

Survey Outcomes

Cooks River Catchment Coastal Management Program



September 2021

Purpose of the survey

The Cooks River Alliance is developing the Cooks River Catchment coastal management program (CMP) to improve the health of the river. CMPs set the long-term strategy for the coordinated management of the coast, with a focus on achieving the objects and objectives of the *Coastal Management Act 2016*.

Our CMP gives us the opportunity to tackle long-term complex issues facing the river that can only be addressed collectively. The CMP will be a Whole of River plan for climate change, preserving Aboriginal culture, water quality, community use, river and beach access, biodiversity degradation and flooding.

The Cooks River Community Values survey is an important part of the CMP process, providing information about what the community values about the Cooks River and its tributaries, what they would like to see improved, and how their activities around the waterways might change if conditions continue to improve. This information will be used to identify and evaluate future management actions.

Survey outcomes

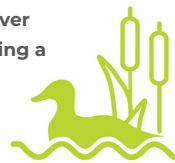
The survey ran from 30 July to 5 September 2021. The survey consisted of an online survey and interactive map. The survey received 1,101 responses.

The survey outcomes support the 2030 Community Vision and its four supporting objectives, providing more detailed information and specific ideas about what people imagine for the future of the river and its tributaries.

Cooks River 2030 Community Vision

A loved and healthy river valley enriching the heart of Sydney

A biodiverse river valley supporting a clean river.



Every community accessing and enjoying the river.

Aboriginal ways of thinking are valued from Yana Badu to Kamay.

Holistic and cooperative approaches are guiding river restoration.

Survey insights into the 2030 Vision

A biodiverse river valley supporting a clean river

Cleaner water, waterway naturalisation and cleaning up litter and debris are top priorities. The work done so far to restore natural areas and naturalise river banks is appreciated, and people would like to see similar works done elsewhere.

Aboriginal ways of thinking are valued from Yana Badu to Kamay

The Cooks River community see a major need for improvement in opportunities to engage with Aboriginal history and contemporary Aboriginal culture around the catchment's waterways.

Every community accessing and enjoying the river

People imagine that their use of waterways and their surrounds would increase if conditions improve. They appreciate recent upgrades to improve access and facilities, and would like to see other gaps addressed.

Holistic and cooperative approaches are guiding river restoration

The community recognise that management is improving but want to see restoration efforts continue. They expect a holistic and cooperative approach to a place they experience as a whole.

1,101 
responses
to the survey


12-84
age range of
respondents

5% 
speak a
language
other than
English


2% 
Aboriginal
and/or Torres
Strait Islander
participants



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Survey findings



Top priorities for improving the Cooks River:

1. **Cleaner water** **44%** ranked as priority #1 or #2
2. **Waterway naturalisation** **40%** ranked as priority #1 or #2
3. **Clean up litter and debris** **35%** ranked as priority #1 or #2

If conditions improve

- 43%** would **spend time in nature** much more often
- 26%** would go **boating** much more often
- 24%** would go **swimming, wading or splashing** much more often



There is significant room to improve **cultural engagement** around waterways

The highest-ranked needs were:

- #1** improving opportunities to engage with **Aboriginal history** and
- #2** improving opportunities to engage with **contemporary Aboriginal culture**



Connections with wildlife

The most popular wildlife people associate with a healthier Cooks River:

Eastern long-necked turtles, Mudcrabs, Green and golden bellfrogs
Pelicans, Herons, Dusky moorhens, Egrets, Cormorants
Tawny frogmouths, Blue-tongue lizards, Powerful owls, Grey-headed flying foxes

Find out more

The Cooks River Alliance is a partnership between Bayside Council, City of Canterbury Bankstown, Inner West Council, Strathfield Council and Sydney Water. The Alliance uses the combined resources, experience, knowledge and skills within our partner organisations and the community to address the complex environmental problems of the Cooks River.

Visit www.cooksriver.org.au/cmp or social media channels to find out more.



info@cooksriver.org.au



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02 9707 5724