



Annual Report **2009–2010**



## About this Document

The target readership for this Annual Report is the project partners, significant stakeholders such as policy makers and regulators within Australian, NSW and Local Government and other agencies directly engaged in natural resource management leadership.

The acronym SMCMA refers to the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority throughout this document.

This Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with Section 17 of the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003*, the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1998* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Regulations 2000*. It details the activities and achievements of the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (SMCMA) for the year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010 highlighting its contribution towards its Catchment Action Plan and Annual Investment Program. It includes statutory and financial information for the SMCMA for 2009-2010 as required under the Act and Regulations.

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with assistance from Owen Graham and SMCMA staff.

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The SMCMA has made available a pdf version of this document on its website: [www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au)  
Hard copies are available on request.

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A warning to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. This report may contain information and images of deceased persons.

**Front cover photograph:** Yegor Korzh, Lane Cove

**Inside front cover photograph:** istock

## Front Cover: Life on Mars

Wednesday, September 23, 2009: Sydney residents awake to an eerie dawn. Thick red dust has blown in from central Australia, reducing visibility and cloaking landmarks. The event captures international attention. Headline writers and internet social media bloggers alike tag their reports: "Life on Mars".

For a day or two the dense dust means natural resource management issues win a place on the front page of newspapers and as the lead item on broadcast bulletins.

A frustration shared among people working within the natural resource management sphere is that it takes an event as dramatic as this choking dust storm to gain attention for issues that are impacting the environment daily.

## Footprint

Sydney's environmental footprint is 200 times larger than its urban footprint. A city's environmental footprint is the area needed to provide the range of goods and services consumed by its residents. A role of the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (SMCMA) is to protect and enhance the natural environment as Sydney grows.

## International Year of Biodiversity

The United Nations declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity.

Biodiversity is the variety of all life forms on earth – the different plants, animals and micro-organisms and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

Australia's biodiversity makes a significant contribution to its economy and is essential to our identity and culture. The SMCMA is working with project partners and stakeholders to install and enhance corridors of connectivity across the Sydney region. These corridors will help link and protect habitat for the prosperity of native plants and animals.





## Scenic Sydney is simply sensational

For residents and visitors alike the natural attributes of Sydney distinguish it as a unique and aesthetically appealing global city.

Sydneysiders have demonstrated for decades they greatly prize the natural environment.

They value the health of the bushland fringing their neighbourhoods and the water quality of their rivers, estuaries and coastal regions.

People from all localities across Sydney hold a genuine concern for the ongoing resilience of their natural environment.

There is a long, proud tradition of people actively advocating on behalf of Sydney's environment. Thousands of people have invested "sweat equity" working as Bushcare volunteers to weed and regenerate localities.

Others have engaged the support of their political representatives at the Local, State or Australian Government level to extend resources to protect and preserve particular pockets within Sydney.

### **Act Local: Lead Global**

The concern for the environment felt by many Sydney residents has had an impact at an international level. For example, in 1989 Ian Kiernan initiated the first "Clean Up Sydney Harbour" recruiting an unexpected and almost overwhelming 40,000 volunteers.

This event was a catalyst for national Clean Up Australia Day starting in 1990 with 300,000 Australians joining in. The event went global in 1993 with 30 million people in 80 countries.

In 1989 250,000 people attended a concert on Bondi Beach protesting ocean outfall of sewerage, prompting a government pledge of \$7 million to clean up Sydney Harbour.

In 2007 Sydney initiated Earth Hour, immediately attracting participation from 2.2 million residents and 2100 businesses who turned off their lights for one hour. In 2010 the event went global and Earth Hour organisers claim their event has influenced 1 billion people in just four years to hold their own events in cities around the world.

### **Engaging Our Community**

An overwhelming number of Sydney residents care passionately about the environment and are prepared to take action to demonstrate their conviction. Some 8000 Sydney residents are volunteer Bushcare workers. The SMCMA has an "army" of allies to partner with across a wide range of natural resource management projects and programs.

Imagine if the energy and enthusiasm demonstrated at "one-off" annual events were harnessed for on-going natural resource management projects.

# Our foundation

The SMCMA was established under the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003*. At its inception in 2005 Sydney Metropolitan joined the 12 existing regional catchment management authorities that were established in 2004. The purpose of the NSW CMAs is to prepare strategic natural resource management plans and coordinate initiatives and activities under these plans that will contribute to the sustainable management of the natural resources of NSW. The targets for future trends in natural resource condition in NSW are set out in the NSW State Plan.

## Our function

The specific functions of NSW CMAs as described in Section 15 of the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003* are to:

- Develop a Catchment Action Plan (CAP)
- Provide loans, grants, subsidies or other financial assistance for catchment activities
- Enter contracts or do any work for the purposes of catchment activities
- Assist landholders to achieve the objectives of the CAP
- Provide educational and training courses and materials in connection with natural resource management (NRM)
- Exercise any other function relating to NRM as prescribed by the regulations

## What is a catchment?

Everyone lives in a catchment. Catchments are defined by the way water moves across a landscape. Human activity has a great impact on the health of a catchment with activities upstream impacting on those living and working downstream.

## Native Vegetation Act 2003

Part of the rationale behind the establishment of the NSW CMAs was that they would function at a regional level and hold responsibility for implementation of the *Native Vegetation Act 2003*.

This Act does not apply to the majority of the SMCMA region. However, in keeping with the spirit of the legislation, the SMCMA assumes an important role in coordinating the management of urban remnant native vegetation by identifying priority projects, working with local communities and promoting consistent outcomes in the protection of such vegetation and control of weeds. The Rapid Fauna Habitat Assessment project completed in 2008 is an example of how we achieve this.

## What is natural resource management?

For NSW catchment management authorities, natural resource management (NRM) is defined in the *Natural Resources Commission Act 2003* (Part 1, Section 5).

For the purposes of this Act, NRM extends to the following matters relating to the management of natural resources:

- Water, native vegetation, salinity, soil, biodiversity, coastal protection, marine environment (except a matter arising under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* or the *Marine Parks Act 1997*) forestry; any other matter concerning natural resources prescribed by the regulations.

**Right:** The footprint of the SMCMA comprises the core of urban Sydney and its coastline.

Our total area is 2470 square kilometres.

The SMCMA extends three nautical miles offshore, some 15 per cent of the surface area of our region.

Our land area, excluding the marine component and Sydney Harbour and Botany Bay is 1890 square kilometres.

The SMCMA works in close partnership with neighbouring Hawkesbury-Nepean and Southern Rivers CMAs.

**Opposite:** The SMCMA was a partner with the Parramatta River Catchment Group to conduct an Urban Nature Photographic Competition in 2009.

Photos from the competition appear throughout this report.

**Opposite bottom left:** Currawong feeding cuckoo, Bicentennial Park Homebush, John Irvine.

**Far right:** Shell on shore, SMCMA.





### **Our vision**

Community growth reconciled with nature.

An urban community that thrives within a valued natural landscape.

### **Our Mission**

To demonstrate how dynamic urban areas can be consistent with sustainable natural resource management.

To champion a Sydney community which has the knowledge and skills to achieve healthy waterways and bushland that all residents and visitors can enjoy, now and in the future.

### **Our Charter**

The most important role for the SMCMA – and one that is not being filled by any other entity in the region - is to connect diverse stakeholders as they work towards shared targets for natural resources across the whole region.

### **Our Unique Point of Difference**

The SMCMA is the smallest of the 13 NSW catchment management authorities, serving the largest urban population in Australia.

Sydney Metropolitan is the only NSW CMA with a specific focus on delivering natural resource management in an urban context.

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# Our Aims and Objectives

The SMCMA works to implement its Catchment Action Plan (CAP) which is a strategic planning tool that identifies the key natural resource features the Sydney community wants to protect and improve.

## Our Catchment Action Plan

The SMCMA CAP reflects the needs of the region. It outlines specific targets to be achieved by 2016 and the priorities for funding or carrying out of catchment activities in the SMCMA region.

The *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003* requires each catchment management authority to prepare a catchment action plan in partnership with its community and government agencies.

The CAP contains both Catchment Targets which identify how the catchment should be managed and Management Targets which identify specific short term actions which will help deliver the longer term targets.

The CAP contains 18 Catchment Targets and 47 Management Targets.

## Catchment Targets

The Catchment Targets describe the greatest improvement to the condition of our biodiversity, water and coasts and soil. These categories, along with "community" represent the four Themes contained in the CAP. Nested within the Themes, the Management Targets provide multiple benefits to the condition of our natural resources. For example, regeneration of native riparian vegetation will also have a positive effect on aquatic health, biodiversity, soils and estuaries.

## Management Targets

The Management Targets outline a systematic approach to enhancing the connectivity of ecosystem processes. The Management Targets focus regional attention on improving the connectivity of priority ecological communities. Achieving this will require a consistent and coordinated focus across multiple government and community organisations.

## NSW State Plan

The State Plan is the community's vision for the future of NSW and how this will be delivered by government. Of the seven State Plan themes, the SMCMA contributes specifically to the delivery of outcomes within the Green State targets.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The SMCMA is one of three NSW CMAs working to provide information and recommendations regarding reviewing and updating of NSW Catchment Action Plans Recommendations which will be provided to the Natural Resources and Environment Chief Executive Officer's Cluster. The intended outcome is that NSW CMA CAPs will contribute to "whole of government" plans such as the NSW State Plan.

In 2009 the SMCMA appointed a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer to assist in collating data detailing progress towards achieving the CAP.

## Sources of Funding

As one of the 13 NSW CMAs the SMCMA acts as a regional delivery body for funding from Federal and State sources, including the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program and the Water for the Future program. Funding is also provided under the State Government's Catchment Action NSW (CANSW) program.

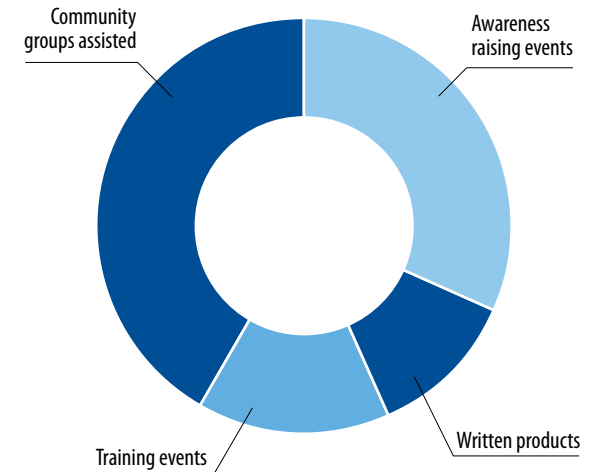
## Investment Program

The SMCMA has adopted a strategic four-year rolling Investment Program which identifies all activities to which it will contribute funds.

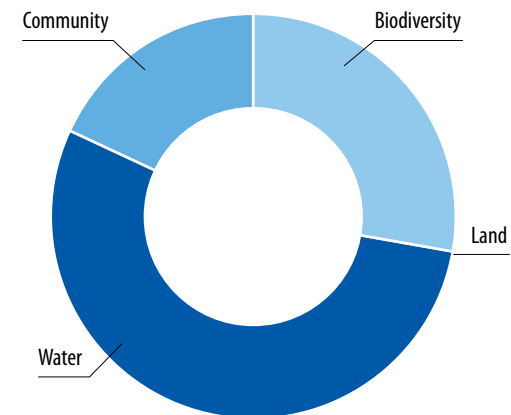
The Investment Program shows how the CAP's Catchment and Management Targets will contribute towards environmental priorities of the NSW State Plan.

The Investment Program includes the SMCMA's Annual Implementation Plan. Objectives and achievements of these projects are included in this Annual Report.

Community participation



Expenditure by Statewide Theme 2009-2010



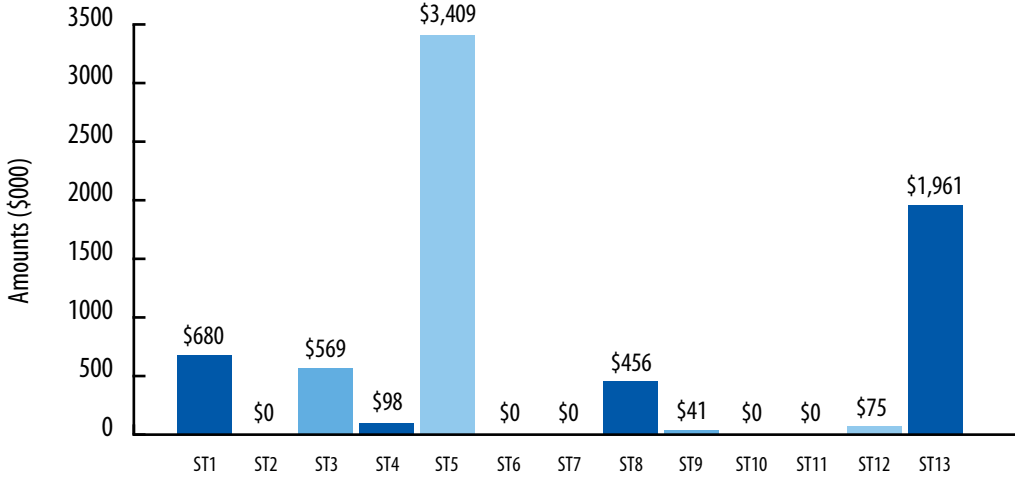
Note: Some NRM activities fall under several themes. For classification purposes they are included in only one theme category.





NSW Government's Targets for Statewide Natural Resource Management	
Biodiversity	
<b>ST1</b>	By 2015 there is an increase in native vegetation extent and an improvement in native vegetation condition
<b>ST2</b>	By 2015 there is an increase in the number of sustainable populations of a range of native fauna species
<b>ST3</b>	By 2015 there is an increase in the recovery of threatened species, populations and ecological communities
<b>ST4</b>	By 2015 there is a reduction in the impact of invasive species
Water	
<b>ST5</b>	By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of riverine ecosystems
<b>ST6</b>	By 2015 there is an improvement in the ability of groundwater systems to support groundwater dependent ecosystems and designated beneficial uses
<b>ST7</b>	By 2015 there is no decline in the condition of marine waters and ecosystems
<b>ST8</b>	By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of important wetlands and the extent of those wetlands is maintained
<b>ST9</b>	By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of estuaries and coastal lake ecosystems
Land	
<b>ST10</b>	By 2015 there is an improvement in soil condition
<b>ST11</b>	By 2015 there is an increase in the area of land that is managed within its capability
Community	
<b>ST12</b>	Natural resource decisions contribute to improving or maintaining economic sustainability and social well-being
<b>ST13</b>	There is an increase in the capacity of natural resource managers to contribute to regionally relevant natural resource management

Expenditure by Statewide targets (ST) 2009-2010



The SMCMA was a partner with the Parramatta River Catchment Group to conduct an Urban Nature Photographic Competition in 2009. Photos from the competition appear throughout this report.  
**Centre:** Lizard, Auburn, John Kha.

# Message from the Chairman

Gathering my thoughts to report on the achievements of the SMCMA during 2009-2010, my impression is that it has been an exceedingly busy year. A year in which this organisation matured and emerged as a leader in natural resource management planning and delivery.

The most recent achievement, and one of the most enjoyable for me as Chair, was to host a visit by the NSW CMAs Chairs' Council to sites within the SMCMA region on June 30.

Adopting the theme "Natural Resource Management in an Urban Context" my fellow Chairs from the regional NSW CMAs, along with a number of other invited guests, spent a full day visiting 10 sites from Kurnell and Cape Solander on the far coastal extremity, to Coxs Creek Reserve at the headwaters of the Cooks River near Strathfield in Sydney's west.

As Chair, what impressed me was the sincere and energetic dedication of the SMCMA project officers responsible for the sites. Their dedication was matched in equal measure by community members and staff from our project partners.

It is one thing to have a Catchment Action Plan document that prescribes that partnerships should be built with key stakeholders, but without the right staff working with the right attitude and right focus, the CAP mission statement is nothing more than eloquent words on a page. What I saw when participating in the "NRM in an Urban Context" tour, was that the SMCMA has genuinely established real relationships that are working to deliver effective NRM projects across Sydney.

The tour demonstrated that the SMCMA has a rightful place within the NSW CMA "family" – we are different, our challenges are different, but we are an effective lead agency delivering regional NRM.

As the SMCMA continues to mature in 2011 and beyond, I anticipate we will take an expanding role in providing solutions to urban NRM issues such as water sensitive urban design that are relevant to all CMAs.

The 2009-2010 Annual Report captures the energy and excitement of our staff working across a broad range of projects that all work towards delivering on our Catchment Action Plan.

**Philip Sansom**  
Chairman

## Letter to the Minister

20 October 2010

The Hon. Frank Sartor  
Minister for Climate Change and the Environment  
Level 30  
Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

We have pleasure in presenting the 2009-2010 Annual Report for the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority, a Statutory body under the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003*.

This report has been prepared for submission to Parliament and is in accordance with Section 17 of the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003*, the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Regulation 2005*.

Yours sincerely



**Philip Sansom**  
Chairman



**Allan Ezzy (APM)**  
Deputy Chairman



Sydney Metropolitan is the "hometown" CMA for 26 Federal and 47 NSW Members of Parliament and 39 Local Government Mayors. Although we are the smallest NSW CMA in size and budget we are extremely visible. I sense a broad expectation that we will "punch above our weight" when it comes to delivery of NRM outcomes.





# The Board

The SMCMA Board is responsible for the strategic direction of natural resource management in the Sydney Metropolitan region. The Board reflects the importance of the 39 Local Government and inter-council organisations in the complex institutional landscape of the Sydney Metropolitan region. SMCMA Board Members bring extensive scientific, technical, management and communication expertise to the SMCMA's decision making.

## Board Bulletin

An electronic "Board-Bulletin-Board" one-page newsletter is emailed to more than 500 key stakeholders within a week of each SMCMA Board meeting. The purpose is to inform Ministers, Mayors, Councillors and senior decision makers at all levels of government of the business of the SMCMA Board.

## First Regional Board Meeting

In April the SMCMA Board held its first regional meeting at Canterbury City Council. This was in response to an audit by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) in 2009 which recommended that the Board be aware of local catchment issues. A half-day inspection of sites undergoing works in the Cooks River Urban Water Initiative program was conducted prior to the meeting.

**Left:** At the official sod-turn for the Cup and Saucer Creek wetland, SMCMA Chairman, Philip Sansom, is interviewed by the media. Front SMCMA catchment officer, John Dahlenburg and rear, Federal Member for Watson, and the then Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Tony Burke.

**Top:** Deputy Chairman, Allan Ezzy and Chairman, Philip Sansom at the SMCMA first regional meeting, Canterbury City Council Chambers.

**Centre:** Chairman Philip Sansom takes part in a panel discussion at the Cooks River Community Forum at Canterbury. Panel members included Federal Member for Grayndler, Anthony Albanese; NSW Deputy Premier and Member for Marrickville, Carmel Tebbutt and NSW Member for Canterbury, Linda Burney.

**Bottom:** December 2009: Chairman Philip Sansom and the then Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, John Robertson, present an award to Ku-ring-gai Council Team Leader, Penny Colyer who accepted for their project 'Managing Urban Biodiversity' at the NSW Local Government and Shires Associations Environmental Excellence Awards.



## Profile of Board Members

### **Councillor Philip Sansom**

- Mayor, Hurstville City Council
- Former Chair of the Southern Sydney Catchment Management Board
- DipArtEd, GradDipArts, MEd

Cr Sansom was appointed Chairman of the SMCMA on 22 June 2009. He was the inaugural Deputy Chairman.

He was the Chairman of the Southern Sydney Catchment Management Board 2001 to 2003. Cr Sansom has been involved in natural resource management for 18 years.

Since 2000 he has been a member of the National Parks and Wildlife Service Sydney South Region Advisory Committee.

