

# Catchments and Coast Committee Tuggerah Lakes Meeting Record 24 June 2020



Location:	Zoom Meeting
Date:	24 June 2020
Time	Started at: 4.09pm* (no quorum until 4.40pm)      Closed at: 6.42pm
Chair	Councillor Jane Smith
File Ref	F2018/00098

## **Present:**

Councillor Jane Smith, Councillor Doug Vincent (arrived 4.40pm), Doug Darlington, Graham Hankin, Robert Davies, Samantha Willis

## **External Representatives present:**

Neil Kelleher – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Richard Murphy – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

## **Council Staff present:**

Luke Sulkowski – Unit Manager Environmental Management, Ben Fullagar – Section Manager Catchments to Coast, Peter Sheath – Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning, Parissa Ghanem – Team Leader, Floodplain Management and Senior Planner, Vanessa McCann – Team Leader Estuary Management and Projects (left 6.29pm), Paul Donaldson – Senior Estuary Management Officer, Zoie Magann – Advisory Group Support Officer

*\*Quorum was not achieved in accordance with Section Three of the Terms of Reference until 4.40pm, with the arrival of a second Councillor member. The Advisory Group commenced informal discussion of items before this time, however no actions were agreed until quorum was met.*

## **Item 1                      Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies**

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Apologies received: Michael Campbell, Marlene Pennings

Councillor Jane Smith welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

## **Item 2                      Disclosures of Interest**

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Graham Hankin declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest for Item 5 as a resident of Chittaway Point, with regard to the floodplain projects discussed.

Doug Darlington declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest for Item 5 as a resident of Long Jetty, with regard to the floodplain projects discussed.

### **Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record**

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The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 29 April 2020.

The Advisory Group discussed the Action Log with the below updates noted:

**Action 36:** Stormwater Management Plan project has commenced. Further updates will come as project progresses (remain pending).

**Action 79:** Staff met with Wyong Nursing Home along with the SES, and provided advice about how to address risk of flooding in area (action complete).

### **Item 4 Feedback from Previous Meeting**

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No feedback was provided.

### **Item 5 Update on Flood and Stormwater Management (Standing Item)**

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Parissa Ghanem (Team Leader Floodplain Management and Senior Planner) provided a presentation on current flood and stormwater management items.

The below key points were noted:

- Flood project update:
  - Wyong River Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (FRMSP) and Ourimbah Creek FRMSP have been adopted by Council.
  - Killarney Vale/Long Jetty FRMSP and Wallarah Creek FRMSP to be publicly exhibited 25 June 2020 to 5 August 2020.
  - Lake Macquarie Overland Flood Study – final draft being prepared by consultant.
  - Northern Lakes FRMSP – final draft being prepared by consultant.
  - Flood Gauging Network Audit has been complete.
- Council currently has three grant applications pending with DPIE for various flood projects.
- Public Exhibition of two FRMSPs is occurring on Council's [www.yourvoiceourcoast.com](http://www.yourvoiceourcoast.com) page:
  - Wallarah Creek FRMP – 5,000 letters were sent to residents in June 2020, and advertisement appeared in northern LGA newspapers to promote online engagement.
  - Community members have option to book an online meeting or phone call to discuss project with Consultant and Council's Project Manager.
  - A Q&A Board and interactive map is being used to keep residents informed.
- Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) construction projects: Blue Haven GPT is completely constructed. Gorokan GPT is expected to be complete by end of next week.
- David Mehan MP letter about flood markers:
  - MP wrote to Council 25 May 2020 and requested Council review the need for more water level markers in areas affected by flood.
  - Concerns noted that new residents in flood prone areas don't understand severity of flooding and often leave it too late to leave area.
  - Staff showed design examples from Tweed River and Murray River and invited comments:
    - Suggested that markers also include risk of associated water level.
    - Good idea to have educational flood posts in public areas such as those in Tweed River and Murray River, but also need more functional depth markers alongside roads (i.e. a holistic approach is best).

**Action:** Staff to provide proposal on flood markers including suggested locations and format to future Advisory Group meeting.

## **Item 6 Update on Coastal Management (Standing Item)**

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Ben Fullagar (Section Manager Coastal Protection) provided a presentation on coastal management.

The below key points were noted:

- Update on Scoping Studies:
  - Open Coastline and Coastal Lagoons – works are underway and expected to be complete September/October 2020.
  - Lower Hawkesbury/Brisbane Water – study recently completed. An application for Coast and Estuary Grant to be made for next stage of the Coastal Management Program (CMP).
  - Tuggerah Lakes Estuary – study being completed in-house. ‘Strategic Context’ report recently drafted which will support development of other CMPs. Project being assisted by Expert Panel.
- Lake Macquarie CMP: Staff are working with Lake Macquarie City Council to address parts of Central Coast LGA impacted by the CMP. Council staff have been engaged in initial stakeholder forums and will be involved in ongoing development of the CMP

## **Item 7 Reported Commercial Wild Harvest Landings for Tuggerah Lakes**

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The Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries) previously provided two graphs to report commercial wild harvest landings for Tuggerah Lakes for the Advisory Group’s information as requested. The graphs were circulated via email on 20 April 2020. It was noted there didn’t appear to be any decline in fish numbers over years, and no further information was requested at this stage.

