



Media Release

14th October, 2015

Cleaning stormwater and protecting valuable saltmarsh in Bridport

A second bioretention system being built in Bridport this week will increase protection of local saltmarshes by treating stormwater and reducing runoff into the Trent Water Estuary.

NRM North in partnership with the Dorset Council anticipate the Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) project under construction on the foreshore corner of Elizabeth Street and Main Street, will treat stormwater runoff from Elizabeth Street and residential catchment, enhance local biodiversity and improve aesthetic values of the area.

While community awareness around the installation of green infrastructure is also being highlighted, so is the connection between stormwater treatment and protecting coastal saltmarsh habitats.

“Stormwater from Elizabeth Street and surrounding homes will be directed into the bioretention system where it is treated before entering the estuary. Saltmarsh wetlands have suffered heavily from human impacts across Tasmania. Close to half of these important natural assets have already been lost or degraded”, said NRM North’s Stormwater and Catchment Officer, Jesse Webster.

NRM North’s Coast Coordinator, Emma Williams, says the project is critical to address threats to coastal saltmarsh.

“Coastal saltmarsh is often overlooked, but its contribution to our coastal environment is incredibly significant ... herbs, grasses and shrubs capture more carbon than rainforest trees. They cycle nutrients between the land and the sea and provide rich pickings for species that form the basis of our fisheries. Having stormwater treatment such as this will help reduce local pressures impacting on saltmarsh communities”, Ms Williams said.

This project is supported by NRM North through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. NRM North has commissioned Syrinx Environmental to implement the bioretention system. Construction begun on October 12 and will be completed on October 16.

Mr Webster, members of the Northern Tasmanian Stormwater Working Group (NTSWG), NRM North Facilitator for Dorset Mike Bretz and Andrew Shipp from Syrinx Environmental will be available onsite at 2:30pm on October 15 for interviews/photos.

Ends.

For more information or interviews, please contact NRM North’s Stormwater and Catchment Officer Jesse Webster on 0478 202 333 or NRM North Communications Officer Biba Bell on 6333 7776 or 0458 666 609. *Please note: Biba works Tuesdays/Wednesdays.*