

Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 1 December 2021
Time: 2:00pm – 4:00pm
Chair: Nick Fewster, Airport Development Group

Location: Charles Darwin Centre (CDC), 7th Floor, 19 Smith Street, The Mall, Darwin
Secretariat: Carmony Leso, Executive Officer – Committees (DEPWS)

Attendees: Dean McAdam
Julia Schult
Karen Gibb - *Teams*
Neal Adamson - *Teams*
Peter O’Hagan - *proxy*

Parks and Wildlife, DEPWS
Water Resources Division, DEPWS
Charles Darwin University (CDU)
Department of Defence (DoD)
Rapid Creek Landcare Group (RCLG)

Apologies Lisa Peters
Richard Fejo
Timothy Moore

Rapid Creek Landcare Group
Flinders University
Community representative

Guests Ian Lancaster
Jade Leask
Julia Fortune - *Teams*
Morgan Rickard
Simon Costanzo - *Teams*

Former RCWAC Chair
City of Darwin (CoD)
Flora and Fauna Division (DEPWS)
City of Darwin (CoD)
Darwinian Consultancy

No.	Item	Action (e.g. Noting / Discussion / Decision)
	Meeting opened	The Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee (RCWAC) meeting opened at 2:00pm
1	Welcome attendance and apologies	Chairperson, Nick Fewster, opened the meeting and welcomed the members to the 16 th meeting. Apologies were noted from Lisa Peters and Timothy Moore. Peter O’Hagan attended as a proxy for Lisa Peters. Jade Leask and Morgan Rickard attended the meeting as guests (pending their official appointment to the RCWAC).
2	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts declared.
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting on 8 September 2021 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 (8 September 2021)	
	Action	Action Officer Status / Update
	Land Rezoning	Ian Lancaster In progress

	<p>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</p>		<p>Jade reported that CoD are concerned with the condition of the site and if they were to take it over they would need extensive weed control undertaken and for the land to be rezoned to conservation.</p>
	<p>Gross Pollutant Traps CoD advised that there were thirteen with limited data</p>	<p>City of Darwin</p>	<p>In progress Jade took action on notice and will report back to the RCWAC.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Darwin Harbour Integrated Report Card Update – Data for Rapid Creek</p>	<p>Simon Costanzo from Darwinian Consultancy attended the RCWAC meeting and provided the committee with an update on the Rapid Creek data findings that stemmed from the Darwin Harbour Integrated Report Card (DHIRC).</p> <p>Simon advised that Rapid Creek was identified to have a very poor catchment condition (graded E). The main cause of the catchments condition is due to intensive uses.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Julia Schult noted that these statistics are purely based on land use categories and doesn't take into account real pollution that comes in from different areas i.e. urban surrounds, the Airport etc. Ian commented that the catchment might be the most intensively used but the creek itself is in quite good condition. However, it still needs to be considerably looked after due to the extreme pressure in land use.</i></p> <p><i>Neal asked if there is any potential for there to be further assessment undertaken on the impacts to the catchment as there are areas of the catchment in the airport and surrounding areas that aren't intensively used. Julia Fortune advised that the data set that the statistics draw from is a land use data set for the whole of the Darwin region. The data is dependent on the annual update of that dataset. Karen asked who is responsible for updating the dataset. Julia Schult advised that the department has taken on the responsibility and some of the work that is being done on mangrove monitoring capture land use which should be able to be incorporated.</i></p> <p><i>Julia Schult advised that the land use mapping is not regularly updated by the department and what is updated is only a small section. Julia noted that this indicator also shows what the risk is from land use and having an Airport in the catchment is a risk. How that risk is managed is indicated by water quality and other indicators, not just land use.</i></p> <p><i>Neal asked if the solar farms at the airport and RAAF Darwin have been calculated. Simon advised that he will discuss this offline with Neal.</i></p> <p><i>Dean asked what the Darwin Harbour Report Card frequency will be. Simon advised that it is expected to be an annual frequency and if it's not a report card each year, something will be released each year to keep momentum. Karen noted that significant others will be approached to discuss governance, ownership and funding models in order to keep the report card alive. Karen advised that if anyone is interested in having input into the DHIRC to contact her.</i></p> <p><i>Simon advised that a previous report card in South America that was made included catchment inserts (mini report cards). Nick asked if Simon could send</i></p>	

