

CURRIMUNDI LAKE CATCHMENT NEWS

This is a community newsletter voluntarily produced by Currimundi Catchment Care Group Inc ABN 77 276 084 092. It is printed on sustainable forest paper and distributed by volunteers to 9,500 households and businesses within the Currimundi Catchment. If you can help with distribution please phone Tony on 5438 8267.



Autumn 2022

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR REGION

Sunshine Coast Council is preparing a new planning scheme to guide future growth and development and hopefully to help preserve the things we love about our region. The existing planning scheme commenced in 2014 and the new scheme is intended to be completed by 2024. It proposes a vision for what the Sunshine Coast could look like in 2041 and how to manage growth and change.

While the planning scheme sets out the “big picture” for our region, it will also include Local Plans for eighteen new local plan areas (LPAs). These Local Plans will focus on protection of local character in parts of the region and recognise that there are different community interests and local issues in different parts of our region.

Information sessions have been held over recent weeks giving members of the community the opportunity to have their say on future directions for our region.

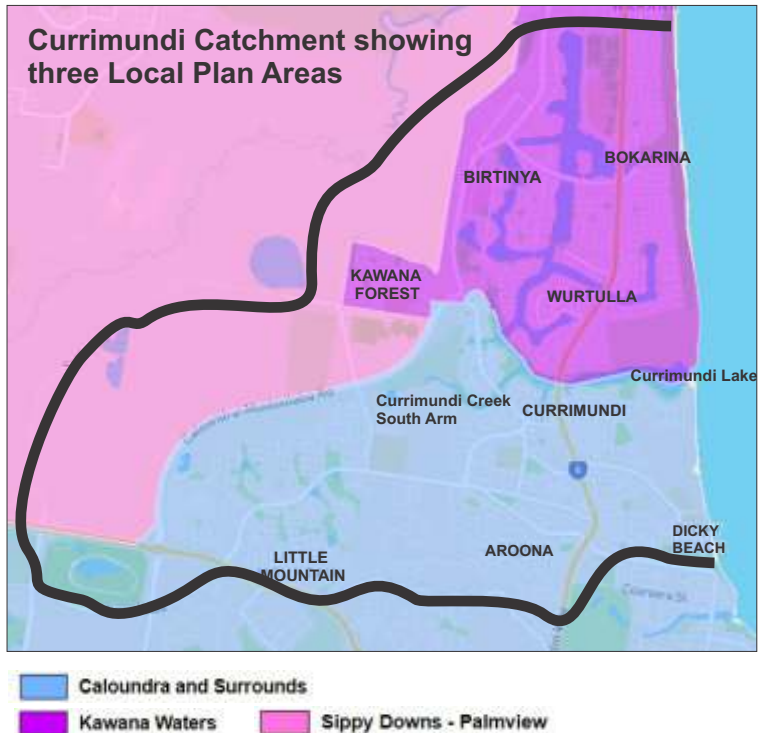
Currimundi Catchment groups have long been concerned to ensure that there is a balance between development and protection of natural areas.

One issue that could impact on planning for the Currimundi catchment is that it falls across three proposed local plan area boundaries - **Caloundra and Surrounds** for the area south of the lake and creeks (shown in blue on the map), **Kawana Waters** for the area north of the lake and including Kawana Forest (shown in purple on the map), and **Sippy Downs – Palmview** for the area west of Kawana Way. (shown in pink on the map).

The following are some of the proposed planning directions that may have an impact on the Currimundi Catchment:

Caloundra and Surrounds

- Investigate opportunities for additional medium density housing such as low-medium rise apartments, dual occupancies and townhouses around Currimundi Centre
- Provide new mixed use development opportunities along Nicklin Way at Currimundi
- Investigate possible areas for additional low-medium density residential development in Currimundi (excluding beachfront areas) and Battery Hill to improve housing diversity



Sippy Downs and Palmwoods

- Include new provisions outlining specific land use intent for the Lower Mooloolah River Greenspace
- Protect environmental values and water quality in and around the Mooloolah River

Kawana Waters

- Focus areas of increased density/height in nodes along Nicklin Way corridor (eg close to existing centres)
- No high rise development outside major centres
- Ensure appropriate transition between areas of higher density and low-density housing areas

If you want to Have Your Say on these local plan areas or any other aspect of future planning, do so via Council’s website before 31 March 2022, or once a proposed planning scheme has been developed which is expected to be some time in 2023.

