

FACT SHEET



SOME COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HNCMA



WHAT IS THE HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (HNCMA)?

The HNCMA was established by the NSW Government in 2004 as one of 13 Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) across NSW to help protect the natural values of the Hawkesbury-Nepean and ensure it continues to be a healthy and productive catchment.

To achieve this goal, the HNCMA works closely with landholders, local councils, community and landcare groups, non-government organisations and other government agencies to plan, fund and carry out practical environmental improvements in priority areas.

The HNCMA is also assisted by many tireless volunteers and private landholders who contribute countless hours and invaluable local knowledge to improving the catchment for everyone's benefit.

IS THE HNCMA RESPONSIBLE FOR DRINKING WATER AND OUR DAMS?

No. That is the Sydney Catchment Authority's role to manage the dams and drinking water supplies for Sydney, the Illawarra and Blue Mountains. In those parts of the catchment that supply drinking water generally above Warragamba Dam, the HNCMA and Sydney Catchment Authority work closely together with landholders to deliver practical on-ground environmental improvements.



WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

The HNCMA provides funding for practical environmental improvements in priority areas including:

- Funding for Landholders

The HNCMA has funding available to work on private land in priority areas across the catchment. HNCMA staff can provide funding and offer technical advice to landholders to help get projects to better manage their natural resources underway.

For more information please refer to our "Funding for landholders" brochure or go to www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au/topics/2490.html

- Funding for Councils

The HNCMA's local government partnership program provides funding to council-led environmental projects which improve catchment health. For more information contact the HNCMA's local government officer or go to www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au/funding

- Partnership Projects

The HNCMA also works with a wide range of other partners including non-government organisations and government agencies to deliver projects that contribute to catchment health.

WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES DOES THE HNCMA MANAGE?

The HNCMA works co-operatively with many other partners to improve catchment health. The HNCMA has a charter to plan, fund and carry out practical environmental improvements such as restoring and protecting riverbanks, bushland and wetlands as well as repairing degraded landscapes. A large focus of the HNCMA's work and funding is directed to private property.

The HNCMA works closely with many other organisations such as the Dept of Environment & Climate Change, Sydney Catchment Authority, Dept of Primary Industries, Sydney Water,

Councils, Rural Lands Protection Boards to contribute to other catchment issues managed by these organisations such as dams, drinking water, river flows, nutrient and fire management, threatened species and National Parks, pest control and stormwater management.

HOW DOES THE HNCMA SELECT PROJECTS FOR FUNDING?

The HNCMA has developed a 10-year Catchment Action Plan, approved by the NSW Government, that identifies priority areas and activities to improve catchment health. Over 400 community members and stakeholders contributed to the development of this plan which provides a framework for decisions about funding.

To assess individual applications for funding from landholders, the HNCMA has set up independent assessment panels. Panel members have a range of natural resource management skills and expertise and include representatives from landholders, landcare, councils, indigenous community, Rural Lands Protection Board, government agencies and Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA staff.

These panels consider the project's design, costs, landholder commitments, risk management and how the project contributes to priority Catchment Action Plan targets before making recommendations on projects to fund.

HOW CAN I JOIN A LANDCARE GROUP?

Landcare in the Hawkesbury-Nepean keeps on growing. Across the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment there are currently 120 landcare groups working to restore and protect our natural environment and volunteering over 68,000 hours annually for the benefit of the entire community. By joining a landcare group, you can team up with other people in your community to care for your local environment, learn new skills and gain a better understanding of environmental issues affecting the future of all Australians.

You can help us to make a difference. Contact your local HNCMA office or visit our website (www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au/getinvolved) to find your local landcare group. Alternatively you can start your own group – if there is a local environmental issue you think needs addressing talk to your friends and neighbours, and contact one of our Community Support Officers for assistance to get started.

CAN I CLEAR NATIVE VEGETATION ON MY PROPERTY?

The *Native Vegetation Act 2003* came into force in NSW in December 2005 and introduced a new approach to the management of native vegetation across NSW. The Act is designed to promote sustainable management of native vegetation across NSW, to protect native vegetation of high conservation value, to protect water quality and biodiversity and to prevent land degradation. The HNCMA is charged with implementing the Act within the region and assists landowners in managing native vegetation on their properties.

In general, any clearing approved under the Act must be offset by improving the condition of another area of native vegetation of the same or similar type. However there are some clearing

activities that do not require consent under the Act. Rural landholders can carry out certain clearing activities if these are defined as Routine Agricultural Management Activities (RAMAs).

Before undertaking any clearing on your property, please consult your local HNCMA office for advice. For more information contact our Goulburn office or go to www.nativevegetation.nsw.gov.au

DOES THE HNCMA DO SOIL TESTING?

The HNCMA's Soil and Land program invests in rehabilitating degraded land, controlling erosion and promoting continuous improvement in sustainable land management. Salinity and acidity have also been recognised as having a significant impact on the natural environment in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment as well as damaging infrastructure and agricultural enterprises.

Soil testing for landholders is available through your local council or, for commercial properties, it is available through your local Stock and Station Agent.

For further information on soil testing and other services provided by other agencies within the catchment, please refer to the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Directory.

IS THE HNCMA INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS?

No. The HNCMA has no direct role in Development Approvals. Through the Catchment Action Plan, the HNCMA seeks to align catchment priorities with local and State Government planning instruments such as Local Environment Plans.

