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Appendices

Appendix A  Maps
1. Introduction

The Taree – Great Lakes Regional Boating Plan has been developed as part of a major NSW Government initiative to boost the experience of recreational boating across the state. The Plan was developed by the Maritime Management Centre (MMC) in Transport for NSW working closely with the NSW Maritime Division of Roads and Maritime Services (Roads and Maritime) and with expert coastal infrastructure advice from consultants GHD.

The Plan identifies the boating safety, access and infrastructure actions across the region to be implemented over the next five years. A summary of the infrastructure projects, safety and policy initiatives to be delivered as part of the Plan are detailed in the Delivery Program in Chapter 8. A Progress Report on the Delivery Program will be published annually to provide an update on the delivery of key projects and actions.

Funding for infrastructure projects will be allocated out of the NSW Boating Now program announced by the Minister for Roads and Freight in August 2014 which will see $14m per year made available for the delivery of boating infrastructure projects over the next five years.

The Plan is one of eleven Regional Boating Plans that have been developed across the major waterways in NSW as shown in Figure 1.

Each Regional Boating Plan was developed through a two-stage consultation process. The first stage involved workshops with local Councils and key stakeholder group as well as an online survey open to all waterway users and members of the general public. Feedback received from the first stage was then used to inform the development a Consultation Draft which formed the basis of the second stage of consultation.

A public information session was held at Forster on 30 July 2014 to discuss and seek feedback on the key findings and actions identified in the Consultation Draft. Further meetings were also held with Councils to help determine the priority infrastructure projects identified in the final Plan.
Inland lakes and dams have been allocated to their closest region.

**Figure 1 – Map of regions**

**Key**

1. Tweed Clarence Valley Region
2. Mid-North Coast Region
3. Taree Great Lakes Region
4. Port Stephens Hunter Region
5. Lake Macquarie Tuggerah Lakes Region
6. Hawkesbury River Pittwater Brisbane Water Region
7. Sydney Harbour Region
8. Botany Bay Georges River Port Hacking Region
9. Shoalhaven Illawarra Region
10. Far South Coast Region
11. Murray Riverina Region
2. Physical character of the waterways

2.1 Background

The Taree – Great Lakes Region predominately consists of two major waterways, the Manning River and Wallis Lake. However, recreational boating is a popular past time throughout the region, with users undertaking a wide variety of boating activities. Due to constraints such as limited waterway availability, limited foreshore space and shelter from weather, users in this region tend to concentrate on particular areas in the waterways. Further details on waterway users are provided in Chapter 3.

The waterways are covered by three councils:
- Greater Taree City Council (GTCC);
- Great Lakes Council (GLC); and
- Gloucester Shire Council (GSC).

Most councils have plans in place to manage their waterways and associated estuaries. The main objectives of these plans are to manage and co-ordinate waterfront development, improve public accessibility and to protect the visual character and natural landscape of the waterways.

It should be noted the suburbs of Bulahdelah, Tea Gardens, Hawks Nest and Stroud are within the boundaries of the Great Lakes Council, however, fall into the Port Stephens-Hunter region.

The region incorporates part of the Port Stephens – Great Lakes Marine Park which covers an area of approximately 98,000 ha and encompasses the area between Cape Hawke Surf Life Saving Club near Forster south to Birubi Beach Life Saving Club at the northern end of Stockton Beach. However this is mostly within the Port Stephens – Hunter region. As such the section relevant to the Taree – Great Lakes region is from Sugarloaf Point at Seal Rocks north to the Cape Hawke Surf Life Saving Club.

The marine park incorporates estuaries to their tidal limit, foreshores to the mean high water mark and extends offshore to the 3 nautical mile State waters boundary. The Port Stephens – Great Lakes Marine Park Zoning Plan protects the marine biodiversity of the area while supporting a wide range of recreational and commercial activities. Many significant Indigenous cultural and spiritual sites are located within or adjacent to the marine park including middens, burial sites and traditional campsites.

Visitors and the local community enjoy a range of recreational and commercial activities in the marine parks. Popular recreational activities include swimming, surfing, fishing and diving. Commercial fishing vessels operating out of Forster also access the marine park.
The sections below outline the physical characteristics of the waterways where boating mainly occurs rather than the entire catchment and tributaries.

### 2.2 Manning catchment

The Manning catchment is on the NSW mid north coast and is approximately 8,420 km² in size. The River begins in the Great Dividing Range and flows south-east for 250 km through a coastal floodplain to Taree. The southern arm of this river meets the Pacific Ocean at Old Bar, and the northern arm meets the ocean at Harrington. The entrance at Harrington is open with only a single training wall on the northern shoreline, as such it is known to be unstable and more dynamic than other entrances with two training walls. Farquhar Inlet is untrained and has a history of periodic closure.

The northern and southern arms split further creating a delta system and in turn, Mitchells and Oxley Islands. The river itself has an approximate estuary area of 35 km² in size with an average depth of 3 m. The navigable distance of the river is approximately 50 km to the town of Wingham. The catchment is spread over two local government areas, Greater Taree City Council (GTCC) and Gloucester Shire Council (GSC).

![Figure 2 – Manning catchment](image-url)
2.3 **Wallis Lake**

Wallis Lake has a number of tributaries including the Wallingat River, Wang Wauk River, Coolongolook River and Wallamba River. The estuary is approximately 99 km² in size with an average depth of 2.3 m. The entrance of the system is open and trained and separates the towns of Forster and Tuncurry. The height restrictions of the Forster – Tuncurry Bridge restricts movement of taller vessels under the bridge.