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY EVENTS CANCELLED

Clean Up Australia Day was scheduled for Sunday 6 March but unfortunately local events were cancelled because of the potential danger to volunteers from the very wet and dangerous areas and associated debris. This is usually a very well attended event so it is a shame not to be able to proceed at this time.

But you can still do your bit when you’re out walking. This small collection of polystyrene and other plastic items, pictures right, was collected in 5 minutes from a recent beach walk by a helpful community resident. Better in the bin than on the beach!



Coming of age for Currimundi Catchment Care Group

In March 2022 Currimundi Catchment Care Group notches up 21 years since its inaugural meeting. Way back then a small group of people living near Currimundi Lake decided they didn't like the way things were going with water quality.

Founding member Joan Andrews recalls "I arrived on the Sunshine Coast in 1988 with a young family and lived on the north side of Currimundi Lake. Over time we began to notice changes in the Lake, increased erosion, siltation, pollution and higher turbidity and with high level of development happening, concerns were raised."

Eloise and Ron Blake were also early members and Eloise recalls that the group received vital assistance from then Councillor Elaine Darling. "She had a vision that brought together community members who were concerned about the health of Currimundi Lake, its creeks west of the Nicklin Way and the surrounding natural environment." One significant achievement after Cr Darling's election was implementation of large scale dredging by Council to remove the sand plug at the mouth of the lake and enable the water to flow freely in accordance with tidal movement.

The people who joined the Group brought their knowledge, experiences and enthusiasm with them. They set out 3 aims:

- Improve Water Quality
- Limit Erosion
- Improve the Environment.

It was not easy to achieve changes in the early days of the Group. Founding member Kym Maver remembers hosting a small group at her home to look at options for stopping erosion of the banks. She said one of the strategies discussed was to use old power poles to create a barrier with land filled in behind. "We thought we could start the next week. Of course we had absolutely no idea about the complexity of rules and regulations that any such idea would encounter."



CCCG volunteers installing coir log walls on the banks of the lake in 2014

It turns out that idea about the old power poles wasn't completely out of line. This idea was to bear fruit some years later when the Group launched perhaps its most significant project – the installation of coir log walls along the banks at Noel Burns Park. Coir logs are dense tubes made from coconut fibre into the shape of logs which can be installed in much the same way as a garden retaining wall.

Several installations were made between 2009 and 2015. The logs naturally degrade over time after plants, soils and geofabric have done the job of slowing down and filtering water flowing into the lake and thus halting erosion of the banks.

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Long-time members David and Jenny Allan actively promoted many significant projects of the Group including the Water Monitoring Program that ran for 14 years. David recalls a time when he and Jenny spent a few hours in a tinnie along the lake and creeks with two water quality scientists measuring water quality with two different devices and comparing results. David believes that this activity clearly showed that "citizen scientists", using the correct equipment, can competently measure and report readings as well as interpreting results.



David Allan - water monitoring duties in 2012

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Current President Tony Moorhead is also celebrating a milestone of 10 years in the role this year. He recalls many successful projects over the years from weeding to revegetation, surveying fish numbers, promoting responsible boating behaviour, installing nest boxes, and working with the community for Clean Up Australia Day, National Tree Day, Riversweep, Wildflower Festivals and the Lights on the Lake Community Festival.

"It is pleasing to reflect on the changes in attitudes of the community at large over the previous 21 years" Tony said. "People are more environmentally aware. Local, State and Federal laws have also changed and banned many practices that damaged the environment"



Nest boxes home to rainbow lorikeets

Tony and Vice President Glenys Powell have taken the Group to a wider perspective where the problems facing the catchment are seen as part of the broader environmental system. As well as picks, shovels and gardening gloves, today's tools include a website, Facebook page and e-newsletters to disseminate information about the catchment and activities of the Group.

