

PROJECT *Snapshots*

Big Changes Soon to OSD Policy

The catchment's On-site Stormwater Detention (OSD) policy is about to change significantly. OSD has been required on all new developments in the catchment since 1991 to ensure that downstream flooding is not made worse. A typical OSD system is shown below.



The new OSD policy will reduce creek pollution and bank erosion by limiting site runoff in the full range of storms - not just 100-year floods. It will also filter the runoff water to remove finer pollutants. At the same time, the volume of stormwater that must be temporarily stored, and hence the cost of OSD, will be significantly reduced.

Consultants have commenced revising the Trust's OSD Handbook to reflect the new OSD policy. It is hoped that the new OSD policy can start early next year.

Warning Signs in Flood Retarding Basins

With all the dry weather in recent months, it is easy to forget that floods can still happen. In this catchment there are 17 big flood-retarding basins along our creeks. These basins store water during heavy rains to help reduce the risk of flooding homes downstream. All these basins lie on public land or golf courses and, because they are dry most of the time, they are often used as playing fields or for other forms of recreation. Warning signs, such as the one shown, have been erected within the basins or at the entry points to larger



basins like the one at Loyalty Road at North Rocks. Water levels can rise rapidly in the basins during heavy rain, creating a hazard for anyone in the basin. It is very important that you leave any basin area as soon as it starts to rain.

Strong Trust Support for Water Sensitive Design

As the drought continues and water restrictions are tightened, the Trust and the local councils are leading efforts to promote water saving through Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD).

A series of WSUD demonstration projects being managed by the Trust are nearing completion. The WSUD project at Model Farms High School in Baulkham Hills was launched at a ceremony at the school on 26 May 2004. It includes vegetated filters and swales to treat and capture polluted runoff for irrigation; and rainwater tanks that collect roof runoff for toilet flushing. An aged housing development in Pioneer Street, Seven Hills, and the Homeworld 4 display office at Kellyville, both with extensive WSUD features, are nearing completion.

As well, WSUD design guidelines and technical specifications for use by western Sydney councils and designers were launched recently at Blacktown City Council.

Over 150 people attended the 2004 Sydney WSUD Seminar at Bankstown Town Hall on 5 August to hear of recent WSUD developments, with a tour of various WSUD demonstration sites the next day.



Finally, a detailed economic evaluation of the three local WSUD demonstration sites is now underway to identify and calculate all of the costs and benefits of WSUD.

Lower Darling Mills Creek Rehabilitation Nears Completion

Baulkham Hills Shire Council and its contractors recently completed extensive rehabilitation works along Darling Mills Creek, between Lodore Place in Northmead and Speers Road in North Rocks. This section of creek was badly obstructed by vegetation and sand, causing bank erosion and damage to adjacent private properties. Works carried out include channel reshaping, bank stabilisation, local drainage adjustments, landscaping and revegetation. Council will ask local residents to help revegetate the creek banks. Council and the Trust have



shared the cost of over \$300,000.

Water Experts Focus on Lake Parramatta - Pollution and Solution

A recent study by researchers from the University of NSW suggests that ducks are the main reason why the water in Lake Parramatta is not fit to swim in. The University's Professor Nick Ashbolt and Dr David Roser addressed the Trust recently on this work. The Trust has endorsed a follow-up study by the researchers to confirm the main sources of pollution, assess their risks to

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Major Climate Change Study to Start

As Sydney's record-breaking dry spell continues, the Trust will soon engage CSIRO to carry out a major study to better predict the severity of floods and droughts in the future as a result of climate change. The study will refine predictions from computer models of the earth's atmosphere down to a smaller scale and shorter time frame that can be used to assess likely impacts in a catchment like ours. Similar studies elsewhere suggest that there will be less rain overall and longer, drier droughts. But when big rainstorms do occur they will be more severe.

The study will cover much of western Sydney and surrounding areas, take 3 years to complete and cost \$1M. The Australian Greenhouse Office and CSIRO will meet most of the study's cost, with the Trust and nearby Catchment Management Authorities contributing the balance.

New Michigan Road Bridge to Relieve Flood Threat

Blacktown Council has just completed a new \$385,000 bridge over Grantham Creek at Michigan Road in Seven Hills. The bridge will protect 30 nearby homes from major flooding. It replaces an undersized culvert identified as a flood threat last year by one of the Trust's flood studies of outstanding flood problem areas. The NSW Government and the Trust have helped fund the new bridge.



Caption: New bridge recently completed over Grantham Creek in Seven Hills

New Trustees Come on Board – Presentations to Retiring Trustees



Bob Junor, reappointed Chairman of the Trust.

Following the March local council elections and receipt of nominations, a new Trust board has been appointed. Four new councillors join the 12-person board. They are Cllrs John Dinnie and David Bentham (nominated by Baulkham Hills Council), Cr Paul Barber (Parramatta Council) and Cr Mark Pigram (Holroyd).

Trustees re-appointed are Bob Junor (Chairman) and Axel Tennie (both nominated by the Minister for Natural Resources), Lois Gray (Minister for Planning), Pam Smith (Minister for the Environment), Cr Maureen Walsh (Parramatta); Crs Kathie Collins and Barbara Gapps (Blacktown) and Cr Alan Ezzy (Holroyd).

At the new Trust's first meeting on 25 June

Community gets greener with latest grants

Five schools and a community group in the catchment will be a whole lot greener this year after receiving a Greener Schools and Community Grant. The Trust provides the grants to schools and community groups who want to establish or extend green, native plant gardens and corridors within their school or local park. Applicants can apply for up to \$5,000.

