

Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 15 June 2022
Time: 8:30am – 10:30am
Chair: Nick Fewster, Airport Development Group

Location: Northern Australia Conference Room, 1st Floor, Development House, 76 Esplanade
Secretariat: Carmony Leso, Executive Officer – Committees (DEPWS)

Attendees: Jonathan Burcher – *Proxy*
Neal Adamson – *via Teams*
Peter O’Hagan – *Proxy*
Steven Dawson – *Guest*
Timothy Moore

Water Resources Division
Department of Defence (DoD)
Rapid Creek Landcare Group
Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
Community Representative

Apologies Dean McAdam
Jade Leask
Karen Gibb
Lisa Peters

Parks and Wildlife, DEPWS
City of Darwin
Charles Darwin University
Rapid Creek Landcare Group

No.	Item	Action (e.g. Noting / Discussion / Decision)	
	Meeting opened	The Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee (RCWAC) meeting opened at 8:30am	
1	Welcome attendance and apologies	Chairperson, Nick Fewster, opened the meeting and welcomed the members to the 18 th meeting. Apologies were noted from Dean McAdam, Jade Leask, Karen Gibb and Lisa Peters.	
2	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts declared.	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting on 28 March 2022 were circulated to the Committee members prior to the meeting for comments / edits. The minutes were accepted with no further changes.	
4	Actions arising from the previous meeting (28 March 2022)		
	Action	Action Officer	Status / Update
	Land Rezoning Ian Lancaster will draft letters to CoD and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) requesting transfer of the land and send RCWAC members for their approval	City of Darwin	In progress Jade reported that CoD want the land rezoned to conservation as the adjacent block is conservation and that process will take time.
	Gross Pollutant Traps	City of Darwin	In progress

	CoD advised that there were thirteen with limited data		Is on hold due to the wet season. Post wet season Jade will have a discussion with the field staff about how it moves forward and will provide an update at the next meeting.
	Contact DIPL about the patch of natural bush on the detention basin in Rapid Creek that needs maintenance.	Nick Fewster	Ongoing Email sent to Graeme Finch on 18 February 2022
	Follow up on a Larrkia representative to join the committee	Nick Fewster	Complete Steven Dawson was nominated as the Larrakia representative on the Committee.
	Add an appendix to the minutes for the Fire and Weed Management Plans	Carmony Leso	Complete Refer to agenda item 7.
	Put the DEPWS Water Monitoring data into a table for the committee.	Jonathan Burcher	Complete
	Hold an out of session meeting to workshop a report on the DEPWS Water Monitoring data	All members	Complete
	Meet and discuss jointly investing in the CDU Rapid Creek Wildlife Movements Project	Nick Fewster, Jade Leask and the Rapid Creek Landcare Group	Complete City of Darwin have contributed \$20 000 to fund the project.
	Draft and submit a letter on behalf of the committee in relation to the Malak Caravan Park Planning Application	Nick Fewster	Complete
	Send out an updated Rapid Creek Plan of Management Priority Action list to members for their feedback	Nick Fewster	Complete Refer to agenda item 9.1.

5	Correspondence	
5.1	Correspondence out	<p>The following incoming correspondence was tabled at the meeting for noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communique to the Minister • Submission re the Marrara Subdivision <p><i>Discussion: Tim asked if there is the likelihood for the RCWAC to attend the hearing and speak to their submission. Nick advised that he isn't sure but it would be a good opportunity.</i></p> <p><i>Nick advised that he will highlight in the Communique that there is a lack of general awareness in the community about why the Marrara Detention Basin was built.</i></p>
5.2	Correspondence in	<p>The following outgoing correspondence was tabled at the meeting for noting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIPLs response to RCWACs submission re the Marrara Subdivision