Cr Sansom has been a Councillor for the Peakhurst Ward, Hurstville City Council from September 1991 to the present and has held the position of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Cr Sansom was a teacher for 26 years and now works with the NSW Department of Education and Training in Workforce Management.

### **Councillor Genia McCaffery**

- Mayor, North Sydney Council
- President of the NSW Local Government Association
- B.Ec (Hon) Sydney University

Cr McCaffery began work as a researcher with the National Trust. Her experience spans work in youth issues, unemployment and public advocacy.

Cr McCaffery was elected as full-time Mayor of North Sydney

by popular vote in 1995 and was re-elected in 1999, 2004 and 2008. As Mayor, Cr McCaffery is committed to managing development within North Sydney, responsible financial management of Council, protecting the environment and maintaining strong community involvement in Local Government.

In October 2004, Cr McCaffery was elected President of the Local Government Association of NSW for a two year term. Cr McCaffery was re-elected as President in 2006 and again in 2008. She has identified planning, natural resources management and infrastructure investment as the key issues to address during her term as President.

Cr McCaffery has been a member of the Local Government Executive since 1998. She is on the Board of the NSW Environment Protection Authority and the NSW Environmental Trust.

### **Councillor Allan Ezzy**

- Deputy Chairman SMCMA
- Holroyd City Councillor and former Mayor
- APM, JP

Cr Ezzy has a Graduate Certificate in Management from Wollongong University. He was Mayor of Holroyd City Council for nine terms. He has had extensive experience in engaging with community groups, local business and with educational programs. His 19 years with the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust has provided him with considerable experience in managing the sometimes conflicting challenges

of flood mitigation and riparian biodiversity, predominantly in an urban framework. He is a retired Senior Prosecutor with the NSW Police Service.

Committees:

- Chairman of the NSW Floodplain Management Authorities
- Member National Flood Risk Advisory Group
- Foundation Trustee of Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust
- Vice President, Local Government Association
- Member, Natural Resources Advisory Council
- Director, State Cover Insurance Company
- Director, Metropole Insurance Pool
- Director, Merrylands RSL Club Ltd
- Member NSW State Food Regulation Advisory Forum
- Past President Holroyd Rotary Club

### **Mr Paul Zammit**

- Former Member of NSW Parliament (Burwood/Strathfield, 1984-1996)
- Former Member Australian Parliament (Lowe, 1996-1998)
- FAICD
- Extensive business experience

Mr Zammit has more than 30 years experience in the private and public sectors. He was a NSW Parliamentarian for 12 years. He was then elected to the Australian Parliament for some three years before returning to private enterprise. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Directors of Australia and a foundation Fellow



Left to right: Philip Sansom, Genia McCaffery, Allan Ezzy, Paul Zammit, Suzanne Little, Nick Katris

of the Australian Institute of Company Directors since 1983, an unbroken period of more than 25 years.

During his term in the NSW Parliament Mr Zammit served as Assistant Minister to the then Premier of NSW, The Hon. Nick Greiner MP. He served as Chairman of the NSW Parliamentary Select Committee on Lead Poisoning and Chairman of the NSW Parliamentary Select Committee on National Parks and Wildlife (Aboriginal Ownership) Bill. He has strong corporate governance experience and expertise.

He is the Managing Director of his family company, Zammit Sales, Marketing and Management Pty Ltd, a position held since its inception in 1998. Mr Zammit has also served as a Non-Executive Director on numerous private, government and publically-listed company boards.

**Ms Suzanne Little**

- BSc, MSc, Dip Ed

Ms Little is an environmental scientist with a career in environmental management, auditing and training. Her background ranges from local Bushcare through to corporate Australia. Among her commercial roles, Ms Little was the environment manager at three corporations: Vodafone Australia, AGL and SAI Global. Today she advises and teaches environmental courses in-house for several corporations.

In the public sector, Ms Little was Environment Director for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games where 20 venues were constructed in the metropolitan area as a showcase of sustainable development to the world. Previously she was an

environmental scientist with the Electricity Commission of NSW, Sydney Water's Priority Sewerage Program and two universities.

At national level, Ms Little was Australian Vice-President of the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand from 2005-2007 where she represented the views of the environment profession. She regularly presents at conferences and represented SMCMA as a conference speaker in July and October 2009 on the topics of sustainable procurement in the public service and a carbon price for Australia.

Her local roles include honorary Chair of Ku-ring-gai Bushcare Association from 2004-06, representing 800 volunteers. Ms Little has been active in Bushcare for ten years.

**Councillor Nick Katris**

- Kogarah City Councillor and former Mayor
- BSc(Arch), BArch(Hons), MURP, ARAIA, RIBA

Cr Katris has held a life-long interest in the management of natural resources and heritage and the pressure presented by increased urbanisation and urban renewal.

Cr Katris's background is as an architect with post graduate qualifications in Urban and Regional Planning. This has made him acutely aware of the dynamics of the interactive forces that arise between the natural and built environments and the importance of achieving sustainable social and economic solutions and outcomes.

Cr Katris is a former Mayor of Kogarah City Council and is serving his fourth term as a Councillor. As a Local Government Association representative he has had experience serving

on various committees (including the Building Regulations Advisory Council of the Department of Planning and Sydney Water's Corporate Customer Council). He has served as Chair of the Kogarah City Council Urban Planning and Design Working Party and Council's Estuary and Flood Plain Management Committee.

The Urban Planning Working Party, along with Kogarah City Council's Steering Committee, has been responsible for the coordination of the development of Kogarah's Town Centre, which has won more than 15 design excellence and ecologically sustainable development awards. The Estuary and Flood Plain Management Committee (which Cr Katris had chaired for more than seven years) has been responsible for procuring more than \$5 million in government grants to satisfy Council's goal of "Putting Total Water Cycle Management into Practice in Kogarah".

Cr Katris has also represented Council on the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and has served as Chair of Kogarah Community Services as a committee member for the Australian Standards Association.

# General Manager's Report



This year saw the SMCMA continue to initiate and build on the partnerships we have developed for managing natural resources in Sydney. Using State and Federal funding we were able to continue to invest in projects with local government partners, while maintaining close links with our community and professional networks. Connectivity is a key theme of

the region's Catchment Action Plan developed by the SMCMA. That connectivity is reflected in biophysical activities, and in the CMA's role as a facilitator of communication and capacity building.

Hosting a NSW CMA Chairs' Council tour of our projects on June 30 provided an opportunity to showcase our achievements to fellow CMAs across the State. While the challenges are specific to the intensely urbanised region, many of the methods we use to develop capacity, engage and partner in projects and support local community groups resonated with our regional sister organisations. I was particularly proud of the professionalism shown by staff in arranging and contributing to the tour, while providing opportunities for our partners to tell their story at each site visit.

At the State level CMAs also work collegiately with partners for shared objectives. The NSW Natural Resources and Environment Chief Executive Officers' Cluster has established a Senior Officer's Group (SOG) to oversight the review and implementation of the NSW State Plan, the revision of the State Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) Strategy and the revision of CMA Catchment Action Plans. CMAs have been invited to join the SOG to ensure that the regional perspective is available for these important activities.

At the local level it is important to have periodic assessments of the effectiveness of the organisation in achieving its goals. The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) is an independent State Government Authority charged with reviewing the progress of CMAs in implementing their Catchment Action Plans.

Part of this assessment involves undertaking audits of CMAs at appropriate intervals. Auditors engaged by the NRC conducted a review of the SMCMA in June and July 2009.

They presented their draft review to the Board in September and a final report to the NRC in November 2009. The Audit concluded that the CMA's project management and community engagement were generally going well, but that the areas of strategic engagement and prioritisation could be improved. The SMCMA has committed to undertake a range of actions to address these concerns and the Board will be considering reports on progress and notifying the NRC accordingly.

An important factor in strategic planning is identifying the links between long term goals and shorter term programs and projects. One of the ways to better understand these relationships is called Program Logic. All staff participated in Program Logic training during August 2009. Program Logic helps capture the rationale behind a program, the anticipated cause-and-effect relationships between program activities, outputs, intermediate outcomes and longer term desired outcomes and helps identify possible risks to be overcome. It thus provides greater confidence that each natural resource management target is being correctly addressed.

Although stormwater is a focus for us, water supply is also important for industrial and irrigation purposes. The SMCMA provided important administrative assistance to the NSW Office of Water in conducting public consultation at Bankstown and Liverpool on the proposed Greater Metropolitan Water Sharing Plan. While some landholders and commercial operators within the Sydney region have licensed bores, the issue has not generated the strong community feeling which occurred in neighbouring CMAs where access to water for irrigation by rural landholders can be critical for their livelihoods..

Local Councils are responsible for implementing the majority of natural resource management in the Sydney region. We work closely with councils for many activities. The SMCMA continues to be involved with the Sydney Weeds Committees, the Georges River Combined Councils' Committee, the Sydney Coastal Councils Group, the Cooks River Foreshores Working Group and the Parramatta River Catchment Group. The Annual Report aims to document the connections between our stakeholders, partnerships and the effective delivery of our Catchment Action Plan targets.

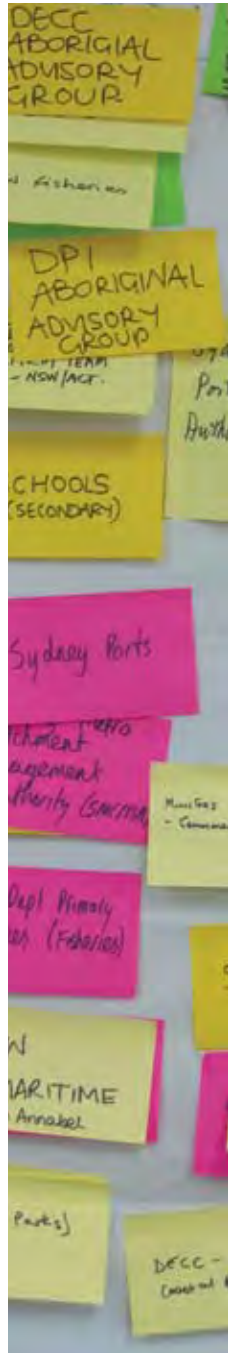
In October the Minister launched the NSW CMAs' 5 year anniversary document at Parliament House. This 80-page report captured the diversity and extent of NRM programs and projects being delivered by the 13 NSW CMAs over the five years since their foundation. It has been very well received and demonstrates the benefits of the regional model and involving local communities. Several SMCMA case studies were included.

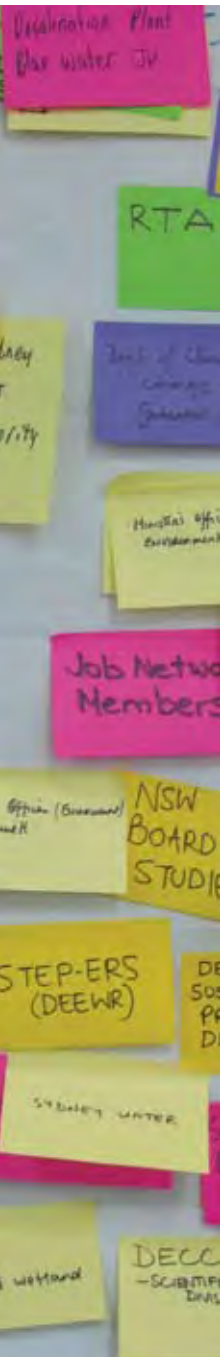
Another forum promoting the work of regional bodies was the National NRM Knowledge Conference, held in Darwin and attended by representatives from the 56 Australian NRM regional bodies. The SMCMA provided a case study on the guidelines Integrating NRM into Local Government Operations, which had received two awards at the 2009 Planning Institute of Australia's 2009 NSW Planning Excellence Awards. The project was funded by the Australian Government and undertaken on our behalf by the LGSA.

The SMCMA Marine Pests Education project has been a key project since 2008 with funding from the Australian Government and the National Resources Advisory Council (NRAC). In 2009 materials under this program have been used as templates for similar projects around Australia. Part of the material was also used on the NSW South Coast to counter a sudden outbreak of a sea squirt pest in early 2010. The project was nominated by NRAC for the Green Globe Awards. While the project did not win its category, it was an achievement to be nominated as one of the NRAC's three best projects.

The achievements outlined in this Annual Report could not be delivered without the support and guidance of the Board and the professionalism and enthusiasm of the staff. I would like to record my thanks and congratulations to each of them on a job well done. I have every confidence that the SMCMA will continue to improve its performance and engagement with our community and partners in caring for Sydney's natural environment.

**John Carse**  
General Manager





**Clockwise from Top Left:**

Launching the NSW CMA 5 Year Anniversary report at NSW Parliament House, July 2009: SMCMA General Manager, John Carse; Hawkesbury Nepean CMA Communication and Education Officer, Peter O'Malley; Central West CMA Public Relations and Media Officer, Lynne Hawkes; NSW CMA Chairs' Council Secretariat, Kerry Richardson; Western CMA Public Relations and Media Officer, Maree Barnes; Namoi CMA Public Relations and Media Officer, Anne Ferguson and Western CMA General Manager, Daryl Green.

Deputy Chairman, Allan Ezzy opens the second public consultation on the NSW Metropolitan Water Sharing Plan held at Liverpool in June.

Program Logic workshop, August 2009.

June 30, 2010. The NSW CMA Chairs participated in the SMCMA hosted "Delivering NRM in an Urban Context" tour. Here SMCMA General Manager John Carse answers questions from Lower Murray Darling CMA General Manager, Lesley Palmer.

On site at Kurnell. The Natural Resources Commission conducted an audit of the SMCMA.

# Catchment Action Plan

The Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Action Plan (CAP) is central to the delivery of natural resource management throughout our region.

The vision described by the CAP is "Community Growth Reconciled with Nature - An urban community that thrives within a valued natural landscape".

The CAP depicts a region where there are strong and positive links between healthy, functioning natural resource systems, vibrant communities and a robust and sustainable economy.

The CAP is the reference document for the community, the Australian and NSW Governments, state-owned corporations, industry, peak bodies and Local Councils who are the SMCMA's primary partners in specific programs.

Importantly, the CAP has a key role in addressing the priorities of the NSW State Plan at the local level. The NSW State Plan identifies targets which will guide the implementation of CAPs to ensure better outcomes for native vegetation, biodiversity, land, rivers and coastal waterways.

The CAP complements other natural resource management plans, including regional strategies, water sharing plans and regional conservation plans.

The CAP is the result of extensive consultation and collaboration with local groups, Aboriginal communities, local government, industry, NSW and Australian Government agencies to develop the best priorities and investments for natural resource management at a catchment level.





## Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

In November 2009, the SMCMA employed a Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) Officer whose key task during 2009-2010 was the development of a draft MER Strategy for the SMCMA. The final version of the Strategy is intended to be completed by the end of 2010.

The MER Strategy will guide how to collate, analyse, report and improve on the progress of SMCMA towards achieving the catchment and management targets identified in the CAP.

In particular the MER Strategy will provide details on the drivers, objectives and outcomes of applying MER to the CAP as well as providing a plan and supporting tools for project and investment program level MER.

The MER Strategy will be consistent with the NSW Natural Resources MER Strategy and the Australian Government's Natural Resource Management Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Framework and will identify monitoring, reporting and reviewing procedures and responsibilities for all SMCMA activities which contribute to the CAP. This will assist to support the process of adaptive management and improvement within the SMCMA.

The development of the SMCMA MER Strategy will also specifically address a number of the points identified in the Natural Resources Commission Audit and takes into account the requirements set out in the NSW Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management.

To support delivery of the MER Strategy, enhancements have been made to a number of SMCMA's project management systems. In particular the Catchment Information Management System and the geographic information system Land Management Database.

These enhancements will enable better recording of project deliverables and enable the SMCMA to more accurately spatially identify the location of on ground works and the contribution the works make to the CAP targets.

Utilisation of these two systems is common across the majority of other NSW CMAs and allows a common and consistent platform for reporting in a standard way the products and services delivered by all CMAs towards the NSW Statewide Targets.

The SMCMA was a partner with the Parramatta River Catchment Group to conduct an Urban Nature Photographic Competition in 2009. Some of the entries included:

**Clockwise from Top Left:**

Cockatoo at Callan Park, Johnny Barker.

Sydney Blue Gum forest, SMCMA.

Possum Box, Holroyd, Bruce Simpson.

Kookaburras, Annandale, Zeija Hu.

Taking a drink at the Japanese Gardens, Auburn, Yin Yau Cheung.

# Our Strategic Partnerships

The primary role of the SMCMA is to better connect the work of all natural resource management stakeholders within our region. The SMCMA sets targets that provide a unifying direction for all natural resource managers and contribute to the Statewide NRM targets.

The SMCMA has worked with its partners to determine the most important natural resource issues in the region and the processes or threats that are driving trends in natural resource condition. The SMCMA has reviewed existing efforts to address the fragmentation and degradation of natural resources and identified knowledge gaps.

The SMCMA operates within a complex mix of high profile strategic interests that intersect across government, industry and the community.

In the government arena the SMCMA works with policy makers, regulators and land managers within the the three tiers of government: Australian, NSW, and Local. At the community level the SMCMA interacts with an extensive network of organisations and businesses.

This "institutional landscape" presents important challenges and opportunities for the SMCMA in its efforts to implement its role of coordination and integration of natural resource management across the Sydney Metropolitan region.

Progress in natural resource condition in this intensively urban and managed region will be achieved by the development of continued support of strategic partnerships:

- Across natural system boundaries (eg freshwater creeks to estuaries)
- Between land managers across both private and public lands
- Between different government institutions
- Between community and government, harnessing the energy of more than three million residents and more than 20,000 volunteers







# Local Aboriginal Land Councils

The SMCMA acknowledges the connection of Aboriginal people to country and the integral connections between the natural resource values (such as water quality and flows and intact plant and animal communities) and the cultural values of the landscape.

The NSW Department of Natural Resources (2005) defined Aboriginal cultural landscapes as:

*"A location, area or region valued by an Aboriginal group (or groups) because of their long and complex relationship with that land. It expresses their unity with the natural and spiritual environment. It embodies their traditional knowledge of spirits, places, land uses and ecology. Material remains of the association may be prominent, but will often be minimal or absent."*

The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council covers the traditional land of 29 clans of the Eora nation. The Land Council's theme: *"Always was, always will be ... Aboriginal land"* embodies the concept of a cultural landscape that is valued for the continuity that the land represents – for stories, spiritual associations, economic associations (plants, animals, water and stone resources) and community strength.

Other Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC) and traditional nations that are represented in the SMCMA region include:

- La Perouse LALC in the Botany Bay area
- Gandangara LALC, based at Liverpool
- Tharawal LALC, based at Buxton
- Deerubbin LALC, based at Mount Druitt
- Illawarra LALC, based at Wollongong

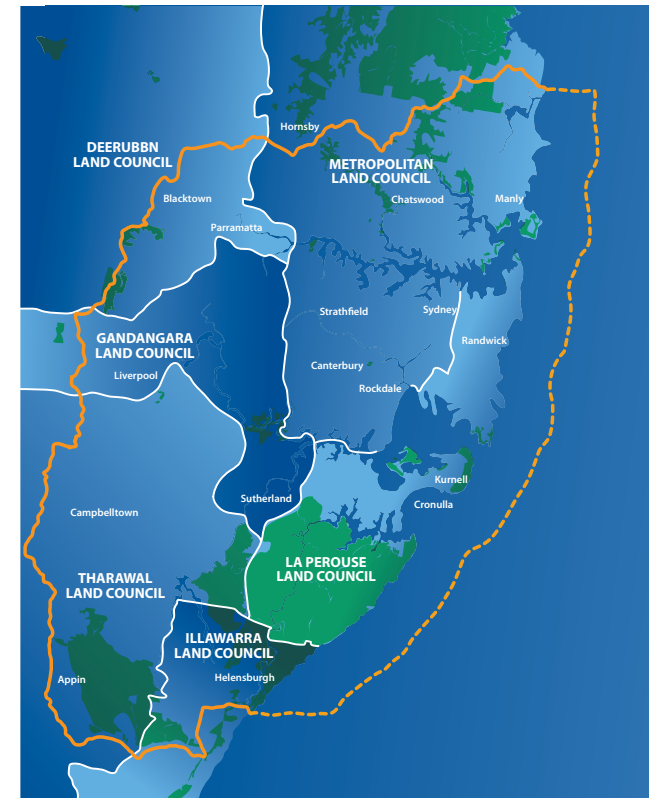
In addition to the traditional cultural associations with country, the LALCs and traditional owners in the SMCMA region own a significant area of land in multiple parcels, obtained under the *NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*.

