

NRM UPDATE

For NSW Local Government



MARCH 2018
ISSUE 107

The Natural Resource Management (NRM) Update provides council elected representatives and staff with information across the broad spectrum of natural resource management policy and programs

LGNSW News

2017 Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards

Recognising outstanding achievements by local government in managing and protecting the environment.

This year the Excellence in the Environment Awards celebrated twenty years of inspiration from NSW councils in programs, projects and people across 14 award categories. The Awards attracted over 65 entries from a range of councils across NSW and were presented on 11 October 2017 at the UTS Aerial Function Centre Ultimo, Sydney.



Environment Awards 2017 winners

Details of the winners in each category and links to project summaries can be found in the following table.



All of the finalists and award winners along with project summaries can be found on the [Awards website](#).

Award	Asbestos Management
Winner	North East Waste
Project Title	Asbestos testing program for householders
Award	Climate Change Action
Winner	Shoalhaven City Council
Project Title	Sussex Inlet and district strategic action plan: building community resilience
Award	Communication, Education and Empowerment
Winner	Ku-ring-gai Council
Project Title	WildThings bees and biodiversity program
Award	Community Sharps Management
Winner	Northern Inland Regional Waste
Project Title	Community sharps management infrastructure enhancement and awareness
Award	Innovation in Planning, Policies and Decision Making
Winner	Sutherland Shire Council



Project Title	A model for bringing back our indigenous tree canopy
Award	Invasive Species Management
Winner	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
Project Title	Weed risk management assessment by locality across south east NSW
Award	National Environment Protection and Enhancement: On-Ground Works
Winner	Blue Mountains City Council
Project Title	Return of the "Bottomless Pool" in Yosemite Creek, North Katoomba
Award	Resource Recovery
Winner	Albury City Council
Project Title	Albury recycling centre
Award	Community Waste Services
Winner	City of Canterbury Bankstown
Project Title	Resource recovery of problem waste at MUDs
Award	Behaviour Change in Waste
Winner	Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils
Project Title	Love Food on Campus: university food waste avoidance project
Award	Water Management
Winner	Parkes Shire Council
Project Title	Parkes integrated water infrastructure renewal project
Award	Local Sustainability
Winner	Campbelltown City Council
Project Title	Sustainable council program
Award	Louise Petchell Memorial Award for Individual Sustainability
Winner	Carmel Hamilton

Environment Awards nominations opening June 2018. Start planning now!

NSW Local Government Flying-fox Forum

The NSW Local Government Flying-fox Forum (LGFFF) was held in October 2017. The National Flying-fox forum was held at the same venue the previous day. There were 53 participants with a mix of NSW Local Government and State Agency staff attending. Some of the key issues identified include:

1. Habitat and Bushland Enhancement for Flying-foxes. Need for guidance for land managers on habitat management and sustainable flying-fox camp management.
2. Flying-fox Camp Management Information Portal. Camp managers learning from camp managers – 'One Stop Shop' for resources.

3. Real-time Monitoring. Need for a platform for real time information/data gathering about flying-fox movements and food resources from the community
4. Political Engagement. To educate/re-educate councillors on the importance of flying-foxes, the challenges involved in managing flying-fox camps, and appropriate messaging for communities about health, camp management and conservation.
5. National Strategy. Agreed national framework to coordinate effort, resources, actions and communications for strategic outcomes for flying-foxes and communities.

Outcomes from the forum can be found [here](#) or Rod Hardwick rod.hardwick@lgnsw.org.au.

Rapid Assessment Methodology (RAM) and EcoRoadside App

As part of the Linear Reserves Program, funded by the NSW Environmental Trust, LGNSW and Local Land Services (LLS) have developed the Rapid Assessment Methodology (RAM) to assist council and LLS staff in undertaking assessments of council roadside reserves and travelling stock reserves respectively.

The RAM provides a simple approach to assess and capture environmental data that identifies three main aspects: conservation status, landscape context and vegetation condition. Based on the scoring of these aspects and utilising a conservation value assessment matrix, each site is then assigned an overall conservation value of high, medium or low.

