

CRFWG
Annual Report
2004

Printing instructions:

(1) Do not print this page.

(2) The Annual Report is formatted to be printed two-sided and bound for best viewing. The first page should be the cover page (next) with the vision statement on its reverse side.



CRFWG Annual Report 2004



Cooks River Foreshores Working Group

Vision

The Cooks River will be a vital and dynamic river system, representing, in all its dimensions, a healthy natural environment within its urban landscape.

The river and its foreshores will provide a rich recreational resource valued by both the local and wider community, catering for all interests from dog walkers to joggers, sports groups to picnickers and anglers to boat users; It will also be recognized as an important regional cycle link between Homebush Bay and Botany Bay.

As a generous river corridor, the foreshores will create an ideal opportunity to restore and conserve a range of native plant communities and wildlife habitats, establishing a link from the River's beginning in Bankstown to its issue into Botany Bay.

The river and its catchment will be managed to assist the natural recovery of the water quality, aquatic life and riverbed profile, enhanced by riverbanks that reflect a more natural character.

In all of its dimensions, the long Aboriginal and European history of the river will be recognised through informative, educational and artistic programmes and features along the river's length, bringing to the community that shares and enjoys its many attractions, a sense of pride in helping to secure a sound future for this valuable city landscape.

Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan (Clouston 1997)

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Marrickville Council	Judy Pincus

Coordinator's message

As Coordinator of the Cooks River Foreshores Working Group, I take great pleasure in welcoming you to the 2004 CRFWG Annual Report.

As this is our first official Annual Report, in addition to covering the activities of the past year, it also offers a brief overview of the history of the CRFWG and descriptions of most of the Cooks River foreshore improvement projects initiated by the CRFWG and its members since completion of the *Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan* in 1997.

The Report also features a special 'spotlight' section on riverbank rehabilitation and restoration projects currently underway, as addressing erosion and degradation along the limited remaining 'natural' banks of the river has been a primary area of focus and achievement for the CRFWG in recent years.

Looking back over the history of the Group, it's amazing and rewarding to reflect on how much has been achieved. Even just since I came on board in 2000. Back then there was barely enough funding to employ a coordinator for two days per week over six months, so as to implement two \$4,500 grant-funded projects and seek more substantial funding for other regional projects. Four and a half years later, I'm still here, the Coordinator's job is now four days per week, the CRFWG and its member councils are continually rolling out projects and the NSW Government has established a grants program specifically targeting Cooks River foreshore improvement projects.

While the CRFWG itself is quite small, a great many people, as part of their job or as volunteers, from local, state and federal government agencies, schools, businesses, community groups or just as individuals, have contributed enormously, giving of their money, time, skills, expertise and resources, to bring about all of the outcomes reported here. Personally and on behalf of everyone in the CRFWG, I extend a huge 'thank you' to you all.

There is, of course, still a lot of work to be done and ongoing commitment is needed from the councils, the NSW Government and the community if we are to see Cooks River become the environmental and community resource it has the potential to become.

As you browse these pages, I hope you will be inspired, both by what has already been achieved and by the vision for the future which guides us, to increase your commitment to improving Cooks River and supporting or joining with us to continue this work.

Judy Pincus
Coordinator

INCREASE IN NSW GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program

The first round of grant awards under the NSW Government's \$2 million Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (CRFIP) were announced in June 2004, providing almost \$500,000 in matching State funding for nine new council and community projects aimed at enhancing the natural environment and recreational opportunities along the Cooks River foreshores.

The CRFIP represents a significant and welcome increase in the level of NSW Government support for both Cooks River foreshore improvement projects and for the CRFWG itself.

According to representatives of the NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR), this targeted funding program would never have come about without the persistent efforts and achievements of the CRFWG, and the existence and continuing relevance of the *Cooks River Foreshore Strategic Plan*.

Among the Round One awards was a \$33,360 grant supporting the activities of the CRFWG by increasing the resources available for its coordination. This is the first financial support to be provided by the NSW Government for CRFWG coordination and reflects the Government's recognition of the essential role played by the CRFWG in facilitating regional collaboration, delivering on-ground results and assisting DIPNR with implementation of the CRFIP.

Seven applications for the second round of CRFIP funding were submitted to DIPNR in July 2004. Due to delays by DIPNR, awards won't be announced until early 2005. Two further rounds of grants will be offered in 2005 and 2006.

Steel Sheet Piling Removal and Replacement Program

A combined lobbying effort by the CRFWG and its member councils was influential in convincing DIPNR to uphold its promise to carry out the critical and long-awaited replacement of deteriorating, in some areas collapsing, steel sheet embankments lining much of the foreshores in the Canterbury and Marrickville LGAs.

Concerned by the lack of progress and information on the NSW Government's Steel Sheet Piling Removal and Replacement Program, the CRFWG and its member councils wrote the DIPNR Director General in September 2004, asking for prompt confirmation of the Government's commitment to the Program. The Director General's reply, in October, assured that 'planning is in hand' and restoration works will commence in 2005/06.

The Steel Sheet Piling Program, which was announced by the NSW Government at the same time as the CRFIP, will see an investment of \$2.9 million in State funds towards the design and construction of more ecologically viable, safe and aesthetic bank treatments to replace the existing structures.



Collapsing sheet piling on Cooks River upstream of Riverview Road

Executive summary

REGIONAL PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Excellent progress has been made on the three **riverbank restoration** projects initiated by the CRFWG in 2000, with construction nearly half complete in Freshwater Park, Strathfield; a development application under assessment for Gough Whitlam Park, Undercliffe; and master planning under way for Kendrick Park, Marrickville. These projects will all employ 'soft' engineering treatments, including the planting of local provenance indigenous riparian vegetation, to stabilise eroding banks, create habitat, improve water quality and beautify the foreshores.

The new **RiverLife** projects, **RiverScience** and **Planting the Seed**, will provide scientific information needed to properly plan for and manage future projects involving water quality improvement, riverbank rehabilitation, revegetation using locally provenanced indigenous species, mangrove management, etc.

CREW (Cooks River Enviro Workers), launched by the CRFWG in October 2004, provides the first coordinated ongoing program to remove litter and gross pollutants from Cooks River. CREW pools resources from six CRFWG councils, the Georges Riverkeeper Program of the Georges River Combined Councils Committee, and the Periodic Detention Program of the NSW Department of Correctional Services, to provide a low-cost, end-of-pipe response to community frustration over the river's persistent litter problem.

The **Cooks River Pedestrian and Cycle Path Improvement Study Project** brings together all seven councils located along the Bay-to-Bay

Cycleway and Alexandra Canal to develop regional design guidelines and consistent solutions to safety and other issues, to ensure greater consistency of path development along the river.

Community volunteers, trained through the **RiverLife Interpretive Tour Program**, continue to inspire a love of Cooks River in tour participants with their popular walking and kayaking tours. A second training for volunteer tour guides is planned for early 2005.

CRFWG OPERATIONS

Officers from Bankstown, Burwood, Canterbury, City of Sydney, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils, NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, the Interim Sydney Metro Catchment Management Authority, Sydney Water and RailCorp participated actively in regular CRFWG meetings throughout the year.

Held in alternate months, CRFWG meetings provide participants with valuable opportunities to exchange information, generate ideas and initiate collaborative projects.

