
Minutes of the 12th meeting of the
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee
Thursday 24th May, 2012
Brooklyn Community Centre
2-4 Dangar Rd, Brooklyn

Title	Family Name	Given Name	Representatio n	Present	Apologies	Absent	Alternate Rep.
Mr	ANDREWS	John	Mooney-Cheero Progress Association	X			
Mr	BERGMAN	Peter	Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service			X	
Mr	BLACK	Steve	NSW Transport Roads and Maritime Services		X		
Prof.	BOOTH	David	University of Technology Sydney & Sydney Institute of Marine Sciences	X			
Mr	BROWN	Warren	Gosford City Council		X		
Mr	GREEN	Marcel	Industry & Investment, Primary Industries Fishing & Aquaculture			X	
Ms	COLLINS	Emma	Community Representative			X	
Ms	MARVELL	Cheryl	Sydney Water Corporation		X		
Mr	FENWICK	Andrew	Fenwicks Marina	X			
Ms	FIELD	Melanie	NSW Food Authority		X		
Mr	FISH	Mike	Community Representative		X		
Ms	FRATER	Melissa	NSW Bridge to Bridge Committee	X			
Cllr	FREEWATER	Peter	Gosford City Council			X	
Ms	HOWARD	Mary	Community Representative	X			
Hon	LLOYD	Jim	Mooney-Cheero Progress Association		X		
Mr	MACDONALD	Tim	Gosford City Council	X			
Cllr	MCMURDO	Wendy	Hornsby Shire Council	X			
Mr	MICHOS	Arthur	Office of Environment & Heritage			X	
Mr	MILES	David	Boat Owners Association	X			
Ms	MOOY	Rebecca	Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority		X		
Mr	NORINGTON	Rolf	Hawkesbury River District Fishermans Co-operative	Observer			
Mr	PIGNEYGUY	Justin	Hawkesbury Cruises		X		
Emer. Prof.	RECHER	Harry	Community Representative	X			
Mr	REES	Stan	Land and Property Management Authority	X			
Mr	ROWE	Simon	Oceanwatch Australia		X		
Ms	RUBIO-ZUAZO	Ana	Community Representative	X			
Cllr	RUSSELL	Steve	Hornsby Shire Council		X		
Ms	SEGOVIA	Ingrid	Community Representative	X			
Mr	STUBBS	John	Broken Bay Oysters Association		X		
Mr	VON ZELEWSKI	Axel	Community Representative	X			

1. WELCOME

Cllr **McMurdo** welcomed Dave Beharrell, Team Leader - Catchment Remediation, Hornsby Shire Council, Amanda Cashion, Gosford City Council and Leong Lim as an observer from Milsons Point.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from:

Steve Black, Cheryl Marvel, Melanie Field, Mike Fish, Jim Lloyd, Rebecca Mooy, Justin Pigneguy, Simon Rowe, John Stubbs, and Warren Brown.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Wendy McMurdo declared a non-financial interest, as a resident of Dangar Island, in Item A of General Business – Dangar Island Rock Spit Protection.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING AND CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence:

No committee correspondence received.

Matters arising from previous meeting, 22nd March 2012:

MOTION 201201: That the minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting Thursday 24th November 2011, should be accepted. **Complete.**

MOTION 201202: That the Team Leader – Estuary Management request Sydney Water present to the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee the results from the dye testing and the implications for plant design and performance. **Ongoing.**

ACTION 201203: That the Team Leader – Estuary Management request the Water Keeper present to the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee.

A request was sent to the Waterkeeper however a response was not received in time for this meeting, Peter **Coad** will follow up for the next meeting. **Ongoing.**

ACTION 201204: The Team Leader – Estuary Management to request information from National Parks regarding the management of local Aboriginal artwork.

Peter Bergman, National Parks, was expected to attend this meeting. Peter **Coad** will follow this up for the next meeting. **Ongoing.**

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting, Thursday 22nd March, 2012 were accepted.

MOTION 201205: That the minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting Thursday 22nd March 2012, should be accepted. Moved by David **Miles** seconded by Harry **Recher**. Carried unanimously.

