



Wodonga Waterways Community Consultation Report 2015

Overview

For the past two years, the Wodonga Urban Landcare Network (WULN) has been working in partnership with the North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA) and Wodonga Council to develop a plan for the future management of Wodonga's waterways.

WULN sought and received funding for a community engagement process to determine the community's vision and values for the waterways, and to identify any significant issues that needed to be addressed. Vivid Consulting undertook this research and produced a report outlining the feedback received and the opportunities for action identified by the community.

Community Values – highlights from the Report:

“Wodonga retains significant pockets and corridors of remnant bush and a network of creek parks and reserves, which are protected by various strategies and **are increasingly valued by the community** for their amenity.”

“97% of respondents said it is very important or important that the waterways **are green corridors acting as lungs for the city...**”

“99% of respondents believe it is very important or important that the **waterways** are **free of pollution**, and 99% believe it is very important or important that the **waterways** are **free of rubbish**”.

“98% of respondents saying it is very important or important that the waterways are a **habitable environment for native fish, birds and animals**, and 98% also saying it is very important or important that the waterways are **corridors for native species** to move and live amongst the urban population”.

“83% said it is very important or important that the **waterways** are **accessible to the public**, with 82% saying it is very important or important that there is a range of options for people to enjoy the waterways (walking paths, vehicle access)”.

“The Wodonga community's appreciation for its surrounds is clearly evident in the recreational activities undertaken in the natural environment. [Walking and cycling are the two most popular recreational activities undertaken along the waterways](#)”.

“Opportunities for increasing recreation activities alongside and in the waterways are critical, with 90% of community survey respondents saying it is very important or important that the [waterways are places for people to relax, recreate and enjoy](#)”.

“[Improving access](#) to the waterways will be critical in developing Wodonga's recreational and tourism markets, with many residents and tourists looking to cycle, walk, run, fish, swim, kayak/canoe, bird watch, picnic and relax along the waterways”

Source: Vivid Consulting, 2015, Wodonga Urban Landcare Network – Wodonga Waterways Community Consultation Findings Report, Wodonga Urban Landcare Network.





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Where to from Here?

The table below summarises the main recommendations of the report with some discussion points towards progressing these actions.

Recommended Action	WULN	CoW	NECMA	Opportunities to progress
<p>Complete new Wodonga Waterways Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate recommendations of this report. • Undertake a comprehensive engagement program with the Indigenous community to feed directly into the development of the plan. 	*	*	*	<p>NECMA & CoW to lead, WULN to participate and encourage further community input.</p> <p>Opportunities for partnership projects such as creek walks with elders.</p>
<p>Prioritise Waterways in Council Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate new Wodonga Waterways Action Plan into Wodonga 2033 Vision • Prioritise environmental values in future strategic plans for Wodonga. • Include waterways in the overall strategic framework for public open spaces in Wodonga. 		*		
<p>Develop masterplans for each of the waterways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the local indigenous community to identify locations of significance along the waterways and include the preservation of these, • Investigate ways to improve public access to the waterways and include these, • Work with community groups and organisations to promote opportunities 	*	*	*	<p>Partnership projects; cultural heritage walks, develop methods to map/register weeds – citizen science?</p>

Recommended Action	WULN	CoW	NECMA	Opportunities to progress
<p>to be involved in projects listed,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate and ensure a holistic view of weed control, including addressing issues along the entire length of the waterways and not just in Wodonga's urban areas. 				
<p>Develop a waterways signage strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate indigenous culture and history perspectives into the signage strategy and promotional items 		*		Utilise 2015 WRENS interpretation Strategy and learning from WULN group's signage projects
<p>Engage and Educate residents about the waterways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop brochure for each waterway Work with Wodonga TAFE to develop a community education program Develop and implement a social marketing campaign Hold social events (eg community BBQ) for the purpose of educating community about specific waterways topics Incorporate historical photos and information into educational and promotional items Incorporate Fire awareness information at every opportunity Investigate opportunities to hold annual/bi-annual community events along the waterways (such as running and cycling events) 	*	*	*	Partnership projects: shift CoW Neighbourhood BBQ's to parks, connect with Historical Society's current audit
<p>Improve Communications regarding waterways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a "Who to call" document for distribution to community groups and for uploading on the council and NECMA website Promote the online "Report a problem" function on the council website, and include this as a QR code on signage along the waterways Provide a single point of contact for the community when seeking information on land ownership along waterways 	*	*	*	
<p>Improve amenity of waterways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the council's maintenance program to ensure rubbish is removed from the waterways in a timely manner, Work with community groups to instigate maintenance programs for the removal of rubbish from the waterways. 	*	*		