Thanks to an increase in council contributions and the CRFIP grant for coordination of the CRFWG, the Coordinator's hours were able to be increased from three to four days per week from September 2004, increasing the capacity of the Coordinator to facilitate further collaboration and assist councils to achieve greater on-ground results.



Kayak tour participants, led by RiverLife volunteer guides from the River Canoe Club, exploring Wolli Creek, November 2004 (Photo by Gavin Gatenbv)

PURPOSE

The Cooks River Foreshores Working Group (CRFWG) is a regional association of councils, State Government agencies and NGOs who are working together to bring about a more holistic and coordinated approach to the management of Cooks River and its foreshores.

Guided by the vision, objectives and strategies of the *Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan* (Clouston 1997), the CRFWG promotes and facilitates regional collaboration between key stakeholders for the improvement and enhancement of Cooks River and its foreshore open space corridor.

ORIGINS

The roots of the CRFWG go back to the enactment of the NSW Local Government Act of 1993, which required all local governments in NSW to prepare plans of management for community lands within their Local Government Area (LGA).

As much of the open space corridor along Cooks River consists of community lands managed separately by the foreshore councils, several council officers from the area recognised the need to develop an overarching and holistic regional strategy - to ensure that the planning and management of each individual site contributes to the health of the river as a whole, the cohesive development of the foreshores as a regionally significant environmental and recreational resource, and the welfare of the surrounding community.

Through the initiative of officers from Strathfield and Marrickville Councils, representatives from Strathfield, Marrickville, Canterbury and Burwood Councils, the NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC) and Greening Australia came together in 1995 to form the Cooks River Regional Working Party.

Their work together over the next few years resulted in the creation of the *Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan* (CRFSP) (Clouston 1997).

COOKS RIVER FORESHORES STRATEGIC PLAN

The CRFSP identifies 121 strategies for improving and better managing Cooks River and its foreshores, in keeping with the community's long-term vision for revitalizing the river and foreshores and realising their potential as a valuable natural, recreational, cultural and educational resource.

True to the CRFSP's holistic approach, its strategies address the whole gamut of relevant issues, from access and recreation, to natural conservation and restoration (biodiversity), water quality, riverbank rehabilitation, cultural heritage and interpretation, as well as the planning, coordination and administrative measures needed to move from strategies on paper to actions on the ground.

Since its completion in 1997, the CRFSP has continued to serve as an essential management tool for all of the councils and other authorities responsible for managing the river and its foreshores.

BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRFWG

Following completion of the CRFSP, the Working Party's membership was expanded to include more stakeholders, and the group became known as the Cooks River Foreshores Working Group (CRFWG).

Through the efforts of council officers and a part-time coordinator, employed temporarily, in 1998, to help implement the Plan, several seminal biodiversity projects were initiated, including the Cooks River Seedbank and Remnant Restoration Project and publication of *Missing Jigsaw Pieces – Bushplants of the Cooks River Valley*.

Two small grants of \$4,500 each were also secured for a foreshore signage audit and publication of a CRFWG newsletter. Implementation of these two projects and progress in other areas, however, was impeded by the lack of a Coordinator in 1999.

About the CRFWG

The ball began rolling again from mid-2000, with the employment of a new Coordinator. Gradually the momentum grew, spurred greatly by an important breakthrough in funding, in November 2000, when Sydney Water committed up to \$80,000 towards the design of riverbank rehabilitation works called for by the CRFSP.

With this seed money, the regional Cooks River Bank Restoration Project was up and running. The design work undertaken with Sydney Water's assistance paved the way for securing further significant funding for riverbank restoration projects, including:

- \$250,000 in matching funding from the NSW Government's Estuary Management Program for projects in Canterbury and Marrickville (2002 and 2003); and
- \$550,000 from the NSW Government's Stormwater Trust (2002) for works in Freshwater Park, Strathfield, and the RiverLife Program, run jointly by Canterbury, Marrickville and Strathfield Councils, to increase community initiative for the improvement of stormwater quality.

Additionally, an application by Strathfield Council is currently pending for \$150,000 under Round 2 of the CRFIP to complete restoration works in Freshwater Park.

Similarly, the foreshore signage audit prepared the way for the Cooks River Interpretive Trail Project, which brings together all five councils along the Cooks River section of the Bay-to-Bay Cycleway to develop a coordinated system of orientation and interpretive signage for use in all council areas along the foreshores.

Such successes and the growing collaboration occurring between the foreshore councils were clearly key factors influencing the State Government's decisions to launch the Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program in 2003, and to provide financial support for coordination of the CRFWG, through a CRFIP grant awarded in June 2004.

The CRFWG today plays a vital role in driving Cooks River improvement initiatives generally.

It also plays a pivotal role in the implementation of the CRFIP, by facilitating communication between DIPNR and the councils, bringing the councils together to generate and develop regional project ideas and assisting the councils to prepare grant applications.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The success of the CRFIP will be of critical importance in ensuring continued State Government support for Cooks River and Cooks River foreshore improvement projects after the CRFIP is finished.

Assisting councils to develop regional project plans and prepare successful CRFIP (as well as other) funding applications will thus remain a high priority for the CRFWG over the next couple of years.

Regional priorities for the near future include:

- Preparation of an estuarine vegetation management plan (building on the outcomes of the RiverScience Project) to guide future mangrove management, riverbank restoration and foreshore landscaping works;
- Preparation of an interpretation strategy to foster appreciation and protection of the River's natural and cultural heritage;
- Improving access to and within the foreshore open space corridor by enhancing the path network, improving the provision of amenities / user facilities and developing maps and other promotional materials to increase public awareness of what Cooks River has to offer and how to get there;
- Improving water quality;
- Monitoring progress and ensuring council input into the State Government's Steel Sheet Piling Removal and Replacement Project;
- Building partnerships with the new Sydney Metro Catchment Management Authority to achieve desirable outcomes for Cooks River.

CRFWG – initiated projects

All of the projects initiated by the CRFWG, since its start in 1997, are presented here. Projects are organised according to the principal strategic area they address (based on the categories used in the CRFSP) and their status, ie, 'new' (started in 2004), 'continuing' (ongoing from previous years) and 'completed' (projects completed from 1997 - 2004).

In reality, most projects address a broad range of CRFSP objectives. For example, the riverbank restoration projects featured in the section on Water and Riverbank Management Projects, all aim to stabilise banks, improve water quality, enhance biodiversity by restoring local indigenous vegetation, provide for waterway access, views, recreational use, and interpretation, and beautify the foreshores.

Funding amounts shown are ex-GST.

ACCESS, RECREATION AND USE PROJECTS

NEW

Cooks River Pedestrian & Cycle Trail Improvement Project

Project Description

This project brings together seven councils to develop common design guidelines and identify solutions to existing problems and constraints, in order to improve the safety, functionality and visual coherence of pedestrian and cycle paths along Cooks River and the Alexandra Canal.

Partners

- CRFWG (Project Management)
- Strathfield and Marrickville Councils (Administration)
- Burwood, Canterbury, City of Sydney, City of Botany Bay and Rockdale Councils

Funding

- Burwood, Canterbury, City of Botany Bay, City of Sydney, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils: \$21,000 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR), Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$21,000

Status

A consultants' brief is currently being finalised and specialists will be engaged in early 2005 to study the existing path network and develop design recommendations.



NATURAL CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROJECTS

NEW

RiverLife - Planting the Seed

Project Description

RiverLife - Planting the Seed addresses the need to strategically manage local provenance indigenous plant resources to ensure there are enough plant materials available to meet the growing demand for these species in council and community revegetation and riverbank restoration projects.

