

creek to coast

Summer 2016/2017

“We All Deserve Clean Water”

Lynne Strong shared a powerful message at the release of the [2016 Waterway and Catchment Report Card](#) in Stroud on Friday the 18th of November; “We all deserve clean water”.

Guest speaker at the Report Card Release, Lynne is a dairy farmer from the Jamberoo district of the NSW south coast. Lynne’s family has been farming in the Jamberoo district for over 180 years, and 35 years ago she and her husband established Clover Hill Dairies. Today Clover Hill Dairies is an innovative farming system which has achieved international recognition as a sustainable model of intensive dairy production.

Lynne pointed out that everyone both wants and deserves clean water; and that we have a shared responsibility to work toward this regardless of where in the catchment we live.

Lynne told the story of how Clover Hill Dairies operates on the principle of “Less is More”; milking more cows using fewer resources. This improves their bottom line as well as minimising the farm’s environmental footprint. One way they do this is by paying close attention to their nutrient maps, in particular nitrogen and phosphorous, to ensure both maximum pasture growth and minimal runoff into waterways.

Interviews with Lynne are now available to be viewed on YouTube: 1. [The use of NRM to enhance farm productivity](#), and 2. [Fostering connections between farmers and the community](#) (or search “Lynne Strong MidCoast Council”).



Lynne Strong of Clover Hill Dairies

2016 Waterway and Catchment Report Card



Attendees enjoyed a delicious buffet showcasing local produce

Approximately 80 people were in attendance at the Report Card Release to hear Lynne’s inspirational message of enhancing both farm productivity and waterway health. The Stroud Brickthrowing committee catered for the evening, showcasing delicious food produced locally within the catchments of the Karuah, Myall and Wallis Lake.

Over the past year Council expanded waterway monitoring to capture data from rivers in addition to the estuaries of the Karuah, Myall and Wallis Lake. This gives us a great picture of what is happening along the length of our waterways, from the headwaters to the estuaries. The monitoring was undertaken by independent scientists from the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.

(See overleaf for more information on the trends shown from the monitoring)

How Healthy are our Waterways?

Wallis
Myall
Karuah

Waterway²⁰¹⁶
& Catchment
REPORT CARD

This year's waterway and catchment report card results tell an in-depth story on the health of our waterways. As we move from the upper catchments through to the estuaries, water quality declines due to increased stressors associated with intensified land use.

Upper Catchments

- healthy
- low nutrient and sediment inputs
- good river bank conditions
- low algae levels
- water bug populations healthy

Mid Catchments

- poorer health compared to upper catchment
- increased nutrients and sediment
- declining river bank conditions
- higher algae levels
- water bug populations suffering

Estuaries

- impacted from both upstream waters and land use directly surrounding them
- can be influenced by connection to the ocean

What does this mean?

More work needs to be done to improve land use practices and reduce stressors. This will improve catchment and waterway health for the whole community to benefit.

Go to www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Community/Report-Card to download the Report Card and to view the results, videos of local landholders discussing the importance of waterway health and lots more great info.

MidCoast Council water quality improvement projects are made possible by the Environmental Special Rate

Gloucester cleans up at Blue Star Awards

The second annual Keep NSW Beautiful Blue Star Sustainability Awards were announced in Orange in November and MidCoast Council is pleased to reveal that Gloucester came home with three out of three category awards.

The Gloucester community were excited to be named as finalists in three categories in the Blue Star Awards including the Waste Less Recycle More Award for the Majestic Family Store Opportunity Shop, the Sustainable Systems Award for Gloucester's Sustainable Futures Convention and the Environmental Achievement Award for Penny Drake-Brockman's efforts in protecting endangered wildlife, conserving remnant native vegetation and recording valuable environmental data.



MidCoast Council's Director of Community Spaces and Services, Paul De Szell, was pleased to hear the news about these well-deserved awards. "Gloucester has a long standing reputation as one of the state's tidiest towns and it's great to see this passionate community continuing to work towards achieving great environmental outcomes," said Paul.

