

PROJECT *Snapshots*

2000/01 Total Pollution Exports from Catchment

Over the last 12 months the equivalent of almost 300 five tonne tip trucks full of soil has been washed off our streets in the upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust into Sydney Harbour and enough fertiliser to fertilise about 100 football fields for the next three years.

We need your help to protect the Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour by keeping the stormwater gutters clean and reporting to council any building sites with no sediment controls.

Tales of Toongabbie Creek



Image from Tales of Toongabbie Creek brochure.

The Trust and Parramatta City Council have just completed a project collecting historical recollections from the local community about Toongabbie Creek. The memories and photographs have been compiled into a brochure. For a copy please contact the Trust.

Environmental Education Kit

Are you at school or university and interested in finding out more about your local environment?

The Trust has just engaged Oz GREEN to develop an environmental education kit for secondary schools in the upper Parramatta River catchment. This kit will provide all the information and photographs you will need to complete your assignment on the local environment. By June 2002 the kit will be in all local high schools, local libraries and on the Trust's website. To find out more please call Jaki Edwards at the Trust.

Western Sydney Water Festival



Over 7,000 people attended the second 'Western Sydney Water Festival -Carnivale' in Central Gardens, Merrylands on Sunday 14 October 2001 as part of Water Week celebrations. The community helped us to find a name for our eel, played the Stormwater Wheel, searched for water bugs and learnt all about how to care for the local environment.

Sydney Harbour Catchment Management Board – Catchment Blueprint

The upper Parramatta River catchment forms the upper reaches of the Sydney Harbour catchment. The Sydney Harbour Catchment Management Board has just released their Catchment Blueprint that will establish the strategic direction for the management of natural resources in the catchment. To find out more ring the Board on 9895 5965 or visit their website www.dlwc.nsw.gov.au/cmb/sydneyharbour.

Update on Multi-use Recreational Pathways

The creeks of the upper Parramatta River catchment form a network that links Merrylands, Castle Hill, Parramatta and Blacktown. As a way of increasing the community values of creeks, the Trust, with the assistance of the RTA, engaged a consultant to look at opportunities to build pathways along local creeks. The consultant has come up with an impressive network of possible pathways for use by cyclists, walkers, parents with prams, and people with limited mobility. This 'Multi Use Recreational Pathway' plan will be on public exhibition from Monday 19 November 2001 to Monday 10 December 2001.

For information on your nearest exhibition location, please call Frank on 02 9891 4633.

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Sierra Place Flood Retarding Basin at West Baulkham Hills Opens

On 1 November 2001 the Hon Richard Amery MP, Minister for Land and Water

Conservation and Minister for Agriculture officially opened the enlarged 'Sierra Place Flood Retarding Basin' on Toongabbie Creek at West Baulkham Hills.

Enlargement of this flood retarding basin was completed at a cost of \$1.2M and completes a major part of the 'Upper Toongabbie Creek Flood Mitigation Strategy'. The Department of Land and Water Conservation and the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust funded the works.

The work involved increasing the volume of water the basin would temporarily hold during a flood event. This work included raising the main basin wall by 2.5m, raising and extending a secondary wall and modifying the basin's culvert (outlet). These works will help protect over 300 homes in the Toongabbie area and make other flood retarding basins downstream such as the McCoy Park Flood Retarding Basin more effective.

As well as its flood mitigation benefits, the project has many other features, including a bush regeneration program to control riparian weeds, modifications to make the basin easier and safer to



The Minister with Wayne Merton MP, State Member for Baulkham Hills planting a native tree as part of the Sierra Reserve revegetation program.



The Minister with George Whitehouse, Chair of the Trust walking along the newly constructed wall of the Basin.

maintain, a new and improved playground for the local children and completion of the missing link of the regional cycleway network.

This project is a major milestone in the Trust's and the local councils' efforts to protect the catchment community from major floods. Since the Trust started in 1989 the number of flood liable homes has been reduced by 40%, with a 65% reduction for business premises. However we still have a lot of work to do to protect the remaining flood affected properties and maintain that level of protection.

The Trust would also like to thank the residents of West Baulkham Hills for their patience during construction of the basin.

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Trust Joins WSROC to Promote Water Sensitive Urban Design in Western Sydney

Water sensitive urban design aims to change the way we use water in our urban areas and can include:

- rainwater tanks,
- minimising impervious areas,
- water efficient appliances,
- water pollution traps,
- infiltration and filter strips, and
- on-site detention.