The project will (1) assess the current capacity of existing seed collection and nursery resources to produce local provenance plants; (2) estimate demand for these plants in foreshore council areas for the next 5-10 years; and (3) recommend actions to address gaps and meet future demand.

Planting the Seed builds upon the work started under the Cooks River Seedbank and Remnant Restoration Project.

Contributors / Partners

- Marrickville Council (Project Management)
- Canterbury and Rockdale Councils
- Wolli Creek Preservation Society
- CRFWG
- DIPNR

Funding

- Councils: \$109,000 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW DIPNR, Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$109,000

Status

A position description is being finalised so as to engage a project officer in early 2005.

CRFWG – initiated projects

COMPLETED

Cooks River Seedbank and Remnant Restoration Project

1998 – 2003

Project Description

This first major project of the CRFWG embarked upon a number of high priority strategies, identified by the CRFSP, to protect, restore, extend, link and strategically manage the scattered remnants of indigenous Cooks River Valley vegetation.

Contributors / Partners

- Greening Australia (Project Management)
- Bankstown, Burwood, Canterbury, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils
- CRFWG
- Bankstown Bushland Society
- Wolli Creek Preservation Society
- Numerous other community groups, schools and individual volunteers

Funding

- Councils, Greening Australia and community volunteers: \$115,000 (cash and in-kind)
- Commonwealth Government, Natural Heritage Trust: \$115,000

Outcomes

Over its four year life, the CRSBRRP resulted in: the expansion and improvement of local provenance seed banks at council and community nurseries; the propagation and planting of over 45,000 plants, grown from local provenance seeds by local community and council nurseries, at over 60 sites in five council areas by some 3,000 community volunteers at council and community-run planting events; and the training of dozens of community volunteers in seed collection and propagation techniques. It also fostered collaboration and communication between local government and community groups, which continues to bear fruit to this day.

The new Riverscience – Planting the Seed project will collect and assess data on production capacity and demand for local provenance vegetation resources, to help ensure their ongoing sustainability and strategic management.

WATER AND RIVERBANK MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

NEW

RiverLife - RiverScience

Project Description

RiverLife - RiverScience aims to establish an ecological benchmarking and monitoring program for Cooks River to provide the scientific information needed to track the river's long-term ecological health. The information collected will assist management decisions regarding future waterway and foreshore management and rehabilitation.

RiverScience builds upon and extends the research begun under the Cooks River Benthic Study. It is being established in line with the Department of the Environment and Heritage's, "Environmental Indicators for National State of the Environment Reporting - Estuaries and Seas."

Contributors / Partners

- Canterbury, Kogarah, Marrickville and Rockdale Councils
- University of New South Wales
- Sydney Water
- NSW Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries
- Australian Museum

Funding

- NSW DIPNR, Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$30,000
- Canterbury, Kogarah, Marrickville and Rockdale Councils, University of New South Wales, Sydney Water, NSW Department of Primary Industries - Fisheries: \$30,000 (in-kind)

Status

With technical assistance from specialists from Sydney Water, NSW Fisheries and UNSW, the joint council working group managing this project has targeted three core indicator components: (a) sediment characterisation, sediment geochemical analysis and benthic foraminifera determination; (b) sessile invertebrate aquatic fauna monitoring and benthic macro fauna determination and (c) estuarine flora macrophyte mapping. A research brief is being developed and consultants will be engaged in 2005 to develop monitoring methodology and collect baseline data.

CRFWG – initiated projects

CREW

(Cooks River Enviro Workers)

Project Description

CREW represents the first collaborative regional effort by local and state government to remove litter and other gross pollutants from Cooks River and its tributaries. It responds to community dissatisfaction with the large quantities of litter, which still end up in the river system due to ongoing littering behaviour and the limitations of existing gross pollutant traps.

Modelled on the successful Georges River clean-up program, CREW brings a team of trained volunteers, from the Periodic Detention Program of the NSW Department of Corrective Services, to the river two days a week to remove rubbish from the water and banks. Participating councils provide tools and supplies for the workers and dispose of the rubbish collected. Georges Riverkeeper and PDC staff train the team and coordinate and supervise their work.

The CRFWG gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Georges River Combined Councils Committee in making available the resources of the Georges Riverkeeper to help us establish and run this program for Cooks River.

Contributors / Partners

- CRFWG (Project management)
- Bankstown, Burwood, Canterbury, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils
- Georges River Combined Councils Committee - Georges Riverkeeper Program
- NSW Department of Correctional Services, Periodic Detention Program

Funding

- Georges River Combined Councils Committee - Georges Riverkeeper Program: (in-kind)
- NSW Department of Correctional Services, Periodic Detention Program: (in-kind)
- Bankstown, Burwood, Canterbury, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils: \$8,000 plus in-kind
- CRFWG: (in-kind)

Status

From October 2004, when CREW was launched, to year-end, the team filled an estimated 1,400 bags with rubbish removed from the river and foreshores. That's an average of 30 bags of rubbish per day (60 per weekend).



CREW Launch, October 2004

CRFWG – initiated projects

Spotlight: Riverbank restoration

Three riverbank restoration projects are currently at various stages of implementation along Cooks River as a result of a CRFWG initiative, begun in 2000, to rehabilitate unstable and eroding riverbanks in the 'natural' (non-channelised) sections of the river.

The CRFWG was instrumental in facilitating the inter-council collaboration, fundraising and securing of NSW State Government support needed to make these projects happen.

Planning, funding and designing and constructing these projects is a long-term undertaking, involving preparation of grant applications, consultant briefs, plans, technical documentation and development applications; site studies; stakeholder consultations; tendering processes, etc. As a result, many years of work have gone by with little to show that would be of interest to or impress the general public.

At last, in late 2004, construction began at one of these sites - Freshwater Park, Strathfield. In celebration of this milestone, we have decided to spotlight riverbank restoration in this 2004 Annual Report.

CONTINUING

RiverLife - Structural Project: Cooks River Bank Restoration, Freshwater Park, Strathfield

2003 -

Project Description

Detailed design and construction of bank stabilisation and riparian corridor restoration works along the last remaining natural / non-channelised section of Cooks River in Strathfield.

Works include battering back of banks to reduce channel steepness and the use of placed rock, geotextiles and dense plantings to stabilise the bed and banks. Plantings of local provenance indigenous species are to re-establish a riparian corridor, which will provide habitat for native fauna and a source of seed for future restoration projects.

This project extends rehabilitation work completed immediately downstream by Strathfield Council in 2002. It builds upon design work undertaken during Stage One of the Cooks River Bank Restoration Project and implements the Freshwater Park Demonstration Project proposed in the CRFSP.

Strathfield Golf Club will assist with maintenance to ensure the successful establishment of the riparian vegetation corridor.

Contributors / Partners

- Strathfield Council (Project management)
- Sydney Water Corporation
- Strathfield Golf Club
- NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources
- NSW Fisheries
- CRFWG



Bank instability and erosion, Freshwater Park, May 2003

Funding

- Stormwater Trust, NSW Government: \$268,126 (structural portion of a \$550,000 grant, which also included the RiverLife - Non-structural Project) – for on-ground works
- Sydney Water, Stormwater Environmental Improvement Program (Project No. 29): \$55,700 – for project design
- Strathfield Council: over \$12,000 to date + in-kind



Spotlight: Riverbank restoration

Status

In March 2004, Sinclair Knight Merz consultants finalised detailed designs and tender / contract documentation for the project. On-ground work along the most unstable section of the banks in Freshwater Park began in November, with half of the planned structural work completed by year-end.