The catchment is spread across the three local government areas of Great Lakes Council, Greater Taree City Council and Gloucester Shire Council.

![Figure 3 – Wallis Lake and surrounds](image)
2.4 Smiths Lake

Smiths Lake lies immediately to the south of Wallis Lake. The lake is approximately 10 km\(^2\) in size with an average depth of 2.4 m. It is mainly an undisturbed estuary and its southern shores lie within the Myall Lakes National Park.

The lake is of a unique type known as an ‘intermittently closed or open lake or lagoon’ (ICOLL). The lake has three basins and there is evidence of sedimentation adjacent to the ocean entrance. The lake is mechanically opened at Sandbar Beach in accordance with an opening regime adopted by the Great Lakes Council. This occurs approximately every 18 months to assist in flushing of the lake and prevent the flooding of low lying properties.

![Figure 4 – Smiths Lake and surrounds](image-url)
Recreational boating is a popular past-time in the Taree – Great Lakes regional waterways. These waterways are popular for recreational fishing, sailing, water skiing, wake boarding, rowing, kayaking, yacht racing and other regattas. The waterways also host numerous sporting events such as rowing throughout the year.

**Manning Catchment**

The Manning River estuary is a very popular waterway for a diverse range of recreational boaters. These include power boating, recreational fishing, rowing, sailing and kayaking. The population and the usage of the region’s waterways swell during the summer months due to the 250,000 tourists that visit the Manning Valley each year. This places pressure on existing infrastructure and can detract from the boating experience whilst increasing safety risks.

There are a number of known conflicts that currently occur on the Manning River due to its popularity and limited space. This region has a large oyster industry occupying a significant portion of the estuary system. Some conflicts between power boaters and non-powered craft users are present. Non-powered vessels are very popular on the waters around Taree and Wingham, leading to competition for space between rowers, sailors and others waterway users.

**Wallis Lake**

The Wallis Lake estuary encompasses a broad waterway with multiple uses. The area incorporating the entrance and the waters around Wallis Island hosts the majority of the estuary system’s oyster leases. The area is also used for recreational fishing, swimming, paddling, power boating and jet skiing. Usage also increases significantly during peak periods as a result of tourism in the Forster area.

Wakeboarding activity is banned in all parts of the Wallamba River. Fishing and oyster production also take place on the Wallamba Broadwater. The Coolongolook, Wang Wauk and Wallingat Rivers are less utilised, however are typically used for fishing and waterskiing.

**Smiths Lake**

Smiths Lake is a relatively popular waterway with recreational uses including swimming, waterskiing, canoeing, kayaking, kite surfing, fishing and Personal Water Craft (PWC) use. The usage of the lake varies throughout the year; with peak numbers occurring in the summer holiday periods. Locals have near-sole use of the lake outside the summer months and their usage is concentrated on weekends. Activity on the lake is also dictated by the entrance to the ocean as it influences the water levels.
The area from Ski Cove extending east to Bull Island is the most intensively utilised section of Smiths Lake with windsurfers, sail craft, canoes, catamarans, powerboats and PWCs operating. Most power boats are used for towing purposes in the calm waters of Ski Cove.

3.1 Analysis of waterway users

3.1.1 Licence data analysis

In the 2011 census, there were 46,541 people living in the Greater Taree LGA. In addition, there were 34,430 and 4,877 people living in the Great Lakes and Gloucester LGAs respectively. The region generally experienced a population growth between 1.5-5%, between 2006 and 2011, which was below both the State and national average of 5.63% and 8.32% respectively.

There are approximately 15,000 boat licence holders in the Taree – Great Lakes region. This represents approximately 2.8% of all boating licences in NSW. The majority of licence holders in the region carry a General Boat Licence. Approximately 6% are licenced to operate PWCs, a figure slightly less than the State average.

3.1.2 Registration data analysis

There are approximately 8,700 registered recreational vessels in this region. This represents approximately 3.7% of all registered recreational vessels in NSW. The most common vessel hull types in this region are open runabouts followed by punts and cabin runabouts.

A significant majority (90%) of the registered vessels in this region are below 6 m and the average vessel length is 4.7 m. Vessels less than 6 m in length are defined as trailerable. This has a strong influence on the boating access and storage requirements in the region with a strong demand on boat ramps and trailer parking.

3.1.3 Other users

Whilst the data analysed above provides information on licence holders and vessels registered in the Taree - Great Lakes region, it does not capture vessels from other regions utilising these waterways. External users include boaters from nearby regions such as the Central Coast, Lake Macquarie and Sydney, which can add significantly to the local demand at certain times of the year.

Roads and Maritime’s licence and registration data does not capture non-powered craft numbers such as kayaks, canoes, beach-launch sail craft which do not require registration. It is suggested that there may be several thousand such craft in the Taree – Great Lakes region, based on their estimated total number in NSW.

3.1.4 Future demand

In 2010, the then NSW Maritime released a report titled NSW Boat Ownership and Storage Growth Forecasts to 2026. The report forecast a continuing growth trend in vessel ownership of 2.9% annually across NSW.

