

2. *Achievements and stakeholder contributions*

2.1 *Overview*

Any successful community based project is reliant on effective partnerships with its key stakeholders at local, regional, state and federal levels.

Northern Beaches Envirolink's Greenlink project not only managed these relationships successfully but quickly gained a reputation for productive engagement, especially in relation to on-ground works and outcomes. This is most starkly evident in the volunteer and other contributor efforts, which have exceeded planned intent.

In an endeavour to assess and acknowledge achievements and stakeholder contributions this section considers:

- *community based coordination*
- *volunteer contributions*
- *other contributions*
- *increase in Greenlink stakeholder participants*
- *promotion and communication*
- *sponsorship and support*
- *environmental outcomes*
- *ongoing commitment to regional conservation*

Figure 2.0

Students from Cromer Primary School take a break from revegetation of Dee Why Creek. These workdays were organised by the charitable OzGREEN, as part of their contribution to Greenlink.

2.2 Community Based Coordination

Greenlink was established by the Sydney Northern Beaches Catchment Management Committee (CMC) in 1999. When CMCs were disbanded in mid 2000, a new community group called *Northern Beaches Envirolink Inc* (NBE) was formed. NBE became the proponent for Greenlink, but did not have the part-time support of the CMC Coordinator, who was employed directly by DLWC. The change also resulted in a loss of administrative resource financial support.

In spite of this change, and a loss of the financial, administrative and resource backing of the Committee, the wholly community supported *Northern Beaches Envirolink* successfully guided Greenlink to its current position. Further discussion concerning this administrative constraint is provided in Section 3.2.

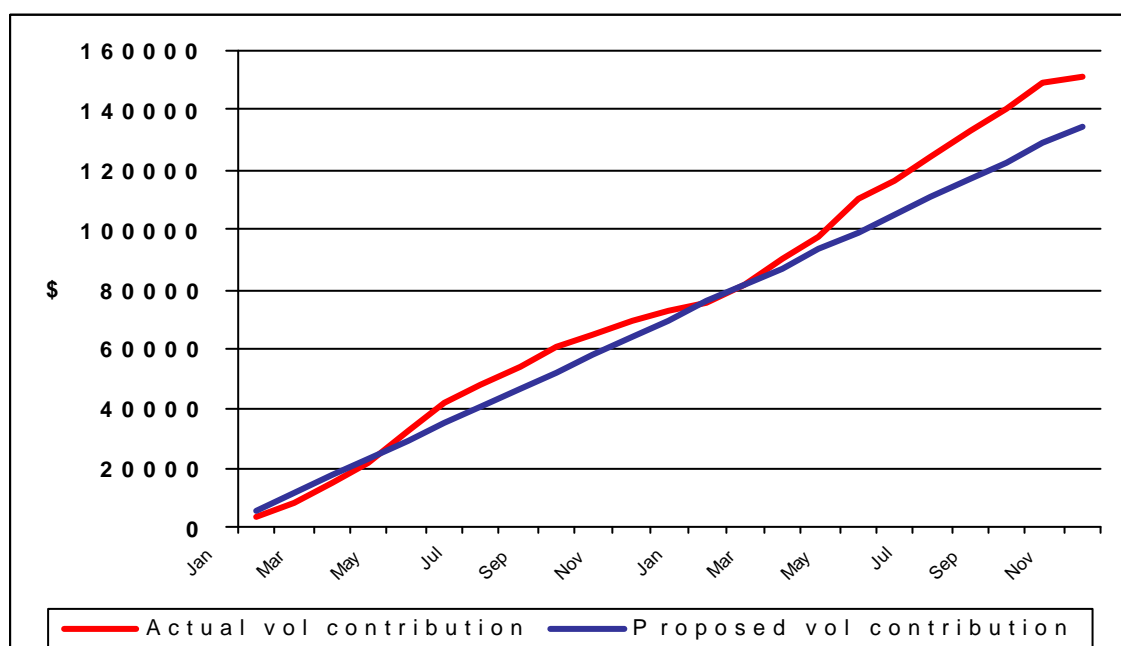
The project is regarded by many as exemplary, and Envirolink has maintained the full confidence of the key stakeholders (Bushcare, Department of Land and Water Conservation, Environment Australia the Sydney Harbour Catchment Management Board and the three local Northern Beaches Councils) throughout its duration.