Contractors laying down toe protection, Freshwater Park, November 2004

Council has applied for CRFIP Round 2 funding to enable completion of the remaining restoration works proposed along the river in Freshwater Park, upstream of the current site.



Partially completed bank restoration works, Freshwater Park, November 2004

Kendrick Park Foreshore Restoration Project

2002 -

Project Description

Detailed design and on-ground works for the rehabilitation of eroding banks and restoration of salt marsh and other local native riparian vegetation along the foreshores at Kendrick Park.

The design work builds upon preliminary studies and treatment recommendations provided during Stage One of the Cooks River, Bank Restoration Project, which was initiated and managed by the CRFWG.

Contributors / Partners

- Marrickville Council

Funding

- Marrickville Council: \$130,000 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources - Estuary Management Program: \$100,000
- NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$30,000

Status

Council has engaged Clouston Associates to assess feasibility and prepare concept and master plans for Kendrick Park, incorporating foreshore restoration and refurbishment of the path network and park facilities.



Bank erosion, Kendrick Park

CRFWG – initiated projects

The Power of Collaborative Action

Evolution of the Cooks River Bank Restoration Project and the role of the CRFWG in its development

1997 The *Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan* calls for the stabilisation of eroding sections of riverbank using ecologically sensitive 'soft' reinforcement techniques.

1999 The *Cooks River Stormwater Management Plan* identifies the same riverbank sections as erosion 'hot-spots' and targets them for bank rehabilitation.

2000 The CRFWG targets the rehabilitation of three high priority areas - in Gough Whitlam Park, Undercliffe; Kendrick Park, Marrickville and Freshwater Park, Strathfield.

2000 The CRFWG Coordinator prepares joint application to the Estuary Management Program (EMP) of the Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC), for funding for the Canterbury and Marrickville sites. DLWC declines funding on the basis that there is no Estuary Management Plan for Cooks River.

2001 The CRFWG responds to a call for proposals from Sydney Water and secures funding, through its Stormwater Environmental Improvement Program (SEIP Project No. 29), for the design for rehabilitation works at all three sites. With this seed money, the Cooks River Bank Restoration Project (CRBRP) is up and running.

Oct - Dec 2001 The CRFWG Coordinator assists the three councils to prepare an application for \$1.4 million from the Stormwater Trust for on-ground bank stabilisation works at all three sites, in conjunction with a community education and capacity-building program.

Nov 2001 – Nov 2002 Sydney Water contracts with the CRFWG for the Coordinator to manage CRBRP - Stage One, which involves site appraisals and the development of treatment recommendations and concept designs. Storm Consulting is engaged and completes the *Cooks River Riverbank Restoration Project Design Report* in November 2002.

Feb 2002 The CRFWG writes the Minister for Land and Water Conservation asking for recognition of the CRFSP as a basis for seeking EMP funding.

(continued next page)

Cooks River Bank Restoration, Gough Whitlam Park, Undercliffe

2002 -

Project Description

Design and construction of works to stabilise and rehabilitate eroding banks along Gough Whitlam Park, Undercliffe. Ecologically sensitive treatments are proposed, including revegetation with salt marsh and other native riparian vegetation.

The design work builds upon preliminary studies and treatment recommendations provided during Stage One of the Cooks River, Bank Restoration Project, which was initiated and managed by the CRFWG.



Steep eroding banks at entrance to inlet, Gough Whitlam Park

Contributors / Partners

- Canterbury Council

Funding

- Canterbury Council: \$150,000
- NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources - Estuary Management Program: \$150,000

Status

Consultants engaged by Canterbury Council completed a Concept Plan and Statement of Environmental Effects for the project in April 2004. Council completed detailed designs in October and submitted a Development Application in November to undertake works. The DA is currently being assessed.

Spotlight: Riverbank restoration

COMPLETED

Cooks River Bank Restoration Project – Stage One: Site appraisal and concept design development

Nov 2001 - Nov 2002

Project Description

Site assessments and development of treatment recommendations and concept designs for riverbank stabilisation and rehabilitation works at three erosion 'hotspots' identified in the CRFSP and the Cooks River Stormwater Management Plan (PPK 1999): Gough Whitlam Park, Undercliffe; Kendrick Park, Marrickville and Freshwater Park, Strathfield.

Contributors / Partners

- CRFWG (Project management)
- Canterbury, Marrickville and Strathfield Councils
- Sydney Water
- NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation
- NSW Fisheries

Funding

- Sydney Water, Stormwater Environmental Improvement Program (Project No. 29): \$25,181
- CRFWG: (in-kind)
- Canterbury, Marrickville and Strathfield Councils: (in-kind)

Outcomes

The Design Report (Storm Consulting, November 2002) produced through this project has informed subsequent detailed design work for the bank restoration projects at all three sites. It also greatly facilitated fundraising for detailed design and on-ground works.



Council and DIPNR officers on Kendrick Park site visit

(continued from previous page)

Mar 2002 The Stormwater Trust awards a \$550,000 grant for (1) bank rehabilitation works in Freshwater Park, Strathfield, and (2) the proposed capacity-building/education program, which becomes known as the RiverLife Project.

Sydney Water allocates the remainder of its SEIP 29 budget for the development of detailed designs and tender / contract documentation for the Freshwater Park project, and extends its contract with the CRFWG, to coordinate the tendering process.

April 2002 The Minister responds favourably to the CRFWG's enquiry, allowing that the (CRFSP) "could form the basis of a funding proposal."

2002 – 03 On the basis of the Minister's ruling, Canterbury and Marrickville Councils submit a joint application for \$175,000 in matching funding through the EMP. This time their application is successful.

Jun 03 – Mar 04 Sinclair Knight Merz is selected to develop detailed designs and tender / contract documentation for the Freshwater Park project. Following technical studies and extensive consultations with DLWC, NSW Fisheries and Strathfield Golf Club (which leases the site from Council), acceptable designs are produced and documentation is completed in March 2004.

2003 – 04 With the help of the EMP grant, Canterbury begins more detailed design work for its site, building upon the recommendations in the Stage One Design Report.

Canterbury secures an additional \$75,000 in matching funding from the EMP and completes concept plans and an SoE, enabling it to submit a development application in November. At year-end the DA was being assessed.

Marrickville decides to incorporate bank restoration objectives into its planning for the redevelopment of Kendrick Park and secures additional funding through DIPNR's CRFIP for master planning and on-ground works. Consultants engaged by Council are currently preparing concept and master plans.

Mar – Dec 2004 Strathfield Council obtains development approval for works at the Freshwater Park project and takes over management of the project from the CRFWG. With the help of the Stormwater Trust grant, contractors begin on-ground works along the most unstable section of the river in November and works are about half complete by year-end. Council applies for funding under Round 2 of the CRFIP to enable completion of the restoration works proposed for Freshwater Park.

CRFWG – initiated projects

COMPLETED

RiverLife - Non-structural Project

May 2002 – Dec 2003

Project Description

Initiated by the CRFWG and implemented through a joint partnership between Canterbury, Marrickville and Strathfield Councils, RiverLife developed and employed a range of innovative strategies for engaging the community in stormwater education and behaviour change. Its primary aim was to increase community-initiated action to improve stormwater quality.

