

PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF THE CUMBERLAND PLAIN (WESTERN SYDNEY)



Be a **VOICE** for western Sydney's environment -

If you have seen something that doesn't look right....

**Emergency pollution incidents
CALL 000**

EnviroLine:

Report any clearing or pollution concerns – If you are unsure if something has been approved for clearing, or something doesn't look right - **CALL 131 555**
We need to be holding people and organisations accountable!

Let them know that there are eyes watching from every direction.

Environmental Defenders Office (EDO)

Uses the law to protect our environment and wildlife, offering a legal centre that can provide advice to ANYONE on legal matters concerning the environment eg. development issues.

For fact sheets, or to find out more visit:

<https://www.edo.org.au/get-advice/>
E: inquiries@edo.org.au
P: Sydney phone: 9262 6989

Approach Local Members of Parliament and others able to make decisions on matters related to the protection and conservation of the western Sydney environment. These people can take issues higher up the chain and encourage discussions at high levels, including Parliament.

Or, contact your local Council – for Bushcare and environmental issues in your local area.

Thanks to all the groups and individuals who made the Forum on the Biodiversity of western Sydney (2020) such a great success, and who contributed to the information compiled herein



'The Cumberland Plain Restoration Program is being funded by the NSW Government through a partnership between the Saving our Species program and the Environmental Trust'



MARK FULLER

PETER RIDGEWAY

What the environmental community said about western Sydney - the Cumberland Plain - and what matters to them in its future protection and restoration



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Western Sydney environmental facts, issues and ideas for improvement, including what we can ask of politicians and decision makers.

Themes include:

- Protection and restoration of the Cumberland Plain
- Fauna conservation
- Creeks, rivers and wetlands
- Indigenous connections
- Land-caring and landholder support





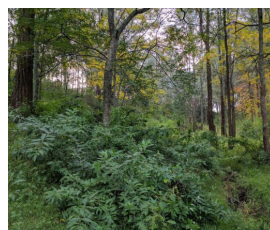
PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF THE CUMBERLAND PLAIN

PETER RIDGEWAY











Facts:






-  The Cumberland Plain contains vegetation communities that have all been classified as threatened. If we lose much more, these ecological communities could eventually become functionally extinct
 - And, yet the Cumberland Plain (western Sydney) is under ever-increasing political pressure for development, with clearing – a listed **'Key Threatening Process'**
 - In the current form, offsets can no longer be found on the Cumberland Plain, however, developments continue with the promise that cleared land will be offset
-  All fragments of remaining bushland in western Sydney lose their resilience with edge effects, and it has never been more important to restore these remnants



How we can improve on this:

-  No more clearing of bushland for development; develop in already cleared areas **ONLY**
-  No more cutting down of old growth trees on the Cumberland Plain
-  Protection of trees that will be future 'old growth' trees
 - Can they be graded with importance like old growth trees?
 - Mark these trees in Plans of Management
-  Intervene in structural issues if necessary
 - Presentations from ecologists to councils, councillors and community
-  Greater promotion and public relations behind Cumberland plain importance
 - Develop a **MAJOR COORDINATED PROACTIVE** awareness raising **MOVEMENT**
-  Hollow log recycling – arborist donations of the timber – developers or those which are chopping down the tree/s to pay for the transportation of this valuable resource
-  Importance placed on hollow trees
 - Including in back burns!
 - Protection given by directing fire away/ watering logs
 - Awareness and training of RFS
-  Put community knowledge pressure on governments/ developers
 - **AWARENESS** then becomes... **COMMUNITY LED!**

Future requests:

