

Rapid Creek Water Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 8 September 2021
Time: 2:00pm – 4:00pm
Chair: Ian Lancaster

Location: Arafura Meeting Room, Development, House, 1st Floor, 76 Esplanade, Darwin
Secretariat: Carmony Leso, Executive Officer – Committees (DEPWS)

Attendees: Dean McAdam
Jade Leask – proxy
Neal Adamson
Nick Fewster
Peter O’Hagan – proxy

Apologies: Julia Schult
Karen Gibb
Lisa Peters
Richard Fejo
Timothy Moore

Parks and Wildlife, DEPWS
City of Darwin (CoD)
Department of Defence (DoD)
Airport Development Group (ADG)
Rapid Creek Landcare Group (RCLG)
Water Resources Division, DEPWS
Charles Darwin University (CDU)
Rapid Creek Landcare Group
Flinders University
Community representative

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, Ian Lancaster, opened the meeting and welcomed the members to the 15 th meeting. Apologies were noted from Julia Schult, Karen Gibb, Lisa Peters, Richard Fejo and Timothy Moore. Peter O’Hagan attended as a proxy for Lisa Peters. Robin Knox resigned her position on the Committee on 31 August 2021. Jade Leask attended as the proxy for the CoD.	
2	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts declared.	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting on 7 May 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 (7 May 2020)		
	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	Ian Lancaster	In progress No response received from CoD. Jade reported that CoD are looking at the management implications and will get back to the RCWAC soon.

Gross Pollutant Traps Robin was advised that there were thirteen with limited data, and agreed to follow this up with the CoD	Robin Knox	In progress Jade took action on notice and will report back to the RCWAC.
Rapid Creek Plan of Management Put forward suggested amendments to the Plan	Ian Lancaster	Complete
Fire and Weed Management Plans Contact DIPL, CoD and CDU for an update on where their Weed and Fire Management Plan are up to.	Ian Lancaster	In progress

5 Rapid Creek Plan of Management – Action List

Issue	Action	Status / Update
Fire and weed management plans	Lodge with RCWAC	Plans have been received from CDU and Crown Land. Ian to send Carmony the Fire Management Plan from CoD. Action: DoD, Parks and DIA to send through their plans to Carmony.
Identify and collate list of natural assets	Create list for communication with authorities	RCWAC to identify natural assets for their list for prioritisation for management by the NT Fire and Rescue Group. The committee agreed that the spit and Marrara Swamp should go on the list. The committee agreed to make this an agenda item for the next meeting and everyone provide a list of assets for collation prior to or at the next meeting. Discussion: Dean noted that a map of Casuarina Coastal Reserve (CCR) which has environmental assets listed on it was given to NT Fire and Rescue but it wasn't made a priority. Dean will send the asset list to Carmony. Peter reported that CCR and RCLG met with Firies in 2019. CCR and RCLG co-signed a letter in March 2021 about fire issues and wanting to arrange a another meeting and sent it to the Minister for Police, Fire and Rescue, who has sent it to the Minister for Environment, who then sent it to the Minister for Parks and it has been bouncing around since. Ian advised that more engagement directly with NT Fire and Rescue is required. Action: All members to provide a list of assets for collation prior to or at the next meeting
Monitor Land Development to ensure inflows are controlled	Discussion re recent or intended developments	The committee agreed to discuss this at a later date.
Drainage Infrastructure Plans	Lobby asset holders	CoD are reviewing their assets and will report back to the committee at the next meeting.

