

**Media Release**

**17 September 2021**

## **Greater Sydney Harbour councils receive state government funding boost to improve waterway health**

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) and Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) have been successful in securing a \$274,000 grant through the NSW Government's Coastal and Estuary Grants Program, to address the impact of urban stormwater discharge on Greater Sydney Harbour.

The project is supported by 20 councils in the Greater Sydney Harbour catchment and is the largest collaboration of local government agencies to have received a NSW Government planning grant.

The Greater Sydney Harbour catchment comprises four smaller catchments: Parramatta River, Lane Cove River, Middle Harbour and the remaining foreshore areas draining into Port Jackson.

The grant funding will contribute towards a detailed assessment of stormwater runoff across the region, to better understand the needs of councils in managing the health of their local waterways.

The results will support the development of a Coastal Management Program (CMP) for Greater Sydney Harbour, being led by the SCCG. The CMP aims to establish a long-term strategy for the coordinated management of the region, to mitigate the potential adverse impacts of population growth, climate change (including sea-level rise) and catchment runoff.

SCCG Chair, Councillor Lindsay Shurey, said that the grant provides a unique opportunity address and manage stormwater runoff on a whole-of-catchment scale.

"The Stage 1 Scoping Study of the Greater Sydney Harbour CMP identified urban stormwater discharge as a high priority threat to environmental and public health," Cr Shurey said.

"We thank the NSW Government for their financial support of Stage 2 of our project to investigate stormwater runoff across the catchment. This work will contribute to the protection of Greater Sydney Harbour, which is a source of great ecological diversity and one of Australia's most significant natural assets."

PRCG Chair, Councillor Mark Drury, said that the success of the grant highlights the importance of collaboration between local and state government agencies to manage the common issue of stormwater runoff.

"Much of the stormwater discharge that enters the Parramatta River ends up in Sydney Harbour, so it is vital that we take a holistic approach to managing its impact on our waterways," Cr Drury said.

"As the Parramatta River Catchment Group progresses our Masterplan to open more swim sites on the Parramatta River by 2025, we welcome the NSW Government's increased commitment to improving waterway health."

In Stage 2 of the project, results from the stormwater assessment, application of existing planning tools such as the Risk Based Framework, and community and stakeholder engagement, will support individual councils working with state government agencies to develop projects and actions for consideration in Stage 3.

The 20 local councils supported by the funding are:

Blacktown City Council, Burwood Council, City of Canada Bay Council, City of Canterbury Bankstown, City of Parramatta, City of Ryde, City of Sydney, Cumberland City Council, Hills Shire Council, Hornsby Shire Council, Hunter's Hill Council, Inner West Council, Ku-ring-gai Council, Lane Cove Council, Mosman Municipal Council, Northern Beaches Council, North Sydney Council, Waverley Council, Willoughby City Council, Woollahra Municipal Council.

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