



**Media Release
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COMMUNITY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT HEALTH OF LAKE

Residents of Lake Macquarie are optimistic about the environmental health of the Lake, according to community survey report released today.

The findings from the telephone survey commissioned by the Office of the Lake Macquarie & Catchment Coordinator provide a snapshot of local community views towards the environmental health of Lake Macquarie.

Lake Macquarie & Catchment Coordinator, Jeff Jansson said the community is increasingly positive about the health of the Lake.

"Over the past five years there has been an encouraging upward trend in the rating of the current health of the Lake. 68% of respondents rated the overall environment between 5-7 out of 10 and 27% of respondents rated it between 8-10 out of 10," He said.

Mr Jansson stressed that although residents were witnessing improvements that the work is still far from over.

"The improvement in the quality of Lake Macquarie is an ongoing process and there is still work to do. It is important that residents and Lake users ensure that they continue to do their part to limit their impact on the Lake," he said.

Understanding of specific environmental issues has been highlighted as an area that requires further community education.

"Residents continue to place importance on water movement between the Lake and Swansea Channel, yet an understanding of the impact of urban development remains low.

The truth is that while increasing tidal exchange in Swansea Channel would have little effect overall on water quality in the Lake and cause other serious negative consequences, the level of urban development is the major contributor to nutrient and sedimentation loads," Mr Jansson said.

The research project involved a survey of 600 randomly selected respondents within the Lake Macquarie and Catchment area. Responses were obtained over a two week period in November and December.

The report was compiled by FordComm Consulting on behalf of the Office of the Lake Macquarie & Catchment Coordinator.

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