

# 2015 Waterway & Catchment report card

for Wallis, Smiths and Myall Lakes

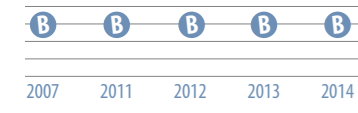


Water quality improvement projects are made possible by the Great Lakes Environmental Special Rate



# Wallis Lake Report Card

## Pipers Creek

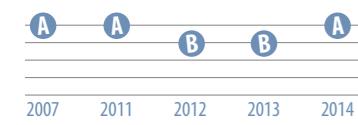


**A**  
2015

The ecological health in Pipers Creek continues to improve, moving into the excellent category. Waters in Pipers Creek remained clear. The nutrient loads from the urban catchment of Forster resulted in algal levels that are now low enough for Pipers Creek to get an excellent grade.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		Reduce algal levels	✓
Water clarity		Improve water clarity	✓

## Wallis Lake



**A**  
2015

In Wallis Lake ecological health was excellent this year, with the amount of algal growth remaining in the excellent category.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		Maintain or reduce algal levels	✓
Water clarity		Maintain or improve water clarity	✓

## Charlotte Bay



**A**  
2015

In Charlotte Bay, ecological health remained excellent, algal growth is at very low levels, continuing the excellent scores for the last couple of years. Water clarity was excellent.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		Maintain or reduce algal levels	✓
Water clarity		Maintain or improve water clarity	✓

## Mid Wallamba Estuary



**C**  
2015

Waters of the mid Wallamba have remained clear most of the time, but the amount of algae in the water continues to be higher than desired. Nutrients from the catchment combined with clear waters and the still hot conditions led to overall high concentrations of algae.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		Reduce algal levels	✗
Water clarity		Improve water clarity	✓

## Wallamba Cove



**B**  
2015

The results for Wallamba Cove are similar to last year, indicating that estuary health in the Cove requires improvement. The algal levels show that targeted work in the catchment to reduce nutrient inputs is the highest priority.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		No interim target was set for this site	
Water clarity			

# Results to be proud of - 6 years on

## INDEPENDENT scientific research

provides a solid understanding of the impacts of catchment activities on lake health. Works in the catchment have been targeted to achieve improvements in waterway health.



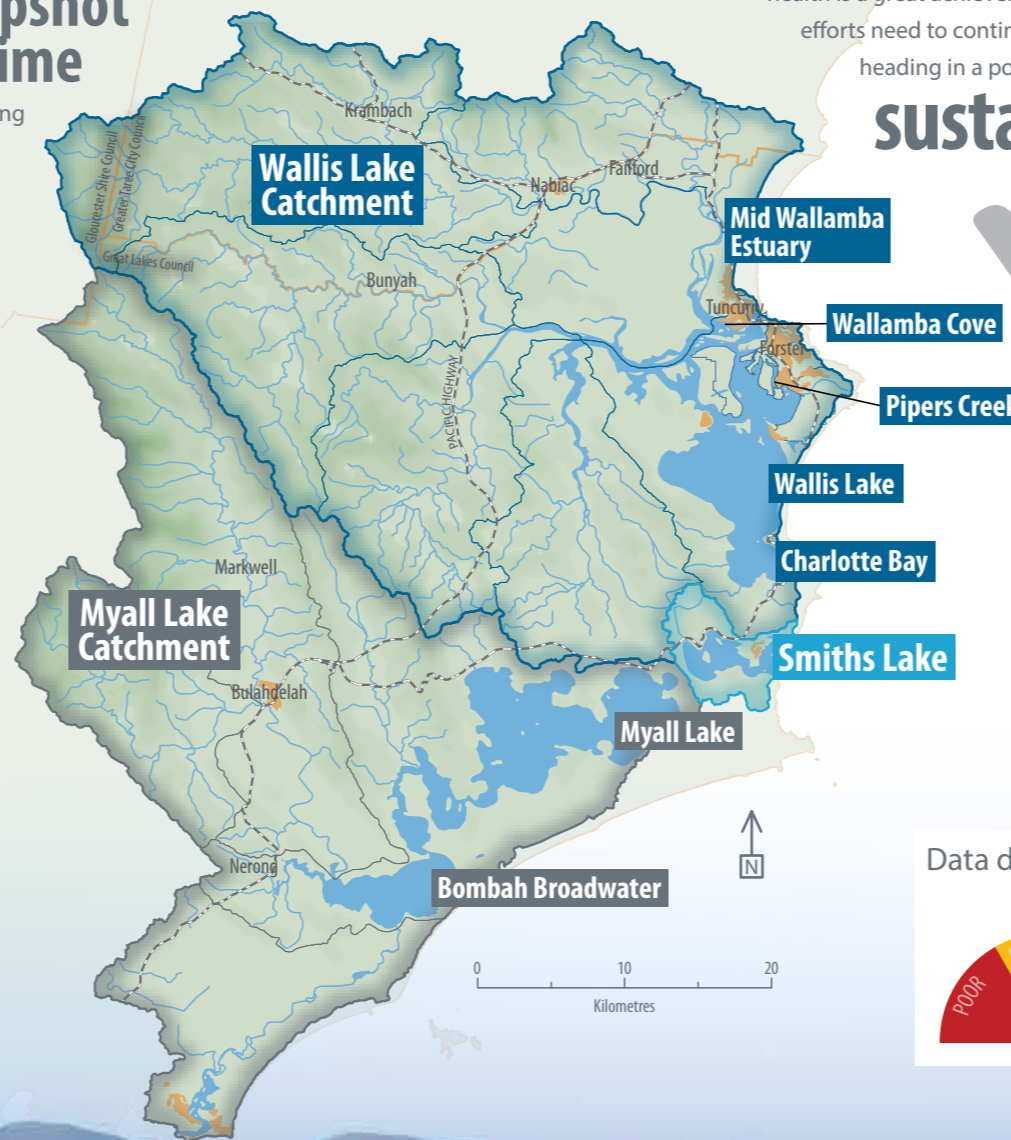
The Water Quality Improvement Plan established 'achievable' interim targets and long term 'aspirational' targets. Six years since adopting the plan, all sites are strongly trending towards **achieving & sustaining** the interim targets with room for improvement on algal levels at two locations.