## **Item 8 Entrance Channel Update**

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Peter Sheath (Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning) provided a presentation on The Entrance Channel.

The below key points were noted:

- Tuggerah Lakes flood education is being considered by staff. Draft education slides were shown to the Advisory Group, which include images and data to communicate key info about flooding events.
- Review of February 2020 storm event:
  - There was average of 440mm rain in 4 days across whole catchment. Heavy rainfall coincided with king tides and storm surges resulting in a 1 in 10 year flood event. Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (MHL) data indicates rainfall intensities were highest on record since 1998.
  - Noted that the Channel was open and being monitored by Council before the flood peaked on Monday 10 February. Staff opened a second outlet on Tuesday 11 February once waves subsided enough to limit ocean flow back to lake.
  - Staff currently working on entrance management procedures and support tool in collaboration with MHL.
- Review of Tuggerah Lakes since January 2020:
  - Noted community concerns that lake level had been low leading up to February 2020.
  - Large ocean swell in May 2020 resulted in significant coastal erosion in region.

Graham Hankin previously provided some information on berm management that suggested if the berm had been opened earlier during the February storm event, the impact of flooding could have been reduced. Staff noted that the ocean level also had to be considered as the significant wave height meant ocean water would continue to flow into lake. Staff are continuing to investigate berm management options and impacts/benefits in collaboration with MHL.

Ben Fullagar (Section Manager Catchments to Coast) provided an update on The Entrance Dredging Program.

The below key points were noted:

- The Channel continues to be wide open and very dynamic with moving sand shoals.
- A bathymetric survey was recently completed to identify areas where dredging may be needed.
- Consultants are assisting with development of a dredge plan and environmental assessments.
- A key challenge is to identify a suitable space to settle out the dredge spoil to meet environmental water quality requirements. Council have applied to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for an Environment Protection Licence to address these concerns.
- The Advisory Group noted support of staff continuing to work with EPA and keeping the community informed of any action taken.

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## **Item 9 Coastal Erosion Update – The Entrance North**

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Ben Fullagar (Section Manager Catchments to Coast) provided an update on coastal erosion in The Entrance North.

The below key points were noted:

- Photos were shown to the Advisory Group of exposed rock boulders and coastal erosion at North Entrance Beach.
- Surveys conducted in February 2020 indicate profiles are at most eroded state since 2018. A new LiDAR survey was flown on 18 June 2020. Staff expect results will show further sand has been lost since February 2020.
- There was a Council Resolution on 9 June 2020 regarding emergency beach stabilisation works. Staff have been working towards the Resolution and have conducted some sand scraping in inter tidal zone to improve immediate safety in area.
- Sand bags had been suggested in the Chamber as a possible solution, but it was noted by DPIE that this approach may not be effective in The Entrance.

**Action:** Neil Kelleher (DPIE) to bring info on coastal stabilisation techniques and effectiveness of sand bags to next Advisory Group meeting.

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## **Item 10 General Business and Close**

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- a) Porters Creek Wetland: Advisory Group members were shown a boundary map of the wetland. Good news story that project is progressing, and boundary aligns with suggestions previously made.
- b) Tuggerah Lakes Expert Panel: five meetings have been held so far. Information can be found here: <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/water/estuaries/protecting-and-managing-estuaries/tuggerah-lakes-expert-panel>. There is an identified gap in community engagement. Spectrum

have been engaged as consultants to help with involving the community. It was noted that Tuggerah Lakes is in pretty good condition based on number of people in catchment.

- c) National Tree Day is 2 August 2020. Advisory Group members were encouraged to keep their eyes out for details.
- d) Wrack removal by residents and community groups: concerns were noted on behalf of community members that machinery used for wrack removal is damaging, and there remains high levels of wrack in the lake. Staff noted Fisheries are the authority on wrack removal and advise individuals can take up to 20kg of wrack per day for disposal. Discussions are occurring about how to support Landcare groups in achieving outcomes.

**Action:** Topic of wrack removal to be added to agenda for next meeting with view to consider how community groups can be involved in foreshore management, as well as staff efforts in this area and Expert Panel findings.

The meeting closed at 6.42pm

**Next Meeting:            Wednesday 26 August 2020**  
**2pm – 4pm**  
**Location TBC**