

CATCHMENT NEWS

A newsletter brought to you by NICA

ISSUE 1

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Stories in this newsletter



Vessels and Mooring



A new year with NICA



Catchment management

Welcome to CATCHMENT NEWS.....

This is the first edition of our new regular newsletter. It is part of a more comprehensive and efficient communications and public relations strategy which we hope to roll out during the year.

In each edition of CATCHMENT NEWS we will present regular articles to give you a better understanding of how, and why, we are addressing our governance, planning, programming, and implementation; what's happening in Committee, some background material about the catchment, and feature articles to bring you up to date on projects and initiatives – both our own, and in the community.

CATCHMENT NEWS complements our successful MWN series, which will continue, and we look forward to further coverage of our activities in the local public media. Together they can inform, and connect us with Committee, the Members, and the Community.

We look forward to receiving your comments and contributions.

As we start a new year with NICA.....



Toward the end of last year, we revised the Constitution, to make it easier to use and understand. It's a contemporary document and it can be easily amended as we move forward, if it needs to be.

Now our attention is drawn to further important milestones we need to reach this year. They will involve improvements in our planning and processes, the way we present to the community, and always looking to increasing our membership and skills.

Most importantly, we need to establish, by engagement with our Members and Stakeholders, our Purpose, our Goal, and our medium term Objectives. Once these are in place we can set about preparing a Program approach to our activities, which will give us visibility, and enhance our ability to attract funding for various activities.

We need to go about it systematically, recognizing the skills inherent in our membership base, both on, and off Committee – skills that must be brought forward by you, the Members. We cannot afford to lose, or ignore, expertise or experience, and we should all be part of the process. Management Committee will value your contributions.

In the last few months, we have revisited the work of the Strategic Working Group in 2017, and begun an examination of how we can develop and apply their recommendations. It is a process which will involve you from time to time, and we began at our recent Monday with NICA where we looked at the Purpose and Goal suggested by the Strategic Working Group; together with a set of Objectives for the next 10 years, based once again on the Working Groups report, previous work by Committee, and more recent analysis by Members.

New year with NICA cont'd

It was pleasing to see the interest shown by the Members attending, in what has been achieved so far. It is likely that we will hold further sessions with Members, and we hope you will continue to contribute.

The Purpose of an organisation has been described as being the fundamental reason why the organisation exists. NICA focuses on river and catchment care, so our Purpose can be stated as

“To support community participation in integrated planning and management of the Noosa River Catchment”

(Elsewhere in this edition of CATCHMENT NEWS we briefly revisit some of the history of *“integrated catchment management”*).

Our Goal is what we plan to achieve, and it has been suggested by the Working group that our Goal should be

“Conservation and ecologically sustainable use of the Noosa River and catchment”

These two simple statements give us a clear foundation to go to the next step of setting Objectives – a series of statements against which we can judge our performance.

At MWN we asked you to indicate your own perception of, and agreement with, a set of proposed Objectives. Each of these Objectives can be correlated with a number of past, current, or proposed future activities. Our analysis of your responses will help us refine the list to a more manageable working document. In summary, the Objectives listed cover

- *Conservation and restoration of natural habitat*
- *Appreciation and stewardship of the catchment*
- *Understanding the interactions between land, water, and related resources*
- *An on-going catchment wide approach*
- *Improved awareness and understanding of issues e.g. climate change*
- *Supporting science based intervention*
- *Water quality reporting and action*
- *Improved land management*
- *Community education resources and programs*
- *Collaboration with others*
- *A range of funding resources and associated opportunities*

If you would like to see more detail on any of these, or add any commentary of your own, please let us know.

While this is important work, as we proceed to action planning, (a Catchment Care Program), Committee recognises that we need to be thinking in parallel about a wider set of parameters like leadership and devolution of project responsibilities; a professional (and scientific) skills base; and better use of our volunteer base. In particular, are we providing enough (and the right) opportunities for our existing and new Members?

We appreciate the contributions that have already been made - throughout the year, we look forward to your continuing comments, advice, and assistance.

Management Committee

January 2019

Vessels and Mooring Structures



A NICA RiverWatch survey in July 2018 identified a range of management issues related to vessels and associated infrastructure on the lower Noosa River. The survey results document the location and condition of all vessels (houseboats and other medium length vessels) and mooring structures, between Lake Cooroibah and the river mouth.

