
Minutes of the 35th Meeting of the
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee
Thursday 24th May 2018
Brooklyn Community Centre
2-4 Dangar Rd, Brooklyn

| Title | Family Name | Given Name | Representation | Present | Apologies | Absent | Alternate Rep. |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|---|----------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Mr | ANDREWS | John | Mooney-Mooney Progress Association | X | | | |
| Mr | BROWN | Warren | Central Coast Council | | X | | |
| Mr | BROWN | Stephen | Roads and Maritime Authority | | | X | |
| Mr | BURNS | David | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Ms | BURTON | Tegan | National Parks & Wildlife | | X | | |
| Mr | FAIRBAIRN | Iain | Sydney Water Corporation | X | | | |
| Mr | FENWICK | Andrew | Fenwicks Marina | | X | | |
| Mr | FISH | Mike | Community Representative | | | X | |
| Ms | FRATER | Ray | NSW Bridge to Bridge Committee | | X | | |
| Dr | FREEWATER | Peter | Office of Environment & Heritage | X | | | |
| Ms | CONACHER | Sarah | Industry & Investment, Primary Industries Fishing & Aquaculture | X | | | |
| Ms | HOWARD | Mary | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Mr | HUGHES | David | Affiliate members - Community Representative | X | | | |
| Mr | KARCZ | Bronek | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Dr | LIM | Leong | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Mr | HAM | Peter | Central Coast Council | | X | | |
| Cr | MARR | Mick | Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council | X | | | |
| Mrs | MCDIARMID | Jill | Community Representative | | X | | Tim Irwin |
| Ms | MCMURDO | Wendy | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Mr | MILES | David | Boat Owners Association | X | | | |
| Ms | MOOY | Rebecca | Greater Sydney Local Land Services | | X | | |
| Mr | MOXHAM | Rob | Commercial Representative – Oysters Farmers | | | X | |
| Mr | PATTISON | Mick | Hawkesbury City Council | | X | | |
| Mr | PIGNEYGUY | Justin | Hawkesbury Cruises | X | | | |
| Mr | REES | Stan | Land and Property Management Authority | | X | | |
| Mr | ROWE | Simon | Oceanwatch Australia | | X | | |
| Dr | RUBIO | Ana | Hornsby Shire Council | X | | | |
| Mrs | RYLAND | Julie | Hornsby Shire Council | X | | | |
| Mr | SCARSBRICK | Brian | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Ms | SEGOVIA | Ingrid | Community Representative | X | | | |

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|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|--|----------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Ms | SHORTER | Cybele | Community Representative Dangar Island | X | | | |
| Mr | TAYLOR | Chris | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Ms | STUART | Suzanne | Hawkesbury City Council | | X | | |
| Cllr | TILBURY | Nathan | Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council | X | | | |
| Mr | VON ZELEWSKI | Axel | Community Representative | X | | | |
| Cr | WADDELL | Warren | Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council | X | | | |

1. WELCOME

Meeting opened at 18:10. Meeting was chaired by Cr **Waddell**. Cr **Waddell** welcomed Tim Irwin from the Lower Hawkesbury River Association which includes Little Wobby, Cogra Bay and Mullet Creek. Tim sat in the meeting on behalf of Jill McDiarmid who was an apology for the night. Cr **Waddell** also welcome Sarah Conacher from NSW DPI Fisheries who will be the representative for her organisation in this committee from now onwards.

2. APOLOGIES

Warren Brown, Tegan Burton, Andrew Fenwick, Ray Frater, Peter Ham, Jill McDiarmid, Bec Mooy, Mick Pattison, Stan Rees, Simon Rowe and Suzanne Stuart.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No pecuniary interest was declared

4. PRESENTATION:

Sarah Conacher from NSW DPI Fisheries presented information on a number of projects that her department is currently involved relating directly or indirectly to the Lower Hawkesbury. Her presentation covered the followed projects:

- Fisheries gets involved in development applications related to but not limited to:
 - Bank stabilisation (revegetation a preferred option versus seawalls, enhancement of fish habitat)
 - Water crossing designs, enhancement of fish passage
 - Moorings (away from seagrass areas, transition to environmentally friendly moorings, trial of in-line float on block and chain mooring)