The EcoRoadside App has been developed, by EcoServer, to provide an electronic data collection tool for completing the RAM. The App provides a visual guide with prompts and information to assist councils in filling out the RAM form. There is also the opportunity to add photos and record additional information, including current and proposed management requirements. The final conservation value score is calculated for each site as the form is completed, which enables a "live" in-field check to be undertaken.

Detailed instructional videos on accessing and using the App are available. For more information or to subscribe to regular CRR project updates please email: kathy.godfrey@lgnsw.org.au or visit the project's [website](#).

This project has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust.



Whats coming up?

- March** International Day of Forests – 21
World Water Day - 22
Earth Hour - 24
- April** Earth Day -22
- May** World Migratory Bird Day - 12
National Volunteer Week - 21 -27
International Biological Diversity Day - 22
World Turtle Day – 23



Local Government Case Studies

Sutherland Shire Council - A model for bringing back our indigenous tree canopy

Sutherland Shire Council developed an online mapping tool to assist in species selection when making planting decisions for development assessment conditions, bush regeneration, street tree planting and in reserves. By selecting the right species for the location, vegetation is more likely to flourish. This contributes to a stronger Green Grid and local biodiversity, and mitigates the impacts of increasing urban heat.

Blue Mountains City Council - Return of the 'Bottomless Pool' in Yosemite Creek, North Katoomba

Decades of urban stormwater runoff resulted in sedimentation, erosion and decline of Yosemite Creek's water quality, as well as loss of habitat and aquatic biodiversity. Local residents lamented the loss of their favourite swimming hole, as the 'bottomless pool' at the base of Minnehaha Falls filled with sediment. A coordinated and collaborative approach with Blue Mountains City Council, government agencies, businesses and the local community resulted in the successful restoration of Yosemite Creek and the return of the pools including Minnehaha's 'bottomless' plunge pool.

Survey on local government use of weed and pest animal data.

The CSIRO recently conducted a survey as part of research funded by the Local Government Association of Queensland and Biosecurity Queensland. The project will look at national best practice approaches and lessons learned when capturing, managing and reporting on weed and pest animal data.

The purpose of the survey is to understand the diversity in current local government practices, and to identify common challenges and future opportunities. The results will be shared with interested NSW councils too.

State News

Biodiversity offsets scheme commences

The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme commenced for local development in most local government areas in NSW on 25 February 2018. Additional Interim Designated Areas have been declared for some local government areas where transition arrangements will be extended until 24 November 2018 and local development will continue to be assessed under the former planning provisions.

The Office of Local Government circular provides an explanation of these changes, which are summarised below.

- Local development assessment

For most local government areas, any new application for development consent or modification to an approved development under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979* (not including State Significant Development) will be subject to the biodiversity assessment



requirements of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

- Interim designated areas

Seven additional local government areas as Interim Designated Areas: Cessnock, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Central Coast and Coffs Harbour. The West Dapto Urban Release Area in the Wollongong local government area has also been declared.

These are in addition to seven Western Sydney local government areas (Camden, City of Campbelltown, City of Fairfield, City of Hawkesbury, City of Liverpool, City of Penrith and Wollondilly) previously identified.

In these areas, applications for development consent, or modifications to an approved development, under Part 4 of the EP&A Act, will continue to be assessed under former planning provisions until 24 November 2018. The Biodiversity Offset Scheme will commence in these areas on 25 November 2018.

Transitional arrangements will continue to apply to activities under Part 5 of the EP&A Act, major projects and mining projects.

Biodiversity Support Officers for Local Government

OEH has entered into partnerships with 8 local government organisations to employ regionally based officers to provide help desk support to groups of councils. A number of these positions are still being recruited however the following officers are now employed to assist councils.

Hunter and Central Coast: Carlie McClung,
carliem@huntercouncils.com.au 4978 4045
0436676201

North Coast: Jane Eales,
jane.eales@bellingen.nsw.gov.au 6655 7382
0438790973

New England North West and northern Far West:
Anne Coote, acoote@gwydir.nsw.gov.au
0408 007 163

Riverina and Murray and southern Far West:
Marcus Wright, mwright@reroc.com.au 6930 1808
0498547757

More [information and resources](#) have been produced for councils to assist them in implementation.

