



The Newport Beach S.L.S.C Environment Plan

February 2008

NEWPORT BEACH S.L.S.C. ENVIRONMENT PLAN

VISION

Newport Surf Life Saving Club (S.L.S.C) is an active participant in the co-operative network of community organisations that promote environmental stewardship in the protection of Newport Beach's ecologically sensitive coastal environment.

MISSION

Newport S.L.S.C is committed to the ecologically sustainable use of the coastal environment. The Club will demonstrate this commitment through the promotion of environmentally sustainable practices and community awareness raising of environmental issues to ensure the ecologically sustainable use of coastal resources.

PREAMBLE

The Newport SLSC is committing resources to the development of an Environment Plan for Newport Beach. Currently Pittwater Council has responsibility for managing the litter on the beach, barbecue, parking, pool, headland and dune reclamation areas, with the latter ably assisted by community groups. To the credit of Pittwater Council it does this job well but does so virtually single handedly with little assistance from the resident Surf Club.

Newport Beach is becoming an increasingly popular destination, particularly in summer. This demand for recreation space, as well as the presence of two major storm water outfalls, makes the challenge of managing beach litter a difficult one for Pittwater Council and its staff.

Newport S.L.S.C would like to partner with Pittwater Council to action many elements in this encompassing Environment Plan. This partnership would allow the Surf Club to use its considerable resources to develop and implement environmental initiatives that complement and build upon existing programs conducted by Pittwater Council. This initiative will also encourage the broader community to assist with the important and worthwhile task of maintaining a clean beach.

This is a quantum shift for over 900 members of the Newport S.L.S.C. It is recognition that the Club and its activities are dependent on the condition of the beach, dunes, headlands tidal zone and public areas. There are few things that the Surf Club has failed to achieve in recent years, including the title of "The Most Outstanding Club In 2007". It is with this level of dedication and achievement that the Club now directs its energies to the initiatives within this Environment Plan. The Club recognises that while its primary task is to maintain a safe beach for its members and the visiting public it has sufficient resources to help clean the beach and assist with the preservation of its unique biodiversity.

ACTION PLAN

The Newport S.L.S.C. environmental initiatives are as follows:

1. Incorporate a coastal education unit into the Newport Nipper program;

This will expose Nippers to, and improve their understanding of, the biological diversity of the coastal intertidal zone. This program was trialed in 2007 with the Nippers as a component of their existing activities. The educational unit will be compiled by the Coastal Environment Centre and will be conducted by the age managers. The S.L.S.C believes that Nippers will make better environmental custodians if given the appropriate skills to manage the environment.

2. Recycling bins to be deployed throughout the beach;

The Club proposes to work with Pittwater Council and local schools to design a highly visible recycling bin system that caters for the summer demand. The three-bin system is a popular one and if adopted would be well sign posted highlighting that this is one of many environmental initiatives employed by Pittwater Council and the S.L.S.C.

3. The S.L.S.C and its membership actively contribute to existing dune and headland regeneration projects;

Currently, there are a number of environment groups active in dune regeneration. The S.L.S.C recognises the need to contribute to this collective effort. Additionally, an on-site meeting with Pittwater Council, Coastal Environment Centre and other active groups would be beneficial to ascertain how the Club can best use its resources to accelerate the existing regeneration programs.

4. Clubhouse to install rainwater tanks;

The Club will lodge another application in 2008 for a grant to install two concrete water tanks to be sunk adjacent to the Club. These tanks will collect approximately 218,000 litres of rainwater runoff annually, reducing the Clubs use of potable water by a similar amount. This rainwater collection system will be made visible with numerous signs highlighting its presence and the benefits of rainwater collection.

5. Beach litter signs to be displayed on all patrols;

Two signs strategically positioned on all patrols should encourage visitors to remove and recycle their garbage. The Council may help with the production of the signs.

