



Media Release

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EARLY RESULTS OF TAMAR SEDIMENT MODELLING PROJECT

NRM North has released the preliminary results of a sediment modelling project for the Tamar catchment areas.

The early results indicate the North Esk and Meander River catchments appear to be generating more sediment than the South Esk River, with the main land uses in the North Esk being forestry and agriculture.

NRM North Chief Executive Officer, James McKee, stressed the results were preliminary and there was still work to be done before the final report was released.

"It is important to note, the sediments coming from the upper catchments of the Tamar Estuary are consistent with other similar catchments in Australia.

"There does not appear to be any more sediment coming down the rivers than what you would expect from other similar catchments.

"This is only part of the Tamar Estuary sediment picture; we still need to understand what is happening to sediment in the estuary itself.

"This affirms the work we are already supporting in the catchment areas with both farmers and forestry and this will continue.

"These results have given us a snapshot of some potential causes and fate of some of the sediments in the Tamar catchment.

"By the end of the project, we aim to have a more accurate picture of the amount of sediment entering the estuary from the river systems and have a better idea of the area in the catchment where it is originating from." Mr McKee said.


NRM North, through the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) program, awarded the tender for the sediment modelling project to the consortium BMT WBM and Hydro Tasmania Consulting.

Catchment modeller Tony Weber, from consultants BMT WBM, said he was reasonably confident the predictions were sound.

"We have been able to relate the modelling we have done in this study to previous water quality monitoring and the results agree quite well.

"What we still have to do is a "sanity check" of the model with people in the catchment to make sure we are consistent with what is happening on the ground.

"The model that we are developing is just a tool in the end though, useful for planning and getting a better understanding of the catchments. It's just one of many bits of information needed to help manage the region better." Mr Weber said.



A final report is expected next month. NRM North would then be able to identify and undertake targeted on-ground works to reduce sediment input into the river systems.

“The model will give us the ability to test the course of actions. Some of the recommendations are likely to include activities we are already doing such as supporting best practice land management and the creation of riparian buffers.” Mr McKee said.

NRM North’s modelling project will link with the Tamar Estuary Hydrodynamic model developed by the Launceston City Council, which investigates tidal movement and sediment transport in the estuary.

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