



## **Media Release 20 February 2004 - For Immediate Use**

### ***Dredging Up The Past for the Lake's Future***

A 12 week intensive dredging operation started this week in LT Creek and Fennell and Edmunds Bays.

The project will involve dredging up to 0.5 metres of sediment from specific areas within Edmunds Bay to enhance water circulation, as well as the removal of sediment from a number of selected stormwater outlets in Fennell Bay and LT Creek.

The works are part of the \$1.5 million Fennell and Edmunds Bays Management Plan, initiated and funded by the Office of the Lake Macquarie & Catchment Coordinator. This Management Plan also involves the construction of stormwater treatment devices and foreshore stabilisation and vegetation in this area.

*"Fennell and Edmunds Bays have been the victim of sediment and excessive nutrient enrichment from the surrounding urbanised environment over many years. Sediment build up such as this leads to the smothering of seagrass and problems with algal blooms," said Councillor Greg Piper, Chairman of Lake Macquarie Project Management Committee.*

Key outcomes were identified for the sustainable management of Fennell and Edmunds Bays in the Management Plan prepared by environmental consultants, Umwelt. The outcomes included restoration and protection of habitat for fish and water birds, restoration of natural vegetation, further recovery of seagrass beds, efficient, but naturally slow water circulation and improved water quality.

The Management Plan did not recommend major dredging as part of the ongoing strategy to restore and provide protection for the ecological health of Edmunds Bay, rather dredging of specific areas to assist in the repair of natural processes.

*"The Lake and its catchment are a dynamic, living thing. Its survival depends on maintaining balance between all elements of the ecosystem. The work being carried out fosters the gradual recovery of the Lake's ecological health," Cr Piper said.*

The current dredging operation follows other successful projects in the area, such as the installation of a flow improvement device between Mudd Creek and Stony Creek and the construction of a new culvert at nearby Fennell Crescent. This work has resulted in fish life returning to the upper reaches of Mudd Creek for the first time in over a decade.

The Lake Macquarie Project Management Committee was formed in 1999 to implement the recommendations of the Premier's Taskforce Report on Lake Macquarie.

NSW Premier Bob Carr announced an extension of the program in May 2002, describing it as a "model partnership between the State and local governments, industry and the community".

**For further information please contact:**

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Source: Aerial Photo taken in 1996

0 100 200 400m  
1:9000

## Dredging Locations

### Legend

- Stormwater Infrastructure / Outlet
- Dredging Locations
- Dewatering Locations