links may also be useful -

- Sediment removal FAQs available at [lower-vasse-river-sediment-removal-faqs \(busselton.wa.gov.au\)](http://busselton.wa.gov.au/lower-vasse-river-sediment-removal-faqs)
- LVR FAQs available at [FAQs - Lower Vasses River - RGW \(dwer.wa.gov.au\)](http://dwer.wa.gov.au/faqs-lower-vasses-river-rgw)

Members of the community can also contact the City if they have questions about the management of the River.