

# KEEPING THE CHANNEL CLEAR

Averting the tide of marine debris  
in the Huon and Channel



2017

The issue of marine debris has been making waves more frequently in recent times as the scale of the issue - and the threat it poses to waterway health, wildlife and the economy - become increasingly apparent. In a bid to address this growing problem, NRM South (through participation in the D'Entrecasteaux and Huon Collaboration) have been coordinating regular marine debris clean-up events across multiple sites in the Huon Estuary and D'Entrecasteaux Channel since 2016.

These events have been a great opportunity to engage with community and industry, and also provide a snapshot of the health of these waterways by gathering valuable data about the type and volume of debris collected year on year. In 2016, 5m<sup>3</sup> of debris was removed from the coastline at Alonnah, Bruny Island. In 2017, efforts were expanded by working more closely with industry partners and community, and by tackling new areas - resulting in a total of 36m<sup>3</sup> of debris being removed from multiple sites.

In total, over 40m<sup>3</sup> of marine debris has been collected from dozens of sites across the region, including Bruny Island, Nine Pin Point and Randalls Bay. To date, clean-up efforts have involved over 200 people and a dozen organisations and community groups.

As well as rope, nets and other fishing gear, large amounts of soft plastic rubbish are regularly collected, which brings to light the ongoing problem of single use plastics in our environment. However, these clean-ups have been gaining in popularity with an increasing number of people showing a keen interest to participate.

**"We began the clean-ups last year, and it was great to re-visit a site on Bruny Island a year later and collect less than half the volume of debris."**

**But there is still a lot of new rubbish entering our waterways, which presents a threat to marine life and the industries and recreational activities that rely on the Channel and Huon estuaries."**

**Nepelle Crane,  
D'Entrecasteaux and Huon  
Collaboration Coordinator**

While the amount of plastic debris being collected is still a cause for concern, at sites on Bruny Island that were cleaned in 2016, less than half the volume of debris was collected during the 2017 clean-up.

These events have helped to facilitate engagement with local aquaculture businesses, which is anticipated will lead to improved industry practices in the future.

In addition to clean-up activities, NRM South (through participation in the D'Entrecasteaux and Huon Collaboration) has been working with Huon Aquaculture, Tassal, the Bruny Island Shellfish Growers Association, and the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council to increase the length of coastline "adopted" by industry for marine debris clean ups, and to establish a new hotline for people to report marine debris in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and the Huon Estuary.



This project is supported by NRM South through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

NRM SOUTH: 313 Macquarie St, Hobart TAS 7000  
PO BOX 425, South Hobart, TAS 7004  
PH: 03 6221 6111 FAX: 03 6221 6166

www.nrmsouth.org.au  
@nrmsouth  
facebook.com/nrmsouthTas