

Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date:	7 December 2023	Location:	Arnhem Plateau Meeting Room, 4 th Floor, Goyder Centre, 25 Chun Wah Terrace, Palmerston
Time:	9:00am – 11:00am	Secretariat:	Parul Chandel, A/Executive Officer Committees, DEPWS
Chair:	Nick Fewster, City of Darwin		
Attendees:	Julie Kean Proxy for Dean McAdam Jonathon Burcher Katina Croft – <i>Teams</i> Nicola Stromsoe – Proxy for Karen Gibb Peter O’Hagan – Proxy for Lisa Peters Julie Whiting	Parks and Wildlife Division Water Resources Division Department of Defence Charles Darwin University Rapid Creek Landcare Group Airport Development Group	
Apologies:	Morgan Rickard Steven Dawson Racheal Curtain – <i>Proxy</i> Timothy Moore Wendy Pengelly	City of Darwin Larrakia Nation Crown Land, DIPL Community member A/Senior Project Officer, DIPL	

No.	Item	Action (e.g. Noting / Discussion / Decision)
	Meeting opened	The Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee (RCWAC) meeting opened at 9:06 am.
1	Welcome attendance and apologies	Chairperson, Nick Fewster, opened the meeting and welcomed the members to the 24 th meeting. He provided an Acknowledgement of Country. Apologies were noted from Lisa Peters, Morgan Rickard, and Steven Dawson.
2	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts declared.
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting on 29 September 2023 were circulated to the Committee members prior to the meeting for comments / edits. The minutes were accepted with a minor change of date.
4	Actions arising from the previous meetings	
	Action	Action Officer Status / Update

<p>Land Rezoning Small parcel of land to the north-east of Henry Wrigley Bridge.</p>	Nick Fewster	<p>In progress City of Darwin is working with DIPL to acquire the parcel of land.</p>
<p>Gross Pollutant Traps Assess additional gross pollutant traps for the catchment</p>	Nick Fewster	<p>In progress Has been added as a priority for the Urban Rivers Program. Nicola discussed the several types of funding streams that are needed.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise and clarify with Emily Raso from Landcare on how the federal funding (Round 2) sits compared to NTG funding (Round 1) and timing. • DIPL to give a report back to the Committee on information regarding gross pollutant traps at the next meeting.
<p>NTG Contractor weed control Key land areas under the contract with prolific weed growth.</p>	Wendy Pengelly	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Scope of works for relevant weed contracts.
<p>Boulter Road Stormwater Pipes Ask DIPL for further information about the large stormwater pipes and the implications for catchment flows.</p>	DIPL rep	<p>Completed Racheal advised that 1.5-diameter storm water pipes have been put underground in the Boulter Road area, and there are no implications for flows to Rapid Creek.</p>
<p>Stormwater management Policy Provide an update on any Defence policies that relate to / support no net increase in environmental flows from developments.</p>	Katina Croft	<p>In progress Katina advised that DoD Policies are Australia wide and the policy states that DoD are to look at the impact of flows, it doesn't say they can't be increased. However, the unofficial Policy in Darwin is to aim for no increase in flows. The projects are planning retention basins and GPTs on the areas that need them. The aim is to retain the water for 4 hours after peak flows. Katina will provide a further update at the next meeting.</p> <p>Katina asked Nick to clarify exactly what information he required. Nick asked for the local instruction to commit to no net increases in stormwater flows post Rapid Creek catchment developments.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katina will provide draft wording before the next meeting.