Projects ranging from sensory gardens to education programs were nominated for funding under the Trust's annual Greener Schools and Green Corridors Community Group grants scheme. Please contact Peter Morison at the Trust for further information on the grants scheme.

2004 a presentation was made to Cr Larry Bolitho, a Trustee since 1989, and Cr Chris Worthington, a Trustee since 1995.

This Issue

- Major Climate Change Study to Start
- New Michigan Road Bridge to Relieve Flood Threat
- New Trustees Come on Board – Presentatons to Retiring Trustees
- 2004 Environmental Awards
- Project Snapshots

Regional Environment Awards 2004

The 2004 Regional Environment Awards were held on Thursday 3 June at Old Government House in Parramatta Park. The awards celebrate and recognise local schools, community groups and individuals that are caring for and helping to improve their local environment. The awards cover the four catchment councils, Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Holroyd and Parramatta.

Diamond Winner

The winner of the prestigious 2004 Diamond Award was Greystanes Creek Management Committee from Toongabbie. The group has been working along Greystanes Creek, between Oklahoma Avenue and Memphis Crescent, for the past 10 years. Its main focus has been replanting and preserving native trees along the banks of the creek. Since 1999 members of the group have planted well over 20,000 trees which has greatly increased habitat for native birds and animals.

Neil Johnson, President of the Group said, "The group has been working at this for such a long time, but we never expected to receive such an award. Its really a great honour to receive it. Thanks to the Trust and Holroyd Council for their support".

Category Winners

Individual

16-year-old Zac Gazzard from North Rocks was the winner of the 2004 Overall Individual Achievement Category. Zac has worked with Baulkham Hills Council on a project to spot and reduce the number of wild foxes within the area and encourage native animals back. He also started the local bushcare group and runs tree planting days in Excelsior Reserve.



Neil Johnson with Maree Costigan congratulated by Tanya Gadiel MP for winning the 2004 Diamond Award.

Education

Carlingford West Public School was the winner of the 2004 Overall Education category prize this year. Teachers and students have been busy surveying, planning and planting their school playground over the past year. They realised that many of their larger native trees were beginning to suffer. So the students suggested that gardens should be built around the trees. A teacher at the school, Jane Lodge, said "We have put in a great deal of work, but it is the students that have been driving everything. Our whole school community is really supportive of all the work we do, which is exciting."

Council Winners

Baulkham Hills Shire Council

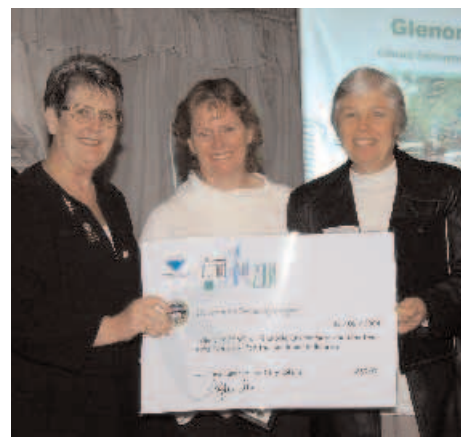
- Education Carlingford West Public School for the Carlingford West Nature Gardens project.
- Individual Zac Gazzard for the Fox Monitoring and Bush Regeneration project.
- Community Glenorie Environment and Creative Arts Centre.



Zac Gazzard with Mayor of Baulkham Hills Shire Council Sonya Phillips



Jane Lodge from Carlingford West Public School with Michael Richardson MP.



Patricia Swartz and Gay Derriman from Glenorie Environment and Creative Arts Centre with mayor Sonya Phillips.



Students from St Andrew's College with Blacktown Mayor, Cr Leo Kelly.

Blacktown City Council

- Education St Andrews College, Marayong, for the regeneration of St Andrews College.
- Individual Martin O'Reilly for his work with the Blacktown District Environment Group.
- Community Friends of Grantham for the restoration of Grantham Heritage Park.

Holroyd City Council

- Education Cerdon College, Merrylands, for the Cerdon Environment Group.
- Individual Matthew Sanderson of Greystanes for his work in Alpha Park.
- Community Greystanes Creek Management Committee for its work along Greystanes Creek at Toongabbie.

Parramatta City Council

- Education – Catherine McAuley High School, Westmead, for its wetland regeneration project



Matthew Sanderson with Mayor of Holroyd Cr John Brodie.



Martin O'Reilly with Blacktown Mayor, Cr Leo Kelly.



Tanya Gadiel MP and Lord Mayor of Parramatta Julia Finn with Shaun Nichols from Catherine McAuley.



Wayne Olling from Friends of Grantham, winners of the Blacktown Council Community category with Michael Richardson MP.

- Individual – Neil Rogers for his work with the PDC Landcare Group.
- Community The Periodic Detention Centre (PDC) Landcare Group for its Toongabbie Creek Restoration project.

OSD Award

The Regional Environmental Awards this year again included an award for Excellence in On-site Stormwater Detention (OSD). The award reminds us that urban development has an impact on the natural environment. Uncontrolled development means more pollutants are washed into our creeks, creek banks are eroded and people living downstream are flooded more often. The catchment wide OSD policy requires new developments to hold back stormwater for a short time during heavy rain to slow the flow to the creeks to a more natural rate.

The winners of the OSD Excellence Award for 2004 were Mr Steve Arraj and Mr Giorgio Bucci of the Rosehill-based engineering consultancy Haddad Khalil Mance Arraj Partners. Their OSD design for a large apartment complex in a steep valley at Castle Hill, provided a meandering rock-lined channel to cater for any overland flows from upstream, as well as an above ground basin to temporarily store rainwater falling on the site.



Lord Mayor of Parramatta Cr Julia Finn with Craig Osland from the Periodic Detention Centre.