1999 Oxley Creek
Catchment Management Plan
The final editing of this Oxley Creek Catchment Management Plan was carried out by the Oxley Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee (OCCCC) under the leadership of Anne Clarke.

This report contains the major suggestions for editing of the draft plan made in response to consultation by the Catchment Coordinator and members of the OCCCC with community, industry and agencies from November 1998 to February 1999.

The OCCCC and its Working Groups intend to produce a later version of the Plan as a document for agency action in response to Environment Protection Policy (Water) requirements and other needs expressed by the agencies in the consultation. In addition, further studies on Cultural Heritage values will be undertaken in the catchment at a later date. This later report will contain material requested which involves more detailed research and planning work.

Cover photo: Sugar Glider (Petaurus breviceps) (G.C. Suckling/Nature focus)
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Further technical support was provided by Mary Maher and Associates, South East Queensland Regional Water Quality Management Strategy, Willing and Partners and Catchment & Creeks Pty Ltd.

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A     How to use the Plan Documents

This volume, Volume 1, the Catchment Management Plan (CMP) is in 5 parts:

1. Executive Summary
   Contains an overview of the Plan and its associated actions.

2. Introduction/Background (Chapters 1, 2, and 3)
   The aim of the plan is found in Chapter 1. Brief but vital details of the catchment are also included. The purpose and success factors for catchment management plans are in Chapters 2 and 3.

3. How Management Actions are determined from existing conditions
   Report cards on the current environment, planning and management of the catchment are in Chapters 4 and 5. From these evolve future management actions.

4. The Plan with its Management Actions (Chapters 6, 7 and 8)
   Chapter 6 describes Planning for Creek Sustainability and Chapter 7 gives priorities and schedules for implementation of the CMP. Institutional arrangements and local actions have been addressed in Chapter 8.

5. Oxley into the Future
   Recommendations are found in Chapter 8. These emphasise the need for critical integrated action in the catchment.

The technical assessments on which this report is based with full physical descriptions and analysis of the catchment are in Volume 2.

Volume 2 contains the following documents:

- Creek stability
- Water quality
- Geology and soils
- Soil erosion risk
- Flooding
- Aquatic survey

B     Where the CMP Fits In
About the Oxley Creek Catchment Association (OCCA)

Vision / Mission statement
To protect and enhance the natural resource values of the Oxley Creek Catchment.

Objectives of the Oxley Creek Catchment Association

• Foster coordination between landholders, individuals, community, industry and Government agencies in their land, water and vegetation management activities.

• Promote community and Government understanding of the interactions between land, water and related biological resources.

• Promote the value of a coordinated, catchment-wide approach for managing these resources.

• Identify and prioritise interrelated land and water resource issues in the catchment, identify solutions and agree on actions through public and Government participation.

• Provide a forum for community and Government discussions on catchment management issues for resolving conflicting demands on natural resources.

• Promote the planned and sustainable economic growth of Oxley Creek catchment in a constructive and balanced way.

Achievements to date

• Incorporation of the Oxley Creek Catchment Association as well as formal endorsement of the Catchment Coordinating Committee through the Department of Natural Resources Integrated Catchment Management Program (1996).

• Development of a financial membership network as well as an information network of over 600 people and organisations.

• Completion and publication of the 1996 State of the Oxley Creek Catchment and the Water and Land Use Impact and Management Analysis.

• Annual staging of two Oxley Creek Water Festivals, an initiative of Oxley Creek Environment Group, aimed at creating awareness of Oxley Creek and issues.

• Development of an educational awareness program including industry, school children.

• Initiation of integrated management and planning projects within Oxley Creek catchment eg CMP.

• Establishment of working groups with members from government, industry and community

• Strong partnerships with industry and environmental groups.

Membership of the Oxley Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee 1997/98
The Oxley Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee has been established under the Integrated
Catchment Strategy for Queensland and is Queensland's only urban Integrated Catchment
Management Committee. It is comprised of representatives from the following interest sectors:

**Extractive Industry**
Mr Rowland Bendall  
(Chairman May 1997 to Oct 98)  
Land Tenure Manager  
CSR Construction Materials: Readymix Quarries, Northern Region