ACTION 201801: Mary **Howard** requested an aerial photo of Pittwater showing comparison between the old mooring with the new mooring showing the improvement on seagrass beds. **COMPLETE:** Sarah **Conacher** from NSW DPI Fisheries sent Mary Howard the aerial photo requested (HSC TRIM D07453294, D07470797)

- Marine Estate Management Authority (MEMA). The statewide Threat and Risk Assessment (TARA) final report published in website in October 2017 <https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/key-initiatives/threat-and-risk-assessment>
Anyone can put their name on the stakeholder database to be informed about this project. Draft Marine Estate Management Strategy (MEMS) developed in 2017 responding to threats identify in TARA. Once finalised and released MEMS will be in place for 10 years – send your feedback <https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/key-initiatives/marine-estate-management-strategy>
The draft Strategy includes eight management initiatives:
 - Improving water quality and reducing litter
 - Sustainable coastal use and development for healthy habitats
 - Planning for a changing climate
 - Protecting the cultural values of the marine estate
 - Reducing impacts on wildlife
 - Sustainable fishing and aquaculture
 - Enabling safe and sustainable boating
 - Improving governance and enhancing social and economic benefits

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- Introduction to fisheries public webportal that contains information on macrophytes, freshwater fish (threaten species and communities); aquaculture and marine protected areas <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/science-and-research/spatial-data-portal>
Once you follow the link, scroll down the page and click the big blue button that says ‘Launch the Fisheries spatial data portal’.
It’ll take a few minutes to load up.
Once you’re in, click on the ‘map layers’ button on the top left. This will display all the map layers down the left hand side of the screen. You can then turn these layers on/off depending on what you want to view.
 - Habitat restoration projects:
 - Riparian vegetation and fencing off livestock in private land on Wheeny Creek
 - Weeding and Riparian veg in partnership with Bass Sydney Fishing Club on Crown Lands at Emu Plains
 - Current research projects
 - Sydney Rock Oyster – QX disease resistant triploids
Breeding program to produce QX-resistant Sydney Rock Oysters has been running for a number of years. Currently the stock being produced from the breeding program will have 70% survival by 2020. In addition, the research team at fisheries is working on producing a QX disease resistant triploid with the goal of reaching market 6 months earlier than diploids, hold meat condition longer and reduce winter mortality by half. Commercial trials will be sent to industry members including growers from the Hawkesbury
 - New species of oyster discovered in Richmond Estuary?
A native oyster has been found on the foreshore of the Richmond River. Currently awaiting for genetic identification as morphological aspect is misleading the identification. This oyster has been found to perform well close to cultivated Sydney Rock Oysters that have died as a result of QX and other environmental stressors typical of the area. The Port Stephens Fisheries research centre have bred this oyster in their hatchery and produced successfully 200,000 spat which have now been returned to the Richmond River. Commercial trials will be undertaken at a number of NSW estuaries in the North Coast, at Port Stephens and in the Hawkesbury River

ACTION 201802: Ana **Rubio** to contact NSW DPI Aquaculture team to ensure that stock from the Richmond River Oyster batch reaches the Hawkesbury Oyster Growers. **COMPLETE:** Ana Rubio got confirmation from the NSW DPI Aquaculture that the stock will be sent to the Hawkesbury growers by the end of June (HSC TRIM D07453278)

- Mulloway Lordosis
-Recent reports of deformed mulloway in the Hawkesbury- fish needs to be tested and samples are required – fisheries is working with commercial and recreational fishers
-Lordosis can have a range of causes including hereditary, environmental (change in water temperature at birth) or infectious (e.g. parasites)
-the parasite involved is not directly transmitted between fish as it requires an alternative host
- Mulloway Stock Enhancement Program
Fisheries are maintaining wild broodstock at their fisheries centre in Port Stephens. They have tried to spawn them – unsuccessful attempts lately. The goal is to stock Botany Bay, Lake Macquarie and St Georges Basin
- Eastern King Prawn habitat – an update will be provided at next meeting
- School Prawn habitat - an update will be provided at next meeting
- Impacts of oyster cultivation on seagrass - an update will be provided at next meeting

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- Operation Crayweed: Restoring Sydney's underwater forests (UNSW) - an update will be provided at next meeting
 - Estimated value of fisheries harvest supported by saltmarsh and mangrove habitats - an update will be provided at next meeting

Committee representatives brought up the current densities of brown jellyfishes present in the estuary at the moment – what is causing the increased numbers and if this is an emerging issue as it is impacting on swimmers due to minor stinging.

