

Initiative 5 – Improving boating infrastructure

Frequently asked questions

How will improved boat storage facilities improve community benefits from the marine estate?

The benefits from recreational boating are reliant on adequate infrastructure such as boat launching ramps, navigation aids, access points, boat storage facilities, moorings, and marinas. Boat numbers in Sydney Harbour are set to grow at around 2.9 % annually. An estimated 1.8 million people go boating in the NSW marine estate each year.

Councils in key regions, including Pittwater and Lake Macquarie, have been working with Transport for NSW to develop strategies for their waterways and planning for the best mix of boat storage options to cope with the forecast growth in vessel numbers. This is a new initiative and builds upon the Sydney Harbour Boat Storage Strategy released by Transport for NSW in 2013.

In developing boating storage strategies, consideration will be given to piloting innovative approaches to on-water storage such as multiple-mooring systems and public marinas. This will allow for more organised boat storage solutions which help to ‘de-clutter’ bays, open up more navigable waters to recreational boating, and minimise environmental impacts.

What is an environmentally friendly mooring? Have they been trialed elsewhere and do they work?

Transport for NSW is working with Roads and Maritime Services, and DPI Fisheries to develop transition arrangements to mandate the use of Environmentally Friendly Moorings (EFMs) in sensitive seagrass areas. This is an existing initiative and builds upon the Moorings Review released by Transport for NSW in 2014.

A number of alternative mooring designs are now on the market and aim to protect seagrass habitat without compromising safety or reliability. These designs are referred to as EFMs. These EFMs protect the seabed from the effects of chain scouring by keeping all mooring components off the sea bed at all times.

Trials of EFMs show that some are effective in protecting seagrass and promoting recovery. However, some issues such as cost, installation and maintenance, supply and the availability of qualified contractors still need to be addressed. There is also a lack of awareness about the damage done by the traditional “chain and block” moorings as well as the benefits of EFMs.

What is exempt and complying water-based development?

‘Exempt development’, if consistent with any technical or design requirements, does not require formal approval. ‘Complying development’ does not require a full development application but can be approved in a more streamlined way by a certifying authority.

An activity may be characterised as exempt or complying development if the activity has a low or minimal impact on the environment. Low risk water-based development might include development that is not detrimental to the bed of a waterway or marine vegetation.

Descriptions or lists for current exempt and complying development can be found in environmental planning instruments, such as the *State and Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008*.

Where can I find more information?

More information is available at www.marine.nsw.gov.au.

Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion assessment: www.marine.nsw.gov.au/key-initiatives/hawkesbury-shelf-marine-assessment

If you would like to receive updates on the Hawkesbury Shelf assessment or other marine estate initiatives please advise us via contact.us@marine.nsw.gov.au and provide your name, email address and postcode.

Feedback requested

We would appreciate feedback on these Frequently Asked Questions: Was it useful information? Was it easy to understand? What other questions would you like answered? Please email your comments to contact.us@marine.nsw.gov.au

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