

Seeking sediment solutions

Perth, Western Australia



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The Sediment Task Force works with builders and residents to reduce sediment run-off and protect our iconic rivers, wetlands, waterways and oceans.

Why control sediment?

Sediment washes into and blocks stormwater drains, resulting in flooding of roads and neighbouring homes.

- Sediment washed into waterways smothers reeds, aquatic plants and seagrasses that keep our rivers, wetlands and ocean healthy.
- Sediment contaminates marine life and can cause the death of fish, prawn and crab species.
- Sediment prevents effective functioning of bio-filters, pervious paving, infiltration cells and tree pits that are critical to protecting our waterways.

The benefits

- Maintain the health of our rivers, wetlands, waterways and oceans.
- Protect our local parks, where storm water is often processed.
- Reduce the cost of stormwater management to government and community.

With population growth and increasing levels of infill development, environmental managers and planners need better data on the sources and pathways of sediment release into Perth's stormwater networks, waterways and wetlands.

Taskforce grows participation and technical expertise

Facilitated by Perth NRM, the Sediment Task Force represents a collaborative approach to managing the issue of Sediment.

Recent new members the Department of Environment Regulation, the City of Subiaco and the City of Nedlands, continue to add to the skills and expertise of the Sediment Task Force.

This multi-partisan group also includes representation from:

- Leading industry groups: Housing Industry Association, Master Builders Association, Urban Development Industry of Australia WA
- Government Environment Managers and enforcement agencies: Departments Parks and Wildlife and Water, Main Roads WA, Water Corporation
- Representatives of local councils: WA Local Government Authority and the Cities of Armadale and Gosnells
- Community environmental groups: Perth NRM, South East Regional Centre of Urban Landcare

Progress and achievements

Since its inception the task force has been pleased to see positive action such as:

- An improvement in the Main Roads rapid response process for contract work and the project management process which now includes a check of structures after rainfall events, as well as an improvement in project audit processes when closing projects.
- The inclusion of sediment management in the Smart Waste program.
- Review of the Water Corporation's rapid response processes and the development of the 'Erosion and Sediment Control at Construction Sites Guideline'.
- A review of the subdivision sediment and erosion plan of the Urban Development Institute of Australia.

Research into sediment run-off

The Sediment Task Force discovered a lack of research on the issue of sediment control and will now help to carry out a study to evaluate and quantify sediment arising from urban development across Gosnells, Armadale and Kwinana. It will provide insights into the discharge of sediment as water-borne particulates.

This study will be undertaken in conjunction with Professor Carolyn Oldham at the University of Western Australia and as part of the Australian Governments' Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities (Perth).

The findings will inform decision making to manage sediment impact on water quality and drainage infrastructure, and help meet environmental standards on construction sites.

The Cities of Armadale, Gosnells and Kwinana, the Department of Parks and Wildlife, Main Roads Western Australia, the South East Regional Centre of Urban Landcare, the Water Corporation and the West Australian Local Government Association have contributed financial and in-kind support valued at \$93,500 towards this two-year project. The Department of Water and Perth NRM have provided in-kind support to the value of \$1,500 to help ensure the success of this study.



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