Project Support Officer Report – November 2015 for Central West Local Land Services

In the period since the last Project Support Officer Report there has been a great deal of Alliance activity across the Central West Local Land Services region in order to successfully engage with Local Government. The details of these works and activities are listed below.

Multi-Agency Stormwater Capacity Building Group

As detailed in the May report, the Project Support Officer has been engaging with other State Government Agencies to form a Multi-Agency Stormwater Capacity Building Group. This has led to some strong relationships being formed and resource sharing across agencies. It is envisaged that this will lead to direct benefits for Alliance member councils in the future as opportunities, resources and learnings from related agencies are passed on.

NSW Environmental Trust – Environmental Education Program

An expression of interest was submitted to the NSW Environmental Trust's Environmental Education Program for a proposed project titled Youth Stormwater Champions. The expression of interest was unsuccessful with some positive feedback from the Trust regarding the project around the concept with some suggestions for modifications to make the application more appealing in the future.

It is envisaged that should the Alliance member councils be supportive, the application will be resubmitted in the new year with required modifications.

Environmental Health Australia – 40th National Conference

The Alliance Project Support Officer submitted an abstract to the Environmental Health Australia – 40th National Conference titled Implementing Water Sensitive Urban Design in Central West NSW – The Barriers to Success. The abstract was successful and subsequently the Project Support Officer presented to this conference on Thursday 22 October, 2015. This was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the Alliance and the work that we are achieving across the Central West of NSW, as well as to further raise the profile of the environmental health issues surrounding stormwater management.

Environment & Waterways Alliance Facebook Page

The Environment & Waterways Alliance Facebook page is now live with a total of 86 'likes' at the time of writing. This page is proving to be a successful means of raising the profile of the Alliance and its member councils across the Central West of NSW and further afield with many posts reaching a national or international audience. The page can be viewed at: https://www.facebook.com/Water.Quality.Alliance

Central West Councils Environment & Waterways Alliance

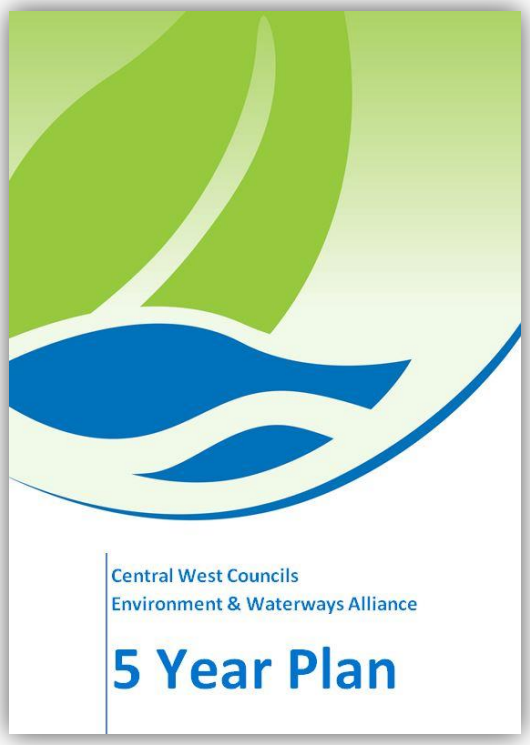
At an Alliance meeting held in Dubbo in July, it was agreed upon by the members present that the Alliance should change the operating name to better reflect the current values and objectives of the

group. This is not the first name change for the Alliance which was formed in 2000 under the banner of Salinity Action Alliance.

In 2007 the group elected to change the name to the Central West Councils Salinity & Water Quality Alliance. Since this time the needs and focus of the group have continued to develop and evolve. Much of the work of the Alliance is now based around broad environmental issues across the region with a focus on waterway health and riparian corridors.

As such, it was considered that the name should once again be changed to better reflect the current direction and priorities of the group. It was considered that the new title of Central West Councils Environment & Waterways Alliance succinctly describes the current and future direction of the group.

As part of the development of the new name it was decided that a new branding package was required. Along with a new logo has been the development of brand guidelines including standard colours and fonts as well as templates for a range of documents.



Environment & Waterways Alliance 5 Year Plan

The key guiding document for the Alliance is the 5 Year Plan which was last updated in July 2013. This plan has been a feature of the Alliance since 2009 with annual updates ensuring its currency.

With the existing Salinity & Water Quality Alliance 5 Year Plan having been in existence for more than 5 years, and with major changes to the Alliance boundaries and directions since the cessation of the CMA model leading to the introduction of Local Land Services, it was decided that the 5 Year Plan should be completely revised.

A planning meeting was held in Dubbo on 17 July, 2015 where new Priorities and Goals were set for the Alliance, with a series of Strategies and Actions drafted. These Strategies and Actions have now been linked to the Local Land Services Strategies within tables in the 5 Year Plan and form the basis of the future works for the Alliance over the coming year.

As has been the case in the past, the plan will be reviewed annually allowing for the Strategies and Actions to remain current and in keeping with the requirements and goals of the member councils, as well as the supporting Local Land Services regions.

Environment & Waterways Alliance Website

The Central West Councils Environment & Waterways Alliance website is now live. The development of this website has taken several months and significant time investment to ensure that the content is current, appropriate and accurate. The website is comprised of two main areas, a public access area and a members only area.