6. PRESENTATION

Amanda Cashion – Gosford City Council, update on the Priority Sewage Program

- Strategic Options Study completed in November 2011
- Locations considered:
 - o Little Wobby
 - o Patonga Creek
 - o Bar Point
- Study objectives were to:
 - o Consider a range of cost-effective sewage management system options
 - o Develop each option to enable comparison on the basis of economic, environmental and social outcomes and with consideration of the project objectives, project criteria and existing operational environment
 - o Select a preferred option
- Study methodology involved:
 - o Compiling a long list of possible servicing options, including “do-nothing”
 - o Reviewing the long list of options against mandatory criteria in order to generate a short list of options
 - o Short listed options assessed against desirable sustainability criteria that looked at operational, social, economic and environmental impacts
- Community consultation undertaken in October 2011
- Conclusions:
 - o Patonga Creek should proceed on the basis of community support and potential impacts
 - o Little Wobby and Bar Point should not proceed on the following basis:
 - Low level of interest in connecting and paying the estimated contribution charge
 - Very expensive schemes with estimated contribution charges of over \$30,000 for Little Wobby and 50% of Bar Point owners
 - Extreme construction difficulty due to topography, geotechnical conditions and remote location. Little Wobby in particular is a very restricted and unstable site
 - High risks of operation due to remote locations
 - More opportunity for river to disperse and dilute and sewage discharge than at Patonga Creek
 - High cost/benefit ratio
- Discussion was held regarding:
 - o Weightings in the multicriteria analysis
 - o Information provided regarding the ongoing costs and differences between systems
 - o Options for wastewater to be treated and reused
 - o Differences between the communities and their willingness to connect
 - o The potential increase in development opportunities in sewered areas
 - o Restrictions encountered due to grant funding conditions

ACTION 201206: Tim Macdonald, Gosford City Council, to update the LHEM Committee on the progress of the Mooney Mooney and Cheero Point connection to the Brooklyn Wastewater Treatment Plant.

David Beharrell – Hornsby Shire Council, Catchment Remediation Program.

- History of the program:
 - o 1993 – response to water degradation and algal blooms
 - o 1994 – Technical working party and Statement of Joint Intent (SOJI)
 - o 1994 – Council resolved to levy a Catchment Remediation Rate (2%)
 - o 1995 – 5 year Catchment Remediation Program initiated
 - o 1997 – CRR levy increased from 2% to 5%
- Capital expenditure:
 - o Gross pollutant traps/devices
 - o Sediment basins
 - o Creek remediation
 - o Wetlands
 - o Bioretention
 - o Leachate treatment
 - o Stormwater harvesting
- Non-capital expenditure:
 - o Asset maintenance
 - o Asset renewal and repair
 - o Street sweeping
 - o Water quality monitoring
 - o Environmental studies and research
 - o Community education programs
 - o Catchment tours
- Annual Reports available at www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/crr
- Discussion held regarding:
 - o Disposal of material collected in the devices. Material is currently being taken to landfill.
 - o How program actions are prioritised.
 - o The possibility the captured water in harvesting devices may influence environmental flows. This is not the case at the moment.
 - o If the capture and removal of organic waste is impacting on natural systems. Most devices are in urbanised areas with highly modified creeks. Excess organic matter in these location can cause issues such as eutrophication.

7. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LOWER HAWKESBURY ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Peter Coad – Hornsby Shire Council

Office of Environment & Heritage grant submissions

- Kangaroo Point seawall and foreshore rehabilitation (\$80 000)
- Kangaroo Point to Seymours Creek boardwalk (\$262 120)
- Environmental status of sediments in the Hawkesbury estuary (\$70 000)
- Real time estuarine health monitoring in the Hawkesbury estuary (55 000)
- No further information on the success or otherwise of the applications

Brooklyn Public School Bar Island Trip

- Supported by the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority
- 17 students from years 5 & 6, Brooklyn Public School
- Information booklet developed with Tom Richmond distributed to students