To find out more about the 2016 Blue Star Sustainability Awards, including a full list of winners, visit www.knswb.org.au/our-programs/the-blue-stars.

Backyard Bushcare in Pacific Palms

MidCoast Council has recently received a grant for \$100,000 from the Environmental Trust to bring the Backyard Bushcare program to Pacific Palms.

Starting in May 2017, it will be a community engagement program designed to improve understanding and behaviour around the management of weeds on private properties. The aim of Backyard Bushcare is to minimise invasive weed spread into bushland and improve native habitat.



"A Busy Life" Weed Control Calendar



Due to popular demand, MidCoast Council is maintaining the legacy of Mid North Coast Weeds Coordinating Committee by continuing with the annual "A Busy Life" weed control calendar for 2017. This calendar has been an institution on the mid North Coast for the past 15 years.

Moving into a new era Council has increased the calendars network reach gaining the support of both the realigned Hunter Regional Weeds Committee and North Coast Regional Weeds Committee. This extra support has meant an increase to the print run and distribution, a decrease in the per unit cost of the calendars and a shift from black and white to full colour.

Calendar production has increased from 7000 black and white copies to 20,000 full colour copies being distributed in 2 versions from the NSW Central Coast to the Tweed. Pick up your free copy from your local Council office or produce store.

Addressing Erosion on the Manning

Funding has been secured by Council to undertake works on priority riverbanks on Oxley Island and Dumaresq Island to address severe riverbank erosion on the Manning. Rock fillet construction, riverbank fencing, weeding and planting works will address approximately 2km of erosion. This project will start in the new year and is being funded through Council's environmental levy, the NSW OEH Estuary Management Program and the NSW Fisheries Habitat Action Grant.

The next stage of the project will involve working with landholders for good land management outcomes.





Karuah
Great Lakes
Landcare

KGLL Update

The latest from Karuah & Great Lakes Landcare

Do it Yourself biological products

Landholders from all over converged on Coolongolook on October 4th for a good dose of soil health building inspiration from the dynamic Jeremy Bradley of Beechwood Biological Solutions. Jeremy's passion for soil biology and for the DIY ethic was contagious as he ran through the preparation and applications of aerated compost teas and Ekihi on the farm, complete with live demonstrations.



Weed Whacking in the Wang Wauk

Bunyah was treated to a very informative Weed management workshop on October 17th, with presentations on regional weed strategy and emerging weed threats, biological measures for Giant Parramatta Grass management and a live weed display. Thanks to Terry Inkson and Wendy Bushell of MidCoast Council, Jeremy Bradley of Beechwood Biological Solutions, and to Bunyah Hall Committee for the delicious catering.



Revitalising a sustainable farming group for Bulahdelah

The Crawford River Sustainable Farming Group caught up and welcomed new members on 23rd October. With existing members from outside the Crawford Valley, and a desire to expand as a local group, they have adopted the new name "Bulahdelah Sustainable Farming Group". Participants enjoyed a vineyard tour and a guest speaker - Lee Fieldhouse from Islands in the Stream Vermiculture, and planned future activities. To join this diverse group of farmers with a passion for a sustainable local food industry, contact Julie on 0416 242 945



Case Studies online

KGLL have started sharing case studies of their programs on the NSW Landcare website at <http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/>

Two case studies have been uploaded so far, go here to see them: [Recreating Wootton's Forest](#), and [Coming together for soil health](#)

NSW Landcare Gateway



Quoll Boxes Trialled

Spotted-tailed Quolls are enigmatic and beautiful. They are the largest marsupial carnivore on the Australian mainland. But, sadly, they are very rare and are considered to be vulnerable to extinction. Quolls use hollow logs, rock outcrops, caves and hollow tree bases as dens for breeding.

