November 2006

An electronic update for Local Government on NRM and environmental policies, projects and events in Tasmania

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If you have any queries about the content of this newsletter, or ideas for contributions to future newsletters, please contact me on the details below…
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➢ Funding Opportunities

NLP Community Support Component
The National Landcare Programme Community Support Component is now open for applications. Funding is available for local and regional landcare activities that are consistent with the priorities in the regional NRM Strategies and Investment Plans. All project ideas should be discussed with the State Landcare Coordinator, Don Defenderfer prior to submitting an application. Applications should be submitted to the regional NRM body by COB 26 February 2007. To find out more about the NLP Community Support Component, or to view projects funded in previous rounds, visit the website.

Recreational Fishing Grants – NOW OPEN
Don’t forget that Recreational Fishing Grants are NOW OPEN, with applications due by 25 January 2007. Councils can apply for grants of up to $100,000 to undertake projects that enhance recreational fishing opportunities. This can include infrastructure upgrades, restocking or resnagging waterways, awareness raising or track upgrades in either freshwater or saltwater environments. For more info visit the Recreational Fishing website.

Community Water Grants – Successful Projects from Round 2
The successful projects from Round 2 of Community Water Grants have just been announced, with Tasmanian projects attracting over $2 million in funding. The details of successful projects are available on the website. Applicants who would like feedback on their applications are encouraged to contact the Community Water Grants team either by e-mail or on the hotline: 1800 780 730. The next round of Community Water Grants is expected to open early in the new-year. The larger $250,000 grants have not been confirmed for the next round, but they haven’t been ruled out – so be ready!

➢ What’s On

Landcare Field Day
A field day at the site of a NLP project will be held at ‘Sendace’, approximately 5km from Hamilton, on 13 December from 1:30 – 3:30 pm. The day will provide an overview of an NLP project which looks at the development, methods of establishment and survival of pest and drought tolerant perennial forage plants in the upper Derwent Valley. For more information, or to RSVP (by 8 December), contact Eric.Hall@dpiw.tas.gov.au.

Southern Forum: Exploring Climate Change and Coastal Response
As part of Coastcare week NRM South are holding a public forum on Exploring Coastal Change and Response. The forum provides an opportunity for community members to hear from expert speakers on climate change, sea level rise and coastal response through presentations and a panel discussion. The forum will be held on Thursday 7 December, from 7 – 9pm at the Philip Smith Centre, 2 Edward Street, Glebe. To RSVP, contact Fleur O'Neill by Monday 4 December, 2006.

Coastcare Week: 1 December – 7 December 2006
**News**

**NRM Policy Commitments Endorsed at ALGA General Assembly**
Over the past few months, the Local Government NRM Facilitator network around Australia has advanced four policy statements to establish a policy position for local government in the natural resource management sector at a national level. These policy commitments were endorsed by each of the State and Territory Local Government Associations, and were then posed as a motion at the recent ALGA General Assembly. The policy commitments were endorsed at the ALGA General Assembly, and will now provide a national policy context for Local Government involvement in NRM. The policy commitments can be viewed on the [LGAT website](http://www.lgat.asn.au) under NRM.

**Public Submissions on Proposed EPA Closing Soon**
The Tasmanian Government’s proposal to establish an Environmental Protection Authority to oversee environmental regulation in the state is seeking public comment until the 22 December 2006. A position paper is available through Service Tasmania, and on-line at [www.environment.tas.gov.au](http://www.environment.tas.gov.au).

**Continued Improvement in Derwent Estuary**
The health of the Derwent Estuary continues to improve according to the State of the Derwent Report Card released this month by the Derwent Estuary Program (DEP). The snapshot of waterway condition shows a 70% decrease in heavy metal loads from zinc smelter outfall, and a 7% decrease in organic loads from pulp mill outfall. Whilst some of the decrease can be attributed to operational conditions, it also reflects investment by industry and Local Government to improve waterway condition in recent years. Additional funding to improve waterway condition will include a focus on stormwater management and enhanced water sensitive urban design, such as greater use of vegetated buffers, wetlands and rainwater tanks.

**Stormwater Management Strategy to be Developed**
The State Government, through the Living Environment Program, has begun consultation with various stakeholders (including Local Government) to develop a strategy for the improved management of urban runoff in Tasmania. Urban runoff is a source of pollution to waterways, and can put pressure on infrastructure through increased flow and pollution. The strategy will assist Local Government by outlining best practice approaches to stormwater management and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD), particularly for new developments.

**National Guidelines on Water Recycling**
The NRM Ministerial Council and the Environment Protection and Heritage Council this month released the final guidelines for phase one of the National Water Recycling Guidelines project. The guidelines apply a risk management approach to identifying and managing hazards in recycled water that could potentially affect human or environmental health. A copy of the guidelines will be made available on the [LGAT](http://www.lgat.asn.au) website.