Some of these parcels contain land with high biodiversity values.

Many represent links for Aboriginal people between traditional cultural landscape values and contemporary economic independence.

Aboriginal people are land managers and important stakeholders in improving natural resource conditions within the SMCMA region.

The SMCMA has participated in consultation with the NSW Aboriginal Land Council as well as LALCs within our region, as well as elders and traditional owner groups across the region.



**Opposite:** A film crew takes to the water at Oatley Bay on the Georges River to capture an oral history of Aboriginal cultural connection to the locality. In boat, from rear, clockwise: Georges Riverkeeper, Simon Annabel; Clive Freeman; Steven Russell and camera man, Sam King.

**Above:** Local Aboriginal Land Council areas within the SMCMA region.

**Right:** Sydney waratah

# Local Government

The SMCMA recognises that councils have a pre-eminent role as natural resource managers within the core urban Sydney region.

They have a primary role in land use planning and development assessment and the care and control of public land that influences many of the catchment targets for the urban landscape. Following the closure of the NSW Stormwater Trust in 2006, Local Government has been responsible for levying funds to cover the majority of stormwater management improvements in the region, while the Sydney Water Corporation also manages some stormwater infrastructure.

Local Government has a close working relationship with local and regional-scale community groups and individual councils are in a position to influence community attitudes and behaviour. As it would be resource intense to work with 39 individual councils, the SMCMA generally works with groups of councils, especially those with a catchment focus such as Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG); The Georges River Combined Councils' Committee (GRCCC); Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) and the Cooks River Foreshores Working Group. The region also contains five Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs) which also provide opportunities for achieving natural resource outcomes across Local Government boundaries.

The ROCS are:

- Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC)
- Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC)
- Shore Regional Organisation of Councils (SHOROC)
- Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC)
- Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils (MACROC)

## Other Significant Partnerships

The scope of the policy, regulatory, funding and on-ground management responsibilities of some organisations overlaps extensively with the core interests of the SMCMA. Some key stakeholder groups include:

## Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust

The SMCMA has a significant and important relationship with the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust.

The Trust was constituted in 1989. Under its charter the Trust was responsible for mitigating the impacts of flooding, trunk drainage surcharge, deteriorating water quality and other natural hazards. The Parramatta River catchment covers the upper part of The Hills Shire and Blacktown, Holroyd and Parramatta areas. A river management service charge levied on all rateable properties in the catchment provided funding for the Trust.

Projects included construction of infrastructure, flood modelling and data collection and the catchment-wide on-site stormwater detention policy.

In February 2005 the NSW Government decided the Trust would merge with the SMCMA. The finalisation of the merger and the abolition of the Trust is now dependent on identifying a source of funds to maintain the Trust's assets and liabilities after the merger.

## Port Hacking Management Panel

This group was established by Sutherland Shire Council to provide advice to Council on all matters related to the preservation, maintenance, sustainable development and use of Port Hacking. This includes ensuring that the Port Hacking Integrated Environmental Management Plan 2007-2012 is contemporary and relevant. Members of the Panel represent Council, commercial operators, The Waterfront Owners Association, the Waterways User Group, and other environmentally-focussed groups.

Non-voting members include representatives from the Department of Primary Industries, NSW Maritime Authority, and DECCW agencies including the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Estuary Management Program and the former Environment Protection Authority. The SMCMA is invited to attend meetings in an observer capacity.

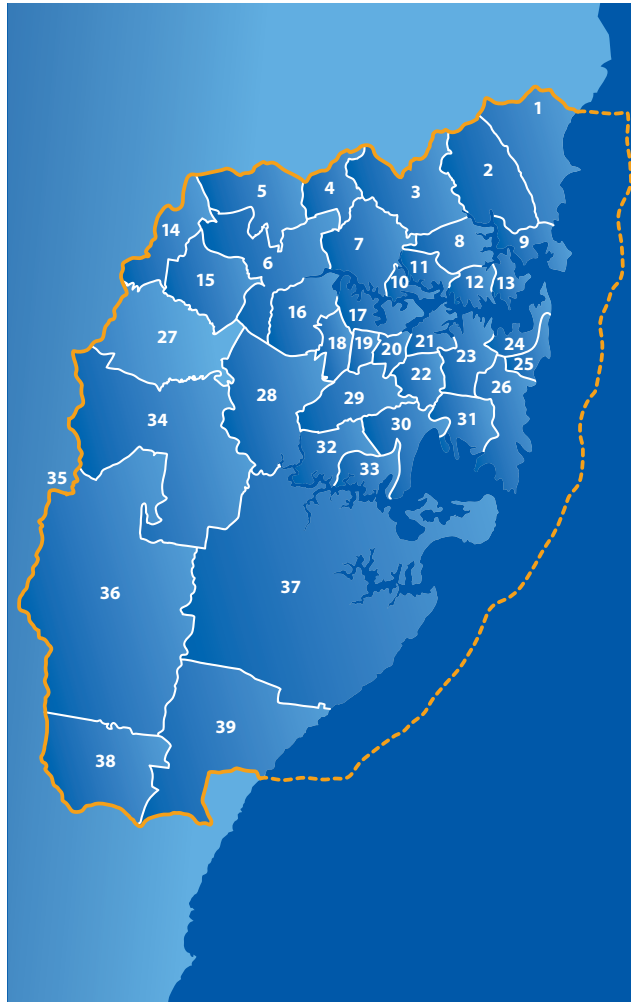
## The Coastal CMAs Working Group

The Coastal Catchment Management Authorities Working Group was set up to provide a forum for the five coastal CMAs to share knowledge, discuss issues and explore solutions. Members are: Northern Rivers, Hunter-Central Rivers Hawkesbury-Nepean, Sydney Metropolitan and Southern Rivers. The group meets quarterly and provides opportunities for the following:

- Development of strategic level NRM recommendations under the guidance from Coastal GMs and/or the joint NSW CMA GM's group
- Development of consistent operational foundations for policy, regulations, legislation, programs and operations - ensuring flexibility to adapt and vary these as necessary
- Sharing of knowledge, experience, initiatives through networking
- Joint problem solving and recommendation development
- Investigation and, if appropriate, progression of joint funding opportunities for cross-CMA projects

The regional Bitou Bush Control Project is an example of a successfully implemented cross regional project.





### Local Government areas

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 Pittwater     | 21 Leichhardt   |
| 2 Warringah     | 22 Marrickville |
| 3 Ku-ring-gai   | 23 Sydney       |
| 4 Hornsby       | 24 Woollahra    |
| 5 The Hills     | 25 Waverley     |
| 6 Parramatta    | 26 Randwick     |
| 7 Ryde          | 27 Fairfield    |
| 8 Willoughby    | 28 Bankstown    |
| 9 Manly         | 29 Canterbury   |
| 10 Hunters Hill | 30 Rockdale     |
| 11 Lane Cove    | 31 Botany Bay   |
| 12 North Sydney | 32 Hurstville   |
| 13 Mosman       | 33 Kogarah      |
| 14 Blacktown    | 34 Liverpool    |
| 15 Holroyd      | 35 Camden       |
| 16 Auburn       | 36 Campbelltown |
| 17 Canada Bay   | 37 Sutherland   |
| 18 Strathfield  | 38 Wollondilly  |
| 19 Burwood      | 39 Wollongong   |
| 20 Ashfield     |                 |



**Opposite:** Rockdale City Council engages heavy machinery at Coolibah Reserve Bardwell Park to install a gross pollutant trap to capture litter before it enters Bardwell Creek, part of the Cooks River catchment.

**Map:** 39 Local Government areas are in part or wholly within the SMCMA's region.

# Cooks River Urban Water Initiative

## Location and Significance of Site

The Cooks River is possibly the most urbanised waterway in Australia. Adjacent to Sydney's centre, it has suffered significant native vegetation loss, stream channel hardening, in-filling of wetlands and more than two centuries of industrial and sewage pollution. Its catchment of just over 10,000 hectares has a population of some 430,000 people and is predicted to continue to grow in the future.

The Cooks River is considered a valuable natural resource by catchment residents and worthy of attempts to restore its ecological functioning. Pressure from the community has ensured significant on-going investment from Local, NSW and Australian Governments to improve its ailing waters.

## Issues

In 2008 the Australian Government provided the initial \$2 million for the Cooks River Urban Water Initiative from its Water for the Future program. The SMCMA developed a project team with representatives from the community, Local Councils and NSW Government agencies to plan 14 stormwater and wetland projects in the catchment.

Local and State project partners provided substantial funding and entered into agreements for works. The Initiative contributes to a range of strategic targets at both State and Federal levels to improve the water quality and ecosystem functioning of the Cooks River Waterway.

From 2010, a partnership between Macquarie University, Sydney Water and the Environmental Trust will support research by a PhD student to monitor the project's implementation.

## Project Aims

The Cooks River Urban Water Initiative is a \$2million program aimed at funding direct on-ground work to improve the environmental quality of the system. Works include wetland restoration and stormwater treatment projects implemented in collaboration with local councils and agencies.

## Work

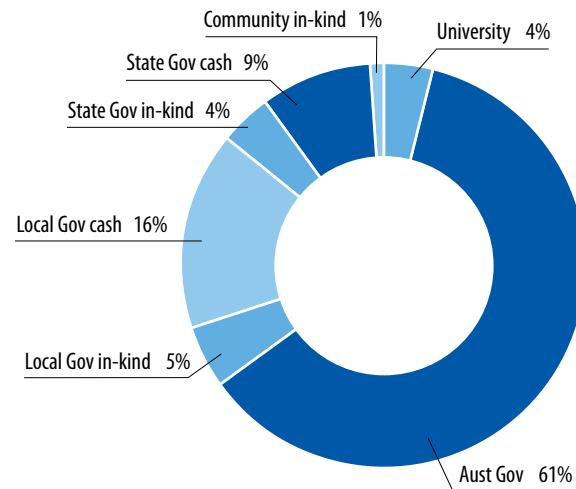
- Yarrowee Freshwater Wetland, Strathfield  
CRUWI \$120,000 Partner: Strathfield Council
- Cup and Saucer Creek Wetland at Heynes Reserve, Canterbury  
CRUWI \$335,000 Partner: Sydney Water and City of Canterbury
- Coolibah Reserve Wetland refurbished on the banks of Bardwell Creek, Turrella.  
CRUWI \$85,000 Partner: Rockdale City Council
- Steel Park Saltmarsh constructed at Steel Park Marrickville  
CRUWI \$130,000 Partner: Marrickville Council
- Turrella Creek Saltmarsh to be constructed at Wolli Creek  
CRUWI \$225,000 Partner: DECCW
- Eve Street Wetland bush regeneration and native plantings  
CRUWI \$40,000 Partners: Sydney Water and Rockdale City Council
- Hannam Street Bioretention Basin, Turrella  
CRUWI \$100,000 Partner: Rockdale City Council
- High Cliff East Bioretention Swale, Earlwood constructed to treat water before it enters the Regional Park  
CRUWI \$100,000 Partner: City of Canterbury
- Johnston Street Bioretention Basin, Earlwood  
CRUWI \$130,000 Partner: City of Canterbury
- HighCliff West Gross Pollutant Trap, Earlwood  
CRUWI \$50,000 Partner City of Canterbury
- Turrella Reserve Gross Pollutant Trap, Turrella  
CRUWI \$100,000 Partner City of Canterbury
- Bray Avenue Gross Pollutant Trap, Earlwood  
CRUWI \$50,000 Partner City of Canterbury
- Bardwell Valley Sedimentation Basin constructed  
CRUWI \$15,000 Partner: Rockdale City Council





## Funding

Australian Government's Water for the Future Program = \$2M



Total: July 2010 = \$3,098,095

Value of maintenance contracts signed with partners = \$71,000 per year ongoing

Status: All projects will be complete April 2011.

Full details available at [www.cooksriver.info](http://www.cooksriver.info)

**Opposite:** SMCMA Chairman, Philip Sansom and Board Members Suzanne Little and Nick Katris visit Heynes Reserve ahead of the sod-turn for the Cup and Saucer Creek wetland. Briefing the Board on the details are SMCMA Place Manager, Owen Graham (with map) and Sydney Water Natural Asset Manager, Daniel Cunningham.

**Centre:** During a tour of projects being undertaken as part of the Cooks River Urban Water Initiative, SMCMA Board Members inspect a stormwater installation.

**Left:** Federal Member for Grayndler, Anthony Albanese and the then Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government is interviewed at the official sod-turn for the Cup and Saucer Creek wetland.

## The Future

The Research Project will continue to provide further direction on the outcome of these improvements and provide guidance for similar work in the Cooks River catchment in the future.

## Achievements

- Four councils, three state agencies, two major community groups and one university engaged as partners
- Six major GPTs and six gully baskets installed
- Two bioretention systems created
- Two freshwater wetlands created and one refurbished
- Two saltmarshes created
- One saltmarsh buffer being restored
- One sediment capture basin constructed
- \$1,670,000 of grant expended

## Project partners

Cooks River Valley Association  
 Wollie Creek Preservation Society  
 Rockdale City Council  
 City of Canterbury  
 Marrickville Council  
 Strathfield Council  
 Macquarie University  
 NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water  
 Cooks River Foreshore Working Group  
 NSW Environmental Trust  
 Sydney Water

# Georges River

## River Health Monitoring Program

### River Location and Significance of Project

The Community River Health Monitoring Program Report Card provides a snapshot of the health of the whole of the Georges River. Four Report Cards are to be released between 2009 and 2011.

The Georges River Combined Council's Committee (GRCCC) was established in 1979 and represents nine member councils: Rockdale, Sutherland, Kogarah, Hurstville, Bankstown, Liverpool, Fairfield, Campbelltown and Wollondilly.

The Georges River catchment covers an area of approximately 960 square kilometres and, with more than one million residents, it is one of the most highly urbanised catchments in Australia.

### Issues

The SMCMA is providing support by hosting a co-ordinator to manage this project. Four of the nine GRCCC councils and the Georges River Environmental Education Centre are collaborating to provide data.

The high degree of urbanisation in the mid and lower catchments has led to a loss of riparian and estuarine vegetation and deterioration in water quality and macroinvertebrate diversity. In the upper catchment the protection of large areas of natural bushland has resulted in mostly healthy waterways however there is evidence of some negative impacts to water quality, possibly due to industrial discharge and urban runoff.

### Project Aims

To involve the community and scientific professionals in the collection of robust and meaningful scientific data for the determination of the current condition of the Georges River catchment. This information will be used by land managers to enhance and preserve the ecological integrity of the river system.

### Work

- Train community members in robust ecological monitoring methodology and involve them in the assessment of the condition of the Georges River catchment waterways.
- Display results of the monitoring program in an easily understood format that can be viewed and used by a range of stakeholders including the community, Local and NSW Government.

### The Future

It is anticipated that well-promoted and supported sub-catchment sampling days will encourage residents to become active in river management.

The data collected will be used to provide an indicative river health picture and will be used by the GRCCC to structure more rigorous studies. Research and data will identify hotspots and guide environmental spending by the member councils.

### Achievements

The first Report Card indicated the overall environmental health of the Georges River is fair and that large areas of the catchment are in reasonably good condition.

The Report Card verifies that the river system has been affected by urban and industrial development.

More than 300 community volunteers, led by science professionals, have participated in collecting data at more than 42 sites within the Georges River catchment.

This project moves beyond previous water quality and stream ecology studies that have been of short duration and based on political boundaries, rather than landscape boundaries.

**Clockwise:** Georges River Riverkeeper, Simon Annabel, and SMCMA officer Emma Beckley hosting an information day on the Georges River.

Scenery along the Georges River.





## Community Support for Biodiversity Restoration

### Location and Significance of Site

- Botany Bay and its catchment were identified as a priority coastal hot spot in 2008-2010 Caring for our Country Business Plans
- This project is based in the mid-Georges River Catchment specifically the local government areas of Hurstville, Bankstown and Liverpool

### Issues

- Volunteer engagement is not as high in the Georges River Catchment as in other areas of the SMCMA region (2007 SMCMA Environmental Volunteering Survey)
- Target areas have more than 30% Culturally and Linguistically Diverse CALD residents who often need greater support to engage in NRM activities
- Liverpool, Bankstown and Hurstville Councils were selected to participate in the project

### Project Aims

The project involves improving the skills and knowledge of the community in restoring biodiversity of bushland and creek corridors. Several on ground projects have been selected in riparian areas as part of the project involving works such as weed control, bush regeneration, sediment/erosion control and community workshops. A major focus will be to inspire and engage new volunteers particularly from different cultural and language backgrounds. A Bushcare site audit and map of community involvement across the entire SMCMA region is scheduled.

### Work

Actions planned for 2010-2011 include: Community Tree Planting at Ireland Park Liverpool, three CALD community workshops in Bankstown LGA, a Introductory Bushcare Training Course in Bankstown and a Community Engagement Report Card for the Georges River utilising data from the SMCMA 2009 Environmental Volunteering Survey and a number of locally relevant Case Studies.

### The Future

Although this project finishes in October 2010, partnerships with the three local councils and the communities they represent have been strengthened and future projects will be developed.

### Achievements

The project highlights the importance of partnerships, particularly those strong partnerships with local government for delivering quality integrated projects that deliver numerous outcomes across a variety of themes.

Another key role of the SMCMA has been to facilitate linkages between different organisations and the community.

It also highlights that a relatively small investment of project funds can be all that is needed to generate a lot more investment in terms of volunteer contribution.

### Highlights

- Six on ground incentives projects selected and works commenced with 3 partner councils, Total: \$52, 650 Morgan's Creek, Picnic Point, The River Reserve at Revesby, Myles Dunphy Reserve at Oatley, Blamfield Oval at Ashcroft, Mihajlovic Reserve at Green Valley, Ireland Park at Liverpool)
- Volunteer Motivation and Recruitment Workshop (1/2 day) and Working with CALD volunteers workshop (1/2 day) held November 2009
- Bushcare sites audit and map of all volunteer Bushcare sites in the SMCMA region completed
- Three Inspiring workshops held for CALD volunteers Liverpool City Council
- Georges River Community Boat Trip
- Aboriginal Weaving Workshop on the Georges River at Oatley and Documentary about the event
- Bankstown Bushcare Brochure translated into three community languages- Arabic, Vietnamese and Chinese

### Partners

Councils: Liverpool, Bankstown, Hurstville  
 Georges River Riverkeeper  
 Oceanwatch Australia  
 School of Volunteer Management  
 Boolarng Nangamai Artist Studio

### Funding

Caring for our Country Community Coastcare \$149, 777

### Completion

October 2010

(Continued from page 21)

### Catchment and Management Targets

CTC1: By 2016 more people, communities and organisations have increased capacity to engage in practices that contribute to improved NRM

CTC2: By 2016 there is an improved focus and collaboration between organisations that act in or influence NRM

CTC4: By 2016 there is improved recognition across the community of the contribution of healthy NRM

MTC1.1: By 2016 local and regional training, education and awareness programs have been developed and implemented for priority communities and NRM stakeholders.

MTC2.3: By 2016 stakeholders partnerships and networks will be extended, consolidated and made more effective.

## Action on the Georges

This project is part of a suite of projects within the "Engaging NSW Communities in Coastline Conservation" Strategy.

Work is being undertaken at multiple sites within the Georges River catchment, which is part of the Botany Bay catchment, a coastal "hot spot" area.

