

# Rehabilitation of the Macquarie River Riparian Corridor Factsheet



## Rehabilitation of the Macquarie River Riparian Corridor

In 2018, Bathurst Regional Council was successful in receiving funding from the NSW Environmental Trust for the project titled 'Rehabilitation of the Macquarie River Riparian Corridor'. To be completed over a three-year period, the project aims to rehabilitate and improve riparian vegetation condition along 1km of the Macquarie River to connect previously completed riparian rehabilitation projects and existing habitat areas.

By connecting these important areas, the project will significantly increase the extent of habitat along the river for a wide range of native species such as the Grey-headed Flying Fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) and Platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*). In doing so, the project will assist in addressing key threats to the recovery of listed endangered species such as the Boorolong Frog (*Litoria booroolongensis*) and the Murray Cod (*Maccullochella peelii*).

Through involvement and education, the project aims to create a greater awareness within the community of the benefits of riparian habitat rehabilitation, river health, and build appreciation and stewardship of the Macquarie River.

### What is the environmental problem?

The Macquarie River has been largely impacted by the loss of important vegetation and infestation of highly invasive weeds within its riparian zone. The riparian zone describes the area of vegetation including trees, shrubs and grasses that grow along the banks of a waterbody. Native riparian vegetation provides habitat and food for fish and other aquatic fauna by dropping fruit, leaves and branches into the water.

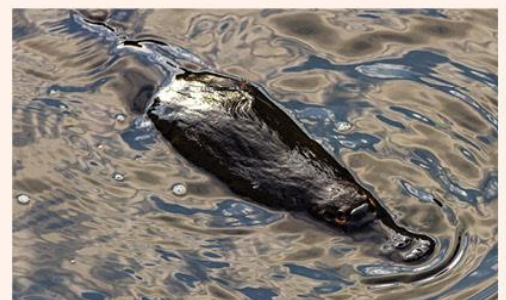
Overhanging trees and vegetation also shade the river which keeps water temperatures down. Deep-rooted vegetation helps to hold soil in place, reduces erosion, filters out pollutants and keeps excess sediments from

entering the waterway. When the riparian zone is cleared of vegetation the banks are more vulnerable to erosion. The sediment from erosion then washes into the water and smothers aquatic plants and fauna and fills in refuge holes and other habitat.

Weeds in the riparian zone are often highly invasive and outcompete native plants. For instance, when willows dominate the river, they provide heavy shade which inhibits the growth of understory plants. Willows also drop all their leaves in Autumn which reduces water quality and does not provide a year-round food source for aquatic fauna.



Grey-headed Flying Fox. © DJM Australia Photography



Platypus. © DJM Australia Photography

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### What will the project aim to achieve?

The project will reduce the impacts of introduced weed species through a control program. This will be achieved by targeting exotic woody and herbaceous weeds such as willows, poplars and blackberry that are currently competing with native species.

Controlled weeds will then be replaced with a range of local riparian trees, shrubs and grasses. Planting naturally occurring species from the Bathurst region is best as they are well adapted to the local soils, conditions and are more likely to benefit the local fauna. Fast growing species will also be planted as they provide quick coverage of the planting area to outcompete weeds and protect the riverbank.

These works will significantly increase the extent of habitat along the Macquarie River for a wide range of native fauna species, improve river health and reduce erosion.

### How can we get involved?

Join Council's Community Environmental Engagement Officer at any one of Councils community tree planting days or revegetation maintenance days. Give as much or as little time as you can spare – it all makes a difference to help rehabilitate the Macquarie River.

Visit Councils website; [www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au) for further details.



Volunteers at the community tree planting day. © Ken Smith



Student volunteers at a schools planting day



Planting native sedges on the banks of the river. © Skillset Landworks



Macquarie River at dawn. © DJM Australia Photography



The Rehabilitation of the Macquarie River Riparian Corridor project is proudly supported by the NSW Government's Environmental Trust and Bathurst Regional Council.