
Minutes of the 6th meeting of the
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee
Thursday 25th November, 2010
Brooklyn Community Centre
2-4 Dangar Rd, Brooklyn

ATTENDANCE

John Andrews	Community Representative
Steve Black	NSW Maritime Authority
Warren Brown	Gosford City Council
Peter Coad	Hornsby Shire Council
Melanie Field	NSW Food Authority
Mike Fish	Community Representative
Melissa Frater	NSW Bridge to Bridge Committee
Kristy Guise	Hornsby Shire Council
Mary Howard	Community Representative
Tim Macdonald	Gosford City Council
Wendy McMurdo	Chair - Hornsby Shire Council
Justin Pigneguy	Hawkesbury River Cruises
Harry Recher	Community Representative
Simon Rowe	Ocean Watch Australia
Ana Rubio-Zuazo	Community Representative
Ingrid Segovia	Community Representative
Axel von Zelewski	Community Representative
Ray Frater	Guest - NSW Bridge to Bridge Committee

APOLOGIES

David Booth	Community Representative
Marcel Green	Industry and Investment NSW
Steve Diffey	Sydney Water Corporation
Andrew Fenwick	Fenwicks Marina
David Miles	Boat Owners Association
Rebecca Mooy	Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority
Rolf Norington	Hawkesbury River District Fishermans Co-operative
Stan Rees	NSW Department of Land and Property Management
John Stubbs	Broken Bay Oysters Association

ABSENT

Peter Bergman	NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water
Emma Collins	Community Representative
Peter Freewater	Gosford City Council
Terri Latella	Gosford City Council
Jim Lloyd	Community Representative
Arthur Michos	NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water
Steve Russell	Hornsby Shire Council

Meeting started at 6.20 pm

1. WELCOME

Cllr **McMurdo** welcomed Ray Frater, race start organiser for the Bridge to Bridge Ski Classic.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from:

David Booth	Community Representative
Marcel Green	Industry and Investment NSW
Steve Diffey	Sydney Water Corporation
Andrew Fenwick	Fenwicks Marina
David Miles	Boat Owners Association
Rebecca Mooy	Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority
Rolf Norington	Hawkesbury River District Fishermans Co-operative
Stan Rees	NSW Department of Land and Property Management
John Stubbs	Broken Bay Oysters Association

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No pecuniary interests declared.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING AND CORRESPONDENCE

Motion 201009: Minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting, Thursday 23 September, 2010, should be accepted. Complete.

Action 201010: The Team Leader Estuary Management to forward Gosford City Council's interest in participating in the estuarine bird survey to Hornsby Shire Council's project manager Alex Fraser. Complete.

Action 201011: Members who have a particular interest in any of the Bushland and Biodiversity projects outlined should forward their interest or any relevant information to Peter Coad, Team Leader Estuary Management. Complete.

Action 201012: The Team Leader Estuary Management to distribute the Industry and Investment NSW, Estuarine habitat mapping and geomorphic characterisation of the lower Hawkesbury river and Pittwater estuaries report to committee members. Report available at www.estuary.hornsby.nsw.gov.au.

Action 201013: Tim Macdonald to contact Pam McCann regarding proposed sewage treatment options for Peat Island and surrounding state government owned land. To be reported to the committee at the meeting of Thursday 25 November 2010. Complete.

John **Andrews** noted that the NSW State Property Authority is responsible for selling the land, however the land needs to be purchased before its purpose can be determined.

ACTION 201015: Tim Macdonald and John Andrews to notify the Team Leader Estuary Management, Peter Coad, when NSW State Property Authority has developed a Masterplan for Peat Island land.

Action 201014: Tim Macdonald to prepare a proposal to amend Section 10 of the LHEMC Terms of Reference to allow the committee to address issues arising outside of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Plan for the committee to vote on at the meeting of Thursday 25 November 2010. Complete. Adhere to current terms of reference.

Correspondence

John and Jill Sutton sent a letter of thanks regarding the riverside settlement 'Living on the Edge' information pack mailout. They also passed on their thanks to NSW Maritime for compliance of no wash zones in Berowra Waters (D01515820).

The Sydney Water Corporation notified Council of amendments to their current monitoring programs. New analytes will be incorporated in to their monitoring including; ecotoxicology, salinity assessments and outfall dilution monitoring (D01532644).

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting, Thursday 23 September, 2010 were accepted.

