

MANNING CATCHMENT COMMITTEE

The Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

PO Box 440
TAREE 2430
Carl Atchison
Ph(02)65522788xtn242
Fx(02)65522047

email:

cjatchison@dlwc.nsw.gov.au

13 August,

1999

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Inquiry Into Catchment Management

The Manning Catchment Management Committee was established in 1991 under the NSW Catchment Management Act 1989. It has operated since then, without any statutory authority (in accordance with the Act), as an advisory, planning and coordination body.

We believe we have had considerable success in achieving improvements in onground management in the Manning Valley, especially in riparian areas. Much of that has occurred through the Committee developing and promoting "Rivercare Planning" and acting as a link between the Department of Land and Water Conservation and thirty local Landcare groups. We have been very active too in promoting the formation of Landcare groups as a means to this end.

The Committee is a foundation member of the (NSW) North Coast Catchment Coordinating Committee and as that Committee has made a submission detailing Catchment Management on the NSW North Coast we have decided not to duplicate that detailed information. Instead I have extracted and attached the Manning Committee's latest submission to the NSW TCM biannual report (1995/96&1996/97). Although now slightly dated, it is in point form and will quickly enable you to see what we do and how we go about it. I trust it will be of some value.

Please do not hesitate to contact our Coordinator, Mr Carl Atchison for any further information.

Yours sincerely

Dr John Stockard
Chairman

MANNING CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

BIANNUAL REPORT 1995/96 & 1996/97

Issues

- . *River stabilisation:* streambank erosion and other riparian issues; sedimentation/gravel build up; water quality and quantity.
- . *Land management:* rural land management practices; soil degradation; tree clearing/forestry operations; noxious weeds; feral animals; fire; fragmentation of rural holdings; land tenure issues.
- . *Coastal:* sand deposition in estuaries; dunal erosion; reduced fish populations; wetland management; acid sulphate soils; recreation.
- . *Future development:* urban residential and rural subdivision; tourism development; environmental monitoring constraints; future recreation activity.

Achievements for 1995/96 & 1996/97

- . Finalised, exhibited and adopted the Committee's Strategic Plan
- . Continued a valley-wide water quality monitoring program using (TCM) Landcare Coordinator and DLWC staff working with Landcare members and Schools
- . With state and local government and the Lower Manning Landcare group, continued and promoted work on estuarine riverbank erosion and the streamlining of the process of obtaining development consent for associated works.
- . Assisted local Landcare groups in the preparation of National Landcare, Rivercare and TCM Enhancement funding applications in 1995/96 and NHT applications in 1996/97 and assessed final submissions. Also participated as a member of the North Coast Catchment Coordinating Committee in reviewing regional projects.
- . Through use of Discretionary funds, assisted Landcare groups with tree planting, weed control, riverbank management, management of ASS areas and resource management education
- . Undertook major projects using state and federal funds on two gully erosion control projects in the Avon Valley near Gloucester and other smaller projects
- . Involved with DLWC in the further development of the "Rivercare" plans for Landcare groups in the Manning. Six plans covering 150 km are complete, four more are well advanced and four more are pending
- . Held three community information evenings on Acid Sulfate Soils
- . Had input, through meetings and hearings and submissions, into the development of numerous State policies

Community Activity for 1995/96 & 1996/97

- . Development and improvement of community understanding of TCM principles and natural resource issues including through Green Week, the local media, local Landcare and addresses to schools, TAFE and service clubs.
- . Continued to lobby government for funding support and umbrella public liability insurance cover for Landcare and Dunecare groups.
- . Continued liaison with officers from Greater Taree and Gloucester Councils and state agencies in formulating strategies and action plans to address resource management issues.
- . Maintained a Landcare Coordinator, with funding largely from the National Landcare Program, to provide support to thirty local Landcare groups.
- . Attended the October 1996 TCM/Landcare Forum in Sydney

Targets for 1997/98

- . Continue the development of community understanding of and involvement in TCM including the formation of Landcare/Dunecare groups to address issues as identified in the strategIC action plans.
- . Hand over the management of the two Landcare Coordinators to local Landcare groups .
- . Continue to organise public forums and field inspections for the exchange of information relating to catchment management issues.
- . Organise field days to promote hardwood plantations, gully erosion control and streambank erosion control in particular.
- . Extend the "Rivercare" planning initiative for the Manning.
- . Maintain close contact with local and state government; especially in relation to EIS preparation/review and Local Environment Plans.
- . Finalise the coordinated water quality monitoring program involving state and local government, educational institutions and community groups.
- . Continue to work with the Lower Manning Landcare Group, Manning oyster farmers and state and local government in finding solutions to severe riverbank erosion and estuary sedimentation downstream of Wingham.
- . Work with Taree Council to actively promote the development of strategies to handle Acid Sulphate Soil problems in the lower estuary.
- . Actively participate in community planning related to the State Government's impending policy initiatives on Native Vegetation Management and Water Reforms
- . Undertake a large Drought Landcare project in the middle reaches of the Manning Valley rectifying river blockages.
- . Work through Taree Council to finalise a TCM funded project on Acid Sulfate drain mapping and management planning
- . Extend the Avon Valley Drought Landcare project further upstream

Catchment Facts

Area 8400 km²

Land Use Intensive agriculture and dairying on floodplain and alluvial valleys, fishing, oyster farming, beef production, sand/gravel extraction, tourism, recreation.

Major Centres Taree, Wingham, Gloucester

Population 50,000
MANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (at 30/6/97)

Bruce Cowan Chairperson

Carl Atchison Coordinator (non member)

Landholder/Landuser

Mr Morgan Keating
Mr Bill McPherson
Mr John Radford
Mr David Bignall
Mr John Hogg
Mr Graham Buyers
Mr Don Schmitzer
Mr Brian Crisp
Mr John Sorby
Mr John Cowan

Environmental

Mr Graeme Stone

Local Government

Mr Ian Angus Greater Taree
Cr John Byrne Greater Taree (ECMC Chair)
Cr Jim Henderson Gloucester

State Government

Mr John Wilson NSW Agriculture
Mr John Murray State Forests
Mr Geoff Foster Land and Water Conservation
Mr Kerry Cree NSW Fisheries