

2021-22 State of the Environment Report

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 2021-22 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.

2021-22 Highlights

- There was a slight increase in the number of potentially contaminated sites compared to the previous four years.
- The number of actions for threatened species increased significantly.
- There was a decline in drinking water and water pollution complaints compared to last year.
- The number of environmental community programs has steadily increased over the past five years.
- Council's use of renewable energy continues to rise.

Land

Issue	Indicator	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Trend
Contamination	Contaminated land sites - Contaminated Land Register (number)	0	0	0	0	0	→
	Contaminated land sites - potentially contaminated sites (number)	500	635	642	643	643	↓
	Contaminated sites rehabilitated (number)	3	2	3	4	1	↓
Erosion	Erosion affected land rehabilitated (ha)	0	0		0		→
Land use planning and management	Number of development consents and building approvals	675	661	599	892	887	↓
	Landuse conflict complaints (number)	1	0	8	8	9	↓
	Loss of primary agricultural land through rezoning (ha)	0	0	0	0	0	→
Minerals & Petroleum	Number of mining and exploration titles			163	92	95	↑
	Area covered by mining and exploration titles (ha)	106K	93,955	140,000	192,000	201,000	↓



improvement



no or little change



worsening trend

Note - the trend is based on comparing the average of the four previous years of reporting with 2021-22

Biodiversity

Issue	Indicator	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Trend
Habitat Loss	Total area in the National Parks Estate (ha)	16,677	16,676	16,676	17,285	17,293	⬆️
	Total area of State Forests (ha)	12,276	12,276	12,276	12,316	12,298	⬆️
	Total area protected in Wildlife Refuges (ha)			8,262	6,691	8,219	⬆️
	Area protected in conservation reserves & under voluntary conservation agreements (ha)	1,996	2,050	1,861	1,902	2,063	⬆️
	Extent of Traveling Stock Reserves in LGA (ha)		324	340	315	315	⬆️
	Proportion of Council reserves that is bushland/remnant vegetation	20%	19%	19%	19%	68%	⬆️
	Habitat areas revegetated (Ha)	2	2	4	0.8	2	⬆️
	Clearing complaints (number)	1	2	10	1	1	⬆️
	Roadside vegetation management plan (Yes//No)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	➡️
	Roadside vegetation rehabilitated (ha)	1	4	9	8	0	⬆️
Threatened Species	State Threatened species listed (number)			102	102	105	⬆️
	Threatened species actions implemented (e.g. PAS, recovery plans) (number)	5	5	7	5	15	⬆️
	Fish restocking activities: native species (number)	22,755	38,000	7,000	46,500	26,350	⬆️
Noxious weeds and feral animals	Fish restocking activities: non-native species (number)	26,667	20,825	28,000	35,950	25,500	⬆️
	Number of declared priority weeds	95	96	98	104	105	⬆️
	Invasive species under active management (number)	13	14	15	19	20	⬆️

Water and Waterways

Issue	Indicator	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Trend
Riparian	E.coli remote from wastewater treatment plants (per 100ml)	1,200	890	1,106	298	250	⬆️
	Riparian vegetation recovery actions (number)	9	8	15	18	19	⬆️
	Riparian vegetation recovery area (ha)	1.7	3	12	21	15	⬆️
Industrial/ Agricultural Pollution	Load Based Licencing Volume (kg)	47,068	46,197	45,930	55,586	64,278	⬆️
	Exceedances of license discharge consent recorded (number)	2	2	0	1	8	⬆️
	Erosion & Sediment Control complaints received by Council (number)	20	44	15	35	39	⬆️
Stormwater Pollution	Number of gross pollutant traps installed	7	7	7	7	8	⬆️
	Total catchment area of GPTs (ha)	863	863	863	863	864	⬆️
	Water pollution complaints (number)	20	12	17	17	10	⬆️
Town Water Quality	Number of instances drinking water guidelines not met	0	0	0	2	0	⬆️
	Number of drinking water complaints	87	41	42	83	44	⬆️
Water extraction	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from surface water sources			243	243	239	⬆️
	Volume of surface water permissible for extraction under licences (GL)			27	31	30	⬆️
	Actual volume extracted through surface water licences				5.8	1.3	⬆️
	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from groundwater resources			1,681	1,722	1721	⬆️
	Volume of groundwater permissible for extraction under licences (GL)			1.9	2.7	2.2	⬆️
	Actual volume extracted through groundwater licences (GL)			0.01	0.02	0.01	⬆️
Council water consumption	Area of irrigated Council managed parks, sportsgrounds, public open space (ha)	134	134	138	139	157	⬆️
	Water used by council for irrigation (including treated and untreated) (ML)	434	337	293	270	120	⬆️
Town water consumption	Annual metered supply (ML)	6,042	4,875	3,934	4,055	3,966	⬆️
	Annual consumption (Total from WTP) (ML)	6,819	5,441	3,917	3,829	4,019	⬆️
	Average annual household mains potable water usage (kL)	297.2	229.4	169.6	182.8	182.3	⬆️
	Average level of water restrictions implemented	0.0	3.0	5.0	5.0	3.0	⬆️
	Water conservation programs (number)	3	5	5	4	6	⬆️