Contributors / Partners

- Canterbury Council
- Marrickville Council
- Strathfield Council
- CRFWG

Funding

- Stormwater Trust, NSW Government: \$281,874 (non-structural portion of a \$550,000 grant which also included the RiverLife - Structural Project)
- Canterbury, Marrickville and Strathfield Councils (in-kind)

Outcomes

- Launch of the exciting and successful **RiverLife Film Festival**, which engaged local filmmakers as stormwater educators, enticing them, through a short film competition, to create films - about Cooks River and how it's affected by stormwater pollution - that would motivate viewers to take action to reduce pollution.
- Launch of the successful **Cooks River Interpretive Tour Program**
- Development of an NESB teaching resource to help new migrants learn about stormwater issues and Cooks River while studying English.
- Engagement of Strathfield Golf Club in better environmental management of the river and indigenous vegetation within its grounds.



- Provision of training for council officers, to increase their capacity to engage community groups in initiating their own stormwater pollution prevention and education programs.
- New stormwater initiatives developed and undertaken by a number of community groups to help improve the condition of Cooks River.
- Increased collaboration between councils to tackle common stormwater issues

Promotion of the Streamwatch program to schools in the catchment for practical scientific education and water quality monitoring.

Cooks River Benthic Study

2002

This study involved the collection and analysis of mud samples taken from the bed of Cooks River, between the mouth of the river and the New Canterbury Road Bridge, as a first step towards assessing the ecological health of Cooks River.



Council officer stowing mud samples collected from the bed of Cooks River

Partners

- Marrickville Council (Project management; data collection)
- University of New South Wales (Study design; data collection and analysis)
- CRFWG

Funding

- Sydney Water: \$5,000 (for laboratory fees)
- Marrickville Council: (in-kind)
- University of New South Wales: (in-kind)

Outcomes

The data collected provided preliminary information on heavy metal concentrations and micro-invertebrate populations in the sediment of Cooks River and pointed the way for future research efforts. The research begun with this project is currently being expanded, in partnership with other councils and agencies, as part of the RiverLife - RiverScience project.

CRFWG – initiated projects

CHARACTER AND CULTURAL HERITAGE PROJECTS

See Member-Initiated Projects, below.

INTERPRETATION AND PROMOTION PROJECTS

CONTINUING

Cooks River Foreshores Interpretive Trail

2001 –

Project Description

Five foreshore councils are participating in this collaborative initiative to develop generic style guidelines and produce signs for a new coordinated system of interpretive and orientation signage for the foreshore path from Strathfield to Botany Bay.

The project is based on recommendations in the CRFSP and builds upon the outcomes of the Cooks River Signage Audit

Contributors / Partners

- CRFWG (Project management)
- Burwood Canterbury, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils

Funding

- CRFWG (Project management)
- Burwood, Canterbury, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils \$63,180 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW DIPNR, Metropolitan Greenspace Program: \$63,180

Status

A new Cooks River logo has been designed and style guidelines for orientation and interpretive signage, for adoption by all foreshore councils, are currently being finalised.

The project has experienced delays due to difficulties encountered during the development of maps for the orientation signs and due to the insufficient resources available for project



management. Project completion is now a top priority for 2005.

RiverLife Interpretive Tour Program

2003 -

Project Description

An outcome of the RiverLife Non-structural Project, the RiverLife Interpretive Tour Program provides training and support to help local residents develop and deliver tours inspiring appreciation for Cooks River and understanding of the environmental issues it faces.

Contributors / Partners

- Marrickville Council (Project management)
- Canterbury and Strathfield Councils
- River Canoe Club
- Community volunteers
- CRFWG

Funding

- Stormwater Trust, NSW Government: (portion of the \$550,000 grant for the RiverLife Project)
- Marrickville Council (in-kind)
- Community volunteers (in-kind)

Status

The program continues beyond the life of the original Stormwater Trust grant, thanks to the enthusiasm and energy of a number of volunteer trainees. Tours have included historical walking tours, an arts tour and the ever-popular kayak tour, which is run in partnership with the River Canoe Club. A second volunteer training program is being planned for early 2005.

Councils and the CRFWG are seeking ongoing funding for the program, to support future trainings and enable the employment of a part-time coordinator.



Children playing environmental games led by an Interpretive Tour Program volunteer on World Environment Day, June 2004

CRFWG – initiated projects

COMPLETED

Cooks River Foreshores Signage

Audit

2000

Project Description

An audit of signage along Cooks River from Strathfield through to Botany Bay to assess existing signage and make recommendations for improving and better coordinating signage along the river.

Environmental Science students at the University of Technology Sydney undertook the audit under the guidance of an academic supervisor as part of a course in Open Space Management.

Contributors / Partners

- CRFWG (Project management)
- Marrickville Council (Administration)
- Jane Tarran, Senior Lecturer, University of Technology Sydney
- Students of Open Space Management, University of Technology Sydney

Funding

- Cooks River Catchment Management Committee (Small Grants Program): \$4,500
- CRFWG: in-kind
- UTS: in-kind

Outcomes

Audit reports produced by the students mapped the locations of over 700 signs, in about 100 different styles, placed by 24 authorities, and provided information about their condition, appropriateness and usefulness.

Recommendations included: (1) development of a new coordinated system of signage to link the foreshore reserves, increase visitors' enjoyment and understanding of the River's natural and cultural heritage and provide a sense of identity

and continuity to the foreshore trail; (2) removal of irreparable, obsolete or redundant signage; (3) repair, cleaning or replacement of damaged / vandalized signs; etc.

The students gained valuable "real world" experience through their participation and the CRFWG used the recommendations to launch the Cooks River Foreshores Interpretive Trail Project.

Cooks River Reporter

2000

Project Description

Creation of a newsletter to increase awareness of the work being done to improve Cooks River CRFWG and to attract government and private sector support for further works.

Partners / Contributors

- CRFWG
- Cooks River Catchment Management Committee

Funding

- CRFWG (project management)
- Cooks River Catchment Management Committee (Small Grants Program): \$4,500
- Sydney Water: \$850
- Shell-Clyde Refinery: \$1818

Outcomes

Copies were distributed by CRFWG members to interested residents, local schools, libraries and community groups, as well as to local and state government officers and elected representatives and potential funding bodies.

This Annual Report has been produced in place of a second issue, with the assistance provided by Sydney Water and Shell-Clyde Refinery.

CRFWG – initiated projects

Missing Jigsaw Pieces - Bush Plants of the Cooks River Valley

1998 - 1999

Project Description

As one of its first projects after completion of the CRFSP, the CRFWG collaborated with local vegetation experts and Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens to produce a book on the native vegetation of the Cooks River Valley. The purpose of the book was to identify opportunities to conserve local native vegetation as well as increase appreciation of the valley's valuable and interesting living heritage - the scattered remnants of its original vegetation communities.