The Trust has joined with the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and the Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils to co-ordinate a water sensitive urban design 'capacity building' program for western Sydney in 2002.

This program will complement and support the Trust's efforts to reduce stormwater pollution and limit flood risks.

We will be working with council, builders and developers to develop a better understanding of water sensitive urban design and how it can be implemented in western and southwestern Sydney.

The WSUD capacity building program for western Sydney was launched at a major seminar held at the Holroyd Centre in Merrylands on Friday 9 November 2001. Speakers included leading WSUD practitioners Michael Mobbs (Sydney), Tony McAlister (Brisbane), Peter Coombes (Newcastle), Dr Mike Mouritz (Wollongong), Meredith Laing (Newcastle) and Peter Morison (Blacktown).

For more information on water sensitive urban design visit http://www.uprct.nsw.gov.au/sustainable_water/sustain_home.htm

Green Corridor Project Highlights

The Green Corridors program is a partnership between the Trust and the four councils in the catchment to restore native vegetation along creeklines in the Upper Parramatta River Catchment.

Current projects include:

Toongabbie Creek at Westmead:

Parramatta City Council is removing climbing weeds from ancient Blue Gums and Grey Gums growing on the banks of Toongabbie Creek from Oakes Road Toongabbie to Briens Road, Westmead.

Hunts Creek at North Rocks and North Parramatta:

bushland in Lake Parramatta reserve is now 90% free of primary weeds such as lantana and privet. The next stages of weed control to be done by Parramatta City Council over the next three years will prevent the return of problem weeds. With Trust assistance Baulkham Hills Council is also regenerating bushland in the vicinity of Northam Drive Carlingford, which is the start of the Hunts Creek corridor.

Sophia Doyle Reserve at Baulkham Hills:

Baulkham Hills Shire Council has engaged bush regenerators to work with the Sophia Doyle Bushcare Group to remove weeds and encourage natural regeneration

of this Threatened Shale Sandstone Transition Forest.

Central Gardens at Merrylands: Over 95% of the weed has now been removed from this reserve and native regeneration has been excellent. Holroyd City Council will soon install a viewing platform and information boards.

Blacktown Creek at Prospect: Blacktown City Council has continued regeneration of a Cumberland Plain Woodland remnant between the Great Western Highway and Myrtle Street. Almost 5000 trees and shrubs have more than doubled in size in 12 months with a very high survival rate.



Photographs taken in Central Gardens at Merrylands in 1993 and 2001 show this significant changes that have occurred since the regeneration program commenced.



Aerial photograph of Lake Parramatta

Hunts Creek Catchment Crawl

One of the water quality problems in Lake Parramatta is sewage pollution. The sewage can come from leaking private and main pipes, illegal connections to the stormwater system and designed overflow structures.

Each year Sydney Water fixes many problems to prevent sewage pollution from entering our waterways. However many of the smaller problems occur in the pipes on private property.

To help find out where the sewage pollution is coming from in the Hunts Creek Catchment (Hunts Creek flows into Lake Parramatta), the Trust with support from Sydney Water held the 'Hunts Creek Catchment Crawl' on Friday 19 October 2001.

Super sleuth students from Cumberland High School, Burnside Primary School, James Ruse Agricultural College and Tara School for Girls helped in an intensive water quality sampling program. The results of the sampling will help to give a detailed picture of water quality throughout the catchment. This will help us identify where sewage pollution is coming from so we can find ways to help fix the problem and make Lake Parramatta suitable for swimming by the year 2005.

How you can help:

- Report mains sewer blockages immediately to Sydney Water on 131 090
- Repair damaged private sewer pipes quickly using professional plumbers
- Don't plant large trees close to clay sewer pipes as roots can damage the pipes causing leaks.

Water Week 14-21 October 2001

Lee Lau the Trust's Water Quality Officer was out and about spreading the Water Week message to protect, conserve and enjoy our local waterways.

Arthur Phillip High School, Mathew Pearce Public School, Jasper Road Public School, Old Bert Public School and Seven Hills Public School all went down to their local creeks to see what water bugs they could find and learn all about water quality. Looking for water bugs is a really practical way of showing local children how things that we do in our homes, parks and streets can have an impact on water quality.

A student from Seven Hills Public School search for water bugs in Blacktown Creek