Towards Sustainability

Issue	Indicator	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Trend
Waste Generation	Total waste entombed at primary landfill (tonnes)	42,874	40,497	40,392	50,042	48,698	↓
	Total waste entombed at other landfills (exc recyclables) (tonnes)	150	155	155	160	165	↓
	Average total waste generated per person (tonnes)	1	0.94	0.93	1.14	1.12	↓
	Average cost of waste service per residential household	\$377	\$394	\$413	\$432	\$464	↓
Hazardous/Liquid Waste	DrumMuster collections (number of drums)	2,164	1,879	2,109	1,992	1,638	↓
	Household Hazardous Wastes collected (kg)	12350	15,724	10,385	31,354	27,801	↑
Reduce	Organics collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	5,780	6,138	5,358	7,191	8,104	↑
	E-Waste collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	19	29	16	33	15	↓
Recycle	Volume of material recycled (tonnes)	3,684	4,360	3,012	4,144	3,896	↑
	Volume of material recycled per person (kg)	86	101	69	94	89	↑
Littering and illegal dumping	Number of illegal waste disposal complaints to Council	129	147	135	81	97	↑
Engineering, Infrastructure and Civil Works	New road construction (km)	6	5	0.93	1	0.83	↑
	Road upgrades (km)	53	80	42	53	50	↑
Risk Management	Flood management plans/ flood mapping - increase in area covered (ha)	0	0	0	0	0	→
	Hazard reduction burns (number)	1	1	0	1	0	↑
Climate Change Mitigation	Office paper used by Council (A4 & A3 reams)	2,641	2,288	2,724	1,578	2,127	↑
	Council sustainability initiatives (number)	27	28	33	35	31	→
	Council mitigation initiatives (number)	6	8	9	9	10	↑
Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Annual electricity consumption for Council controlled facilities (MWh)	15,289	14,746	13,220	11,874	12,047	↑
	Annual natural gas consumption for Council controlled facilities GJ	14,958	15,845	14,545	17,867	15,918	↓
	Annual bottled gas consumption for Council controlled facilities (L)	2,205	3,065	1,693	1,595	1,379	↑
	Total fuel consumption (KL)	858	876	915	970	900	↑
	Proportion of Council's electrical energy demand met from council-owned renewable energy infrastructure	4.1%	4.4%	5.3%	6.6%	7.4%	↑
	Council total operational greenhouse gas emissions (tCO ₂ -e/year)	29,636	30,798	35,111	22,263	35,073	↓
Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Small scale renewable energy uptake (kW installed)	2,176	3,837	5,165	7,289	7,323	↑
	Number of solar water heaters and heat pumps installed	19	10	10	13	14	↑

People and Communities

Issue	Indicator	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Trend
Active community involvement	Environmental volunteers working on public open space (hours)	2,734	2,260	2,116	2,167	601	↓
	Number of environmental community engagement programs	12	12	11	13	15	↑
	Number of growers markets/local food retailers specialising in local food	5	5	6	6	6	↑
Community Impacts	Number of days that air pollution maximum goals for particulate matter were exceeded*	3	12	84	0	0	↑
Indigenous Heritage	Number of Indigenous sites on AHIMS register	300	328	341	366	369	↑
	Inclusion in DCPs & rural strategies (Yes/No)	Yes	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	3.0	→
	Development approvals on listed Indigenous sites (number)	1	1	1	1	1	→
	Number of Indigenous heritage management actions/responses	0	0	8	1	1	↓
Non-Aboriginal Heritage	NSW Heritage Items (number)	34	34	34	35	36	↑
	Locally listed heritage items (number)	342	342	344	353	359	↑
	Actions to protect non-indigenous heritage (including management plans) (number)	6	8	8	8	9	↑
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists demolished/degraded in past year (number)	1	0	2	0	0	↑
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists renovated/improved in past year (number)	6	22	11	19	26	↑

CASE STUDY: Banishing Bathurst Butts (Bathurst LGA)

The Banishing Bathurst Butts cigarette butt litter prevention project focused on increased public awareness and education, improved infrastructure, and implemented strategic enforcement to reduce litter in the CBD. It aimed to increase binning rates by 50% and decrease CBD cigarette butt litter by 70% in a 12-month period.

Baseline surveys calculated that approximately 18,000 cigarette butts were littered in the CBD each week. Upgrades to existing waste infrastructure and installation of butt bins with associated signage was identified as a desperate need to mitigate this worrying litter trend.

Butt bins, directional floor graphics and informative signage were installed throughout the CBD, with particular focus on the Howick Street bus terminal, taxi rank and Post Office hotspots. Bins and signage were also installed at the RSL and Elizabeth Street carparks, near pubs and clubs, and at the entryways to the three CBD shopping centres. Infrastructure was installed in locations that complied with the *Smoke Free Environment Act 2000* and did not obstruct or impede pedestrian movement.

Improved infrastructure instilled pride of place and ownership throughout the CBD, making it undesirable and socially unacceptable to litter cigarette butts. Smoker opinion was measured during surveys: there was a 38% increase in smoker pride of place over the duration of the project which exceeded the 20% target.

Over a 12-month project period, cigarette litter throughout the Bathurst CBD decreased by 93.7% in a 12-month project period. 87.9% of cigarettes smoked in the CBD are now deposited in Council waste receptacles rather than being discarded in the street which were washed into the Wambuul Macquarie River.

The Banishing Bathurst Butts EPA Grant project was featured in the NSW Government's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy and was awarded Highly Commended at the Keep Australia Beautiful Awards.

