

Environment Protection Authority South Australia

Outer Harbor channel dredging

Thursday 17 October 2019

Port Adelaide Environment Forum

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Acknowledgements

The EPA recognises the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

We would like to acknowledge that we meet today on Kaurna land.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



Photo courtesy of Sue Miers AM. Symbolic painting created for NOFASD by an Australian Aboriginal woman. *The pregnant woman is resting below the tree and is part of the landscape. Her face is reaching up to the stars (ancestors).*

The original painting was presented to NOFASD Founder Sue Miers AM in honour of NOFASD's 20th anniversary. The artist's identity is confidential.

Overview & introductions

- Planning approval
- Licence application stage
- Dredge management plan
- Environmental monitoring
- Community engagement
- Compliance and inspections
- Hold determinations
- Closure plan and ongoing monitoring

Planning approval

In May 2018, the Minister for Planning approved the application after extensive consideration

Input from the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to ensure that the impact on the environment was minimised as much as possible.

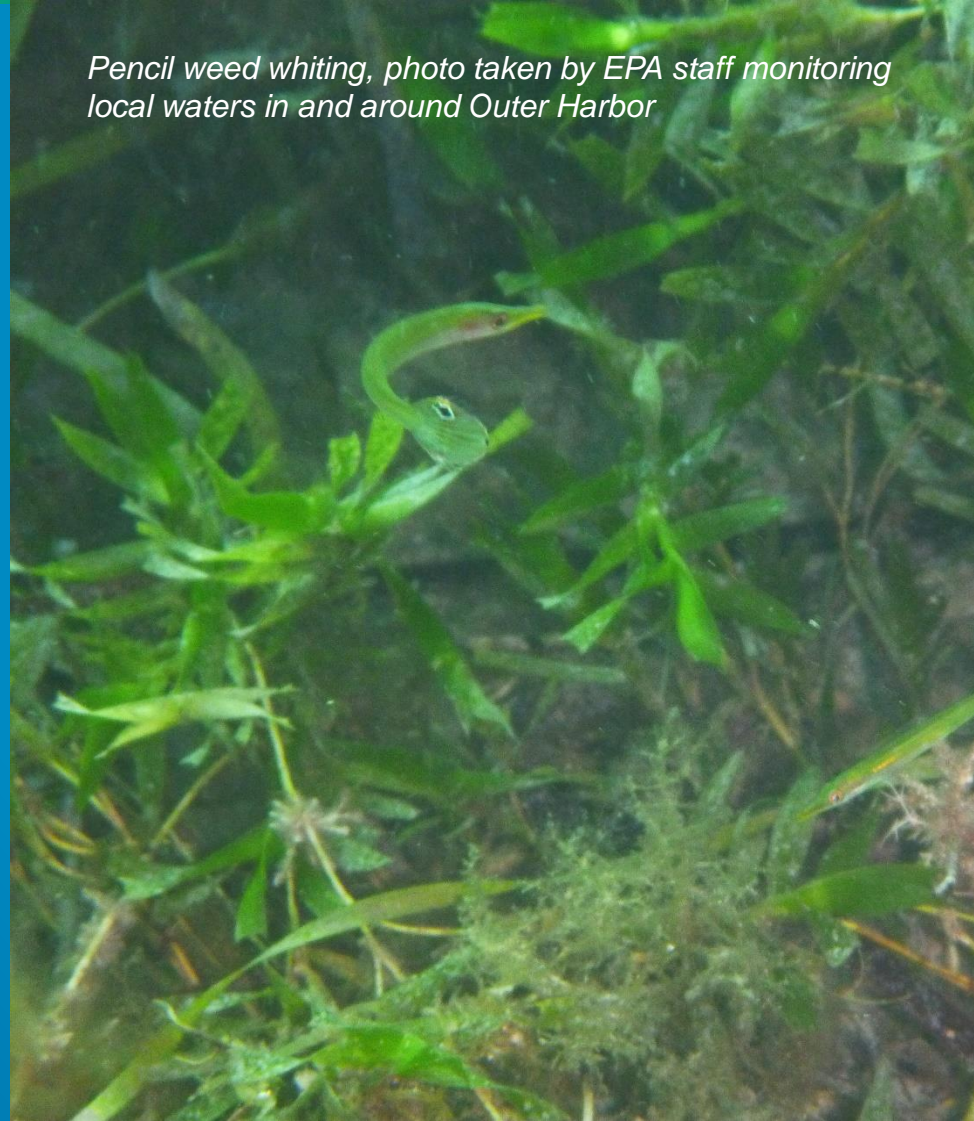
The Minister approved the application [subject to eight conditions](#), many of which were recommended by the EPA.



