

## 6. COMMUNITY ISSUES

### 6.1 What Are the Issues?

Through consultation with the community, including the Friends of Dee Why Lagoon, and experts in the field, including the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Council Staff, key management issues in relation to the Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge have been identified. The issues have been grouped into several broad areas, following is a summary of the main issues. The issues have been addressed through the management actions in Section 7. Background information to the values and issues identified in this Plan of Management is detailed in Appendix A.

#### Lagoon Waterbody Management

- Maintenance of a “natural regime” for the lagoon water-level;
- Water quality objectives;
- Need to identify a range of acceptable water levels in the lagoon and frequency of variations;
- Management of lagoon opening events;
- Potential damage to claybed when artificially opening the lagoon entrance;
- Maintenance of the lagoon’s aesthetic appeal.

#### Vegetation

- Maintenance of native vegetation communities of significance;
- Impact on western edge of the Refuge by the stormwater drains which are a source of nutrient and sediment pollution;
- Segmentation of the core bushland area;
- High level of ongoing maintenance of estuarine vegetation communities;
- Ongoing maintenance is required even once areas have been regenerated;
- Naturalisation of weeds within the bushland;
- Stability and re-establishment of dune vegetation;
- Use of fire within the Refuge;
- Weed management;
- Illegal dumping of vegetation rubbish and fill within the Refuge;
- Proliferation of tracks compromise the conservation values of the Refuge.

#### Fauna

- Management proposals are to meet international and legislative requirements;
- Habitat value for migratory bird species, especially those of international and national significance;
- Further research into habitat and impact of urbanised catchment on bird species;
- Loss of habitat due to segmentation of the core bushland area;
- Management of habitat for aquatic fauna;
- Control of feral animals;
- Enforce ban on dogs within the Wildlife Refuge, in accordance with National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, Section 70;
- Encourage Black Swans to use the lagoon as they are recognised as a symbol of Dee Why due to their abundance during the early 1900’s.



### Landscape Maintenance

- Frequent mowing of grassed areas;
- Regular maintenance of water detention basins;
- High boundary/area ratio;
- Landscape plantings in the park area are “scrappy”;
- James Meehan Reserve filled area;
- Unnatural and abrupt shoreline in the south-east corner of the Refuge where land has been reclaimed;
- High visual amenity for Dee Why and Long Reef;
- Shoreline reedland and rushland communities in the landscaped areas are narrow and often effected by lawn grasses and mowing practices;
- Grassed area near Clarence Street is not a functional park area and is negatively impacting the surrounding bushland areas;
- Maintenance of grassed areas can cause damage to tree trunks, intrude on unfenced bushland and spread grass clippings and seeds into bushland edges.

### Environmental Education and Research

- Educational use of the Refuge should not compromise the conservational values, guidelines for use of the Refuge are required;
- Council should encourage research of topics where gaps in data occur;
- Improved relationship between industry within the catchment and environmental groups;
- Education of beach users regarding the undesirability of opening of the lagoon entrance;
- Lack of interpretative/educational material on site;
- Potential educational value of coastal system in an urban environment and as part of a larger complex of coastal wetland on the northern beaches.

### Recreation

- Boardwalk and viewing platform incorporating interpretive signage is desired;
- Recreational pursuits are not to compromise the conservational values of the Refuge;
- Access link from Dee Why Park across Pittwater Road to the Refuge;
- Minimise access within the core of the Refuge;
- Clear directions for walking track locations.

### Administration

- Lack of communication and coordination between service units;
- Improved communication between Council and volunteer groups;
- Improved community involvement in management;
- Coordination of the actions should be carried out by one Council unit.

A number of issues in relation to catchment management and sedimentation of the lagoon were raised during community consultation for this Plan of Management. Investigations during the development of the Estuary Processes Study, Estuary Management Study and Estuary Management Plan will take into account catchment processes. The catchment issues raised have been listed below and will be addressed within the Estuary Management Plan.



### Catchment Management

- Total catchment management approach to maximise water quality of lagoon;
- Sedimentation of the lagoon and the desirability of dredging;
- At source control of nutrient input into the lagoon;
- Maintenance of drains and water detention basins;
- Potential for flooding of properties and Pittwater Road during heavy rain events;
- Rubbish entering the lagoon via drainage channels;
- Links adjoining catchments;
- Establish environmental indicators;
- Monitoring and measuring pollution in catchment;
- Use of qualitative and quantitative data to identify the catchment.