Surf Lifesaving Clean Up

- 10 clean up days since the March meeting
- Volunteers from
 - o Brisbane Water Secondary College “Special Ed Unit” and “The Croft”
 - o MacMasters Beach Surf Life Saving Club
 - o Terrigal High School Gold Duke of Edinburgh
 - o Rowland Hassall Special Needs School
- Support received from
 - o Hornsby Shire Council
 - o Gosford City Council
 - o Hawkesbury Nepean CMA
 - o National Parks & Wildlife Service
 - o Broken Bay & Brisbane Waters oyster farmers
 - o Department of Sport & Recreation
- Locations visited include
 - o Brisbane Waters
 - o Woy Woy Bay
 - o Tallow Beach
 - o Hawkesbury River (Brooklyn, Mooney Mooney, Little Wobby, Milsons Island, Tank Creek)

Real time temperature and salinity mapping

- Interactive site operational
- Explanatory text being written
- Access to data from probes, rainfall and tide gauges

Kangaroo Point Pumpout Facility

- 620 007L pumped out since 2008
- 72 366L pumped out for this year
- Wed 4th April – phone line cut during construction at Kangaroo Point (this took approximately 3 weeks to repair)
- Assistance from Luxury Afloat with re-setting the system
- Discussion with regular commercial users regarding potential improvements. All feedback was good

Estuarine and migratory bird surveys

- Surveys completed by Peter and Judy Smith
- Focused on large farm dams, intertidal mud flats and upper reaches
- Most survey effort has been around Wisemans Ferry and the rural areas
- Many sea eagles and common water birds
- Draft report due in July 2102

Mary **Howard** noted that at this time of year there are normally Leatherhead/Fryer birds in the Mahoganies, currently it is full of lorikeets. There are also huge numbers of lorikeets at Epping station.

World Migratory Bird Day

- Two cruises from Brooklyn to Bar Island (40 per cruise)
- Held on Sunday 13th May 2012
- Theme for 2012 was “*Migratory birds and people – together through time*”

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- Welcome to Country on Bar Island by Laurie Bimson, a direct descendant of the local Guringai Tribe
 - An ochre ceremony and presentation by National Parks Discovery Ranger, Les McLeod
 - A presentation on local birds and migratory birds by ornithologist Professor Harry Recher

Tim Macdonald – Gosford City Council

- GCC are undertaking wetland education with the Hawkesbury Nepean CMA during the development of the Wetland Management Plan
- Coastal Hanging Swamps have recently been listed as Ecologically Endangered Communities (EEC) providing them with improved protection
- GCC runs an Eco Grant program to support research that will fill current knowledge gaps. \$5000 was provided for freshwater aquatic biodiversity surveys to assist the Australian Crayfish project. Electronic copies of this research report are available via Gosford City Council website
<http://www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/environment/education/working-ecological-research-grants-past-project-reports>.

ACTION 201207: Peter Coad, Team Leader – Estuary Management, to distribute Gosford City Council’s biodiversity surveys to interested committee members.

Rebecca Mooy – Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority

Local coastal and estuary community group grants from Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA

- 36 projects funded in HNCMA area since 2010
- Funds available for 2012/13 financial year
- Expressions of interest invited in the near future

Capacity building and awareness raising events

- Asparagus Fern Out at Morning Bay
 - o Friday 20th – Sunday 22nd April
 - o Pittwater YHA
- Love the River Campaign
 - o Saturday 19th May
 - o Volunteer celebration event to wrap up the project
 - o www.cen.org.au/projects/lovetheriver
- Bar Island School Visit
 - o Tuesday 8th May
 - o Tom Richmond, HSC and Brooklyn Public School
- Asparagus Fern Out at North Palm Beach
 - o Saturday 12th May
 - o Included a tour of Barrenjoey Lighthouse

Healthy Waterways = Better Boating, More Fish

- Presentations by DPI and HNCMA to:
 - o Penrith Panthers Fishing Club
 - o Ryde Underwater Club
 - o Newport Arms Fishing Club
- HNCMA looking for more fishing groups to present to, contact Rebecca Mooy if you would like to organise a presentation, rebecca.mooy@hncma.nsw.gov.au.