-  **CORRIDORS** and **CONNECTIVITY** of remnant threatened ecological communities needs to be prioritised in all future planning and restoration programs
-  Western Sydney wide database with log pile locations, possible sites for distribution, arborist and transport information
-  More money concentrating on site maintenance after restoration
 - Place importance in application phase of funding
-  A tree planting bag removal crew could be employed onto past plantings, where tree guards often strangle and inhibit tree growth
 - This is such an easy task, but is often neglected
-  One central community group for the Cumberland plain
 - Clarify the roles of volunteer land-caring groups in greater Cumberland area - work together - to get better and smarter in targeting goals
 - **UNIFIED VOICE** – by working together
 - Resurrect Cumberland Conservation Network

NO MORE CLEARING OF BUSHLAND FOR DEVELOPMENT; DEVELOP IN ALREADY CLEARED AREAS ONLY

Further information:

Cumberland Plain Woodland species profile:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedSpeciesApp/profile.aspx?id=10191>

Cumberland Plain Woodland final determination (containing species lists):
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/nsw-threatened-species-scientific-committee/determinations/final-determinations/1996-1999/cumberland-plain-woodland-endangered-ecological-community-listing>

Cumberland Plain Woodland fact sheet:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/nature/EECinfoCumberlandPlainWoodland.pdf>

Cumberland Plain ecological communities fact sheet:
<https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/98b16f7a-f5ee-4f9f-ad80-d4dcf576866/files/tsd05cumberland-plain.pdf>

Cumberland Plain Woodland Draft Strategy:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Threatened-species/sos-exhibition-19/draft-strategy/tec-widespread/draft-cumberland-plain-woodland-in-the-sydney-basin-bioregion-strategy>

Cumberland Plain Woodland Recovery Plan:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Recovery-plans/cumberland-plain-recovery-plan-100501.pdf>

Recovering bushland on the Cumberland Plain PDF:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/nature/RecoveringCumberlandPlain.pdf>

Protecting and restoring the Cumberland Plain case study:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/threatenedspecies/08639cumbplnwl.pdf>

State of the Cumberland Plain Report:
<https://greatersydneylandcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GSLN-CCN-State-of-the-Cumberland-2018-GSLN.pdf>

Cumberland Land Conservancy (non-profit group protecting and restoring Cumberland Plain):
<https://www.cumberlandlc.org.au/>

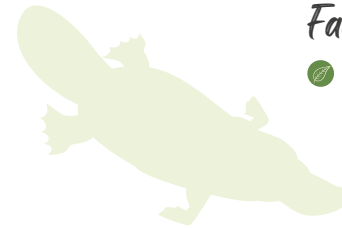
Cumberland Conservation Network (Facebook):
<https://www.facebook.com/CCNSaveCPW/>

Cumberland Plain Conservation Program:
<https://greatersydneylandcare.org/landcare-sos-cumberland-plain-restoration-program/>

<https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/conservation-programs/cumberland-plain-restoration-program>

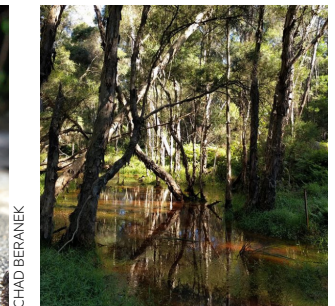


JESS LUMBROSO



Facts:

- ✔ There is currently a net loss of wetlands and water in western Sydney
- **EXAMPLE:** The Badgery's Creek Airport site had 200 dams – now there are only 7 left. All dams have been drained for at least 3km around the airport
- ✔ Water, creeks, rivers and wetlands are used for mechanical/ utilitarian reasons, and are not recognised as the ecosystems that they are
- ✔ All water bodies (including dams) are habitat for turtles, frogs, fish, macro-invertebrates and much more
- ✔ Creeks and Rivers may well be our only wildlife corridors left over time



CHAD BERANEK

Not good:

- Government bodies 'wash' their hands of water issue responsibility
- Doing development backwards ie currently filling in dams and wetlands, or re-directing creeklines, to engineer systems instead of developing around naturally functioning ones
- Urban design – without consideration of water in 'urban design' water velocity and flow impacts further down the catchment

