

UPPER PARRAMATTA RIVER  
CATCHMENT TRUST

# Streamline

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## Trial shows how to protect creeks from spills

Equipment designed to protect creeks in the Upper Parramatta River catchment in the event of polluting spill, was successfully tested on Thursday 20 October 2005. The trial involved staff from the NSW Fire Brigades, Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust and Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Holroyd and Parramatta Councils.

On Greystanes Creek at Toongabbie, specially manufactured aluminium panels were quickly installed in brackets on the upstream side of the Station Road Bridge to trap pollutants being carried downstream.

Then, at Tucks Road in Seven Hills, a rubber bag was inflated inside a stormwater pipe to stop oil, or other polluting liquids, from this industrial area flowing into nearby Toongabbie Creek. Both sites have had serious chemical spills in the past.

Both pieces of equipment are temporary barriers to contain pollutants until relevant authorities can remove and dispose of the spilled material.

The equipment is stored locally for quick deployment. It complements devices already carried by the NSW Fire Brigades' HAZMAT teams.

Dr Stephen Lees, Executive Officer of the Trust, said: "This trial is another example of what can be achieved when local and state authorities work together. As well as leading efforts to reduce the flood risk to the community, the Trust is also co-ordinating steps to improve stormwater and protect the health of our waterways."

For more information please contact the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust on 9891 4633 or visit the website [www.uprct.nsw.gov.au](http://www.uprct.nsw.gov.au).

The Trust's Chairperson, Bob Junor and Executive Officer, Stephen Lees, inspect Duck River, which will benefit from rehabilitation works to be carried out by the new CMA.

## Trust to Merge with CMA

The State Government has decided that the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust will merge with the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (CMA), which has just been established.

The Trust's service charge is expected to wind down at the end of next year when the catchment's last three major flood mitigation projects are due to be finished. Other Trust activities will be completed, wound up or transferred in the lead up to the merger. Subject to ongoing funding, the new CMA will maintain the Trust's key flood mitigation assets, systems and services. The Trust's Chairman and Executive Officer recently had separate meetings with the Mayors and General Managers of the four local councils in the catchment to discuss how to deal with the changes.

New aluminium barriers (left) and an inflatable rubber bag (right) purchased by the Trust will protect creeks and rivers in the event of a polluting spill.

## Flood Works Benefit Scores at North Wentworthville

Scores of flood liable homes in North Wentworthville will be much safer when Parramatta Council completes a major flood culvert beneath Briens Road by the end of this year.

This area at the junction of Toongabbie, Coopers and Finlaysons Creeks has the second largest number of flood-affected properties in the catchment - 35 flooded over-floor in a 100-year flood and 127 flooded over ground.

Costing \$1.7M, the new culvert will lower the 100-year flood level on the western or upstream side of Briens Road by up to 300 mm. It will do so by allowing floodwaters in the remnant billabong west of Briens Road to escape into Finlaysons Creek, as used to happen in the past.

The project is a key element of the North Wentworthville Floodplain Management Plan. This was jointly prepared by Council and the Trust

in 1997/98 and adopted by Council in December 2001. Also as part of the Plan, five severely flood liable homes are being voluntarily acquired by Council. All of the measures are being funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments (one third each) and Parramatta City Council and this Trust (one-sixths each).

Meanwhile, nearby in North Wentworthville, contractors to Sydney Water are finalizing work on the large scour hole that developed immediately downstream of where the Finlaysons Creek lined stormwater channel ends. The scour hole has been reshaped and rock-lined to stop bank erosion that threatened Briens Road.

A new flood culvert on O'Briens Road at North Wentworthville will benefit many homes in the event of a major flood.

# Major Change to Stormwater Detention Policy

The first major change to the catchment's On-site Stormwater Detention (OSD) policy in 14 years was heralded on Tuesday 9 August 2005 when over 200 designers, engineers and developers attended the launch of the Trust's 4th edition OSD Handbook at a seminar in the Holroyd Centre in Merrylands.

OSD is a key strategy used by all four local councils to ensure that new developments do not increase downstream flooding. Until now OSD systems have only detained site runoff in moderate to major storms. However the revised OSD policy requires a two-stage outlet so that site runoff is detained in the full range of storms, from small to very large events. The change

will help reduce erosion of local creeks, the amount of pollution carried to local creeks and the risk of local stormwater drains overflowing. The overall volume of OSD storage required is slightly reduced, but stormwater will be detained more often. The new OSD policy should come into effect later this year when the new OSD Handbook is placed on the Trust's website.



200 people attended the launch of the new On-site Stormwater Detention policy.

## Creek Transformed in Parramatta Park

An innovative project to rehabilitate the previously polluted and unsightly Murray Gardens Creek in Parramatta Park was opened by Tom Uren AO, Chairman of the Parramatta Park Trust, at a ceremony on Thursday 20 October 2005. The Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust, Parramatta City Council and the NSW Stormwater Trust funded the project.

Polluted stormwater from the Parramatta central business district used to discharge untreated into Murray Gardens Creek, spreading rubbish, oil and sediment along this small stream, which is close to O'Connell Street.