Contributors / Partners

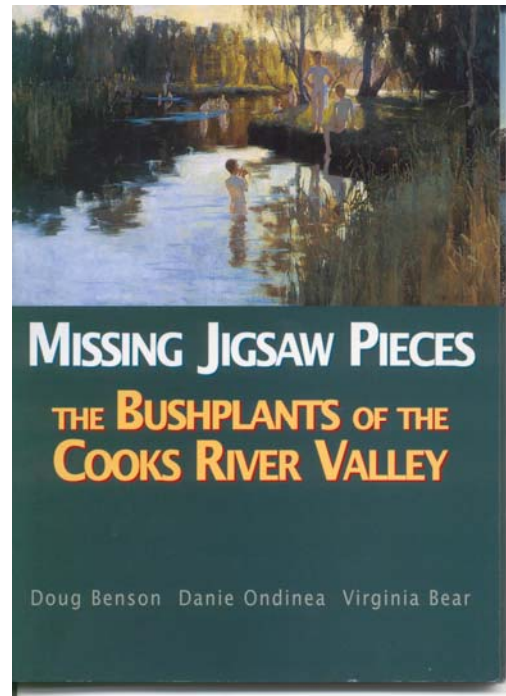
- CRFWG
- Doug Benson and Danie Ondinea (authors); Virginia Bear (illustrator)
- Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney (publisher)
- Greening Australia

Funding

- Doug Benson, Danie Ondinea and Virginia Bear developed text, graphics and layout as an in-kind contribution
- Marrickville, Rockdale, Bankstown, Strathfield and Canterbury Councils: \$3,000 each (for printing)
- Cooks River Catchment Management Committee: \$2,000 (for printing)
- Greening Australia: \$1,000

Outcomes

The beautifully illustrated and informative little book produced through this initiative, provides fascinating and enjoyable reading about remnant vegetation and the natural and social history of the Cooks River Valley. It remains a popular resource for students, professionals and interested members of the community. It can be purchased through the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens and Marrickville and Strathfield Councils.



Cooks River Foreshores Recreation Pamphlet

1998

Project Description / Outcomes

Production of a simple and informative pamphlet and map, to help publicise the foreshores as a natural and recreational resource for the community and introduce the just-completed *Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan*. The pamphlet was distributed by councils to their local communities for many years.

Contributors / Partners

- CRFWG councils

Funding

- CRFWG councils: \$500 each

CRFWG – initiated projects

PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION PROJECTS

NEW

Councils Collaborating for Cooks River

2004 - 05

Project Description

Coordination of the Cooks River Foreshores Working Group to facilitate regional collaboration amongst the foreshore councils and other stakeholders, assist councils in translating strategic objectives into on-ground results and assist DIPNR and the councils with implementation of the CRFIP.

Contributors / Partners

- CRFWG (Project management)
- Bankstown, Burwood, Canterbury, Marrickville, Rockdale, Strathfield, City of Sydney and City of Botany Bay Councils
- NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources
- Sydney Water
- RailCorp

Funding

- Burwood, Canterbury, City of Sydney, Marrickville, Rockdale, Strathfield Council and City of Botany Bay Councils: \$33,360 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW DIPNR, Cooks River Foreshores Improvement Program (Round 1): \$33,360

Status

Thanks to the additional resources provided by the CRFIP grant, the CRFWG Coordinator's working hours were increased by 33% from late September 2004, increasing the capacity of the Coordinator to facilitate the achievement of CRFWG, CRFSP and CRFIP objectives.

COMPLETED

Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan

1997

Project Description

See 'About the CRFWG', above.

Contributors / Partners

Cooks River Regional Working Party, comprising:

- Canterbury, Marrickville and Strathfield Councils
- Cooks River Catchment Management Committee
- Environment Protection Authority
- Greening Australia
- Department of Land and Water Conservation

Funding

- Canterbury, Marrickville and Strathfield Councils
- Department of Land and Water Conservation

Outcomes

The CRFSP remains a valuable management tool, guiding the foreshore councils and other stakeholders in the improvement, restoration and enhancement of the Cooks River foreshores and the river system as a whole. Its strategies and restoration principles have guided all of the work presented in this Report.



Preparations for the CRFSP launch

Member – initiated projects

The following is only a partial listing of the many projects initiated and run by CRFWG members to implement the strategies of the *Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan*. Among the projects not included here are the numerous stormwater quality improvement projects, such as the installation of gross pollutant traps and community education programs, which were developed primarily on the basis of the *Cooks River Stormwater Management Plan* (PPK 1999).

ACCESS, RECREATION AND USE PROJECTS

NEW

Dean Reserve River Crossing and Stage 3 Upgrade, Strathfield

Project Description

Design and construction of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across Cooks River near Dean Reserve to improve access to the Bay-to-Bay Cycleway from the western side of the river. Associated works will include construction of a shared access pathway and planting of indigenous vegetation along the western bank and further enhancements to Dean Reserve, a former garbage tip site which Council has rehabilitated and is gradually transforming into a regional public park.

Contributors / Partners

- Strathfield Council

Funding

- Strathfield Council: \$150,000 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW DIPNR, Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$150,000

Status

Community consultations held for the preparation of a plan of management for the site elicited strong support for the plan from the community. Council is preparing a draft of the plan to present to the community for comment and will undertake various cultural, heritage and environmental studies for the site in 2005.



New promenade at Tempe Reserve

Cooks River Cycle Path Improvement Project, Burwood

Project Description

The project aims to: (1) prepare a masterplan for the foreshores within Burwood, to ensure future developments protect and enhance landscape, visual, recreational, natural and cultural values; and (2) identify and recommend options for improving paths and on-road traffic facilities for path users.

Contributors / Partners

- Burwood Council

Funding

- Burwood Council: \$30,000 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW DIPNR, Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$30,000

Status

A consultant engaged to undertake the study is expected to deliver a study report in early 2005.

Cooks River Bikepath (Stage One), Waterside Crescent, Earlwood

Project Description

Construction of a new sealed pedestrian and cycle path along the south bank of Cooks River from Thompson St to Younger Ave, Earlwood.

Contributors / Partners

- Canterbury Council

Funding

- Canterbury Council: \$75,000 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW DIPNR, Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$75,000

Status

Construction commenced in May 2004, and the path is now open to public use between Thompson St and Foord Ave (75% of the project). Completion of the section between Foord Ave and Younger Ave is expected by June 2005.

Member – initiated projects

CONTINUING

Tempe Recreational Reserve Redevelopment

2000 -

Project Description

Redevelopment of the site used for construction of the New Southern Railway into a major regional recreational facility. In addition to providing opportunities for indoor and outdoor, active and passive recreation, a primary objective is to manage water on the site so as to prevent negative impact on Cooks River.

Contributors / Partners

- Marrickville Council

Funding

- Marrickville Council: \$6.2 million
- Grants: \$800,000
 - Metropolitan Greenspace Program
 - NSW Department of Sport and Recreation
 - NSW Government, Estuary Management Program
 - NSW Waterways Authority

Outcomes

The landform was altered and bio-swales created to direct stormwater and flood runoff through an artificial wetland constructed on site. The wetland provides water filtration and storage/detention as well as habitat for migratory birds. Pedestrian and cycle paths provide access to the foreshores and to newly constructed indoor and outdoor sport and recreational facilities. See also 'Cooks River Valley Garden'.

Upgrading of Cooks River Foreshore Cycleway, Canterbury

Project Description

Upgrading of cycle path on the northern bank of Cooks River between Canterbury Road and Charles St, Canterbury.

Contributors / Partners

- Canterbury Council

Funding

- Canterbury Council
- RTA

Outcomes

Completed June 2004

NATURAL CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROJECTS

NEW

Plan of Management for Campsie Bushland, Canterbury

Project Description

Preparation of a Plan of Management for the foreshore reserve at the end of 3rd Ave, Campsie. The site contains remnants of the Cooks River/Castlereagh Ironbark Forest Endangered Ecological Community and is threatened by weed-infestation and its proximity to urban development.