### Issues

- The local coastal environment is under pressure from high levels of urbanisation and recreational activities
- Issues include weeds and poor water quality
- Low numbers of youth involved in bush regeneration activities

### Project Aims

To build the skills and awareness of young people aged 15-21 living along the Georges River and encourage on ground volunteering through participation in restoration locations along the Georges River.

### Work

- Engagement of students from local schools
- Liaison and training with Georges River Riverkeeper
- Bush regeneration
- Weeding and planting

More schools are to be engaged and planting events will be conducted in the near future. Tentative dates scheduled for program delivery are: September and December 2010.

### Achievements

Conservation Volunteers Australia has engaged students from local high schools including Hurstville Boys High School and Picnic Point High School.

Work with the Georges River Riverkeeper has commenced.

### Partners

Conservation Volunteers Australia, Picnic Point High School, Hurstville Boys High School, Georges River Riverkeeper.

### Funding

Caring for our Country \$48,000



**Top:** SMCMA Indigenous Catchment Officer, Tabatha Timbery-Cann presents Land Alive trainee, Nathan Kennedy, with a bush regeneration kit.

The Gandangara Land Council owns a 750 hectare site at Menai within the Mill Creek catchment. The trainees are working to reduce and control weeds and illegal rubbish dumping. An important aim is to reduce and eventually eliminate the illegal access of motorbikes and four-wheel drive vehicles to the area. Trainees will also construct a walking track which will highlight the cultural and natural importance of the area.

**Bottom:** Georges River.



# Waterways and Wetlands: Mill Creek

## Location and Significance of Site

- Land is owned by the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council (GLALC)
- The land is affected by severe soil erosion from 4WD vehicles and motor bikes
- Mill Creek is a tributary of the Georges River. This flows to Botany Bay, which is a Caring for our Country designated "hot spot"
- Threatened species on this land

## Issues

- Illegal vehicle access and vandalism to fencing
- Damage to erosion control works
- Weed proliferation
- Ongoing funding for trainees

## Project Aims

- Reduce sediment loads into Mill Creek
- On-ground Bush Regeneration
- Training of Aboriginal trainees in Conservation and Land Management

## Work

- Supply and installation of erosion control materials
- Supervision of Aboriginal trainees
- Bush regeneration
- Seed collection and propagation
- Weed control

## The Future

- Continue building capacity of local Aboriginal community and GLALC in NRM activities and education
- Continue to work with GLALC to improve their capacity to manage natural resources on their land. This will assist in improving the health of the Mill Creek sub catchments

## Achievements

- Successful mitigation of some soil erosion issues on GLALC Mill Creek
- Development of a partnership between a professional bush regeneration company and the local Aboriginal community and Land Council
- Engaging Aboriginal trainees in bush regeneration and land management training
- Successful partnership with SMCMA and GLALC

## Funding

DECCW Land Alive Program  
GLALC  
Aboriginal Community  
Caring for our Country

## Catchment and Management Targets

MTLD1.1: By 2016 sediment load inputs to urban bushland have been minimised through best practice erosion and sedimentation control strategies.

CTC1: By 2016 more people, communities and organisations have increased capacity to engage in practices that contribute to improved NRM

CTW1: By 2016 there is a net improvement in the health of modified waterways and riparian corridors and conservation of natural waterways.

MTC1.4: By 2016 there is an increase in the capacity of Aboriginal communities to engage in NRM.

**Right:** Admiring a healthy Gymea Lily, the dominant plant in the Endangered Ecological Community, O'Hares Creek Shale Forest in the Dharawal State Conservation Area.



# Botany Bay Water Quality Improvement Program

The Botany Bay Water Quality Improvement Program aims to achieve long-term protection of the surface waters of Botany Bay, its estuaries and its catchment.

Botany Bay and its catchment are significant, being home to many endangered species and communities, the Ramsar wetland at Towra Point Nature Reserve, migratory species, recreational, water based activities and cultural heritage.

## Issues

Botany Bay and its catchment waterways face ongoing threats due to nutrient and sediment-laden run-off from various urban land uses. A substantial part of the catchment is highly developed with almost 40 per cent of its area being used for urban, industrial or commercial purposes.

Pollutants include nitrogen, phosphorus, nutrients and total suspended solids.

Development pressure is contributing to degradation of waterways, bushland and recreational areas within the catchment.

## Local Government

Partnering with key stakeholders, including Local Government, the SMCMA has funded the installation of \$2.6 million of water quality improvement devices across the Botany Bay catchment.

Seven projects have been funded under the Water Quality Improvement Plan which will result in more than 40 devices being installed which will improve the quality of stormwater entering the Bay's precious waterways.

The Water Quality Improvement Grants were awarded to Sutherland Shire Council, City of Canterbury, Bankstown City Council, City of Sydney and the Centennial Park Foundation.

## Work

The projects include bioretention basins or raingardens, wetlands, bioretention swales, stormwater treatment and reuse as well as gross pollutant traps. The devices are intended to significantly reduce litter, sediment and nutrients entering waterways.

This will subsequently reduce impacts on the plants and animals living in our waterways and reduce the chance of algal blooms occurring in Botany Bay and its estuaries. In total, 223 hectares of Botany Bay's catchment will be treated by these devices.

## Partners

In December 2009 the SMCMA partnered with four councils: Rockdale, Hurstville, Fairfield and Strathfield to fund similar projects.

## Funding

Total: All projects \$3.2 million,  
\$700,000 contributed by the SMCMA

All projects will be completed by May 2011

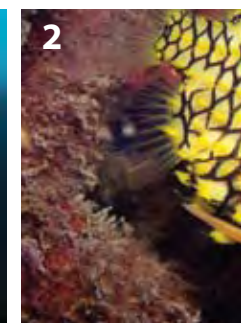
Visit: <http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au/bbcci/>

The Botany Bay catchment extends from Prospect Reservoir in the north-west, and intersects with approx 25 local government areas including Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Bankstown, Canterbury, Marrickville and Sutherland.

**Right:** Bare Island Botany Bay.

Photography: 2008 David Harasti for SMCMA®.

**Bottom left to right:** Photo 1: Six Spined Leatherjacket (*Meuschenia freycineti*) at Bare Island; Photo 2: Pineapplefish (*Cleidopus gloriamaris*) at Shiprock - Port Hacking; Photo 3: White ear damselfish (*Parma microlepis*) at Bare Island; Photo 4: Weedy Seadragon (*Phyllopteryx taeniolatus*) at Kurnell; Photo 5: Eastern Blue Devilfish (*Paraplesiops bleekeri*) at Shark Point - Clovelly; Photo 6: Diver and Eastern Shovel Nose Shark (*Aptychotrema rostrata*) at Bare Island





### Botany Bay catchment

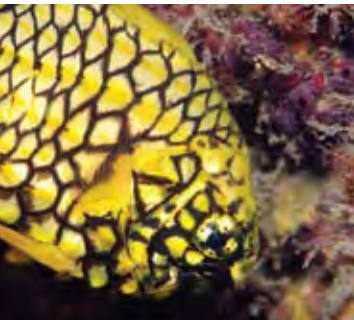
The Botany Bay catchment includes the two significant sub-catchments of the Cooks and Georges rivers.

The catchment extends across some 1165 square kms. It is bounded by the Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour catchments in the north, the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment in the west and the Hacking River catchment in the south.



Botany Bay is Australia's largest container port, handling more than one-third of the national containerised trade in 2004.

Kingsford Smith Airport extends across reclaimed land in Botany Bay and is Australia's busiest international airport.



Botany Bay and its catchment has been identified as an environmental "hot spot" under the Australian Government Caring for our Country program.

# Kurnell

## Kurnell 2020 Biodiversity Corridors Program

### Location and Significance of the Site

- The Kurnell Peninsula covers an area of 33 square kms on the southern shore of Botany Bay, approximately 16 km south of the Sydney CBD. Kurnell Peninsula is within the Sutherland Shire Local Government Area

### Issues

- Towra Point Nature Reserve and Kamay Botany Bay National Park (KBBNP) share boundaries with publically owned land managed by Sutherland Shire Council and a variety of private land boundaries. Prior to the Kurnell 2020 initiative there has been no collaborative approach to pest control to protect these areas of high conservation significance
- Towra Point Nature Reserve (a Ramsar Wetland) is linked to KBBNP by a narrow corridor. Part of this corridor has been newly acquired by Kamay Botany Bay National Park. The newly acquired areas are heavily impacted by weeds and vertebrate pests
- The area is under pressure from adjacent urban development and rubbish dumping
- There is a range of experience and understanding among the business community and local residents on natural resource management objectives

### Work

- Primary and secondary weed removal
- Bush regeneration
- Involvement of the local community
- Community education days
- Planting
- Dune stabilisation
- Human traffic control
- Aboriginal Towra Team training and support

## Kurnell 2020 vision: Engaging community in integrated ecological restoration, Stage 1

### Project Description

This project commenced in April 2009, with funding from the Australian Government Caring for our Country, Community Coastcare Program 2008-2009. It is an integrated project undertaking strategic planning, on-ground works on public land and community education, training and engagement. The project will be completed in October 2010. The project was initiated with a range of partners to further develop the SMCMA's investment in Kurnell. It comprises six external contracts as well as SMCMA project deliverables.

### Funding

Total: \$227,272

Funding 2009-2010: \$170,454

### Location

This project is focussed on public lands across the Kurnell Peninsula.

### Site selected

- Existing SMCMA investment in Kurnell Peninsula through Australian Government
- Willingness of key partners, Sutherland Shire Council (SSC), KBBNP, Georges River Combined Councils Committee to be involved
- Cultural heritage and European heritage values

### Issues

- Kurnell has the "best", (endangered ecological communities including high quality Kurnell Dune Forest), and the "worst", (bitou infestations, loss of soils due to sand mining, depleted natural resources) natural elements within a landscape mosaic of industrial, residential and infrastructure features
- There are multiple public and private land managers on Kurnell Peninsula and it lacks an integrated landscape-wide management approach. The SMCMA had the opportunity, as an overarching agency, to help coordinate investment and land management across the Peninsula

- Kurnell is "off the map" for most Sydneysiders. Very little community awareness of its natural values: seen as just an industrial landscape

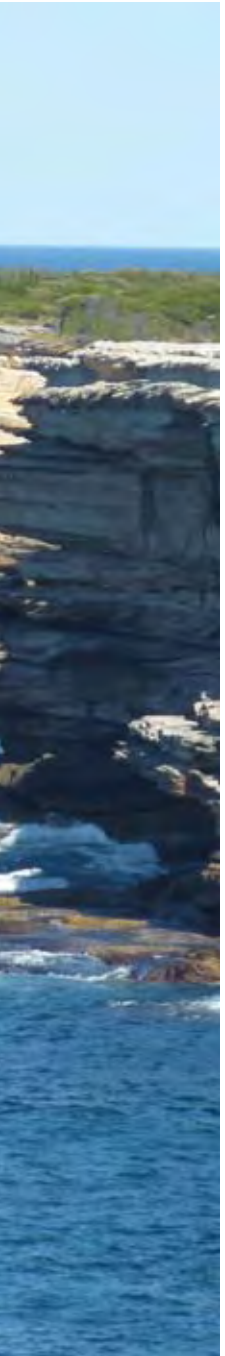
### Project Aims

- Improve coordination by land managers across the Kurnell Peninsula through development of strategic planning documents
- Improve condition of vegetation by undertaking weed control and bush regeneration on key sites
- Management of foxes
- Increase the skills and engagement of the Indigenous Towra Team, employed by KBBNP by funding training opportunities
- Increase skills, knowledge and awareness of the local community and SSC volunteers by delivering a series of bushcare training workshops and awareness raising events, publication of a Kurnell Guide and other communication outcomes
- Increase awareness of values of Kurnell among corporate community

### Work

- A joint operational Steering Committee established and meeting regularly
- An Integrated Pest Management Strategy completed for the whole Peninsula
- A Seed and Nursery Audit completed and available on the Sutherland Shire Council website
- Bush regeneration across 4.5 hectares of public land by SSC and Kamay Botany Bay National Park
- Fox control conducted by SSC across the Peninsula
- Six training sessions for the Indigenous Towra Team relevant to conservation and land management activities, such as cultural heritage training, driver training, chemical handling and First Aid
- Five community workshops delivering training in Identification of Plants of the Kurnell Peninsula; Bushcare Basics and Plant Propagation





- Nine corporate community work days facilitated by Conservation Volunteers Australia on Kurnell
- Kurnell Biodiversity Forum delivered jointly with other SMCMA projects on Kurnell

### The Future

This project will be completed in late 2010. The strategic planning documents will help inform the revegetation of biodiversity corridors across Kurnell by project partners and the community will be further engaged through the publication of the Kurnell Guide.

### Key Message

The grant application that created this project was developed by the SMCMA through a series of meetings and consultations over several months with the whole range of stakeholders who had an interest in the management of Kurnell's natural resources. The project's success is a result of the sense of commitment and ownership that the partners have in the delivery of the project outcomes.

### Management Target

MTB3.3: By 2016 there is an increase in the extent, condition and connectivity of regional biodiversity corridors

MTC1.1: By 2016 local and regional training, education and awareness programs have been developed and implemented for priority communities and NRM stakeholders.

## Sharing the Shoreline – Towra Point community shoreline protection program

The SMCMA assisted Kamay Botany Bay National Park to access funding to provide a shorebird coordinator for six months over the summer breeding season.

### Location

Towra Spit Island, a man-made island which is part of Towra Point Aquatic Reserve in Botany Bay.

### Significance

- This site is part of the Towra Point Aquatic Reserve, an internationally recognised Ramsar site. It is a nesting site for threatened Little Terns and Pied Oystercatchers as well as providing summer roosting sites for migratory shorebirds, protected under a suite of national and international conservation covenants
- Activities funded supported the Priority Action Statement (PAS) for Little Terns. Migratory Shorebirds are also a priority in the SMCMA PAS Implementation Strategy

### Issues

- Beach-nesting shorebirds face a range of threats including predation by vertebrate pests, dogs and human disturbance, high tide flooding and unsuitable vegetation
- Beach-nesting opportunities are also limited generally in Botany Bay due to the Port extensions and other infrastructure works. Towra Spit, as an island, is an ideal location for Little Terns and in previous years they used this site

### Project Aims

- Facilitate successful beach-nesting of shorebirds at Towra Spit 2009-2010
- Employ a Shorebird Coordinator from October 2009 - March 2010 to manage the site for beach-nesting shorebirds and facilitate training for volunteers and the Indigenous Towra Team
- Raise community awareness regarding beach-nesting shorebirds

### Work

- Shorebird coordinator employed
- Volunteers completed 380 hours of vegetation management and monitoring
- Training in bird identification provided to Indigenous work team
- Fox control conducted across Towra Point Spit and buffer areas
- Guidelines for beach-nesting shorebirds reprinted and 400 distributed at boat launch sites

### Achievements

- For reasons not identified only two Little Terns successfully fledged on the Island. In 2009-2010, Little Tern breeding was very limited in Botany Bay
- Volunteers did not get the opportunity to undertake extensive site monitoring
- Indigenous Towra team was not employed by KBBNP until March 2010 so only received minimal training

### Future

- Volunteer community groups, including Friends of Towra Point and the Botany Bay Busy Bees need to be supported to assist in funding ongoing protection and conservation of threatened species
- Little Terns are unpredictable in their breeding site preferences

### Funding

Caring for our Country Community Coastcare 2009-2010.

Total: \$45,114

### Management Target

MTB4.1 By 2009, SMCMA relevant priority actions in the Threatened Species Priorities Action Statement have been determined and are being implemented.

Left: Coastline at Cape Solander, Kamay Botany Bay National Park

# Water Sensitive Urban Design Program

The focus of the Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) Program is to build capacity and commitment amongst Sydney Metropolitan local councils. However, the primary focus of the program is Botany Bay catchment.

## Location and Significance of Site

The Botany Bay catchment faces difficult pressures and requires better management and protection to ensure it is sustained into the future by reducing impacts of poor water quality.

Under Caring for our Country, which funds the program, a priority coastal hotspot is a coastal aquatic ecosystem:

- With high ecological, social, cultural and/or recreational values
- That encompasses one or more matters of national environmental significance
- That is under pressure from the impacts of population growth and declining or poor water quality
- With an existing Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) or where works have been undertaken to begin the development of one

## Issues

The adoption of WSUD is considered an important component of protecting and improving coastal hotspots from ongoing and/or declining water quality.

Improving the commitment and capacity for councils to implement WSUD involves the dissemination of a series of resources (eg. guidelines, case studies, training, planning provisions, best practice design, etc.) via a mix of communication tools (eg. websites; newsletters; seminars; forums; face to face discussions and project support; experiential learning through project development and delivery etc.). The instrument selection is dependent on the known capacity of the individual organisations, balancing a mix of capacity building instruments that bring councils up to a best practice standard, while providing incentives and rewards to the leaders.

Without governing external rules and incentives at a Federal or State Government level, the onus is on the councils as to whether or not they wish to adopt WSUD. As such, the WSUD Program also has to fulfill an advocacy role.

## Project Aims

Improve the Botany Bay Coastal hot spot by:

- The development and launch of an online council capacity building tool ensuring four Botany Bay councils have adopted WSUD Design practices

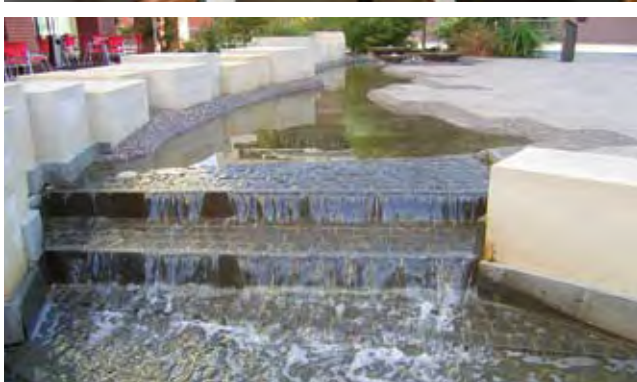
The above solutions were adopted with the aim to encourage and provide the means for councils to develop a suite of WSUD planning policies to ensure the consistent application of WSUD in all developments – council and private.

## Work

The WSUD Program will continue to improve the commitment and capacity of Sydney Metropolitan councils (councillors and staff) to promote and implement more sustainable urban water management practices across council operations and urban development in Sydney. The primary mechanisms to realise these goals include:

- A series of seminars, conferences and site visits
- Issue-based workshops tailored to suit individual council and organisation's needs
- WSUD e-newsletters – minimum 10 per year
- WSUD planning and technical guidelines for use by councils and consultants
- WSUD website – technical guidelines, literature, case studies, resources, images and web links
- Promotion of new WSUD innovations (policies, projects, research etc.)
- Council support - developing policies, projects and initiatives, including sourcing and applying for grants





- Development of partnership (Government, Industry and Research Institutions) projects that create cross sectoral linkages and develop tangible practical outputs - models, guidelines, reports, checklists, manuals etc.
- Program monitoring, reporting and evaluation

**The Future**

In addition to the above ongoing responsibilities and the realisation of 2010-2011 targets, the SMCMA will deliver the following projects in 2010-2011 which will be funded by in-kind contributions from the SMCMA and via the NSW Government's CANSW fund:

- A WSUD Geographical Information Systems Register will showcase the uptake of WSUD infrastructure by councils
- Construction and establishment time lapse video footage will be made available later in the year as an educational resource to promote best practice WSUD and encourage similar projects
- Impacts of Climate Change on Urban Water Management in Metropolitan Sydney will include a literature review and ground truthing findings
- National Life Cycle Costing Project will provide, once completed a compendium of costing information; supporting modelling tools
- WSUD Typical Drawings

**Achievements**

Funded by the SMCMA as a function of their in-kind contribution to the WSUD Program's delivery and via the NSW State Government's Catchment Action NSW fund, the following projects have been completed:

- Interim WSUD Reference Guidelines (Concept Design). Bridging documents providing a regional context to the South East Queensland's Water by Design Program's suite of technical guidelines
- A WSUD Geographical Information Systems Register will showcase the uptake of WSUD infrastructure by councils
- Continuing involvement in the Cities as Water Supply Catchments, a five-year National research program

- Introductory WSUD Fact Sheet
- Introductory WSUD Power Point Presentation
- Institutional Capacity – Rapid Assessment and Action Plan Tool will enable councils to identify and prioritise strategies to improve their ability to implement WSUD
- WSUD Incentives (Case Study Compendium)

**Funding**

Caring for our Country from 2009-2011

**Top, Bottom and Left:**

Examples of Water Sensitive Urban Design solutions: [www.wsud.org](http://www.wsud.org).