ACTION 201803: Ana **Rubio** to contact jellyfish researcher Kylie Pitt to share committee concerns about the potential increase in jellyfish densities in the Lower Hawkesbury. **COMPLETE:** Ana Rubio approached jellyfish researcher who shared some information about the jellyfish species that tend to occur in the Hawkesbury including observation data that can be gathered in order to assist with the enquiry (HSC TRIM D07455506)

Iain **Fairbairn** from Sydney Water also gave a quick summary presentation on the community consultation undertaken as part of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Nutrient Modelling project. The following points were raised:

- Upgrades of wastewater treatment plants (WWTP) have reduced discharge of total nitrogen and phosphorus by over 75% and 90% respectively whilst flows doubled to cater for the growing population
- WWTPs make up the majority of the point source discharges into the Hawkesbury-Nepean River (20-30%). The other 80-70% is a result of diffuse source nutrient run-off which is unregulated
- EPA is managing the level of nutrient input in to the Hawkesbury
- New WWTP will be built in accordance to the significant urban growth expected in western Sydney
- Sydney Water is looking at potential nutrient management pilot projects such as stormwater initiatives, wetlands, bank stabilisation, etc
- Sydney Water is also looking at off-set projects. These projects do not need to be on Sydney Water's land but they would need to be implemented in the same river zone as where the issue is present. Examples: maintenance of catchment remediation devices (current Council operational projects)
- Community feedback:
 - Support for diffuse pollution projects as offsets
 - Expectations that Sydney Water continues to improve WWTP
 - Concerns regarding lack of regulation and/or enforcement of diffuse pollution
 - Councillors are supporting the build/upgrade of raingardens along roads
 - Overall concerns about soil/sediment erosion and stormwater treatment
 - Sydney Water have discussed with developers the need for stronger sediment controls, both agreed there it is a problem
- Consultation undertaken with Aboriginal Land Council as they are the largest landholder in Western Sydney
- Final report summarising the community consultation is scheduled for July 2018

ACTION 201804: Mary **Howard** requested information from Sydney Water about the location of the new WWTP and the volumes per day of the St Mary's WWTP into the Hawkesbury-Nepean River. **PENDING:** (HSC TRIM XXXX)

A comment was raised from Mary **Howard** notifying the committee that last year the commercial fishers had one of the best years in regards to catch numbers and size of the catch upstream of Wisemans Ferry despite of the lack of rain and current flows.

5. CORRESPONDENCE and MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

ACTION 201709: Ana **Rubio** to approach the Environment Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission to attend an upcoming LHEMP Committee meeting. **On-going:** The Environment Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission has been contacted and tentatively accepted our invitation to present at one of our meetings (HSC TRIM D07285448, D07295443). Apologies have been received for the meetings scheduled on November 2017, March 2018 and May 2018. Mr Simpson has expressed his interest in hearing how the group is working aligning with Coastal policy, MEMA, the Lower Hawkesbury River Nutrient Management Plan and any other water, fisheries and recreational boating plans (HSC TRM D07387943). The August 2018 meeting date is on Mr Simpson's calendar. Closer to the time we will hear about his availability

ACTION 201711: The Committee raised concerns about the potential environmental impact on the estuary from the illegal dumping in the Spencer area. **On-going:** Central Coast Council to provide an update to the committee on actions put in place to minimise any potential impacts on the estuary from the illegal dumping at Spencer. In particular information is required about who would undertake the remediation work, what will involve and how long will it take to do the remediation work

Correspondence:

- **3/April/2018-** new planning policy for coastal management starts (SEPP and Coastal Manual)
- **10/April/2018** – Offer of assistance received from Bar Point residents to assist with Bar Isl headstone restoration
- **2/May/2018** – Commercial fishers/ Wildcaught Coalition reported cases of Lordosis in Mulloway caught. Enquiry passed on to DPI Fisheries who advised fish to get tested
- **9/May/2018** - Derelict boat at upstream of Mullet Ck by Jill McDiarmid/LHRRRA
- **9/May/2018** – Problems with Kangaroo Point Pump-out reported and solved in 2 days
- **15/May/2018** – Opportunity to screen the OYSTER film through DemandFilm. Discussions with the Brooklyn Progress Association
- **19/May/2018** – Opportunity to submit article to Brooklyn's Gateway Newsletter

6. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Acceptance of minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting on Thursday 22nd May 2018:

Accepted: Brian **Scarsbrick**

Carried: Cr **Tilbury.**

7. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LOWER HAWKESBURY ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Hornsby Shire Council

Summary of implemented actions and projects was sent with the agenda of the meeting. A couple of points were mentioned in more detail at this meeting:

- Whole of Hawkesbury River/Estuary Coastal Management Program (CMP). Currently waiting for Northern Beaches Council to decide whether they are interested in being part of

this overarching program. The plan is to apply for OEH funding to develop a Scoping Study. Current timeframe is end of June. The scoping study will involve:

- Strategic context for coastal management
 - Purpose, vision and objectives of the CMP
 - Scope- issues, areas, including maps of relevant CMAs
 - Review of current management practices and arrangements
 - Identification of roles and responsibilities
 - Risk assessment to identify where action is required
 - Stakeholder and community engagement
 - Preliminary business case
 - Implementation plan including timeframes
- Bar Island Grave Restoration – work will start in May. Specialised consultants have been selected. Headstones will be picked up from site and restore off-site. Security cameras will also be installed. Once the work is completed a number of community days will be organised on site
 - McKell Park sandstone steps are now completed. 99 new steps connect lower with upper McKell Park. Contractors engaged did a very good job
 - Water quality investigation along Berowra Creek currently underway- assessment of quality of sewer infrastructure (overflow points) and bacteriological sampling during dry flow conditions. Two areas have been discussed and currently being remediated by Sydney Water at Cockle Creek and Jimmy Banks Creek.
 - New swimming signs have been installed at Crosslands reserve to inform swimmers of current conditions by directing them to the new webportal <http://www.mhlfit.net/users/HornsbyShireCouncil/>
 - Council in partnership with greater Sydney LLS will fund Clean4Shore for undertaking 10 clean-up activities which will involve a larger education component and we are hoping to engage new schools in Hornsby Shire. Please help us promoting this project among high schools
 - A ‘Hawkesbury Saltmarsh experience’ boat trip took place on 24th March with 27 residents. The trip had: 1) an education component about the importance of saltmarsh ecosystems, 2) a historical & on-ground works component in regards to background about the area and vegetation management undertaken in particular about lantana and 3) litter collection. The activity was undertaken in partnership with Greater Sydney LLS and NPWS

Central Coast Council – no report as they were an apology

National Parks and Wildlife Service - no report as they were an apology

Greater Sydney Local Land Service – they were an apology but a report was sent through to be read in the meeting and included in the minutes:

2018 Floating Landcare

- In 2018 there have been 5 Floating Landcare trips held of the 15 activities on the calendar. The Bushcare camp on Berowra Creek run in partnership with NPWS, Hornsby Council and Willow Warriors was a great success with 22 volunteers participating over the weekend.
- The trip to Peats Bight was postponed due to strong winds and will now be held on Saturday 16th June 2018.
- All activities so far have had participation form and average of 18 volunteers per trip
- There was also a Floating Landcare activity in Woy Woy Bay in March coordinated by Deb Holloman.

So far in 2018 for Floating Landcare.....

Floating Landcare the movie!

- [Floating Landcare Video](#)
- The video was produced following filming and production by Vera Hong. The interviews of 4 volunteers, NPWS Ranger Sue Guthrie and myself took place on Spectacle Island in late February.
- The video has had 255 views to date on the Greater Sydney LLS Youtube channel.
- The video is aimed at enticing more volunteering in the estuary and potentially attract some corporate sponsorship to keep the Program afloat.