This Newsletter remains our primary means of getting the message out there and advising of activities and events happening in the area. First published in 2002 when 4,000 were distributed, there are now 10,000 copies delivered by 146 volunteers.

So congratulations Currimundi Catchment Care Group and good luck for the future!



A typical group of volunteer weeders in 2012 enjoying the famous sausage sizzle and drink

And the work goes on...

Many thanks to those who attended the first CCCG working bee for the year on 12 February. The ground was hard and the wind was very unpleasant. But we persevered and managed to clear the whole area we targeted. Well done to us.

With COVID-19 precautions needed we continue to require the support and attendance of Council staff (many thanks). This means that our working bees will continue to be on the second Saturday of each month from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm for the foreseeable future.

Don't hesitate to email us for more details, or if you would like to attend. Every pair of hands makes a big difference.



Bev, Kym, Ruth and Tony and all those bags of weeds!



WATER WATER EVERYWHERE

It's hard to know how to react to the recent widespread and devastating flooding in South East Queensland and northern New South Wales. Predictions have been made for years about the increased likelihood of extreme weather events but that doesn't make it any easier when these events occur and people lose their homes and possessions if not their lives.

This picture of Lake Kawana near the stadium taken on 23 February shows 'moderate' flooding in our catchment but below 'major' flood levels. This water flows directly into Currimundi Lake and the high level was contributed to by the fact that the mouth of the lake had closed naturally. Council workers opened the lake on 23 February which enabled the water to flow to the ocean.

So our small corner of the world escaped major flooding this time but the areas affected are in our neighbourhood and it's likely that every one of us knows someone in these hard-hit areas.

This flooding coincided with the release of the report to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on **Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability**. This report assesses the impacts of climate change, looking at ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities at global and regional levels. It also reviews vulnerabilities and the capacities and limits of the natural world and human societies to adapt to climate change.



VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

If you're reading this newsletter, congratulations you are eligible to be one of our valuable volunteer newsletter deliverers!

It takes approximately 2 hours, four times a year and gives you the opportunity to walk in the fresh air and get to know your community better.

Phone Tony on 5438 8267.



Moderate flooding in Lake Kawana

We all know that extreme weather events have an enormous social and economic cost for Australia.

As reported in our previous newsletter Council has acknowledged that we are in a climate emergency. It has already taken steps to adapt to climate change and will hopefully increase its focus in the coming months and years. The Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy is one such strategy that enables better planning for current and future impacts of coastal hazards (including sea level rise).

A 0.8 metre sea level rise has been factored into the current Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014 in relation to the management of coastal hazards (erosion and inundation) under future climate conditions. Council is continuing to invest significant resources in risk reduction and disaster prevention planning.

Council CEO has undertaken to present an interim report on progress on the Zero-net Emissions Plan and Regional Climate Action Roadmap with recommendations for Council's consideration by 31 March 2022. We hope this timeline will be met and look forward to seeing this interim report.



This project has been assisted through the Sunshine Coast Council Grants Program.

Group Reports

CURRIMUNDI CATCHMENT CARE GROUP

Well the big news of the last few weeks has been the terrible weather events and shocking flooding taking place across so much of South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales. Our thoughts are with all of those who have been affected. Fortunately our little patch of the Sunshine Coast was not too severely impacted. I hope that many of us will show our thanks by helping those impacted, either with donations or by volunteering for the clean-ups.

Contact Volunteering Queensland <https://volunteeringqld.org.au/> if you can help. I'm sure these regions will need help for quite some time. The devastating fires and floods that have been occurring and intensifying in recent years highlight the need for climate action to limit the impacts of climate change and planning and preparation for the inevitable impacts it will have.

Finally, we need volunteers to join our efforts to look after our local catchment and environment and specifically at this time to help deliver this newsletter. If you can spare two hours every three months, please contact me by email: cccginfo@currimundicatchment.org.au or give me a call on 5438 8267.

Tony, President

FRIENDS OF CURRIMUNDI LAKE

I wonder what the next happening will be? In the natural sector we have had prolonged droughts, devastating fires and now rain and floods. Thrown into this mix is COVID-19. How much more can people suffer, and still come out on top?