MOTION 201016: That the minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting Thursday 23rd September, should be accepted. Forwarded by Mike **Fish**, seconded by Melanie **Field**. Carried unanimously.

6. PRESENTATION

Presentation by Tim **Macdonald**, Senior Environment Planning Officer, Gosford City Council outlining the sea level rise planning, mapping and communication processes undertaken by GCC in Brisbane Water where approximately 9000 properties identified as being potentially affected have had notifications placed on their Section 149 (5) Planning Certificates.

Discussion held regarding overland flows, impacts of hazard reduction and fire management activities. Harry **Recher** noted that 0.9m level no longer accepted by scientists. Predictions from some CSIRO scientists are much higher (~7m).

7. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LOWER HAWKESBURY ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Peter Coad – Hornsby Shire Council

Courangra Point Algae – Increased chlorophyll-a levels were evident during November, however testing showed a diversity of species with no harmful species being present.

Real Time Temperature and Salinity Mapping – The first maps have been produced with MHL indicating temperature and salinity levels in the Lower Hawkesbury estuary. When these maps are released they will be updated daily and may be useful for recreational swimming, informing food authority closures, commercial fishers and oyster farmers. Swimming recommendations are based on salinity with freshwater inputs assumed to be stormwater.

Kangaroo Point Pumpout Facility – Over 89 000L of effluent collected in 2010. Justin **Pigneyguy** noted that more recreational boaters are using the facility.

Estuarine and migratory bird surveys – Council has engaged the Australian Wetlands and Rivers Centre of UNSW to undertake this research. Thank you to Mary **Howard** and Harry **Recher** for their input to date.

Estuary Open Day – It is proposed that an Estuary Open Day not be run in 2011. Instead the Estuary Management Program will increase involvement in Council's Guided Walks Program, Brooklyn Spring Fair, World Migratory Bird Day, Cleanup Australia Day and Coastcare Week activities.

Annual Report – The Estuary Management Program 2009-10 Annual Report is available at www.estuary.hornsby.nsw.gov.au.

Best Practice Guidelines for Estuary Activities (EPIC) - These guidelines are currently being compiled. Meetings will be held with council Planners and Health & Sustainability staff to discuss the guidelines and how best to implement them.

Media Campaign – A staged media campaign will be run during 2011 to educate river users and increase community awareness of the Estuary Management Program. Advertisements will be placed in the Bush Telegraph, the Advocate, Council Columns, and the Hornsby Shire Council Visitors Guide.

Boat Seagrass Stickers – Stickers are being designed to put in hire boats and houseboats indicating shallow areas. Discussion held regarding appropriate text. *Avoid shallow areas. Protected seagrass.*

Land Capability Assessment – Draft modelling has been undertaken and initial results are being discussed. More information will be available after the next meeting in December. This project is due to be completed in June 2011.

Impacts of Climate Change – NSW Industry and Investment and the Centre for Water Research (University of Western Australia) have been engaged to undertake this study. It will focus on seagrass, mangrove, saltmarsh and wetland species giving consideration to the 2030 scenarios and 2050 sea level guideline set by the state government. Modelling has been complete and the biological response to these modelled inundation times (and other variables) is being considered.

Derelict Oyster Lease Clean-up – A grant application for \$50 000 was submitted to the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority in October. The grant money will go towards tipping fees.

Parsley Bay Seawall – Work will commence in December. The seawall design is in line with the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water *Biodiversity Friendly Seawall Guidelines*. Four rain gardens will also be installed in Parsley Bay car park.

Comprehensive LEP – Waterways have now been zoned eg. natural and recreational waterways as land based zoning can be placed on the waterway. Seagrass and tidal flat areas are zoned E2 which is similar to national park protection.

DECCW 2011-12 Grant Proposals - proposed grants include:

- * Boardwalk – from Kangaroo Point to Dolphin Marina
- * Catchment Remediation – undertake capital works at Parsley Bay to improve stormwater quality
- * Estuarine Bird Survey – undertake a migratory and estuarine waterbird survey
- * Vegetation Restoration – undertake foreshore rehabilitation works along the estuary
- * Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plans – integrate Hornsby, Gosford and Pittwater estuary management plans into one CZMP (as per draft DECCW guidelines)
- * Estuary Productivity Maps – identify productive areas of the estuary as assess implication from climate change to these areas
- * Sediments Survey – revisiting the 53 sites monitored in 2006 to see if there is any change in sediment quality

Tim Macdonald & Warren Brown – Gosford City Council

Funding Application Richard Woodbury Reserve – Satyananda Yoga Association with support from Gosford Council applied for additional funding through the HNCMA to continue the restoration works at Richard Woodbury Reserve, works were to include: weed maintenance by a professional bush regeneration contractor along the southern boundary of the site as well as along Mangrove Creek; additional planting within the ephemeral wetland area and long-stem eucalypt plantings along the reserve boundaries.