**Centre:** At the official launch of Cities as Water Supply Catchments held at Marrickville: the Hon. Professor John Thwaites (Research Program Chairperson, Monash Uni); SMCMA Chairman, Philip Sansom and Professor Tony Wong (Research Program Director, Monash Uni).

# Parramatta River

## Marsden Street Weir Fish Passage

### Location and Significance of the Site

Marsden Street Weir is located on the main stem of Parramatta River within Parramatta Central Business District.

The Parramatta River plays a unique role in the history of both its Aboriginal inhabitants and Australia's earliest European settlers. It was valued for its clean waters and plentiful supply of food such as bass and other native fish.

### Issues

In the early 1800's weirs were installed to provide water to Sydney's growing settlement. So for almost 200 years the upper reaches of the Parramatta River have not been accessible to native fish for breeding and feeding. Four weirs on the main stem were identified as barriers to fish passage and prioritised for remediation in the NSW Department of Primary Industries' report *"Reviewing and Restoring Fish Passage in Urbanised Waterways, Sydney Catchments"*. Marsden Street Weir is the second of the four weirs. The first and third weirs have had vertical slot fishways installed (Charles Street and Kiosk Weirs).

### Project Aims

The project funding contributed towards the construction of a fish lock fishway through Marsden Street Weir to re-establish native fish migration upstream and downstream. The project contributes to a long-term solution to improve the ecological health of the river.

### Partners

The project was jointly funded by Parramatta City Council, Industry and Investment NSW (Fisheries), Federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust (UPRCT), and CSR Building Products Limited (under penalty imposed by the NSW Land and Environment Court).

Bass Sydney and Parramatta Park Trust provided in-kind contributions.

### Funding

Total: Catchment Action NSW \$78,000

### Achievements

Works are completed and the fish lock is operating. The fish lock allows fish movement over a rise or fall of approximately three metres. The lower gate periodically opens allowing fish to enter or exit. When the lower gate closes the upper gate opens filling the lock with water. This process allows fish to ascend to the headwater level or to travel downstream.

### The Future

- Parramatta City Council has commissioned a fish monitoring study below and above each of the first three weirs installed with fishways to determine their success
- Maintenance of the fish lock is undertaken by Parramatta City Council

### Catchment and Management Targets

CTW1: By 2016 there is a net improvement in the health of modified waterways and riparian corridors and conservation of natural waterways.

MTW1.6: By 2016 the extent, condition and connectivity of instream habitat is maintained and/or improved by facilitating the protection and/or rehabilitation of freshwater vegetation at all high priority sites, the removal or remediation of 10 barriers to fish passage and the reinstatement of woody debris.

## Parramatta River Estuary Management Plan

### Location and Significance of the Site

The Parramatta River is the major tributary flowing into the iconic Sydney Harbour.

### Issues

The Parramatta River Estuary is managed by nine local governments and numerous state government agencies. It has had more than 200 years of settlement, agriculture, industry and urbanisation and as a result has been highly modified from its original natural state.

### Project Aims

To identify and address problems within this important estuary, local councils, state agencies (including the SMCMA) and the community have coordinated efforts and resources within the Parramatta River Catchment Group to develop an Estuary Management Plan.

The Estuary Management Planning process is a three stage process:

- Stage 1: Data Compilation and Review was completed in 2008
- Stage 2: Estuary Processes Study was undertaken in 2009-2010
- Stage 3: The SMCMA contributed funding in 2009-2010 to the Estuary Management Plan

### Partners

DECCW, Parramatta City Council, City of Ryde Council, Auburn Council, City of Canada Bay Council, Sydney Olympic Park Authority, Shell, Ashfield Council, Strathfield Council, Hunter's Hill Council and Leichhardt Municipal Council.

### Achievements

Partnerships developed between stakeholders to optimise the use of funds and staff time and to share technical expertise and local knowledge.

Production of quality reports to assist in the management of the Parramatta River Estuary.

### The Future

Finalisation of the Estuary Management Plan and implementation of the Plan.

### Catchment and Management Targets

CTECM 1: By 2016 there is an improvement in the condition of estuaries and coastal lakes.

MTECM 1.5: By 2016 the condition of estuaries and coastal lake systems will be maintained or improved through development and implementation of natural resource management plans (including estuary management plans).







## Bilingual Guides in the Parramatta River Area

### Issues

It was determined that there was an inconsistent level of knowledge and understanding within Sydney's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities about 'living in a catchment' and human actions that impact on our river systems. The SMCMA's consultation with staff from the Auburn Migrant Resource Centre, Parramatta, Ryde and Auburn Councils indicated that many migrants recently settled in the area lacked a sense of place and often didn't venture beyond their immediate neighbourhood. This project was intended to address gaps in awareness about the Parramatta and Duck Rivers and surrounding natural areas as important places to be enjoyed and cared for by all of the community.

### Project Aims

- To train bilingual volunteers to develop and deliver informative tours to groups in their language other than English
- To promote and organise interpretive tours in the Parramatta River area that provide community members, for whom English is not the first language, with information on the history and environmental issues of their local area
- To establish and develop networks with Councils and Community support organisations in the Parramatta River area

### Achievements

Eight bilingual volunteers were given accredited training in developing and delivering guided tours. To successfully complete the course each participant was required to develop a tour and then deliver it in both English and their own language other than English.

Networks established with Auburn Council (including the Auburn City Council Community Pride Taskforce), Parramatta Council, the Catchment Connections Network (including Ryde Council), and the Auburn Community Development Network.

One tour of Parramatta Park was delivered in Arabic by one of the volunteer Guides in November 2009 for a group of eleven people from the Merrylands Community Health Centre.

A brochure has been developed promoting the availability of the guides for dissemination to Council and Community organisations. This brochure gives the contact details of the volunteer guides so that groups and organisations are able to deal directly with them to organise tours.

### The Future

The trained bilingual Guides will continue to be promoted through the developed brochure. Partnerships and networks established with local Councils and Community support organisations will be maintained and opportunities to extend the project investigated.

### Partner

Environmental Trust

### Funding

Grant of \$32,525 awarded for a one year project

### Management Target

MTC1.1: By 2016 local and regional training, education and awareness programs have been developed and implemented for priority communities and NRM stakeholders.

### Top, bottom and left:

Parramatta River

Centre: SMCMA Catchment Officer Rosanna Luca guiding participants on a Parramatta River issues inspection cruise.

# Water

The Water Theme aims to protect water sources from contamination, over extraction and interruption of natural processes. It aims to maintain or improve aquatic, riparian, wetland and groundwater ecosystem health to protect biodiversity and support sustainable use of these resources.



**Above:** The marine pests education brochure targeting recreational boaters and fishers provided information on how to wash down boats and gear and how to identify high-risk marine pest species.

## Environmentally Friendly Seawalls

### Issues

Seawalls are a common site in urban waterways and with the advent of climate change and sea level rise they will become increasingly widespread in populated estuaries. Inappropriately built seawalls can mean a dramatic, if not total, loss of natural habitat and therefore biodiversity, however, there are designs that can mitigate this loss and encourage biodiversity.

### Project Aims

Environmentally Friendly Seawall Guidelines and a brochure were produced in early 2009 with two field days held in June 2009. In the 2009-2010 financial year:

- Seawall guidelines and brochures continue to be distributed and principles encouraged
- Interpretive signage was installed at four environmentally friendly seawall demonstration sites around Sydney, depicting a range of designs: Gough Whitlam Park (City of Canterbury Council), Tempe Reserve (Marrickville Council), McMahons Point (North Sydney Council), Pearl Bay (Mosman Council)
- Funding was contributed to University of Sydney for research on enhancing biodiversity on vertical seawalls

### Partners

In-kind: DECCW, Local Councils

### Funding

Catchment Action NSW

### Achievements

The Guidelines have been extremely well received with enquiries received from all over coastal NSW and interstate and from private landholders who want to “do the right thing!”

### The Future

Continue to partner with DECCW to deliver environmentally friendly seawall principles in various forums and through a variety of mechanisms such as case studies.

## Marine Pests

### Issues

Invasive species are one of the greatest threats to native biodiversity, second only to habitat destruction and modification – this applies under the water as well.

Marine pests are a significant threat to our aquatic biodiversity as well as to our marine industries and aquatic recreational activities. The Marine Pests Risk Assessment undertaken previously in partnership with the Department of Industry and Investment NSW indicates the likelihood of marine pest introduction into Sydney estuaries and the priority species we need to keep a look out for to minimise their spread.

### Project Aims

To report on the outcomes of previous marine pest projects undertaken by the SMCMA in partnership with various stakeholders, including the Marine Pests Risk Assessment and a Marine Pests Education Strategy for Boaters and Recreational Fishers.

To continue to raise the profile of the risk of marine pests to our aquatic biodiversity by informing key stakeholders including government agencies, potential funding bodies and peak recreational and industry groups.

### Achievements

Presentations summarising the outcomes of the projects have been presented to the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing, the Natural Resources Advisory Council, the Coastal Catchment Management Authorities and the SMCMA Board.

### The Future

Further funding applications and presentations are planned.

### Catchment and Management Targets

CTECM 1: By 2016 there is an improvement in the condition of estuaries and coastal lakes.

MTECM 1.1 (Marine Pests): By 2016 the threats posed by marine pests have been reduced.

MTW1.4 (Environmentally Friendly Seawalls): By 2016 new instream and foreshore structures are designed and constructed in an ecologically sensitive manner.





## Seagrass Friendly Moorings

### Location and Significance of the Site

Manly Cove, Manly within Sydney Harbour and adjacent to North Harbour Aquatic Reserve.

### Issues

Seagrass beds are important habitat for fish and invertebrates including recreationally and commercially important species. There are many negative impacts on seagrasses within estuarine waterways. One of the obvious impacts is caused by concrete block and chain boat moorings in seagrass beds. The chain from these moorings scours a hole in the seagrass bed in the immediate vicinity. Wave action can then cause secondary damage to a larger area of the bed (called "blowouts").

### Project Aims

The Department of Industry and Investment NSW and the SMCMA are coordinating a three-year trial introduction of new seagrass friendly moorings to sites within Manly Cove. The trial involves the voluntary, no-cost participation of 30 existing mooring owners. Each owner has agreed to have their concrete block and chain mooring replaced with a new seagrass friendly mooring and three years of maintenance.

In addition, the trial involves monitoring of the seagrass in the vicinity of the moorings and at control sites, to determine if the seagrass-friendly moorings do not damage seagrass beds and also if they allow seagrass to return to the damaged areas. The University of Newcastle is collaborating with the "Eco Divers", a community dive group who will collect field data for the University to analyse.

### Achievements

All 30 moorings have been installed and the first year of monitoring and maintenance is complete.

### The Future

The trial requires a three-year period to allow time for seagrass beds to regenerate and to ensure sufficient data is collected to allow for a rigorous scientific research outcome.

University of Newcastle is also using this opportunity to undertake a research project on the value of the collection of scientific data by community volunteers.

### Partners

NSW Department of Industry and Investment, NSW Maritime, Manly Council.

### Funding

Australian Government and the five coastal NSW CMAs.

### Catchment and Management Targets

CTECM 1: By 2016 there is an improvement in the condition of estuaries and coastal lakes.

MTECM 1.10: By 2016 the extent, condition and connectivity of estuarine vegetation is maintained and/or improved by facilitating the protection and rehabilitation of estuarine vegetation at high priority sites.

**Centre:** Two environmentally friendly seawall site visits were conducted in 2009.

**Below:** An example of a seagrass-friendly mooring.



## Improving Estuaries and Coastal Lakes

The aim of this project was to support Local Government to implement priority NRM actions from existing Estuary Management Plans.

- Projects were selected through an Expression of Interest process
- Funding was allocated for on-ground projects in riparian areas adjacent to, or flowing directly into estuaries
- The City of Canada Bay Prince Edward Park Saltmarsh Conservation project and the Kogarah Council Oatley Bay Bank Stabilisation project were completed in June 2009
- Warringah Council Deep Creek Restoration project was completed in May 2010

### Location and Significance of the Site

- Located next to Garigal National Park and contained within Crown land under the care, control and management of Warringah Council
- The site contains four Endangered Ecological Communities listed under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. Two of these communities, Bangalay Alluvial Forest and Estuarine Reedland, are forms of Swamp Sclerophyll Forest on Coastal Floodplains. The remaining communities are Swamp Oak Forest and Coastal Freshwater Lagoons
- These key terrestrial vegetation communities provide known and potential habitat for a number of threatened fauna species, most notably the Black Bittern (*Ixobrychus flavicollis*), Australasian Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*) and Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). A further 27 plant species are threatened in northern Sydney and three plant species are threatened in Warringah

### Issues

- The area is under pressure from weed infestation and unleashed dogs

### Project Aims

- Improve the habitat value of a tributary corridor to Narrabeen Lagoon
- Freshwater wetland protected
- Rehabilitate key terrestrial vegetation communities through bush regeneration works
- Increase community understanding through descriptive signs that highlight the conservation values of the reserve
- Control of noxious and environmental weed species

### Work

- Primary and secondary weed removal
- Bush regeneration
- Four interpretive signs to raise public awareness of the site's ecological communities

### The Future

- Regular bush regeneration will be undertaken to maintain the site
- Warringah Council plans to initiate an education program for dog owners explaining the threats to native fauna from unleashed dogs and outlining the owner's responsibility to prevent their dogs from entering the site
- Pittwater Council is collaborating with local community groups, including local dog training clubs, to implement a range of strategies to protect wildlife from dogs
- Council is currently planning construction of a low-key, multi-use, eco-educational trail between Middle Creek and Deep Creek Reserves to provide a link between existing trails around Narrabeen Lagoon

### Achievements

- This site supports key vegetation communities, many of which are endangered and all of which provide critical habitat for threatened fauna
- The interpretive signage will help inform the local community of the importance of the site and how to protect it

### Partner

Warringah Council

### Funding

Caring for our Country, \$29,000

Catchment Action NSW, \$5,400

Warringah Council: \$5,000 towards additional signage

Status: Complete

Timeframe: April 2009 - May 2010

### Project Targets

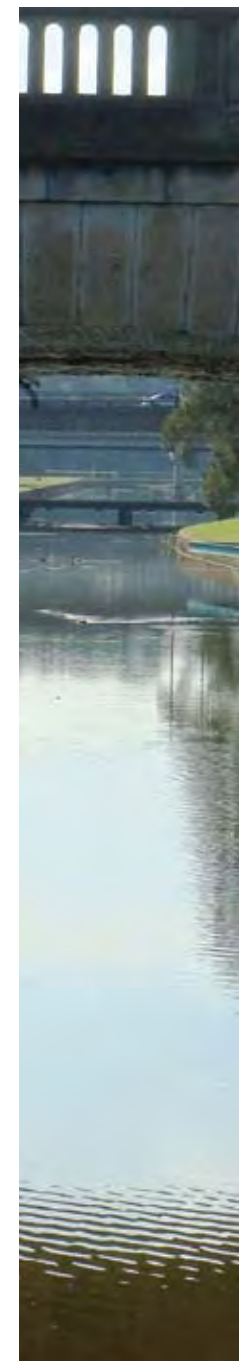
NSW Statewide target, E4.9: By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of estuaries and coastal lake ecosystems.

Catchment Target, CTECM1: By 2016 there is an improvement in the condition of estuaries and coastal lakes.

Management Target, MTECM1.5: By 2016 the condition of estuaries and coastal lake systems will be maintained or improved through development and implementation of natural resource management plans (including estuary management plans).

Caring for our Country Target: Coastal environments and critical aquatic habitats – address invasive species threats in high conservation value aquatic ecosystems.

**Right:** The Parramatta River, Parramatta CBD.





## Waterways and Wetlands Devolved Grants

### Location and Significance of Site

Seven projects selected through an Expression of Interest process.

The projects were selected on the following basis:

- River reach or wetland type identified in the Waterways Health Strategy as highest/very high/high priority management action
- Presence of an *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth) (EPBC Act) listed Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) or Weed of National Significance (WONs); or
- Presence of Coastal Saltmarsh, a Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (NSW) listed EEC
- Had significant community involvement and education
- Had ongoing commitment by the land owner
- Located in the Botany Bay “hot spot”

The project locations are:

- Bray Avenue Wetland, Earlwood
- Birunji Creek, Campbelltown
- Mill Creek, Menai
- Oyster Gully Creek, Kirrawee
- Upper Georges River, Ingleburn
- Woomera Reserve, Phillip Bay

### Issues

Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs) listed under the EPBC Act have been reduced to six per cent or less of their pre-European extent.

Coastal saltmarsh occurs in the intertidal zone. Its extent in NSW has been reduced due to: infill development (urban, industrial and commercial), modification of tidal flows and changes to ground elevation from sedimentation.

### Challenges

Wet weather patterns have delayed weed treatment as well as riverbank erosion control works. Two projects have been delayed by two months.

### Project Aims

- The Waterways and Wetlands Program (Waterways Health Strategy Implementation - Botany Bay catchment) targets priority wetlands/riparian corridors and engages coastal community, private, public and indigenous landholders, in delivering on-ground works to improve the health of the Botany Bay catchment
- Small and larger scale on-ground projects will improve water quality; reduce the negative impacts on biodiversity and increase condition, connectivity and resilience of habitat in endangered ecological communities
- A unique partnership built with one Local Aboriginal Land Council to work on Aboriginal land. The partnership is delivering TAFE certification in CALM III certificate for five Aboriginal trainees, as well as onsite bush regeneration, erosion control and seed collection/propagation skills

### Work

- Primary weed removal (WONs, locally declared noxious weeds)
- Assisted regeneration of Endangered Ecological vegetation community (EPBC listed)
- Bush regeneration
- Revegetation (not all sites)
- River bed or bank erosion constructed stabilisation works
- Local community involvement (bushcare volunteers, Indigenous TAFE trainees, fishing club kayakers)
- Introduction to Bushcare days

### The Future

A 2010-2011 Expression of Interest round has been called and 12 submissions are being evaluated for potential funding.

### Achievements

- Rehabilitation of 3.7 hectares of native habitat has been completed
- 13 volunteers engaged in managing natural resources
- Five Indigenous trainees enrolled in CALM Certificate III (TAFE). Trainees have also completed extensive onsite training hours in bush regeneration, seed collection and plant propagation techniques

- A new community group has engaged in managing natural resources (recreational fishing club)
- A contractor can be a mentor too

### Partners

Campbelltown City Council  
Randwick City Council  
Sutherland Shire Council  
Wolli Creek Preservation Society  
Gandangarra LALC  
Guriwal Aboriginal Corporation  
Campbelltown City Sport Fishing Club  
LandAlive  
DECCW

### Funding

Caring for our Country and Catchment Action NSW  
Status: completed by June 2011

### Catchment Targets

CTW1: By 2016 there is a net improvement in the health of modified waterways and riparian corridors and conservation of natural waterways.

CTW2: By 2016 improve the condition and extent of wetlands.

## Wetlands GIS Prioritisation Project

### Location and Significance of Site

There are more than 13,000 wetlands in SMCMA area.

Of the 13,000 wetlands, there is one Ramsar wetland (Towra Point) and eight Directory of Important Wetlands of Australia (DIWA) listed wetlands.

