



ACT
Government

Environment, Planning and
Sustainable Development

EPSDD Ref No.:

Response to DLO Request

*** All information provided should be factual.**

EGM clearance email to be saved in the Objective file and forwarded to the EPSDD DLO inbox and copy in the relevant EO.

Subject: Land management ideas for Belconnen Oval and elsewhere

- (Dr.) John Giacon, who is Convenor of the [Emu Creek Park Planting Group](#), wrote Minister Cheyne wishing to be given details about 'Labor's commitment to a feasibility study for a wetland on Belconnen oval'.
- He would also like to discuss with Minister Cheyne more widespread, small-scale measures, such as such as small water gardens/ponds, more conservation-mow areas, protecting self-sown plants and care of infrastructure such as diversion drains.

Response:

Feasibility study for a wetland on Belconnen oval

- Belconnen oval is a potential site for a water quality asset to help clean polluted stormwater in Emu Creek and associated drains.
- Emu Creek is highly urbanised, with drainage currently routed underground, and with its receiving water—Lake Ginninderra—experiencing poor water quality. The lake has been closed between 12-25 weeks a year in the past four years, mainly due to faecal coliforms but also because of outbreaks of blue-green algae.
- In July EPSDD responded to a request by the Ginninderra Catchment Group to consider water sensitive urban design (WSUD) options for Emu Creek (see: *20/49421 - DLO Request - Ginninderra Catchment Group/Belconnen Community Council - Santo Lolicato*). In August an EPSDD officer inspected the drainage line with members of the community.
- The idea of transforming Belconnen Oval into a WSUD asset is in line with contemporary approaches about how stormwater needs to be managed to improve water quality, urban amenity and urban cooling, and appears to have at least some community support.
- A broader analysis would be required to assess whether this proposal was among the best possible options within the Lake Ginninderra catchment.



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Government programs/ Small-scale measures to improve water quality

- ACT Healthy Waterways is the ACT Government's main water quality improvement program, involving a \$93.5M investment by ACT and Commonwealth Governments. It started in 2014 and runs until June 2021.
- A \$30M extension to Healthy Waterways is currently being considered.
- The business case for the \$30M *Clean catchments, Clean Lakes* bid includes work to create a catchment plan for Lake Ginninderra that would address elements of a feasibility study for Belconnen oval.
- The initial Healthy Waterways project focused on constructing large water quality assets, and also featured research, monitoring and pilot behavioural change programs.
- The relative merits of retrofitting various water quality assets in the Lake Ginninderra catchment—including Belconnen oval—were not evaluated in the initial Healthy Waterways project because the scope of that project was on urban drainage more directly affecting the Murrumbidgee River (hence West Belconnen, downstream of Lake Ginninderra).