

NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy

2019 - 2024

Healthy and accessible waterways

New South Wales hosts some of the best boating environments and experiences in the world. Our waterways sustain important ecological communities while providing a central part of life for many people and businesses. To meet the rising demand for boating and water-based tourism experiences and balance environmental imperatives requires a well-informed, proactive management approach to waterway accessibility.

While dredging is not a legislative responsibility, the NSW Government is committed to improve and sustain accessibility to key coastal locations, river entrances and local waterways to support economic growth opportunities through improved navigation for commercial and recreational vessels.

Dredging is an important management activity necessary to maintain navigation channels and provide access to maritime infrastructure that are otherwise restricted by natural sand shoaling. A well-managed statewide dredging approach can economically provide navigational and other benefits such as flood mitigation, sand for beach nourishment and help conserve water quality within our estuaries.

The **NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy 2019 – 2024** outlines waterway user benefits and other expected favourable outcomes, statewide priority dredging preferences over the next 5 years, adopted sediment, environmental and statutory approvals management principles and funding need to maintain healthy and accessible waterways in NSW.

The NSW Government has already made a firm commitment through the [Maritime Infrastructure Plan \(MIP\)](#) to maximise the benefits of investment in maritime infrastructure for recreational and commercial boaters (including the commercial fishing, aquaculture and tourism sectors) and to provide certainty to industry over the next 5 years (representing an investment of over \$200 million).

Since 2012, the NSW Government has contributed about \$19.5 million to maintain navigational access to state owned maritime infrastructure. New and improved boat ramps, pontoons, wharves and boat storage as well as funding for emergency repairs is being delivered through \$70M of investment from boating licences under the [NSW Boating Now](#) program.

The **Coastal Dredging Strategy** identifies the state government as being responsible for the dredging of navigational channels identified in the [MIP](#) (refer **Table 1 - Key Investment Locations**) and in navigational channels providing access to state owned maritime infrastructure (refer **Table 2 - Priority Regional Locations**), while Councils maintain other navigational channels (i.e. local waterways). \$6 million is already committed until June 2021 for local Council dredging projects under the [Rescuing Our Waterways Program](#), and \$2 million to fund dredging projects in priority regional locations.

The **Coastal Dredging Strategy** has been developed and is co-ordinated by the [Maritime Infrastructure Delivery Office \(MIDO\)](#) and will provide certainty to Councils and industry on priority areas, funding and assistance in planning, design and development of local dredging strategies that lead to on-ground dredging works.

The **Coastal Dredging Strategy** is integrated also with the [NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy](#) initiatives and projects and the [NSW Coastal Management Framework](#) via its [Coastal Management Programs](#) using a collaborative '[co-design](#)' approach between State agencies, industry and other interested parties to support Councils to undertake dredging and beach nourishment works.

The **Coastal Dredging Strategy** aligns with the government's vision of a strong diverse NSW economy. It contributes to effective transport and increasing the capacity of primary industries and communities to drive economic growth in particular across regional NSW.

Benefits of dredging

Healthy waterways are the lifeblood of many regional communities and are the basis for recreation, tourism and commercial fishing and aquaculture. The main maritime infrastructure needs of these three key user groups are described under five categories within the [MIP](#) (Figures 4 and 5), and include waterway access and navigation.

With increasing demand for boating and water-based tourism experiences, dredging can deliver:

- improved navigation and greater commercial, recreational and tourism experiences
- accessibility and increased investment to local waterways, boating infrastructure and facilities
- flood mitigation, improved public amenity and waterway conditions
- improved water flows for healthy estuaries
- use of dredged sand for beach nourishment especially at locations susceptible to coastal erosion
- flow-on benefits for local economies by increasing coastal tourism and commercial opportunities.

Prioritisation of dredging investment

The State's maritime asset portfolio as described in the [MIP](#) is worth \$1.5 billion (excluding Newcastle, Port Kembla and Sydney) and is central to regional economic growth.

