



CASE STUDIES



Western ringtail possum in artificial drey,
South Capel, Western Australia



South Capel, Western Australia

SOUTH CAPEL REMEDIATION

In 2019 Iluka commenced a project to remove mineral sand residue material in old storage dams at our Capel dry plant and South Capel sites, and move it to a new purpose-built facility at South Capel.

The old dams were used during historical operations to store residues from mineral sands processing. The dams met regulatory and industry standards of the day, but not contemporary containment requirements. Seepage has occurred, with some common and generally non-hazardous substances found in mineral sands, such as manganese and sulfates observed in the shallow groundwater aquifer. Deeper groundwater is unaffected. The project will remove this risk to groundwater and achieve an enhanced environmental outcome at South Capel.

The project comprises removal of approximately 70,000 cubic metres of residue in the old storage dam at the Capel dry plant and about 410,000 cubic metres of residue stored at our South Capel site. All residue is being moved to the new storage facility on the same site. Iluka has consulted with the community in respect of the project and Iluka's approach to managing environmental risks at the sites.

The first step of the remediation project was the relocation of fauna and clearing of vegetation to create access to the old storage dams. Iluka engaged experts in fauna relocation to catch marsupials and reptiles at the sites and move them to suitable nearby and adjacent natural areas. Marsupials moved included the Western ringtail possum, or 'gnuraren' in the local Noongar language, which are endangered. Relocating the gnuraren was done with great care and was successfully completed in 2019.

The remainder of the project is due to be completed in 2020 including land form and revegetation works at the older storage dams. Iluka will monitor the rehabilitated areas for approximately 10 years to ensure the rehabilitation is successful. The project was approved by the Western Australian Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, with other government agencies assessing and approving various parts of the project. These include the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Main Roads WA and the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy.