

# Media Release

Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017

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## LAKE TREVALLYN BLUE GREEN ALGAL MONITORING UNDERWAY

NRM North's Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program has started its annual monitoring for blue green algae *Anabaena circinalis* at Lake Trevallyn.

TEER Program staff have set up water quality sensors in Lake Trevallyn which are able to determine the ideal environmental conditions for blue green algae to multiply.

Weekly water samples will also be taken at the Trevallyn boat ramp and at Blackstone Park to determine the presence of blue green algae.

The summer monitoring program has been running since 2007 when blue green algae was first detected in bloom proportions at Lake Trevallyn.

The TEER Program Scientific and Technical Coordinator, Dr Toni Furlonge, said the monitoring was an important element in providing early warning to recreational water users.

"It is important recreational water users are kept informed on the status of algal blooms in Lake Trevallyn as direct contact with the algae can cause skin rashes, eye irritation, earaches, itchiness, swollen lips and other symptoms," Dr Furlonge said.

"Last summer we saw a small bloom towards the end of January, however this was minor compared to the bloom in 2007. We are hoping that improved catchment management practices combined with weather conditions may keep the bloom at bay this summer."

Low annual rainfall (in particular over the warmer months), low water flows, high water temperatures and high nutrient concentrations are attributed to triggering algal blooms.

In the event of a bloom, signage is erected at the lake advising recreational water users on the associated health risks.

Lake Trevallyn is also used as a drinking water supply. The water treatment plants which treat the Lake Trevallyn water are able to remove the algal cells thereby ensuring the drinking water is safe. Water quality is continually monitored and managed for drinking throughout the year in Lake Trevallyn.

The TEER Program was established in 2008 and is a regional partnership between the agencies responsible for management of the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers waterways. Our partners include the Tasmanian Government, City of Launceston, Meander Valley Council, West Tamar Council, George Town Council, Northern Midlands Council, TasWater and Hydro Tasmania.

Ends:

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For more information contact: Melissa Lewarn, Manager –Engagement & Communications, NRM North 6333 7776 or 0427 354 058

**\*\*\* PICTURE/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY:** TEER staff will be taking water samples at the boat ramp at Lake Trevallyn **TODAY at 11.30am** and will be available for interviews/photos.

**Directions to Lake Trevallyn boat ramp** – drive up Reatta Road, turn right onto Lake Trevallyn Road and follow the road until you reach boat ramp.