			<p>DIPL has a draft Asset Maintenance Plan and RCWAC needs to put more pressure on DIPL to get the plan finished.</p> <p>Action: CoD to report back to the committee about CoDs assets</p>
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> <p>Discussion: Nick advised that DIA has had Flora and Fauna surveys done and Nick will share the report with the committee. The surveys are done every 5 - 8 years across the whole Airport site but includes Rapid Creek.</p> <p>Neal reported that DoD do extensive Flora and Fauna surveys etc. which can be sent to the committee.</p>
Review of catchment vegetation	Investigate options		<p>No vegetation mapping has been done in the catchment for a number of years. It is another opportunity for PhD Students' to undertake a review.</p> <p>Action: Nick and Neal to provided 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> <p>Discussion: Jade advised that CoD reports 3 times over the wet season and they have 12 storm water sampling sites. If the committee wanted to add a site in the specific CoD area they can. There is a map of CoD Stormwater infrastructure which is on the CoD website on the open data - Stormwater (arcgis.com). CoD will share where they are sampling.</p> <p>Nick advised that he will also share the latest stormwater report to the committee and what the parameters are of what is being monitored in the catchment and their sites.</p> <p>Action: CoD to provide stormwater sampling sites to the committee. Nick to provide Storm Water Report to the Committee</p>
GPT reinstatement	Lobby asset holders		Already discussed.

6 Member Reports on activities

6.1	Parks and Wildlife	Dean reported that Parks has been working with the RCLCG for the fire season. There have been 18 wildfires this year (so far). The 2019 fires have caused broad scale damage across the reserve which everyone is observing and writing in about. In terms of the catchment, there isn't much going on.
6.2	City of Darwin	Jade reported that CoD manages the whole Rapid Creek area, both the conservation and Jingili on their weekly service delivery. This service includes path maintenance, rubbish removal and minor vegetation maintenance. There is a wet season program for weed management which

		has been contracted and will run for 6 – 8 weeks. The only fire management undertaken by CoD is weed management and fire breaks.
6.3	Water Resources Division, DEPWS	<p>Julia Schult was an apology for the meeting. Julia emailed a brief update to the Committee prior to the meeting. A gauging station has been installed at the Rapid Creek detention basin and water level data can now be seen online - Data - The NT Water Data Portal</p> <p><i>Discussion: Peter asked where the gauging station is. Ian advised that it is in the Stilling Basin and he thinks it would be right in the drain.</i></p>
6.4	Department of Defence	<p>Neal reported that there has been no activity having a major impact on Rapid Creek recently. The US Fill Farm had a potential to have an impact; they are building 2 x 8 million litre tanks of portable water. DoD will be undertaking hydrostatic testing of those tanks during Sept and the wanted to dispose of the water in the stormwater network. Infiltration was the preferred method to get rid of it. DoD sought advice from CoD, NTG and NTEPA about what their requirements were for the disposal. It was determined it would be infiltrated over a large area of land.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Peter asked if that is the infrastructure that can be seen from Bagot Road. Neal advised that is the main hardstand upgrades. Additional hardstands are being added for additional aircraft parking which requires excavation and concrete.</i></p>
6.5	Darwin Airport	<p>Nick reported that DIA has undertaken a controlled burn with the Larrakia Rangers which went well. There have been 3 fires since Monday that were deliberately lit. Fire and Rescue did a back burn behind the airport as a fire break but two additional fires erupted.</p> <p>Nick reported that there are major road works happening at the airport. DIA has purchased both the Novotel and the Mercure Hotel, both of which will be upgraded, but first the road network is being updated. 30 September 2021 is the deadline for completion. One of the roundabouts being put in which is closest to Rapid Creek, is right up against the edge of Henry Wriggley Road so the water flow from that will go into a basin before being discharged out through the CoDs riparian area and then will eventually go into Rapid Creek. There will be some major silt control to ensure no silt goes into the riparian area.</p> <p>Nick reported that DIA is looking at removing the Mecure BBQ area and creating something larger with equal opportunity access to get down to the reserve area. It would push into the reserve but not into any vegetation. The idea is to have a large event area for workshops or gatherings etc. There will also be a smaller area for smaller gatherings.</p> <p>Nick reported that DIA has submitted a grant application for the Larrakia Rangers to develop a more in-depth cultural resource for the area so people can learn more about Larrakia that anyone can deliver i.e. Hotel Staff, Rangers, Tour Guides, Teachers etc.</p>
6.6	Rapid Creek Landcare Group	<p>Peter provided an update to the RCWAC which was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting. Update is at Attachment A.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Ian advised that there is no erosion sediment control on either of the blocks on Boulter Road – block 1 is more of a concern as if the erosion and sediment isn't managed it will all end up in the wetlands. Ian advised that they</i></p>

