

**PROJECT SUPPORT OFFICER REPORT**

**for**

**Central Tablelands LLS Region – May 2015**

**All activities undertaken in line with the Salinity & Water Quality Alliance 5 Year Plan which identifies Councils Community Strategic Plans actions that support and overlap with the outcomes identified in the Central Tablelands LLS Transitional CAP**

**(It is intended that the 5 Year Plan will be reviewed once the Central Tablelands LLS Strategic Plan is finalised)**

## General Business

The Project Support Officer has been active in a range of works to ensure that the Alliance remains relevant and supportive for the member Councils. Together with the Central Tablelands LLS’s Senior Strategic Land Services Officer – Local Government, the Project Support Officer has been engaging with other State Government Agencies to form a Multi-Agency Stormwater Capacity Building Group. A key focus of this group is to share the positive work being achieved by each agency as well as to create some consistency across NSW in regards to this stormwater capacity building work.

A round of sediment and erosion control training has been completed in early May with sessions aimed at Council staff as well as the building industry. Unfortunately, there was little support from the building industry but a strong turnout from the Councils. This training is considered to be contributing to a range of Alliance Targets and Actions surrounding waterway health and minimisation of pollution.

An expression of interest has been submitted to the NSW Environmental Trust’s Environmental Education Program for a proposed project titled Youth Stormwater Champions. If successfully funded the project would see a group of up to 20 Year 10 students from across the Alliance region participate in a series of workshops related to best practice stormwater management. The program would produce a range of education material including television and cinema advertising and would culminate with the students presenting to their peers at the Youth Eco Summit in Sydney in 2016. One stormwater educational event would be held in each participating Council’s LGA.

An abstract has been submitted to the Environmental Health Australia – 40th National Conference titled Implementing Water Sensitive Urban Design in Central West NSW – The Barriers to Success. Should the abstract be successful and the Project Support Officer is invited to present to this conference it would be an opportunity to promote the Alliance on an International stage.

The Salinity & Water Quality Alliance Facebook page is now live giving the Alliance a presence on social media. It is envisaged that this page will primarily be used to promote environmental events and success stories for the Alliance and each of the member Councils. An Alliance web page is also in the preliminary stages of development with a full communications strategy to be developed.

A Hydraulic Conductivity Testing Kit has been put together by the Project Support Officer for the purpose of measuring the rate at which water moves through filtration media of installed raingardens. This kit will be available for use by Councils with raingardens / biofiltration systems installed which will provide hard evidence as to the functionality of these systems once installed. Additionally, the Alliance has purchased 10 Hamilton Tree Planters – 5 Forestry Tube & 5 Hiko – for use by member Councils.

## Orange City Council

Orange City Council has successfully completed their Civic Centre car park raingarden project. This project has proven to be a great example of collaboration across various departments within Council to produce a functional raingarden that ties in with the existing landscaping in this area. An interpretive sign for this raingarden is currently being produced and should be installed on site in coming weeks. Wayne Gailey and Shahreen Alford presented to the March Reference Group Meeting regarding this successful project.

The Project Support Officer worked with Orange City Council Officers to perform Hydraulic Conductivity Testing on the raingarden. The results will provide a baseline measurement for future performance and functionality testing and fell within the expected range showing that the filtration media is performing as expected.

Additionally, Roger Smith is working to implement the Rifle Range Creek Project with Soil Conservation Service engaged to install two leaky weirs within the creek. It is envisaged that this work will assist in stabilising the creek banks, reducing stormwater velocities and maintaining water in the landscape for the associated revegetation works which have already begun.

#### Actions:

* Provide Orange City Council with an educational sign for installation at the raingarden project.
* Pursue funding opportunities to implement an Urban Waterways Management Plan for Orange City Council.
* Sustain communications with Roger Smith to ensure that the Rifle Range Creek project is proceeding and to review leaky weir designs prior to works beginning.

## Blayney Shire Council

The major upcoming project for Blayney Shire Council is the Pound Flat project at Carcoar where funding has been sourced through the NSW Environmental Trust to conduct woody weed removal and rehabilitation works on the Belubula River. While the Alliance is not directly involved in this project, it meets Targets and Actions from the Alliance Five Year Plan and as such supports the CTLLS Strategic Targets.