		<p>through the example of the mini report card inserts and the land use statistics for Rapid Creek.</p> <p>Action: Simon Costanzo to send through the example of the mini report card inserts from South America and the land use statistics for Rapid Creek.</p>
6	Rapid Creek Plan of Management – Action List	
	Issue	Action
	Fire and weed management plans	Lodge with RCWAC
		<p>In progress</p> <p>Plans received from PWC, CDU, ADG, DIPL and PWC. DoD provided Fire Management Plan but still need to finalise Weed Management Plan. CoD still need to provide their updated plans.</p>
	Identify and collate list of natural assets	Create list for communication with authorities
		<p>In progress</p> <p>Refer to agenda item 7.</p> <p>Discussion: Nick asked Peter if a response was received in relation to the letter that was sent from the Casuarina Coastal Reserve and the RCLG to the Minister for NTPFRS. Peter advised that he will have to check with CCR but he doesn't think a response has been received. Nick advised that perhaps it could be included in the committees Communique to the Minister.</p> <p>Action: Include communication issues with Ministers offices in the Communique.</p>
	Monitor Land Development to ensure inflows are controlled	Discussion re recent or intended developments
		<p>Nick suggested to have a speaker from the Northern Territory Government attend the next meeting to present on the flooding and mapping around the Rapid Creek Catchment, how the detention basis is performing, and the expectation of net zero increases in flows into the catchment and what the basis is in terms of flooding.</p> <p>Action: Invite representatives from DIPL to the next RCWAC to present to the committee on flooding and mapping around the Rapid Creek catchment.</p>
	Drainage Infrastructure Plans	Lobby asset holders
		DIPL has a draft Asset Maintenance Plan and RCWAC needs to put more pressure on DIPL to get the plan finished.
	Review of catchment biodiversity	Investigate options
		<p>Long term project. The committee will need to look for opportunities. Ian suggested a PhD Student undertake a review of catchment Biodiversity.</p>
	Review of catchment vegetation	Investigate options
		<p>No vegetation mapping has been done in the catchment for a number of years. It is an opportunity for PhD Students' to undertake a review.</p> <p>ADG and DoD provided their Flora and Fauna Survey Reports to the committee.</p>
	Reporting of Water Quality	Investigate options
		<p>Long term project. It is a good idea but there are all sorts of issues with it in terms of how you report, where you report and what to report etc.</p>

			CoD and ADG have provided Storm Water Reports to the committee.
	GPT reinstatement	Lobby asset holders	
7	Natural Asset List	<p>Due to time constraints the committee didn't get to collate an asset list. This item will be carried over to the next meeting.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Peter reported that there is a patch of natural bush left on the detention basin which needs to be looked after. Ian advised that it is the responsibility of DIPL.</i></p> <p><i>Action: Contact DIPL about the patch of natural bush on the detention basin in Rapid Creek that needs maintenance.</i></p>	
8	Member Reports on activities		
8.1	Rapid Creek Landcare Group	<p>Peter reported that the RCLG have been relatively quiet as their work is seasonal, but due to the rain they will need to undertake spraying, working bees and brush cutting.</p> <p>The RCLG attended the Eco-Fair out at Fred's Pass over the weekend.</p> <p>The RCLG have been having ongoing issues with Boulter Road and the lack on erosion controls. RCLG have requested information in relation to their sediment and erosion control plans and the weed management plan.</p> <p>Peter advised that RCLG has a MOU with Parks and their volunteers are now deemed workers when on Parks, and as such are required to comply with the mandatory vaccination requirement.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Nick asked Peter if a response was received in relation to the submission RCLG put in for the rezoning of the Malak Caravan Park. Peter advised that the planning application for the Caravan Park had been approved and as such the land would be rezoned for development. Peter advised that the RCLG will provide a submission in relation to the development application.</i></p>	
8.2	City of Darwin	<p>Jade reported that CoD are looking at starting the weeds program shortly as well as fire considerations for 2022.</p> <p>Morgan thanked the committee for having him and advised he looks forward to working with the committee once his appointment is official.</p> <p>Morgan requested to receive previous minutes and other relevant documents being discussed to ensure he is across everything.</p> <p><i>Action: Carmony to send previous meeting minutes and other relevant documents to Jade and Morgan upon their appointment to the Committee.</i></p>	
8.3	Parks and Wildlife	<p>Dean reported that a lot of the work happening on Casuarina Coastal Reserve is being driven by volunteers and the Landcare Group. CCRLG has a group of people that are going to adopt a spot and do some Gamba control work complementary to what the Gamba Army is doing. The Adopt a Spot area is from Rapid Creek through to Lee Point (Buffalo Creek) and the outlier areas are where the CCRLG will undertake the work.</p> <p>Dean reported that the CCRLG received a \$50,000 Community Benefits Grant to undertake weed control work in Casuarina. Parks and Wildlife will meet with CCRLG to determine where that work will be undertaken.</p>	

