

# Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP)

February 2010



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## **1. Our Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan**

The four platforms underpinning the Strategic Plan place Central Coast’s unique attributes at the centre of our planning; responding to community desires while tapping into opportunities at national and global levels.

These platforms, liveability, sustainability, innovation, and creative energy and distinctiveness, are at the cutting edge of local economic development, competitiveness, and place-based development. They lead five strategic directions for Central Coast and associated recommendations for Council – providing guidance for taking action where it most matters.

Natural resource management (NRM) is encapsulated across the strategic directions as follows:

### **Strategic Direction 1 – The Shape of the Place**

- 1.1 Develop an open space and recreation strategy which adopts a hierarchical approach to the provision of open space within Central Coast
- 1.3 Develop a precinct master plan from the Ulverstone Wharf to Beach Road (including development of a sports precinct)
- 3.4 Complete the Council’s Street Tree Strategy

### **Strategic Direction 2 – A Connected Central Coast**

- 1.2 Develop a range of promotional activities to encourage greater use of walking routes

### **Strategic Direction 3 – Community Capacity and Creativity**

- 1.1 Investigate the feasibility of developing youth-specific spaces

### **Strategic Direction 4 – The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure**

- 1.1 Develop an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP) for Central Coast
- 4.1 Promote and participate in regional, State and national climate change-related initiatives
- 4.2 Investigate and plan for the effects of climate change on the local area
- 4.3 Implement suitable climate change adaptation and/or mitigation strategies
- 4.4 Provide support and assistance to community groups engaged in environmental activities in Central Coast, such as Coastcare and Rivercare

## Strategic Direction 5 – Council Sustainability and Governance

- 1.3 Develop resources to provide clear, consistent guidelines on best practice environmental management
- 5.1 Develop and enhance partnerships with governments, regional authorities, the private sector and community groups in achieving significant community goals
- 5.2 Actively participate in the development and implementation of regional strategies

NRM in Central Coast is about meeting the aspirations of the community and the Strategic Plan to use and conserve our natural assets on Council owned and/or licenced/leased and maintained land.

NRM at Central Coast does not involve itself in issues relating to private property.

This Plan brings together all the aspects of NRM that the Council are involved in and the outcomes that are derived from these components.

Appendix A is a chart that gives an overview of the matters that Council has an input into.



## **2. Our Vision**

The Central Coast Strategic Plan 2009–14, Strategic Directions set out the vision of sustaining built infrastructure and the natural environment by encouraging innovation and investment in Central Coast.

The strategies and key actions are:

1. Invest in and leverage opportunities from our natural environment
2. Contribute to a safe and healthy environment
3. Develop and manage sustainable built environment; and
4. Contribute to the preservation of the natural environment

## **3. Our Assets**

The INRMP focuses on the management of Council owned/managed natural and urban landscapes. The Council's assets stretch from the urban foreshore environment inland to the Leven Canyon and country park reserves; other natural resources include riparian reserves – particularly along the Leven and Forth Rivers; management of vegetation surrounding creeks; foreshore reserves; vegetation situated in road reserves; and town/park trees. Much of this land is used for conservation, recreation and social purposes.

These natural areas are valued for various reasons. Most areas are highly valued and utilised by the community for recreational and tourism purposes. Natural areas in good overall health have the ability to support natural processes and sustain a diverse ecosystem providing habitat for native flora and fauna. Many areas are large enough to sustain vegetation communities and fauna populations.

Threats to these landscapes include misuse; altering the landscape through excavation and vegetation removal; introduction of weed species and pest animals; installation of infrastructure and development; disturbance through recreational activities; vehicle and pedestrian access; encroachment from neighbouring properties; destruction of vegetation for views; loss of soil through erosion – both natural and non-natural; inappropriate fire management; and diseases.

The communities of the Central Coast municipal area are diverse, geographically dispersed and closely connected to the landscapes that surround them. Maintaining vibrant communities and people working on environmental projects is critical for the sustainable management of the Central Coast's natural resources, enterprises and heritage. Maintaining, using and expanding the knowledge held, and the partnerships formed, by the Central Coast and their community are important parts of such a vibrant community. Building relationships with community groups is a vital part of developing the NRM capacity of Central Coast.