Following sightings on the Bulahdelah Plain Reserve, MidCoast Council has commenced a trial in which artificial Quoll dens are placed into known habitat areas. By supplementing den opportunities, it is hoped that Quolls may be observed to breed on site. "We are excited about this trial. We also encourage all landholders to do their bit to enhance the quality of the natural environment for native wildlife" said Mat Bell, Council's Senior Ecologist.



Bungwahl Creek Restoration

Works to improve riparian vegetation condition and fish habitat in Bungwahl Creek at Failford are progressing well with primary weed controls recently completed. Funds from the Recreational Fishing Trusts Habitat Action Grants have been utilised to engage contractors who have targeted riparian weeds including Lantana, Cape Ivy, Camphor Laurel, Wild Tobacco Trees, Brazilian Nightshade and Coastal Morning Glory.

The project works are being carried out to enhance fish habitat through protecting and maintaining native vegetation buffers between terrestrial and aquatic habitat, minimising nutrients and sediment loads entering estuarine waterways from the subject land through the important environmental service provisions, notably water quality improvement provided by healthy native vegetation cover. The project will enhance areas used for lifecycle purposes by aquatic species with values associated with recreational fisheries.

Council's Environmental Officer, Peter Goonan said "The bush regeneration contractors are delivering excellent results. There is a high level of native regeneration occurring across the site following primary weed control works". The 12 month project will now move into the final stages with follow-up weed controls to be carried out in early 2016.

Southern Wallis Foreshore Restoration Plan Update

In late 2015 Council received funding from the Office of Environment and Heritage Estuary Program to produce a comprehensive restoration plan for the Wallis Lake foreshore, between Tiona Park and Rose Point.

The foreshore reserve system in this area extends for around 40km, incorporating roughly 250ha of riparian vegetation adjacent to a highly sensitive area of southern Wallis Lake, which is recognised as a wetland of National Significance.



The grant funding is being used to engage consultants to develop detailed vegetation mapping and condition assessment, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage assessment, and a stormwater management plan for Coomba Park.

Stage 1 of the program is close to completion, with a vegetation assessment of the foreshore undertaken by consultants in early 2016. The report identified 279 species of plants (vascular) in the study area and 13 native vegetation communities. There were four endangered ecological communities (EECs) and two threatened plant species identified in the project area. Key threats to foreshore vegetation include grazing, weed invasion, vegetation clearing and damage, unauthorised tracks and vehicular damage, rubbish, mowing, and unauthorised buildings/structures. Feral animal impacts (deer, foxes) have also been identified as key threats in the project area. The vegetation assessment recommends prioritising weed control activities, with a new record of the invasive Sharp Rush (*Juncus acutus*) recorded in Coomba Bay. This weed had not been recorded in the Wallis Catchment previously, and is now prioritised for immediate control in current restoration works.

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment is close to completion with desktop analysis, predictive modelling and mapping of the project area underway. Engagement of the local Worimi community commenced with a well-attended Cultural excursion to Coomba Park in November, during which it was identified that there is a need for public recognition of Worimi values.

Broader community consultation will be undertaken in the Pacific Palms and Coomba areas in early 2017 to capture local knowledge, values and needs with regard to the foreshore reserve system. If you would like to register your interest in these public meetings, please email isabelle.strachan@midcoast.nsw.gov.au

Stay up to date

Facebook & website

Stay up to date with MidCoast Council news on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MidCoastCouncil

Information on volunteering can be found here: <http://midcoast.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au/Community-Recreation/Volunteering>

Karuah & Great Lakes Landcare can also be found on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/karuahgreatlakeslandcare>

Land for Wildlife

Get involved

Are you interested in conserving your property's special natural features? Do you have areas of your property that you are already managing to encourage native wildlife? Then the Land for Wildlife program may be for you. For more information, visit <http://midcoast.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au/Environment/Get-Involved#landforwildlife>



Or email Helen at MidCoast Council: helen.kemp@midcoast.nsw.gov.au

Contacts

Karuah Catchment Officer

Debbi Delaney, MidCoast Council
phone: 02 6591 7378
debbi.delaney@midcoast.nsw.gov.au

Land for Wildlife

Helen Kemp, MidCoast Council
Land for Wildlife Regional Provider
phone: 02 6591 7344
helen.kemp@midcoast.nsw.gov.au

Great Lakes area volunteering

Contact the MidCoast Council switch on phone: 02 6591 7222

Karuah & Great Lakes Landcare

KGLL is a voluntary community-based network supporting land holders and land management groups in different localities around the catchments of the Great Lakes area. Contacts for groups are shown below.