6. Voluntary Lifesavers and Lifeguards duties to be amended to include litter collection;

This additional task will not be at the detriment of their primary duty but would allow the Lifesavers and Lifeguards collectively to set a positive and visible example to the community about litter collection. This will encourage the public to participate in the collection of litter for the benefit of the coastal environment. In particular, children see Lifeguards as mentors- this is an opportunity not to be overlooked. If patrols lead by example it is more likely that the public will follow their example and take up the challenge.

7. Address the pollution generated by the two storm water outfalls;

The two storm water outfalls generate large amounts of gross pollution in the form of glass bottles, plastics, Styrofoam, cadaver's you name it, its regularly there! This pollution is unsightly, environmentally damaging and very often dangerous to the public, most of all it is unnecessary. We would like to hold discussions with Pittwater Council to see what plans they have for the outfalls and if gross pollutant traps are the answer.

8. The S.L.S.C to conduct a major community event to raise awareness and support for these environmental initiatives;

Newport SLSC, in conjunction with Pittwater Council, Coastcare and the community, will hold a community event at Newport Beach to raise awareness of the degrading state of the beach and the range of initiatives in this plan for the sustainable use of the beach for recreation. This event will allow the community to participate in activities, including dune regeneration, native tree plantings and rubbish removal. These events will tie in with other environmental initiatives, including Coastcare Week, Clean up Australia Day and others.

9. The Club will actively participate in annual environmental competitions;

Competitions like the "2007 Clean Beach Challenge" keep the Club active and environmentally innovative, necessary ingredient in stimulating the enthusiasm of Club members and hopefully helping the club maintain its environmental credentials. Newport SLSC will utilise these opportunities for promoting actions within this plan.

10. Clubhouse to be environmentally compliant;

With the Club promoting an environmental plan it is vital the Clubhouse be compliant and be seen by the public to be so. With the Clubhouse currently undergoing renovation the Building Committee has taken the opportunity to incorporate long life light fittings and three star efficient water fittings.

Additionally the Club will adopt rigorous recycling practices for all waste it generates.

11. The SLSC will seek funding opportunities for major initiatives through its partnerships

The S.L.S.C will use its partnership with Pittwater Council, Coastcare groups and the community to apply for funding assistance from major Government and non-Government grant programs, including Envirofund, Climate Change Fund, Landcare Australia, Greening Australia and others. The successful receipt of these grant funds will allow the S.L.S.C to complete many of these environmental initiatives, including holding a major community event, establishing recycling bins and beach litter signs and installing gross pollutant traps.

12. The installation of a grey water system;

The Club will pursue this initiative after the rainwater system has been installed. The merit of the grey water system is that it further reduces potable water consumption and is consistent with the Clubs holistic environment plan.

13. Clubhouse to reduce its dependence on grid power;

The Club seeks to reduce its environmental footprint where possible. This can be achieved with the installation of a solar and or wind turbine system. This initiative is dependent on both Council approval and funding via sponsorship.

14. Installation of bicycle racks.

Encouraging the use of bicycles in and around the beach environment reduces noise and air pollution and traffic congestion. This can be funded by sponsorship.

BENEFITS

The Surf Club compiled this environment plan in 2008 as a holistic approach, committing the clubs resources to the better protection of the coastal zone of Newport Beach.

The benefits of this plan are many, including:

1. Improved protection of the coastal ecosystem
2. Encouraging the sustainable use of the beach for recreation
3. Reduction in rubbish and pollution at the beach
4. Improved understanding of the coastal zone and the need to manage it in a sustainable manner by Nippers
5. Increase in energy and water efficiency of the Newport SLSC Clubhouse; and
6. Greater participation by the general community in beach maintenance.

CONCLUSION

The Newport SLSC has been fortunate in recent years to see its membership grow rapidly in unison with its strong performance at carnivals. As a result, the Club has a vibrant and active membership that is proud of its beach and Club facilities. It has become clear to the Club and its members that we need to take a far more active role with the Council and other active environment groups to protect an asset that is immensely valuable to us and the many families that visit Newport Beach.

Mr Doug Menzies
Club President