



# Media Release

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## NEW SIGNS HIGHLIGHT THE TAMAR'S HISTORY AND NATURAL VALUES

A series of new signs have been erected along the foreshore in Launceston to highlight the history and values of the Tamar River estuary and how communities have lived with sedimentation throughout time.

The project has been developed as a partnership between NRM North's Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program, the Launceston City Council, the Launceston Flood Authority and the Tasmanian Government.

It involved developing 13 interpretative signage panels for 6 locations extending from the Seaport marina to Richie's Mill.

The signage content covers the following major themes;

- European settlement of Launceston and its early industries;
- Floods and flood protection;
- Maritime history and dredging;
- Sedimentation process and drivers;
- Natural values, Aboriginal values and recreation; and
- Richie's Mill and the Cataract Gorge.

NRM North's Water Theme Manager and TEER Program Coordinator, Amanda Locatelli, said the project aimed to inform visitors and residents about the history of the Tamar and the process of sedimentation.

"Sedimentation, or siltation as referred to by the community, of the upper Tamar River estuary has been a long standing issue of contention in the community for over 150 years for reasons of public amenity, commercial access and environmental quality," Ms Locatelli said.

"Although the focus of this project has been to inform the community about how and why sedimentation occurs in the Tamar estuary, the project also communicates the history and values of the Tamar."

Environment Minister, Brian Wightman, said the signs were a valuable addition to the Launceston landscape.

"Explaining these concepts in way that is easy to understand is no easy task. These signs are not only entertaining but provide a valuable service to anyone wondering why the Tamar River is the way it is," Minister Wightman said.

The Chairman of the Launceston Flood Authority, Alan Birchmore, said the new signage provided a valuable source of information on the estuary and past management.

"Sedimentation is a natural process and cannot be eradicated, but it can be controlled and this year the Launceston Flood Authority has been able to lower the mudflats so that they are no longer visible," Mr Birchmore said.

"The Tamar now has greater capability for many recreational purposes and will be further improved in future years with modest maintenance."

The project has included significant consultation with technical, communications and historical experts to ensure the information and content is accurate. NRM North has also been granted permission from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre to use the Aboriginal name for the Tamar River: kanamaluka.

Launceston Mayor, Albert van Zetten, said he hoped the signage would add to the amenity of the Tamar foreshore.

"This is a great way to tell a story and I hope people will embrace it when they are enjoying the boardwalk," Mayor van Zetten said.

"I think it's going to be wonderful for tourists and locals alike to find out more about our river and its history, and the role it has played in the development of Launceston."

NRM North Chief Executive Officer, James McKee, said telling a story about the history of the Tamar was important so people could appreciate how unique and highly valued the Tamar estuary and its rivers have been throughout time.

"The Tamar has shaped the way of life for the communities and people who have lived alongside it and continues to be a much loved part of Launceston today," Mr McKee said.

"The need for this project and telling the Tamar's story has been well recognised by all partners involved and it is hoped communicating this story will inspire, inform and add to the visitor experience to the Tamar foreshore in the years to come."

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