The Report used a different regional profile to that being used for the Regional Boating Plan. It identified that the North Coast region (which incorporates the Taree - Great Lakes Region) has experienced the most significant growth. Despite this growth (approximately 4% per annum cross all boat sizes), the North Coast has the second smallest proportion of boats greater than 6 m in length which suggests that most growth is in the <6 m category (trailerable vessels).
4. Safety

Key findings

- Stakeholder consultation suggests high levels of satisfaction with current boating safety in the region.
- Concerns with existing navigation aids were limited to a relatively low number of specific locations such as the placement of navigation aids at the two entrances to the Manning River near Old Bar and Harrington.
- Stakeholder consultation indicates safety issues associated with conflicting waterway user groups, especially between motorised craft, PWCs and swimmers.
- Waterway user behaviour is generally considered to be satisfactory with the exception of some high-usage areas such as Taree, Farquhar Inlet, Breckenridge Channel and Cape Hawke Harbour.

Actions

a. Review strategies to improve user behaviour, particularly targeting areas of high activity.
b. Review the placement of navigation aids, especially where shifting sand bars and channels are of concern and undertake ongoing review of existing aids in these areas.

4.1 Overview of existing safety activities

The MMC has led a campaign with Roads and Maritime to promote the wearing of lifejackets, especially in small vessels. The campaign is a response to the fact that 9 out of 10 people, who drown when boating, are not wearing a lifejacket.

The campaign has been the most comprehensive, targeted program on boating safety in NSW history. It included an extensive and targeted advertising campaign, an innovative mobile lifejacket promotional van which took the safety message to the boating public State-wide (including visits to the Taree-Great Lakes Region), a zero tolerance on-water compliance approach and a host of supporting activities.

Roads and Maritime is responsible for the operational delivery of marine safety in NSW, including the operational aspects of the regulation of recreational and commercial boating activity throughout the State. The enforcement role is chiefly performed by BSOs who conduct regular on-water patrols and inspections throughout the Taree-Great Lakes waterways to
provide boating safety education and ensure compliance with safety requirements (such as lifejackets), speed, wash, distance off, aquatic licences, commercial operations and mooring requirements.

Roads and Maritime also operate a Mobile Safety Education and Compliance Team which is a team of specialist BSOs who can be deployed throughout NSW.

The BSOs work in close partnership with the local NSW Police Force (both general duties police and the local Marine Area Command), often conducting joint patrols, although police officers are solely responsible for conducting random breath testing on NSW navigable waters.

BSOs also work in partnership with officers of the Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries) and National Parks’ rangers in relation to matters of common interest.

In addition to State-wide regulatory requirements and boating safety campaigns, specific boating safety restrictions that apply in the Taree – Great Lakes region are shown on the map included in Appendix A and online at http://www.maritime.nsw.gov.au/. These are summarised as follows:

- Speed restrictions such as:
  - 4 knot zones, specifically at:
    - Harrington and Manning River
    - Failford and Wallamba River
    - Smiths Lake
    - Wallis Lake (Brekenridge Channel, Foster Keys and Cape Hawke Boat Harbour); and
    - Muddy Creek
  - “no wash” zones;
  - PWC prohibited areas;
  - no anchoring submarine cables;
  - shallow waters;
  - bar crossings; and
  - no towing zones.

Further controls exist in the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea which are observed in NSW and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The skipper (master of the vessel) is responsible for the safety of the vessel and all people on board;

- The skipper must always:
  - keep to a safe speed for the conditions (e.g., slower speeds at times of reduced visibility, rough water, congested waterway);
  - keep a proper lookout;
  - be prepared to take action to avoid a collision; and
  - display appropriate navigation lights at night.

In addition, there are also a number of general “distance off” restrictions which apply on all NSW waters – for example, vessels travelling at 10 knots or more must remain at least 60 m from people in the water and 30 m from structures, shorelines and other powered vessels. Where it is
not possible to maintain the specified distances, a “safe distance” should be maintained. This is the distance which will ensure that a vessel will not endanger or injure people or damage property, having regard to relevant factors such as prevailing weather conditions, visibility, speed and any obstructions.

4.2 Complaints

Analysis of the complaints received by Roads and Maritime during the 5 years leading up to 1 January 2014 reveals that the majority of complaints received relate to:

- wash (35%);
- irregular riding of personal watercraft (20%); and
- navigation and speeding (14%).

The most significant number of complaints received by the Maritime for the Taree - Great Lakes region related to the popular Wallis Lake area (approximately 50%). There were only limited complaints for other areas in the region.

4.3 Infringements

Between 2009 and 2013 the number of penalty notices issued within the Taree - Great Lakes region accounted for 3.5% (over 1,000) of all infringement notices issued throughout NSW. Of the penalties issued over the five year period, approximately 85% were the issued by Roads and Maritime, whilst the remainder were issued by NSW Police. In addition to these penalties, 758 formal warnings were also issued. The highly trafficked waters of Wallis Lake and its tributaries accounted for 62% of the region’s infringements.

As indicated in Figure 5 below, the infringements for which the most penalty notices were issued in the region were for:

- failure to carry the correct safety equipment (12%);
- failure to wear a lifejacket when required (12%); and
- failure to carry the required licence (10%).
4.4 Incidents

In the period between 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2013, there were 21 vessel incidents reported to Roads and Maritime in the region. Nine incidents occurred on Wallis Lake or in one of its tributaries, four occurred on the Manning River and another eight incidents occurred offshore. Eighteen of the incidents involved recreational vessels and three involved commercial vessels. There were no incidents involving an interaction between a recreational and a commercial vessel. This breakdown of incidents among vessel categories is broadly consistent with State-wide observations.

4.4.1 Incidents resulting in death or injury

Four fatal boating incidents have occurred in the region during this period. These all occurred in daylight hours between 6 am and 6 pm and involved open runabouts. There is no recurring theme when analysing the cause of fatality. Contributing factors included hazardous waters, excessive speed and fault of machinery.