Planning approval

- The dredge spoil is a mix of sand, silt and clay and is not contaminated with toxic substances.
- It was disposed at sea in the same area that was used in the previous dredge operation, preventing the need for land based disposal
- Land based disposal was not favoured as it would cause significant impact on sensitive habitats such as mangroves and samphire.

Pencil weed whiting, photo taken by EPA staff monitoring local waters in and around Outer Harbor



Planning approval

- The spoil disposal site was in the middle of Gulf St Vincent and approximately 30 m deep
- Similar to other comparable areas within the Gulf at this depth that have been impacted by prawn trawling
- Images on the right show the spoil disposal site before commencement of dredging (top) and 5 nautical miles south of the disposal site (below)

S 34 49.9393
E138 08.8635

195 deg
0 knt
29.0 mtr

01:12:18

02-27-18

S 34 57.7389
E138 10.2140

223 deg
0 knt
35.7 mtr

03:43:58

02-27-18

Licence application stage



The EPA sought advice from Primary Industries and Regions SA, the Native Vegetation Council, Coastal Protection Board, Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary and other experts within the Department of Environment and Water to determine and finalise licence conditions.

Posidonia sinuosa, photo courtesy of Simon Bryars



Dredge management plan



- Flinders Ports was required to prepare a dredge management plan (DMP) to the satisfaction of the EPA before dredging could commence.
- The DMP provided real-time 'alarm' and 'hold' work triggers and management actions when triggers for turbidity levels were exceeded.
- The EPA required Flinders Ports to have a marine mammal observer on board the dredge at all times, log any sightings and take management actions if required.
- It also included real-time access to water quality data at monitoring sites appropriate management of biosecurity risks, as endorsed by Primary Industries and Regions SA.
- The DMP was approved by the EPA on 16 May 2019 and was published on the EPA website.

Environmental monitoring



- Another condition of the development approval required Flinders Ports to prepare an environmental monitoring program (EMP) which measured the zones of seagrass impact predicted in the hydrodynamic modelling.
- The EPA included monitoring of seagrass conditions using a 'before and after control impact' design - measuring seagrass health metrics at an appropriate spatial and temporal frequency.
- This EMP was required to be approved by the EPA and implemented by Flinders Ports prior to dredging commencing.
- The EMP was approved by the EPA on 16 May 2019 and was published on the EPA website.

Community engagement



Date	Activity
November 2017	Key stakeholder engagement with conservation groups and recreational fishing groups.
3 August 2018	Flinders Ports licence application submitted, preliminary meetings and discussions
5 November 2018	EPA sent information to key stakeholders advising of the application and invitation to make submissions.
14 November 2018	The Advertiser and Portside Messenger advertisements announced public submission period.
30 November 2018	Public submission period closes. The EPA forwards all submissions (with personal details removed) to Flinders Ports for the opportunity to respond.

Community engagement



Date	Activity
7– 14 December 2018	EPA publishes community submissions report.
21 January 2019	EPA announces that a licence is to be issued. Community update published describing likely themes and objectives of conditions.
12 March 2019	Licence published on EPA website.
30 April 2019	Community information session on the EPA licence.
1 May – ongoing	Ongoing engagement with the community during dredging, publication of all hold determinations on the website.
May 2020	Reporting on the outcome of the seagrass monitoring.

Community engagement



- 150 interactions to date
- 3951 web hits
- 85 submissions personally acknowledged
- Key themes and further information provided in a [community submissions report](#)
- Real-time turbidity data live
- Hold determinations published within 24 hrs
- All documentation and monitoring surveys publically available