The Blayney Stormwater Treatment Wetland was constructed with Alliance funds through the Water Sensitive Urban Design Implementation program. This project represents a very basic ephemeral wetland designed to slow down and treat stormwater prior to entering Farm Creek which flows into the Belubula River. Significant effort has gone into ensuring that this project has been done as economically and environmentally consciously as possible with re-use of logs and local rock in the construction as well as transplanting of sedges and rushes.

The Project Support Officer has worked with Blayney Shire Council to purchase a range of wetland plants for increasing the density of vegetation within the wetland. The plant delivery occurred in the first week of May with plans for the planting to proceed shortly after.

#### Actions:

* Ensure planting of wetland plants for the Farm Creek Wetland project goes ahead.
* Sustain communications with Brian Parker regarding the Pound Flat project and any support that can be provided.

## Lithgow City Council

Following several meetings as well as other correspondence Lithgow City Council has elected to become a member of the Salinity & Water Quality Alliance. Further work is now required from the Project Support Officer to understand the potential projects, opportunities and constraints within the region and to provide relevant support to see successful on-ground works being implemented.

#### Actions:

* Arrange site tour with Lithgow City Council to better understand existing issues, funding opportunities etc.
* Ensure Alliance agreements are signed and completed correctly.

## Cabonne Shire Council

Communications with Cabonne Shire Council have primarily been related to the Youth Stormwater Champions grant application. Additionally, a discussion was held with Clayton Miller regarding the potential for Central Tablelands LLS support to continue the works on Molong Creek and extend this project to the Bell River. At present project planning for the 2015/16 financial year and onwards is occurring with potential for partnerships to be established once final LLS targets are set.

#### Actions:

* Continue seeking funding opportunities to assist the environmental works being completed by Cabonne Shire Council.

## Oberon Council

Following an introductory meeting with Oberon Council the Project Support Officer has put together a range of LLS brochures for Council to display as requested. Additionally, site visits have shown the potential for several stormwater management projects that would contribute to the amenity of the township as well as the water quality entering receiving waters.

#### Actions:

* Arrange on-site meeting with Gillian Salmon to investigate the potential for a raingarden in the car park behind the supermarket as well as to workshop ideas for the NSW Environmental Trust Restoration & Rehabilitation project.
* Deliver assorted brochures to Gary Wallace.

## Bathurst Regional Council

The Project Support Officer is working with a range of staff from Bathurst Regional Council to see on-ground environmental works being delivered. A key project dating from early CMA days has been the Sawpit Creek development associated with the Sawpit Creek rehabilitation works completed. At present this is in the design phase with a range of WSUD features to be incorporated including biofiltration swales and stormwater wetlands.

Stage 2 of the Adventure Playground is also in the planning stage with preliminary designs being prepared. Issues have arisen at this project relating to the reuse of stormwater for use in the adjacent toilet block. The Project Support Officer is liaising with Council and a representative from the Office of Environment & Heritage in order to find a suitable outcome that can see this project proceed. Initial contact has been made with representatives from NSW Water to understand how to proceed this project.

Advice and direction for Bathurst Regional Council’s new Environmental Programs Coordinator has also been given to assist in the successful implementation of two NSW Environmental Trust grant funded projects.

#### Actions:

* Maintain communications with key staff to ensure positive WSUD outcomes for the Sawpit Creek development.
* Continue facilitating communications between NSW OEH and Bathurst Regional Council to see stage 2 of the Adventure Playground Stormwater Treatment Train reach fruition.
* Provide support as required for the Racing to Save the Mount Panorama Woodlands and Restoring Regent Honeyeater Habitat projects to proceed.

## Mid-Western Regional Council

Mid-Western Regional Council has discovered populations of endangered plants within their LGA that have been cause for some management concerns. Some preliminary work has been done to research these plants and to better understand their ecology to assist with appropriate management.

#### Actions:

* No on-going actions at present.

## Cowra Shire Council

Currently the Project Support Officer is working with Cowra Shire Council to provide advice on retrofitting detention basins within the LGA to incorporate WSUD principles. At present one detention basin is being signalled as a trial site with options to include a National Tree Day planting or similar events.

Additionally, options are being considered for riverbank rehabilitation works to Council managed areas of the Lachlan River where issues include bank erosion caused by concentrated stormwater flows and woody weed issues.

During a recent visit to Cowra the Project Support Officer provided a stormwater presentation to the local Natural Resource Management Group.

#### Actions:

* Assist with development of vegetation plan for detention basin retrofit project.
* Use Chardonnay Hills Estate in Cowra as an example of best practice management for stormwater in new developments.
* Seek funding opportunities for river rehabilitation works.