**Extractive Industry**
Mr Noel Cooke  
Paradise Hills Pty Ltd Mewlow Pty Ltd

**Industry**
Mr. Bruce Smith (Chairman, 1996)  
Mr Cameron Smeal  
Weston Bioproducts

**Industry**
Mr Glen Platt  
(Deputy Chairman Sep 97-Oct98)  
Dulux Australia

**Landfill**
Mr George Deen(Chairman Oct 1998)  
Gainscow Holdings

**Local Government Upper Catchment**
Councillor Judy Richardson (1997)  
Wayne Window  
Beaudesert Shire Council

**Local Government Middle Catchment**
Ms Michelle Hennessey  
Logan City Council

**Local Government Lower Catchment**
Mr Paul Mack (1996-98)  
Mr. Patrick Bourke (1999)  
Brisbane City Council

**State Government**
Mr Dave Kent  
Resource Management Officer  
Department of Natural Resources

**Residential Developer**
Position not filled

**Community**
Ms Diana Dawson (Treasurer to Oct 98)  
Ms Jocelyn Clarkson  
Oxley Creek Environment Group

**Community**
Mr Frank Dingle (Treasurer Oct 98)  
Pamphlet Sea Scouts Master

**Community**
Mr Bruce Harper  
Oxley - Sherwood Lions

**Community**
Mr Ray Ison, Environmental Planner  
Oxley Creek Environment Group

**Community**
Ms Debra Manendis  
West Logan Environment Group

**Community**
Ms Lynn Whitfield (Secretary)  
Oxley Creek Environment Group

**Community**
Ms Amanda Fox  
Greening Australia

**Community**
Ms Michelle Peile  
Benarrawa Community Development Ass.

**Community**
Dr Mike Olsen  
Griffith University

**Coordinator (1996-Feb 99)**
Cathy Ellis  
Brisbane River Management Group

**Assistant Temporary Coordinator(1998)**
Andrew Daniel
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The catchment of Oxley Creek, along with its tributary system of Blunder Creek, has been subjected to a range of negative environmental impacts culminating in the need for a program of protection and management work.

This catchment management plan (CMP) has examined the state of the catchment under the following headings:

- Water quality, in-stream conditions of the waterways of the catchment
- Waterway conditions of bed and banks, riparian vegetation including wetlands and flooding;
- Catchment conditions including erosion-risk soils and vegetation; and
- Access to and amenity of waterways.

Key findings about these aspects of the catchment, outlined in Chapters 4 (environmental report card) and 5 (legislation and planning report card) are summarised as follows.

Water quality

- Within the Creek system, water quality remains below standards in the lower urbanised part of the catchment, and other reaches upstream have also degraded. There is some evidence that the extremes of poor water quality conditions of 1988 – 90 have improved. However, exceedances above ‘acceptable’ water quality standards have continued across all water quality parameters (suspended solids, total nitrogen, total phosphorus, faecal coliforms).
- Primary causes of the existing degradation are point sources such as the Inala Sewage Treatment Plant, minor point sources (sewer overflows) and the non-point sources of sand extraction, stormwater run-off and land development, including areas using septic treatment systems.
- Brisbane River and Moreton Bay, the receiving waters of Oxley Creek, are experiencing problems of excess sediments, nutrients and faecal coliforms, giving rise to problems of sea grass loss and algal blooms.

Waterway conditions

- Bed and bank conditions are serious in the middle reaches and a full geomorphic analysis is needed.
- Flooding problems will be exacerbated if development in the upper catchment proceeds.
- Riparian vegetation including wetlands has some critical areas requiring management and buffering.
Catchment conditions

- High to very high erosion-risk soils line the watercourses and are found in parts of the catchment.
- Vegetation in the catchment has significant biodiversity and land protection values with several vegetated areas supporting endangered and threatened species, and several areas of large high value vegetation associations (Greenbank Military Training Area, Parkinson, and Beaudesert uplands).

Access and amenity

- Limited access and amenity planning in the lower catchment with opportunities to extend waterway corridor recreation spaces in the middle and upper catchments. Knowledge of the Cultural Heritage values of the catchment is limited.

The vision for Oxley Creek catchment is proposed as:

*Using community action and multi-agency cooperation, revitalise the catchment and its waterways to support healthy ecosystems, and to ensure a resource that is available for the sustainable use and enjoyment of all.*

The plan evaluated 3 scenarios for Creek sustainability:

- ‘Do Nothing’ scenario;
- ‘Slightly Better’ scenario with targeted improvements on 1998 catchment conditions; and

The ‘Slightly Better’ scenario is to form the basis of this Catchment Management Plan for the next 5 years.

Key components in achieving the vision of this catchment management plan are:

Community Creek Care

- Facilitating community learning about the Creek to increase the levels of community ownership of what's needed for its health and vitality.

Immediate remedial action

- Using effective ‘quick fix’ solutions to some of the most urgent environmental problems and pressures.

Effective management & authority

- Building the framework for long term coordination and co-management between stakeholders, and the planning and regulatory framework for Creek sustainability.

Adequate resourcing

- Generating the foundation for public and private sector partnerships and building sustainability into existing programs and sector plans.
The aim is that the ‘Slightly Better’ scenario forms a foundation philosophy for this first catchment management plan, with planned progression to the ‘Improvements on 1998 Conditions’ scenario following the plan review in 2003.

The natural vegetation cover in the middle and upper catchment is a major water quality asset. It represents an area of natural rates of runoff as well as a means of soil protection. It is also a biodiversity asset, in terms of large core areas as well as riparian plant and animal life.