There were also seven incidents that occurred which resulted in serious injury to the victim. A serious injury is classified as one requiring hospitalisation or outpatient treatment. These incidents resulted in eight injuries with no particular trend in causes. Causes of these incidents have been attributed to failure to keep a proper lookout and environmental factors such as tidal conditions, bar conditions and hazardous waters. Several incidents occurred during towing activities and others involved collision with a fixed objects. An additional five incidents resulted in minor injury to 11 persons, although the there were no common trends in the causes of these incidents.

4.4.2 Types of vessels

The main type of vessel involved in incidents was open runabouts (74%). Several other hull types such as cabin runabouts, PWCs, fishing vessels, punts, and cat-power vessels were each involved in single incidents, Despite being a major source of complaints (section 4.2) across the regions, there were very few incidents involving PWCs.
4.4.3 Incident locations

While incidents occurred throughout the region there are a number of areas where there were significant concentrations of incidents. These areas are:

- 6 incidents on Wallis Lake.
- 3 incidents offshore between Diamond Head and Crowdy Head.
- 3 incidents on the Manning River between Manning Point and Taree.

4.4.4 Incident cause

Behavioural and environmental factors were identified as the primary cause of the majority of incidents. Eight incidents were the result of hazardous waters, weather, bar or tidal conditions. Two incidents were the result of a failure to keep a proper lookout and one incident was attributed to a lack of judgement. Material factors were the cause on only one occasion due to a machinery fault.

4.4.5 Incident type

The types of boating incidents in the Taree – Great Lakes region differed considerably from State-wide averages, partially due to the small sample size in this region. More than a quarter of incidents (six incidents) involved vessel capsize, which is double the State-wide average.

The next most common type of vessel incident observed in the region was grounding (3 incidents) and while there were a number of incidents which had serious consequences, no other incident type was registered on more than two occasions.

4.4.6 Incident operation

Vessel operation at the time of an incident provides some insight into the nature of incidents occurring. None of the incidents in this region occurred when vessels were moored, at anchor or berthed, while State-wide figures suggest a 20% contribution of incidents from stationary vessels. This may be a reason for the low incident count in the region and could be due to protected waters.

4.4.7 Time of day, month and year

Where the time of the incident is known, 19 occurred during daylight; 12 in the morning and 7 in the afternoon. Two incidents occurred at night, with both occurring after midnight. December and January had high proportions of incidents, corresponding to the heaviest periods of boating activity. Wednesday and Sunday were the most likely days for incidents to occur. In a majority of other regions, incidents were found to most likely occur on weekends.

4.4.8 Wind and weather

During consultations anecdotal evidence was provided suggesting that the river entrances can be subject to rapidly changing weather and tidal conditions, which can cause problems for boaters, particularly in small vessels. Of the incidents where the weather conditions are known, approximately 85% occurred on days with clear visibility and fine weather. However, approximately a third of the incidents occurred where water conditions were described as choppy, rough, very rough or in strong current.
4.4.9 Bar crossings

There are a number of bar crossings in this region, including the Manning River entrance at Harrington and Forster Bar. Despite this, bar crossing incidents are relatively uncommon and were accountable for only one of the 22 incidents. Despite this success, the issue of bar crossings and management strategies will be investigated further in Chapter 8.

4.5 Key findings

The consultation feedback suggests that boaters in the Taree-Great Lakes generally have a positive view about safety on the region’s waterways. Analysis of complaints, infringements and incidents data suggest that Roads and Maritime will need to continue to actively manage safety on the waterways through its compliance activities and education campaign.

Some concerns were expressed about waterway user behavior across the different stakeholder groups. Waterway user behaviour was consistently raised as a concern in areas where there are conflicting uses of the waterway, particularly between swimmers and motorised crafts.

During site visits, numerous examples were noted of navigation aids that required updating with respect to lighting, placement or condition. Specific locations where this was identified as an issue include the two entrances to the Manning River and along the Tuncurry channel through Cape Hawke Harbour. A number of stakeholder groups noted that continuing to review the placement of navigation aids at these locations was necessary to maintaining safety in the region due to the shifting nature of sand bars and channels.

Figure 6 – Examples of locations with safety issues

Manning River Entrance at Harrington with sandbar movements

High use area at Brekenridge Channel
5. Access

Key findings

- There are a relatively small number of waterway access points in the Taree-Great Lakes Region. Capacity is only of concern at regionally significant locations. Car and trailer parking capacity was of notable concern at these locations at peak times where demand is significantly increased during holiday periods.
- Feedback suggests a number of boat ramps could be upgraded to improve usability.
- Ongoing management and future planning for the two entrances to the Manning River at Old Bar and Harrington is of great local importance.
- Strategic placement of additional courtesy moorings will enhance the overall boating experience.

Actions

a. Work with councils to improve the condition and ongoing maintenance of existing boat ramps and other access facilities at key locations including courtesy moorings.

b. Work with councils and other partners to increase boat ramp, pontoon and trailer parking capacity at key locations.