2.3 Volunteer Contributions

As demonstrated in the following figures, Greenlink has been highly successful in encouraging voluntary community input. Throughout the project's duration, the people involved in Greenlink have continued to demonstrate their enormous dedication to their goal of regional conservation. The success of this project is mainly due to their hard work and commitment.

Between January 2000 and October 2001 (inclusive), Greenlink volunteers have contributed at least 10,080 hours to the project. This accounts for the time spent on actual project site work and does not include all of the time taken to perform of the activities necessary to keep the groups running, such as organising workdays, attending meetings or preparing equipment and other support needs on work days. If volunteers are valued at \$15.00 per hour this equates to over \$151,000 – a remarkable effort.

Figure 2.1: Volunteer contribution 2000 / 2001.



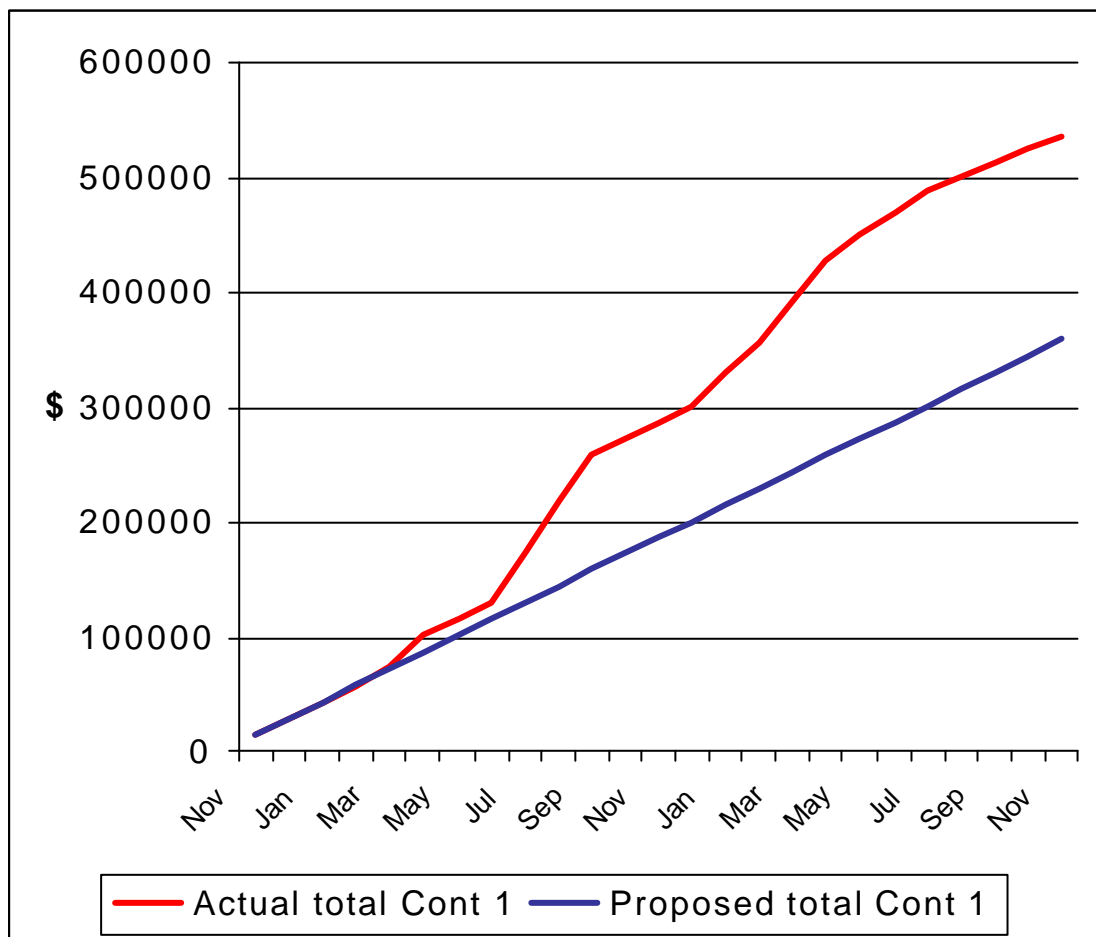
2.4 Other Contributors

Contributor 1, as listed in Greenlink's Natural Heritage Trust application, was Pittwater and Warringah Councils. In 2001, Manly Council joined Greenlink, adding to the overall dollar value of the project.

The contributions from the Councils were both in actual dollars and in-kind. Their contributions took the form of volunteer support, tools, fencing, tubestock and training. They also paid for bush regeneration contract work, track work and creekline stabilisation that directly complemented the work performed by volunteers.

As demonstrated in the following figure, the input of funds from Contributor 1 easily exceeded the amount proposed in the initial application. The total contribution up to November 2001 was \$535,407. This does not include a further \$11,200 that Pittwater Council has committed to a maintenance phase for some of the contractor's primary work that has recently been finished.

Figure 2.2: Contributor 1 input, 2000 / 2001.



Contributor 2 was listed as the NSW Aged and Disability Department. Unfortunately, this project partner was forced to withdraw support for Greenlink, as noted in correspondence to the Department of Land and Water Conservation on 15 July 2000.

2.5 Increase in Greenlink Participants