General enquiries Robyn 0419 800 896, email: kgl.landcare@gmail.com

Group meetings

Dyers Crossing Landcare

Meets every 2 months, usually at a property to tour it and discuss issues.

CONTACT:
John
6559 1251

Wang Wauk / Wallamba Sustainable Farming Group

Meets every 2 months at a property to discuss what we have each been working on and any issues. It is always an entertaining and informative session with delicious morning tea.

CONTACT:
Ros
0412 793 446

Topi Topi Sustainable Farming Group

Meets every month to focus on a topic of interest to members.
Mondays 10am-12 noon

CONTACT:
Sue
0438 433 063

Bulahdelah Sustainable Farming Group

Supporting each other for a sustainable and profitable food industry in the Bulahdelah area. Meets every 2 months at members' properties.

CONTACT:
Julie
0416 242 945

Great Lakes Soil Health Group

Great Lakes district landholders working together to protect and enhance our key agricultural resource, the soil. Meets every second month at members' properties.

CONTACT:
Joël
0416 242 945

Other groups

Coomba Sustainable Living Group

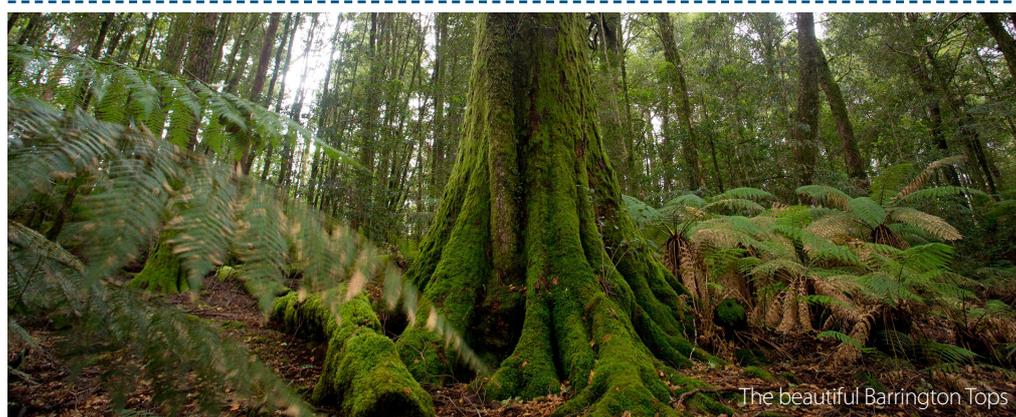
Meets last Friday of the month, for a wide variety of workshops and visits to promote sustainable living.

CONTACT:
Carolyn
0439 513 119
6554 2001

Nabiac Landcare Group

Meets each Wednesday morning, currently working at "Lilly Pilly Bend"

CONTACT:
Leonie Bell
0400 958 486



The beautiful Barrington Tops

Welcome to MidCoast Council

This year Gloucester Shire Council, Greater Taree City Council and Great Lakes Council merged into one entity, the new MidCoast Council. This new Council covers a huge area - from the Barrington Tops to our beautiful lakes and beaches, from Hawks Nest to Elands and out to Johns River. This LGA covers approximately 10,000 square kilometres and includes a vast range of natural environments and land uses.

This area has unique and highly valuable natural assets, and MidCoast Council remains committed to working with the whole community to continue to protect and enhance these.

For information and ongoing updates, please visit the MidCoast Council website at midcoast.nsw.gov.au