5.1 Overview of existing access facilities

Relative to other regions in NSW, there are a small number of formal boating access points within the Taree - Great Lakes region. Vessel access to the region’s waterways is available through several avenues including marina berths, club or private landing facilities and boat ramps. Trailered vessels can be launched and retrieved at public boat ramps, some of which have public facilities available such as trailer parking, fish cleaning tables and toilets. Various public wharves and jetties provide alternate access to vessels that are on the water. Informal dinghy storage facilities are used to access moored vessels. Waterfront landowners can also gain direct access to the waterway through private landing facilities. There is also informal access for smaller non-powered vessels (such as canoes and kayaks) from a number of public reserves and beaches.
During the site visits, some of the ramps visited were visually identified to be in below average condition, lacking amenities and access facilities. This is reinforced by stakeholder feedback as well as the existing literature that was reviewed, particularly the Manning Valley Boating Infrastructure Plan 2012 issued by Greater Taree City Council and the Recreation Boating Infrastructure Strategy 2012 issued by Great Lakes Council.

**Boat ramps**

There are currently approximately 26 boat ramps.

- **Location:**
  - 12 are located on the Manning River;
  - 10 are located in Wallis Lake and associated tributaries (including Wallamba River);
  - Two are located in Smiths Lake;
  - Two provide direct access to coastal waters; and
- **Material:**
  - 19 are concrete ramps; and
  - Remainder are sand, gravel or earth.
- **Ownership:**
  - 25 of the boat ramps are owned and maintained by local council (Greater Taree City Council, Great Lakes Council and Gloucester Shire Council).

**Public jetties, wharves and pontoons**

In addition to ramps there are approximately 38 public access points in the region including wharves, jetties, pontoons and landings.

- **Location:**
  - 17 in Manning River;
  - 15 in Wallis Lake; and
  - 6 (kayak/canoe launch facilities) upstream of Manning River in Barrington & Gloucester Rivers.

**Courtesy moorings**

There were no courtesy moorings were identified in the Taree – Great Lakes Region.
5.1.1 Better Boating Program grants

Through the Better Boating Program, Roads and Maritime has provided grants totalling over $1 million were provided for 31 projects in the Taree - Great Lakes region between 2005 and 2014. A selection of these can be seen in Figure 8 with all projects listed in Table 1 below. It is important to note that the total cost of the projects is not depicted in this table. For total cost of the projects refer to [http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/projects/](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/projects/)

Table 1 – List of Grants provided to Taree – Great Lakes Region through the BBP projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Final Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester Shire Council</td>
<td>Barrington Reserve Kayak Launch Facility, Barrington (Barrington River)</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester Shire Council</td>
<td>Gloucester District Park Kayak Launch, Gloucester</td>
<td>$22,000*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gloucester Shire Council</td>
<td>Kayak Access Improvements at Rocky Crossing, Barrington River</td>
<td>$7,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Final Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester Shire Council</td>
<td>Landers Crossing Kayak Launch, Gloucester - Barrington River</td>
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<td>Old Bowman Farm Road Kayak Launch, Gloucester (Barrington River)</td>
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<td>Gloucester Shire Council</td>
<td>Relfs Rd Kayak Launch Gloucester, Barrington River (Additional Funding)</td>
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<td>Relfs Road Kayak Launching Ramp, Barrington River</td>
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<td>Great Lakes Council</td>
<td>Forster Boat Harbour Public Pontoon</td>
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<td>Great Lakes Council</td>
<td>Forster Boat Harbour Public Sewage Pumpout Upgrade</td>
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<td>Forster Harbour Boat Ramp Upgrade, Forster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Lakes Council</td>
<td>Great Lakes Recreational Boating Infrastructure Strategy</td>
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<td>Little Street Boat Ramp Retaining Wall</td>
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<td>Pacific Palms Boat Ramp Upgrade - Wallis Lake</td>
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<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
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<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Croki Floating Pontoon</td>
<td>$78,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Endeavour Place Boat Ramp Upgrade, Taree - Manning River</td>
<td>$13,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Harrington Boat Ramp Extension - Manning River</td>
<td>$13,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Maintenance Dredging at Crowdy Head Boat Ramp</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Manning Enhancement Program (Pontoon at Taree CBD &amp; Wingham Boat Ramp)</td>
<td>$117,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Manning River Waterway Infrastructure Feasibility Plans: Three Locations</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Manning Valley Boating Infrastructure Plan</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Pampoolah Jetty Upgrade - Manning River</td>
<td>$32,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Queen Elizabeth Park Sewage Pump-out Upgrade, Taree</td>
<td>$12,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Shoal Dredging, Manning Quays, Taree</td>
<td>$8,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Taree City Council</td>
<td>Taree Town Wharf (Manning Quays)</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Department Of Lands</td>
<td>Lower Farquhar Inlet - Public Wharf, Toilets &amp; Vehicular Access Track</td>
<td>$25,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coomba Aquatic Club Inc</td>
<td>Coomba Aquatic Gardens New Pontoon, Wallis Lake</td>
<td>$50,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$997,161</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* denotes Active projects as of 11/11/2014
5.2 Key findings

There are a relatively small number of waterway access points in the Taree-Great Lakes Region, however, the population these facilities service is also comparatively low outside of holiday periods. Capacity constraints throughout the region were identified to be of particular concern at strategic locations, such as Forster, Tuncurry, Taree and Cape Hawke Harbour, where population density is high and/or tourism influx in holiday periods is significant. The consultation feedback suggests that at these regionally significant locations there is a lack of capacity to accommodate demand particularly at peak times and to keep pace with the expected growth in boat ownership over the next decade. Other key issues raised include car and trailer parking capacity, temporary on-water vessel storage and access to pontoons and fixed jetties. Feedback suggests a demand for courtesy moorings in the region to enhance the overall boating experience and aid in relieving capacity requirements on jetty and pontoon facilities.