		<i>have until September to have their controls in place before the RCWAC takes action against them.</i>
7	Other Business	Ian reported that he will be resigning as Chair of the RCWAC and will not be staying on as a Committee member. He might chair the next meeting if the department can't find a new replacement otherwise he will send his letter of resignation to the Minister.
8	Next meeting	The next meeting will be held in late November 2021
	Meeting closed	The meeting concluded at 3:30pm

Actions arising from the meeting

No.	Action	Action officer	Timeframe
1	Send Carmony the Fire Management Plan for City of Darwin	Ian Lancaster	Prior to the next meeting
2	DoD, Parks and DIA to send through their plans to Carmony	Neal, Dean and Nick	Prior to the next meeting
3	Put the Natural Asset List on the agenda for the next meeting	Carmony	For the next meeting
4	Provide a list of assets for collation prior to or at the next meeting	All members	Prior to or at the next meeting
5	Report back to the committee about CoDs assets	CoD	Prior to the next meeting
6	Provided Flora and Fauna Survey Report to the committee	Nick and Neal	Prior to the next meeting
7	Provide stormwater sampling sites to the committee	CoD	Prior to the next meeting
8	Provide Stormwater Report to the committee	Nick	Prior to the next meeting

Attachments

Attachment A

Report to RCWAC Meeting 15, 8 September 2021

For members information

Focus on the Lower Catchment Project

- At The Spit continued monitoring of grass and weeds, no gamba, some mission and buffel grass, some caltrop, khaki weed and merremia.
- Working bees to reduce grass and weed fuel load resulted in Parks not being required to do a fuel reduction burn this dry. Brush cutting and hand pulling was undertaken and fuel bagged and removed from the site. Keeping the fuel load down this coming wet season will again be a priority.
- Three working bees done, December and two in January specifically to clean up coffee bush new and regrowth along the mangrove verge from the creek mouth to Trower Road. This will need to be an ongoing annual activity.

Other activities/issues

- The 2020/21 financial year saw a lot of meetings, working bees and volunteer engagement. There were 167 individual attendances by members and supporters resulting in 376 hours of volunteer work.
- Submissions made to development applications at 1 Boulter Road Berrimah twice and attendance at hearings, then Marrara Caravan Park rezoning.
- Two Clean Up Australia events were undertaken at the mouth of Rapid Creek with the Clontarf Foundation, 60 and 25 students respectively. This area is generally well maintained so not a lot of rubbish collected, another event planned for the Marrara sports precinct was washed out.
- Ongoing issue of what appears to be deliberately lit bush and grass fires in the catchment. Ian attended an onsite meeting with Police and Fire Services on 23/4/21 organised by Nick Fewster (DIA).
- RCLG's upgraded website has received favourable feedback and has resulted in many contacts and enquires from the wider community and some new members.
- The RCLG Management Committee met on 30/9/20, 2/11/20, 18/1/21 and 1/5/21, meetings minuted.
- RCWAC meetings attended 10/9/20, 19/2/21 and 7/5/21.
- RCLG members have attended working bees for Casuarina Coastal Reserve Landcare and Lee Point Gamba mapping and eradication.
- Ongoing and regular liaison with Landcare NT.
- Presentations to school projects Anula Primary (on site) and Essington School
- Participated in Walkshop organised by Top End STS and the Northern Institute 24/6/21
- Meeting with Minister Lauren Moss and Sally Egan Executive Director Parks 17/7/20
- Site meetings:
 - Parks 30/9/20, 22/10/20, 16/11/20 and 28/3/20
 - CoD 20/1/21
 - Landcare NT 19/11/20 and 14/5/21
 - Minister Selena Uiibo and CCR Landcare 19/10/20