



**Lake Illawarra**  
ESTUARY MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

MEETING HELD  
5.30PM WEDNESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT	
Cr Peter Moran (SCC) Acting Chair	Paul Knight (ILALC)
Brian Jones (Scientific Advisor)	Col Wilton (Community Rep)
John Davey (Community Rep)	Jillian Reynolds (Fisheries)
Annie Marlow (Community Rep)	Wayne Cooke (Community Rep)
Danny Wiecek (OEH)	

IN ATTENDANCE	
Kristy Blackburn WCC and SCC	Gavin McDonall (Fisheries)
Philomena Gangaiya WCC	Tuesday Heather SCC
Chris Stewart (WCC)	Claire Knight WCC
Mike Dowd (WCC)	Carla Ganassin (Fisheries)
Grant Meredith (SCC)	

1 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Committee members and thanked them for their attendance. Introductions were made.

- 2 APOLOGIES – Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Marianne Saliba, Renee Winsor, Jodi Edwards, Cr Cattell, Cr Blakey, Cr Walters, Cr Figliomeni, Aunty Sharralyn Robinson, Graham Towers and Kerrylee Rogers.

3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair acknowledged the traditional owners of the Land.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 July 2018

**Recommendation:** The minutes of the previous Lake Illawarra Estuary Management Committee meeting held on 19 September 2018 be endorsed:

**MOVED: Brian Jones**

**SECONDED: Annie Marlow**

**ALL IN FAVOUR**

Mike Dowd did follow up with the relevant manager the water pollution issue (run off from unprotected works by Council contractors doing road resurfacing at Lake Heights) raised by Annie Marlow. He will follow up again to see if the contractor is going to be held as non-compliant against their contract.

All other action items progressed as per the Business Paper

- 6 WEST DAPTO UPDATE – PRESENTATION – EMMA STRUYS  
This item was held over.

- 7 WHITE'S SEAHORSE – PRESENTATION – JILLIAN REYNOLDS

Jillian Reynolds, Fisheries Manager, Dept of Primary Industries provided an update on the recently proposed determination to list White's Seahorse (*Hippocampus whitei*) as an Endangered Species. Its distribution is from Foster in the north to Lake Illawarra in the south, but surveys show marked reduction in numbers since 2006 due to habitat loss, medicinal uses and recreational collection. They have been spotted off Port Kembla at Five Islands and there is one recorded sighting in Lake Illawarra in 1903. It is a marine species so the permanent opening could potentially mean that the Lake is more likely to be suitable habitat than previously.

If it is declared an endangered species a Priority Action Statement would be created by Dept of Fisheries and funding would be granted for its protection. All development applications would need to consider the impact on the species as a part of the approval process. Jillian will inform the Committee of the determination.

- 8 MANAGEMENT OF FISHING IN LAKE ILLAWARRA – PRESENTATION – GAVIN McDONALL AND JILLIAN REYNOLDS

Gavin McDonall, Fisheries Officer, Dept of Primary Industries and Jillian Reynolds, Fisheries Manager provided an overview of the work undertaken by Fisheries staff at Lake Illawarra as well as the commercial and recreational fishing practices taking place within the Lake.

Fisheries staff spend at least part of every work day around Lake Illawarra. They work to educate the community but to also regulate and at times prosecute commercial and recreational fishers. They also have a role in investigating habitat offences, fish kills and threatened species infringements.

Most commercial species of fish within NSW are fully fished and the most common species taken by commercial fishers within Lake Illawarra are Dusky Flathead, Blue Swimmer Crab, Mullet and Silver Biddies. The prawn fishery has dropped significantly since the permanent entrance works – from 6135 Tonnes in 2009/10 to 112 Tonnes in 2015/16 (a drop of 98%). There are 50 commercial fishing licences granted in region 6 which includes Lake Illawarra. 10-12 of these licences are used regularly in the Lake. It is highly regulated with restrictions on the size, type of nets that can be used as well as 'real time' catch returns needing to be submitted for some species.

Recreational fishing is widespread throughout Lake Illawarra and it accounts for a significant proportion of the take for most species. For example the most recent Recreational Fishing Survey undertaken by DPI show that commercial fishers take 343 Tonnes of Bream a year in NSW and Recreational fishers are estimated to take 330. Commercial fishers take 115 Tonnes of Dusky Flathead a year and recreational fishers are estimated to take 288 Tonnes.

A significant issue at present within Lake Illawarra is the excessive removal of cockles. Although Fisheries does not think this is a species at risk, it is acknowledged that some people are taking too many. Information signs, Facebook posts and other types of education (as well as enforcement) is being carried out.

Some Committee members expressed concern for the cockle population and would like to see more enforcement of takes in excess of bag limits.

9 CORRESPONDENCE IN AND OUT

Correspondence In	Description	Recommended Action

Correspondence Out	Description
Kristy Blackburn on behalf of some LIEMC members.	Advice to both SCC and WCC to consider in their submissions regarding the Calderwood Modification application.

- 10 REZONING APPLICATIONS – LAKE CATCHMENT AND FORESHORE WCC AND SCC  
Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy WCC and Grant Meredith, Group Manager City Development SCC spoke to the respective reports.

- 11 MAJOR CAPITAL WORKS: COUNCIL-BASED UPDATE  
Mike Dowd, Manager Infrastructure Strategy & Planning, WCC spoke to the report, noting that the channel entrance study is continuing with the data generated within the consultant model currently being calibrated and validated against survey data. This is progressing well. The tracer study methodology is currently being reviewed.

