PEEL INLET MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

3rd meeting held on Friday, 15th September 2004
at the Tuckey Room, City of Mandurah

The meeting commenced at 9:05am.

ATTENDANCE:

Bob Pond Chairman
Martin Baird Department for Planning and Infrastructure (Maritime)
Morris Bessant Community
Cameron Bulstrode Department for Planning and Infrastructure (Planning)
Heidi Greif Department of Fisheries
John Hughes Community
Brian Joynes City of Mandurah
Bruce Tatham Community
Christine Towes Community
Kim Wilson Community

APOLOGIES:

Phil Curren Community
Marilyn Gray Community
Murray Love Department of Conservation and Land Management
Dorothy Lucks Community
Christine Steer Peel Development Commission
Chris Thompson Shire of Murray

EXECUTIVE SUPPORT:

Debbie Colquhoun Minute Secretary, Department of Environment
John Pszczola Department of Environment

1. WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Mr Pond advised that he would be the Chairman for this meeting. He declared the meeting open and announced the apologies. He advised that Ms Steer had tendered her apologies as she was no longer working for the Peel Development Commission. The Peel Development Commission will advise her replacement on the Committee in due course.
2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Resolved:
That the minutes of the second meeting held on 21 July 2004 be confirmed as a true record of proceedings.

Moved: M Bessant
Seconded: B Tatham

3. BUSINESS ARISING

(a) Action Item No. 5 – Alleged Moratorium on Canal Developments in the City of Mandurah

The Chairman reported that there is no moratorium on canal developments in the City of Mandurah. In 1997 the Council agreed to defer decisions on proposed canal developments until such time as the proposed management arrangements had been clarified. Artificial waterways are now the responsibility of the relevant local government authorities.

(b) Action Item No. 2 - Chairman

The Chairman reported that the Board of the Water and Rivers Commission resolved to adopt the Partnership Agreement, recognised the Council as a sub-committee of the Board, and Chair appointment. The Minister for the Environment will be notified of the preferred Chair prior to appointment.

(c) Item No. 9 Acid Sulfate Soils and Dredging Issues in the Peel Harvey System

Ms Greif reported that the Departments of Fisheries and Agriculture will be developing a test to isolate the fungus which affects fish from acid sulfate run-off.

(d) Item 6 – Peel Regional Park Community Consultative Committee

Mr Bulstrode reported that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure was seeking further information and therefore the position of Chairman of this Committee had not yet been resolved.

(e) Action Item No. 7 – 5 Knot Vessel Speed Limit

Mr Baird reported that the 5 knot speed limit for motor vessels on the Murray and Serpentine Rivers has been gazetted with no time limit (Government Gazette 31 January 2003 page 291 Ref TR402).
(f) **Item 13 – Acid Sulfate Soils**

The Chairman was unable to provide information on the five canal developments in the area which had received planning permission.

3. **WILGIE CREEK RESTORATION GROUP – PROGRESS REPORT**

The Chairman reported that the Group is continuing to meet to formulate action plans for improvements in the health of the creek. The Shire of Murray is investigating urban stormwater drainage which enters the creek. The Department of Environment will be preparing an operating strategy for pumping water from the Murray River into the creek over the summer months and to monitor water quality during this time.

He also reported that the Department of Environment has commenced negotiations with the land owner to resume approximately 7 ½ hectares of land along the creek.

4. **REVIEW OF PEEL REGION BOATING FACILITIES STUDY 2003**

Mr Baird advised that the community consultation phase, which is to be run concurrently with the community consultations for the Peel Regional Park, has been delayed pending the appointment of the Chairman of the Peel Regional Park Community Consultative Committee.

He further advised that the Department for Planning and Infrastructure (Maritime) have been investigating the installation of universal access facilities at boat ramps around Australia and their possible use in Western Australia.

A discussion ensued on boat access at Island Point and Birchmont.

5. **CURRENT DREDGING AND DISPOSAL LICENCES**

(a) **Mary Street Lagoon Entrance Channel – Dredging Licence**

The dredging operation will take 3 weeks.

(b) **Mandurah Ocean Marina – removal of bund/final bed level – Dredging Licence**

The work is to commenced on 20 September 2004.

(c) **Mariner’s Cove Stage 4CA and 5CA – Dredging Licence**

The licence is current until December 2004.

(e) **Murray and Serpentine Rivers Entrance Channel – Dredging Licence**

The proponent has requested an extension to the dredging licence as the work has been delayed due to inclement weather.
Mr Tatham mentioned the need to dredge upstream from Ballee Island in future dredging operations in this area.

(e) **Cox Bay Stage 8 Retaining Wall – Disposal Licence**
The work has been completed. The next stage is to remove the bund.

(f) **City of Mandurah War Memorial – Reclamation Licence**
Conceptual plans have been received but no detailed engineering specifications.

Members expressed their opposition to the proposal to extend a portion of the War Memorial into the Estuary. This matter was delayed until after the morning break to allow members to view the model of the proposed War Memorial.

(f) **Hire and Drive Operation Approval**
Approval has been given to operate a paddle boat hire business on the western foreshore and a jet ski hire operation on the Harvey Estuary.

Discussions ensued on the jet ski hire operation on the Harvey Estuary.

6. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

The Chairman reported on the progress of the Committee in prioritising the strategies in the plan, preparing business planning templates and seeking funding opportunities for carrying out the strategies.

A couple of project proposals are currently being developed:
1. major foreshore revegetation and restoration activities
2. planning for the area between the Peel Deviation and the Estuary

The Peel Development Commission is investigating funding opportunities for supporting the State Algal Strategy and promoting Mandurah as the regional centre.