A comprehensive report on this survey written by Peter Hunnam is available on the NICA website:

<http://noosariver.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Noosa-RiverWatch-Report-July-2018-Vessel-Survey.pdf>

A total of 111 vessels (other than small dinghies and kayaks), 57 moorings, and 144 jetties/wharfs were recorded; as well as boat ramps, slips and launch sites, vessels on anchor, and tied to shore.

These figures demonstrate how the lower river and estuary have become urbanised, with the attendant issues of ecological damage, water quality, sediments, and spillage etc. The list of identified impacts extends to on-shore activities and loss of public foreshore access, visual pollution attributable to poorly maintained vessels, and river bed damage caused by unsuitable moorings.

The report calls for better long term outcomes from mooring plans, low impact moorings, and foreshore rehabilitation.

Noosa Council's draft Noosa River Plan 2018 includes a section on "*Anchoring, mooring and living on the river*" which broadly covers similar issues, including the lack of effective regulatory control. The limited control which the Queensland Government exercises under the Transport Infrastructure- Waterways Management Regulation 2012 has been the subject of discussions between Council and Maritime Safety Qld (MSQ) for many years.

It is understood that a "task force" has now been established to examine the regulations applying to waterways in order to achieve a simplification and rationalisation, with the possibility of delegating effective management to local authorities where appropriate. In the meantime, Council has limited ability to affect significant improvement.

The draft River Plan is now closed for comment, but you can access and read it from Council's website at:

<https://yoursay.noosa.qld.gov.au/37071/documents/82598>

Integrated Catchment Management



Integrated catchment management or ICM is a strategy for achieving balanced use of land, water and biological resources. Projects and other actions supporting that strategy are often initiated, or undertaken directly, by local committees and organisations made up of representatives of interested agencies, and individuals.

Integrated catchment management began in the Noosa River catchment in 1996 with the establishment of the Noosa River Catchment Coordinating Committee (NRCCC). In 1997, a reference group comprising the NRCCC and Noosa Council was established for the purposes of incorporating ICM principles in the Noosa Shire Planning Scheme being prepared at that time. In 2001, the NRCCC became the Noosa River Catchment Association Inc.

In 1997/98, the Noosa River catchment was one of four catchments in Local Authorities in Qld, chosen for a pilot study of the effectiveness of this joint approach between the community and local government planners.

ICM is based on knowledge of natural ecosystems, geographic catchment units, the best available information, and subsequent informed action by individual users and agencies; all in a constantly changing physical and biological catchment environment.

In 1997, NRCCC commissioned the preparation of the *Noosa River Catchment Management Strategy* (CMS), through a process of community consultation and information field days. The CMS was published by NICA in 2001, and reprinted as a second edition in 2008.

Integrated Catchment Management contd

You can find the CMS on our website at:

<http://noosariver.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/NoosaRiverCatchmentManagementStrategy-July-2001-text-and-dividers.pdf>

The document follows a systematic and analytical approach to each of six broad objectives;

- Biodiversity and habitat
- Land management practice
- Water resources management
- River and stream management
- Fisheries management
- Research and understanding

Against each objective, the process identifies and examines relevant issues, and then formulates strategies, actions, and priorities for addressing those issues; and nominates appropriate agencies to progress the solutions.

The actions listed at the time are very much “in principle”, and much of the contextual detail is now dated. However it was clearly intended as a guide for community action, and one that would be rigorous enough to withstand the test of time. To that extent, it is an important document in the history of catchment planning for the Noosa River; and one that is still often referenced in contemporary studies.

In Committee....



NICA Management Committee held its first meeting for the New Year on 15 January.

You may recall that the Strategic Working Group recommended that the functions of Management Committee should be strengthened by directing specific activities to individual Committee members, and appointing sub committees to oversee development and implementation of, e.g. specific projects and activities.

Committee has now established a Working Group to look specifically at the design, funding, and implementation of a Gardens for Wildlife project, and is seeking interested Members to assist.

Please contact NICA office if you would like to be part of this Group, or assist in any way.

Management Committee

President:	Bruce Hallett
Vice President:	Bob Tooth
Treasurer:	Tony Haslam
Members:	Kay Southam Phil Meade
Secretary:	Gill Studdock

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