Grant Meredith spoke to the SCC report. He responded to a question regarding Native Title and its impact on the timing of works. There is an active native title claim on land including the Lake Illawarra catchment. Both Councils need to refer proposed works on Crown Land to both the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council (ILALC) and Native Title Services (NTS). There is a State (Land Rights) and Federal (Native Title) process to go through which will take some time. Paul Knight, CEO of ILALC indicated that he will be running Native Title and Land Rights information sessions that members of the LIEMC could attend. He will let Kristy know when these are occurring.

- 12 LAKE ILLAWARRA OFFICER REPORT  
Kristy Blackburn Environmental Strategy Officer for Lake Illawarra spoke to the report as outlined in the Business Paper. Further discussions were held regarding:

- **Update on project CMP for Lake Illawarra** – the variation request to the OEH Grants Unit for extra funds and time was approved in full on 4 December which means that work on revising the draft CMP can begin. The consultants BMT have been reengaged and are working with the project management team to meet new deadlines. The additional funds will also fund a tidal inundation study being undertaken by the UoW and a project looking at the linkages between habitats (such as mangrove and saltmarsh) and fisheries. This work will be undertaken by the University of Newcastle. Public exhibition of the revised draft CMP will be mid next year. Management Action WQ1 is being progressed.
- **Submissions to the OEH Coastal and Estuaries Grant round 2018/19** – staff at both WCC and SCC have been preparing two applications for submission in the OEH 2018/19 Coastal and Estuaries funding round. Certain activities are eligible for funding without a certified CMP. The projects will use funding from the joint Lake Illawarra fund (contributed to 2:1 by WCC and SCC) as well as WCC Natural Area cash and in-kind support. All proposed activities are in the Draft CMP. LIEMC support for these applications is being sought as it will strengthen their chances of success. In the absence of a LIEMC quorum, support by individual members present will be outlined in the applications.

**Recommendation:** That the LIEMC members present endorse the project application – Restoration of ecosystem integrity at significant sites around Lake Illawarra, which aims to improve vegetation communities at Primbee, Heritage Park and Horsley Creek by extensive weeding and revegetation.

**MOVED: John Davey**  
**SECONDED: Annie Marlow**  
**ALL IN FAVOUR**

**Recommendation:** That the LIEMC members present endorse the potential SCC project application – Beach Scraping at Entrance Beach. This project will manage vegetation encroachment and undertake beach scraping in order to improve access along this stretch of foreshore.

**MOVED: John Davey**  
**SECONDED: Annie Marlow**  
**ALL IN FAVOUR**

#### 13 COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES (ROUND TABLE)

Wane Cooke expressed concern re water quality at Tallawarra. He has photos of grey sludge/foam. Philomena stated that water quality testing has been undertaken there for the last 5 years and will send Wayne the link for the monitoring report.

Col Wilton advised that Reddall Reserve boat ramp (west of the Entrance Beach swimming area) is unsafe. The bottom of the ramp has rocks as a result of the building of rock walls by the State Government. "Save Lake Illawarra" letters have been met with dismissive responses. Col will send copies of the letters to Kristy for follow up.

Paul Knight reminded the Committee that the Albion Park Rail bypass construction was commencing in January 2019 and that it could have potential environmental impacts on the lake via runoff into Macquarie rivulet and Duck Creek. He also mentioned that ILALC is establishing a native plant nursery at Tallawarra power station.

Jillian Reynolds mentioned that Local Land Services have recently received significant funds to spend in the Illawarra implementing the Marine Estate Strategy. They will be looking for large scale revegetation/saltmarsh projects which may not require matching funding. Hooka Point was mentioned as a possible site and the opportunities are quite broad so could include education. The Draft CMP has multiple sites identified for salt marsh conservation efforts. Kristy will follow up with Jason at LLS.

#### 14 OTHER BUSINESS

Grant Meredith stated that the meeting could have been held at SCC.

#### 15 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday, 27 March 2019 at the SCC Administration Centre.

#### 16 CLOSE

The meeting concluded at 7.25pm.

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Minutes to be confirmed at the next meeting to be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday, 27 March 2019.

Action Summary over page

**ACTION SUMMARY**

Item	Action	Officer	Status
	Put mangrove discussion on the agenda for another LIEMC meeting	KB	Held over
5	Mike Dowd did follow up with the relevant manager the water pollution issue (run off from unprotected works by Council contractors doing road resurfacing at Lake Heights) raised by Annie Marlow. He will follow up again to see if the contractor is going to be held as non-compliant against their contract.	MD	
6	Put West Dapto update on the agenda for another LIEMC meeting.	KB	
7	Keep the LIEMC informed of the status of the White's Seahorse ( <i>Hippocampus whitei</i> ) determination.	JR	
12	Staff to include the endorsement of individual LIEMC members present at this meeting in the OEH Grant applications	KB and TH	Done
13	Wayne to send photos of grey sludge/ foam to Kristy for investigation.	WC	Done (see below)
13	Philomena to send Wayne the link to water quality report	PG	Done via Kristy
13	Kristy to follow up Col Wilton's letters re safety concerns at Reddall Reserve Boat Ramp.	KB	Emailed Crown Lands – awaiting response

\* The submitted photos were sent to Kristy who forwarded them onto Philomena (WCC) and Danny (OEH). Danny responded - The hot water discharge from the power plant and associated turbulence can create foam, which then moves its way down the channel and builds up on a floating boom across the channel. Some recent aerial imagery shows this boom is no longer working and is washed up along the western foreshore, so the foam would make its way further down the channel. Kristy then followed up the broken boom with Kristen Lee at EnergyAustralia. She indicated that the boom had been vandalised but was now fixed and no such foam should be present so far down the channel as a result.