The Chairman advised that the next stage is to prepare a feasibility study for the proposed Peel Waterways Institute.

The meeting adjourned at this point.

5(f) **City of Mandurah War Memorial – Reclamation Licence (continued)**

Mr Bulstrode advised that as waterways are considered to be reservations under the Peel Region Scheme and as most of the foreshore areas around the Peel Harvey are Regional Open Space, the proposed War Memorial will require planning approval by the Western Australian Planning Commission.
Strategic long term planning for the Regional Open Space needs to be progressed as a matter of urgency as part of the Peel Region Park Plan process. Members expressed disappointment at the delay in setting up the Community Consultative Committee. Mr Bulstrode agreed to inform the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure of the Council’s disappointment which has also led to the delay in progressing the Review of the Peel Region Boating Facilities Study.

Members expressed concern at the lack of public access around the foreshore and incremental development without any approved plan for the whole of the central foreshore areas should the intrusion into the Estuary proceed. A discussion ensued on whether the Council should resolve disputes with the Department of Environment through the Minister for the Environment or the Board of the Water and Rivers Commission.

Moved: J Hughes
The Peel Inlet Management Council writes to the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure expressing their disappointment that, while not opposing the War Memorial or its location, the Department for Environment has approved the intrusion of part of the structure into the Mandurah Channel and the restriction of public assess to the foreshore. The Council is also disappointed that the proposal was not put before the Council for their opinion prior to the Department making a decision.
Withdrawn
It was agreed that Bob Pond, Bruce Tatham and Morris Bessant meet to review the Partnership Agreement and the dispute mechanisms and report back to the Council.

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<td>1. Inform the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure of the Council’s concern at the delay in appointing a Chairman to the Peel Regional Park Community Consultative Committee. <em>(Mr Bulstrode)</em></td>
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<td>2. Partnership Agreement be reviewed, particularly the dispute mechanisms. <em>(Bob Pond)</em></td>
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7. LONG TERM MANAGEMENT OF PEEL HARVEY CRAB AND FISH STOCKS

The Chairman introduced Ms Linda Bellchambers and Mr Kim Smith from the Department of Fisheries and invited them to address the meeting.

Ms Bellchambers gave a briefing on the biology and life history of the blue swimmer crab.

She reported that the commercial fishery has moved to pots. Commercial landings in Australia amounted to approximately 2,000 tonnes in 2002/03, with Western Australia accounting for approximately 890 tonnes.
Commercial landings in the Peel Harvey amounted to approximately 70 tonnes, with the recreational sector catching approximately 270 tonnes. Of the recreational catchers, it was noted that 36% live in the Mandurah area and 57% from the Perth area. Population in the Peel Harvey is growing at approximately 4.6% per annum.

Issues to be considered for sustainability of the stocks include:
- Destruction of habitat and nursery areas, particularly seagrass
- Increased chemical and sediment loads in the water (i.e., algal blooms, eutrophication)
- Altered environmental flows
- Introduced species and diseases

The following research is proposed:
- Recreational survey along the west coast in March 2005 (Peel Harvey will be included)
- Logbooks to monitor fish health in rivers and estuaries
- Impact of acid sulfate soil runoff on fish health

Ms Bellchambers advised that, although the volume of crab stocks are affected by climatic and environmental conditions, stocks have not diminished rather the number of recreational fishers taking the crabs has increased.

The Chairman thanked Ms Bellchambers for her presentation. Members were asked to forward any questions on this matter to either Mr Pond or Mr Pszczola who will pass them on to Ms Bellchambers for a response.

8. **ACID SULFATE SOILS WORKSHOP – 1-3 SEPTEMBER 2004**

The Chairman reported on the recent Workshop held in Mandurah. He urged members to be wary when reading newspaper articles linking red spot disease in fish being attributed to acid sulfate soil runoff as there has been no proven local link at this stage.

*Resolved:*
*Provide letter of support to the Department of Fisheries for research into the effects of acid sulfate soil runoff on fish health.*

*Moved: B Tatham*
*Seconded: M Bessant*

9. **DRAFT PIMC FERRY BOAT OPERATION POLICY**

This matter was deferred to the next meeting.

*Action:*
3. Deferred to November 2004 meeting. (*Mr Pszczola*)
10. MURRAY RIVER WORKING GROUP

The Chairman reported on recent foreshore planting and rehabilitation work in the Region, including Furnissdale and Ravenswood Sanctuary.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Herron Foreshore

This matter was deferred to the next meeting.

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<td>4. Deferred to November 2004 meeting. (Mr Pszczola)</td>
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(b) Lot 2 Estuary Road, Bouvard – Illegal Retaining Wall

The Chairman reported that the Minister for the Environment has rejected the second appeal against the Department’s request for the illegal retaining wall on the foreshore at Lot 2 Estuary Road, Bouvard to be removed. The wall is to be removed by the end of October 2004.

(c) Peel Region Recreational Fishery Advisory Committee Report

Discussion ensued on the recent media articles on the Committee’s report on crab and fish stocks in the Region. A copy of the report to be obtained for each member.

Cr Joynes will provide a copy of the City of Mandurah’s comment on the Report for members’ information.

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<td>5. A copy of the report be obtained for each member. (Mr Pszczola)</td>
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<td>6. City of Mandurah’s comment on the report be provided for members’ information. (Cr Joynes)</td>
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(d) Reef Ball Project

Mr Baird reported on the Department for Planning and Infrastructure’s meeting with the proponent to discuss the reef ball project and the need to set up a lease of the seabed and responsibility for the long term management of the project.
17. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSE

The meeting closed at 11.40am. The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 17 November 2004.**

Chairman