

The boundaries illustrated in this map are principally based on major natural topographical divides within the regions river and lake systems. However, these boundaries also have close relationships to natural environmental, social and industry boundaries, rainfall and land use systems. These boundaries in part reflect IBRA\* sub regionals, and cropping zones in the south west of Western Australia in addition to a range of socio-economic trends.

**Role:** To provide advice and guidance to the Wheatbelt NRM Aboriginal NRM Team for the development and review of Aboriginal NRM projects. This includes providing opinions and cultural guidance on strategic planning, project development, program logic developments and funding applications.

**Scope:** The Elders Advisory Group meetings are a forum in which to discuss natural resource management issues, in light of Aboriginal culture and values for the Wheatbelt region. The Advisory Group provides cultural advice to Wheatbelt NRM on current and future Aboriginal NRM projects and other Wheatbelt NRM projects, if asked. The Advisory Group offers direction and advice about who to talk to when conducting specific activities.

**Membership:** The Wheatbelt NRM Noongar Elders Advisory Group consists of ten members with substantive traditional knowledge.

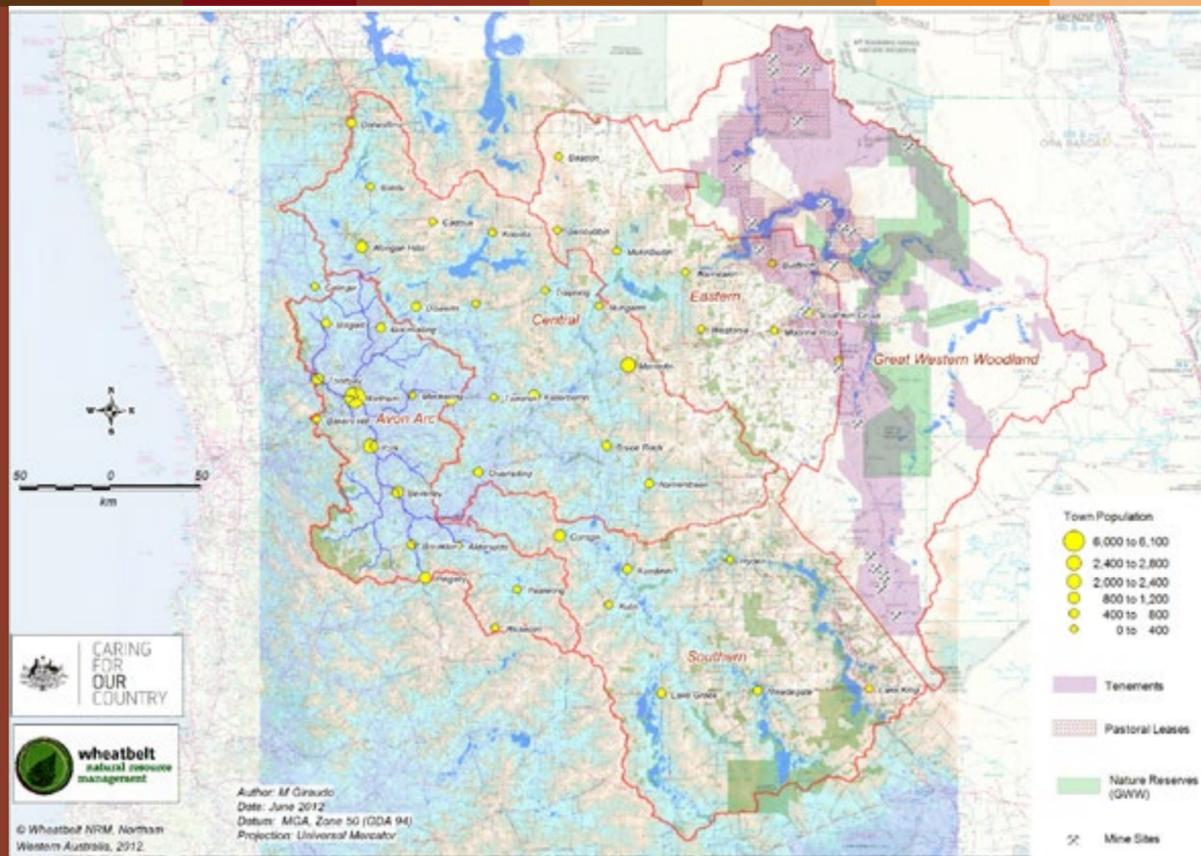
Guests will be invited to meetings as requested by Advisory Group members or Aboriginal NRM staff members within Wheatbelt NRM.