Greenlink has been highly successful in attracting new groups to join the project. In March 2000, the project had eight participant groups / Councils. In 2001, the number grew to fourteen (see figure 2.2), and a further nine were to join in 2002. These groups will continue to function with the support of the Councils, although in a much more limited way than was planned.

Greenlink was also successful in securing the participation of Manly Council in 2001. Although their involvement (revegetation work at Seaforth Oval) was relatively small for this year, it would have enlarged considerably in 2002. The planned inclusion of an extension to their highly successful Burnt Bridge Creek rehabilitation project would have added considerably to the long term environmental benefits of Greenlink.

Figure 2.2: Growth in Greenlink participation

Original Groups (1999)		
Group	Location	Project
1. Reefcare	Long Reef Point	Grassland restoration
2. Friends of Dee Why Lagoon	Dee Why Lagoon	Wetland rehabilitation, bush regeneration
3. Warringah Council	Wildlife Refuge	
4. OzGREEN	Dee Why Wetlands	Riparian rehabilitation
5. Thursday Gardeners,	South Creek	Riparian rehabilitation, bush regeneration
6. Northside Enterprises		
7. Pittwater Council	North shore of Narrabeen Lagoon	Bush regeneration, track construction
8. Friends of Warriewood Wetlands, Pittwater Council	Warriewood Wetlands	Bush regeneration, revegetation, habitat restoration
New Groups / Areas 2000		
Warringah Council	Jamieson Park	Bush regeneration, track construction
9. Friends of Deep Creek	Deep Creek Reserve	Bush regeneration, trail rehabilitation
New Groups / Areas 2001		
10. Friends of McKillop Reserve	McKillop Reserve, Harbord	Bush regeneration, habitat restoration, revegetation.
11. Heron Place Bushcare, Warringah Council	Dee Why Creek	Revegetation, riparian rehabilitation
12. Friends of Anzac Reserve	Anzac Reserve	Bush regeneration, track construction.
13. Friends of South Creek	South Creek Beacon Hill	Riparian rehabilitation, bush regeneration
14. Manly Council	Seaforth Oval	Revegetation

2.6 Promotions and Communications

The Greenlink display that is permanently housed at the Coastal Environment Centre in Narrabeen has appeared at a range of locations over the last two years. From the local shopping centre to various open days and conferences, this informative display has attracted considerable attention.

