

Note: Outdoors WA has made this anonymous submission available so that others can see a range of issues identified from the recent Outdoors Forum and the materials presented. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of Outdoors WA. We are thankful for those within the WA Outdoors Sector that have utilised their time and expertise in responding to these key issues.

## **Private response**

**Draft Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million**  
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I hereby tender the following commentary on the **Draft Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million** (DPPGP) along with additional comments references to identified extracts from various documents, from a perspective of and a focus on **Recreation/Outdoor Recreation** as part of my personal submission on the DPPGP.

### **The Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan (PPGGP) for 3.5 million in 2050 – Contexts for this Submission**

#### **The Known**

There has been a continuing and unbroken connection of the Whadjuk (and Noongar) people, one of the world's oldest cultures, to the Perth-Peel riverscape for more than 60,000 years or 2000 generations. Against that approximately 190 years or 8 generations of European settlement\* – this becomes approximately 225 or about ten generations in 2050 (\*about 0.5 of 1% of the total inhabited history for these two significant historical and cultural regions in Western Australia).

#### **The Unknowns in the PPGGP**

- insufficient detail shown in Sub-regional Plans;
- areas for recreation/outdoor recreation excluded based on perceived constraints, not previously discussed with community nor verified by any assessment of actual recreational value and significance to the health and wellbeing of the regions' potential population in 2050;
- no background analysis of social indicators for the regions given now nor projected to 2050;
- no priority for recreation/outdoor recreation for acquisition into the Conservation Estate; and
- reasons not given as to why no cross referencing of projected 2050 recreational needs and 'conservation' of land for recreational purposes.

#### **Submissions and Articulated References to Three Key or Ancillary Documents to the PPGGP**

'MR' [marli riverpark](#) Final Report Interpretation Plan for Swan and Canning Riverpark 2014

"IH' [Indigenous History of the Swan and Canning Rivers 2010](#)

## **'PRIB' [Peel Regional Investment Blueprint](#) for 2050**

### **My Submission One**

The PPGGP has 'broad-sided' the recreational issues, 'and driven off' – tried to fit a state and federal environmental approval regime and acquisitions/constraints in staged plan(s) rather than looking at projected population needs and mass activities leading to health and wellbeing outcomes using the natural landscape for the 3.5 million - first. (NB Having said that – with the PPGGP having no background analysis of social indicators for the regions given now, nor projected to 2050, makes it difficult to comment responsibly in 2016).

### **My Submission Two**

**Other studies give better guides to what might be in 2050 – examples follow from the PRIB.**

(At page 12 PRIB) A range of sport and leisure plans are developed and implemented that encourage participation and promote our natural assets,' plus 'a diverse range of 'active ageing' plans (recreation?) are developed and implemented across the Peel.'

(At page 13 PRIB) 'SHOWCASING ANYTIME ADVENTURES AND NATURE BASED TOURISM

The Peel's natural and developed attractions have created long-term demand for tourism activities that recognise the region's proximity to the Perth metropolitan region and transport corridors linking the localities and features of the Peel. Supporting the enhancement of the Peel as a destination will be a corridor of natural and built attractions creating an epicentre for walk trails, mountain bike trails, horse riding trails and adventure centres with a range of accommodation options befitting the visitor's needs and budget. Central hubs will be created providing high quality public amenities, information points and signage, camping facilities plus gathering and socialisation points. For visitors to the Peel, their experiences will range from adventurous, relaxing, stimulating but most of all—satisfying—so they will return on a regular basis.'

(At page 10 PRIB) – Objective 'create a network of diverse adventures which attracts visitors (and services locals) and extends their stay.'

### **Aboriginal Perspectives and the PPGGP**

(At page 4 of IH) The Swan and Canning Rivers and their immediate surroundings can be considered the most important landscape features of the Perth Metropolitan Region. The river holds 'icon' status and has become a focus for the quality of the perceived environment in the metropolitan region. Retaining the natural and cultural elements makes the Swan and Canning Rivers unique and defines its regional identity. The importance of a site reflects not just a physical link to the land, but also a spiritual or emotional link.

### **Riverparks and River Health – An Integral Part of the PPGGP**

(At page 11 MR) A staged implementation strategy and budget estimates would guide the practical realisation of conservation and interpretation of the Riverpark.