The Advisory Group will seek to work in cooperation to reach a consensus on issues.

**Requirement of members:** Attend Advisory Group meetings.

Communicate to the Advisory Group the ideas, concerns and direction of the wider Aboriginal community.

Communicate the ideas and direction of Wheatbelt NRM to the wider Aboriginal community.



### Avon Arc:

- Higher rainfall
- Higher population density
- Increasing population
- Town economies greatly influenced by services industries
- Increases in urban and peri urban land use development
- Early cleared, high level of local extinctions
- Avon and Swan River impacts
- Management of land use planning

### Eastern Region:

- Low population density
- Declining population
- Limited access to essential social services
- Emerging influence of mining on the local economy
- Ongoing structural adjustment with agricultural enterprises
- Later clearing, moderate clearing rates, important ecological refuge

### Central Region:

- Moderate population density
- Declining population
- Economy reliant on agriculture
- Muted structural adjustment in agricultural industry leading to increasing economic stress
- Early settled, high clearing rates, extensive local extinction
- Moderate access to essential social services

### Southern Region:

- Low population density
- Declining population
- Limited access to essential social services
- Ongoing structural adjustment with agricultural enterprises
- Most recent clearing, lower clearing rates, important ecological refuge

### Great Western Woodland:

- Limited clearing
- Dominated by mining, traditional and conservation land uses
- Significant areas of Unallocated Crown Land (83%), open to potential future change in land use
- Key threats associated with changes to fire management, feral animal control, weed invasion and vegetation disturbance
- Limited largely inactive pastoral leases

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## Ballardong Noongar Boodjar

Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Incorporated (Wheatbelt NRM) is an independent, community-based organisation leading natural resource management (NRM) endeavours within the Avon River Basin. The organisation operates from its Northam office, Western Australia, and exists as the second largest of the six NRM regional organisations in the State, with responsibility for the 12,000,000 hectares of the Avon River Basin.

This document presents the Five Year Targets for NRM aspirations for the Wheatbelt by the Aboriginal community. It has been developed from the Ballardong Noongar Boodjar Healthy Country – Healthy People document, a landmark statement of intent released in 2006.

The Noongar are the local Aboriginal people of the Avon River Basin with, as their ancestors have described, a close affinity and relationship with their Country since the time of the Dreaming.

Carriage of the Five Year Targets is contingent on funding through the Wheatbelt NRM Noongar Elders Advisory Group.

## Our Vision

For all people to respect and understand Noongar culture and from there have a greater attachment to the land (Budjar), and to work in partnerships to create a positive and sustainable future for all.

# Five Year Targets

## 1. Recording Traditional Knowledge for NRM

Recording traditional knowledge is the identification and recording of significant Noongar cultural aspects of NRM.

- Priorities**
- Identify sites for inclusion in the Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) Register;
  - Recognise the right people to speak for country;
  - Create ways or structures to share appropriate traditional knowledge about this region, to build common understandings.

- Key Activities**
- Written, visual and aural recording activities in regards to managing Budjar, that can be shared;
  - Maintain appropriate information and recordings on the Wheatbelt NRM Aboriginal NRM website;
  - Address issues of protection of traditional knowledge and intellectual property;
  - Build the relationship and communication with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC);
  - Develop the relationship between the Wheatbelt NRM Noongar Elders Advisory Group and the Wheatbelt NRM Board, such that the Elders Advisory Group is recognised and supported as the first source of advice;
  - Maintain a strong profile and relationship with DIA or other appropriate bodies, where a site is part of Wheatbelt NRM project work.

