

Submission from Tony & Kay Voller re Prices for Central Coast Council from 1 July 2019

We make this submission as owners of a rural residential property of 8 hectares adjacent to Ourimbah Creek. We are particularly concerned about the Central Coast Council proposal to establish a stormwater drainage charge of \$5,427.81 from 2019-20 on all non-residential properties greater than 4.5ha.

The Central Coast Council's submission to IPART includes this increase to the stormwater drainage charge (see Price Submission Summary Table 2 on page 4 Stormwater Drainage - Non-residential Properties >45,000sq m).

Concerns

We are passionate environmentalists that are committed to protect the natural resources on our property and in the Ourimbah Creek catchment area. And we have implemented considerable works to enhance our native vegetation, land and water resources.

These works include soil conservation banks that direct runoff water to permanently protected areas of dense vegetation prior to discharging into an environmental dam. This dam leaks and reduces the peak discharge of any overflow water that drains to Ourimbah Creek. The whole design of the soil conservation scheme is to maximise infiltration, minimise runoff and ensure that any runoff water has a high water quality rating.

We also protect the 3.5ha of native vegetation on the property through stock exclusion fencing. The remaining 5ha of pasture is managed in a conservative manner through rotational grazing with a low stocking rate to ensure a dense protective vegetative cover over the land. This vegetative cover ensures that the soil is protected and maximises water infiltration. It also results in high quality water when there is any runoff.

We have removed stock access to Ourimbah Creek through the implementation of an off-stream watering system and the fencing of the rainforest vegetation in the riparian zone. This stock exclusion fencing now protects the streambanks from trampling and bank erosion. Any runoff water entering Ourimbah Creek from our property is filtered as it drains through the dense riparian vegetation adjacent to Ourimbah Creek. Many water tests over the years in the Streamwatch monitoring program have consistently indicated a very high quality rating.

These works provide an 'environmental service' that benefits all natural resources on our property including any runoff water that discharges into Ourimbah Creek that is a source of potable water for the Central Coast. It will be inequitable to financially penalise our property that is providing all of these environmental services to the water and other natural resources.

We therefore strongly object to the increase in the stormwater drainage charge as proposed in the Central Coast Council's submission to IPART.

Tony & Kay Voller

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19th October 2018