(At page 15 MR) The Rivers provide the opportunity for the development of greater understanding between people through the challenges of their conservation and rehabilitation as both a physical resource and a spiritual place.

(At page 77 MR) In terms of community involvement for change, the history of the Swan and Canning Rivers has been one of the harnessing of emotions. It has been the community that has since European settlement been active in “protecting” the River. The state of the River was the focus of community attention and community action from early in the twentieth century.

(At page 21 MR) The concept of marli brings with it altitude, higher vision, a ‘whole of river’ perspective, while providing an enduring link between the past and the present. *marli Riverpark* respects the past and present, transcends its confluence and its physical boundaries to reach across to Wadjemup/Rottneest Island. *Marli Riverpark* brings a capacity to consider many perspectives at the one time.

(At page 17MR) River (‘and Giver’) of Life. As an overarching theme, the River of Life considers the conservation of heritage places as part of environmental, social and community wellbeing. This notion of wellbeing is manifested in the physical environment through the actual health of the river, through preservation and conservation and the avoidance of chemical spills, sewerage release, nutrient loaded run off, fish kills and the like. For Aboriginal people the wellbeing of the river and the appropriate treatment of significant places have connotations for physical and psychological health. For the wider community, opportunities for connections with nature, *recreation* and preservation of community heritage have an impact on the quality of life and identity of society as a whole. This overarching theme is central to the concept of healthy sustainable communities.

### **My Submission Three**

**The condition and health of the river systems – Swan, Canning, and Murray etc – is an equal to land acquisition and approvals in priorities under the PPGGP – being interconnected to cultural identity for Noongar people future water and recreational needs of all of the projected 3.5 million.**

### **Riverparks and Sustainability – Genuine Green Healthy Growth**

(At page 17 PPGGP) This overarching theme draws together notions of caring and respect for the land and rivers, responsibility for the environment and the role of those who are connected with the continuing sustainability.

(At page 11MR) Improving and managing the long term health of the Peel-Harvey and Swan Canning catchments and wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) is critical to meeting the conservation objectives for MNES and State environmental values. A substantial package of measures to improve water quality and protect wetlands within the Perth and Peel regions forms a critical part of the Conservation Program and will be ongoing over the life of the Strategic Conservation Plan.

The Swan and Canning Rivers (and the Murray River etc in the Peel Region) and their immediate surroundings can be considered the most important landscape features of the Perth Metropolitan Region. The river holds ‘icon’ status and has become a focus for the quality of the perceived environment in the metropolitan region. Retaining the natural and cultural elements makes the Swan and Canning Rivers unique and defines its regional identity. The importance of a site reflects not just a physical link to the land, but also a spiritual or emotional link.

(At page 39 MR) Potential future audiences (3.5 million and more) for interpretive experiences in the riverscape are residents of the Perth and surrounding area plus intrastate, interstate and international visitors to the Experience Perth region. Some in this

local population are actively and frequently engaged in formal activities in the riverscape through recreational pursuits, citizen science, environment and conservation and built heritage conservation activities. Others engage on a less frequent basis in social activities with family and friends such as foreshore picnics and community events.

(At page 111MR) Nature Neurons and the Power of Water Marine biologist Wallace J. Nichols in his 'Blue Mind' initiative demonstrates how cutting edge neuroscience and personal stories can encourage protection of oceans. Nichols' documents the positive effects of water on health and wellbeing. What is emerging is a new branch of neuroscience that shows that proximity to water can reduce stress, diminish anxiety and lead to improved performance and professional success. This in turn can lead to understanding and more positive practices:

*An appreciation of the vast cognitive benefits and services provided by healthy ecosystems may help advance more sustainable policies and practices. New research suggests that time spent with nature, in particular near water, significantly reduces stress, accelerates healing, boosts feelings of wellbeing, enhances creativity, improves cognitive function, increases attention and focus, and may help build new neurons – 'nature neurons'.*

#### **My Submission Four**

**Culture and the protection of established/to be established Heritage go hand in hand with Approvals, Acquisitions and Constraints. Every approval or land or conservation area acquisition must be implemented at the conclusion of full consideration of cognitive, conservation and cultural benefits that it might bring in a projection for all ages and abilities of 3.5 million people in 2050.**

19 April 2016