

ANNUAL REPORT – PEEL PRESERVATION GROUP INC – 2012

AGM Abbreviated Report 2012

Peel Preservation Group is pleased to take this opportunity to review the activities of the past year, working to protect the precious natural environment of the Peel Region. This year has seen the committee gain new members – Jill, Peter, Linda, Mary with Farid, Nooshin and Gary joining a few months later, at the same time losing Caroline from that role, because of her City Council commitments, but she still remains an active member.

Our members continue to be involved in submission writing, attending seminars and information sessions as well as a variety of 'hands on activities'.

A submission written early in the year was on the Draft Terms of Reference Strategic Environmental Assessment Perth-Peel which looks at a proposal to designate certain areas as acceptable for development and setting aside Natural Areas of Environmental Significance. We see the difficulties in the proposal and are awaiting the publication of the Terms of Reference so we can further comment.

Forrest Highway Offsets came up for comment – we accept the areas set aside as offsets but did comment that the area adjacent to Yalgorup National Park should be included in the park.

Peel Region Draft Boating Facilities Policy came up for comment and whilst it mainly concerned the building of jetties we took the opportunity to remind that the protection of waterways from overuse needs to be considered.

Proposed development at Keralup has been a longstanding subject for us, so we opposed the WA Planning proposal to rezone part of the area, seeing it as the first step towards an unsuitable development. Later in the year several of us travelled to Perth to put our reasons (unsuccessfully as it turned out) to a panel at the WAPC office. The worry is the effects of development on the Serpentine River and nearby wetlands.

In an attempt to save some of the trees at Mandurah Quays from a development threat PPG submitted Significant Tree Register application to City of Mandurah for several groups of worth trees. At present the application is in limbo as it appears the development threat has been forestalled.

The Wind Farm at Lake Clifton turned out to be a non-event. Having researched the subject and attended a presentation by the Proponent we discovered the very next day that the proposal had been withdrawn.

The Proposal to rezone an increased area for North Dandalup townsite was reasonable, however our comment called for a greater buffer around some dampland areas.

Wetlands and proximity to the River are also seen as major concerns involved in the Nambeelup Industrial Estate proposal which includes a deep drainage system which may put the watertable in surrounding farming areas at risk.

Our most recent submission this year was for the Draft forest Management Plan 2014 – 2023 included comment about retaining public ability to nominate Old Growth areas for retention, retention of forest areas around roads, clearfelling, regeneration and mining options, among other subjects. Our final comment was 'Environmental policy, plans, requirements and performance should not be considered on the level of financial cost alone – the environment has enormous intrinsic value which needs safeguarding by a concerted effort from all agencies involved.'

PPG has been heavily involved in comments and campaigns to fight the Proposed Point Grey Channel and Marina Proposal. Over 300 people attended a protest meeting on the subject. We nervously await the Federal Environment Minister's decision after the WA Minister gave his approval and was heard to say 'it is only a little project in a big estuary – it won't do much damage'. A very disappointing attitude.

The PPG screening of the 'anti-plastic bag' movie 'Bag-it' was followed up by a similarly well received showing by the City of Mandurah. We are determined to reduce the use of plastics, especially those so easily discarded, which led us to look at a plastic drink bottle ban for our city. To this end some of our members are conducting an inventory and condition report on drinking fountains in Mandurah. If you can think of an area where one is needed – let us know.

Since PPG members take part in a series of Water Testing and recording (as part of Water Dept records) we have researched and applied for a Lotterywest Grant for a Multi-Parameter Water testing meter which will do all the tests, except Phosphates, in one unit. Certainly this will be simpler and give consistently accurate results. Peel Harvey Catchment Council staff members have offered to assist us with setting up a set of procedures to follow and help with training.

One of our less agreeable actions recently arose from following up a community members report of excessive clearing at the Mandurah Junction Project and our subsequent report to Federal Compliance section. Hon. Dr Sally Talbot even asked questions in Parliament only to be told the 'Proponent was responsible for Compliance'. We are still wondering how that works! It is shattering to see the almost total clearing of understory, especially from the adjacent Reserve which is not part of the Development.

We also supported Lakelands Landlink (two of our members are in that group) in their conducting a very well attended walk round Black Swan Lake with indigenous leader George Walley. The plan is to encourage folk in the Lakelands area to appreciate the beauty of nature on their doorstep. Anyone can go out there and enjoy a walk round Black Swan Lake on a safe path.

We joined with Lake Mealup Preservation Society in celebrations at the opening of the weir, designed to retain more water in the lake and in the lunch and 'walk over' that followed. It was a lovely day with Nooshin making the most of her camera capturing the wide selection of wildflowers.

Throughout the year we have kept up production of our quarterly newsletter, The Preservation Times, thanks to the Grant from city of Mandurah. Thanks, to go to our Editor Coral Richards and those who presented articles for publication. Articles, drawings, poems or Letters to the Editor are welcome from everyone, so if you feel you have something to share – 'let us have it'!!!

Our members are heavily involved in many environmental areas and groups in the region - assisted with Planting Days at Lake Clifton and at National Tree Day, been trained in and contributed to the annual 'Bird Count'. Three members are on the Mandurah Environment Advisory Group (MEAG), one is also a member of Friends of Rivers PEEL, two are Friends of Tindale Reserve, four are Friends of Marlee Reserve and two are Friends of Serpentine River.

We would like to acknowledge and thank David Templeman for a very generous donation from last year's Charity Concert and we again eagerly look forward to attending the Boil Family's coming event (a group booking has been made).