There are numerous other opportunities to enhance the boating experience by upgrading and undertaking ongoing maintenance of existing facilities. Feedback has suggested that some boat ramps are slippery and require ongoing maintenance to ensure they are serviceable. More significant works at other boat access facilities are required such as Tuncurry to improve usability.

Ongoing management and future planning for the two entrances to the Manning River is of great local importance. The Manning River is unique to other major river systems in NSW boasting historical significance and two entrances at Old Bar and Harrington. The entrance at Farquhar Inlet is untrained and subject to closure at times. The Greater Taree City Council has an Entrance Opening Management Plan for this entrance that incorporates stakeholder and regional concerns for tourism. This plan also explores dredging requirements in the area. The primary entrance to the Manning River at Harrington is trained on the northern side of the river. The nature of the entrance channel and surroundings is managed through the Manning River Maintenance Dredging Strategy. Maintaining the health and accessibility of the river around these entrances is integral in maintaining boating in the region.
Since the Consultation Draft was released, Rescuing Our Waterways round 2 funding has been allocated to the Manning River Harrington Entrance ($20,000), the Manning River Farquhar Inlet ($20,000) and Wallis Lake ($414,000). Stage 3 of the Rescuing our Waterways program was announced on 18 November 2014 with councils able to apply for up to 50% funding support for dredging projects.

Examples of issues identified during the regional site visits are shown in Figure 9.

**Figure 9 – Examples of access issues**

- Concrete grooves cut in boat ramp at Endeavour Place
- Inadequate Boating facilities at Bohnock Boat Ramp to improve surface (Better Boating Grant)
- Proposed paddle craft launching area at Browns Creek
6. Storage

Key findings

- The growth in boat storage capacity across the region will need to keep pace with the forecast growth in vessel numbers.
- Increased popularity in the use of paddle craft and dinghies used for recreational boating has resulted in informal storage in popular areas of Forster-Tuncurry as well as Cundletown.

Actions

c. Explore the need for dinghy and non-powered craft storage
d. Work with councils and other partners to help deliver projects that support strategic growth in boat storage capacity in the region and improve harbour storage facilities

6.1 Existing storage

6.1.1 Overview of existing storage types

Storage for vessels is generally provided on-land for smaller (< 6 m), e.g. trailerable power or sail, and on-water for larger vessels (> 6 m); however larger vessels can also be stored on-land, for example at dry-storage facilities, for vessels up to approximately 10 m.

The main types of on-water storage in the Taree - Great Lakes region are principally administered as follows:

- Private moorings;
- Commercial moorings;
- Commercial marina berths; and
- Domestic berths, moorings and other associated storage.

On-water storage at commercial marinas, yacht / sailing clubs, or boating facilities, is provided through berths (floating or fixed), moorings (swing, fore and aft or other) and where space permits on-land, through dry storage such as a hard-stand or dry-stack. Examples are shown below at Figure 10 and Figure 11.

The region has only a few yacht and sailing clubs and none with significant storage spaces.
Storage at private facilities can be adjacent to private property through domestic jetties, slipways, boatsheds, and berths or fore and aft moorings, or on private swing moorings. Private swing moorings usually also require access to the water with a tender, for example a dinghy and this vessel also requires its own form of storage on land. There is also a new private marina development as part of new residences on the Manning river as shown in Figure 10.

Vessels less than 6 metres are most often stored on private property on trailers and access the water via boat ramps.
6.1.2 Overview of existing storage volume

There are approximately 600 vessels stored on-water or at related land facilities in the region. Of these, less than 130 are private moorings and less than ten are commercial mooring licences issued administered by Roads and Maritime. However, there are also a number of commercial and private licences administered by NSW Trade and Investment (Crown Lands).

The Taree-Great Lakes region has a number of rivers as well as small boat harbours at Crowdy Head and Forster – Tuncurry. There is significantly less on-water storage available in this region compared with other areas of the State and the region is home to approximately 3.7% of all registered recreational vessels in NSW. Registration data in Section 3.1.4, highlighted that 90% of the region’s vessels are below 6 m, and therefore most likely stored on trailers and private property. It is also possible that the physical characteristics of the region and lack of on-water storage influences the types of boats used in the area.

Commercial sites at Crowdy Head harbour, Forster-Tuncurry and Taree:

- Crowdy Head harbour – small harbour berths and fishing co-op and related boating facilities totalling <30;
- Forster - small harbour berths (<30) and fishing co-op (<12) and related boating facilities;
- A few hire and drive business that store small vessels used for the hire and drive;
- Forster Marina has a small number (<15) of berths;
- Blue Peter Boatshed also offers storage for a small number (<12) of boats as well as shed storage for dinghies, and other small craft;
- Tuncurry – small marina (16 berths) and related boating facilities and hire and drive operation;
- Forster-Tuncurry Caravan and Boat Storage offers dry storage for boats. Capacity varies with 34 individual spaces and a number of undercover and open storage areas; and
- Tuncurry opposite Cape Hawke harbour – (<35) commercial berths and jetties /landings for use primarily by commercial charter vessels.

The region has a minimal number of commercial (<10) and private (<130) moorings, mainly at Forster-Tuncurry. The total number of commercial moorings includes those moorings attached to land-based facilities, such as at Forster - Tuncurry.

Private Moorings:

- Forster – Tuncurry (including Smith’s Lake) – >90; and
- Manning River (including Harrington) – <15.

There is only one application on a waiting list in the region as of April 2014.