The Wetland Program's "A Wetland Prioritisation Technique for the SMCMA Area" was developed as a desktop assessment tool to determine the conservation significance of each wetland. The assessment relied on the existence of information such as exists in a Plan of Management (PoM).

As at 2009 there were approximately 30 PoMs for wetlands within the SMCMA area.

It was determined that an alternate but complementary process was required to assess many more of the wetlands in SMCMA's area of operation using other available data. GIS data was identified as the most accessible and consistent across the SMCMA area.

### Issues

- Historically wetlands were viewed as a source of disease or an impediment to progress and were progressively drained and filled. Today wetlands are valued as significant natural resource assets, and countries are encouraged to protect significant wetlands under an international treaty – the Ramsar Convention
- Urban wetlands continue to face the pressure of development through encroachment, sedimentation, changed hydrology regimes and weed and pest infestations

### Project Aims

- Provision of a GIS-based wetland prioritisation system to inform the future investment by the SMCMA in Wetland PoMs and on ground works
- Provision of a comprehensive database to inform wetland managers

### Achievements

The GIS database has been developed and 226 wetlands assessed for their values and threats to produce a ranking: High (77), Medium (111) or Low (38).

### Work

- Determine a wetland selection methodology, in consultation with the SMCMA and its Wetlands Reference Group, to undertake a GIS-based assessment of a large subset of wetlands in the SMCMA area
- Ensure that this subset represents the range of wetland types within the SMCMA area
- The assessment is to be undertaken in accordance with the SMCMA Wetland Prioritisation Technique
- Prioritise this subset of wetlands and record in a technical report and new GIS layer
- Include an Algorithm within the GIS layer that will allow automatic calculation of the overall wetland condition assessment and assignment of a priority ranking (high, medium or low)
- Information will be made available to relevant stakeholders

### The Future

The GIS-based prioritisation will be repeated as new GIS data becomes available.

### Partners

Wetland specialists and/or respective land managers with a responsibility for wetlands were invited to form a SMCMA Wetlands Reference Group. This group critiqued the selection methodology, the representation of the selected wetlands and the future evaluation of SMCMA wetlands.

### Funding

Caring for our Country and Catchment Action NSW

Status: For completion by August 2010

### Catchment and Management Targets

CTW2: By 2016 there is improvement in the condition and extent of wetlands.

MTW2: By 2009 significant wetlands are prioritised for rehabilitation





## Wetland Management Program – Stage 3 – Plans of Management

The SMCMA invited, through an Expression of Interest process, land managers to develop Plans of Management (PoMs) for their important wetlands. Five PoMs were commenced in 2008-2009, and were completed in 2009-2010, two additional PoMs commenced in 2009-2010. In addition, concept and design plans were developed for one constructed wetland.

### Location and Significance of sites

Plans of management were funded for the following wetlands:

- Park Central (Marsden Park) – Campbelltown City Council
- Baludarra Wetland (Pemberton Street) – Parramatta City Council
- Cox's Creek Reserve Constructed Wetland (Greenacre) – Strathfield Municipal Council
- Marton Park Wetland (Kurnell) – Sutherland Shire Council
- Cabramatta Creek Wetland – Fairfield City Council
- Warriewood Wetland – Pittwater Council
- Nareen Wetland – Pittwater Council

Concept and design plans were undertaken for:

- Dunbar Park – City of Ryde's only freshwater wetland. Originally it was intended to develop a PoM for this wetland, but after initial investigations it was discovered that it was no longer functioning as a wetland. Therefore, Council re-applied for funding to undertake design plans and Council's in-kind contribution undertook revegetation and development of an interim management plan

All these wetland areas are biodiversity "hot spots" and contain threatened species and most have Endangered Ecological Communities. Wetlands also function as filters and sinks for sediments and nutrients prior to entering the river or creek.

**Centre:** SMCMA Officer, Lesley Diver, presenting a paper on Wetlands Plans of Management at a two-day seminar hosted by Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

### Issues

- Aquatic and terrestrial weed infestation
- Erosion and impacts from stormwater
- Rubbish dumping
- Feral animal infestations
- Low level of community engagement and/or understanding
- One wetland so badly degraded it was no longer functioning as wetland

### Project Aims

- Develop a Plan of Management for each wetland which identifies the overall objective for the site and the range of values and threats found on the site
- Prioritise actions to protect the values and reduce the threats
- Encourage each landholder to take ownership of the management, protection and enhancement of the wetland
- Increase community involvement

### Work

- Community consultation and engagement
- Review of previous Plans of Management
- PoMs specify management actions, operation and maintenance procedures, areas of concern, goals and objectives of future works
- Media coverage through print press and local community newsletter
- Coordination of public exhibition periods and preparation of display materials

### The future

- Increased community understanding of the importance of wetlands
- PoMs provide long-term strategic actions to control the issues and problems existent at each site

### Achievements

- Through the development of the Wetland PoMs, the level of knowledge of wetlands in the Sydney region has increased
- Landholders are able to optimise the use of their own funds by targetting priority actions

- The ability to seek future grant funding has increased as the funding bodies can see that individual actions are part of a strategic approach
- During 2009-2010, all the PoMs were completed except Cabramatta Creek. This Wetland extends over two local government authority areas and delays were experienced due to the greater level of consultation required and differences between the Councils' legislative land management requirements
- The completed Wetland PoMs can be viewed on the SMCMA website and individual Council websites

### Funding

Caring for our Country and Catchment Action NSW

Timeframe: July 2009 – June 2010

Status: Complete (except Cabramatta Creek Wetland)

### Project Targets

- Statewide target By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of important wetlands, and the extent of those wetlands is maintained.
- Catchment Target CTW2 – By 2016 there is an improvement in the condition and extent of wetlands.
- Management Target MTW 2.1 – By 2009 significant wetlands are prioritised for rehabilitation.
- Management Target MTW2.2 – By 2016 plans of management have been developed and rehabilitation programs facilitated for 8 significant wetlands;
- Caring for our Country E4.8 – By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of important wetlands and the extent of those wetlands is maintained.

## Baludarri Wetland PoM

### Location and Significance of the Site

- Baludarri Wetland within Parramatta City Council's area contains two Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs): Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest of the Sydney Basin – a freshwater wetland, and a continuous stretch of Coastal Saltmarsh
- Saltmarsh and mangroves provide important fish habitat for Parramatta River
- The site is used by many species of birds including cattle egret (JAMBA and CAMBA listed), sacred kingfisher and black shouldered kites as well as other fauna including lizards and frogs

### Issues

- Noxious weeds and garden escapees
- Feral animals (rabbits)
- Litter control and public education regarding the importance of the site
- Future impacts including the development of a large block of land adjacent to the site for residential use
- Better management of stormwater is required

### Project Aims

- Develop a Plan of Management for each wetland which identifies the overall objective for the site and the range of values and threats found on the site
- Prioritise actions to protect the values and reduce the threats
- Encourage the landholders to take ownership of the management and protection of the wetland
- Increase community involvement

### Work

- The Wetland PoM will describe appropriate actions to manage environmental and recreation areas, encroachment issues and future issues and will also create works lists for Council

- Consultation with the local community and reference to any relevant studies and/or documents to assist in the development of the PoM
- Promote the site and importance of habitat through Parramatta City Council Bushcare Bulletin
- Describe the impacts of Climate Change on the saltmarsh, freshwater wetland and stormwater infrastructure and develop appropriate actions that will address these issues

### The Future

- Council is committed to implementing the PoM and providing continued improvements and ongoing maintenance of the site to ensure protection of these important habitats
- The Bushcare group is also committed to ensuring the site is protected from future impacts including the development of a large block of land adjacent to the site for residential use

### Key Message

Development of the PoM will lead to improved strategic management actions for this important wetland, including assisting Council to allocate resources in future budgets. The PoMs will also assist in submissions to external grant funding bodies.

### Partner

Parramatta City Council

### Funding

Caring for our Country \$10,000  
Catchment Action NSW \$12,000

Total: \$22,000

Timeframe: April 2009 – June 2010

Status: Complete

**Top:** Marton Park Wetland, Sutherland.

**Middle:** Park Central, Marsden Park, Campbelltown.

**Bottom:** Green and Gold Bell Frog at Cox's Creek Reserve, Strathfield.

**Centre:** Park Central, Marsden Park, Campbelltown.







## Warriewood and Nareen Wetlands Plans of Management

### Location and Significance of the Site

- Nareen Wetland contains the Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), Sydney Freshwater Wetlands in the Sydney Basin Bioregion and threatened species habitat for Microbats and possibly the Brown Goshawk (*Accipiter fasciatus*)
- Warriewood Wetlands containing three EECs: Freshwater wetlands on coastal floodplains; Swamp Sclerophyll forest; and Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest. It has the largest sand-plain wetland and the largest Swamp Sclerophyll EEC area within the SMCMA's region
- Warriewood and Nareen Wetlands help protect the water quality of Narrabeen Lagoon, functioning as a filter and sink for sediments and nutrients
- More than 80 bird species have been recorded within the Warriewood Wetlands, including the endangered Regent Honeyeater (*Xanthomyza phrygia*), the Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*) and several migratory birds such as Latham's Snipe (*Gallinago hardwickii*) which is listed in the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA)

### Issues

- Nareen Wetland previously did not have any management plan. The area is badly weed infested, has sedimentation problems and encroachment issues from local residents
- Increased development and recreation needs have put increased pressure on Warriewood Wetland that the previous PoM did not address. This situation has led to the need for an updated PoM that will address the current and projected future issues of the wetland

### Project Aims

- Develop a Plan of Management for each wetland which identifies the overall objective for the site and the range of values and threats found on the site
- Prioritise actions to protect the values and reduce the threats

- Encourage the landholders to take ownership of the management and protection of the wetland
- Increase community involvement

### Work

- The Wetland PoMs will describe appropriate actions to manage environmental and recreation areas, encroachment issues and future issues and will also create works lists for Council
- Conduct community consultation to inform the community and to seek their input
- Refer to any relevant studies and/or documents
- Produce a media release for local newspapers and community newsletters

### The Future

- Pittwater Council plans to schedule management actions specified in the PoMs based on priorities. Funds have been allocated in the 2010-2011 budget for maintenance of the two wetlands (mainly weed control and boardwalk/signage maintenance) for Council staff and contractors to implement
- Grants have been applied for in relation to creek catchment care and monitoring
- A new PoM for Ingleside Chase Reserve which forms the upper catchment area of Mullet Creek which leads into the Warriewood wetland is currently being undertaken by Council

### Achievements

The development of the Nareen Wetland PoM and an update of the previous Warriewood Wetland PoM will lead to improved strategic management of these important wetlands, including assisting Council to allocate resources in future budgets. The PoMs will also assist in submissions to external grant funding bodies.

### Partner

Pittwater Council

### Funding

Catchment Action NSW

Total: \$61,580

Timeframe: January 2010 – June 2010

Status: Complete

### Project Targets

Statewide Target By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of important wetlands, and the extent of those wetlands is maintained.

Catchment Target, CTW2 – By 2016 there is an improvement in the condition and extent of wetlands.

Management Target MTW2.2 – By 2016 plans of management have been developed and rehabilitation programs facilitated for eight significant wetlands.

Caring for our Country E4.8 (Baludarri Wetland PoM) By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of important wetlands and the extent of those wetlands is maintained.

# Biodiversity

The Biodiversity Theme focuses on the conservation of native vegetation recognising that healthy vegetation communities provide the base habitat for other forms of life.

## Green Web Program 2009-2010

The SMCMA's Green Web Program began in 2006. It promoted the establishment of a green web of native vegetation to protect, conserve and enhance remnant bushland in the Sydney region. Green Web aims to increase the extent, condition and/or connectivity of habitat corridors and ultimately link fragmented patches of bushland and facilitate the migration of wildlife and the natural dispersal of native plants.

## Improving the Biodiversity Corridor of Cabramatta Creek Wetland

### Location and Significance of Site

- Located off Railway Parade, Cabramatta
- Largest freshwater wetland in Georges River Catchment
- Provides habitat for rare and threatened flora and fauna eg Grey-headed Flying Fox; Downy Wattle (*Acacia pubescens*)
- Provides habitat for migratory birds eg White-bellied Sea Eagle
- Educational resource for Cabramatta High School students who participated in a planting day

### Issues

- Exotic vines and scramblers invading the site and having significant adverse effects on biodiversity
- Degraded riparian zone
- Rubbish dumping

### Project Aims

- The project aims to improve and increase the extent of the biodiversity corridor through pest plant control and revegetation works
- Community involvement through training and tree planting
- Increase community awareness of wetland area

### Work

- Weed control
- Bush regeneration
- Tree planting
- Training and community education

### The Future

Fairfield Council will continue to maintain the wetland through its Creek Care Program. Additional planting will be undertaken in July 2010. Once established, trees will act as a corridor to the rest of the wetland.

### Achievements

- Weed control was undertaken over 15 hectares of the site
- 1,200 trees planted
- School students have gained a greater appreciation of the wetland area

### Partners

Fairfield City Council  
Cabramatta High School  
Fairfield Creeks and Wetlands Group

Timeframe: July 2009 – June 2010

### Funding

Catchment Action NSW, \$40,300

Status: Complete

**Top left:** Ku-ring-gai Council's 'Discovering Biodiversity' project was a case study presentation at the 2009 Local Government and Shires Association Environment Awards. Project Officer, Val Close, acknowledged the SMCMA support for the project.

**Bottom left:** Richmond Park, Gordon.

**Right Top and Bottom:** Pied Piper Playground, Seven Hills.





## Preening Pied Piper Playground

### Location and Significance of Site

- Located off Beethoven Street, Seven Hills
- Pied Piper Playground and Melody Gardens Reserve contain Cumberland Plain Woodland, Grey Box Forest and River-Flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplain Endangered Ecological Communities
- Part of a regenerating tributary of Toongabbie Creek with direct corridor links to neighbouring bushland areas
- The Pied Piper Bushcare Group have been active in revegetating and regenerating the reserve

### Issues

- Invasive weeds smothering endangered plant communities
- Need to establish connectivity between the two reserves
- Degraded creekline

### Project Aims

- The project aims to provide habitat for indigenous flora and fauna with a stable vegetation community that is more resistant to reinvasion by weeds
- Define the regeneration zones within the reserves
- Improve the health of the waterway within the catchment
- Provide connectivity and biodiversity corridors
- Raise the profile of the bushland reserves within the community
- Support the Pied Piper Bushcare Group

### Work

- Bush regeneration, Weed control, Habitat restoration
- Fencing and Bushcare group promotion

### The Future

Blacktown City Council will continue to maintain both sites through their regular maintenance programs. The Pied Piper Bushcare Group will maintain their reserve by holding monthly workdays.

Council is reviewing all of its Bushcare group material to better promote the benefits of Bushcare volunteering. Council is also in the process of establishing permanent signage to be displayed at all Bushcare managed bushland Reserves.

### Achievements

- Work has enabled Bushcare group to gain control of the site and make it more manageable
- Melody Gardens Park Committee has been re-engaged and will undertake additional work in the reserve
- Eight new volunteers contributed to the project
- 1 hectare of native vegetation enhanced/rehabilitated

### Partners

Blacktown City Council  
Pied Piper Bushcare Group  
Melody Gardens Park Committee

### Funding

Catchment Action NSW

Total: \$30,000

Timeframe: July 2009 – June 2010

Status: Complete

### Catchment Target

The three Greenweb projects address:  
CTB3: There is an increase in the connectivity of terrestrial native vegetation.

## Excellence in Vegetation Management Richmond Park, (Gordon)

### Location and Significance of Site

- Located off Rosedale Road, Gordon
- Richmond Park contains Duffys Forest Endangered Ecological Community
- Has a strong bio link to Middle Harbour and links to the regionally important Gordon Flying Fox Colony
- Has a long standing commitment by the residential community

### Issues

- Invasive vines smothering endangered plant communities
- Area is being impacted from surrounding residences due to dumping and encroachments

### Project Aims

- This project aims to maintain diversity, succession and health of flora and fauna species within the park
- It focused on removing the exotic vines Climbing Asparagus, Mothvine, Cats Claw Creeper and Balloon Vine on the western side of Highridge Creek. It is allowing for an opportunity for stability and succession of native species vegetation
- Community education covering topics of urban bushland interface issues particularly weed control and recognition

### Work

- Target weeding of exotic vines
- Monitoring and targeting of regrowth
- Bush regeneration
- Signage
- "Bush Neighbours Day" for local community

### The Future

Ku-ring-gai Council bush regeneration staff to monitor and maintain the site in conjunction with local bushcare group

### Achievements

- Target vine species removed from an area of 1.9 hectares
- The community has been made aware of detrimental weeds on their own properties

### Partners

Ku-ring-gai Council  
Richmond Park Bushcare Group  
Second Gordon Scouts

### Funding

Catchment Action NSW

Total: \$30,000

Timeframe: July 2009 – June 2010

Status: Complete

## Priority Action Statement Implementation

### Location and Significance of Site

This project is funded to implement the NSW Threatened Species Priorities Action Statement (PAS). The PAS identifies the species, ecological communities and key threatening processes for which a Recovery or Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) will be prepared, and lists actions for those species for which the resources to prepare a formal plan are not available.

The draft SMCMA PAS Implementation Strategy details the 13 priority threatened species, populations and ecological communities for future project development and investment within the SMCMA area. One of the priority ecological communities listed in the Draft SMCMA PAS Implementation Strategy is Coastal Saltmarsh Endangered Ecological Community.

The project funds on-ground works at two sites within the SMCMA area to implement priority actions to help recover Coastal Saltmarsh:

- Saltmarsh Restoration Buffalo Creek East (Hunter's Hill Council: \$37,000)
- Restoration of Coastal Saltmarsh and Other Communities of the Mid Woronora River (Sutherland Shire Council: \$32,000)

### Issues

Coastal Saltmarsh occurs in the intertidal zone on the shores of estuaries and lagoons that are permanently or intermittently open to the sea. It is frequently found as a zone on the landward side of mangrove stands. Coastal Saltmarsh is listed as an Endangered Ecological Community under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. Some of the threats to saltmarsh include infilling, tidal flow modification, increased nutrient levels, weed invasion, physical damage, dumping and inappropriate fire regimes.

The PAS Implementation Project focuses on implementing Recovery Strategies listed in the NSW Threatened Species Priorities Action Statement to help recover this threatened ecological community, including:

- Recovery Strategy 2: Community and land-holder liaison/ awareness and/or education

- Recovery Strategy 3: Habitat management; Feral Control
- Recovery Strategy 5: Habitat Management; Site Protection

### Project Aims

- To implement priority action for one priority species at two locations in the coastal zone
- To protect, enhance and rehabilitate remnant Coastal Saltmarsh stands through bush regeneration and pest species control activities
- To engage and support community volunteers, and to raise awareness of Coastal Saltmarsh through the installation of interpretive signage, and awareness raising events

### Work

- Primary treatment of invasive weeds
- Feral animal control program
- Educational material produced
- Awareness raising events held
- Interpretive Signage installed

### The Future

Works were completed in June 2010, and on going maintenance schedules were produced by each contractor to ensure project sites are maintained beyond the funding life of the project.

### Achievements

- Priority actions implemented for Coastal Saltmarsh recovery at two sites along the SMCMA coastal Zone (Buffalo Creek - Hunter's Hill Council, and Mid Woronora River - Sutherland Shire Council)
- Recovery strategy 2: Community and land-holder liaison/ awareness and/or education achieved through four community awareness raising events, which attracted 30 participants, as well as supporting six community Bushcare groups
- Recovery Strategy 3: Habitat management; Feral Control was achieved through implementing pest plant and animal control across a total of 10.5 hectares, including boneseed and feral rabbit, fox, cat and rat control

- Recovery Strategy 5: Habitat Management. An area of Coastal Saltmarsh was protected by erecting two interpretive signs, and undertaking on-ground management of an area of 1.2 hectares of Coastal Saltmarsh

### Partners

Hunter's Hill Council  
Sutherland Shire Council

### Funding

Catchment Action NSW

Status: Complete 30 June 2010

### Catchment and Management Targets

For Priority Action Statement Implementation and Saving Sydney's Biodiversity

CTB4: By 2016 aquatic and terrestrial threatened species and Endangered Ecological Communities and Endangered Populations are better conserved by implementing actions identified in the Priorities Action Statement.