Contributors / Partners

- Canterbury Council

Funding

- Canterbury Council: \$10,000 (cash and in-kind)
- NSW DIPNR, Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (Round 1): \$10,000

Status

The Plan of Management is currently under preparation.

Tempe Lands Remediation and Revegetation

Project Description

Remediation, landscaping and revegetation of a former tip site to create a new public park. Remediation included measures to prevent further contamination of Alexandra Canal by leachates from the site.

Contributors / Partners

- Marrickville Council

Funding

- Marrickville Council: \$17 million

Status

Site remediation is underway and expected to be completed, along with landscaping, in 2005.

Member – initiated projects

CONTINUING

Cooks River Valley Garden

2001 -

Project Description

Located within Tempe Recreational Reserve, this living museum showcases over 80 species native to the Cooks River Valley. Plant selection has been based on the book, *Missing Jigsaw Pieces*, produced by the CRFWG in 1999. Planting and maintenance work is done by the local community with support from Council.

Contributors / Partners

- Murrumbidgee Council
- Murrumbidgee Community Nursery (plants)
- Community volunteers

Funding

- Murrumbidgee Council: \$50,000+ (cash and in-kind)
- Commonwealth Government, Natural Heritage Trust: \$9,900
- Greenweb Sydney (devolved NHT grant): \$16,800
- Community volunteers: 142 hours valued at \$2,840 in 2004 alone (in-kind)

Outcomes

The garden is extensive and growing beautifully. Visitors can see and, with the help of informational signage, learn about local native species and find out which plants are suitable for planting in their gardens.

COMPLETED

Transformation of Dean Reserve from tip to park - Stages 1 & 2

1998 - 2001

Project Description

Conversion of the unused and degraded site of a former brick pit, which had been backfilled with waste, into an inviting passive recreation facility for local residents and users of the Bay to Bay Cycleway.

Contributors / Partners

- Strathfield Municipal Council
- Community volunteers

Funding

- Strathfield Municipal Council: \$170,000 (Stage 1); \$126,000 (Stage 2)

- NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, Metropolitan Greenspace Program (1998): \$85,000 (Stage 1)

Outcomes

Stage 1 involved site remediation and initial landscaping, including the planting of over 25,000 trees with the help of community volunteers. In Stage 2, a pathway network was constructed and a parking area sealed. Council is currently planning further enhancements (Stage 3), with the assistance of a CRFIP Round 1 grant.

Kyeemagh Boat Ramp Reserve Landscape Improvement Plan

2000

Project Description

Preparation of a landscape plan to guide future riverbank restoration along Muddy Creek and enhancement of the Boat Ramp Reserve with public amenities and plantings.

Contributors / Partners

- Rockdale City Council

Funding

- Rockdale City Council: \$20,000

Outcomes

The Landscape Plan was completed in 2000. Council prepared a Plan of Management in 2002, and in July 2004, applied for funding under Round 2 of the CRFIP to implement elements of the Landscape Plan including foreshore landscaping and construction of a new access road into the Boat Ramp parking area.

Regeneration of Cooks River Clay Plain Scrub Forest

Remnant

2001

Project Description

Regeneration of threatened Cooks River Clay Plain Scrub Forest remnant bushland, located within the rail corridor near Rookwood Cemetery.

Contributors / Partners

- Rail Access Corporation
- Rail Services Australia

Member – initiated projects

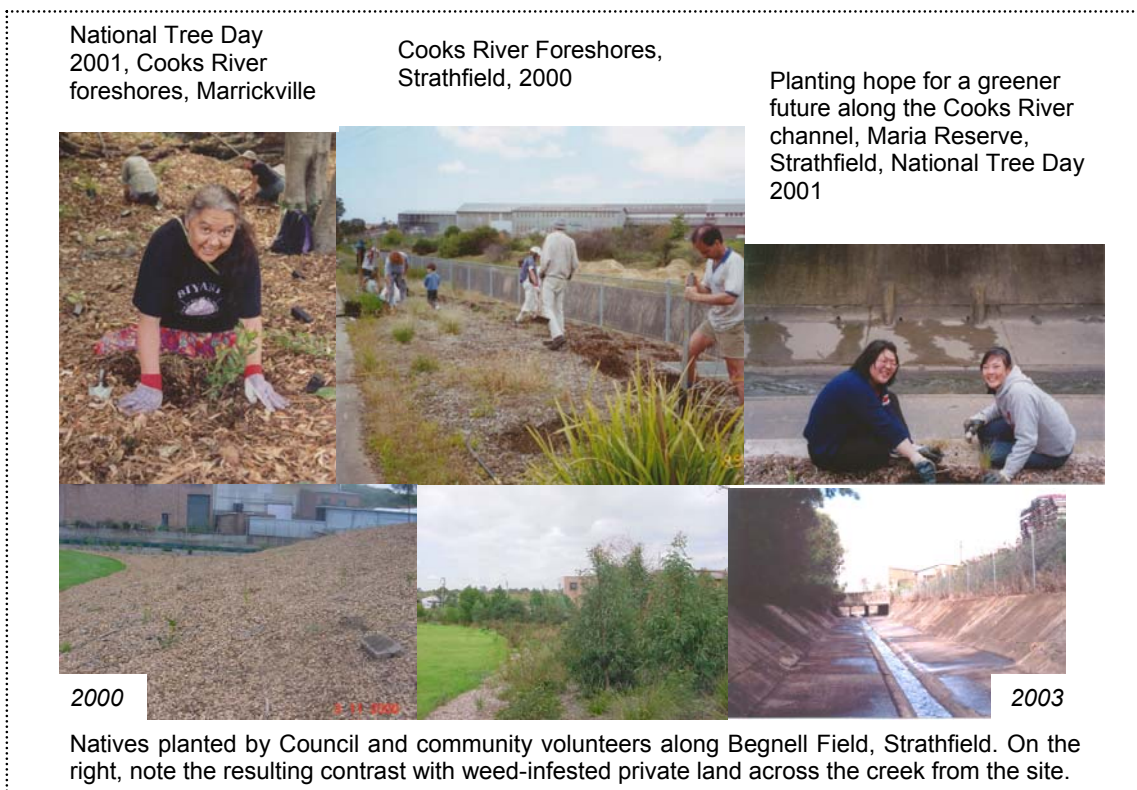
Foreshore revegetation projects

The foreshore open space corridor remaining along Cooks River and its tributaries provides a unique opportunity to recreate a network of green corridors which can provide valuable habitat to wildlife, as well as beauty and pleasant relief to humans in an otherwise a densely developed urban catchment.

Planting along the foreshores pre-dates the CRFSP, but since completion of the Plan the foreshore councils have increasingly adopted its recommendations that species endemic to the Cooks River Valley and appropriate to each particular site be planted, and that, as much as possible, materials propagated from locally provenanced seed be used.

Such practices will gradually extend and build linkages between the few surviving pockets of remnant vegetation scattered about the catchment, helping to ensure the survival of many valuable and threatened species and plant communities.

Revegetation projects are funded from a wide range of sources, including councils, State and Commonwealth Government agencies and private contributors. Perhaps the most important contributors, however, are the countless community volunteers who generously give of their time and energy to pull weeds and put plants in the ground, through their participation in ongoing community bushcare groups and periodic planting days, many of which are organised and supported by the councils.



