



Media Release

Friday 3rd August, 2018

PARTNERS UNITED IN TAMAR RIVER HEALTH

The 2018 Tamar Estuary Report Card released today has revealed the waterway is still suffering the effects of the severe June 2016 floods, with an overall decline in grades.

The largest flood in Launceston since 1969 delivered high loads of pollutants including nutrients, sediments, pathogens and metals to the Tamar. This extreme weather event was followed by a warmer and drier than average Autumn. These conditions led to an increase in algal growth and a decrease in oxygen levels throughout the estuary, driving the decline in grades.

Monitoring was conducted in five zones between Launceston and Low Head, with zone one between Launceston and Legana receiving a D rating indicating poor health from high pollutant loads entering the system. While high rainfall is a key driver of pollutant loads from the catchment, NRM North's report cards draw data from a number of other pressures impacting the health of the Tamar, including sewage treatment plants and urban stormwater.

NRM North's Chief Executive Officer, Rosanna Coombes, said it was important to monitor and understand the health of the Tamar River estuary.

"The TEER Program is committed to releasing these report cards which provide a snapshot of the health of the Tamar and are a valuable tool to assist the community and management agencies with information to guide future management."

NRM North's Operations Manager, Amanda Locatelli, said the future of the estuary is dependent on ongoing scientific research backed by strong partnerships.

"NRM North would like to acknowledge the community commitment to improve the health and amenity of the estuary and the TEER Program will continue to work with a number of stakeholders including landholders and industry in an effort to reduce pollutants entering the system."

The TEER report card and monitoring partners include NRM North, Tasmanian Government, Environment Protection Authority, Department of Health, City of Launceston, West Tamar Council, George Town Council, Meander Valley Council, Northern Midlands Council, University of Tasmania and IMAS, Hydro Tasmania, TasWater, Bell Bay Aluminium, Petuna Aquaculture, and South 32 TEMCO.

The 2018 Report Card can be downloaded from the TEER website www.nrmnorth.org.au/teer

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