

# Catchments and Coast Committee Tuggerah Lakes Meeting Record 9 December 2020



Location:	Zoom Meeting
Date:	9 December 2020
Time	Started at: 2.02pm Closed at: 4.13pm
Chair	Luke Sulkowski, Unit Manager Environmental Management
File Ref	F2018/00098

**Present:**

Mike Campbell, Graham Hankin, Robert Davies, Samantha Willis

**External Representatives present:**

Richard Murphy – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

**Council Staff present:**

Luke Sulkowski – Unit Manager Environmental Management, Ben Fullagar – Section Manager Catchments to Coast, James Lawson – Section Manager Environmental Infrastructure, Peter Sheath – Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning, Parissa Ghanem – Team Leader Floodplain Management, Vanessa McCann – Team Leader Estuary Management, Paul Donaldson – Senior Estuary Management Officer, Rochelle Lawson – Senior Ecologist (joined 2.14pm, left 2.17pm), Zoie Magann – Advisory Group Support Officer

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

Apologies received: Doug Darlington, Marlene Pennings

The Chairperson welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

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**Item 2            Disclosures of Interest**

No disclosures were noted.

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**Item 3            Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record**

The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 26 August 2020.

The Advisory Group discussed the Action Log, noting all actions were complete, closed or listed for this meeting.

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

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No feedback was provided.

#### **Item 5 Brief Update on Council's Current Financial Situation**

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Luke Sulkowski (Unit Manager Environmental Management) provided a brief update on Council's current financial situation. Information about this is available on Council's website, including the Administrator's 30 Day Interim Report: <https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/council/news/councils-financial-situation>

Members noted concerns about the future of projects and grant funding given the current situation.

#### **Item 6 Update on Flood and Stormwater Management**

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*Item deferred to follow update provided by Rochelle Lawson as part of General Business.*

Peter Sheath (Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning) provided a presentation on flood and stormwater management items in the northern LGA as requested at previous meetings.

The below key points were noted:

- Kangy Angy Transport Flood Study:
  - Council adopted Ourimbah Creek FRMSP on 25 May 2020 which included Resolution 404/20 regarding investigation of flooding impacts at Kangy Angy Rail Facility, as previously reported to Advisory Group meeting held 26 August 2020.
  - Flood Impact Assessment results showed insignificant impacts. Similar results as found in 2016 Transport for NSW flood study (<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/new-intercity-fleet-maintenance-facility>).
  - Facility construction has now been completed. Site stormwater management is being addressed and no issues have been found that warrant further flood modelling investigation. Noted that February 2020 flood event would not have been exacerbated by Rail Facility.
  - Concerns noted about impacts of detention basin overflow – staff believe this wasn't constructed at time of February flood event.

**Recommendation:** That Council note an investigation of the potential flooding impacts of the Kangy Angy Rail Facility has been completed as per Resolution 404/20, and no issues have been found that warrant further flood modelling investigation.

- Porters Creek Wetland and Catchment Monitoring Plan:
  - Consultant study is ongoing as advised at last meeting.
  - Draft report is expected for review by year end. Update to be provided at next meeting should coincide with report to Council on outcomes of study.
- Proposal on Flood Markers:
  - Staff completed preliminary investigations in consultation with stakeholders and have drafted proposed list of locations for flood depth indicators and historical flood markers. List to be distributed to members for feedback given concerns about some proposed locations.
  - Staff will consider feedback as well as timing and funding for project implementation.

**Action:** Staff to plot proposed locations for flood markers with overlay of 1% AEP flood and distribute to Advisory Group members for feedback. Add to next agenda for further discussion.

- Graham Hankin recently raised some concerns at Open Forum on 23 November 2020. Staff prepared responses to the questions and shared with the Advisory Group for information.

**Action:** Staff to circulate Graham's questions and responses to Advisory Group members.

## **Item 7                    Update on Coastal Management**

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Vanessa McCann (Team Leader Estuary Management) provided a presentation on various Estuary Management items.

The below key points were noted:

- Summary of Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan (EMP):
  - EMP developed 1996 – 2006 to address key objectives of water quality, foreshores, public facilities, rivers and creeks, ocean entrances, fish and prawn populations, and seagrass wrack.
  - Significant funding provided to implement findings of EMP. Reports and project site maps are on Council's website: <https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastlines/estuaries-lagoons-and-wetlands/tuggerah-lakes-estuary>
  - Coastal Management Program (CMP) being developed to replace EMP due to change in legislation, with scoping study underway and community engagement to take place.
  - Noted that Tuggerah Lakes Expert Panel report is expected shortly, which will help guide CMP.
- Overall achievements from Improving Your Local Parks and Environment 2017 – 2020 (IYLPE) grant:
  - Federal IYLPE grant resulted in numerous priority projects being completed including 6 new stormwater devices, 2 new wrack pads, improvements and rehabilitation for various foreshore, streambank, saltmarsh and wetland sites, research and planning projects, Landcare group support, and education projects.
- Planned activities for Environmental Restoration Fund (ERF) 2020-2023 grant:
  - Federal ERF grant provides \$4.7M for restoration activities including wetland and saltmarsh rehabilitation, streambank and catchment improvements, stormwater upgrades, foreshore and water quality improvements, research and planning, environmental groups support, ongoing education and community engagement.
- Estuary results and trends:
  - Have been monitoring estuary since 2011. Results remain consistent, with some improvement trends experienced. 2019/20 results: Grade A 19%, B 56%, C 25%.
  - Commercial landings and prawn catch graphs previously shared by Fisheries further support long-term stable trends in water quality and ecology over time as numbers have not significantly decreased.
  - Annual cumulative volume of wrack removed continues to increase.
  - Website has been updated and provides easily accessible information for community members: [www.loveourwaterways.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://www.loveourwaterways.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)
  - Noted that Central Coast Council was recently awarded two awards at the NSW Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards 2020 for the below categories:
    - Environmental Health Management Award to Terrigal Audit

- Natural Environment Protection and Enhancement Award

Ben Fullagar (Section Manager Catchments to Coast) provided an update on coastal erosion and recovery at North Entrance Beach.

The below key points were noted:

- North Entrance already impacted by series of coastal storms and further events in February and July 2020 exacerbated erosion.
- Emergency toe protection works placed in August 2020, with approximately 3,000 tonne of hard rock following advice from coastal engineers.
- Progress shot from November 2020 showed vast improvements following sand nourishment.
- Anticipated that sand recovery will continue throughout summer and Council staff will continue to monitor site.

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### **Item 8                    Update on Wrack Management and Proposed Buff Point 'Shore Care' Program**

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James Lawson (Section Manager Environmental Infrastructure) provided an update on wrack management.

The below key points were noted:

- Site visit to Buff Point held 15 September 2020 with key agencies and interested people to consider how community support could be provided with regard to wrack management.
- Tuggerah Lakes Care Group applied for license with Fisheries to allow for wrack removal. Application has since been withdrawn due to conflict with locals.
- Hoping to engage volunteers to commence 'Shore Care' program similar to land care to help raise awareness and educate residents.
- Noted that Council is not regulatory agency for wrack management (Fisheries is), but staff are keen to facilitate community involvement where possible.
- Council's wrack management program is being reduced due to current financial situation, however staff still progressing with wrack collection and hopeful to reach previously committed amounts.
- Concerns raised about costs associated with wrack disposal – suggested that wrack be considered for placement in buffer zones at sewage treatment plants.

**Action:** James Lawson to share updated chart for wrack collection at next meeting, as well as update on wrack disposal opportunities and possible cost savings.

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### **Item 9                    Update on Dredging**

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James Lawson (Section Manager Environmental Infrastructure) provided a presentation on dredging program at The Entrance.

The below key points were noted:

- \$1.2M funding secured to deliver dredging program. Royal Haskoning engaged as advised at last meeting.
- Works commenced mid-September 2020 as expected. Various photos shown to document process.
- Monitoring buoy placed to check turbidity. Data is being shared on Council's website for transparency: <https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastlines/estuaries-lagoons-and-wetlands/tuggerah-lakes-estuary/dredging-entrance>

- Some sand used for beach nourishment at North Entrance. Vegetation (native plants) has also been placed to help with dune stabilisation. Residents informed of works and invited to assist by watering.
- Concern raised about amount of sand remaining in estuary as result of storm events. Noted that works for remaining budget have been exhausted so no immediate plans to undertake further programs in current financial year.
- Suggestion made that dredging channel be established and mechanisms put in place to address concerns at Dunleith Point (limit mobility by providing solid foundation). Noted that MHL report and Expert Panel findings will guide next steps for The Entrance and CMP development.

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

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- a) *Item brought forward to follow Item 5, followed by Item 6.*

Rochelle Lawson (Senior Ecologist) provided an update on protection of Porters Creek Wetland.

The below key points were noted:

- Staff liaised with internal stakeholders to identify risks and begin preliminary investigations.
- Draft plan currently with Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) for review. Also considering external engagement opportunities.
- Expect that further update will be ready for next meeting.

- b) Robert Davies commended staff in light of Council's current situation and thanked for efforts.

The meeting closed at 4.13pm

**Next Meeting:            March 2021 (TBC)**  
**4pm – 6pm**  
**Location TBC**