**Aboriginal Heritage Legislation Review**
As part of the State Government’s review of Aboriginal Heritage Legislation, a consultation package has been released for public information and comment. The consultation package encourages people to become informed of the proposed changes, and provides a mechanism for input into the process. The consultation package can be accessed on-line at [www.tahl.tas.gov.au](http://www.tahl.tas.gov.au), or through the Aboriginal Heritage Office. Comments should be made to the Aboriginal Heritage Office by 22 December 2006.

**Comments Sought on Overland Track Management Plan**
The Parks and Wildlife Service have called for comments on a plan that will guide the management of the Overland Track – Tasmania’s premier long-distance walking track. The Overland Track Recreation Zone Plan 2006 provides the foundations for planning and development of the Overland Track for the next ten years, including the design, layout and location of infrastructure along the 65km walking track. The plan is available from the [PWS website](http://www.pws.tas.gov.au) or from Service Tasmania outlets, and is open for comment until 15 January 2007.

**Southern Tasmanian Councils Joint Initiative with Nursery and Garden Industry**
Southern Councils, YATES Australia and Nursery and Garden Industry Accredited Garden Centres have joined together to launch a reusable shopping bag initiative, which addressed the dual issues of plastic shopping bags and water conservation. The production and distribution of 10,000 reusable bags, which promote water-wise plant choices, will be supported by qualified advice and displays of water-wise resources and information at participating accredited garden centres. For more information about the scheme, or to find out how your Council could become involved in the initiative, contact Wayne Cole from the Nursery and Garden Industry Tasmania.

**Funding Announced for Research and Development to Defeat the Weed Menace**
The Australian Government this month announced $3.1 million in funding for 14 research and development projects through the Defeating the Weed Menace Programme. Among the projects will be research into the risk of different pathways by which weeds invade the environment, so as to enable better targeting of efforts to reduce the movements of high-risk weeds around Australia.

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_The Coastal and Marine environment is the second major source of biodiversity on our planet!_
Resources and Tools

CO2 News On-line
The popular environmental e-newsletter Enviro/Info now offers an additional electronic newsletter on climate change, emission reduction initiatives and renewable energy called CO2 News. The fortnightly publication is available free on-line, simply e-mail co2news@envirocentre.com.au to subscribe.

Do You Receive ASSAY?
Would you like to? ASSAY is a free newsletter that is published nationally to raise awareness about Acid Sulfate Soils. Acid Sulfate Soils (ASS) are soils that contain iron sulfide and, when exposed to air, can produce sulfuric acid and release toxic quantities of heavy metals into the environment. After a two-year break, ASSAY is now back in publication, thanks to funding through the National Heritage Trust. If you’re not already receiving this valuable resource, and you’d like to, e-mail Chrisy Clay to be added to the mailing list.

Project Insight

Conservation and Freshwater Ecosystem Values Project
The Conservation of Freshwater Ecosystem Values (CFEV) Project forms part of the implementation of the Water Development Plan for Tasmania - an initiative of the Department of Primary Industries and Water. Key outputs of the project include a framework for assessing freshwater ecosystem values, based on Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve-design principles, and the CFEV database for spatial and Geographic Information System (GIS) data that supports the CFEV assessment framework.

The CFEV assessment framework has now been finalised, with data that were gathered and analysed as part of the assessment process now stored within a spatial database. This information tool will enable users to access environmental data relating to freshwater areas on both public and private land.

The CFEV database can currently only be accessed by contacting the CFEV project team to request GIS data sets. However, two web-based interfaces are being developed, one of which will provide access to the general public via the Water Information System of Tasmania (WIST) (www.water.dpiw.tas.gov.au). The second interface, due for release at the end of the year, will provide more comprehensive access to professional users in the freshwater field.

The CFEV project has received funding through the State Government (DPIW), the Australian Government through the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality, and more recently through the Australian Government Water Fund. For further information about the project, contact the project team.

Conferences

Beyond Environmental Law: Intersections Between Legal Disciplines and the Environment
This two-day conference, hosted by the Australian Centre for Environmental Law Sydney and the Environmental Defender's Office, will be held at the Portside Centre, Sydney on Thursday 15 – Friday 16 February, 2007. The conference will see experts from a broad range of legal disciplines reflect on how their areas of law impacts on the environment. For further information about the conference, click here.

UrbanSalt 2007 – Early Bird Registrations Now Open
The second Urban Salt Conference – “Dealing with Salinity in Urban Environments” will be held at the Waterview Convention Centre in Homebush Bay, NSW from 22-23 May, 2007. The conference provides a forum for decision-makers from government, NRM regions, engineering and development fields to hear from experts in urban salinity from around Australia. For more information about the conference programme, visit the conference website.

Biodiversity: Balancing Conservation and Production – Advance Notice
This local conference, to be held in Launceston 26-28 June 2007, will explore the balance between conservation and production. To find out more about the conference and how to be involved, visit the website.

If you no longer wish to receive this electronic newsletter, please e-mail Jenni at the Local Government Association of Tasmania.

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