Currimundi Lake has had an enormous amount of water through, but it did not scour the front of Lake entrance as much as it did in 2011. However our frontal dunes are eroding very badly and this has been hard for our endangered marine turtles to lay their eggs. So many nests have had to be relocated to higher ground.

Also in my last report I stated that Friends of Currimundi Lake would be pulling out lots of weeds. With all the rain the weeds are now over a meter high in some places but at our last weeding day, we had 14 people to help Ruth with pulling weeds out. Hopefully you will all come again please.

Weeds will keep us busy, but hopefully we will be able to count and GPS as many Birdwing Butterfly Vines in the Friends of Currimundi Lake area. Over the years we have planted quite a few, and I know residents have also planted these vines. If anyone has a vine in their yard, I would love to hear from you please.

Take care everyone, and if anyone has a couple of hours spare once a month, you would be doing us and our beautiful Currimundi area a favour by joining our weeding and planting day group on the second Wednesday of each month at 8.00am. Contact Ruth or Rhondda.

Rhondda, President

PARKLANDS COMMUNITY GROUP

Everyone has been busy cleaning up but we have been fortunate and not had an overabundance of rain to cause flooding to our residential neighbourhood! The water was high and about equal to what I have experienced during my past 16 years. We are so very grateful.

If there are any issues or concern that you may have, please do not hesitate to contact us on 5491 7905.

Ron, President

KAWANA FOREST RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Recent flooding left Kawana Forest completely cut off for over 24 hours but it brought out the best in our community – helping each other out in times of need and reassuring some residents who were quite fearful and nervous. KaFRA is now working to ensure that Sunshine Coast Council and Transport & Main Roads make proper provision for emergency access to and from Kawana Forest in times of disaster as planning continues for the future Kawana Motorway and also in the short term. Other matters for ongoing attention are:

- New Sunshine Coast planning scheme consultation
- Southern Sunshine Coast public transport corridor consultation
- Promised new bus service
- Reporting of graffiti and other illegal and dangerous activity in Kawana Forest (eg speeding, motorbikes and fireworks)

Glenn, President



Contacts



Currimundi Catchment Care Group Inc. (CCCG)

covers the catchments of Currimundi Lake, Creeks and Canals and Lake Kawana.

Meetings: 7.00pm at the Talara Primary College Library, Talara Street, Currimundi on the 2nd Monday of every odd month.

Next Meeting: To be advised

Contact: President Tony, 5438 8267

Email: cccginfo@currimundicatchment.org.au

Website: <http://cg.currimundicatchment.org.au>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/currimundicatchmentcaregroup



Friends of Currimundi Lake (FOCL)

covers the area south of Currimundi Lake

from the beach to Nicklin Way bridge.

Meetings: 7.30pm at Currimundi Recreation Hall cnr Currimundi Rd & Ilya St, Currimundi on the 1st Tuesday of every even month.

Next Meeting:

Contact: President Rhondda 5437 6481

Working bees: contact Ruth 0408 989 263

Email: foclinfo@currimundicatchment.org.au

Website: <http://focl.currimundicatchment.org.au>

Parklands Community Group

Contact: Ron 5491 7905, 0448 517 905

Email: rburnett@bigpond.net.au

Kawana Forest Residents Association (KaFRA)

Contact: President Glenn 0412 286 156

Email: gsmith@gideons.org.au

Website: www.kafra.org.au

Meeting Place bookings: 1800 786 227

Others:

Sunshine Coast Council: 5475 7272 issues regarding Currimundi Lake and its Catchment.

Kawana Police: 5413 8700 or 131444

Queensland Boating & Fisheries Patrol: 5444 4599 to report speeding boats.

TurtleCare: 0437 559 067 to report turtle tracks or nests.

Department of Environment & Resource Management (DERM): 1300 130 372 to report spills, dumping or anything suspicious in our waterways OR

1300 264 625 to report wildlife emergencies, including sick, injured or distressed marine life.

Wilvos: 5441 6200 24 hour hotline for injured wildlife.

Fishwatch Hotline: 1800 017 116 to report unlawful fishing activities.

Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital: 1800 334 350