## 2. Use of Noongar Language

Sharing of Noongar language and stories deepens respect for Noongar culture and spirituality and creates a greater awareness of the traditional and contemporary history of the area.

- Priorities**
- Signage of place names in Noongar language;
  - Sharing of language and stories;
  - Use of Noongar language incorporated into documents;
  - Inclusion of Noongar language in classes and school curriculum.
  - Recognition of old Noongar families in Local Government Authorities' naming of streets, roads, bridges and other infrastructure;

- Key Activities**
- Opportunities and activities that involve the participation of Noongar elders;
  - Identification and recording of Noongar speakers;
  - Use of Noongar place names in all Wheatbelt NRM signage;
  - Inclusion of Noongar words and terms into Wheatbelt NRM documents and plans;
  - Addition of a language section on the Wheatbelt NRM Aboriginal NRM website page;
  - Development of a Noongar NRM dictionary or word list, published as a booklet and as a resource on the website;
  - Use of language at major events through Welcome to Country ceremonies.

## 3. Access to Significant Sites

Appropriate access to significant sites to enable Noongar people to reconnect spiritually to sites of cultural significance.

- Priorities**
- Access on farms and private property;
  - Joint management for reserves;
  - Responsibility for maintenance and management of cultural sites.
  - Increase public awareness of the importance of access, in order to break down barriers with land holders;

- Key Activities**
- Build partnerships with the Department of Parks and Wildlife to provide input into the management of nature reserves and forest areas;
  - Continue to highlight the importance of interagency linkages to increase access;
  - Support local Noongar organisations to be vested with responsibility for the maintenance and management of local cultural sites such as Town Reserves, in to ensure access and carry out project work.

## 4. Walk Trails

The development of walk trails to ensure access, raise awareness of Noongar culture and lead to possible enterprises such as guided tours.

- Priorities**
- Development of walk trails, based on the traditional trails across the Wheatbelt region;
  - Employment and engagement of local Noongar people in the development of the trails;
  - Opportunities to develop enterprises such as guided cultural tours based on the trails.

- Key Activities**
- Develop partnerships with Local Government Shires, NRM organisations and SWALSC to identify opportunities for walk trails;
  - Focus on the opportunity for a major project such as the Granites Way or the Northam / Mukinbudin trail and seek funding partnerships;
  - Ensure that signage is developed and maintained for existing trails;
  - Continue to build awareness of protocols for access to farms, reserves and parks.

## 5. Economic Opportunities in NRM

The creation of economic opportunities in NRM for Noongar people is a growing opportunity.

- Priorities**
- Development of knowledge and skills incorporated into all project applications;
  - Development of Ranger teams;
  - Development of Noongar traineeships;
  - Development of partnerships for economic benefit.

- Key Activities**
- Continue to seek support for a Ranger team in the Wheatbelt that is based on the Green Teams concept and provides work for younger Noongars and consultation opportunities for elders;
  - Maintain at least two Boodjar Carer positions each year through Wheatbelt NRM;
  - Seek partnerships for:
    - cultural awareness training and seminars with Shires,
    - support for farm viability through the Indigenous Landholder Services,
    - opportunities to benefit from carbon farming initiatives on Noongar managed lands,
    - opportunities for input to training and education through the Muresk Institute and the Cunderdin Agricultural College and TAFE.
    - consultancies for elders within NRM programs.

## 6. Meaningful Discussion

The basis of respectful and meaningful discussion has been established through Wheatbelt NRM. The challenge now is the ongoing commitment and support from each partner to the process and to each other.

- Priorities**
- Maintenance of the Wheatbelt NRM Noongar Elders Advisory Group;
  - Expanded representation of the Elders Advisory Group within the regions;
  - Support for the Wheatbelt NRM Aboriginal Team.
  - To secure long-term funding support to enable the Wheatbelt NRM Noongar Elders Advisory Group to carry out their role effectively;

- Key Activities**
- Create opportunities to promote the Elders Advisory Group concept in areas that are supportive and strategic, eg: Great Western Woodlands;
  - Ensure that the Elders Advisory Group provides a sense of direction to the work of the Aboriginal NRM Projects Team within Wheatbelt NRM.

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