Patonga Management Plan – Gosford Council in partnership with the LPMA is in the process of preparing a Plan of Management for the Patonga Foreshore areas from Dark Corner in the east, to approximately Jacaranda Ave in Patonga Creek. The PoM will be places on exhibition on finalisation however the project is unlikely to proceed until after the March State Election. The Plan will be presented to the Committee at the next meeting pending status.

Estuarine and Migratory Bird Surveys – discussion was held with Hornsby Council's Bushland and Biodiversity Management Team regarding how Gosford Council could assist with this project. There is potential for collaboration in the next survey period.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

Bridge to Bridge

Discussion was held regarding the 2010 Bridge to Bridge Ski Classic operations and the conduct of participants.

Issues raised included:

- * Ski boats traversing the marked seagrass area
- * Adequacy and volume of the PA announcements
- * Location of the portable toilets
- * Smoking and fire hazards
- * Safety of the skiers beneath the rail and road bridges

-
- * Litter and waste management

Actions taken by the ski federation in 2010 included:

- * White marker buoys installed around Mareela Reef
- * Races scheduled to be held on high tide
- * Maps and seagrass locations included in the race magazine

Suggestions for future management included:

- * An alternative start location
- * Strict licence conditions with harsher penalties for non compliance
- * Increase education and information for race participants
- * Discussions held with other organisations to prevent issues with parking and limited preparation space
- * Limits on the number of events that can be held in the area on the same day

MOTION 201017: That a meeting be organised by Councillor Wendy **McMurdo** between the NSW Ski Federation, Upper Hawkesbury Power Boat Association, NSW Maritime, Dangar Island League, Brooklyn Community Association, Police, Rural Fire Service and Hornsby Shire Council to discuss and resolve issues relating to Bridge to Bridge race operations within the Hawkesbury River. This meeting is to work towards a Memorandum of Understanding for future race operations which minimises the environmental impact of the Bridge to Bridge Ski race. Forwarded by Mary **Howard**, seconded by Ana **Rubio-Zuazo**. Carried unanimously.

Estuary Education Project

Mary **Howard** presented a large printed aerial of the Hawkesbury that is to be used as an educational tool and requested feedback from the committee. Committee to support grant applications.

MOTION 201018: That **Oceanwatch** inform the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee of funding opportunities, that may be supported by the committee, to get a map of the Lower Hawkesbury estuary printed. Forwarded by Mike **Fish**, seconded by Melissa **Frater**. Carried unanimously.

AQIS Determination – Melanie Field reported that the Broken Bay Oyster Association farmers have received AQIS approval to export their produce. The decision to grant this approval was influenced by activities including; installation of drop toilets at Twin Beaches, the connection of the Brooklyn Dangar Island Sewage Treatment Plant, installation of education signs, the use of boat sewage pumpout facilities, on-site sewerage management system inspections, implementation of estuary management plans and the cleanup of derelict oyster leases in the estuary.

NSW Coastal Conference – Hornsby Shire Councils Estuary Management Team won the Coastal Management Award, received by Cllr **McMurdo**, for their approach to estuary management. The contribution of Gosford City Council and the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority to the success of the program was acknowledged.

Wendy **McMurdo** enquired about the management of moorings along the railway line in Brooklyn Harbour. To be discussed with Steve Black external to committee business.

Mike **Fish** enquired whether any members had observed any issues with waste in America Bay and Refuge Bay since the removal of the litter barge.

ACTION 201019: Team Leader Estuary Management to request an update from NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service on waste management in America and Refuge Bays.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS

Proposed dates for meetings in 2011: March 24, May 19, September 22 and November 24.

The next meeting of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee will be held Thursday **24 March 2011**, at the **Brooklyn Community Centre, 204 Dangar Rd, Brooklyn**.

Mike **Fish** thanked Cllr McMurdo as the committee chair, and all staff involved in organising and running the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meetings and program.

10. CLOSE

Meeting closed at 8.40pm