Domestic jetties, piled moorings, private marina berths:

- Manning River – private marina berths (<25);
- Tuncurry – numerous piled moorings on the foreshore at Point Rd; and
- Infrequent domestic infrastructure along the rivers in the region.
Sailing and other club storage

There are a small number of sailing clubs in the region, including Great Lakes Sailing Club, Taree Aquatic Club and Manning River Sailing Club. These clubs are land-based and use access points such as beaches, ramps or similar to launch their craft. Typical of coastal / riverine regions, vessels are small and stored on-land. Most small clubs offer members access to storage. Storage for these generally smaller vessels can be on-water or land-based, in an open hardstand area, or inside stacks in smaller sheds. Some of these vessels are not required to be registered and therefore do not appear on Roads and Maritime registrations statistics.

Manning Rowing Club in Taree also relies on land-based storage and accesses the river via the adjacent boat ramp and pontoons.

Dinghy and other small vessel storage

Due to the relatively small number of moorings currently in the region, dinghy storage is generally not formalised at the location of the moorings. Whilst dinghies are often launched from private property, in popular tourist areas such as Forster-Tuncurry, storage is an issue.

As with other regions non-powered boating (paddle craft) use has resulted in demand for storage and access in popular tourist areas such as Forster – Tuncurry. Apart from storage at commercially operated hire sites, there is no formalised storage for these types of craft in the region.

6.2 Key findings

Stakeholder feedback highlighted a small number of issues in relation to storage. These included:

- demand for more on-water storage, for example a marina in Forster-Tuncurry and Taree;
- improvements to ageing facilities in the region, storage and access for commercial vessels; and
- storage for smaller craft including dinghies and paddle craft.

As noted in Chapter 3, approximately 10% of vessels are >6 m. The remainder are predominantly trailer boats which places higher demand on the need for access infrastructure whilst creating less demand for on-water storage methods. Since vessel registrations experienced one of the strongest growths in this region and since the average size of recreational vessel across the State is forecast to increase, it is anticipated that local demand for on water storage will increase.

Failing to plan for boat storage growth not only impacts on the experience of boaters in the region but also risks generating negative impacts for the community more broadly. Increased storage capacity will also be needed for paddle craft and other vessels which do not require registration and therefore do not appear in growth forecasts. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that the popularity of these craft is growing at a faster rate than registered vessels.

Two key issues have been identified that would benefit from a more strategic approach to boat storage.

Storage for dinghies and other small craft

Some stakeholders have indicated concern with dinghies stored on the foreshores and reserves of the Taree-Great Lakes region. These locations include Cundletown and Forster where storage for dinghies is used by non-powered crafts rather than tender purposes in the foreshore area. This was evident during the site visit by the project team. Stakeholders also highlighted the need to support the use, storage and access for these small craft. Specific boater groups would benefit from provision of storage and access to the waterway.
Storage for paddle craft including kayaks, canoes and SUPs, which are being used in increasing numbers in the region was also highlighted as an issue in Forster-Tuncurry area in particular.

**Increasing storage capacity in the region and improving facilities in Forster-Tuncurry and Crowdy Head harbour**

Harbours along the NSW coast are seen as important layovers for cruising vessels as well as focal points for tourism and commercial activities including commercial and recreational fishing and charter vessels. Both Crowdy Head harbour and Forster-Tuncurry offer limited storage at a small number of boating facilities and at the small boat harbours formerly used by the commercial fishing fleet.

Feedback from various stakeholders and observations, identified the need for additional on-water storage. The lack of modern vessel storage options was seen as an inhibitor to attracting vessels and more visitors to the region. In particular, berthing with appropriate access for charter vessels was raised as an issue in Forster-Tuncurry and in Taree.

Previous studies undertaken by Council have reviewed the need for improving the Forster-Tuncurry harbour including expansion of on-water storage. Greater Taree City Council is also working with stakeholders to identify opportunities for boating infrastructure on the Manning River.

**Figure 12 – Examples of storage issues identified during regional site visits**

- Limited access and storage for commercial vessels
- Dinghies used for recreation stored across the foreshore in Forster
7. Feedback on Consultation Draft

7.1 Feedback Summary
Feedback received from Councils and other stakeholders in submissions and at the public information sessions was generally supportive of the key findings and actions contained in the Consultation Draft.

7.1.1 Safety
Feedback in submissions and at the public info sessions generally supported safety measure referred to in the Consultation Draft. Additional comments were also provided about the need to assess the positioning of navigation aids in areas where navigation channels are known to change due to shifting sand and the need to remove redundant oyster racks which can present obstructions to navigation.

7.1.2 Access
The feedback received broadly endorsed the key access findings, with submissions from Councils helping to inform the list of projects identified in Chapter 8 which will receive priority funding allocations as part of the NSW Boating Now program.

The following additional comments were received in submissions on the draft report and during the public information sessions:

Feedback in submissions and at the public info sessions highlighted the need to improve boating access facilities at Tuncurry, Harrington and Manning Point and to provide sewage pump out facilities west of the Tuncurry Bridge.

To improve navigation in the area, it was suggested that a small portable dredge should be purchased to conduct maintenance dredging to maintain channels. Feedback suggested dredging is required at Manning River entrance, Forster/Tuncurry, Smiths Lake, Breckenridge Channel and Wallis Lake.

Feedback also suggested there is demand for courtesy moorings at Coomba, Forster/Tuncurry, Harrington, Manning Point and Cape Hawke Harbour.