The public access section of the website includes information about the Alliance including contact details, current and past Alliance projects, a news blog including media releases, videos, grants & awards information, upcoming events details, and State of the Environment reports.

The Members Area is available to be accessed by member councils of the Alliance. This area contains Alliance documents such as meeting minutes and agendas, reports and presentations, resources including templates, guidelines and fact sheets as well as information regarding the CRC for Water Sensitive Cities and the Contamination Central project.

It is envisaged that the website will become the primary repository of information for Alliance members. Over time the site will grow to have a large range of fact sheets, case studies and other documents that will be a great source of information and knowledge sharing.

The website can be viewed at: http://www.cwcewa.com.au

Stormwater 2015 – Stormwater Best Management Practice Conference

The Environment & Waterways Alliance partnered with the Orana and Central West branches of Institute of Public Works Engineers Australasia (IPWEA) in October to host Stormwater 2015 – Stormwater Best Management Practice Conference. It was considered that this partnership was the best means of actively promoting the event to, and engaging with engineering and technical works staff from across the Alliance region.

The event was held in Dubbo on Friday 18 September, 2015 at the Caltex Park Function Room and attracted 43 participants from local government and private consultancies. A conference dinner on the Thursday evening attracted 24 attendees and was sponsored by local engineering and development firm Geolyse. This provided an opportunity for networking in an informal setting leading into the conference the following day.

The conference began with a series of five local stormwater best management practice case studies being presented from representatives of Alliance member councils.

Following this session, Nerida Taylor presented on the Blacktown City Council Water Sensitive Urban Design Capacity Building Program and how this could

translate to smaller, regional councils. Natalie Payne, Co-President of Stormwater NSW, concluded the second session of the day with information about Stormwater NSW and a questionnaire process to gain a greater understanding of how this industry body can better work with regional councils to achieve best management practice stormwater outcomes.

The final session of the day was an interactive workshop facilitated by Rod Wiese, Director of Storm Consulting. This session provided participants with an opportunity to understand the impacts of urbanisation, appreciate the benefits of stormwater management and to consider alternative techniques. The day concluded with a site visit to Keswick Estate in Dubbo to see firsthand the stormwater challenges associated with this development site.

Stormwater 2015 has generated significant positive publicity with the event being featured in the Stormwater Australia Bulletin Edition 219:
http://www.cwcewa.com.au/blog/2015/10/20/stormwater-2015-conference-featured-in-national-stormwater-industry-publication

Additionally, the Alliance has been advised that an article regarding the conference will feature in the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Showcase Journal due to be released in late November.

CRC for Water Sensitive Cities

The Alliance continues to maintain membership of the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities which provides our member councils access to the cutting edge research being produced by this research cooperative.

The Project Support Officer attended the CRC for Water Sensitive Cities Conference in Brisbane during September. The conference featured presentations on current research projects as well as completed research outcomes. Additionally, there were many case studies presented regarding the research outcomes being implemented into on-ground projects. This has provided some great insight into how projects can be implemented within our region.

Central West Local Land Services Incentive Funding

The NRM for Local Government incentive funding was open for application recently with applications closing Friday 13 November, 2015. Funding of up to $8,000 was made available to member councils of the Alliance within the Central West Local Land Services Region. A total of eight applications were received with five grants to be awarded.

It is anticipated that the assessment process and awarding of incentive funding will be completed prior to the end of the year with projects to commence in the new year.

Fact sheets for each of these projects will be developed and distributed through the Alliance website: http://www.cwcewa.com.au

Environment & Waterways Alliance 5 Year Plan & Website Launch Event

The Alliance held an event on Friday 6 November, 2015 to launch the new 5 Year Plan and Website. Minister for Local Government, the Hon Paul Toole MP was present to officially launch the event with a Mayoral Welcome provided by Bathurst Regional Council Mayor, Cl. Gary Rush, as Bathurst Regional Council hosted the event.

More than 20 guests were present to hear presentations from Paul Toole MP, Murray Wood – Chair of the Alliance and Director of Parks & Landcare at Dubbo City Council, Reg Kidd – Board Member of Central Tablelands Local Land Services and Jane Chrystal – Manager Strategic Land Services, Central West Local Land Services.

The launch was a great success with media coverage from several newspapers as well as WIN News Central West. To view the story: https://www.facebook.com/431557963627074/videos/853732448076288/?hc_location=ufi

International Water Sensitive Urban Design and International Erosion Control Association National Conference

Diana Kureen - Senior Strategic Land Services Officer – Local Government, Central Tablelands Local Land Services and Michael Chambers - Environmental Officer, Parkes Shire Council presented at the International Water Sensitive Urban Design and International Erosion Control Association National Conference in October, 2015.

The presentation was titled Concrete or Plants? – Erosion and Sediment Control Using WSUD Principles. Parkes Shire Council had a serious stormwater issue at a major intersection with the Newell Highway where their conventional stormwater management solutions had failed, resulting in severe erosion and sediment accessing the local receiving water.

Parkes Shire Council is a member of the Central West Councils Environment & Waterways Alliance and therefore took advantage of this membership to request advice on how to remediate the situation. The result was a 'greener' solution which employs WSUD techniques and has been vastly more successful than the failed concrete based solution previously implemented.