The NSW Government is committed to taking a strategic and proactive approach to delivering dredging for coastal communities in regional NSW. Fourteen strategically significant locations as listed in **Table 1** have been identified based on waterway user activity, existing infrastructure and broader economic performance in combination with how these locations align with broader NSW Government priorities as described in the [MIP](#).

Because community and other interested party expectations regarding dredging requirements exceeded available budget allocations, over time, additional locations will be incorporated into our planning as investment continues and additional data and evidence becomes available.

Although not identified as a priority in this **Coastal Dredging Strategy**, the NSW Government will continue to support dredging in other waterways that sustain significant boating activity through collaborative 'co-design' and co-funding opportunities that maximise commercial, economic and social benefits from greater coordination between relevant agencies and more effective engagement with industry and local government (via approved [Coastal Management Programs](#)) regarding maritime infrastructure investment (see [MIP](#)).

Management principles, monitoring and review

The **Coastal Dredging Strategy** is coordinated by [MIDO](#) under the [MIP](#) to help collate market information, refine the planning and regulatory approval processes and monitor relative performance and longevity of dredging works.

The **Coastal Dredging Strategy** aims to maximise the sustainability and value of dredging by working with nature to best utilise our limited sand resources for the benefit of coastal communities. The MIDO will establish a waterway monitoring framework at key locations under the **Coastal Dredging Strategy** that complements existing data programs under the Coastal Management Act and the Marine Integrated Monitoring Program to help assess the efficacy of coastal dredging in NSW.

Table 1. NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy – Key Investment Locations (north to south)

Location	Dredging needs	Nourishment potential
Lower Tweed River	River entrance channel to Terranora Inlet boat harbour.	Kingscliff & Gold Coast
Lower Richmond River	River entrance channel and West Ballina boat harbour.	North Ballina & Lennox beaches
Lower Clarence River	Entrance channels to Iluka and Yamba boat harbours.	Whiting Beach
Coffs Harbour	Entrance channel to boat harbour.	Parks Beach
Port Macquarie	River entrance channel and the Town Green channel.	Town Beach
Forster/Tuncurry	Entrance channel to Point Road moorings.	Tuncurry Beach
Port Stephens	Entrance channel at and within Nelson Bay boat harbour.	Little Nelson Bay
Lake Macquarie	Swansea Channel from ocean entrance to Marks Point.	Blacksmiths Beach
Lower Hawkesbury, Pittwater & Brisbane Water	Entrance to Brisbane Water (Ettalong Channel).	Ocean/Umina Beach
Botany Bay, Georges River & Port Hacking	Navigation channel in Gunnamatta Bay.	Cronulla Beach
Wollongong	Wollongong boat harbour.	N/A
Lower Shoalhaven River & Jervis Bay	River entrance channel	Seven Mile Beach
Batemans Bay & Clyde River	River entrance bar channel.	Corrigans and Surfside Beaches
Eden	Eden boat harbour.	N/A

Table 2. NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy – Priority Regional Locations (north to south)

Location	Dredging needs	Nourishment potential
Cudgen Creek	Creek entrance channel.	Kingscliff Beach
Brunswick River	River entrance channel to and including the boat harbour.	New Brighton Beach
Evans River	River entrance channel to and including the boat harbour	Airforce Beach
Wooli Creek	River entrance channel to the town wharf.	Wooli Beach
Macleay River	River entrance channel at ocean.	Stuart Point Beach
Camden Haven River	Entrance channel to commercial fishermen's mooring	Grants Beach
Kiama & Ulladulla	Kiama & Ulladulla boat harbours.	N/A
Moruya River	River entrance channel at Moruya Heads	Bengello Beach
Narooma River	River entrance channel to the Town commercial wharf	Bar Beach
Bermagui River	River entrance channel to and including the boat harbour.	Haywards Beach

More information

www.dpie.nsw.gov.au

© State of New South Wales through Department of Planning, Industry & Environment 2019.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (March 2019). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Planning, Industry & Environment or the user's independent adviser.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (March 2019) and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including the NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.