The Project Officer has appeared at a range of community functions as guest speaker representing Greenlink and its role in regional conservation. The most recent of these was at the **Weedbusters** week conference in September to an audience of approximately 160 people at the Chatswood Town Hall.

In addition to this, the Greenlink Steering Committee Chairman has had the opportunity to address several well attended events (including a Sydney Harbour Week seminar) to highlight valuing community efforts, drawing on the experience of this project.

Ten Greenlink project signs have been erected in strategic locations in the project area, drawing attention to the involvement of the community, Councils and the Natural Heritage Trust. Constructed by a local company (*Bayview Fencing*) the timber boards feature the Greenlink water dragon and the project slogan 'Our community, our bushland', along with the logos of the major project partners.

The quarterly Greenlink Newsletter has proved enormously successful in spreading information related to Greenlink and its activities. Each edition has featured details of various projects, as well as general weed information, technical advice and a 'What's on' page (*see Appendix D*). The newsletter has a current circulation of 120.

2.7 Sponsorship and Support

Dee Why RSL Club generously donated \$1,600 towards the cost of Greenlink tee shirts in 2000. This contribution was instrumental in building a team spirit amongst participants, as the shirts helped to create a sense of identity.

Local schools, including Cromer Primary and Balgowlah Boys High participated in a number of planting, mulching and weeding days. Their support has been important in sustaining the community effort in a number of locations.

Two of the project sites (South Creek Cromer and Long Reef) are immediately adjacent to golf courses. Cromer Golf Club has actively supported the Thursday Gardeners by assisting with the maintenance of their work area and the provision of storage space, irrigation, herbicide and some tools. Although Long Reef Golf Course has allowed Reefcare to use their water supply for irrigation of planted areas and has provided some irrigation equipment and herbicide, its relationship with the community soured upon lodgement of Development Application, as discussed further in Section 3.6.

2.8 Environmental Outcomes

Natural Heritage Trust funds have paid for over 10,500 tubestock grown from seed collected from the various reserves in the project area. The three councils have also planted in excess of 4,000 tubestock and more mature plants within the project area. The local nurseries have devoted considerable attention to the provision of site specific stock to maintain the genetic integrity of the existing vegetation. These tubestock were only planted in areas that were too degraded for natural regeneration to take place, such as mown edges of playing fields, or highly degraded riparian zones.

The plants funded by NHT were all planted by volunteers, either as part of the regular project work days, or on specific planting days. Exemplifying this was the National Tree Planting Day event along Dee Why Creek that attracted approximately thirty participants, and close to 700 trees were planted. The local councils and the volunteer groups have undertaken to maintain these planted areas to ensure that the high initial success rate is sustained into the future.

2.9 *Ongoing commitment to regional conservation*

Greenlink has been successful in the 2000 / 2001 period in establishing project areas that will be sustained into the future. All of the groups involved in the project have dedicated members who will continue to maintain the project areas. In addition to this, the participant Councils have given assurances that the work completed as part of Greenlink will be maintained as part of Council's regular environmental work. This ensures that Greenlink's contribution to regional conservation will have a lasting benefit.

As a regional project, Greenlink has attempted to complement the work of other similar projects and groups in the area. To this end, strong ties with groups such as the Friends of Katandra, Pittwater Natural Heritage Association and Friends of John Fisher Park have been established and maintained. This has helped to create a healthy support base for the project and has given it a regional context.

Adding to this has been the involvement of the Greenlink Project Officer in other connected projects. These have included the Deep Creek rehabilitation work and the Long Reef Save the Dunes project (both funded by Coastcare). These projects have direct physical connections to the Greenlink area and contribute enormously to regional conservation.

Northern Beaches Envirolink has recently been awarded a \$30,000 NHT grant contribution in a separate project whose objective is Bitou Bush and Boneseed control in the Northern Beaches region of Sydney.