

State of the Environment Snapshot

**Former Wellington Council
Local Government Area**

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.

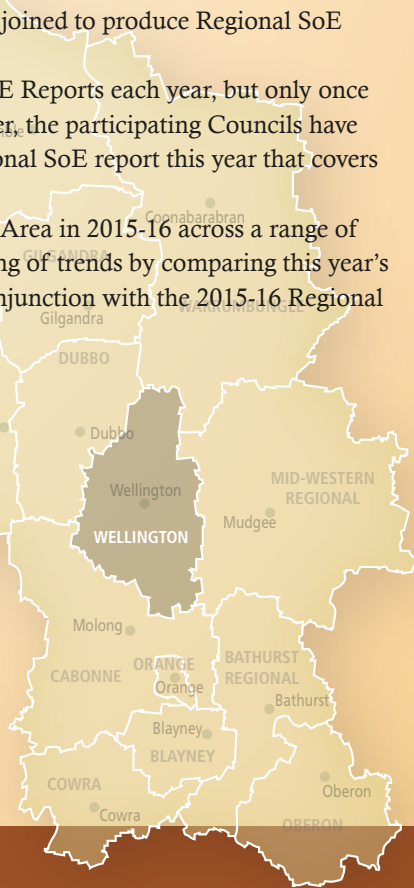
Since 2007, the Councils of the Greater Central West Region of NSW (see map) have joined to produce Regional SoE Reports as part of Council reporting requirements.

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

This is a brief snapshot of data for the former Wellington Council Local Government Area in 2015-16 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. The Council snapshot report should be read in conjunction with the 2015-16 Regional SoE report.

2015-16 Highlights

- ↑ Environmental volunteers working on public open space increased significantly this year.
- ↓ The number of native fish restocked into local waterways was less than half of last year's figure.
- ↑ The household town water use was significantly less than last year.
- ↑ The volume of material recycled per person was at its highest level in the past four years.
- ↓ The total waste entombed at primary landfill rose to its highest level in four years.



Land

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Contamination	Contaminated land sites - Contaminated Land Register (Number)	0	0	0	0	→
	Contaminated land sites - potentially contaminated sites (Number)	45	45	45	45	→
	Contaminated sites rehabilitated (Number)	0	1	1	1	↑
Erosion	Erosion affected land rehabilitated (ha)			0	0	→
Land use planning and management	Number of development consents and building approvals	81	88	42	71	↓
	Landuse conflict complaints (Number)	0	2	0	1	↓
	Loss of primary agricultural land through rezoning (ha)	0	0	1	0	↑
Minerals & Petroleum*	Number of mining and exploration titles	40	80	71	64	↓
	Area covered by mining and exploration titles (ha)	312K	311K		219K	↑

↑ improvement → no or little change ↓ worsening trend

Note - the trend is based on comparing the average of the previous three years of reporting with 2015-16

Biodiversity

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Habitat Loss	Total Area in the National Parks Estate (ha)			451	451	→
	Total Area of State Forests (ha)			1,657	1,657	→
	Total Area Protected in Wildlife Refuges (ha)	5,467	5,467	5,467	5,467	→
	Total Area protected in conservation reserves & under voluntary conservation agreements (ha)	433	433	433	395	↓
	Proportion of Council reserves that is bushland/remnant vegetation		0%	0%	0%	→
	Habitat areas revegetated (ha)	100	80	0	1	↓
	Roadside vegetation management plan	1	1	1	1	→
Threatened Species	Threatened species actions implemented (e.g. PAS, recovery plans) (Number)	2	2	2	2	→
	Fish restocking activities: native species (Number)	102,000	128,000	141,000	61,500	↓
Noxious weeds and feral animals	Fish restocking activities: non-native species (Number)	0	0	0	17,000	↓
	Number of declared noxious weeds (Number)	103	109	118	118	↓
	Invasive species (listed noxious or WONS) under active management (Number)	9	9	9	6	↓

Water and Waterways

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Surface & Ground Water Quality	Average salinity levels in selected streams (EC)		747	830	719	↑
	Average Total Nitrogen in selected streams (mg/L)		0.59	0.5	0.49	↑
	Average Total Phosphorus in selected streams(mg/L)		0.03	0.03	0.03	→
	Average Turbidity in selected streams (NTU)		10	5.9	6.8	↑
Riparian	Riparian vegetation recovery actions (Number)	2	1	1	2	↑
	Riparian vegetation recovery area (ha)	0.3	20	20	20	↑
Industrial/ Agricultural Pollution	Exceedances of license discharge consent recorded	0	5	0	0	↑
	Erosion & Sediment Control complaints received by Council (Number)		0		2	↓
Stormwater Pollution	Number of gross pollutant traps installed	19	19	19	19	→
	Total catchment area of GPTs (ha)	30	30	30	30	→
	Water pollution complaints (Number)	0	0	0	0	→
Dam Levels	Average dam levels	63.8%	31.9%	20.9%	18.4%	↓
Water extraction*	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from surface water sources		375	376	357	↑
	Volume of surface water permissible for extraction under licences (GL)		26	63	58	↓
	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from groundwater resources		3,069	3,151	3,090	↑
	Volume of groundwater permissible for extraction under licences (GL)	42	36	41	40	→
	Actual volume extracted through groundwater licences (GL)			13	14	↓
Council water consumption	Area of irrigated Council managed parks, sportsgrounds, public open space (ha)			0	210	↓
	Water used by council for irrigation (including treated and untreated) (ML)	59	55	57	32	↑
Town water consumption	Annual metered supply (ML)			1,064	972	↑
	Average annual household mains potable water usage (kL)			408.6	231.9	↑
	Average level of water restrictions implemented			0.0	0.0	→
Town Water Quality	Number of instances drinking water guidelines not met	0	0	0	0	→
	Number of drinking water complaints	6	3	2	0	↑

