

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 275
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)
Topic: Tamar River forestry practices
Hansard Page: 11
Question Date: 04 March 2016
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:

Senator WHISH-WILSON: How many progress reports have you had to date?

Mr Costello: In general—and I will have to confirm this—there are two per year. There would have been two reports in 2014-15 and probably one report so far in 2015-16, but I will confirm that.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Are they publicly available?

Mr Costello: Not in the form that we receive them, but we can make information available. The proponent may well have information that they make available.

Answer:

The Launceston City Council has submitted a mid-year progress report and an end-of-year progress report for the 2014–15 financial year, and a financial report for the 2014–15 financial year. Submission of a mid-year progress report for the 2015-16 financial year is pending.

Launceston City Council has published three editions of the Tamar River Recovery Plan Newsletter that provides updates on the initiative's achievements. The most recent edition was published in January 2016.

Trial Water Release a Huge Success!

In August 2015, the Tasmanian Government, Launceston Flood Authority and Hydro Tasmania announced a trial to assess the effectiveness of a controlled release of water from the Trevallyn Dam, co-ordinated with silt raking operations, on the removal of silt from the Tamar estuary.

Hydro released a continuous 25 cubic metres per second during the three-day trial which was undertaken in late August to coincide with the strongest tide events. During the release, the Launceston Flood Authority co-ordinated silt raking operations.

Bathymetric surveys were done before and after the water release and the results were astonishing, with a productivity increase during the higher flows of nearly 1,000% per shift of raking, strongly confirming the relationship between river flows and sediment removal.

The August 2015 trial has proven that a robust flow of water is necessary for successful raking operations and the Launceston Flood Authority continues to make the case with the State Government and Hydro Tasmania for periodic water releases during dry years.



Clean Rivers Dairy Grants Update

A total of 19 farms were funded during Round 1 of the IntoDairy Clean Rivers project. Total expenditure to date is \$45,000 with in-kind contributions of \$189,000. To date, 9 of these projects have been completed and the remaining 10 are all on track for completion by the end of March 2016.

NRM North extended the contract with Dairy Tasmania in October 2015 to deliver a second round of 'Clean Rivers' small farm dairy grants in the TEER region. A total investment of \$56,833 will provide an additional 10 grants in Round 2, 8 of which have already been awarded.

Work Progresses on Launceston's Combined Drainage System Strategy

Andrew Truscott, TasWater's Project Director, advises that TasWater engaged Beca, a multi-national consultancy firm with significant experience in working on combined systems around the world. Beca's project proposal demonstrated a strong understanding of the requirements of a successful long term strategy for the combined system and allowed for a high level of stakeholder engagement and education. Stakeholder engagement was

undertaken and involved four key drivers:

- Responsibility to the community
- Public health
- River health
- Public perception

An in-depth technical analysis of the existing combined system and a preliminary options report was developed and provided in late December 2015. Twelve options were assessed, with four being identified as best addressing the multi-criteria analysis drivers.

TasWater are expecting delivery of Beca's draft final report, for stakeholder comment, in late February 2016.



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TAMAR RIVER RECOVERY PLAN NEWSLETTER

CITY OF LAUNCESTON / LAUNCESTON FLOOD AUTHORITY

Issue 3—January 2016

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GRANT RECIPIENTS FOR RIVERBANK STABILISATION ACTIVITIES ANNOUNCED

On 18 November 2015, Federal Member for Bass, Andrew Nikolic, announced the 13 recipients of the 2015 Riverbank Erosion Grants.

Riverbank Erosion Grant funding to the total value of \$200,165 will go towards a range of activities including riverbank stabilisation works, revegetating eroding riverbanks, weed removal and fencing out stock from waterways. In addition to the grant funding, the program attracted in-kind contributions of \$186,389 from landholders.

Key activities to stabilise riverbank erosion and improve parts of the Tamar Estuary and Esk River catchments are well underway and expected to be completed by October 2016.

NRM North's TEER Program Coordinator, Amanda Locatelli, said: *"Riverbank erosion has the potential to generate high loads of sediment in waterways, particularly during floods. This funding will assist applicants in stabilising eroding riverbanks and lead to an improvement in water quality in the Tamar River estuary."*

(Before and after photos of one of the Riverbank Stabilisation projects)



"It is pleasing to see the \$3 million in funding that I secured during the 2013 Federal Election for the Tamar River Recovery Plan providing real and practical environmental outcomes."

Andrew Nikolic AM CSC MP
Federal Member for Bass