## 4. Introduction

### 4.1 Purpose and Role of the Plan

Central Coast has a commitment through its Strategic Plan 2009–2014 to provide an NRM capacity and to promote the sustainable use of natural resources under the jurisdiction and control of the Council.

This includes land owned by the Council, owned by the Crown and leased or licensed to the Council and it does not include **private land**.

The INRMP for the Central Coast Council provides a document that brings together all the aspects and processes for the use and conservation of its natural resources.

### 4.2 What is NRM?

NRM is the management of all activities that use, develop and/or conserve our air, water, land, flora, fauna and the systems they form.

### 4.3 Why NRM?

To develop and maintain a healthy region, the environment, society and economy must all be in good condition and work together. Healthy regions rely on us managing and using our natural resources wisely.



## 5. Cradle Coast Natural Resource Management<sup>1</sup>

### 5.1 Regional NRM

Cradle Coast NRM is one of 56 regional NRM bodies in Australia. Under the Tasmanian NRM Framework and Act 2002, the State Government facilitated the establishment of Regional NRM Committees (Bodies) for each of the three regions of the State.

In the Cradle Coast Region the Regional Committee is hosted by the Cradle Coast Authority. The Committee is responsible for identifying regional NRM priorities, preparing strategies and promoting NRM principles.

In 2005 the Cradle Coast community, through Cradle Coast NRM, developed an integrated natural resource strategy. This regional approach attracts Australian Government (Caring for Our Country) and Tasmanian Government funding, enabling Cradle Coast NRM to assist community groups, landowners and businesses to achieve the goals set out in the Cradle Coast Natural Resource Management Strategy.

**Action:** The Council will continue to participate in regional NRM activities where there are direct benefits to the Central Coast community.

### 5.2 Cradle Coast NRM

“Vibrant communities committed to protecting natural resources and actively involved in managing the resources for their environmental, social and economic benefits and values, to ensure a sustainable future for the Region.”

Cradle Coast NRM is the natural resource management division of the Cradle Coast Authority. Cradle Coast NRM actively assists communities in north-west Tasmania to manage and improve their natural resources to ensure a healthy future for our region.

A not-for-profit organisation, Cradle Coast NRM fosters collaborative management of our region’s natural resources by government, industry, private enterprise and Aboriginal and community groups through the provision of information, resources and technical support.

**Action:** The Council will continue to work in a collaborative manner with Cradle Coast NRM assisting in the management and improvement of natural resources.

### 5.3 Our Partnerships

Good partnerships are an essential component of successful programs and services in natural resource management. Achieving good partnerships involves more than using certain words in

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<sup>1</sup> Cradle Coast NRM website

funding submissions and program plans. It requires thoughtful decisions based on an appreciation of the types of partnership relationships, the situations to which they are suited, the benefits they offer to all partners, and the qualities that support their success.

Cradle Coast works in partnership with businesses and community groups across a number of different sectors to implement the various initiatives and programs arising from the Cradle Coast NRM Regional Plan.

**Action:** The Council will continue to support Cradle Coast NRM in its role of facilitating involvement from community members/groups within Central Coast.

## 6. School Groups

The Central Coast Council has encouraged and established links with the following local schools:

- Ulverstone High School
- Leighlands Christian School
- West Ulverstone Primary School
- Central Primary School

Through engaging school groups to take part in environmental works, the following activities have been undertaken:

- tree planting;
- plant maintenance;
- weed removal;
- plant and weed identification workshops; and
- litter removal.

Assistance and support to undertake these environmental works provides students with an understanding of environmental issues and pressures placed on our natural environments. Through involving students in various environmentally focused activities they are able to learn the importance of preserving these areas and also what they can do individually to make a positive difference.

Through regularly working at a site, students develop a sense of ownership and are able to notice positive improvement to the area over a period of time, providing them with a sense of achievement.

Students learn about coastal pressures, how to work safely and as a team, how to identify weed and native plant species, coastal processes, the process and work involved in rehabilitating an area, how to plant native species and the importance of providing good vegetation cover and habitat for local fauna, as well as the importance of litter removal and maintaining a natural site.

