

Improving collaboration with Council

Manning Coastcare Group



Manning Coastcare is working to improve communication and collaboration with MidCoast Council for better outcomes for all

The issue

A lack of regular communication between Manning Coastcare and their local Council, Midcoast Council, had led to a slow erosion of the relationship and a number of missed opportunities for collaboration. There was a general sense from each side of not really knowing what the other organisation was working on or working toward and a lack of cohesiveness despite shared long-term goals for the coastal fringe of the area. The Manning Coastcare Committee did not know who in Council to approach for support or information beyond the very basics.

The solution

We have started to rebuild the relationship between Coastcare and Council by first organising presentations and meetings to all "get on the same page". The first of these was a webinar presented by Council's Coastal Management Coordinator discussing the work being done to develop Council's Coastal Management Plan. Questions and topics for discussion were sought from Coastcare volunteers before and after the webinar and the video has since been uploaded to Youtube to make it accessible to all members, including those unable to attend on the day. A meeting has also been organised between the Manning Coastcare Committee and the Manager and several staff of Council's Natural Systems department.

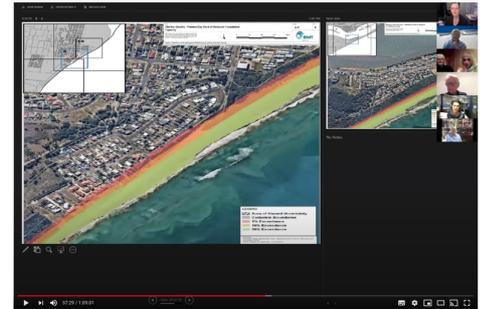
It is intended to make meetings and discussions like this a regular feature of Manning Coastcare's calendar to continue to improve the flow of communication between the two organisations.

The impact

It is still early days, but already the relationship between our organisations has improved. Council is very keen to improve communication and collaborations and leverage our volunteers efforts for better environmental outcomes, and our volunteers are feeling validated by Council's attention and looking forward to more support in the works they're undertaking. Ensuring that our future works are planned in conjunction and are complementary will greatly benefit the outcomes being sought by all parties.

Learnings

Things have gone well so far, though we only had a fairly low turnout for the webinar. This was probably due to the fact that it was presented on Zoom, which many of our volunteers are unfortunately still reluctant to use. We will continue to offer the occasional presentation online, but we are looking forward to the relaxation of some of the gathering restrictions so that we can once again meet face-to-face.



Key facts

- Communication and collaboration benefits the environment and everyone involved
- Councils are often keen to work with local Landcare/ Coastcare groups, but it may take the community group reaching out to get the ball rolling



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