

ACTIONS FOR CLEAN WATER

The Upper Murrumbidgee Actions for Clean Water (ACWA) Plan identified priority erosion hotspots which continue to pose a risk to water quality.

Key findings

- Between 2012-2018 there were several sites that decreased risk rating due to on ground land management efforts.
- Better co-ordination of funding sources to conduct erosion remediation works is required. However this remains difficult as many sites are out of public view and not as attractive to broader environmental community support.
- Climate change impacts are being felt with drier seasonal conditions, decreased vegetation growth and grazing impacts further exacerbating the erodibility of soils.
- Potential reluctance of land owners to rehabilitate erosion areas due to the likelihood of having to lock away land that might be used for other purposes.
- Difficulty coordinating rehabilitation work due to various geographic areas and land ownership tenures.

Catchment management arrangements

The Upper Murrumbidgee River catchment (for the purposes of this Plan) extends from just northwest of Canberra, south along the Murrumbidgee River towards Cooma and then west past Adaminaby. The catchment is diverse; being home to the urban centres of Canberra, Cooma and Adaminaby and supporting enterprises in various economic sectors.

The Upper Murrumbidgee River catchment is subject to a diverse climate, ranging from alpine regions to sub-alpine plains, with the ACWA covering an area of approximately 6400 km². The upper catchment area is centred on the sub-alpine Brindabella and Namadgi National Parks, with the river flowing north and meeting with the major tributaries of the Numeralla, Bredbo, Strike a Light, Naas, Cotter and Molongo Rivers.

The region above the Cotter confluence is the focus of this Plan.

In NSW natural resource management in the Upper Murrumbidgee River catchment is framed primarily by the Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plan (CAP). The CAP sets the strategic direction for the region and incorporates the integrated catchment management context in which the ACWA sits. The CAP has been developed in consultation with the community, government and nongovernment organisations and sets tangible targets and direction for investment for enhanced natural resource outcomes.

The ACWA is enhanced by stakeholders and groups who work across borders including the UMCN, Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch, Icon Water and those organisations funded by the ACT Natural Resource Management Council/ACT Government who work in NSW collaboratively to achieve better environmental outcomes.

Waterways and natural resource management

Under the CAP, the ACWA Plan is framed to help achieve the following targets:

- Remove barriers to natural resource management adoption.
- Partner with private land owners and Landcare.
- Knowledge and skills improvement.
- Structures for river bank stability.
- Manage aquatic habitat.

Success stories

- Site 6 improved its risk rating from Extreme in 2012 to Low in 2018 by filling the erosion gully with rock, and conducting rehabilitation.
- Site 8 improved bank stability by fencing off the area from grazing and conducting rehabilitation.
- The ACWA Plan contributed to the gaining of funds for on ground works by the Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach group.

