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24 March 2016

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Dear Sir/Madam

SUBMISSION DRAFT HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Hunter Regional Plan.

The Hunter Estuary Technical Working Group supports the proposed establishment of the Hunter Regional Plan Coordination and Monitoring Committee. It is understood that the committee will oversee the delivery of the Hunter Regional Plan and report on issues including natural environment and resources.

The Hunter Estuary Technical Working Group is a Whole of Government committee that was recently established to provide a streamlined, strategic approach to decision making for the Hunter River. The Working Group is a sub-committee of the Hunter Estuary Technical Working Party, which was established over ten years ago. The Hunter Estuary Technical Working Group includes representatives from the Office of Water, Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Local Land Service, Maitland City Council, Port Stephens Council and Newcastle City Council. Committee members have a wealth of technical knowledge and experience related to the management of the Hunter River catchment. The objectives of the Hunter Technical Estuary Working Group are to:

- provide a streamlined, strategic approach to decision making for the Hunter River;
- support government decision making for the Hunter River by improving transparency and credibility; and
- provide a central point of contact for data collection and management, and hydrodynamic modelling in the Hunter River.

The Working Group is currently working with Hunter Water Corporation to develop a hydrodynamic model for the Hunter Estuary, which will incorporate the best available scientific data and be endorsed by the relevant government agencies. A centralised database, which will provide access to the best available scientific data on the Hunter Estuary in one location, is also being developed by the Working Group.

The Working Group aims to provide an efficient and streamlined means for informing decision making, and providing credible scientific evidence for strategic plans and developments in the Hunter River catchment.



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Given the central role that the Hunter River plays in strategic planning for the Hunter region, it is requested that the NSW Department of Planning and Environment consider the role that the Hunter Estuary Technical Working Group could play in working with the Hunter Regional Plan Coordination and Monitoring Committee. It is proposed that the Hunter Estuary Technical Working Group could be one of the supporting groups that assists the Coordination and Monitoring Committee in planning and decision making for the Hunter River.

Should you require any further information about this matter, please don't hesitate to contact Council's Senior Strategist - Environment, Kristy Munro on 4974 2852.

Yours faithfully



Ken Liddell
ACTING DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE