
Minutes of the 26th Meeting of the
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee
Thursday 17th March 2016
Brooklyn Community Centre
2-4 Dangar Rd, Brooklyn

Title	Family Name	Given Name	Representation	Present	Apologies	Absent	Alternate Rep.
Mr	ANDREWS	John	Mooney-Cheero Progress Association		X		
Cr	ANISSE	Antony	Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council		X		
Mr	BROWN	Warren	Gosford City Council		X		Michael Hourn
Mr	BROWN	Stephen	Roads and Maritime Authority	X			
Mr	BURNS	David	Community Representative	X			
Ms	BURTON	Tegan	National Parks & Wildlife	X			
Mr	FENWICK	Andrew	Fenwicks Marina	X			
Mr	FISH	Mike	Community Representative		X		
Ms	FRATER	Ray	NSW Bridge to Bridge Committee		X		
Mr	GANASSIN	Carla	Industry & Investment, Primary Industries Fishing & Aquaculture		X		New Rep.
Ms	HOWARD	Mary	Community Representative	X			
Mr	KARCZ	Bronek	Community Representative		X		
Dr	LIM	Leong	Community Representative	X			
Mr	MACDONALD	Tim	Gosford City Council	X			
Ms	MARVELL	Cheryl	Sydney Water Corporation		X		
Ms	MCMURDO	Wendy	Community Representative	X			
Mr	MILES	David	Boat Owners Association	X			
Ms	MOOY	Rebecca	Greater Sydney Local Land Services	X			
Cllr	MORRIS	Hilary	Gosford City Council		X		
Mr	MOXHAM	Rob	Commercial Representative – Oysters Farmers		X		
Mr	MYERS	Andy	Oceanwatch		X		
Mr	PATTISON	Mick	Hawkesbury City Council	X			
Mr	PELOSI	Gus	Office of Environment & Heritage	X			
Mr	PHILIPP	Hjalmar	Community Representative				Resigned
Mr	PIGNEYGUY	Justin	Hawkesbury Cruises		X		
Emer Prof	RECHER	Harry	Community Representative				Resigned
Mr	REES	Stan	Land and Property Management Authority		X		
Mr	ROWE	Simon	Oceanwatch Australia		X		
Dr	RUBIO	Ana	Hornsby Shire Council	X			

Title	Family Name	Given Name	Representation	Present	Apologies	Absent	Alternate Rep.
Ms	SEGOVIA	Ingrid	Community Representative		X		
Ms	SCARSBRICK	Joanne	Community Representative		X		
Ms	SHORTER	Cybele	Community Representative Dangar Island		X		
Cllr	STRICKSON	Jeff	Councillor - Gosford City Council		X		
Mr	TAYLOR	Chris	Community Representative	X			
Ms	STUART	Suzanne	Hawkesbury City Council		X		
Cllr	TILBURY	Nathan	Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council		X		
Mr	VAN ZELEWSKI	Axel	Community Representative	X			
Mrs	RYLAND	Julie	Hornsby Shire Council	X			

1. WELCOME

Meeting opened at 18:15. Meeting was chaired by Peter **Coad** as Cllr **Anissee** sent his apologies. Peter **Coad** introduced Julie **Ryland** from Hornsby Shire Council now acting as the Natural Resources Strategy Manager. Julie is now overseeing the Estuary Program at Hornsby Shire Council. Peter **Coad** is now the manager of the Natural Resources Branch. Peter **Coad** also introduced Michael **Hourn** who is filling in temporarily for Warren **Brown** at Gosford City Council. Finally Peter **Coad** introduced the speaker of the night, Rod **McInnes**, an environmental economist who is a member of the Hornsby Shire Council's Catchment Remediation Program Committee and the Australian Agriculture Resource Economics Society. Rod used to work for the Sydney Catchment Authority part of Water NSW.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllr Anisee, John Andrews, Warren Brown, Ray Frater, Mike Fish, Carla Ganassin, Broniek Karcz, Cllr Morris, Andy Myers, Rob Moxham, Stan Rees, Simon Rowe, Ingrid Segovia, Joanne Scarsbrick, Cybele Shorter, Cllr Strickson, Suzanne Stuart, Cheryl Marvell, Cllr Nathan Tilbury.

Chris **Taylor** apologised for not attending the November 2015 meeting and for not delivering the presentation that was organised for the committee's meeting.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No pecuniary interests were declared.

4. PRESENTATION:

Rod McInnes, currently an Agricultural and Resources Economist, gave a presentation on 'The Economics of Environmental Flows in the Hawkesbury'. Rod used to work for the Sydney Catchment Authority (SCA). Through his work on SCA, Rod was involved in a number of projects that advised on reducing nitrogen loads through the Brooklyn STP upgrade and worked on an environmental flows project as the economist. Rod's presentation described the process and variables (i.e. transparency and translucency) needed to consider in evaluating the management of dams such as Warragamba Dam from an economic point of view. Specifically, Rod described the challenges that Warragamba Dam has to allow for environmental flows since this asset was built not for this purpose. The presentation also mentioned a number of projects and modelling tools that have been developed for parts of the Hawkesbury estuary to quantify flushing times, algal activity and nutrient deliveries from certain STPs.

5. CORRESPONDENCE and MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

ACTION 201424: Peter **Coad** to write to Sydney Water for information on reticulation capacity noting pressures on the capacity from our increasing population. **Completed:** Peter Coad was waiting for feedback from Chris Taylor's consultation workshops with Sydney Waters. Chris Taylor gave a summary on the consultation workshops with Sydney Waters as part of 'General Business' within this meeting. No actions were raised.

6. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Discussions about sewer arrangements at Kangaroo Point were included as requested by the committee. Minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting, Thursday 20th August 2016 were accepted, noting inclusions.
Accepted: Wendy **McMurdo** Carried: David **Miles**.

7. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LOWER HAWKESBURY ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Ana Rubio – Hornsby Shire Council

Slight change to the delivery of the progress report by Hornsby Shire Council was trialled at the meeting based on feedback received by the members through a survey undertaken in August 2015. A summary of actions and projects related to the implementation of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Plan undertaken from the last meeting was sent to members with the agenda for this meeting. HSC presentation focussed on a number of key points identified in the summary document: a) work undertaken at One Tree Reach Wetland, b) coming up community events and c) a summary of future projects that we will work on prior to the end of the financial year.

Foreshore Clean-up

- End of 2015 Clean4Shore program.
- Waiting for final stats that will be included in a report produced by Tangaroa Blue, the data repository organisation. 2016 Clean4Shore program will be co-funded by Greater Sydney Local Land Services, Gosford City Council and Hornsby Shire Council. Overall 12 trips in Hornsby LGA and 15 trips in Gosford LGA.
- 4x school presentations in the Hornsby area

Bush rehabilitation work

- Bush regeneration around Brooklyn Park, McKell Park and Kangaroo Point continues (OEH funded project)
- Dangar Beach – coastal reserve – planting took place last November. Ongoing monitoring. Assistance with watering from community members
- Floating Landcare event at Bar Island scheduled on 4th February had to be cancelled due to weather conditions. Contractors are currently working on Bar Island. Asset Protection Zone work around the graves
- Community education and bush regeneration event currently being organised by NPWS and partners at Milsons Passage, Date to be confirmed
- LLS funded project focusing on *Juncus acutus* currently being organised
- Preparation for burn control around Cunio Point, Berowra Ck

Mangrove Monitoring

- Mangrove health monitoring program continues.
- Specifically monitoring die-off downstream of Marlows Creek. RMS reported some mangrove clearing at Greenmans Valley Caravan Park, upstream Marlows Creek – Gosford Council notified.

Seagrass markers

- One seagrass buoy around the Dangar Island seagrass bed has been lost (western side)- currently being replaced by RMS.

One Tree Reach Wetland - hydrological and fish stock study update (Recreational Fishing Trust funds)

- Goal:
 - Understand the hydrologic processes of the wetland to ensure optimal management of the site to improve local fish stocks
- Outputs:
 - High resolution aerial photography = Digital elevation model – vegetation assessment
 - Quantification of hydrological processes

- Fish stock assessment
- Water quality monitoring
- 2x Education workshops
- Field investigations:
 - First round of field days took place in February & March
 - Water quality monitoring (pH, EC, DO etc) of the open water area of the lagoon during the bathymetric survey was collected
 - A Conductivity-Temperature-Depth (CTD) probe downstream of the weir and surveyed to AHD was deployed and left for 5 weeks
 - A water level logger at the observation platform in the wetland and surveyed to AHD was deployed and left for 5 weeks
 - The bathymetry of the main open water section of the wetland was surveyed
 - Soil profiles were collected to assess the extent of Acid Sulfate Soils
- Future work:
 - Complete a bathymetric survey of the southern open water area of the wetland;
 - Complete a drone survey;
 - Download water level/quality loggers;
 - Collect additional soil profile data;
 - Produce a complete DEM of the wetland;
 - Determine a storage volume relationship of the wetland;
 - Provide recommendations on management.

Water quality monitoring buoys

- On-going water quality monitoring via autonomous real-time monitoring stations at 6 locations along the salinity gradient between Wisemans Ferry and the estuary entrance.
- Laughtondale probe was dragged a 1km downstream with the flood water during the January's heavy rainfall. No major damaged occurred. Thanks to Mary Howard for keeping an eye on this probe
- Slightly higher than usual incidences of algal blooms were observed this year in Berowra Creek prior to Christmas with no causative agent identified.

Swimming condition

- Swimming condition thresholds being review at present as we have more locations and more data. Last review of the thresholds was undertaken in 2010

Estuary health index

- Overall estuarine health levels, as per OEH scores, ranged between 'Good' and 'Fair' throughout the year with improved scores during winter when overall turbidity levels are low and with worse scores during summer when chlorophyll-a levels tend to be higher

Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome

- New outbreak in Tasmania in January 2016
- HSC and University of Sydney researchers have been advising the Tasmania industry based on findings from research undertaken in the Hawkesbury and Georges Rivers

Future projects:

- Seagrass awareness phone application – in partnership with Macquarie University students (PACE program) – this project got cancelled in the last minute. Peter **Coad** asked Steve **Brown** if RMS might be looking at similar strategies to increase awareness of the location of seagrasses, but this is not the case.
- Review of toxic marine algal species to better informed management of algal blooms (UTS & HSC joint project). This project will assist with the management of algal blooms in the estuary

Community Events

- Boat field trip along the Hawkesbury for delegates of the 2016 International Coastal Symposium <http://ics2016.org> - 11th March
- Bush guided walk River: Boat, Walk & Talk – 21st May
- World Environment day 4th June – Berowra Community Centre – Plant giveaway

Tim Macdonald – Gosford City Council

Community-based Heritage Study

- Study was developed from recommendations by the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
- Community has work close to the consultant engaged to undertake project
- 215 heritage items are listed in Schedule-5 of the Gosford LEP
- Additional items have been identified as a result of their local significance

ACTION 201601: Tim **Macdonald**, Gosford City Council, to provide information on the Heritage Study to members, including link to the study. **Complete:** Information provided by Tim **Macdonald** 31/03/2016 (HSC REF D06916779)

ACTION 201602: Tim **Macdonald**, Gosford City Council, to confirm that Peat Island is listed in the Heritage Study. **Complete:** Information provided by Tim **Macdonald** 31/03/2016 (HSC REF D06916779)

Coastal Zone Management Plan

- Update on the implementation of the plan, in particular beach nourishment at Patonga Beach

ACTION 201603: Tim **Macdonald**, Gosford City Council, to provide weblink to members about the Gosford Beaches Coastal Zone Management Plan. **Complete:** Information provided by Tim **Macdonald** 31/03/2016 (HSC REF D06916779)

NSW Coastal Reforms

- Tim emphasized that Council is following closely the proposed changes to NSW Coastal reforms, in particular the initiative of replacing existing State Environment Planning Policies (SEPP 14 - Coastal Wetlands, SEPP 26 – Littoral Rainforests and SEPP 71 – Coastal Management) with a new Coastal SEPP
- Redefining the ‘coastal zone’ with new mapping and coastal ‘land use’ categories, however mapping looks confusing

Rebecca Mooy – Greater Sydney Local Land Services

- \$350K of funding available across a number of Sydney Councils on bush regeneration
- Community funding – National Landcare – 2016 Clean4Shore project for 15 months (15 trips in Gosford and 12 in Hawkesbury)
- Pittwater YHI – weed removal including kayaking trip
- Emergency chemical oil spill in waterways - training
- Demonstration Farm in Richmond: composting, manure re-use, etc
- Bobbin Head – Fishing Event
- 60 floating Landcare activities planned
- Promotional You-tube video shown on Floating Landcare

Tegan Burton – National Parks and Wildlife Services

- Funding provided by GSLLS to work in partnership with Hornsby Council and communities in Milsons Passage, Milsons Island and Bar Island
- Clean-up event as part of Clean-up Australia Day at Gentlemans Halt – Floating Landcare
- Bushcare camp at Marramarra Creek – internal grant

Andy Myers – Oceanwatch Australia – no report – representative was absent

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Amalgamations

Peter **Coad** informed members of the intention to continue with the LHEMP Committee however there is uncertainty in the process towards amalgamations. Currently Hornsby Shire Council is waiting for government responses on potential amalgamations with Kuring-Gai Council. Ana **Rubio** will keep members informed about any updates.

Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment

A number of members and representatives from both councils attended the March workshops for the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment. Members were encouraged to review document and consider sending individual submissions.

Coastal Reforms

This topic was discussed during the Gosford City Council's report. Members are encouraged to update themselves with the proposed long-term strategy for the coordinated management of the coastal zone. Draft Coastal Management Bill and Draft Coastal Management Manual can be downloaded from <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/coastreforms.htm>

Sydney Water Community Workshops update

Chris **Taylor** gave an update on the numerous meetings and workshops that he has attended lately with Sydney Water in regards to their facilities and sewage facility upgrades around Sydney. Chris had the opportunity of visiting facilities at Brookvale, Cooks River and Georges River. In each area they have different systems to deal with sewer under dry conditions, overflows and stormwater/wastewater. Sydney Water is concerned about the increased wastewater going through the reticulation pipes as a result of the significant increase in number of units in Sydney. Sydney Water is also assessing the possibility of reusing water to meet increase demand of drinking water.

Resignations

Two members sent their resignations: Harry Recher and Hjamal Phillip.

ACTION 201604: LHEMP Committee to send letter to Harry Recher and Hjamal Phillip thanking them for their time and contributions to the group. **Complete:** Letters have been sent.

Brooklyn Master Plan

Currently under consultation

Tenders were received in December 2015 and Council considered a report on the outcomes of the Tender evaluation at its meeting on 13 April 2016. Council resolved not accept any tender and negotiate with Elton Consulting and McGregor Coxall to arrive at a lump sum tender price. Next meeting is scheduled on 11th May. Further information <http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/council/major-projects/brooklyns-future-a-community-survey>

Other Business

- **Richmond Air Force**

Mary **Howard** was wondering if anyone had information about the firefighting foam chemicals used by the Richmond Air Force located close to the shores of the Hawkesbury. This was raised as a result of the contamination event of the Hunter River from similar contaminants used by the Williamstown Air Force base. Mick Pattison from Hawkesbury City Council provided an update on this:

1. Have the Richmond RAAF use the firefighting foam at the base in the past? Defence began using Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) containing Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) for firefighting in the 1970s, and phased out its use in firefighting training between 2004 and 2011.
2. If so has the foam been used recently during a fire or practice operation? AFFF containing PFOS and PFOA has not been used recently at RAAF Base Richmond.
3. If the foam is used, are there any plans to stop using the chemical based on the findings of the inquiry from the Hunter River incident? AFFF containing PFOS and PFOA is no longer used for firefighting practice.

ACTION 201605: Mick **Pattison**, Hawkesbury City Council, to share information with members provided by the Richmond Air Force on the use of chemicals in their facility. Members can contact the Richmond Air Force directly if they require further information on this topic. **Complete:** Information provided by Mick **Pattison** 18/03/2016 (HSC REF D06907727)

- **Signs on the Fishing Industry history**

Mary **Howard** enquiry about the opportunity of putting signs at Brooklyn, Wisemans Ferry and Patonga about the history of the local Fishing Industry. Some information on this topic will be developed through the UTS socio-economic study of the NSW wild fishing industry. Hornsby Shire Council is waiting for the appropriate theme-based funding to cover cost. In addition Gosford City Council mentioned that there might be opportunities through the team working on the Heritage Study.

ACTION 201606: Tim **Macdonald**, Gosford City Council, to provide Council staff contact details to Mary Howard who might be willing to work with industry on signs. **Complete:** Information by Tim **Macdonald** 31/03/2016 (HSC REF D06916779)

- **Future Meetings**

Next meeting to be held 19th May

8. CLOSE There being no further business the meeting closed at 21:00