



Media Release -23 December 2003

Fish Life Return Clear As Mudd

Fish are returning to a formerly degraded section of Mudd Creek in Lake Macquarie after an absence of more than a decade, thanks to work funded by the Lake Macquarie Project Management Committee.

Mudd Creek, in Blackalls Park, had been the victim of effluent discharge from a nearby sewerage treatment plant for many years. While discharge of the effluent ceased in 1992, the treatment plant had contributed to toxic levels of nutrients to the creek and nearby residents had also complained about offensive odours caused by the state of the site.

Mudd Creek suffered two major fish kills in the early 1990's, as algal blooms resulting from the nutrient-rich environment deprived the water of oxygen. One of the fish kills reportedly resulted in 10 tonnes of dead fish being removed from the Creek.

Although the creek was dredged to remove some of the nutrient enriched sediments, flows were still greatly restricted in the upper reaches of the creek.

Recently though, fish were spotted in this section of Mudd Creek for the first time in over a decade, to the delight of locals.

Chairman of the Lake Macquarie Project Management Committee, Cr Greg Piper, said computer modelling and minor construction works have led to improvement in the water quality of Mudd Creek.

"Mudd Creek was part of the focus in the list of water quality improvement projects for Fennell and Edmunds Bay, in a program worth around \$1.5 million."

"Computer modelling of the area was undertaken to identify opportunities to improve tidal flushing by utilising the limited tides in Mudd Creek and the nearby Stony Creek."

The recommended strategy was to increase the size of an existing culvert where Mudd Creek ran under Fennell Crescent and to install a larger culvert between Mudd and Stony Creeks.

The flow of water through Mudd Creek and Edmunds Bay will be further enhanced when dredging work commences in the near future, to improve water flows through to Fennell Bay.

The work has impressed the marine life too.

"For the first time in more than 10 years we have reports of fish returning to the upper section of Mudd Creek. This is a very positive sign that the strategies we have put in place are having the desired effect," said Cr Piper.

The remaining program for the improvement of Fennell and Edmunds Bay will be completed early in 2004.

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