

Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date:	Thursday	Location:	Territory Conference Room, Ground Floor Development House, 76 Esplanade
Time:	8:30am – 10:30am		
Chair:	Nick Fewster, City of Darwin	Secretariat:	Carmony Leso, Executive Officer – Committees (DEPWS)
Attendees:	Jonathan Burcher – <i>Proxy</i> Karen Gibb – <i>Teams</i> Peter O’Hagan – <i>Proxy</i> Steven Dawson – <i>Teams</i>		Water Resources Division Charles Darwin University Rapid Creek Landcare Group Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
Guests:	Adrian Costar Luke Gosling, MP Neda Vanovac Peter Scott Waugh		Water Resources Division Member for Solomon Luke Goslings Office Water Resources Division
Apologies	Dean McAdam Graeme Finch Lisa Peters Timothy Moore		Parks and Wildlife, DEPWS Capital Works, DIPL Rapid Creek Landcare Group Community Representative

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 19 th meeting. Apologies were noted from Dean McAdam, Graeme Finch, Lisa Peters and Timothy Moore.
2	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts declared.
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting on 15 June 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 Letters were drafted to City of Darwin (CoD) and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) requesting transfer of the land and	City of Darwin In progress Nick reported that CoD are supportive of having the land transferred over to them. The Committee will write to DIPL

	send RCWAC members for their approval. The request is being considered by CoD.		requesting for this to be progressed.
	Gross Pollutant Traps CoD advised that there were thirteen with limited data	City of Darwin	In progress An assessment of gross pollutant traps has occurred across CoD areas within the catchment. This information to support RCWAC discussions on potential future locations and their relevant land tenure
	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
	Circulate the Fire and Weed Management Plan appendix to members for updating	Carmony Leso	Complete Have this on the agenda for the next meeting.
	Report to CDU about the bright luminous green water (fluorescein) around the drain at the back of CDU	Peter O'Hagan	Complete
	Update the Rapid Creek Plan of Management Action list to reflect the changes discussed at the meeting.	Nick Fewster	Complete
5	Urban Rivers and Catchment Program	<p>Luke Gosling attended the meeting to provide an update on the Urban Rivers and Catchment Program. The Urban Rivers and Catchments Program will provide grants for community groups, local and state government to fund projects which deliver improvements to water quality and the local environment, create improved open spaces for kids and families to enjoy and create local jobs.</p> <p>Luke advised that he will definite rely on the RCWAC for advice on how to utilise the funding. The funding will need to be appropriated in the October budget before the funds can be distributed, but there will be more than enough time to make decisions around its allocation.</p> <p>Luke advised that he is flexible as to how the committee wants to provide feedback on the main threats to the catchment – weeds, fire, catchment flows and rubbish.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Nick advised that the committee can provide a document on managing the threats to the catchment and also some of the opportunities. Nick advised that there are also some gaps in biodiversity knowledge in the catchment. Karen reported that biodiversity is a higher order goal for the catchment. There also needs to be information about other components of the catchment such as unimproved scrub as that impacts on the catchment too.</i></p> <p>Action: The committee to pull together information to provide to Luke to feed into the Urban Rivers and Catchment Program.</p>	
6	Correspondence		

