

State of the Environment Snapshot

A State of the Environment (SoE) Report is an important management tool which aims to provide the community and Local Council with information on the condition of the environment in the local area to assist in decision-making.

Since 2007, the Councils of the Greater Central West Region of NSW (see map) have joined to produce Regional SoE Reports as part of Council reporting requirements.

Changes to NSW legislation mean that Councils are no longer required to produce SoE Reports each year, but only once every four years, in the year of the Council election.

However, the participating Councils have decided to continue reporting on an annual basis so that they can provide a detailed Regional SoE report that covers trends in the intervening years.

This is a brief snapshot of data for the Bathurst Local Government Area in 2018-19 across a range of environmental indicators as shown in the tables below. The tables provide an understanding of trends by comparing this year's data with an average of previous years.

2018-19 Highlights

- ↑ The amount of office paper used by Council in 2018-19 was significantly lower than previous years due to improved processes in the Records and Finance sections of Council.
- ↑ Water consumption in 2018-19 was significantly lower than the three previous years in response to the ongoing drought.
- ↓ The number of hours that environmental volunteers worked on open space projects fell to its lowest level in the past four years.
- ↑ Council's electricity consumption in 2018-19 was lower than each of the three previous years.
- ↑ The average amount of waste generated per person in 2018-19 was lower than each of the three previous years.

Land

Issue	Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Trend
Contamination	Contaminated land sites - Contaminated Land Register (number)	0	0	0	0	→
	Contaminated land sites - potentially contaminated sites (number)	391	398	500	635	↓
	Contaminated sites rehabilitated (number)	2	4	3	2	↓
Erosion	Erosion affected land rehabilitated (ha)	0	0	0	0	→
Land use planning and management	Number of development consents and building approvals	664	732	724	661	↑
	Landuse conflict complaints (number)	5	5	1	0	↑
	Loss of primary agricultural land through rezoning (ha)	0	29	0	0	↑
Minerals & Petroleum	Number of mining and exploration titles	83	86	73	87	↓
	Area covered by mining and exploration titles (ha)	78,638	110,000	106,000	109,000	↓

↑ improvement → no or little change ↓ worsening trend

Note - the trend is based on comparing the average of the three previous years of reporting with 2018-19

People and Communities

Issue	Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Trend
Active community involvement	Environmental volunteers working on public open space (hrs)	2,297	3,224	2,734	2,260	↓
	Number of environmental community engagement programs	11	12	12	12	↑
	Number of growers markets/local food retailers specialising in local food	4	5	5	5	↑
Community Impacts	Number of days that air pollution maximum goals for particulate matter were exceeded	1	0	3	11	↓
Indigenous Heritage	Number of Indigenous sites on AHIMS register	259	275	300	328	↑
	Inclusion in DCPs & rural strategies (Yes or No)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	→
	Extent of liaison with Indigenous communities (self-assessed from 0 = none to 3 = High)	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	→
	Development approvals on listed Indigenous sites (number)	0	1	1	1	↓
	Number of Indigenous heritage management actions/responses	0	0	0	0	→
Non-Indigenous Heritage	NSW Heritage Items (number)	34	34	34	34	→
	Locally listed heritage items (number)	331	341	342	342	↑
	Actions to protect non-Indigenous heritage (including management plans) (number)	5	6	6	8	↑
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists demolished/degraded in past year (number)	0	0	1	0	↑
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists renovated/improved in past year (number)	6	10	6	22	↑

Water and Waterways

Issue	Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Trend
Surface & Ground Water Quality	Average salinity levels in selected streams (EC)	397				
	<i>E.coli</i> remote from wastewater treatment plants (per 100ml)	295	810	1,200	890	↓
	Average Total Nitrogen in selected streams (mg/L)	11				
	Average Total Phosphorus in selected streams (mg/L)	0.26				
	Average Turbidity in selected streams (NTU)	5.4				
Riparian	Riparian vegetation recovery actions (number)	11	10	9	8	↓
	Riparian vegetation recovery area (ha)	13	10	2	3	↓
Industrial/ Agricultural Pollution	Load Based Licencing Volume (kg)	51,559	62,439	47,068	46,197	↑
	Exceedances of license discharge consent recorded (number)	0	0	2	2	↓
	Erosion & Sediment Control complaints received by Council (number)	14	16	20	44	↓
Stormwater Pollution	Number of gross pollutant traps installed	5	7	7	7	↑
	Total catchment area of GPTs (ha)	862	863	863	863	→
	Water pollution complaints (number)	20	14	20	12	↑
Town Water Quality	Number of instances drinking water guidelines not met	0	0	0	0	→
	Number of drinking water complaints	142	84	87	41	↑
Water extraction	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from surface water sources	231	235			
	Volume of surface water permissible for extraction under licences (GL)	30	30			
	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from groundwater resources	1,508	1,533			
	Volume of groundwater permissible for extraction under licences (GL)	2	2.3			
	Actual volume extracted through groundwater licences (GL)	0.01	0.01			
Council water consumption	Area of irrigated Council managed parks, sportsgrounds, public open space (ha)	132	132	134	134	→
	Water used by council for irrigation (including treated and untreated) (ML)	237	246	434	337	↓
Town water consumption	Annual metered supply (ML)	5,719	5,720	6,042	4,875	↑
	Annual consumption (Total from WTP) (ML)	6,443	6,578	6,819	5,441	↑
	Average annual household mains potable water usage (kL)	277.4	272.6	297.2	229.4	↑
	Average level of water restrictions implemented	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	→
	Water conservation programs (Number)	2	2	3	5	