7.1.3 Storage
While there were limited comments received about storage in this region, feedback suggested the need for additional storage facilities in the region, especially during peak holiday periods, when demand for on-water vessel storage and boat tie up facilities is at its highest.
8. Delivery Program

8.1 Summary

Table 3 provides a summary of how the actions identified in the Regional Boating Plan will be delivered across the three categories of safety, access and storage. A progress report on the Delivery Program will be published annually.

8.2 NSW Boating Now Funding

$1.89 million in NSW Boating Now funding has been allocated to support delivery of the following 11 infrastructure projects identified as being a priority for delivery over the next three years.

The total Regional allocation is based on estimated projects costs and the proposed financial contributions from Council and other delivery partners for individual projects. The total Regional allocation may be subject to variation following further negotiations with delivery partners to confirm project scope, design, timeframes, funding contributions and the most efficient project delivery method.

The projects are included as part of NSW Boating Statement which includes a total funding commitment of over $33 million to support the delivery of Priority Regional Projects across NSW. The NSW Boating Statement can be downloaded at www.transport.nsw.gov.au/mmc. It includes the full list of Priority Regional Projects for each Region and details on how the Priority Regional Projects were identified.

The NSW Boating Statement includes a summary of the categories of funding to be made available over the five years of the NSW Boating Now program, including at least $10 million to be made available in 2017/18 and 2018/19 to support the delivery of a second round of infrastructure projects. Other funding categories include:

- $10 million to support the delivery of Major Projects that provide benefits to boaters in more than one region including:
  - Measures to address concerns about the impact of boating on riverbanks
  - Boat storage strategies and pilot projects
  - Establishing slipway facilities in strategic locations
  - Measures to reduce the number of “mooring minders”.
- $5 million to support the delivery of dedicated off-street boat trailer parking facilities
- $5 million to be assist with emergency repairs to boating infrastructure, particularly after flood or storm events.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Priority Projects for the Taree – Great Lakes Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Upgrade boat ramp, parking and amenities at Endeavour Park, Taree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Upgrade boat ramp, parking and install pontoon at Bohnock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Investigate relocation of boat ramp at Manning Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Investigate relocation of boat ramp at Croki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Investigate options to improve boat ramp at Cundletown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Upgrade parking and install pontoon at Forster Harbour boat ramp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Upgrade boat ramp, improve parking and install pontoon at Tuncurry (Point Road)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Replace jetty, install pontoon and improve parking at Pacific Palms Recreation Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Improve boating access at Coomba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Construct a passive craft launch area at Browns Creek, Taree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Upgrade boat ramp, parking and install passive craft access and storage at Smiths Lake Foreshore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
<td>Roads and Maritime will work with MMC to review current approach to addressing the user behaviour issues identified for this region including educational and compliance campaigns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review strategies to improve user behaviour, particularly targeting areas of high activity.</td>
<td>Roads and Maritime will review and upgrade as required existing navigation aids across the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the placement of navigation aids, especially where shifting sand bars and channels are of concern and ensure an ongoing review of existing navigation aids in these areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
<td>$1.89 million in NSW Boating Now funds have been allocated to support the delivery of the 11 Priority Regional Projects listed in Table 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with councils to improve the condition and ongoing maintenance of existing boat ramps and other access facilities at key locations including courtesy moorings.</td>
<td>Roads and Maritime will investigate feasibility of installing courtesy moorings at the following locations that were identified during consultation: Coomba, Forster/Tuncurry, Harrington, Manning Point and Cape Hawke Harbour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with councils and other partners to increase boat ramp, pontoon and trailer parking capacity at key locations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue support for the Rescuing Our Waterways dredging program with reference to the Manning River Maintenance Dredging Strategy and Farquhar Entrance Opening Management Plan.</td>
<td>MMC and Roads and Maritime will continue to support the Rescuing Our Waterways dredging program and will work with Crown Lands on a longer term strategy for navigation dredging in NSW. Since the Consultation Draft was released, Rescuing Our Waterways round 2 funding has been allocated to the following projects:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manning River (Harrington Entrance) - $20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manning River (Farquhar Inlet) - $20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wallis Lake - $414,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Storage</strong></td>
<td>While initial consultation suggested there is unmet demand for dinghy and non powered craft storage in the region, this has not been identified as a priority project at this time. The need for such storage will be assessed again for funding under the second round of NSW Boating Now funding allocations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore the need for dinghy and non powered craft storage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with Councils and other partners to help deliver projects that support strategic growth in boat storage capacity in the region and improve harbour storage facilities in Forster-Tuncurry and in Crowdy Head</td>
<td>While consultation suggested there is demand for additional boat storage capacity in the region and for improved harbour storage facilities in Forster-Tuncurry and Crowdy Head, this has not been identified as a priority project at this time. MMC has also begun working with Crown Lands and industry to identify coastal infrastructure needs to support boat storage and access facilities in NSW coastal harbours.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A – Maps
Pink beehive public mooring
Blue beehive emergency mooring
No towing area
All or power boats prohibited area
Four knot speed limit area
Six knot speed limit area
Seven knot speed limit area
Eight knot speed limit area
Ten knot speed limit area
Fifteen knot speed limit area
Uniformed or hand launching area
Formed surface launching ramp
Launching ramp parking & facilities
Fuel available
- Public wharf, jetty or landing
- Marina boatshed or boat hire
- Public vessel pumpout facility
- Public toilet
- Marine Rescue NSW base
- 4 knots speed limit area
- 6 knots or Vessels prohibited
- 8 knots speed limit area
- No towing area