Successful funding bids announced for HNCMA

- Biodiversity Fund Round 1 – Australian Government – Clean Energy Futures
 - o HNCMA – Enhance condition & connectivity of native vegetation in the Blue Mountains \$2,500,000
 - o HNCMA – Enhance condition & connectivity of native vegetation in Nepean sub catchment \$2,533,000
- Other Biodiversity Fund Round 1 projects in the Lower Hawkesbury Nepean
 - o Hawkesbury Council - \$600,000 – Hawkesbury River biodiversity restoration project
 - o The Hills Council - \$2,345,000 – restoring the headwaters to Cattai Creek
 - o Western Sydney Parklands Trust - \$2,263,000 – Bush regeneration and revegetation
 - o Private Landowner in the MacDonald - \$175,700 – river restoration work
- NSW Environmental Trust – 2 Year Projects
 - o 2011 Environmental Restoration and Rehabilitation – state and local government grants
 - o HNCMA - \$89,380 – optimising revegetation management for regent honeyeater recovery in the Capertee Valley
 - o HNCMA - \$71,425 – Workers on Water (WOW) – Floating Landcare in the Hawkesbury estuary

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Dangar Island rocky spit protection

Harry **Recher** suggested that more effort was required by Council to control unleashed and uncontrolled dogs. Dangar Island residents use the area for exercising dogs despite signs saying no dogs allowed on the beach. The area has been identified in vegetation and fauna surveys to be the most significant area in the lower Hawkesbury for estuarine and migratory birds.

Discussion was held regarding:

- Strategies other councils have adopted
- The possibility of physically restricting the area through planting
- Difficulties faced by GCC when revisiting their dog policy
- Residents being responsible dog owners in general i.e. picking up waste, complying with no dog areas, barking dogs etc.

MOTION 201208: Peter **Coad**, Team Leader – Estuary Management, to report to the LHEM Committee on actions undertaken to reduce dogs on Bradleys Beach. Options to consider include writing to Dangar Island residents, increased compliance and improved signage. Moved by Harry **Recher**, seconded by David **Miles**. Carried unanimously.

B. Other business

2012 Bridge to Bridge

With the 2012 Bridge to Bridge Ski Classic approaching it would be appropriate for a representative to address the LHEM Committee at the next meeting.

ACTION 201209: Melissa **Frater** to report to the LHEM Committee on preparation being undertaken for the 2012 Bridge to Bridge race.

Little Wobby Beach Restoration

Leong **Lim** noted that there is community interest to restore the beach at Little Wobby. The land belongs to NSW Sport and Recreation, not Gosford City Council.

Litter in the Hawkesbury

Harry **Recher** noted a large amount of the litter in the river at Refuge Bay. Is this due to the removal of the garbage barge? Harry **Recher** also noted that Gauslaa and his team have provided great service removing large rubbish items and debris resulting from the recent flood events.

ACTION 201210: The LHEM Committee to write a letter of thanks to the Gauslaas for their efforts in supporting Graham Johnson and cleaning up the Hawkesbury River.

ACTION 201211: NSW Maritime to respond at the next LHEM Committee meeting to concerns that rubbish in Refuge Bay had increased since the removal of the garbage barge.

MacMasters Beach SLSC Clean-Up

Discussion was held regarding how GCC, HSC and the CMA can best support Graham Johnston in his clean up efforts. Beaurepairs Hornsby recently collected approximately 20 tyres collected by Graham Johnston and his team from Parsley Bay and also covered the disposal cost.

ACTION 201212: The LHEM Committee to write a letter of thanks to Beaurepairs Hornsby for their assistance in removing tyres from the Hawkesbury River estuary.

Impact of the floods on weeds

Stan **Rees** asked whether there was a noticeable impact of flooding on weed distribution. Wendy **McMurdo** noted the presence of balloon vine on Dangar Island during periods of wet weather. Harry **Recher** noted that an increase in weeds was evident but generally the return of saltwater kept it under control. Mary **Howard** noted that *Aegeria densa* is impacting on commercial trawlers in the river.

C. Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee will be held 6pm, Thursday 23rd August 2012, at the Brooklyn Community Centre.

9. CLOSE

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:20 pm.