MTB4.1: By 2009 SMCMA relevant priority actions in the threatened species Priorities Action Statement have been determined and are being implemented.

### Saving Sydney's Biodiversity (opposite) addresses:

CTC1: By 2016 more people, communities and organisations have increased capacity to engage in practices that contribute to improved NRM.

MTC1.1: By 2016 local and regional training, education and awareness programs have been developed and implemented for priority communities and NRM stakeholders.

**Centre:** Weed of National Significance: Tussock Paspalum was identified in 10 of the 39 LGAs within the SMCMA region.





## Saving Sydney's Biodiversity (2009-2011)

### Location and Significance of Site

This is a regional program undertaken at a number of locations within the SMCMA region. The program funds small projects that aim to conserve native vegetation of the six Threatened Ecological Communities listed under the Federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Many of the highest priority habitats remaining in the SMCMA region are located in areas actively managed for conservation. The focus of the program is to engage with landholders who are not actively managing their land for conservation.

The program funds six projects as listed:

- Yaralla Bush Rehabilitation Project (Canada Bay Council - \$30,000)
- Rehabilitation of Threatened Turpentine Ironbark Forest in Osborne Park (Lane Cove Council - \$28,480)
- Rehabilitation of Turpentine Ironbark Forest and Coastal Saltmarsh on the Lane Cove River (Hunter's Hill Council - \$26,500)
- Restoration of Cumberland Plain Woodland within Toongabbie Creek Corridors (The Hill's Shire Council - \$18,674)
- Integrating Research and Endangered Species Recovery (Macquarie University - \$15,800)
- Blue Gum High Forest Restoration – Pennant Hills (Mount Saint Benedict College - \$30,000)

### Issues

Ecological Communities are unique and naturally occurring groups of plants and animals. Their presence can be determined by factors such as soil type, position in the landscape, climate and water availability. Species within such communities interact and depend on each other for food and shelter.

Changes to the landscape as a result of human activity have put many of these unique communities at risk of extinction, and as such are listed as 'Threatened Ecological Communities' under the EPBC Act. Previous SMCMA programs such as the 'Rapid Fauna Assessment', and the 'Best Practice Guidelines' have revealed that some of Sydney's highest priority habitats

are vulnerable because they are located in areas not managed for conservation.

The Saving Sydney's Biodiversity Program focuses on protecting, enhancing and rehabilitating those communities listed as Threatened under the EPBC Act and occurring in the SMCMA region, as well as attracting landholders who are not actively managing their land for conservation.

The project also has a capacity building element to support the onground works by strengthening the skill base of regional organisations managing volunteers, and existing community volunteers, as well as linking new volunteers to existing groups.

This support is in the form of Volunteer Coordinator Network (VCN) meetings to support regional bodies, workshops, field days, training and the production of educational materials including the 'Environmental Volunteering Survey' to support volunteers. There will also be a special focus on working with schools with the aim of encouraging youth to participate in conservation activities.

Six Threatened Ecological Communities occurring in the SMCMA region:

- Blue Gum High Forest of the Sydney Basin
- Cumberland Plain Woodlands
- Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub of the Sydney Region
- Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets of Eastern Australia
- Shale/Sandstone Transition Forest
- Turpentine-Ironbark Forest in the Sydney Basin

### Project Aims

- To protect, conserve and rehabilitate remnant Threatened Ecological Communities occurring in the SMCMA Region through fencing, bush regeneration, revegetation, stream bank stabilisation, and pest control activities
- To strengthen the skill base of existing community volunteers and link new volunteers to existing groups
- To raise awareness of the importance of protecting remnant Threatened Ecological Communities

### Work

- Fence construction
- Primary treatment of invasive weeds
- Revegetation of understory and buffer zones
- Stream bank stabilisation
- Development of seed bank
- Feral animal control program
- Educational material produced
- Awareness raising events
- Workshops delivered
- Volunteer Coordinator Network meetings

### The Future

Works began in June 2010, and are on going until May 2011. On going maintenance schedules are to be produced by each contractor to ensure project sites are maintained beyond the funding life of the project.

### Achievements

On-ground works began in June 2010. As at June 30, 2010, a total of 0.52ha of native vegetation has been enhanced/rehabilitated, and 1.8ha has been protected by fencing.

Four VCN meetings have been held to support 34 regional organisations, and 28 Bushcare volunteers have been involved in managing natural resources across the sites thus far.

### Partners

Councils: Canada Bay, Lane Cove, Hunter's Hill, The Hills.  
Other partners: Macquarie University, Mount Saint Benedict College

### Funding

Caring for our Country

Status: Completion June 2011

# Land

## Salinity Mapping for the Sydney Metropolitan Area

### Location and Significance of Site

Some land in Greater Sydney is becoming impacted by soil salinity. This impact is generally caused by changes to soil hydrology which allows naturally occurring soil salt to rise to the surface. This salt can corrode built infrastructure and kill vegetation. Increased salinity in runoff water to streams can affect aquatic biodiversity.

Although salinity can impact many areas across Sydney, this mapping work is initially concentrating on Western Sydney.

### Issues

- Need a predictive method for updating maps and identifying areas affected by potential salinity
- Needed a system to identify urban salinity and apply across the SMCMA region
- Addresses Catchment Target to increase the amount of land managed within its capacity

### Project Aims

- Frameworks for groundwater flow systems were developed
- Share an understanding of how salinity develops in Western Sydney

### Work

- Saline outbreaks were identified using the developed methodology for an urbanised environment and the concept models of groundwater flow systems for western Sydney to be mapped
- Information shared with government agencies and local governments

### The Future

- Uptake by local government of new Building Code of Australia codes and urban salinity policies
- Development of a Communication Strategy
- Making the Hydro Geological Landscape information and community education available

- More detailed and refined mapping via a pilot project with one or two Councils
- Additional piezometers installed and monitored, especially in areas which face development

### Achievements

- Methodology developed, ground-truthed and refined
- Draft Hydro Geological Landscapes standardised procedures developed to describe differences in salinity development and impacts in different landscapes and management methods to deal with them.
- Draft Hydro Geological Landscape maps developed
- UrbanSalt 2010 Conference held and Hydro Geological Landscape concept shared and explained

### Partners

DECCW, University of Canberra, WSROC, HNCMA, SRCMA

### Funding

Original State Salinity Enhancement funding fully expended by August 2009. DECCW continuing project with separate funds source.

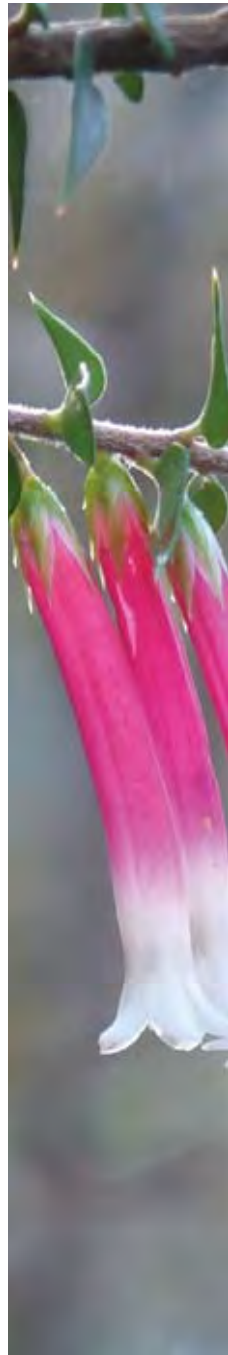
Status: Ongoing

### Management Target

MTLD1.2 land management practices that minimise the occurrence of soil salinity and mitigate the impact of existing salinity have been adopted.



Above: Course material for urban salinity awareness training.





## Events

### Clockwise from Left:

Epacris longiflora.

Marion Park Wetland, Sutherland, exhibited by 13-year-old Kurnell resident schoolboy artist, William Huang.

The official launch of an exhibition by Kurnell resident artists featuring Marion Park Wetland.

Aboriginal dancers performing at the 2010 SMCMA Community Forum held at Bicentennial Park, Homebush.

Accepting the 2009 NSW Planning Excellence Awards for a project supported by the Sydney Metropolitan CMA are Julie Bindon, former President of the Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division); Geoff Hudson, Senior Policy Officer Natural Resource Management, Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW and Peter Walsh of Walsh Consulting, one of the main authors of the Guidelines.

Launch of Coastcare Week, December 2009: SMCMA Board Member Suzanne Little (wearing hat) with SMCMA officers, Lesley Diver, Nerida Gill and Greg Otter.



# Community

The Community Theme undertakes to support and encourage organisations and communities to increase their capacity to contribute to improved natural resource management practices. Community Support Officers work with Local Government, corporate and community groups, Bushcare and Landcare groups, Aboriginal groups and all stakeholders within the catchment engaged in activities designed to deliver improvements in natural resources across Sydney.

## Engaging NSW Communities in Coastline Conservation

12 projects were selected by calling for Expression of Interest

### Three Medium scale projects

- Action on the Georges: Conservation Volunteers Australia, \$48,000
- Buffalo and Kittys Creek Coastal Saltmarsh Restoration: Friends of Lane Cove National Park, \$40,000
- Salty Bushcare: Sutherland Shire Council, \$45,000

### Nine Small community grants

- National Park Association Keepers Rehabilitation and restoration of coastal environments in SMCMA region through sustainable community education, engagement and retention: National Parks Association of NSW Inc, \$20,000
- Fairylands, restoring endangered communities in a heritage area: Friends of Lane Cove National Park, \$7,850
- Summer Activities Program and Coastal Connection Strategy: Sydney Coastal Councils Group, \$20,000
- Restoration and protection of remnant coastal saltmarsh at Sylvania and Como: Sutherland Shire Council, \$20,000
- Restoration of endangered coastal littoral rainforest, Smoothery Park/Gore Cove Reserve, Wollstonecraft: North Sydney Council, \$19,960
- Restoration of endangered coastal littoral rainforest, Greendale Park, Greenwich: Lane Cove Council, \$18,000

- Narrabeen and Turimetta Headlands Bitou Bush and biodiversity project: Pittwater Council, \$20,000
- Middle Harbour saltmarsh protection and community engagement: Ku-ring-gai Council, \$13,500
- Mullet Creek catchment care: Coastal Environment Centre/ Pittwater Council, \$19,820

### Funding

Total: \$292,130

### Location and Significance of Site

Multiple sites across the SMCMA region, including projects located within the Botany Bay catchment coastal "hot spot".

### Issues

- Weeds of National Significance
- Loss of native habitat including Endangered Ecological Communities
- Need to increase levels of community awareness about coastal environment issues
- Need to increase levels of community engagement and participation in coastal environment improvement projects

### Project Aims

This project forms part of "Engaging NSW Communities in coastline conservation", the Caring for our Country cross-regional project, which involves all five coastal CMAs in NSW.

The project aims to increase engagement of coastal community organisations in delivering rehabilitation, restoration and conservation projects across the full range of coastal environments in the SMCMA region.

### Work

- Bush regeneration and restoration of natural habitat, including Endangered Ecological Communities
- Environmental improvement works: eg. weed control, reduction of erosion/sedimentation







### Community engagement and capacity building activities

- Development of a community engagement strategy
- Community planting days and other awareness raising events
- Educational training workshops
- Development and distribution of educational materials

### The Future

Projects are due to be completed by 30 April, 2011.

### Achievements

All 12 projects have commenced.

### Partners

Local Government, community groups and non-government organisations.

### Funding

Caring for our Country \$292,130

**Far Left Top:** SMCMA Officer Judy Christie at a Volunteer Coordinators Network Meeting, Hornsby.

**Far Left Centre:** SMCMA sponsored Restoring Biodiversity Forum.

**Far Left Bottom:** SMCMA supports whale watching volunteers at Cape Solander, Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell.

**Centre:** Woollsia pungens.

**Right:** With SMCMA support Ocean Watch Australia held a 'Fishy Tales' art exhibition at Sydney Fish Markets as part of its Tide to Table community education program. The November 2009 exhibition featured textile tapestries, watercolours and photographs provided by local artists. A highlight was a mural assembled using work contributed by participants from a series of education workshops conducted for people from non-english speaking backgrounds. The fish carried messages of what participants had learned, recipes and their thoughts on the importance of maintaining healthy marine ecosystems.



## NRM Community Support 2009-2010

### Project Description

This is a capacity building project engaging active bushcare community volunteers, as well as the broader community, to raise awareness of natural resource management (NRM) issues across Sydney. The project is delivered by the Community Support Officer– Bushcare, supported by the Regional NRM Facilitator.

### Location

This project was carried out across the SMCMA region.

### Project Aims

- Increase the NRM awareness, skills and knowledge of Sydney's engaged community
- Support and increase the participation of the community in on-ground volunteering through Council and other programs
- Promote the value of Sydney's natural resources to broader community groups, individuals and to audiences beyond the catchment, where appropriate

### Project Outcomes

- Eleven editions of the e-newsletter SNaC (Sydney Nature Carers) were distributed to around 150 subscribers with information about events, grants, NRM awards etc
- Four issues of Mambara, the SMCMA's community newsletter, were produced highlighting SMCMA projects, community achievements, news and events
- Biodiversity Seminar for Local Government: Held in partnership with DECCW, Environment Protection and Regulation, this half day seminar showcased local government case studies related to Biodiversity and Threatened Species Management together with DECCW and SMCMA updates. Approximately 80 people attended
- Bushcare and Biodiversity Stall with native garden at the Royal Easter Show in April 2010. The SMCMA assisted in organising this event which involved up to 70 volunteers and 500 visitors
- SMCMA Community Forum. Some 84 bushcare volunteers attended this annual event to hear inspiring presentations and share innovative ideas with fellow-bushcarers

### Supporting Community Groups

- Direct funding was provided to Marrickville Bushpockets community group to construct a Water Sensitive Urban Designed swale to manage stormwater and improve biodiversity outcomes in their pocket park in Marrickville
- Support to schools assisting them to apply for Junior Landcare grants. Many other community and corporate enquiries were managed during the year
- A member of the Inner West Environment Group was sponsored to attend the National Landcare Conference in Adelaide in April 2010

### Achievements

- 'Sydney Bushcare and Sense of Place' was the topic of a presentation given by the SMCMA Regional NRM Facilitator, at Perth in August at the Society for Ecological Restoration International three-day Conference
- The "Sydney Bushcare" page on the SMCMA's website was linked to the Global Restoration Network site where it was listed as one of the top 25 ecological restoration projects in Australia. See <http://www.globalrestorationnetwork.org/countries/australianew-zealand/australia/>
- The website provides additional information regarding Community outcomes for the SMCMA including Google Bushcare Map; Volunteer Coordinators Network and Volunteers Survey 2009

### Funding

Catchment Action NSW \$138,000

Status: Completed

### Management Target

MTC1.1: By 2016, local and regional training, education and awareness programs have been developed and implemented for priority communities and NRM stakeholders.





**Clockwise from Left:**

Bushcare volunteer, Don Wilson. Mr Wilson helped initiate the Willoughby Council Bushcare Major Day Out where Bushcare volunteers join forces when there is a fifth Sunday in a month, to work on a Bushcare site. The SMCMA has supported this initiative across Sydney and Mr Wilson gave a short presentation on the initiative at the 2010 SMCMA Community Forum.

SMCMA staff who helped organise the 2010 Community Forum: Angie Fricker, Tabatha Timbery-Cann, Judy Christie, Emma Beckley and Owen Graham.

Bushcare volunteers from across Sydney enjoy the opportunity to network during the lunch break at the SMCMA 2010 Community Forum at Bicentennial Park.

Environmental activist, Jack Munday, on the Parramatta River boat trip supported by SMCMA in May 2010.

Wayne Reynolds, a whale watching volunteer at Cape Solander, Kamay Botany Bay National Park.

## Aboriginal Landcare and Schools

### Location and Significance of Site

All projects under the "Aboriginal Landcare and Schools" project were conducted in the Georges River, Botany Bay Catchment, which is a designated Caring for our Country Coastal "hot spot".

- La Perouse Primary School bush regeneration and revegetation project
- Aboriginal Landcare Stewardship and Enhancement project
- Three culturally relevant activities that acknowledge and respect Aboriginal community's connection to place and the natural assets within the SMCMA region
- Three 'Kooris Caring for Country' newsletters

### Project Aims

- Reduce the impact of invasive species
- Contribute to improving or maintaining economic sustainability and social well-being
- Increase native vegetation and improve native vegetation condition
- Increase the area of land that is managed within its capacity

### Work

La Perouse Primary School bush regeneration and revegetation project:

- Zone 1 is receiving secondary weed control work using bush regeneration techniques
- A bush tucker track area has been identified and will include the construction of an informal track and creation of a seating circle for an outdoor classroom
- Planting will be undertaken by the children with plants provided by Randwick City Council
- Zone 2 is receiving primary weed control treatments to 80 per cent of its area. Some 20 per cent has already received primary treatment. Further secondary weed treatment is being undertaken as necessary
- Planting in Zone 2 will be undertaken when conditions are favourable

- Bush regeneration techniques are being applied to zones generally. The "cut and paint" method is being used on larger shrubs, hand removal and herbicide spraying is being used on smaller, softer weeds as appropriate

### The Future

- La Perouse Primary School bush regeneration and revegetation project

At completion of this contract Randwick City Council will encourage La Perouse Public School to continue to maintain the areas until 2016.

At the conclusion of the contract Randwick City Council will write a maintenance plan to be implemented by La Perouse Public School.

- Aboriginal Landcare Stewardship and Enhancement project

The asbestos training and Local Aboriginal Land Council Asbestos licensing will ensure that the Land Councils and their employees will have the ability to conduct asbestos clean up and removal on Aboriginal owned land.

- A documentary of the Georges River Traditional weaving workshop

This has highlighted the cultural and environmental significance of the Georges River catchment to Aboriginal people. The documentary will be launched in 2010 by the SMCMA and distributed to community and schools in the Georges River - Botany Bay catchment by the SMCMA and Oceanwatch Australia Ltd.

### Achievements

- The Aboriginal Landcare Stewardship and Enhancement project has provided:

TAFE accredited training for 23 Aboriginal participants in bonded asbestos handling and supervisory skills. Training is continuing towards the licensing of two Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Botany Bay and Georges River catchment, to remove, repair or disturb bonded asbestos. On completion of the Workcover accreditation, the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council and Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council will be the first Land Councils in NSW to hold this licence.

Partners: DECCW, Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council and Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council.

- La Perouse Primary School bush regeneration and revegetation project

The project is implementing the eradication of two Weeds of National Significance - Bitou Bush and Lantana from non-reserve land.

Up to 75 percent of the students at La Perouse Public School are from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and they will participate in the planting out of their new outdoor classroom.

Partners: Randwick City Council and La Perouse Primary School.

Status: To be completed April 30, 2011.

- Three culturally relevant activities that acknowledge and respect Aboriginal community's connection to place and the natural assets within the SMCMA region

Two were in the form of traditional weaving workshops, with the first held at La Perouse in Botany Bay and the second at Oatley on the Georges River. The Georges River event included the production of a short documentary recording the day on DVD to highlight the cultural and environmental significance of the Georges River catchment to Aboriginal people.

### Partners

Weaving workshop at Oatley on the Georges River: DECCW, Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council and Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council.

### Funding

Caring for our Country





**Catchment and Management Targets**

MTC1.1: By 2016 local and regional training, education and awareness programs have been developed and implemented for priority communities and NRM stakeholders.

MTC1.4: By 2016 there is an increase in the capacity of Aboriginal communities to engage in NRM.