**Action:** The Council will continue to provide opportunities for school involvement in environmental works, encouraging participation and providing resources where available. These works will enhance their knowledge of environmental issues and reinforce the need to preserve the natural environment.

## 7. Environmental Groups

Central Coast has the following community groups looking after various locations throughout the municipal area:

- Turners Beach Coastcare;
- Ulverstone Coastcare;
- Turners Beach Friend of the Dunes;
- Riverside Avenue Community Group;
- Penguin Coastcare;
- Sulphur Creek Coastcare.

The Council has adopted the “*Guidelines for the Formation and Management of Volunteer Environmental Groups within the Central Coast Municipal Area*” (the Guidelines).

These Guidelines have been prepared by the Central Coast Council to assist with the management of new and existing volunteer environmental groups.

The Council is privileged to have a number of dedicated groups undertaking beneficial environmental works within its parks and reserves. These Guidelines have been developed to help foster a good working relationship between these groups and the Council.

Many local people have a wealth of knowledge about the natural and cultural history of an area and by joining a volunteer group this knowledge can be used in a positive way.

These groups are an asset to both the Council and the community and their efforts can have both a positive environmental and positive social effect.

**Action:** The Council will encourage individuals to join an existing group; however, if this is not applicable then consideration will be given to the formation of a new group. In accordance with the Guidelines, the Council will provide ongoing support to new and existing groups, through assistance with administration, advice, financial and in-kind support within available resources.

## 8. Central Coast Council Workforce and Contractors

The Council's Parks/NRM Officer provides support and advice to the Works Group in relation to maintaining roadside vegetation, maintenance of vegetation in parks, reserves and open space areas and also on fauna issues as required.

This advice is also provided to various contractors engaged by the Council on parks/NRM projects.

Contractors are engaged at various times to carry out NRM environmental type works and are bound by the processes and procedures the Council has in place.

**Action:** The Council will continue to foster a close working relationship between the workforce and contractors to promote the implementation of best practice NRM.

## **9. Vegetation Management**

To assist in the management of vegetation associated with areas controlled by the Council, a vegetation management process has been implemented.

### **9.1 Vegetation Management Policy**

A Policy has been adopted which aims to ensure that a high standard of vegetation management is achieved and that the protection of existing native and exotic (in certain circumstances) vegetation is promoted.

The Council manages a wide variety of vegetation types that require specialised management from street trees, parks and reserves to cricket and football grounds. This includes vegetation such as grass and exotic and native species from a single planting to a bushland reserve.

### **9.2 Vegetation Management Strategy**

The Vegetation Management Strategy ensures that a high standard of management is achieved aesthetically, environmentally and safely.

Street and park trees are considered an important asset, each requiring individual documents, namely the Street Tree Strategy and the Park Tree Strategy, which will oversee their management. Rural trees will be managed under the Tree Management Manual. These strategies will operate under the Vegetation Management Strategy. They will ensure the protection and enhancement of trees throughout Central Coast for future generations. The Tree Management Manual will provide management techniques and guidelines for all trees.

All vegetation should be managed with the use of these documents and the appropriate Council procedures.

The positive values of vegetation include maintaining biodiversity, providing fauna habitat, erosion control, creating wind breaks, wildlife corridors, improving water quality, nourishing soil, inhibiting weed growth, storing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen that all animals including humans require, improving visual amenity and providing a sense of place. The benefits of street trees are discussed in the Street Tree Strategy.

The negative values associated with vegetation include lost or filtered views, fruit fall, leaf litter, sap drop, bird droppings and shading of properties.

### **9.3 Street Tree Strategy**

Street trees are regarded as an essential and important asset in an urban environment for a variety of health, aesthetic, social, economic and environmental reasons.

The purpose of the Street Tree Strategy is to achieve a co-ordinated, consistent and strategic approach to street tree management.

The aim of the Strategy is to:

- Improve the aesthetic quality of the streetscape for residents and visitors.
- Ensure trees are planted and preserved for future generations.
- Provide a consistent approach to managing tree related problems and responding to residents grievances.
- Increase the number and the sustainability of street trees in urban areas within budget constraints.

