# Catchment Update Summer 2016

## In General:

For this hastily thrown together (and slightly out of date) update I am going to concentrate on issues that have been raised by volunteers over summer and any actions or implications that resulted. I will also let you know how much data was submitted for each 'reach'. The reaches outlined in my last update have been redefined and many new reaches have been established for the last CHiP report. Maps of these can be found at http://www.act.waterwatch.org.au/chip.html .
Reach maps also show all of the sites that received data for the 2014/15 report. New sites are always coming on line so there may be some gaps or sites missing. I will strive to make amends.

## Murrumbidgee River;

**Murrumbidgee River CMM6** *Michelago to Tharwa 'Sandwash'.*
**5** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
The PCS Rangers recorded a very high E.C value at Angle Crossing in December flowed by very low D.O in January. Weird things were happening with the turbidity of the river as well. The high turbidity was confirmed down at the Sandwash as well by Deb of P.O.S.M. The source is extremely difficult to pin down as readings upstream in NSW varied widely in the lead up to summer. High E.C was a regular issue at some of the tributaries and turbidity will spike upstream one month then drop down the next at sites upstream of this reach.

**Murrumbidgee River CMM7** *Murrumbidgee River; Tharwa 'Sandwash' to Point Hut Crossing.*
**2** out of **12** data sets were received for the **4** sites in this reach**.**
Interestingly the turbidity readings recorded by Outward Bound were much lower than those upstream for the same period.

**Murrumbidgee River CMM8** *Murrumbidgee River; Point Hut Crossing to Kambah Pool.*
**1** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
The Green Army found Kambah Pool crystal clear in December. No records came in for this reach after then.

**Murrumbidgee River CMM9** *Murrumbidgee River; Casuarina Sands to Uriarra Crossing.*
**5** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
The Sands team had a small spike in turbidity at Casuarina Sands in January and by February this had made its way to Uriarra Crossing and was picked up by Barbara from Uriarra Parkcare.

**Spring Station Creek CMS1** *Top of creek to confluence with Murrumbidgee River.*
**2** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
Barbara found this little creek running into Uriarra Crossing, crystal clear over summer.

**Castle Hill Creek UMC1** *Creek on Castle Hill Homestead.*
**0** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
***No data submitted.***

**Barney's Gully MMB1** *Woodcock Drive to confluence with Murrumbidgee River*
**0** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
***No data submitted.***

**Swamp Creek LMS1** *Uriarra Creek confluence to Murrumbidgee River confluence.*
**2** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
The creek running under the small bridge just south of Tharwa was also very clear over summer. This and Spring Station Creek were not as salty as usual. Probably due to the lack of rainfall.

**Stranger Pond MSP1** *Stranger Pond in North Bonython.*
**2** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
The Green Army have recently adopted this 'reach'. They discovered that the small suburban lake is very effective at trapping sediment. 25 NTUs going in and 10 NTUs going out in December.

**Westwood Farm TMM1** *McQuoid's Hill to Murrumbidgee River.*
**2** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
The Green Army found the waterways here to be quite stagnant in December and the small creek also very salty.

**Cooleman Ridge dams RAN1** *Two dams on Cooleman Ridge.*
**3** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
The Cooleman Ridge Parkcarers found the usual high phosphorus and turbidity in February in both dams. Cattle have regular access to one of the dams but the persistently high reading in the other is a continuing mystery blamed possibly on historic use of super phosphate on the ridge in its past. There is also a high likely hood of a link to the high turbidity in the dam suggesting stirred sediment.

# Naas River:

**Naas River NNN1** *Headwater to Gudgenby River confluence.*
**4** out of **10** data sets were received for the **5** sites in this reach**.**

**Danica with friend Michael at Waterwatch training last year. The river site behind them was dry this summer.**

Danica found the Naas River dry by the time it got to Caloola Farm for most of summer. Near the national park the water was still flowing. The little Gudgenby creek still had water in it too but it was salty, full of phosphorus and, of course, cows.

# Gudgenby River;

## Gudgenby River catchment CGG1

*Headwaters of small creeks and Orroral River to the Murrumbidgee River confluence.*

**9** out of **15** data sets were received for the **5** sites in this reach**.**

The pH bordered on high up near the confluence with the Naas River, but downstream a major concern in this reach was the continued bank erosion near the Smiths' Road that appeared after the new bridge went in. Deb from the Parkcarers of Southern Murrumbidgee (POSM) who monitors a site adjacent to the bridge took this issue as far as the Minister to finally get a positive outcome.

**Gudgenby Canyon before erosion control work**

## Bogong Creek catchment CGB1 *Headwaters to Yankee Hat trail bridge.*

**6** out of **6** data sets were received for the **3** sites in this reach**.**

Bogong Creek was running low until heavy rain up in the mountains replenished it in early mid Feb.

## Hospital Creek catchment CGH1 *Headwater of Hospital Breakfast and Little Dry Creeks to the confluence with the Gudgenby River.*

**8** out of **8** data sets were received for the **4** sites in this reach**.**

Martin and Michaela noted the same affect in the this reach as it dried up until a heavy down pour in mid Feb.

