

MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 15 January 2025
Location: Jervis Bay Room, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.02pm

The following members were present:

Clr Patricia White – Chairperson
Clr Selena Clancy
Ms Monica Mudge – (Remotely) – left at 5.45pm
Mr Michael Brungs
Mr Dirk Treloar
Mr Allan Carle

Others present:

Mr Bruce Gibbs – Acting Director City Development
Mr Shane Pickering – Acting Manager Environmental Services
Mr Nigel Smith – Lead Coastal Management
Mr Mark Stone – Lead Floodplain Management
Ms Carla Ganassin – Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development - Fisheries
Mr Greg Britton – Royal Haskoning
Mr John Bucinskas – Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
Ms Barrina South – Heritage NSW
Ms Amanda Pollock – SES

Apologies / Leave of Absence

An Apology was received from Clr Wilkins.

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (Clr White / Dirk Treloar)

That the Minutes of the Southern Coastal Management Program Advisory Committee held on Monday 5 August 2024 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declaration of Interests

Nil

REPORTS

SC24.3 Adoption of the Lake Conjola Coastal Management Program

HPERM Ref:
D24/477320

A presentation was provided to the Committee by Mr Greg Britton - Royal Haskoning. The presentation will be sent via email to the committee members.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Committee endorse that the Lake Conjola Coastal Management Program (CMP) is provided to Council for adoption and submission to the relevant NSW Minister for certification.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Committee defer this item and:

1. Seek further advice and provide a report back to the Committee on:
 - a. The recommendations discussed and
 - b. The role of an Advisory Committee.
2. Advise Council they do not support this recommendation to endorse the CMP in its current form.

CARRIED

POST MEETING NOTE:

Following the presentation, the Committee discussed their concerns endorsing the CMP in its current form. The Committee discussed alternate recommendations on this item and received advice from Council to defer this item to a future meeting to seek clarification on the discussed alternate recommendations in line with the role and purpose of the Committee.

The Committee noted the following concerns:

- Dredging of Lake Conjola as an entrance management activity
- Community concerns
- Costings and funding
- Extensive approvals process
- Not including dredging to maintain a permanently open entrance

On 11 February 2025 an email was provided to the voting members in response to some concerns raised at the meeting, the email addressed parts 1 a) and b) of the above resolution and stated:

Dear Southern CMP Advisory Committee,

I am writing to you to follow up on the Southern Coastal Management Program (CMP) Advisory Committee meeting that was held in Council's Nowra Administration building on Wednesday 15 January 2025.

There were a number of detailed discussions that were had at this meeting, particularly in relation to the potential role of dredging at the Lake Conjola entrance through the CMP and Entrance Management Policy (EMP), and the roles and responsibilities of an advisory Committee to Council per the existing Terms of Reference.

Regarding dredging, Council staff provided in writing via e-mail after this Committee meeting some

additional draft text that is proposed to be included in the Lake Conjola CMP. This additional text describes how Council will consider dredging outside of the CMP. This e-mail correspondence is attached for reference.

Overall, the following approach is proposed:

- Lake Conjola CMP: Council is seeking endorsement from the Committee for the Lake Conjola CMP to be endorsed for adoption by Council. This includes the additional draft text that is proposed to be included in the Lake Conjola CMP which describes how Council will consider dredging outside of the CMP. As discussed, the NSW Coastal Management Framework does not support dredging to keep Lake Conjola Entrance permanently open, and this was not supported by the NSW Government agencies.
- Lake Conjola EMP: The EMP appendix will also be removed (de-coupled) from the CMP, and this will be separately reported to Council, seeking its endorsement. It is noted that the updated EMP provides Council with significantly improved options for entrance management, especially when utilised in collaboration with the proposed Lake Conjola Total Flood Warning System (TFWS).
- Lake Conjola entrance dredging: Council and the State Government will continue to monitor and explore opportunities for dredging separate to both the CMP and EMP, as its own individual and ongoing investigation.

A number of common issues were raised in the CMP consultation and the Committee meeting regarding management of flood events and the affordability of and access to flood insurance. It was highlighted that the community are wanting reduced impacts from smaller, more frequent flood events, but appear to understand and acknowledge that entrance management would be ineffective in infrequent large flood events. It is noted that it is these infrequent larger flood events (typically the 1 in 100 Annual Exceedance Probability) that the insurance industry focus on and the only effective approach to these insurance concerns is the planned relocation and/or raising of existing low-lying buildings and assets. Hence, no EMP Council adopts will have any effect on insurance premiums in Lake Conjola.

Following the certification of the Lake Conjola CMP, adoption and implementation of the updated Lake Conjola EMP and implementation of the proposed TFWS, Council can seek further grant funding to revisit the Lake Conjola Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan with the view to identify contemporary flood mitigation measures which are supported by the Lake Conjola community, aim to reduce the flood affectation of existing low-lying buildings and assets, and would assist with affordability of flood insurance when effectively implemented.

Regarding the roles and responsibilities of an advisory Committee, advisory committees are common and usually have the power to make recommendations but not to make decisions. The recommendations of advisory committees can assist a council in making informed decisions on complex matters. The Committee only have powers to make recommendations on matters for which they have been expressly granted delegation via their Terms of Reference, or, are of a minor administrative nature (for example, meeting times and procedural matters). The Terms of Reference for the Southern CMP Advisory Committee can be found online [here](#).

If the Committee is happy with the additional text for the Lake Conjola CMP and understands their roles as an advisory Committee for Council, a written response via e-mail from each Committee member supporting this **by 26th February 2025** could negate the requirement for another in person, formal Committee meeting to be called. If such a response is received this would be considered an e-mail meeting, and Council would then prepare a report to be tabled at its Ordinary Meeting (OM), seeking the support of Council to adopt the CMP so it can be submitted to the relevant State Government Minister for Certification. A separate report will also be tabled to OM, seeking the adoption of the Lake Conjola EMP.

If the Committee requests a formal, in person Committee meeting, a time can be scheduled at the earliest opportunity.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 6.04pm.

Clr Patricia White
CHAIRPERSON