

Foreshore and Bank Management Lake Illawarra

Lake Illawarra is a partially enclosed coastal lagoon, or estuary, situated between the Windang peninsula and the steep western backdrop of the Illawarra Escarpment. The lake covers a surface area of approximately 35km² and receives runoff from a catchment area of 240km².

The Lake Illawarra Catchment area takes in suburbs in both the Wollongong and Shellharbour LGA's and includes the major tributaries of Macquarie Rivulet, Mullet Creek, Brooks Creek, Duck Creek, and Horsley Creek.

Types and cause of bank erosion

Bank erosion can be defined as the wearing away of foreshore sediments that leads to the retreat or movement of a shoreline over time. Shoreline sediments can be mobilised and transported by water movement associated with wind, waves, tides, currents and changes in ocean water level. Bank erosion in estuaries like Lake Illawarra can occur in response to naturally variable environmental conditions, but it can also be caused, or worsened by, human influences.

Likely factors that are contributing to shoreline erosion around Lake Illawarra include:

- Degraded bank vegetation due to the spread of weeds, clearing and grazing.
- Waves caused by wind or boat wash.
- Tides.
- Saturated bank soils following heavy rainfall events.
- Clearing or development of land close to the foreshore.
- Inadequate or run-down foreshore protection structures.
- Increased storm activity and sea level rise due to climate change.



Degraded bank vegetation

Impacts of erosion

Excessive erosion can negatively impact on things that the community value, such as foreshore assets, safe and accessible recreation, and healthy ecosystems.

Increased suspended sediments can also impact:

- Water quality.
- The health of seagrass meadows.
- Fish habitat and fishing.

What are Lake Managers doing?

The Lake Managers for Lake Illawarra include Wollongong City Council, Shellharbour City Council, and NSW Government Crown Lands.

The Lake Illawarra Bank Management Strategy [2022] has been developed to address part of action FB1 in the Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program (LICMP) and improve understanding of bank erosion risk and present options for the management of eroding sites. As part of this assessment, bank stabilisation options have been developed for 26 sites with a medium or above priority assigned. These options aim to increase bank stability, enhance habitat for fish and other creatures, and improve riparian and amenity values.



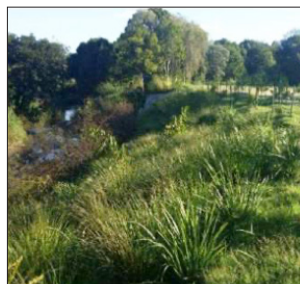
Run-down foreshore protection structures



Site Conditions



Potential Management Options



What can I do to help?

- Do not remove or damage foreshore vegetation.
- Avoid mowing the foreshore strip.
- Stick to formal pathways when walking or biking.
- Volunteer for Bushcare.



For more information visit wollongong.nsw.gov.au/lake-illawarra



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