While opportunities to retain natural features in the lower catchment except on the golf courses and along tributaries may be limited, several smaller but still critical areas of native vegetation exist, for example, Parkinson Bushland and Heathwood. In addition to biodiversity values, their location in the lower catchment gives these areas a high level of significance for water quality protection.

In the more developed areas, riparian vegetation in good condition is also a natural feature contributing to water quality protection, biodiversity and amenity / livability values. A large proportion of the catchment however, is either developed or committed to development. For these areas, controls over point source discharges and stormwater runoff are the major strategic measures to be applied.

The focus of point source discharge work should be on sewage treatment, sewer overflows, and sanitary landfills. The focus of stormwater management should be on new developments, extractive industry and infrastructure projects.

For established urban areas, waterway conditions will only be improved with an increase of awareness by the community and industries, and a generation of greater support for a cleaner stormwater run-off.
High Priority Outcomes (ecological and economic)
The following set of outcomes will drive the actions of the plan. These outcomes are to be revised when the policy base for catchment protection in Oxley Creek is revised and the next plan is prepared.

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<th>Water Quality</th>
<th>Catchment Economic Activities</th>
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<td>• No net increase in suspended solids / sediments from 1998 levels.</td>
<td>• No change to local or downstream flood levels for the 1:2 and 1:100 year ARI events.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Nutrient capping at 1998 levels and achievement of ‘desirable’ levels by 2005</td>
<td>• Due recognition of development limitations for very high and high erosion risk soils in planning schemes and approvals conditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterway Conditions.</td>
<td>• Security of access to sand and soil resources deemed appropriate for development by environmental and social assessments.</td>
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<td>• Any actions taken to rehabilitate instabilities in the middle catchment are to be cost-effective. Costs are to be shared between contributors, and the actions are to deliver the desired results.</td>
<td>• Adequate and accessible infrastructure for resource use, industrial production, and urban development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No change to local or downstream flood levels for the 1:2 and 1:100 year ARI events.</td>
<td>• Security of construction and operation of rigorously assessed and appropriately planned urban development - in the context of catchment requirements.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Nil loss of riparian vegetation.</td>
<td>• Remediation and appropriate end uses of contaminated sites.</td>
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<td>• 100% increase in joint Council – community riparian projects.</td>
<td>• Operation of appropriate urban and industrial services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Due recognition of development limitations for very high and high erosion risk soils in planning schemes and approvals conditions.</td>
<td>• Access to a skilled labour force living in surrounding areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment conditions</td>
<td>• Agricultural and grazing activities compatible with catchment and waterway protection.</td>
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<td>• No further loss of catchment vegetation (1998) levels, retention of highly significant associations and improved recovery levels for threatened species, and fostering of local amenity value vegetation in lower catchment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access and amenity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increase in linkages between public open space in middle and upper reaches.</td>
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<td>• Increased number of public access points in lower catchment.</td>
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High priority outcomes (administrative and community)

The Plan’s administrative arrangements should:

- Promote the Creek system’s identity and build awareness about its protection.
- Ensure the Creek’s contribution to achievement of the overall goals for the River and the Bay.
- Have adequate power and authority to intervene in matters which put the achievement of these goals and those for the Creek itself at risk.
- Ensure establishment and maintenance of strong and effective cross-agency and cross-sector linkages at all levels.
- Build on existing programs, projects and initiatives.
- Attract the resourcing and community support needed.
- Give due recognition to catchment-wide objectives and build capacity through effective management structures.
- Enable all cost factors to be taken into account and allow lowest net cost for achievement of the desired outcomes.
- Provide direction and clarity about legislative reforms and enforcement needed.
- Facilitate systematic management, monitoring and performance reporting.

Recommended actions for catchment protection and management are prioritised across eight Catchment Management Units (CMU) for the catchment. These CMUs, discussed in Chapter 7, are as follows:

CMU1  Northern Oxley Tributaries  
CMU2  Blunder Western Tributaries  
CMU3  Oxley-Blunder Plain  
CMU4  Sheep Station Gully  
CMU5  Greenbank-Karawatha Linkage  
CMU6  Logan Conservation and Urban  
CMU7  Lagoon and Rural Residential  
CMU8  Forested Rural Uplands

Major opportunities exist for incorporating catchment protection into the planning schemes to be prepared under the new Integrated Planning Act (IPA) and for setting the targets for the urban stormwater quality management plans required under the Water Environmental Protection Policy.
Effective implementation of the Catchment Management Plan will mean establishment of formal coordination and reporting mechanisms as well as a review of government powers and plans, particularly those of Local Governments.

The Creek system’s future health will rely on improved measurement of all aspects of the Creek’s condition; greater coordination across responsibility areas in government and the private sector and, greater accountability for decisions and plans which impact on the Creek system. New ways will have to be found to facilitate the desired improvements in the catchment.