

Cooks River Ecological Health Report Card 2016-2017



 **Cooks River**
ALLIANCE



Cooks River

The Cooks River begins in Yagoona and flows east for 23 kilometres through the inner south west suburbs of Sydney to Botany Bay. As the Cooks River makes its way from Yagoona to Botany Bay it's joined by seven creeks.

The Cooks River catchment (the area of land which feeds water to the river) covers an area of approximately 100km².

The health of our Cooks River

The Cooks River provides many benefits which contribute to our well-being and quality of life. For example, the wetlands and bushland surrounding the Cooks River provide vital habitat for native plants, birds and other animals. The river and catchment also provide many parks and recreational facilities for people. However, since colonisation and industrialisation, much of the river and its creeks have been significantly degraded and modified. Natural areas of bush have been removed over the years, though small vibrant pockets of native habitat remain.

The many hard and paved surfaces in the river catchment means that rainwater cannot easily soak into the ground. It rushes from our roofs, roads and footpaths, picking up pollution along the way. It all ends up in the river.

Today, together with councils, community groups such as the Cooks River Valley Association, Mudcrabs, Wollie Creek Preservation Society, Inner West Environment Group, Botany Bay and Catchment Alliance, and Council bushcare groups, are committed to helping the River. Community groups help restore wetlands and bush, and remove litter.



Improving the health of the Cooks River

What we're doing

The Cooks River Alliance was formed in 2011 and is a partnership of councils working together with communities for a healthy Cooks River catchment. The Alliance builds upon previous Cooks River council partnerships and projects. Alliance plans for improving the river include:

Water sensitive urban design

Alliance councils are implementing sustainable urban water management through building raingardens, conserving wetlands and changing practices.

Connecting and coordinating stakeholders

A challenge for management of the Cooks River is that the river crosses multiple local government boundaries. The Cooks River Alliance assists local councils to work together and coordinate activities to protect this precious asset.

Supporting and engaging communities to take action

Local communities have long worked hard to improve the Cooks River. Community groups have helped restore wetlands and bush, and removed huge amounts of litter. The Cooks River Alliance undertakes a wide range of community engagement programs, seeking to involve a broad spectrum of community groups, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and Aboriginal communities.

What you can do



Visit the Cooks River and explore the parks and creeks.



Plant locally native plants in your garden to increase habitat for animals.



Pick up any rubbish before it gets washed into drains.



Sweep up leaves and put them in the bin before they go down the drain.



Pick up after pets so their waste doesn't end up in the river.



Build a raingarden to slow and filter stormwater before it reaches the river.



Wash your car on the lawn and safely dispose of oils and chemicals. Rain carries pollution to the river.



Install a rainwater tank to reduce stormwater flowing to the river.



Get involved in a local community group or join your Council's bushcare group.



Follow the Cooks River Alliance to find out more and to sign up for our email newsletter.

Find out more

Visit cooksriver.org.au to find out more and visit our social media channels.



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