Compliance and inspections

000104

S 34 44.5002
E 138 25.0912

352 deg
1 knt
5 mtr

WATER HARBOUR
Date 22/2/19
Operators MN, UN, PT
Site: Control 1
Transect 1

22:58:55

02-21-19

2019.02.22

09:29:56

KAQG-0012

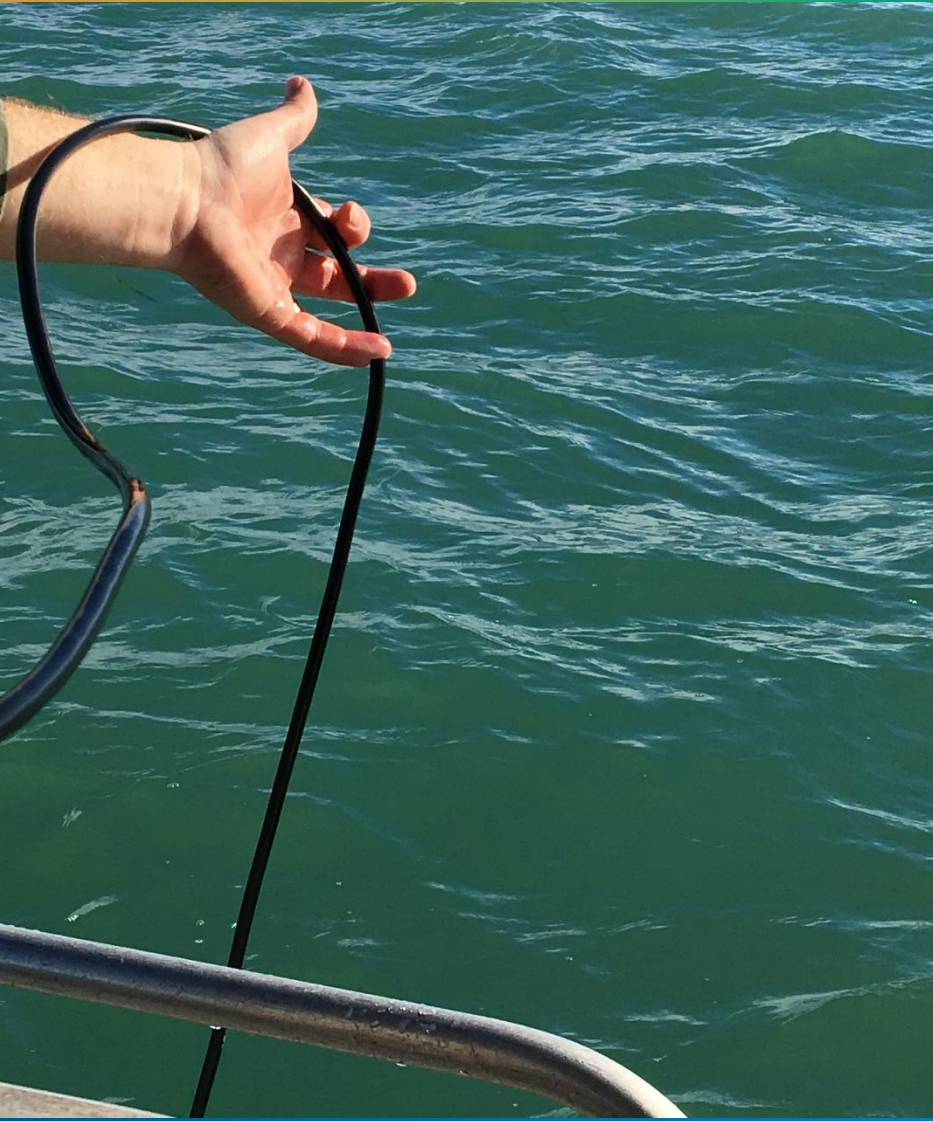
Compliance and inspections



Compliance and inspections



Compliance and inspections



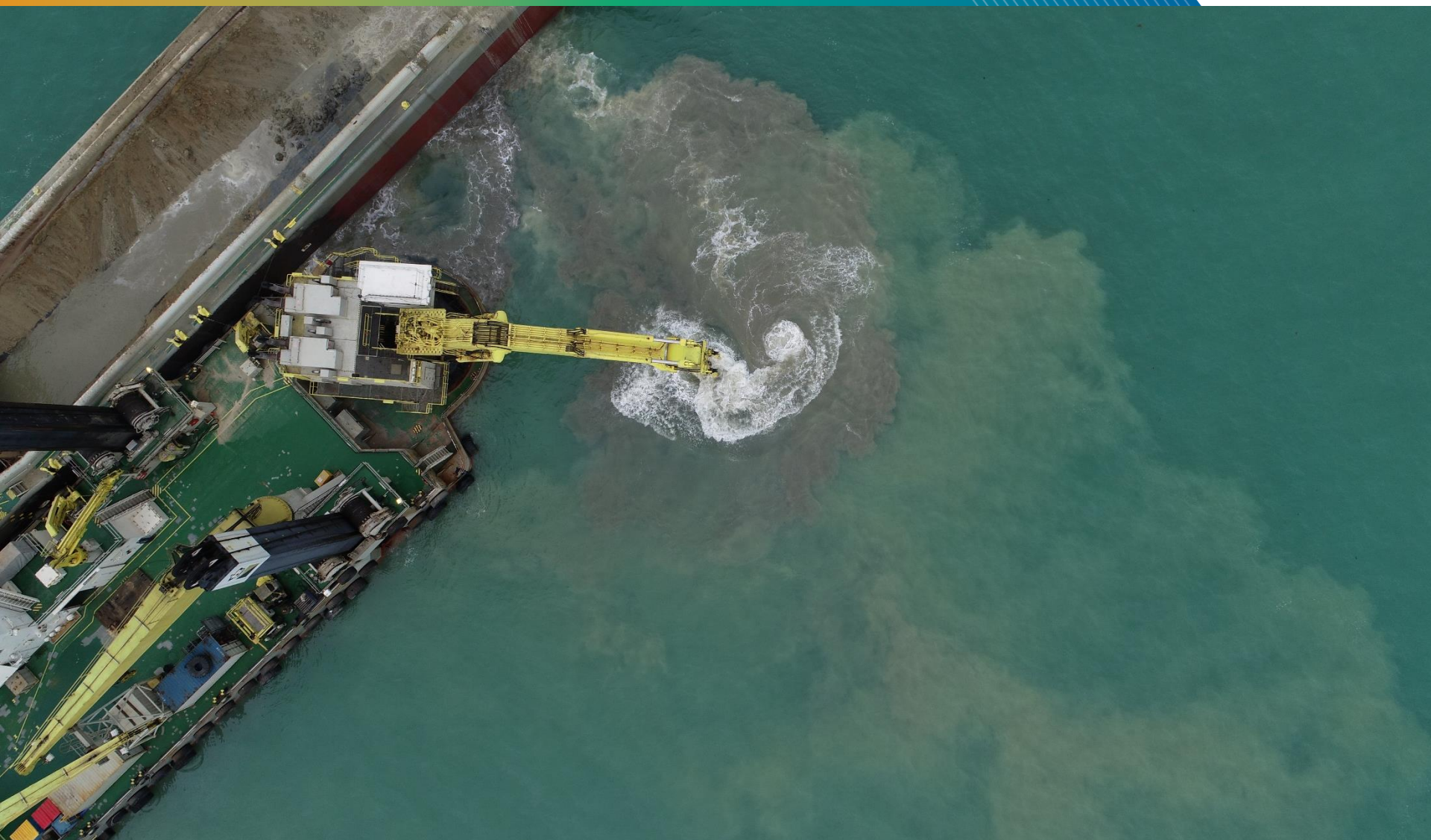
Compliance and inspections



Compliance and inspections



Compliance and inspections



Hold determinations



EPA Licence 50556 – Notified Turbidity HOLD Event, 19 July 2019

I refer to the above notified Turbidity HOLD event at Monitoring Point D2 which occurred at approximately 01:40 on 19 July 2019, at which point dredging ceased shortly thereafter.

Condition 1.3.2 of EPA licence 50556 requires that the Licensee must, where turbidity measured at either of the monitoring locations exceeds HOLD criteria, cease dredging, as soon as reasonably practicable, but no later than 3 hours of turbidity exceeding HOLD criteria; and not recommence dredging until turbidity no longer exceeds HOLD criteria (or unless otherwise approved in writing by the EPA).

Following notification of the above HOLD, Flinders Ports has made a submission to the EPA to allow dredging to recommence during the period of HOLD, which has been assessed and considered.

DETERMINATION

The EPA has assessed recent turbidity monitoring data and hereby provides written approval for the commencement of dredging FORTHWITH, in accordance with condition 1.3.2 (b), as following:

- **Gateway (TSHD) to dredge with no overflow within all designated Areas; and**
- **Magnor (BHD) to dredge in designated Areas F and G only.**

Closure plan and monitoring

- Dredging of the Outer Harbor channel was completed on 18 September 2019.
- Flinders Ports is now undertaking bed levelling works in the channel prior to completing a final survey.
- The EPA is working with Flinders Ports to ensure the closure plan is implemented.
- The plan includes seagrass monitoring which will occur in April 2020 and again in April 2022, bathymetric surveys of the dredge area and disposal area and removal of all plant and equipment from the premises.



Thank you & questions

**www.epa.sa.gov.au (follow the links
to 'Industry updates')**

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