Some of the revegetation and remnant restoration work sites supported by CRFWG Councils

Murrumbidgee

Kendrick Park
Murrumbidgee Golf
Course
Steel Park
Tempe Reserve
Warren Park
Cooks River
foreshores

Strathfield

Begnell Field
Coxs Creek Reserve
Dean Reserve
Elliot Reserve
Ford Park
Freshwater Park
Gregory St
Maria Reserve
Water Street

Canterbury

Beaman Park
Cooks River Reserve, Campsie
Gough Whitlam Park
Heynes Reserve
Hughes Reserve
Rosedale Reserve
Stafford Walk
Third Ave Reserve, Campsie
Jackson Place, Earlwood

Rockdale

Kyeemagh dunes
Kyeemagh Boat
Ramp Reserve

Bankstown

Chullora
Wetlands
Norfolk Reserve

Member – initiated projects

WATER AND RIVERBANK MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

COMPLETED

Cooks River Foreshores Restoration Project – Steel Park to Warren Park

1998 - 2000

Project Description

Restoration of the banks between Steel Park and Warren Park, to stabilize the banks and prevent erosion, thereby reducing the quantities of sediment entering the river. Works included natural rock armouring, soil stabilizing with textiles and revegetation with native species.

This project was highlighted as a demonstration site in the CRFSP.

Contributors / Partners

- Marrickville Council

Funding

- Marrickville Council
- DLWC, Estuary Management Program



Completed riverbank restoration works near The Warren Park, Marrickville

CHARACTER AND CULTURAL HERITAGE PROJECTS

COMPLETED

Restoration of the Cooks River and Wolli Creek Sewer Aqueduct

Project Description

The Cooks River and Wolli Creek Sewer Aqueduct is over 100 years old and listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. Repairs were made to the aqueduct itself, and the three sewer conduits located upon it, which are still in use, were repaired and painted, making the structure a far more interesting and attractive feature of the landscape.

Contributors / Partners

- Sydney Water

Aboriginal Site Survey of the Cooks River (Marrickville)

2000 – 2002

Project Description

Australian Museum Business Services carried out this Aboriginal Site Survey of the Cooks River for Marrickville Council to provide a source of information on Aboriginal use of and occupation along Cooks River, and to provide conservation and planning guidelines to assist in the protection and use of sites identified in the study. The project implemented a recommendation in the CRFSP that further research into Aboriginal history of the river be undertaken.

Contributors / Partners

- Marrickville Council
- Australian Museum Business Services

Funding

- Marrickville Council (cash and in-kind)

Outcomes

The Aboriginal Site Survey for Cooks River was completed in 2002.

CRFWG operations

MEETINGS

Regular CRFWG meetings are held six times per year, in alternate months. Meetings are hosted by the member organizations on a rotating basis. Additional extraordinary meetings and planning workshops are held as needed.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Administrative support for each of the CRFWG-managed projects is provided by one of the councils participating in that project, as agreed by the Project Steering Committee.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

Marrickville Council has administered employment of the CRFWG Coordinator since 1999, when the first Coordinator was engaged.

The Coordinator's position is hosted by one of the member councils, with the host council providing a fully equipped work station, use of office equipment and supplies, access to technical and administrative support, and other normal requirements of a council employee.

The Coordinator's position has been hosted by Strathfield Municipal Council since 2002. Prior to that it was hosted by Marrickville Council.

FUNDING FOR CRFWG COORDINATION

Councils financial contributions towards coordination of the CRFWG increased during the year, from \$13,000 from four councils in FY 2003 – 04, to \$19,000 from six councils in FY 2004 – 05. The increase was due to the welcome decisions by Burwood and City of Sydney Councils to contribute for the first time, and by Canterbury Council to double its contribution over the previous year.

In June 2004, DIPNR announced its first contribution towards coordination of the CRFWG, through the award of a CRFIP grant for \$33,360, to the Councils Collaborating for Cooks River Project.

With the increased funding available, it was possible to increase the Coordinator's hours from three to four days per week from September 2004. Details of contributions are shown in the following table.

Financial and in-kind contributions for CRFWG Coordination

Contributor	Cash contribution		In-kind contribution 2004	Nature of in-kind contribution
	FY 2003 – 04	FY 2004 - 05		
Bankstown City Council			\$3,900	Staff time and meeting support
Burwood Council		\$1,000	7,800	Staff time and meeting support
Canterbury City Council	\$3,000	6,000	3,900	Staff time and meeting support
City of Sydney Council		2,000	3,900	Staff time
Marrickville Council	5,000	5,000	7,800	Staff time and meeting support
			4,000	Administration and overheads for employment of Coordinator
Rockdale City Council	2,000	2,000	3,900	Staff time and meeting support
Strathfield Municipal Council	3,000	3,000	3,900	Staff time and meeting support
			5,000	Hosting of the Coordinator's position
DIPNR (CRFIP Round One grant)		33,360	3,900	Staff time and meeting support
Sydney Water			3,900	Staff time and meeting support
RailCorp			3,900	Staff time and meeting support
Total	\$13,000	\$52,360	\$55,800	

CRFWG operations

EMPLOYEES

Coordinator Judy Pincus

CORE MEMBERS*

Bankstown City Council	Nerida Williams, Catchment Management Officer
Burwood Council	Marnee Harlour, Environmental Project Officer Peter Cormican, Manager Engineering
Canterbury City Council	David Bell, Team Leader Environmental Issues (Kaarina Sarac) Louise Rhodes, Environmental Policy Officer
City of Sydney	Peter Donley, Manager Traffic & Road Management
Marrickville Council	Nell Graham, Acting Manager Environmental Services Jan Orton, Manager Environmental Services Leigh Trevitt, Landscape Coordinator
Rockdale City Council	Nadine Croker, Landscape Architect
Strathfield Municipal Council	Jon Stiebel, Natural Resources Officer Matt Williams, Environmental Projects Officer
Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources	Daylan Cameron, Senior Natural Resource Officer, Coasts & Estuaries, Sydney/South Coast Region
Sydney Water Corporation	(Layla McNeil, Special Projects Manager – Stormwater) Guy Hodgson, Stormwater Programs Project Coordinator
RailCorp	Peter Semple, Senior Natural Resources Officer

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

City of Botany Bay	Oman Wijayaratna, Senior Engineer
Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation	(Colin Gale) Leanne King, Chairperson
Georges Riverkeeper Program	Simon Annabel, Georges Riverkeeper
NSW Department of Environment and Conservation	Kieran Horkan, Principal Officer Sydney Catchments Ray Fowke, Conservation Planning Officer, NPWS
NSW Department of Primary Industries	(Cameron Belcher) Jeanine McGregor, Fisheries Officer
NSW Waterways Authority	Graeme Dunlavia, Operations Manager, Botany Bay Port Hacking
Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (Interim)	Peter Dixon, Executive Officer, Sydney Metropolitan CMA Judy Christie, Regional Natural Resource Management Facilitator
Total Environment Centre	Leigh Martin, Urban Campaigner

* Brackets () indicate the person ceased to be involved part-way through the year.

Cooks River Foreshores Working Group
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Bankstown, Burwood, City of Sydney, Canterbury, Marrickville, Rockdale and Strathfield Councils, in partnership with the Department of
Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, Sydney Water and RailCorp.