Funding from GSLLS for the Hawkesbury Estuary and Pittwater

- Projects in the planning:
 - Floating Landcare 2019
 - Estuary community environmental engagement series
 - Lott Cottage bushland restoration, Singleton Road, Marramarra National Park
- Funded projects approved and agreements in the process of being signed up:
 - OEH NPWS: \$14 000 Berowra Creek restoration of Saltmarsh and Swamp Oak Forest
 - OEH NPWS: \$20 000 towards restoration of Themeda grasslands on West head and the beach vegetation at the base of West Head.
 - Hornsby Council: \$20 000 towards the next stage of restoration of the vegetation communities along SaltPan Creek at SaltPan Reserve Brooklyn.
 - Clean4shore: \$10 000 for Clean4shore to carry out 10 cleanups engaging school students from High Schools in the Hornsby LGA with at least 5 Clean up activities including an education component delivered by Hornsby Council and GSLLS staff.
 - **TOTAL \$64 000 of government funds committed to NRM project**

GSLLS Funded projects currently underway

- Hornsby Council: \$20 000 to restore the native vegetation surrounding Fishponds waterhole on the Fishponds Walk track along Berowra Creek. This project will see professional bush regeneration contractors focus on woody weeds at the site and will engage the local community and Council staff in a couple of remote bushcare days at the waterhole.
- Central Coast Council: At Patonga GSLLS has funded an \$11 000 to assist the Patonga Bushcare group with Primary weed work on the dunes.
- Pittwater YHA: \$6000 to assist the YHA run 2 Envirofun weeding weekends with free overnight accommodation for volunteers during 2018. This is the 9th year of the YHA hosting these weekends. On average 60 volunteers participate each time the weekend is held working on Asparagus Fern removal from the Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest and Endangered Ecological Community. The first weekend was held in May 2018 and was a great success. The next weekend will be 24th to 26th August.
- OEH NPWS: \$15 000 for restoration of coastal saltmarsh at Mackerel Beach. The work by contractors is added to by Floating Landcare and Navy volunteers visiting the site annually
- OEH NPWS: \$15 000 for restoration of Littoral Rainforest EEC and Themeda Grassland.
- OEH NPWS: \$19 350. Crosslands and Calna Creek restoring the Saltmarsh and Swamp Oak forest at both sites. Due for completion in December 2018.
- **TOTAL \$86 350 of government funds committed to NRM projects**

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

Other Business

Lower Hawkesbury River Residents Association: Derelict boats in Mullet Creek

Three new derelict boats have been reported in Mullet Creek, one of them a 10-m length boat was secured to a mooring by RMS a few months ago. This boat is still there and committee members are questioning the approach that RMS would take to deal with this.

The Committee noticed that there has been no RMS representative attending the meetings lately. Stephen Brown who was the RMS representative in the committee is not working for RMS any longer. David Lyons is currently the contact in the mailing list.

It was also suggested that members can raise the issue write individually to the MPs raising

ACTION 201805: Ana **Rubio** to contact RMS/ David Lyons asking for clarification on who is the RMS representative on the committee. There is a need for a RMS representative as there is increasing number of boating issues in the Hawkesbury. **COMPLETE:** David Lyons confirmed he will be the RMS representative in the committee (HSC TRIM D07457453)

Justin Pigneyguy: Increasing impact on foreshore from boat wash

Increasing boat wash by large power boats has been observed lately impacting severely the areas of foreshore with mangroves (i.e. undercutting). The issue has been raised with David **Lyons**, the Hawkesbury estuary Boating Safety Officer when seeking for penalties and enforcement. It seems that RMS can only enforce an offence if the activity is unsafe to other vessels or boaters but not if the impact is on an environmentally protected vegetation community.

It was also suggested whether a No Wash Zone could be assessed for the area between Dangar and Spencer. Education effort among boaters might bring awareness among boaters in the Hawkesbury. This issue will be raised with the RMS representative of the committee.

Mary Howard: dumping of large quantities of fertilizer in private land around Wisemans and road safety on Singleton road

The EPA and Hornsby Shire Council have been managing a case of truck dumping large quantities of fertilizer on private property along Singleton road which could have had significant impacts on the estuary due to low-lying land. In addition, large trucks were involved in this activity that were operated at high speed making the road unsafe for drivers and pedestrians. Mary would like to bring awareness of the safety aspect of allowing large trucks to use Singleton Road

Future Meetings

Next meetings in 2018 are scheduled on:

-23rd Aug

-22nd Nov

You can access information on meeting dates and previous minutes from

<http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/environment/water-catchments/hawkesbury-estuary/lower-hawkesbury-estuary-management-committee-meetings>

CLOSE

Meeting closed at 8:30pm