Towards Sustainability

Issue	Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Trend
Waste Generation	Total waste entombed at primary landfill (tonnes)	47,441	43,608	42,874	40,497	↑
	Total waste entombed at other landfills (exc recyclables) (tonnes)	150	150	150	155	↓
	Average total waste generated per person (tonnes)	1.00	1.03	1.00	0.94	↑
	Average cost of waste service per residential household	\$256	\$368	\$377	\$394	↓
Hazardous/Liquid Waste	DrumMuster collections (number of drums)	897	1,514	2,164	1,879	↑
	Household Hazardous Wastes collected (kg)	4,787	8,258	5,090	15,437	↑
Reduce	Organics collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	2,481	6,429	5,780	6,138	↑
	E-Waste collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	8	8	19	29	↑
Recycle	Volume of material recycled (tonnes)	3,575	2,951	3,684	3,888	↑
	Volume of material recycled per person (kg)	85	70	86	90	↑
Littering and illegal dumping	Number of illegal waste disposal complaints to Council	86	108	129	147	↓
Engineering, Infrastructure and Civil Works	New road construction (km)	4	4	6	5	↓
	Road upgrades (km)	59	55	53	80	↓
Risk Management	Flood management plans/ flood mapping - increase in area covered (ha)	0	0	0	0	→
	Hazard reduction burns (number)	0	0	1	1	↓
Climate Change Mitigation	Office paper used by Council (A4 & A3 reams)	3,248	3,539	2,641	2,288	↑
	Council sustainability initiatives (number)	26	26	27	28	↑
	Council mitigation initiatives (number)	4	5	6	8	↑
Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Annual electricity consumption for Council controlled facilities (MWh)	14,820	15,289	15,289	14,746	↑
	Annual natural gas consumption for Council controlled facilities (GJ)	14,717	15,107	14,958	15,845	↓
	Annual bottled gas consumption for Council controlled facilities (L)	1,760	1,686	2,205	3,065	↓
	Total fuel consumption (KL)	850	857	858	876	↓
	Proportion of Council's electrical energy demand met from council-owned renewable energy infrastructure	1.7%	3.0%	4.1%	4.4%	↑
	Council total operational greenhouse gas emissions (tCO ₂ -e/year)	38,462	38,492	29,636	30,798	↑
Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Small scale renewable energy uptake (kw installed) (kW)	1,698	1,071	2,176	3,837	↑
	Number of solar water heaters and heat pumps installed	26	19	19	10	↓

Biodiversity

Issue	Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Trend
Habitat Loss	Total Area in the National Parks Estate (ha)	16,677	16,677	16,677	16,677	→
	Total Area of State Forests (ha)	12,272	12,276	12,276	12,276	→
	Total Area Protected in Wildlife Refuges (ha)	6,683	6,683	6,683	6,683	→
	Area protected in conservation reserves & under voluntary conservation agreements (ha)	1,848	1,937	1,996	2,050	↑
	Extent of Traveling Stock Reserves in LGA (ha)	334	305		324	→
	Proportion of Council reserves that is bushland/remnant vegetation	50%	50%	45%	45%	↓
	Habitat areas revegetated (ha)	21	15	2	2	↓
	Roadside vegetation management plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	→
	Roadside vegetation rehabilitated (ha)	0	0	1	4	↑
Threatened Species	Threatened species actions implemented (e.g. PAS, recovery plans) (number)	5	4	5	5	↑
	Fish restocking activities: native species (number)	51,887	77,612	22,755	38,000	↓
Noxious weeds and feral animals	Fish restocking activities: non-native species (number)	72,332	67,334	26,667	20,825	↑
	Number of declared priority weeds	125	95	95	96	↑
	Invasive species (listed priority or WONS) under active management (number)	13	13	13	14	↑

CASE STUDY: Bathurst Regional Council Laffing Waters Master Plan (Bathurst LGA)

As a key urban release and growth area for the City of Bathurst, the Laffing Waters Master Plan is an exciting project for Bathurst Regional Council as its first foray into Master Planning.

Laffing Waters, which has an area of approximately 360 hectares has been identified for residential growth and is zoned residential. The area is currently agricultural land which contains isolated remnants of Grassy Box Woodland. The area slopes down towards the Macquarie River and supports several degraded creek systems which have been impacted by grazing and past land clearing activities.

The Laffing Waters Master Plan has been developed to ensure an integrated 'whole-of-community' approach is achieved in its future development. The Master Plan seeks to create a sustainable, liveable community and bring together best practice urban design principles, responding to the site and its sense of place.

The Master Plan proposes some 2,270 new dwellings housing a population of approximately 5,200 residents. The density proposed by the Master Plan has been carefully considered to meet identified future demands for a range of land uses including retail, commercial and community. Planning for a new school site has been undertaken and it will be co-located with a district level (9 hectare) park/sporting field.

The Master Plan integrates open space with local parks and creek reserves ensuring green links and pedestrian connections throughout the development. Integrated water sensitive urban design is a key feature of the Master Plan with the goal of restoring function to the local waterways whilst providing the required drainage.

The Master Plan aims to preserve and improve the site's ecological performance and foster community health with easily accessible open space. Pedestrian and cycle movements within and around the development area are fostered and enhanced. The Plan seeks to create a series of connected neighbourhoods, which are clearly defined and identifiable, providing diverse housing choice and lifestyles for residents.

The opportunity to improve housing choice with increased density around key neighbourhood amenities supports the direction of Bathurst's Housing Strategy. Council is committed to achieving high quality, sustainable growth that seeks to reduce the urban sprawl of the City of Bathurst.



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