* 2015-16 Water extraction data was not available separately for the Wellington Council LGA so the annual totals for the new Dubbo Regional LGA are shown here instead.

Towards Sustainability

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Waste Generation	Total waste entombed at primary landfill (tonnes)	900	975	940	1,050	↓
	Total waste entombed at other landfills (exc recyclables) (tonnes)	1,072	220	260	160	↑
	Average total waste generated per person (tonnes)	0.22	0.13	0.13	0.13	↑
	Average cost of waste service per residential household	\$323	\$341	\$341	\$341	↓
Hazardous/Liquid Waste	DrumMuster collections (number of drums)	248	0	2,252	844	↑
	Household Hazardous Wastes collected (kg)	512	1,152	1,958	393	↓
Reduce	Garden organics collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	662	516	246	250	↓
	E-Waste collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	9	30	5	2	↓
Recycle	Volume of material recycled (tonnes)	1,131	406	446	1,381	↑
	Volume of material recycled per person (kg)	128	45	49	152	↑
Littering and illegal dumping	Number of illegal waste disposal complaints to Council	22	15	32	3	↑
Engineering, Infrastructure and Civil Works	New road construction (km)	0	0	6	0.8	↑
	Road upgrades (km)		0	21	25	↓
Risk Management	Flood management plans/ flood mapping - increase in area covered (ha)	0	0	695	0	↓
	Hazard reduction burns (Number)	0	1	1	0	↑
Climate Change Mitigation	Office paper used by Council (A4 & A3 reams)	1,338	937	965	1,005	↑
Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Total fuel consumption (KL)	439	375	400	386	↑
	Council total operational greenhouse gas emissions (tCO ₂ -e/year)	4,634	3,883	4,454	4,472	↓
Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Small scale renewable energy uptake (kW installed)	318	270	283	395	↑
	Number of solar water heaters and heat pumps installed	14	9	11	10	↓

People and Communities

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Active community involvement	Environmental volunteers working on public open space (hrs)			0	20	↑
	Number of environmental community engagement programs	3	2	2	4	↑
	Number of growers markets/local food retailers specialising in local food	4	4	4	4	→
Indigenous Heritage	Number of Indigenous sites on AHIMS register		280	281	283	↑
	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)	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	↑
	Development approvals on listed Indigenous sites (Number)	0	0	0	0	→
	Number of Indigenous heritage management actions/responses			0	0	→
Non-Indigenous Heritage	NSW Heritage Items (Number)	5	5	5	6	↑
	Locally listed heritage items (Number)	157	157	157	157	→
	Actions to protect non-Indigenous heritage (including management plans) (Number)	0	0	0	0	→
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists demolished/degraded in past year (Number)	0	0	0	0	→
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists renovated/improved in past year (Number)	2	1	0	2	↑

CASE STUDY: Saving Platypus and Fish Habitat in the Bell River (Former Wellington Council and Cabonne Council)

Dubbo Regional Council (former Wellington Council) and Cabonne Council are currently undertaking a project aimed at protecting and improving platypus and fish habitat in the Bell River by removing noxious and environmental weeds from the riparian zone. The Project is primarily focused on the control of willows, a declared noxious weed and weed of National Significance.

The dominance of willow in the River has crowded out a lot of the native plants and reduced habitat for local Platypus and native fish. The Project will include revegetation with indigenous riparian understory species as part of an integrated weed control technique, which will complement the natural regeneration of River She oaks.

The Project Site is situated along Cameron Park in Wellington, an area regularly visited by local residents and visitors to the town. Platypus are regularly seen along this stretch of the River.

The control work will be carried out on thick infestations of willow and other noxious weeds. Once the noxious plants have been treated the Project Site will be planted out with support from the Mid-Macquarie Landcare Group using 100 River Bottle Brush.

This Project is supported DPI – Department of Fisheries, Central West Councils Environment & Waterways Alliance, Central West LLS, Mid-Macquarie Landcare Group, Wellington Fishing Club and the Local Aboriginal Lands Council.



Project Site, Cameron Park Wellington



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