6.1	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
6.2	Correspondence in	<p>The following outgoing correspondence was tabled at the meeting for noting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministers response to the Communique • Rapid Creek Rubbish <i>Discussion: Peter reported that the rubbish concern goes beyond the catchment in terms of Gross Pollutant Traps (GPT) on drains as there is hardly any. This is something that needs to be looked at. Nick advised that the installation of GPT needs to be strategic as they are expensive and need ongoing management. Nick advised that with the Urban Rivers and Catchment Program there could be some funding that could go towards this issue. Peter Waugh advised that DIPL are doing work on this at the moment and have talked about installing alternative rubbish collection devices as well as lining some more of the drains. Peter Waugh asked if there has been much consideration on the Water Sensitive Urban Design and using the infrastructure developments to retro fit to improve water quality and flood mitigation high up in the catchment. Nick advised that the focus around Water Sensitive Urban Design has been making sure decision makers and land managers developing within the catchment don't increase catchment flows. Nick advised that RCWAC could work with DIPL on other catchment knowledge and then determine the top 5 areas in Rapid Creek that need GPT.</i> • Marrara Subdivision • Mangrove verge Trower Road to CDU • Savanna Burning Articles <i>Discussion: Karen advised that there are a number of concerns around the Savannah burning particularly in relation to the impact it has on Darwin's air and water quality. Karen asked how the committee could marshal the concerns and arguments around this to get change. Nick advised that as part of the review of the priority actions the committee can consider these concerns and find ways to address them.</i>
7	Rapid Creek Ecosystem Health Monitoring Review	<p>Jonathan Burcher, Adrian Costar and Peter Waugh from the Water Resources Division (DEPWS) attended the meeting to report on the Rapid Creek Ecosystem Health Monitoring Review.</p> <p>Jonathan advised that a sub-committee has been formed to look at the monitoring that is done in the catchment and looking at the potential to integrate the monitoring with other reporting mechanisms i.e. the Darwin Harbour Integrated Report Card (DHIRC).</p> <p>A draft report has been produced with some ideas around where things could head based on the data that is available. The hope is to have a website on Rapid Creek with a report as well as other data. The proposed report provides the basis for justification for any other organisations that may undertake any additional monitoring in Rapid Creek.</p>

		<p>Jonathan reported that there has been some work on environmental DNA (EDNA) and using DNA to identify the species in Rapid Creek. This shows a lot of potential for making the water monitoring more efficient.</p> <p>Jonathan reported that there is a need for centralised data storage as the data around Rapid Creek is held by various organisations so it would be good to get it somewhere secure.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Nick advised that the sub-committee noted that they wanted to check in with what the values are across the catchment to fine tune what parameters are going to be more relevant than others. Nick asked if a letter needs to be sent DHAC or the DHIRC committee asking to be part of the values process for Rapid Creek. Karen advised that it would be good if RCWAC could talk to DHAC and see if a representative from RCWAC could be on the DHIRC sub-committee.</i></p> <p><i>Jonathan asked the committee whether to finalise the report or to write to the DHAC requesting to integrate with the DHIRC and then the Rapid Creek report follows on from that. Nick advised that the report has provided a good function to calm down the messiness of it all and has helped know what the next steps are strategically. There is still more work to be done and he wouldn't want everything to be pulled over into the DHIRC with Rapid Creek under that. Nick advised that it would be good for Jonathon to join in on the discussions around values and then he can determine some of the indicators that can be tested. Karen suggested that RCWAC leads the way in terms of the catchments values and indicators but still works with the DHIRC. Nick asked Karen if she could draft a letter to send to the DHIRC sub-committee advising that the RCWAC wants to address the values gaps in the report card.</i></p> <p>Action: Nick to draft a letter to the DHIRC sub-committee about the values gaps in the DHIRC. Karen to assist Nick with drafting the letter in her capacity as DHAC member.</p>
8	Member Reports on activities	
8.1	<p>Rapid Creek Landcare Group</p>	<p>Peter reported that Casuarina Coastal Reserve has been impacted with arson and other fires this dry season. Casuarina Coastal Landcare Group and Rapid Creek Landcare Group (RCLG) met with Minister Moss and Minister Worden to discuss the issues. Peter will provide some notes from the meeting to the RCWAC.</p> <p>Peter reported that the RCLG had a Management Committee meeting last week and some concerns were raised at the meeting in relation to DIPL and COD's fire and weed management. One of the areas in question was the Detention Basin and the mangrove verge between Trower Road and CDU. Peter advised that the RCLG wants DIPL to advise how they plan on managing the Detention Basin over the wet season. The other area is between McMillians and Trower Road which is COD's responsibility. Nick advised that there have been some change over in contractors which hasn't been a smooth transition so that is why the maintenance is behind.</p> <p>Peter advised that some of the RCLG members have asked where Gamba Grass is in the catchment and if a Gamba specific survey has been undertaken. Nick advised that a piecemeal Gamba surveys has been undertaken, however there are gaps.</p>