		<p>Dean reported that the weeds program is gearing up again, some work is happening with CDU and the Botanic Gardens to collect and propagate seeds for planting in a few years-time.</p> <p>Dean reported that a dog was bitten by a crocodile at Rapid Creek, luckily the dog survived.</p> <p>Dean reported that despite COVID, CCR had a 20% increase in visitation over the last 2 years.</p>
8.4	Water Resources Division, DEPWS	<p>Julia reported that due to the departments restructure, the Water Resources Divisions monitoring program has moved to the Flora and Fauna Division and the future of it is a bit unclear. Julia asked if the Committee wanted to write a letter to the department to ask what is happening with the program. The committee agreed to action this.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Nick noted that there is possibly an opportunity for PHD students to undertake some monitoring (water and biodiversity). Karen advised that CDU would need to know who would support the projects, how the students would be supported, what the key questions are etc. Nick suggested that at the next meeting the committee develop a project scope to be promoted via CDU.</i></p> <p><i>Morgan asked if maybe there could be a citizen science option, especially through the Youth Program at CoD. Nick advised that a Strategy be developed first and then see what options for citizen science come out of that.</i></p> <p>Action: Nick to write a letter to the department of behalf of the Committee regarding the future status of the Water Resources Division Monitoring Program.</p> <p>Action: The committee to develop a project scope for possible CDU PHD students to undertake some monitoring in the catchment.</p>
8.5	Airport Development Group	<p>Nick reported that ADG received funding from Tourism to develop its outdoor event areas. ADG met with Larrakia Nation and the Larrakia Rangers on culturally appropriate positioned seating and pathway upgrades. The project will be going ahead in March and April 2022 and will include signs, pathways and seating.</p>
8.6	Department of Defence	<p>Neal reported that DoDs weed program is up and running but it is concentrating on their Rangers.</p> <p>Neal reported that the releasing of the hydrostatic test water from the fuel tanks has commenced. Originally it was going to go to ground for infiltration but will now be going into the sewer under an agreement with Power and Water. There will be no impact to Rapid Creek.</p>
8.7	Charles Darwin University	<p>Karen reported that CDU have a master student looking into Fibrio occurrence in shellfish during certain times of year. Karen will share the results with the committee.</p> <p>Karen reported that a CDU staff member – Steven Garnett, has been looking into setting up a project to look at bird movement between the Rapid Creek vegetation and surrounding suburbs. Karen asked if members would be interested in looking at his proposal. The committee advised they would be happy to look at the proposal when it is complete.</p> <p>Action: Karen to send through Steven Garnett's proposal to the committee</p>
9	Other Business	Mandatory Vaccination Requirement

		<p>Nick reminded members that it has been determined by the department that the committee is subject to the CHO Directions 55 and that all members are to be fully vaccinated by 24 December 2021. Any members not vaccinated will not be permitted to attend a meeting in person.</p> <p>Nick advised members to ensure their proof of vaccination is sent to Secretariat.DEPWS@nt.gov.au as per the correspondence from the department.</p>
10	Next meeting	The next meeting will be held in late February / early March 2022.
	Meeting closed	The meeting concluded at 4:10pm

Actions arising from the meeting

No.	Action	Action officer	Timeframe
1	Send through the example of the mini report card inserts from South America and the land use statistics for Rapid Creek.	Simon Costanzo Carmony Leso	Prior to the next meeting
2	Include communication issues with Ministers offices in the Communique.	Nick Fewster	Prior to the next meeting
3	Invite representatives from DIPL to the next RCWAC to present to the committee on flooding and mapping around the Rapid Creek catchment.	Nick Fewster	Prior to the next meeting
4	Contact DIPL about the patch of natural bush on the detention basin in Rapid Creek that needs maintenance.	Nick Fewster	Prior to the next meeting
5	Send previous meeting minutes and other relevant documents to Jade and Morgan upon their appointment to the Committee.	Carmony Leso	Prior to the next meeting
6	Write a letter to the department of behalf of the Committee regarding the future status of the Water Resources Division Monitoring Program.	Nick Fewster	Prior to the next meeting
7	Develop a project scope for possible CDU PHD students to undertake some monitoring in the catchment.	All members	At the next meeting
8	Send through Steven Garnett's proposal to the committee.	Karen Gibb	When available