Management efforts need to continue so that we can keep making progress towards the long term 'aspirational' targets. 'Achievable' targets were just an interim step and we need to **keep working towards the aspirational targets.**

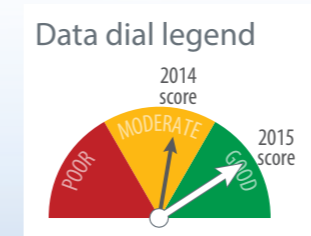


## snapshot in time

Rainfall conditions during the sampling period can affect the report card scores but since sampling commenced in 2007, overall results have trended towards maintaining or achieving the water quality targets.



Halting decline and maintaining waterway health is a great achievement, management efforts need to continue in order to keep heading in a positive direction and **sustain the gains** that have been made.



# Smiths Lake Report Card

## Smiths Lake



**A**  
2015

Smiths Lake continues to be in excellent ecological health with very clear waters to allow growth of seagrass. There was slightly more algal growth than desired in the middle parts of the lake but this did not affect the overall score.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		Maintain or reduce algal levels	✓
Water clarity		Maintain or improve water clarity	✓

# Myall Lake Report Card

## Myall Lake



**B**  
2015

Myall Lake has high conservation values. Overall, the health has remained good. Water clarity in the Myall Lake was excellent but there continues to be some undesirable growth of algae.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		Maintain or reduce algal levels	✓
Water clarity		Maintain or improve water clarity	✓

## Bombah Broadwater



**B**  
2015

Overall ecological health of Bombah Broadwater remained the same as last year. However, there were still large amounts of algae over summer.

Indicator	2015 results	Interim target	Progress
Algae		Reduce algal levels	✗
Water clarity		Improve water clarity	✓

Algae peaked during heavy rains in 2011-12 and still have not subsided, but water clarity exceeded targets



# Everyday water quality

# CHAMPIONS

Tina  
Gogeryly

**Environmental Campaigner,  
Tuncurry**

"Keep Our Paradise Rubbish Free" - that's Tina's simple message. Growing up in the local area and spending many hours enjoying the local beaches, National Parks and waterways Tina noticed just how much rubbish was turning up around our iconic places. She decided enough was enough - the rubbish has to stop. Leading by example, Tina spends many hours cleaning up all types of rubbish in our local area. Joined by family and friends, Tina is encouraging everyone to join her in the year-round clean-up. "I live in this beautiful area, I love this place and I want others who visit now and in the future to enjoy it too, free of rubbish as I knew it once to be". Look out for Tina's colourful bumper stickers or tune-in to her Facebook page for more news #KeepOurParadiseRubbishFree.