6	Natural Asset List	<p>The present committee members undertook an exercise to map out the natural assets in the Rapid Creek Catchment. The following assets were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monsoon Vine Forrest • White Rock area + flood mitigation and high value rec • Cultural importance Larrakia mens area • Paperbark Wetland • Loop Walk • Jingili Water Gardens + adjacent creek corridor and walking paths • 75 hectares of mangroves • Yellow bridge mouth + community recreation focal point • Flood mitigation asset • Paper Bark Swamp and Amy Johnson Culverts – Flood Mitigation / Restrictive Flows • Rapid Creek gauging station • Road and bridge assets • Lead issue behind shooting range <p>The list will be added to by the absent members at a later date.</p>
7	Fire and Weed Management Plans	<p>Nick advised that the Fire and Weed Management Plan appendix will be circulated out of session and members can provide updated plans or ETAs as to when the plans will be finalised.</p> <p><i>Action: Carmony to circulate the Fire and Weed Management Plan appendix to members for updating</i></p>
8 Member Reports on activities		
8.1	Department of Defence	<p>Neil reported that DoD has finished their prescribed burning on RAAF base. DoD are still undertaking their minor fire breaks on the Northern Boundary. Weed spraying was finished a month ago, however there are some issues with weeds being spread in the grassed areas. DoD are looking at extending their weed program to the entire site next year. Hopefully that will mitigate some of the Gamba Grass and Mission Grass concerns.</p>
8.2	Rapid Creek Landcare Group	<p>Peter reported that CoD did a lot of weed spraying along the creek corridor downstream from McMillians Road and back behind the community garden, however it has left a lot of dead grass and flammable material.</p> <p>Peter reported that there is a drain at the back of CDU and water has ponded up by it which is bright luminous green. Not sure what it is (i.e. Algae) but will report it to CDU.</p> <p>Peter reported that in terms of fire management RCLCG are only looking after the spit at the moment.</p> <p><i>Action: Peter to report to CDU about the bright luminous green water around the drain at the back of CDU.</i></p>
8.3	Water Resources, DEPWS	<p>Jonathan reported that he is collating some maps on the water quality monitoring that is going on within the catchment to inform the report that will be developed on the water monitoring that is happening in the</p>

		<p>catchment. There are three organisations involved in the water monitoring – DIA, CoD and DoD. There are many ways the report could be presented. An out of session meeting was held with some of the RCWAC members to discuss what direction this could go in. Jonathan will work on some future pathways for the committee to provide feedback on. It is intended that the committee will drive the direction of the report. The report will be targeted to the general public who have a more direct interest in the catchment. It won't be a highly detailed technical report, it will be a combination of a technical report and a public report.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Nick advised that a sub-committee has been formed to work on the report which is made up of CDU, ADG, DoD and CoD as the main data providers. The sub-committee will continue to report back to the RCWAC. The sub-committee discussed the idea of sending out a Survey to capture values of the community as that will help to build credibility with how the report is structured. The survey could be developed by DEPWS and circulated out via the RCWAC.</i></p> <p><i>Nick reported that one of the challenges that was identified in the short term was the NTG website and its limitations with displaying the data. Jonathan noted that having a joint data set with all the relevant organisations and making that data available to the public will allow for transparency and will be important going forward. Tim noted that it's best that the publication, any stakeholder engagement and the hosting of it comes from CDU, RCLCG or NTG as ADG and DoD need to be seen as independent stakeholders as they would be seen to have the biggest stake or interest in it.</i></p> <p><i>Jonathan noted that there is a question of how far this report should go in terms of human health or microbiological indicators which can be used to assess human health risk. Tim advised that if it's not included there will be criticism as people want to know if they can swim safely in the Rapid Creek. Jonathan advised that DoH will need to be involved if human health risk data is to be included. Nick advised that the committee will look at what they want to report to meet their objectives as a sub-committee and then look at where the barriers are and they can look at discussing it with DoH. Jonathan noted that there may be some data issues with what is needed to undertake an assessment to come up with management recommendations or recommendations to the public on whether they can swim or whether they should stay out the water for a certain number of days after it rains. Tim advised that putting the water safety issues aside, DoH and DoD have done the work and agreed to the human health risks, it's just a matter of obtaining that data.</i></p>
<p>8.4</p>	<p>Airport Development Group</p>	<p>Nick played a video for the members about the Airport development that is happening - World class destination resort (adgnt.com.au). Nick reported that the hotels are undertaking a big refurb, the Airport acquired the Novotel and the Mercure and are removing the road between them to turn them into one big hotel precinct.</p> <p>Nick reported that the Airport is undergoing a Master Planning phase at the moment and over the next 5 – 8 years there will quite a lot of development which may contribute to increased flows so they are getting Storm Water studies done to look at how they can be managed.</p> <p>Nick reported that the Flora and Fauna survey is complete and Nick will share that with the committee.</p>

