



Joint Media Release

Friday August 14, 2015

SPOTLIGHT ON TAMAR RIVER HEALTH AT SCIENCE WEEK BREAKFAST

The health of the Tamar River will be the focus at a breakfast to kick off National Science Week this morning, with experts providing an insight into better management of the northern waterway.

The Tamar's catchment comprises 15 per cent of Tasmania's land mass and is going through a rapid transition in its landscape.

Amanda Locatelli, Water Theme Manager and TEER (Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers) Program Coordinator with NRM North, said as dairy expansion and irrigation expansion provides opportunities in the primary production sector, and as land use is adapted under different climate change scenarios, it is important that we have the best available information at hand to understand the current condition of water quality throughout the catchment and what it might look like in the future.

"Understanding where pollutants come from and how they affect water quality from the catchments through the Tamar estuary allows us to target where we need to improve land management practices," Ms Locatelli said.

TasWater's Department Manager for Product Quality, Lance Stapleton, said science is used to develop long-term strategies for managing sewage treatment plants and the quality of drinking water which can meet the changing needs and values of the community both now and under future population growth scenarios.

"TasWater is committed to developing long-lasting solutions for our major cities to benefit the Tasmanian community. The rollout of TasWater's Drinking Water Quality Management Plan and the Wastewater Management Plan will result in cleaner rivers and beaches, and better health and environmental outcomes all around Tasmania."

Curator of Natural Sciences at QVMAG, David Maynard, said there is a direct correlation between the water quality of the Tamar River and the health of the marine ecosystem.

"The Tamar is a unique estuarine system with biodiversity hotspots in the lower sections. These species-rich reefs can be impacted by changes in water quality that result from anthropogenic activities on the land and in suburbia."

The Science Week Breakfast will be held from 7:30am to 9am at QVMAG Art Gallery on August 14.

Ends

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