Garry  
Smith

**HSIE Head Teacher at Great  
Lakes College, Forster Campus**

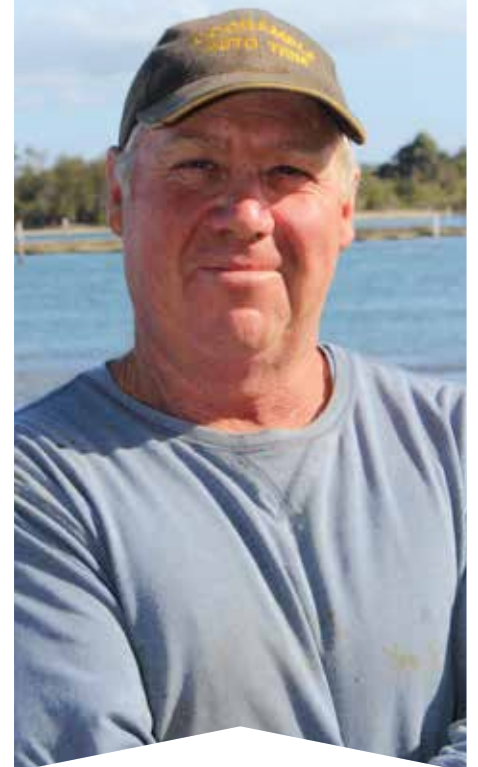
For Garry Smith, Head Teacher of HSIE at Great Lakes College, Forster, teaching students about water management is really a 'no-brainer'! If you see Garry with his students it is easy to see how his enthusiasm for our waterways really rubs off. Garry and his team have established an engaging study unit about water pollution which draws on international examples, the annual Great Lakes water quality report card and local expert knowledge. "I'm keen to raise awareness of local environmental issues. I want students to become active citizens in the future and for them to appreciate where they live and what management and protective action is required. It is up to each and every one of us to be proactive in order to protect and sustainably manage what we have for the future."



Anthony  
Sciacca

**Oyster Farmer, Wallis Lake  
Estuary Committee Member**

Local oyster farmer Anthony Sciacca is a great advocate for the health of our waterways. Everyone knows how important clean water is for the viability of our seafood industry and Anthony is a passionate advocate for restoring our catchments. Representing the oyster industry in 1999, he was instrumental in alerting government and the community to the serious water quality issues associated with the Darawakh Creek. Anthony helped lobby for government funds and worked to convince the community of the need for a local environmental rate to contribute to the restoration of Darawank Wetland. He also convinced his peers in the oyster industry to provide a financial contribution towards this project. Committing 20 years to the Wallis Lake Estuary Committee, Anthony has contributed a wealth of energy and local knowledge to see strategies to protect our lakes implemented.



# Management Actions 2007-2015

## Wallis Lake

### Removal of aquatic weeds

16 hectares of Cabomba infested waterways treated

### Land for wildlife

31 properties across the LGA, and 24 in the Wallis Lake catchment have registered with LFW

### Protection and rehabilitation of key habitats

Acquiring and conserving 927 hectares of wetlands at Darawakh, Minimbah and Lower Wallamba/North Tuncurry and Pipers Creek catchment to protect water quality and biodiversity

### Water sensitive urban design

9 water quality gardens and two wetlands built to treat 39.6 hectares of land in the Pipers and Muddy Creek catchments  
All new houses and subdivisions required to meet water quality targets with water sensitive urban design

### Bush rehabilitation

10 volunteers active in bush regeneration at 10 sites

### Working with students

Incorporated water quality and catchment management issues into the Great Lakes College Geography curriculum for years 7-10

### Rubbish removal

Removal of 14 tons of rubbish from Wallis Lake and Penenton Creek in Forster

### Bank stabilisation

Stabilising 6.5km of the Wallamba River with rock protection, planting 10,170 native plants and conserving 10.9km of stream bank

### Erosion and sediment control

Protecting creek crossings in the upper catchment. 10km roads and trails closed, rehabilitated and maintained to reduce erosion and sedimentation in Wallis Catchment

### Backyard Bushcare

100 residents attended 2 "Weed, Wine & Dine" evenings  
52 people signed "Bushland Friendly Gardens" pledge  
82 people subscribed to Weed Bulletin monthly emails

## Smiths Lake

### Bush rehabilitation

1 volunteer active in bush regeneration /water testing at Smiths Lake contributing 80 hours

### Roadside stabilisation

3220m of roadside stabilised reducing the amount of sediment reaching the lake

### Protection of lake water quality from erosion associated with development on steep blocks

Council increased the lot size for new subdivision in Smiths Lake from 700 m<sup>2</sup> to 1000 m<sup>2</sup>

### Key stats across catchments

- Erosion control on 39.9ha of land
- 903ha of wetlands protected and enhanced
- 63.9km of stream bank protected plus
- 377ha of native vegetation protected and enhanced
- 10ha of infested water treated for aquatic weeds
- 240m of roadside stabilised to reduce erosion

Projects funded by Hunter Local Land Services

## Myall Lake

### Removal of Aquatic Weeds

Aquatic weeds monitored along 46km of streambank and 4 hectares of waterways treated

### Land for wildlife

31 properties across the LGA, and 4 in the Myall Lakes catchment have registered with LFW

### Erosion control

59km roads and trails closed, rehabilitated and maintained to reduce erosion and sedimentation in Myall Lakes Catchment

### Protection and management of land for important ecosystem services

Acquiring 371ha of wetlands in the Bulahdelah area, creating a major wildlife corridor at Durness protecting 90 hectares of land and revegetating 70 hectares to protect water quality and biodiversity

Details on the report card methods and results contained in this report card are available in the 2015 Water Quality Report, or scan the QR code to the right.

[www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au/Environment/The-Big-Picture#waterwayandcatchmentreportcard](http://www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au/Environment/The-Big-Picture#waterwayandcatchmentreportcard)