	Circulate the Darwin Water Ways Project Proposal to the Committee	Carmony Leso	Completed
	Include in the Communique to the Minister the Committees concerns around the Darwin International Airport 2023 Master Plan.	Nick Fewster	Completed
	Write a letter to Airport Development Group providing feedback on the Darwin International Airport 2023 Master Plan	The Committee, facilitated by Nick Fewster	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Katina will provide draft wording before the next meeting.
5	Darwin Harbour Report Card Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jonathan provided an update on mangroves and urban canopy cover in Rapid Creek. More work needs to be done to improve reporting for the Rapid Creek Science Committee to develop water quality indicators for the future Current water quality monitoring is insufficient. Additional monitoring will be needed. The report card is due for publishing around September or October 2024. The group discussed the importance of highlighting actual data about the creek's health and biodiversity rather than potential risk model of existing report. It was noted government acts are being revamped and will be publicly available through DITT. The goal is to build a holistic picture from different data sources for harbor reporting. This is difficult without proper monitoring. The Rapid Creek website on NTG's website needs updating. Some members indicated an interest to contribute data for the report card, however agreements would need to be in place for this to occur. Nick emphasized the need to be clear about how the data will be used and interpreted. <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jonathan will arrange a meeting in the New Year with Nick and other members to discuss adding monitoring sites. 	
6	eDNA results	<p>Jonathan informed the committee of the results summarized in the information sheet. The goal was to optimize eDNA techniques. A community of practice has been established and is actively pursuing projects involving eDNA sequencing. This represents a step forward for enabling more detection at this time of year. The data indicates the optimal time of year for sampling, as well as the type and number of replicates needed.</p> <p>The data is unprotected and will be shared via an information sheet. Nicola asked about potentially expanding the site and Jonathan suggested studying it for a year first. Work was underway to standardize bioassay procedures using these emerging techniques. The hope is that in five years these will be used as tools to monitor biodiversity health. Further genomic sequencing will differentiate species.</p> <p>Action:</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parul to Scan and send the information sheet to all members regarding eDNA techniques. Forward Julie's contact details to Jonathan Burcher.
7	Correspondence	
7.1	Correspondence in	<p>The following incoming correspondence was tabled at the meeting for noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Darwin Harbour Water Catchment Waterways Project update and Proposal document circulated.
7.2	Correspondence out	<p>The following outgoing correspondence was tabled at the meeting for noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communique #7 to the Minister <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Stormwater management policy regarding post development net increases in stormwater Weed management policy regarding Gamba Grass Fire management policy and fire response coordination Water quality monitoring and reporting for Rapid Creek
8	Member Reports on activities	
8.1	Rapid Creek Landcare Group (RCLCG)	<p>Peter from RCLCG discussed the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish dying in Rapid Creek due to low tide and poor water quality from drains. Power and Water sewage lines have not been cleaned for some time, leading to potential pollution issues. During recent community clean-up days, Rapid Creek residents collected 320 kg of waste materials. Events were promoted via social media and flyers. 335 hours of voluntary conservation work logged. Concerns raised about fire damage to vegetation along City of Darwin Land from McMillan Rd to Henry Wrigley Bridge during the dry season, causing erosion. Suggestions made for improved firebreaks, drainage and weed control.
8.2	Parks and Wildlife (PW)	<p>Louise reported on the completion of the fire season and the transition to the wet season. She discussed land transactions to fix boundaries and facilitate land swaps with CDU. Louise also mentioned Sandy Creek behind the hospital in relation to flooding. She discussed the stormwater drain from the hospital property, which floods across walking tracks behind the hospital during storm events. It was noted that the drain was terminated at the property boundary, meaning the walking tracks receive the full brunt of the hospital's stormwater runoff. This has resulted in significant erosion and sedimentation issues. As part of the Urban Rivers program, the committee agreed to explore options for improving drainage and reducing impacts in this area.</p>
8.3	City of Darwin (CoD)	<p>Nick updated the group that the City of Darwin is implementing a drain cleaning program to remove sediment build-up from storm drains. He noted some stormwater pollution concerns originating from the Rapid Creek Markets, including poor clean-up practices and grease residue. City of</p>

		Darwin and the EPA have liaised with the markets management to encourage better maintenance and waste management procedures.
8.4	Department of Defence (DoD)	<p>Katina reported that a project on Defence land has discovered some contamination in close proximity to a tributary to Rapid Creek and we are working with them to ensure the contamination is removed as does not impact Rapid Creek. More information will be provided if needed but at this point there is no indication that it impacted Rapid Creek. Defence also currently has another round of water quality monitoring commencing and once the results are known we can provide further updates if there is anything relevant to the Rapid Creek catchment.</p> <p>New drainage into Rapid Creek installed, initial stabilization complete. Some water from creek observed flowing onto airfield, it will be monitored closely as this could pose issues. Runway team to take necessary precautions during ongoing works.</p>
8.5	CDU	Nicola updated that the CDU engineering department expressed interest in submitting an application to construct a wetland on campus. The wetland would help manage stormwater and improve drainage flows across campus. Peter noted that the property management team can assist in identifying boundaries, as Nick advised that City of Darwin can provide assistance. Jonathan inquired about potential funding sources for the project.
8.6	Airport development group	Julie provided an update on the hotel, upgrades and improvements, such as the concreting of the pathway of Rapid Creek Reserve to make it wheelchair accessible.
9	Other Business	No other business was discussed.
10	Next meeting	The next meeting will be held in late February / early March 2024.
	Meeting closed	The meeting concluded at 10:50 am

Actions arising from the meeting

No.	Action	Action officer
1	Liaise and clarify with Emily Raso from Landcare on how the federal funding (Round 2) sits compared to NTG funding (Round 1) and timing.	Nick
2	DIPL to give a report back to the Committee on information regarding gross pollutant traps at the next meeting.	DIPL
3	Provide Scope of works for relevant weed contracts.	Wendy
4	Katina will provide draft wording before the next meeting - Stormwater management Policy.	Katina
5	Jonathan will arrange a meeting in the New Year with Nick and other members to discuss adding monitoring sites.	Jonathan
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scan and send the information sheet to all members regarding eDNA techniques. Forward Julie's contact details to Jonathan Burcher. 	Parul