The Street Tree Strategy will provide a long-term direction for the implementation of new appropriate and desirable trees and the preservation of existing trees.

The Street Tree Strategy is comprised of three parts including:

- establishing new trees in those identified streets currently without trees;
- preservation of existing trees; and
- substitution of inappropriate or unsafe trees with more desirable species.

**Action:** The Council will continue to implement the requirements of the Street Tree Strategy.

#### **9.4 Park Tree Strategy (under development)**

Park trees are regarded as an essential and important asset in an open space environment for a variety of health, aesthetic, social, economic and environmental reasons.

The purpose of the Park Tree Strategy is to achieve a co-ordinated, consistent and strategic approach to park tree management.

The aim of the Park Tree Strategy is to:

- Improve the aesthetic quality of the parks for residents and visitors.
- Ensure trees are planted and preserved for future generations.
- Provide a consistent approach to managing tree related problems and responding to grievances.
- Increase the number and the sustainability of park trees in the open space areas within budget constraints.

The Park Tree Strategy will provide a long-term direction for the implementation of new appropriate and desirable trees and the preservation of existing trees.

**Action:** The Council will develop a Park Tree Strategy

## 9.5 Tree Management Manual (under development)

The Tree Management Manual is intended as a practical guide to assist all people engaged in decisions or works likely to impact on trees.

Successful tree management involves more than simply planting, pruning and removal of trees.

Careful consideration needs to be made when designing and installing new assets and infrastructure, undertaking repairs to underground services, and undertaking alteration to surface drainage.

Understanding the types of benefits trees provide is essential to making sound decisions and judgments which affect trees.

**Action:** The Council will develop a Tree Management Manual.

## 10. Environmental Days

Each year national initiatives such as Clean Up Australia Day, Weed Busters, Coastcare Week and National Tree Day are carried out.

The Central Coast Council takes a proactive approach in these initiatives by providing assistance with organising events, supplying materials and funding where budgets allow, guidance with selecting sites and assistance with advertising. Financial assistance is only given where events are held on Council owned/managed land. The Council may also organise its own community events. Technical advice is also provided when necessary.

**Action:** The Council will continue to promote Environmental Days as well as offer support and provide assistance to those involved.

## 11. Coastal/Reserve Management

To assist with the management of the coastal environment and some reserves within the municipal area, management plans have been, are being or are proposed to be developed.

Those that are completed or in progress are as follows;

Document	Undertaken By	Stage
Vegetation Management Policy	Central Coast Council	Adopted by the Council
Vegetation Management Strategy	Central Coast Council	Adopted by the Council

Old Nietta Railway Reserve Management Plan	Bushways Environmental Services	Final
Guidelines for the installation of plaques and memorials in parks and open space within Central Coast	Central Coast Council	Adopted by the Council
Street Tree Strategy	Central Coast Council	Adopted by the Council
Guidelines for the formation and management of volunteer environmental groups	Central Coast Council	Adopted by the Council
Reid Street Reserve Management Plan	Central Coast Council	Draft
Riverside Avenue Management Plan	Central Coast Council	Draft
Penguin Creek & Hiscutt Park Management Plan	Central Coast Council	Draft
Sulphur Creek Coastal Reserve , Vegetation and Habitat Management Plan	Bushways Environmental Services	Completed
East Ulverstone Coastal Reserve Vegetation Management Plan	Bushways Environmental Services	Completed
River Park Development Plan	Central Coast Council	In progress
Penguin Habitat Management Plan West Ulverstone Coastal Reserve	Bushways Environmental Services	Completed
Clayton Rivulet Management Plan	Turners Beach Coastcare	Completed
Tea Tree Point Management Plan	Penguin Coastcare	Completed
Central Coast Council Municipal Weed Management Plan	Natural Values Consulting	Completed (requires updating)

Gables Park Management Plan	Central Coast Council	
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Management Plans that are still to be undertaken are shown in Appendix A – Action/Implementation Plan.

## 12 Weeds Management

### 12.1 Vision

To implement an effective, co-ordinated and practical weed management program that minimises the economic, ecological and social impacts of weeds within the Central Coast municipal area.

