

Healthy Waterways Project – GeoCatch Rivers

Aim/Purpose:

Project Objectives for the Geographe Catchment

- Improve water quality in the waterways and receiving estuarine and marine environments of the Geographe Catchment.
- Improve the ecological health of waterways throughout the Catchment by implementing best practice river restoration techniques with landholders and the community.
- Protect the marine water quality for public and environmental benefit.
- Protect and enhance the biodiversity of waterways in the catchment.
- Build landholder and community capacity to better manage waterways.

Nation Heritage Trust /National Action Plan Objectives

- Improve water quality and secure reliable allocations for human uses, industry and the environment.
- Biodiversity Conservation.
- Sustainable Use of Natural Resources.
- Protection of high value public assets including water resources and biodiversity, including through recovery of natural diversity catchments and other target landscapes of high nature conservation value.
- Community Capacity Building and Institutional Change.
- Enhancing knowledge, skills and abilities including technical support and training.

Start Date:

01/01/2009

Finish Date:

30/06/2009

Project Partners:

Cape to Cape Catchments Group and GeoCatch Inc

Project Stakeholders:

- Landholders along watercourses in the Geographe Catchment an in Toby Inlet and the Vasse -Wonnerup Estuary.
- The Shires of Busselton, Augusta-Margaret River, Capel and Donnybrook - Balingup
- Cape to Cape Catchments Group
- Department of Water
- South West Catchments Council
- Geographe Catchment Council
- The Geographe Community Landcare Nursery
- Murdoch University
- The Department of Environment and Conservation

Background:

As the waterways of the Geographe Catchment are amongst the most nutrient polluted in the state, there is a great need for the implementation of this project. The Geographe and Capes Catchments are also considered to be a national biodiversity hotspot (Augusta to Busselton) and therefore are a priority for protection and conservation.

The environmental issues within the catchment include clearing and degradation of native vegetation, weed invasion, erosion, sedimentation and water quality issues such as eutrophication, salinisation, and increased turbidity.

The Healthy Waterways & Estuaries Project aims to address these issues through on ground works such as fencing and revegetation of riparian areas as well as community education and awareness raising.

Main Achievements: (to date)

GeoCatch have been working on the Buayanyup River Action Plan since June 2008. This report will be published this quarter and is the thirteenth in a series of River Action Plans GeoCatch have produced.

During the development of the plan, GeoCatch worked with Murdoch University on a Freshwater Fish and Crayfish survey and were delighted to discover the presence of native fish and crayfish as well as the restricted Black-stripe Minnow. Interestingly this species was found only in areas of dense, healthy riparian vegetation highlighting the important role riparian vegetation plays in biodiversity conservation.

The focus for the next 6 months is on engaging new landholders and continuing support for existing projects. Busselton's Green Corps team will be utilised for some erosion control work and a direct seedling trial will be conducted.

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