



(l to r) Oral McGuire & Arthur Slater in Northam; Arthur at home in Brookton



## Media Release

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### Elders to give 40 000 year history of the Avon

The “*Recording of Traditional Owner Knowledge for Natural Resource Management*”, is an impressive name for an impressive project that aims to learn from the past to preserve the future of the Avon River Basin.

“This project is about learning from the way Noongars have historically valued and managed the Avon. By using the ‘stories’ that we are told in terms of NRM (Natural Resource Management), we can map what is culturally or environmentally significant and integrate this information into our management strategies for the region”, said Avon Catchment Council (ACC) Project Manager, Dan Ferguson.

Arthur Slater of Brookton, is both a Noongar elder and Chair of the ACC Ballardong NRM Working Group. “For a long time, the Noongar owners have been managing the environment of the Avon region. We want to save this traditional knowledge, record it for future generations and learn from it,” said Mr Slater.

Another Noongar keen to preserve traditional knowledge is Language Consultant, Oral McGuire. “I know we have been waiting for something special to happen in our region for more than one generation now and the number of oldies we have lost in the time we have been waiting patiently for this moment to come a long, is reason enough for us to make sure we make the most of what is on offer with the Recording Traditional Knowledge project.

“We must see that our people are re-united with our stories and our places. Let’s not waste another generation by hesitating, or questioning the importance of this opportunity to re-establish the link between the three key elements of our culture and our world - *Ngalak Ngank nitja Budjar, ngalak waankaniny nitja katajin, ngalak moort nitja djurapiny*”, said Oral.

Translated from Noongar language, this means ‘Our Country, Our Stories, Our People’. And it is with this traditional knowledge of ‘Our Avon’ that the project partners aim to develop a better understanding of the region and how to preserve it’s natural environment and areas of cultural significance.

If you would just like to know more about this project contact ACC Indigenous NRM Facilitator **Dianne Lovell** tel: (08) 9690 2250 or email [dlovell@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:dlovell@agric.wa.gov.au)

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