

Stormwater Turtle is a \$100 000 rehabilitation project, funded by the Our Living Coast Project, overseen by Nambucca Shire Council, for two urban creeks in Nambucca Heads. The rehabilitation of Beer and Freshwater Creeks and surrounds aims to improve the quality of stormwater entering the Nambucca River.

The Nambucca River is an important recreational and commercial area for locals and visitors alike. The main activities include; swimming, fishing, boating and oyster production.

As urban areas increase so does the potential for stormwater pollution reaching the clear turquoise waters of the Nambucca River.

Stormwater pollution in some areas of the river presents a health hazard to swimmers and affects the recreational and commercial fishing and aquaculture the Nambucca River is famous for.

Through a series of on ground works, which include; installing a gross pollutant trap, river bank stabilisation, weed removal and native species replanting, Nambucca Shire Council will enhance the areas and improve the quality of stormwater entering the river.

An education program for the community has been developed to ensure stormwater pollution stops at the source. This program will be rolled out at the end of 2011 and into 2012. There will be a chance for the community to get involved, join bushcare groups and help our urban creeks stay clean for the future.



The Our Living Coast Project is a joint initiative of Nambucca Shire, Bellingen Shire and Coffs Harbour City Council's and is funded through a \$1.9 million grant from the NSW Environmental Trust, under the Urban Sustainability Program.



For more information on Stormwater Turtle or the Our Living Coast Project, contact Council's Environmental Compliance Officer  
(02) 6568 0240



# HELP SAVE



## STORMWATER TURTLE!

**Everyone  
can do  
something  
to reduce  
stormwater pollution**





**THIS DRAINS  
TO THE  
'NAMBUCCA RIVER'**

### **What is Stormwater?**

Stormwater is pure rainwater plus anything the rain carries along with it. In Urban areas, rain that falls on the roof of your house, or collects on paved areas like driveways, roads and footpaths is carried away through a system of pipes that is separate from the sewage system.

Stormwater is not treated like sewage. This stormwater flows directly from our streets and gutters into the Nambucca River and ocean.

If you live near a waterway or spend time in or near the water you are probably familiar with what happens after rain. Polluted stormwater spreading into the surrounding clear water can be clearly seen because it is a muddy colour, and often carries litter with it. You usually cannot swim in the river for a few days after because it may pose a significant health risk.

Stormwater pollution can be controlled if everyone plays a part in managing the drains in the streets where they live and work. If you look after your local drains you can dramatically improve what happens in the river.

### **Types of Stormwater Pollution**

- **litter**, such as cigarette butts, cans, paper, plastic bottles and bags
- **chemical pollution**, such as detergents, oil or fertilisers
- **'natural' pollution**, such as leaves, garden clippings or animal droppings
- **sediment pollution**, such as soil erosion and runoff from building sites and unsealed roads

### **Causes of Stormwater Pollution**

- **dropping litter** where it will be swept into the drains next time it rains
- **car washing on the street** using detergent and allowing it to run down the street drain
- **fixing your car on the street**, letting oil or other substances flow into the street drain
- **disposing of garden waste**, letting leaves or garden clippings accumulate in gutters or driveways where they can end up in the drain
- **cleaning paint brushes** and letting the contaminated water flow into the drain
- **hosing the footpath** and letting water carry dirt, soil or other waste into the street drain
- **not picking up dog droppings**, left pet droppings will be carried into the stormwater system next time it rains

### **How Does Stormwater Affect the River?**

Stormwater pollution kills plants and animals that live in the river. Litter clogs the waterways and causes toxicity as it breaks down. It affects the health of birds, fish and other animals and plants that live in the waterways.

Sediment in the water reduces light penetration and affects photosynthesis, the process that allows plants to use light as their source of energy. Sediment makes the waterways cloudy and can suffocate fish by clogging their gills.

When green waste decays in water it uses up oxygen, taking vital oxygen away from plants, fish and other aquatic animals.

Birds, fish and animals can accidentally eat plastics, such as bags and lids, thinking it is food. The plastics cannot be digested and soon accumulate and eventually killing them.

Stormwater entering the river makes swimming unsafe for us.