		<p>Peter raised a concern around the stormwater drains flowing from Boulter Road as the overflow will end up in the Marrara Swamp. Peter asked who is responsible for the design of the drainage pipes. Nick suggested writing to Graeme Finch asking him for further information about the big pipes going into Boulter Road and what the implications are for catchment flows.</p> <p><i>Action: Peter to provide an update to the committee about the meeting between the Landcare Groups and Minster Moss and Minister Worden on the fire issues they have been experiencing.</i></p> <p><i>Action: Nick to write to Graeme Finch asking him for further information about the large stormwater drains going into Boulter Road and what the implications are for catchment flows.</i></p>
8.2	Charles Darwin University	<p>Karen reported that a master student is writing up a thesis on Vibrio bacteria ecology and one site is Rapid Creek – levels of the bacteria in sediment and Long Bum increased after the January 2022 rains.</p>
8.3	Water Resources, DEPWS	<p>It was reported that a flood monitoring group will be starting up for the wet season. Water Resources Division has a gauging station with levels on it that trigger alarms and the alarms trigger a response from NTES when the levels get to a certain height. The main monitoring activity with a roster commences in November 2022.</p>
8.4	City of Darwin	<p>Nick Fester has commenced in the role of Executive Manager of Environment and Waste Services at City of Darwin. His replacement at Airport Development Group will be commencing soon and will be appointed as a member on the RCWAC.</p> <p>Nick reported that SLR are the consultants undertaking the work for the Fire and Weed Management Plans for CoD.</p> <p>Nick reported that the work around urban biodiversity management has been undertaken in house at CoD.</p> <p>Nick advised that the parcel of land that the committee was lobbying to get rezoned and ownership changed has gone through CoD and they are supportive of it and give support for the committee to write to NTG to get the ownership changed over to CoD.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Peter advised that outside of the mouth of Rapid Creek there is a lot of open area with dead grass. RCLG are going to discuss with CoD about putting a water point down there and possibly starting to plant natives along the mangrove verge. Nick advised that the RCLG put forward a proposal to CoD.</i></p> <p><i>Action: Peter to get the RCLG to put forward a proposal to CoD about installing a water point near the mouth of Rapid Creek</i></p>
8.5	Larrakia Nation	<p>Steven Dawson reported that work is continuing at Darwin Airport.</p> <p>Steven reported that surveys are being under taken along Rapid Creek and Darwin Harbour to collect data.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Jonathan asked if Steven could share the data findings with the committee or with himself.</i></p>
9	Other Business	No other business.
10	Next meeting	The next meeting will be held in November 2022.
	Meeting closed	The meeting concluded at 10:25am.

Actions arising from the meeting

No.	Action	Action officer	Timeframe
1	Collate priority catchment management information to provide to Luke to feed into the Urban Rivers and Catchment Program.	All members	
2	Draft a letter to the DHIRC sub-committee about the values gaps in the DHIRC. Karen to assist Nick with drafting the letter in her capacity as DHAC member.	Nick Fewster and Karen Gibb	
3	Provide an update to the committee about the meeting between the Landcare Groups and Minster Moss and Minister Worden on the fire issues they have been experiencing.	Peter O'Hagan	
4	Write to Graeme Finch asking him for further information about the large stormwater pipes are going into Boulter Road and what the implications are for catchment flows.	Nick Fewster	
5	Get the RCLG to put forward a proposal to CoD about installing a water point near the mouth of Rapid Creek	Peter O'Hagan	

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	2021	2026
	Fire Plan	2021	2026
City of Darwin	Weed Plan	Final draft nearing completion	-
	Fire Plan	Final draft nearing completion	-
Darwin Airport Development Group	Weed Plan	2021	2023
	Fire Plan	2021	2023
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	?