		<p>Discussion: Tim noted that the Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee has yet to receive an assurance from the Airport Development Group (ADG) that there will be zero net increase from each development on its own regardless of the Consultant Engineer's reports highlighting an increase that was a negligible impact. Tim advised that each of those negligible increase in flows accumulates to a significant increase. Nick noted that as part of the Master Plan there will be community consultation towards the end of the year and that feedback will be important. Tim advised that a commitment is still sought from ADG that there will be a zero net increase from each development. Nick advised that at the next meeting he can show the Committee some of the preliminary master planning documents.</p> <p>Nick asked if DoD had any defence projects that may or may not have any potential storm water impacts that could be presented on at the next meeting. Neal reported that he doesn't see the projects until they are ready for implementation. Neal advised that all of the larger projects have had a zero net increase in stormwater run-off from any development site. Tim asked if DoD has capacity to provide the details of that to the RCWAC. Neal advised that DoD could potentially do that as long as all the other stakeholders around the table did the same. Nick noted that every organisation has different processes but if something can be put together that shows what is proposed and how it is being managed.</p> <p>Action: Defence and ADG provide future development plans within catchment at next meeting.</p>
8.5	Larrakia Nation	Steven advised that the Larrakia finished up their weed spraying contract with DoD and have been working with the Airport with their weed spraying.
8.6	Community update	Tim reported that one of the final elements of the \$12.5 million Flood Mitigation Strategy has fallen over. The effort was that after 30% of the people on the flood map were taken off the flood map by the building of the detention basin, that those remaining were provided the opportunity to rezone in order to encourage the private market to buy the property for land value only, elevate new property above the flood zone under special use 48 rezoning conditions and build to multiple dwelling densities. Tim advised that the first trial of that was attempted on his block which stacked up financially for the developers but didn't stack up for the land owners. It was also held up at the Ministerial Level as they required an exceptional development permit which didn't happen in the 12 month sunset clause of the contract. There is currently an issue with the NTG approvals process in assessing and approving developments in a timely manner within the rezoned flood areas.
9	Other Business	
9.1	Rapid Creek Plan of Management	<p>Nick tabled the Rapid Creek Plan of Management Action list at the meeting. Nick asked the Committee members how the actions should be structured i.e. by priority. The committee agreed to structure them by priority with three main key priorities and have the actions listed under each priority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fire and Weed Management 2. Inflows 3. Cultural values

		<i>Action: Nick to update the Rapid Creek Plan of Management Action list to reflect the changes discussed at the meeting.</i>
10	Next meeting	The next meeting will be held in September 2022
	Meeting closed	The meeting concluded at 10:30am

Actions arising from the meeting

No.	Action	Action officer	Timeframe
1	Circulate the Fire and Weed Management Plan appendix to members for updating	Carmony Leso	Prior to the next meeting
2	Report to CDU about the bright luminous green water around the drain at the back of CDU	Peter O'Hagan	Prior to the next meeting
3	Update the Rapid Creek Plan of Management Action list to reflect the changes discussed at the meeting.	Nick Fewster	Prior to the next meeting

Appendix A – Weed and Fire Management Plans

Some clarification on reports received is required

Plan	Organisation	Date created	Due for review
Charles Darwin University	Weed Plan	June 2018	?
	Fire Plan	-	-
City of Darwin	Weed Plan	-	-
	Fire Plan	?	?
Darwin Airport Development Group	Weed Plan	2021	2023
	Fire Plan	2021	?
Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics	Weed Plan	June 2020	June 2025
	Fire Plan	-	-
Department of Defence	Weed Plan	-	-
	Fire Plan	2017	?
Parks and Wildlife	Weed Plan	2020	2022
	Fire Plan	2021	?