The project involved installing two net-type litter traps on the outlet of the pipes to prevent rubbish entering the creek, planting grasses and shrubs on the creek banks to filter the water, and building a timber deck and pergola over the litter traps to improve the area's amenity and access. A hatch in the deck allows easy access to the traps for maintenance. The deck is large enough for school groups visiting this historic and environmentally interesting corner of Parramatta Park.



Chairman of the Parramatta Park Trust, Tom Uren AO inspecting the new platform with Park Ranger, Susan Clunie.

## Local Successes in Keep Australia Beautiful Awards

The Trust's Redbank Track project along Toongabbie Creek, behind the Westmead and New Children's Hospitals, won a Highly Commended award in the Community Services and Facilities category at this year's Keep Australia Beautiful (KAB) awards presented on Thursday 1 September 2005.



## Retrofit to Encourage Stormwater Re-use

The Friend Park Occasional Childcare Centre in Wentworthville will have rainwater tanks installed and plumbed in to supply seven toilets and two external taps.

Holroyd City Council will carry out the works with funding provided by the Trust under its Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) Demonstration Site program to encourage stormwater re-use on individual homes and small public and commercial buildings. Native plants will be established on an embankment adjacent to the irrigated garden to absorb overflow from the tanks and reduce the impact of stormwater runoff.

Pictured presenting or receiving the award are the Hon Pam Allan MP, State Member for Wentworthville and KAB Patron; Felicity Dangerfield, the Trust's Community Relations Officer, the Hon Kerry Hickey MP, NSW Minister for Local Government and Cr Maureen Walsh, Deputy Mayor of Parramatta.

Other local winners at the KAB awards were:

- William Rose School at Seven Hills - a recipient

of a Trust Greener Schools and Community Groups small project grant - won a Highly Commended award in the Metropolitan Schools category;

- Zac Gazzard of North Rocks - the Individual Award winner at the Trust's 2004 Regional Environmental Awards - won the Young Legends prize; and
- Parramatta Council's Moxham's Park project at Northmead - part funded by a Trust Green Corridors grant

- won a Highly Commended award in the Urban Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Renewal category.

Elsewhere, the Western Sydney Aboriginal Landcare Group, the overall winner of the 2005 Regional Environment Award, also won the Silver Award at this year's NSW State Landcare Awards held in Wagga in August. The group was recognized for its efforts to rehabilitate Ropes Creek at Minchinbury.

## FloodSafe tackles Complacency about Flood Threat

A new program called FloodSafe is being developed to address the growing complacency about the flood threat amongst the general community and local councils. Population turnover in the 17 years since the last significant flood means that many people are unaware of the flood risks that still exist in this catchment, despite the good progress made in providing flood protection.

FloodSafe is being developed with a Natural Disasters Mitigation Program grant, and guidance from local councils and SES staff. It will be an ongoing community flood awareness program comprising key messages, briefings for new council staff and councillors, reminders for owners of flood liable properties, signage and newspaper articles and displays to raise community awareness. The initial FloodSafe rollout is expected later this year.

## Local Wise Water Use Guidelines win Approval

Design guidelines commissioned by the Trust to help us use water more wisely in our homes and neighborhoods have won a major prize from the land development industry.

The Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) Technical Guidelines for Western Sydney won the Environmental Excellence award at this year's Urban Development Industry Association - NSW Landcom Awards for Excellence. The guidelines provide best practice design specifications for various WSUD measures for subdivisions and individual lots. They will overcome the lack of guidance on WSUD measures suitable for western Sydney. See the guidelines at [www.wsud.org](http://www.wsud.org) under Technical Guide Design Specs.

## Waterwatch team continues to grow

Pendle Hill High School students joined the Waterwatch team on Monday, 12th September. Lee Lau, Waterwatch Coordinator from the Trust, presented students with their own Waterwatch kit at a school assembly. Students can choose Waterwatch as part of the weekly sports program. Waterwatch is also being incorporated into the science curriculum.

## Enhancements Underway along Lower Darling Mills Creek

With Trust financial support, Baulkham Hills Shire Council has started work on the second stage of a project to upgrade the neglected lower section of Darling Mills Creek from Lodore Place in Northmead to Speers Road in North Rocks at an estimated cost of \$165,000.

Last year Council and the Trust spent \$338,000 on the first stage on in-channel works, undertaking rock stabilisation, revegetation, safety fencing and drainage works to reduce erosion. Working to a plan devised by Trust and Council staff, the second stage will improve the overbank areas with extra vegetation, improved access and minor reshaping to improve drainage.



Stage Two of a project to restore Lower Darling Mills Creek has commenced.

## Sustainable Water Projects on Display



Parramatta Lord Mayor, David Borger and Council staff member George Petrie inspect the Doyle Sportsground water recycling project.

The rapid transformation in how water is used in major public projects was a recurring theme at the third annual Sustainable Water Challenge seminar held at Bankstown on 17 August 2005.