Training is available to council staff who will be involved in assessing or reviewing applications which include biodiversity assessment reports. Approvers will need to understand the legislative reforms, including

the Biodiversity Assessment Method and credit schemes to accurately review these reports. Each council in NSW is entitled to three free training places. Register through [GreenCap](#).

Draft Regional Pest Animal Management Plans

NSW Local Land Services is seeking feedback on 11 draft regional strategic pest animal management plans by 20 April. The plans will guide resource allocation and investment across the state and provide a consistent basis for regional planning and delivery.

Councils are strongly encouraged to review the relevant plans for their regions. [Download the plans](#).

Feedback is being recorded via a [short online survey](#). For more information contact [Susy Cenedese](#), Strategy Manager Environment LGNSW.

Greener Places Policy

Greener Places is a draft policy to guide the design, planning, design and delivery of Green Infrastructure in urban areas across NSW. Green Infrastructure is the network of green spaces, natural systems and semi-natural systems including parks, rivers, bushland and private gardens that are strategically planned, designed and managed to support good quality of life in the urban environment.

The aim of the policy is to create a healthier, more liveable, more resilient and sustainable urban environment by improving community access to recreation and exercise, walking and cycling connections.

[Click here](#) for more information.



Climate Smart Innovation in the Central West and Living Waterways Workshop, Cowra 18-19 April

Hosted by Cowra Shire Council, Climate Smart Innovation (CSI) aims to showcase innovation in the region. Splash will be presenting at this conference on the Living Waterways Framework and how it may be adopted into Development Control. More details or to register [click here](#)



Threatened Species Day – 7 Sept

National Threatened Species Day is on 7 September to raise awareness of plants and animals at risk of extinction. The day also celebrates the work that is being done to save them by passionate conservationists, researchers, volunteers, and community experts.

OEH is offering to assist councils in planning an event and can assist with resources such as fact sheets for various threatened species, stickers, threatened species trivia questions, or assist in finding a relevant speaker for your event. To commence this planning, please contact: Jakki.trenbath@environment.nsw.gov.au

Grants

Restoration and Rehabilitation grants

The NSW Environmental Trust is now inviting applications to the 2018 round of its Restoration and Rehabilitation Grants Program. Grants of between \$5,000 and \$100,000 are available. Applications close **3pm Monday 26 March**.

NSW Flying-fox grants

Funding is now only available for **Stream 1** Implementing emergency flying-fox camp management measures where there are significant community impacts. Applications close **30 April**. To apply, visit the website. For further information contact rod.hardwick@lgnsw.org.au

NSW Coast and Estuary Grant Program

The NSW Coast and Estuary Grant Program is open for applications to the planning stream including: developing a Coastal Management Program (CMP), transition a Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) to a CMP and to undertake investigations and designs or cost benefit analyses for infrastructure works

recommended in a certified CZMP or CMP. Applications close **30 June**.

NSW Floodplain Management Grants

The 2018-19 funding round for the NSW Floodplain Management Grant Program is now open. Applications close on the **28 March**.

LGNSW submissions

LGNSW recent submissions to a number of government initiatives are available:

- NSW Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy Discussion Paper
- Sydney Region Plan and Draft District Plans
- Biodiversity Conservation Investment Strategy 2017-2037
- Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000 – Issues Paper
- Draft NSW Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Strategy 2017-2021
- Greener Places Policy

Events and Training

Australasian Bat Society 2018 Conference & AGM, 3-6 April 2018, Richmond, NSW.

Coast to Coast 2018 national coastal management conference, 16-20 April, Hobart

Australian Network for Ecology and Transportation Conference: Connecting Nature – Connecting People 29 April – 2 May, Creswick, Victoria

National Climate Adaptation Conference, 8- 10 May, Melbourne

21st Australasian Weeds Conference, 9 - 12 September, Manly, NSW

SUBSCRIPTION

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MORE INFORMATION

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