How we can improve on this:

- REDUCE the number of dams, wetlands and water bodies being filled in for development
- Creeks, rivers and Riparian areas should be considered as a **PRIORITY** in all future planning for development – with resources for their restoration and monitoring committed over time
- Water sensitive urban design is needed in new developments, with retrofitting in older ones
- Return cement lined creek channels or water bodies to natural creek/ water environments

Future requests:

- Identify who is accountable for creeks, rivers and wetland management and promote this widely
- More funding for public water quality monitoring tool boxes and programs like Streamwatch (<https://greatersydneylandcare.org/streamwatch/>)
 - Have publically available water quality monitoring tools in every Council
- More promotion and money for grass roots groups like Turtle Rescue
 - Mandatory measures for engaging animal rescues when de-watering any water body
- Riverkeepers for all main river systems across the Sydney, including the Hawkesbury Nepean
 - Funding required by the Government annually to keep our major rivers healthy, regulated and alive – in a coordinated manner

Further information:

Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) – Responsible for the enforcement of water laws in NSW: <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/nrar>

Environment Line (Pollution Line) – Environment Protection Authority (EPA): **131 555** or <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/reporting-and-incidents/report-pollution>

Sydney Water – Manages our drinking and waste water systems, and some stormwater systems – To report a leak or blockage contact Sydney Water: **132 090** or <https://www.sydneywater.com.au/SW/index.htm>

Unsure who to contact – Call your local Council and request to speak with someone from water management/ environment: <https://www.sydney-city-directory.com.au/c-page/councils-local.htm>

ALL WATER BODIES
(INCLUDING DAMS) ARE HABITAT
FOR TURTLES, FROGS, FISH,
MACRO-INVERTEBRATES





PAT DURMAN

Hot topic – Sydney koalas!

- The current planning system in Sydney is broken...
 - KOALAs in south west of Sydney are very topical re fauna conservation, with many development-related issues affecting population, connectivity and overall movement
 - Further development where Koalas are known

How we can improve on this:

- Biobanks and reserves need standards – and should have as a priority management action, the encouragement of **SAFE** connectivity to other biobanking sites or reserves – with viable corridors in place
- Minister for the Environment, Rob Stokes was misled by developers about what is a good width for a Koala corridor – the species requires 450m as a **MINIMUM**
 - Whole corridor width needs to be 500m – this should not be calculated by average (otherwise, in some places widths of only 80m – or less – may exist)
 - Corridors should also be free from noise and lights
 - People can help reduce road kill by driving slower and, not driving at all at dawn or dusk

PEOPLE CAN HELP
REDUCE ROAD
KILL BY DRIVING
SLOWER AND, NOT
DRIVING AT ALL AT
DAWN OR DUSK

Future requests:

- Road crossings and underpasses need to be on all roads within Greater Sydney and beyond, where there is bush on both sides of the road – and where animals, esp the Koala (and other threatened species eg Spotted tailed Quoll) are known to cross
- Roads and Maritime Services could be world class if they worked on road kill hot spots eg Appin road, where Koala crossings/underpasses are desperately required!
 - Five crossings have been recommended by the Chief Scientist for Appin Road at Mount Gilead
- A Koala hospital is needed for Appin Road!

Further information:

Save Sydneys Koalas
<https://www.facebook.com/savesydneyskoalas>

Help save the Koalas and bushland in Campbelltown
<https://www.facebook.com/ctownkoalas>

24 hour Koala rescue service
contact Ricardo: **0434 026 799**

SYDNEY WILDLIFE: **02 9413 4300**

WIRES: **1300 094 737**
or www.wires.org.au

Campbelltown Council Koala Plan of Management:
<https://www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au/LocalEnvironment/Koalatown/CouncilTakesActionOnKoalas>

Advice on the protection of the Campbelltown Koala population:
<https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/independent-reports/campbelltown-koala-advice>