# Cotter River;

## Cotter River MCC1 *Downstream of the Cotter Dam.*

**3** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**

Fleur and Maree found the water levels low but clear at the campground for most of summer with a some refill happening by their February monitoring. Blackberries were noted as a re-emerging problem.

**Cotter River at the campground this summer. Photo Fleur Horan**

**Cotter River MCC2** *Pipeline Rd crossing to Vanity's Crossing*
**3** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
The PCS Ranger have reinstated monitoring at this important sight. In January, the mid Cotter River was inundated with sediment possibly from work being done on Corin Dam. This had settled to fine sediment on the river bottom by February.

# Paddy's River:

**Paddy's River catchment CTP1** *Tidbinbilla Rd bridge to Murray's Corner.*
**9** out of **9** data sets were received for the **3** sites in this reach**.**
Paddy's River was clear but very low in early summer. Heavy showers in Later December moved a lot of sediment that was detected by PCS Ranger Bernie at Flint's Crossing in January. Sand and gravel were moved around by the increased flow but this all settled down and by the end of February Fleur and Maree noted very little increase in water levels, just lots of gravel and weeds.

**Murray's Corner this summer Photo Fleur Horan**

**Tidbinbilla River CTT1** *Headwater of Tidbinbilla River and Ashbrook Creek to Gilmores Road Crossing*
**8** out of **15** data sets were received for the **5** sites in this reach**.**
A similar story was told on Tidbinbilla River by Fiona and the Friends of Tidbinbilla Parkcare team. Although there had been a lot of brief
rain high up in the reserve the
lower parts of the river remained dry. The upper creeks remained low the sanctuary was showing signs of not getting a decent flush with phosphorus level becoming elevated.

**Gibraltar Creek GIB** *Top of river to Woods Reserve.*
**6** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
Low flows for Gibraltar Creek as well. John however did get 'help' with his monitoring by a friendly rosella.

# Tuggeranong Creek:

**Upper Tuggeranong Creek TUG1** *Headwaters of Tuggeranong Creek catchment to Theodore.*
**3** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
Eileen and Stuart found the top of Tuggeranong Creek low, turbid, salty and full of rubbish in January. The summer and school holidays are never kind to this little part of the creek under the Monaro Hwy.

**Middle Tuggeranong Creek TUG2** *Concrete drain system upstream of Isabella Pond.*
**3** out of **12** data sets were received for the **4** sites in this reach**.**
Further down along the concrete Eileen and Stuart also recorded extremely high turbidity and pH levels in the drain over summer.

**Tuggeranong Creek TUG3** *Tuggeranong Creek to Murrumbidgee River confluence.*
**1** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
Below Lake Tuggeranong Dam, the Green Army found a salty and stagnant little creek in early summer.

**Lake Tuggeranong Wetlands TLT1** *Drakeford Drive weir to South Quay foot bridge weir.*
**6** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** active sites in this reach**.**
Walt recorded high phosphorus levels in the southern section of the lake January. This decreased slowly over the rest of summer as it was gobbled up by blue green algae..

**Lake Tuggeranong TLT2** *Main body of Lake.*
**10** out of **10** data sets were received for the **5** active sites in this reach**.**

**FWanniassa Creek GPT Photo Ben Bryant**

High sediment built up in one of the northern GPTs of the lake was reported by Ben and the RTA mobilised to get it cleaned. Lake Tuggeranong College have once again resumed their Waterwatch monitoring and had their kit returned by the Lake Tuggeranong Rowing Club who thankfully held the reigns while Nikey was forced to paused LTC Sustainability unit. Thanks to Lyndon and Bob.

**Isabella Pond TIP1** *Large pond south of Monash*.
**6** out of **6** data sets were received for the **2** sites in this reach**.**
Walt, Eileen and Stuart have been sharing Isabella Pond. The southern storm water entry experienced unusual rubbish (including a lawn mower), smells and extreme turbidity in February.

**Goodwin Village Pond RAN2** *Small pond at Goodwin Village, Monash.*
**0** out of **3** data sets were received for the **1** site in this reach**.**
***No data submitted.***

# Point Hut Ponds:

**Point Hut Ponds MPG1** *Headwater of Conder Creek to Point Hut Pond.*
**12** out of **15** data sets were received for the **5** active sites in this reach**.**
Poor Point Hut Pond had issues with high turbidity and strange smells in December. Conder wetlands also suffered high turbidity in December.
A clogged GPT and high phosphorus were reported by Carers of Point Hut Pond in January. The new Lakes Officer got onto the rubbish and explained that RTA are well under funded to deal with the number of GPTs that need to be cleaned each year. With current resources they currently struggle to clean more an one GPT more than twice annually.
A stagnant GPT under Box Hill Avenue was enjoyed by Vera and Julie in February and high phosphorus levels appeared in Pont Hut Ponds again in Feb.

**A huge thank you to all those groups and individuals involved in collecting data. Waterwatch volunteers provide vital and immediate information on the state of our waterways which is used regularly by government, consultants and corporations and other agencies locally and nationally.**
**To view Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch data go to http://www.act.waterwatch.org.au .**
**For more information contact the SACTCG Waterwatch Coordinator on 62966400 or at waterwatch@sactcg.org.au .**

Martin Lind.