



Minister for Advanced Technology and Space Industries
Minister for the Environment and Heritage
Minister for Planning and Land Management
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
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Manager of Government Business
Member for Brindabella

20/42468

Nicole Lawder MLA
Member for Brindabella
By email: lawder@parliament.act.gov.au

Dear Ms Lawder *Nicole*

Thank you for your letter of 25 June 2020 about improving the water quality in Lake Tuggeranong in advance of the next summer season. I apologise for the delay in responding.

The ACT Government is committed to continual improvements to the water quality in Lake Tuggeranong so that the community can continue to enjoy the lake and its foreshores.

The catchment influences that are contributing to poor water quality (most notably blue green algal blooms) are quite complex and will take time to mitigate.

The ACT Government is working to improve water quality in Canberra's lakes and watercourses. The Government co-invested with the Australian Government in the \$93.5 million ACT Healthy Waterways project. Seven of the twenty water quality assets built by the project are in the Lake Tuggeranong catchment. These assets will prevent, on average, 724 tons of sediments, 7.2 tons of nitrogen and 1.1 tons of phosphorus a year from entering the lake. While this is welcome progress, it is approximately 20% of the supply of these pollutants currently entering the Lake. It also highlights that more needs to be done to reduce the pollution events to the lake so that algal blooms can be avoided.

In December 2019 the ACT Government announced a further \$1 million in funding to extend the pollution mitigation work within Lake Tuggeranong and its surrounds. This investment is focusing on:

- fixing a malfunctioning gross pollutant trap at the base of Village Creek that is thought to play a role in initiating algal blooms in Lake Tuggeranong;
- trialling a new swale design to prevent polluted runoff from entering the Tuggeranong stormwater system; and
- extending the research by University of Canberra into algal 'knock-down' agents to clear algal blooms once they arise.

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The University of Canberra is also investigating the sources of pollution in the Tuggeranong Catchment, so we can take actions to prevent the pollution from entering waterways, where it is difficult and expensive to treat.

These activities demonstrate the ACT Government's commitment to improve water quality in Lake Tuggeranong and its catchment, however unfortunately there is no quick fix to solve the pollution and algal blooms that we have traditionally experienced. The ACT Government will continue to make steady and material progress towards cleaning up the lake in coming years.

Thank you for raising this matter with me. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Mick Gentleman MLA
Minister for the Environment and Heritage

24/8/2020