MTC2.3: By 2016 stakeholder partners and networks will be extended, consolidated and made more effective.

CTC1: By 2016 more people, communities and organisations have increased capacity to engage in practices that contribute to improved NRM.

CTLD1: By 2016 there is an increase in the amount of land managed within its capability.

MTB1.4: By 2016 there is an increase in the conservation and management of non-reserved lands.

Aboriginal traditional weaving workshops were held at La Perouse in Botany Bay and at Oatley on the Georges River. These culturally relevant activities acknowledge the Aboriginal community's connection to Country. The workshops received media coverage in the Koori Mail.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Legislation and Legal Change

In carrying out its role the SMCMA principally operated under the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003, No 104*. The SMCMA also operated under other legislation, some of which are common to all NSW Statutory bodies and in particular:

*Annual Reports Act (Statutory Bodies) 1984 No 87*

*Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Regulation 2005*

*Native Vegetation Act 2003 No 103*

*Natural Resources Commission Act 2003 No 102*

*Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 No 152*

*Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2005*

*Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 No 43*

*Soil Conservation Act 1939 No 10*

*Water Management Act 2000 No 92*

## Appendix 2: Staff Statistics

A summary of staff employed by the SMCMA:

Category	At 30/6/2010	At 30/6/2009
Recurrent Staff	12	11
Temporary Staff	13	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>

## Appendix 3: NSW Government Action Plan for Women

The NSW Government is committed to a whole of government approach to the principles of equity, access, rights and participation for women. The NSW Government Action Plan for Women provides a mechanism for leadership and management of coordinated strategies across government agencies. The SMCMA is committed to the aims and objectives of the Action Plan.

## Appendix 4: Equal Employment Opportunity

The SMCMA applied common selection criteria addressing the EEO principles to all recruitment processes and ensured all selection panels were mixed gender. The SMCMA seeks to ensure that all subcommittees have appropriate gender and cultural composition, a principle the SMCMA will continue to apply.

EEO Group	No of Employees	% of Staff 2009-2010
Total Staff	25	100
Women	17	68
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	2	8

## Appendix 5: Personnel Policies and Practices

As DECCW is the host employer for all NSW CMAs, their Personnel Policies and practices extend in coverage to the SMCMA. These policies and practices include:

Industrial Relations  
 Equal Employment Opportunity  
 Disability Plans  
 Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements  
 Occupational Health and Safety

## Appendix 6: Code of Conduct

The staff that provided administrative and technical support to the SMCMA for 2009-2010 were employed or contracted by DECCW, and subscribe to the DECCW and general Public Service Code of Conduct.

## Appendix 7: Performance and Numbers of Executive Officers

It is a requirement that the performance and remuneration of the SMCMA General Manager is reported, even though the position is classified below Senior Executive Service Level 5.

The SMCMA Board undertook a Performance Review of the General Manager and were satisfied by his performance. The remuneration for his position is \$132,806. The General Manager's contract does not contain any incentive payments and none were made.

## Appendix 8: Privacy

The SMCMA respects the privacy of members of the public who work on partnership agreements and access our services. In the 2009-2010 reporting period there were no applications for an internal review and no complaints under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. As required under the Act, DECCW has a Privacy Management Plan governing the collection, retention, accuracy and disclosure of personal information, including rights of access and correction, to which the SMCMA adheres.

## Appendix 9: Consumer Response

The SMCMA has maintained a proactive approach to handling public enquiries. It has established a readily accessible ground floor "shop front" office in Macquarie Tower, Parramatta. This has enhanced public access to the office and improved the dissemination of catchment management information. The SMCMA's publications are displayed in this area and also made available online at [www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au)

## Appendix 10: Risk Management and Insurance Activities

Effective risk management is a core management requirement. Risk management is considered at all levels of the SMCMA's operations in the normal course of its activities. The SMCMA's insurance cover is provided by the NSW Treasury Managed Fund, which is administered by NSW Treasury's Self Insurance Corporation (SICorp). These arrangements provide cover for all insurance exposures faced by the general government sector including the SMCMA. The SMCMA's worker's compensation cover is provided by Allianz with other exposures being covered by GIO.



## Appendix 11: Summary of Accounts Payable

### Quarterly Schedule of Accounts Payable - Aged analysis at the end of each quarter

Quarter	Current (ie within due date) \$	Less than 30 days overdue \$	Between 30 and 60 days overdue \$	Between 60 and 90 days overdue \$	More than 90 days overdue \$
September Quarter	63,102	0	0	0	1,196
December Quarter	51,880	0	0	0	1,196
March Quarter	247,936	0	0	0	1,196
June Quarter	326,331	0	0	0	0

### Accounts paid on time within each quarter

Quarter	Total Accounts Paid on Time			Total Amount Paid \$
	Target %	Actual %	\$	
September Quarter	90	89	385,873	491,100
December Quarter	90	96	1,143,689	1,186,338
March Quarter	90	89	668,324	695,523
June Quarter	90	94	2,069,407	2,232,627

#### Notes on above table:

Percentage of accounts paid on time is based on SAP Payment Analysis Report, which compares vendor masterfile payment terms, invoice document date and payment document date to determine if payment was made on time, and if not, how many days it was late. The dollar value is the actual dollar value of the documents in each column (ie paid on time, not paid on time), so the percentage is based on documents, not dollar value.

#### Comments

Initiatives to improve payment performance include:

- Tightened controls to ensure correct data entry of payment terms and invoice dates in SAP.
- Prioritise vouchers as they are received in Financial Operations so invoices due for payment first get processed first.

- Use of extra resources, to ensure smooth workflow during peak periods.
- Improved compliance with the tax system by vendors and Departmental staff.

Procure-to Pay was established in Accounts Payable in November 2006. This is an across government initiative to streamline payment of accounts.

#### Penalty Interest Paid

There was no penalty interest paid during financial year 2009-2010.

### Credit Card Certification

There were five corporate credit cards issued to the SMCMA as at June 30 2010. Subject to meeting Department of Commerce DECCW requirements, corporate credit cards have been issued to facilitate travel, accommodation and limited purchases. DOC/DECCW corporate credit card policies represent best practice in accordance with Treasury and the Auditor General's guidelines. The corporate card expenditure is also monitored for compliance under the Auditor General's guidelines. The SMCMA incurred no late payment fees as a result of corporate card usage.

### Appendix 12: Budgets

The SMCMA undertakes activities to satisfy catchment management targets that require long-term works over a number of financial reporting periods. The budget for 2010-2011 includes a number of ongoing projects to ensure catchment management targets are met as well as funds allocated to enable ongoing administration and management support to the SMCMA.

The projected 2010-2011 budget is specified below:

NSW Government Allocation	
Total Investment Funds	2037
NSW Catchment Action NSW	781
Australian Government	
Caring for our Country	764
<b>Total Expenditure Other</b>	
<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>2587</b>

Amounts (\$'000)

### Appendix 13: Investment Management Performance

The SMCMA has funds of \$1,385,561 invested in Treasury Corporation – Hourglass Facility at 30 June 2010 at an average (per annum) interest rate of 4.46%. No funds are invested outside the Treasury Corporation Hourglass Facility.

## Appendix 14: List of Projects Funded in 2009–2010

SMCMA Theme	State Target (E4)	SMCMA CT	SMCMA MT	Projects	C4C Baseline (AG)	Other C4C (AG)	NSW	Others	Total source of funds
Biodiversity	ST1	CTB3	MTB3.3	Green Web Program			167,000		167,000
Biodiversity	ST1	CTB3	MTB3.3	Kurnell Corridors Program (Revegetation)	45,000				45,000
Biodiversity	ST1	CTB3	MTB3.3	Kurnell Corridors Program (Coordination)			50,000	16,000	66,000
Biodiversity	ST1	CTB3	MTB3.3	Kurnell - Integrated Ecological Restoration Stage 1		166,840			166,840
Biodiversity	ST3	CTB4	MTB4.1	Saving Sydney's Biodiversity	135,000				135,000
Biodiversity	ST3	CTB4	MTB4.1	PAS Implementation			100,000		100,000
Biodiversity	ST3	CTB4	MTB4.1	Towra Point Community Shorebird Protection Program		45,115			45,115
Biodiversity	ST4	CTB5	MTB5.1	Kurnell Corridors Program (Pests)	25,000				25,000
Water	ST5	CTW1	MTW1.1	Wetlands and Waterways	270,000			44,000	314,000
Water	ST5	CTW1	MTW1.1	Cooks River Urban Water Initiative		1,497,000			1,497,000
Water	ST5	CTW3	MTW3.1	Botany Bay Water Quality Improvement Program (Plan)	50,000				50,000
Water	ST5	CTW3	MTW3.1	Botany Bay Water Quality Improvement Plan Program		775,000			775,000
Water	ST5	CTW3	MTW3.5	Stormwater Management			175,000		175,000
Water	ST5	CTW3	MTW5.3	Water Sensitive Urban Design Program	104,000				104,000
Water	ST5	CTW3	MTW5.3	Water Sensitive Urban Design Program Website and Tools				8,703	8,703
Water	ST8	CTW2	MTW2.2	Wetlands Program			200,000		200,000
Coastal	ST9	CTECM1	MTECM1.0	Coastal Community Engagement		142,524			142,524
Coastal	ST9	CTECM1	MTECM1.0	Bringing Back the Fish				41,014	41,014
Coastal	ST9	CTECM1	MTECM1.5	Estuary Management Plan - Parramatta River			10,000		10,000
Land	ST10	CTLD1	MTLD1.2	Salinity Mapping, Training & Education				10,000	10,000







SMCMA Theme	State Target (E4)	SMCMA CT	SMCMA MT	Projects	C4C Baseline (AG)	Other C4C (AG)	NSW	Others	Total source of funds
Community	ST12	CTC3	MTC3.1	Catchment Planning			30,552		30,552
Community	ST13	CTC3	MTC3.1	GIS				11,883	11,883
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Saving Sydney's Biodiversity (Community)	85,000				85,000
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Media (Mambara)			20,000		20,000
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	NRM Community Support			125,000		125,000
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Community Forum			13,000		13,000
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Community Support for the Georges River Catchment		108,929			108,929
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Volunteer Bilingual Guides				32,535	32,535
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Boating/Recreational Fishing Strategy/ Reduce Spread Marine Pests				15,696	15,696
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Landcare Facilitation				10,000	10,000
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.1	Bushcare Volunteer Training and Professional Support				42,675	42,675
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.4	Aboriginal Community Support			70,000		70,000
Community	ST13	CTC1	MTC1.4	Aboriginal Landcare and Schools Caring for Country		64,335			64,335
Community	ST13	CTC2	MTC2.3	Kurnell Corridors Program (Community)	50,000				50,000
					<b>764,000</b>	<b>2,799,743</b>	<b>960,552</b>	<b>232,506</b>	<b>4,756,801</b>

## **Appendix 15: Cost of Production and Availability of Annual Report**

The external costs incurred in the production of this Annual Report were for graphic design and printing. In order to minimise paper usage, limited copies have been printed. They have been made available at the SMCMA office and are available on request. Three hundred copies of this report were produced. The cost of printing this report was \$7106.00 + gst.

The report is available from the website: [www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au) in PDF format.

## **Appendix 16: Response from Statutory Body to Auditor's Opinion**

No significant issues were raised by the Auditor-General in his Statutory Audit Report issued in accordance with Section 43(2) of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 No 152*.

## **Appendix 17: Consultants Engaged:**

Four

## **Appendix 18: Other reporting issues as directed by Minister**

The SMCMA was not aware of any additional reporting issues as required by the Minister.

## **Appendix 19: NSW Government Departments Post 1 July 2009**

From July 1 NSW Government Departments:  
Department of Environment and Climate Change became the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water

The Department of Primary Industries became the Department of Industry and Investment

The Department of Planning became the Department of Planning and Local Government

## **Appendix 20: Freedom of Information**

No Freedom of Information applications were received during the year. This is consistent with the previous year.

## **Appendix 21: Waste**

The NSW Government's Waste Reduction and Purchasing Policy aims to reduce waste production from all government agencies. The SMCMA occupies part of the building housing DECCW at Parramatta, and participates in all waste minimisation and recycling initiatives. The SMCMA benefitted from this in savings gained from bulk purchases of stores, common recycling programs for used paper and other recyclable materials.

## **Appendix 22: Government Energy Management Performance**

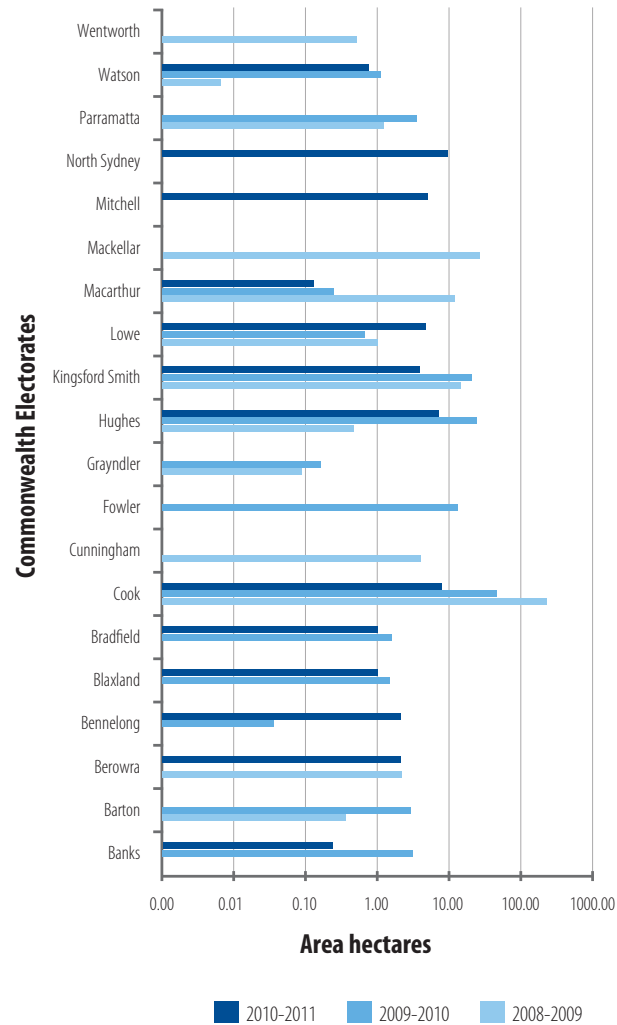
Since DECCW staff supported all operations of the SMCMA during the year, energy management performance information is reported by DECCW. Energy savings gained by individual units in Macquarie Tower, Parramatta are reflected in bulk savings for all building tenants.



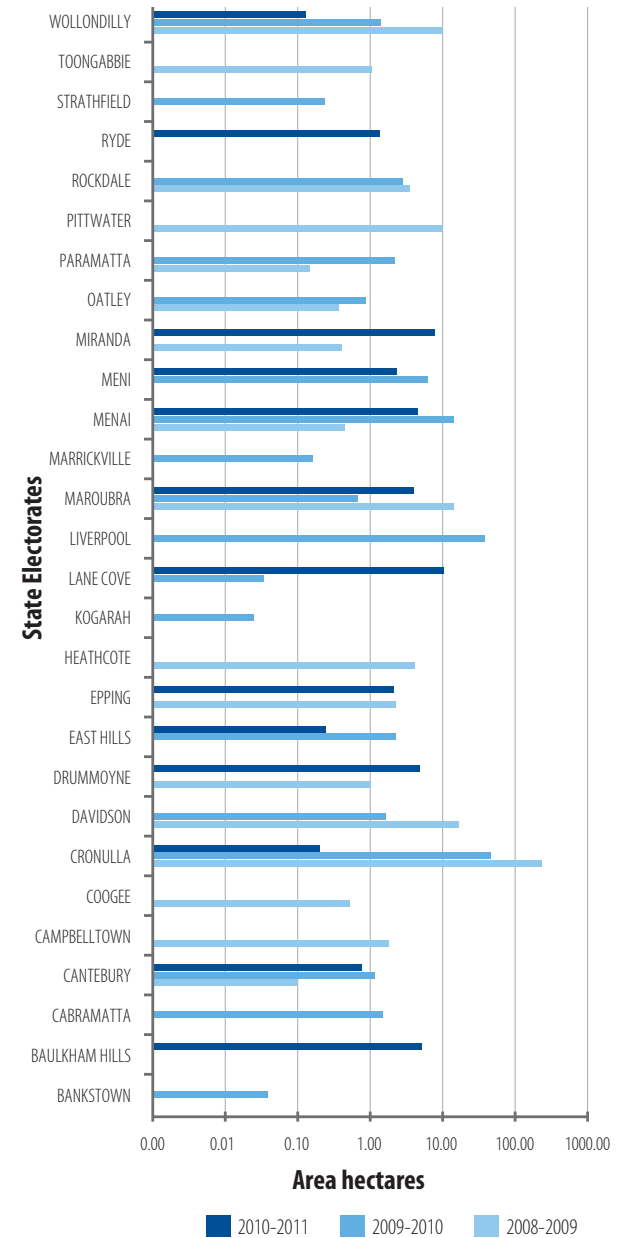
**Right:** Peggy Annabel explains Bushcare work carried out at Kamay Botany Bay National Park.



**Appendix 24: Commonwealth Electorates - On-Ground Works Total Area**



**Appendix 25: State Electorates - On-Ground Works Total Area**



# Glossary of acronymns and abbreviations

AAC	Aboriginal Advisory Committee	GIS	Geographic Information Systems	ROCs	Regional Organisation of Councils
AIP	Annual Implementation Program	GMR	Greater Metropolitan Region	SCA	Sydney Catchment Authority
BBCCI	Botany Bay Coastal Catchments Initiative	GRCCC	Georges River Combined Councils Committee	SCCG	Sydney Coastal Councils Group
BoM	Bureau of Meteorology	HNCMA	Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority	SEPP	State Environment Planning Policy
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	I & I	(NSW Department of) Industry and Investment	SES	State Emergency Service
CAMBA	China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement	JAMBA	Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	SRCMA	Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority
CAP	Catchment Action Plan	JSC	(Natural Resources Management) Joint Steering Committee	SMCMA	Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority
CBD	Central Business District	LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council	TAP	Threat Abatement Plan
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	LEP	Local Environment Plan	UNE	University of New England
CMA	Catchment Management Authority	LGA	Local Government Area	UNSW	University of New South Wales
CRFWG	Cooks River Foreshores Working Group	LGSA	Local Government and Shires Association	UWS	University of Western Sydney
CRUWI	Cooks River Urban Water Initiative	MERI	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting and Improvement	VCN	Volunteer Coordinators Network
CRC	Community Relations Commission for Multicultural NSW	MWSP	Metropolitan Water Sharing Plan	WRAPP	Waste Reduction and Purchasing Policy
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	NAP	National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality	WSP	Water Sharing Plan
DA	Development Application	NGO	Non-Government Organisation	WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design
DECCW	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water	NHT	Natural Heritage Trust	WQIP	Water Quality Improvement Plan
DOC	Department of Commerce	NRC	Natural Resources Commission		
DPC	Department of Premier's and Cabinet	NRM	Natural Resource Management		
DWE	Department of Water and Energy	NSW	New South Wales		
EAPS	Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement	NVA	Native Vegetation Act 2003		
EEC	Endangered Ecological Community	OHS	Occupational Health and Safety		
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity	PRCG	Parramatta River Catchment Group		
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	Ramsar	Internationally recognised wetlands, first agreed at the Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971		
EP&A Act	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	REP	Regional Environmental Plan		
FoI	Freedom of Information	RFIA	Rivers and Foreshores Improvement Act 1948		

# Compliance Index

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**Paper Stock**

Monza Recycled contains 55% recycled fibre (25% post consumer and 30% pre consumer) and FSC Certified pulp, which ensures that all virgin pulp is derived from well-managed forests and controlled sources. It is manufactured by an ISO 14001 certified mill. Monza Recycled is an FSC Mixed Sources Certified paper.

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