### 12.2 Goals

- To implement a co-ordinated Municipal Weed Management Program involving all Council managed land.
- To provide a basis for municipal area implementation of statutory weed management responsibilities.
- To continue with the Council’s existing roadside and reserves priority weed mapping and control program undertaken twice yearly (subject to funding).
- To maintain and keep up to date a Municipal Weed Management Plan for the Central Coast municipal area.
- To identify best practice for sustainable weed management, including effective hygiene practices.
- To reduce the incidence and impact of priority weeds.
- To increase community awareness and encourage ownership and participation in weed management.
- To ensure continued support and funding for weed management activities as funding allows.
- Continue to attend municipal weed officer meetings and foster relationships with councils and government agencies

*For further information refer to the Council’s Municipal Weed Management Plan November 2007.*

### 12.3 Weed Mapping

The Council has invested a considerable amount of time in creating and adopting a sustainable priority weed control program in the way of weed mapping. The Weed Mapping and Control program has proven to be very successful in locating and controlling priority weeds within the Council's reserves and roadsides.

Sites are initially mapped for an array of weed species and this data is then analysed and priority weed species are selected. Data collected includes, species name, size of infestation, date recorded and a GPS point. Once priority weeds have been selected the way points are then plotted on to maps enabling staff to easily locate and control weed infestations, all control works are documented. Mapping data is kept up to date with new infestations being recorded when identified; once controlled, infestations are removed from the system. This program was started in early 2009 and four control programs have now been undertaken in Council road reserves and two control programs in selected reserves. There are many benefits from using this system in comparison to conventional weed control methods:

- Enables the Council to prioritise weed control activities within the municipal area, directing funding and resources to works which will provide the greatest long-term benefit.
- Provides the information required to gauge weed control achievements (comparing maps and data from year to year).
- Provides a long-term record of sites containing weeds with long seed life, enabling reliable long-term monitoring and control actions.
- Provides an objective record which maintains knowledge that may otherwise be lost due to staff turnover.
- Enables weed distribution data to be provided to regional and statewide bodies.

The Council will also undertake weed control works under request; however, this is dependent on the location and weed species.

The Council also undertakes a considerable amount of weed control works through general maintenance activities.

**Action:** The Council will continue with weed mapping and priority weed control works as funding allows.



**Appendix A – Action/Implementation Plan**

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action/Document</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
5.1	The Council will continue to participate in regional NRM activities where there are direct benefits for the Central Coast community.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
5.2	The Council will continue to work in a collaborative manner with Cradle Coast NRM assisting in the management and improvement of natural resources.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
5.3	The Council will continue to support Cradle Coast NRM in its role of facilitating involvement from community members/groups within Central Coast.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
6.1	The Council will continue to provide opportunities for school involvement in environmental works, encouraging participation and providing resources where available. These works will enhance student knowledge of environmental issues and reinforce the need to preserve the natural environment.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
7.1	The Council will encourage individuals to join an existing group; however, if this is not applicable then consideration will be given to the formation of a new group. In accordance with the Guidelines the Council will provide ongoing support to new and existing groups, through assistance with administration, advice, financial and in-kind support within available resources.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		

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8.1	The Council will continue to foster a close working relationship between the workforce and contractors to promote the implementation of best practice NRM.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
9.3	The Council will continue to implement the requirements of the Street Tree Strategy.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
9.4	Develop the Park Tree Strategy.	Central Coast Council	2012		
9.5	Develop a Tree Management Manual.	Central Coast Council	2012		
10.1	The Council will continue to advise, support and provide assistance to Environmental Days.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
12.3	Continue with the weed mapping and weed control works as funding allows.	Central Coast Council	Ongoing		
	Turners Beach Vegetation & Fire Management Plan	Central Coast Council	2011		
	Leven Canyon Management Plan	Central Coast Council	2012		
	Municipal Weed Management Plan Update	Central Coast Council	2012		
	Amy Street Green Belt Management Plan (Update)	Central Coast Council	2013		
	Perry–Ling Gardens Management Plan	Central Coast Council	2013		
	Penguin Foreshore & Vegetation Management Plan	Central Coast Council/consultant	2014		