About 150 local council staff, consultants and academics

gathered to hear the latest developments in Water Sensitive Urban Design from NSW and interstate, with a dozen award winning projects by NSW local councils showcased. These ranged from a community education program to reduce

stormwater pollution of a Newcastle beach, to a program that greatly reduced water usage in Queanbeyan, to various schemes to use stormwater instead of potable water for cleaning and irrigation.

The next day 50 people

went on a bus tour of several WSUD project sites throughout Sydney. The seminar and tour were arranged as part of the Sydney WSUD Program being hosted by the Trust and funded by a Commonwealth Natural Heritage Trust grant.

## Carlingford West Primary cleanup

45 Year 6 and 4 students from Carlingford West Public School cleaned up Hunts Creek at the waterfall on Friday, 23rd September. Teachers Maria Walsh and Jane Lodge organised the activity as part of the Waterwatch program at the school.

They collected over five bags of rubbish, including milk crates and lots of plastic packaging.

Hunts Creek runs into Lake Parramatta creek and is in a highly urbanised catchment. Keeping Hunts Creek clean not only benefits the creek but also the lake which is a major tourist and recreational drawcard for the Western suburbs.



# Catchment Champions: Peter and Brenda Powell

Peter and Brenda Powell walk down their backyard to enjoy the fruits of their labour at 'Redeemer Creek' in North Parramatta. Pictured at lower left is Peter removing masses of Lantana and Privet weed from the same area of bush on the right.

**Q. Where is the project?**

A. The Uniting Church Centre for Ministry, which is the education complex of the Uniting Church, North Parramatta.

**Q. What got you started on the project?**

Moving to the Centre for Ministry and seeing the property covered in weeds, privet and lantana

**Q. What is the most satisfying part of your project?**

Getting rid of the noxious weeds and seeing the bush naturally regenerate

**Q. What is your favourite plant or animal that you see on your site and why?**

A. I really enjoy the birdlife here. Kookaburras, magpies, lorikeets, rosellas and honey eaters. It is fun to see them in

the native plants and bathing in the large bird bath we have. I am not too keen on the red belly black snakes, but they don't bother us too much. They slide away when we approach.

**Q. What has been the reaction of your neighbours and the church community?**

A. Most of our friends are amazed at the changes that have taken place along the creek.

**Q. What is your long-term vision?**

A. To provide bushland in its natural state so that people who come to the Centre for Ministry can walk through the bush and enjoy its beauty

**Q. What do you do between 9 am and 5 pm on weekdays?**

A. Peter, a minister of the Uniting Church, is the Director of the Pastoral Counselling

Institute where the hours are more like 9 am to 10 pm. Brenda is Program Director for "Raising Difficult Children", a program to assist parents whose children have learning and behaviour difficulties.

**Q. Why do you like living in the Upper Parramatta River Catchment?**

A. The peace of the bush, the ability to take long walks through the silent trees, the joy of seeing the bush regenerate.

**Q. What or who motivates you to do Bushcare work?**

A. A Christian understanding that regeneration is a reflection of God's creation and as we participate in recreating the land we become part of the ultimate purpose of making the universe a better place to live. Taking out weeds symbolises removing destructive parts of people's lives so the natural beauty can start to grow.

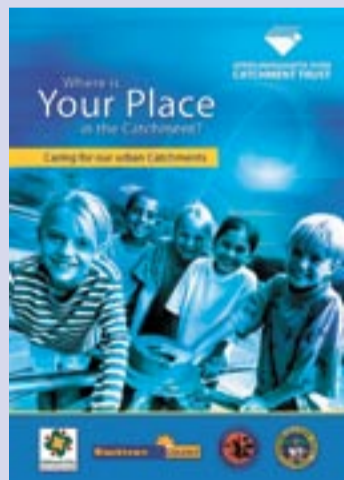


## Be positive for your Catchment!

A new booklet has been launched to help people make a positive impact on their local environment, in particular the Upper Parramatta River Catchment. The Trust and the four local councils jointly sponsored the book.

The booklet covers the following topics: Stormwater, Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD), On-site Detention, In Your Garden and Greywater (wastewater). It provides practical tips about how to improve water quality and reduce runoff.

Phone the Trust on 9891 4633 for a free copy or download it from the website at [www.uprct.nsw.gov.au](http://www.uprct.nsw.gov.au)



## Water celebrated during National Water Week

National Water Week was held from the 17th-22nd October. The Trust coordinated a variety of activities during the week including displays, water quality testing, clean up of creeks and a Catchment Day at Blacktown.

A Catchment tour for residents on Saturday 15th October was a particular highlight. The Trust and the Baulkham Hills Shire, Parramatta, Holroyd and Blacktown City Councils jointly organised the tour. Over 60 participants visited water quality, flood mitigation and revegetation projects in the Catchment and also learnt how they can have a positive impact on their local environment.



Waterwatch students from Girraween High School, McArthur Girls School, Crestwood High School and Greystanes High School helped staff displays at major shopping centres to celebrate National Water Week. They showed their skills in water quality testing, looking for water bugs and explaining to shoppers the importance of our waterways.