Independent review into the decline of Koala populations in key areas of NSW:
<https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/independent-reports/koala-report>

Inquiry into Koala populations and habitat in NSW:
<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2536>

NSW Koala Strategy:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/programs-legislation-and-framework/nsw-koala-strategy>



MARY ERIAN



Facts:

MAKING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

- Traditional owners of the Cumberland Plain are the Darug (or Dharug) people
- Numerous Local Aboriginal Land Councils represent the various Indigenous peoples across western Sydney and NSW
 - https://alc.org.au/land_council/
- Indigenous connections when restoring the natural environment are not always considered, or made



How can we improve on this:

- **Making cultural connections**
 - Create a space where this can happen
 - Education is hugely important and a great way to enable connection
 - Value is not monetary; cultural connections cannot be accounted for
- **Engagement strategies for working with Traditional Owners – where are these available?**
 - Utilise protocols for working with Aboriginal people (below)
- **Habitat/ artefacts (landholders) – how to determine if you have found an artifact on your land – and what to do if this is the case, or you need to find out more?**
 - https://archive.ils.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/495768/archive-how-do-i-identify-artefacts.pdf
- **Cultural burns - Can these be considered for clearing/ opening up closed ecosystems that are out of balance – on a broader scale?**
 - Cultural burns need to be driven by Traditional Owners for them to be considered 'cultural'
 - <https://www.firesticks.org.au/about/cultural-burning/>

Further information:

Aboriginal Protocols - Welcome and Acknowledgment to country:
<https://landcarensw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/RUN-G2.6-Aboriginal-Protocols-Welcome-to-Country-Acknowledgment-of-Country.pdf>

Aboriginal Protocols – tips and facts:
<https://landcarensw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/RUN-G2.7-Aboriginal-Protocols-Tips-Facts.pdf>

Aboriginal protocols – communication:
<https://landcarensw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/RUN-G2.8-Aboriginal-Protocols-Communication.pdf>

Aboriginal protocols – working with Aboriginal people:
<https://landcarensw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/RUN-G2.9-Aboriginal-Protocols-Working-with-Aboriginal-People.pdf>

(source: Landcare NSW Aboriginal Engagement Program - <https://landcarensw.org.au/projects/aboriginal-communities-engagement-program/>)



Landcare provides advice and support to all groups and individuals carrying out Land-caring activities

Landcare traditionally concentrates works on private land

- In Sydney, where large parcels of private land is sparse, Landcare works across all tenures

Landcare is very flexible, and will take under its umbrella

- Almost any project that will benefit the environment

Landcare is a great tool to bring people together eg Kurrajong Koala Project

- Landcare provides great social outcomes

- Landcare is a great point of call for environmental support outside of Sydney too – and will come out to help with on-ground works eg bushland in Grafton that was under a conservation agreement, was surveyed by Landcare after the bushfires, which resulted in Lantana control.

- Greater Sydney Local Land Services provide financial support and advice to landholders eg removing African olive or Lantana on private property

- This support is enough to help restore your property, with feedback from private landholders observing native wildlife and vegetation returning.

Landcare Australia-wide

<https://landcareaustralia.org.au/>

Landcare in NSW

<https://landcare.nsw.gov.au/>

<https://landcarensw.org.au/>

Landcare Networks in Greater Sydney

Greater Sydney Landcare Network

www.greatersydneylandcare.org

Hawkesbury Nepean Landcare Network

<https://www.facebook.com/hawkesburynepeanlandcare/>

Cattai Hills Environment Network

<https://chen.org.au/>

Parramatta River Catchment Group

<https://www.ourlivingriver.com.au/>

Join a Landcare or Bushcare group – or connect with your neighbouring one:

To find a Landcare or Bushcare group near you – **visit:** <https://landcare.nsw.gov.au/map/>

Or, contact your local Council for Bushcare and environmental issues in your local area.

