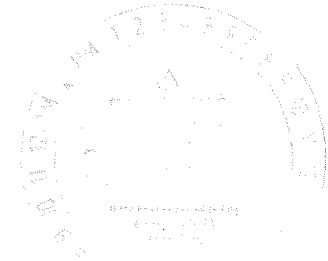


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22.6.17



RE IPART SUBMISSION TO CONTINUE AND INCREASE THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEVY IN THE MIDCOAST COUNCIL RATES, NSW

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a long term resident, former Greater Taree City Councillor and Co-ordinator of Taree Landcare to ask you to continue and increase the Environmental Levy for our area, and extend it to the Gloucester area. As you know our council areas were amalgamated in May of last year, so Great Lakes, Greater Taree and Gloucester are now named the Midcoast Council.

Residents in the Manning area are impressed with the work that has been done in this area since the Environmental levy was introduced. The Great lakes area had received State funding grants to supplement the many projects which they undertook. Greater Taree slowly began to show the improvements to riparian areas on the tributaries and banks of the Manning River. Erosion was reduced and farmers benefitted. The Oyster farmers appreciated the improved water quality. Wetland areas, such as Cattai Wetlands, are slowly improving and leading to less acid sulphate runoff into creeks, and thus the main river. Cattai wetlands became a tourist attraction, with a wide variety of animals, especially birds, which had not been there since the swamps were drained in the 1960s. The Levy has enabled over 600metres of stock exclusion fencing on private land which now protects endangered plant communities and improves water quality.

Improved foreshore facilities, such as the upgrade of two main boat ramps at Taree and Bohnock have been appreciated by members of the public, as have the new riverside public amenities in central locations.

Community Landcare groups have received support from the Council staff, which allows more work to be done and membership of the public to landcare

has increased in the Taree area. More work to protect biodiversity and water quality is now being done by volunteers.

These changes which I have mentioned are just an example of work being done around the rivers, but many other projects are underway. I am including the "Project Update" from Greater Taree City Council, which summarises some of the projects.

The Gloucester River feeds into the Manning River, and it is this latter river which supplies the water which is fed to all our farms, businesses and homes. Improvements in the Gloucester area will benefit the entire catchment.

Please increase our environmental levy and extend it to the Gloucester area. My understanding is that a one per cent increase in the Greater Taree area is being proposed for the Levy, and it would be the first time that Gloucester is included.

Yours sincerely

Helen Hannah

[Redacted signature]

Projects Update

Keeping our community up to date

In November 2013 we adopted an Environmental Action Plan which was developed in close consultation with the community to identify local environmental issues of concern. To help fund the projects in the plan, an environmental levy in the form of a special rate variation was also introduced in July 2014 for a period of 5 years.

The levy will raise just over \$1.3 million dollars each year for projects that address a range of issues grouped under the following themes: Estuary and Water Quality; Biodiversity; Sustainability and Environmental Performance; Dredging and Foreshore Improvements.

Let us know how we are doing.... send an email to tareecouncil@gtcc.nsw.gov.au

This update contains a snapshot of the achievements and projects undertaken between 1 July and 31 December 2015.

Visit our website for more info
gtcc.nsw.gov.au

What we've been up to....



Estuary and Water Quality

- We stabilised over 1km of severely eroding riverbanks on the Manning River at Pelican Bay, Harrington and Taree through a combination of rock filleting and revetment.
- We engaged the UNSW Water Research Laboratory to undertake an assessment of the Manning River floodplain to identify priority areas requiring the remediation of acid sulfate soils.
- We completed the winter sampling for the Sand Tracing Study at Old Bar Beach.



Biodiversity

- We completed an intensive 6 month environmental restoration project at Cattai Wetlands with the assistance of a 10-person Green Army Team funded through the Federal government.
- We completed stage 1 of the Schoolhouse Gully project at Wingham in partnership with Manning Landcare to regenerate a weed infested tributary of Cedar Party Creek.
- We erected over 600m of stock exclusion fencing on private land fronting Browns Creek to improve water quality and to protect endangered plant communities.
- We partnered with Hallidays Point Landcare to help control the spread of Asparagus weeds within the littoral rainforest.



Dredging and Foreshore Improvements

- We commenced the survey and design for the upgrade of the Bohnock Boat Ramp.
- We partnered with Tidy up Taree to upgrade the public amenities at the Endeavour Place Boat Ramp.
- We constructed new public amenities at Harry Bennett Park to enhance the community's use of the Manning River foreshore.



Sustainability and Environmental Performance

- We engaged the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage to conduct the annual water quality monitoring program within the Manning River estuary.
- We engaged NSW Public Works to undertake an investigation to determine whether the processes affecting the dynamics of the two Manning River entrances are having an effect on beach erosion occurring at Old Bar and Manning Point.

We won!

We won a Green Globe Award, in partnership with the UNSW Water Research Laboratory (WRL), in the Natural Environment Sustainability category for the Big Swamp project.

The Green Globe Awards are the NSW Government's leading environmental recognition program, celebrating excellence, leadership and innovation in sustainability.

