

**Submission from Campbell Tiley and Nicola Tayler**

**October 19, 2018**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Central Coast Council proposal to dramatically increase stormwater charges for non-residential properties. I refer to the Central Coast Council proposal to establish a stormwater drainage charge of \$5,427.81 from 2019-20 on all non-residential properties greater than 4.5ha.

I am a landholder in the Ourimbah Creek Valley. I own and live on a 42 hectare property which is predominantly vegetated with native eucalypt and rainforest. The local waterway, Ourimbah Creek, forms one boundary.

The property is not suitable for commercial agriculture and we undertake no commercial activities on it and derive no income from the property. We have invested considerable time and expense in rehabilitating the riparian zone along the creek to reduce soil runoff from what were previously eroded drainage channels and to control invasive weed species. These endeavours improve the quality of water flowing off the property into Ourimbah Creek, water that is collected further downstream for the Central Coast community to drink.

The large area of bushland provides habitat for native species, enhancing the environmental value of surrounding state forest and national park.

Although the property area is large in comparison to a residential block, it has never received or required any works by the Council in relation to stormwater drainage and it is most unlikely that this will ever be the case. Furthermore, the actual monetary value of the block is comparable to many standard sized residential blocks in other areas of the Central Coast, suggesting that the logic of an area based levy for a non-commercial block is in error.

The proposed charge fails to recognise the ongoing work that the majority of landholders self-fund to maintain their properties with direct impacts on water quality. Failing to value this activity and levying a dramatically elevated stormwater charge would create a substantial risk that landholder expenditure on these activities would substantially reduce with a consequent negative impact on the environment of the Creek Surrounds and water quality.

I submit, therefore, that the proposal to substantially increase our stormwater charges is manifestly inequitable and unfair. Furthermore, there is a substantial risk that it will impact negatively on the health of the waterway by discouraging landholder expenditure on important environmental conservation activities.

Campbell Tiley and Nicola Tayler

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]