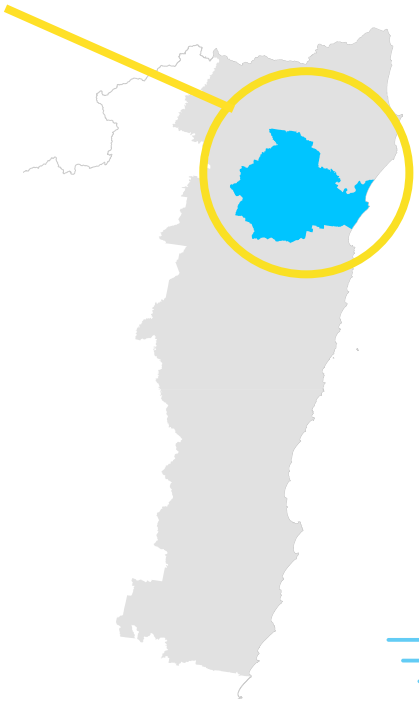
STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT
2016 FINAL SUMMARY

RICHMOND VALLEY LGA



INTRODUCTION

This summary for the Richmond Valley Local Government Area (LGA) forms part of the Regional State of the Environment report for 2016. It was compiled on behalf of the twelve Councils and Rous County Council of the North Coast Region of NSW.

Reporting on major environmental indicators from 2011 to 2016, it identifies trends where relevant. Data was provided by Council, state and federal government, universities, energy suppliers and community groups.

Increasing threats from invasive species such as tropical soda apple, wild dogs, foxes and Indian mynas

Residential water use is steady averaging 172 kilo-litres per connection annually Non-residential water use is the highest in the region

Council's emissions are the lowest in the region with 1,584 tonnes CO_2-e emitted in 2015/16

Domestic waste has decreased by 7% since 2012. In 2016, each person generated 357 kgs of waste, with 45% recycled

Waste water discharged to waterways increased by 32% since 2012. In 2016, 2,407 megalitres of waste water was discharged to waterways

24% of dwellings have roof top solar. Domestic electricity use is 1,960 kilowatt hours annually

Three new endangered species since 2012; koala vulnerable

River heatlh is poor due to poor riparian condition and bank stability, and high nutrient levels

PEOPLE &THE ENVIRONMENT 1

POPULATION

2009 22,417

2015 23,181

POPULATION is steady

CLIMATE CHARACTERISTICS

RAINFALL

2013 - HIGH
2014 - VERY LOW
2015 - AVERAGE
2016 - 5 June wettest day on record for NSW

FLOODING

2013 January - MAJOR
2013 February - MAJOR
2014 March - MINOR
2014 August - MINOR
2015 February - MINOR
2015 May - MINOR to MODERATE
2016 June - MODERATE
2016 June - MINOR

2013 was Australia's **HOTTEST YEAR** on record

COUNCIL EMISSIONS ABATEMENT

Roof-top solar installations and energy-efficient streetlighting abate over 60 tonnes CO_2-e annually

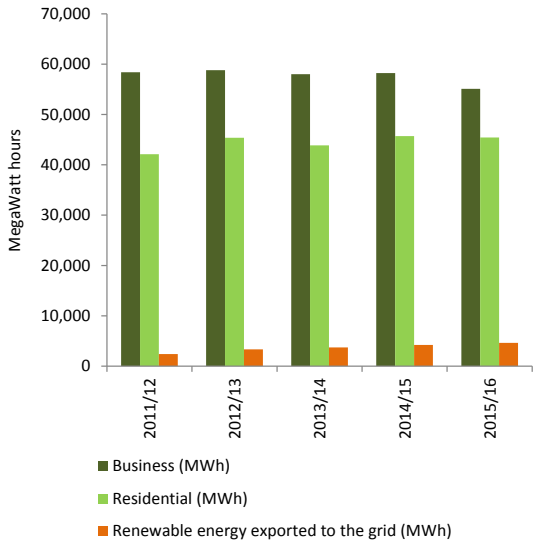
GREENHOUSE GASES & RENEWABLE ENERGY

24% of dwellings have roof top solar

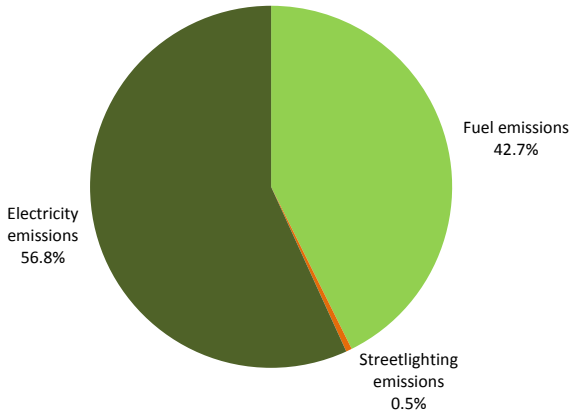
RENEWABLE ENERGY

fed back to the grid has nearly doubled since 2012 with 199 kWh exported per person annually in 2016

1,960 MEGAWATT hrs of residential electricity use per person annually in 2016



COUNCIL EMISSIONS -
IN 2016, RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL EMITTED 1,584 TONNES CO_2-e, the lowest level of council emissions in the region



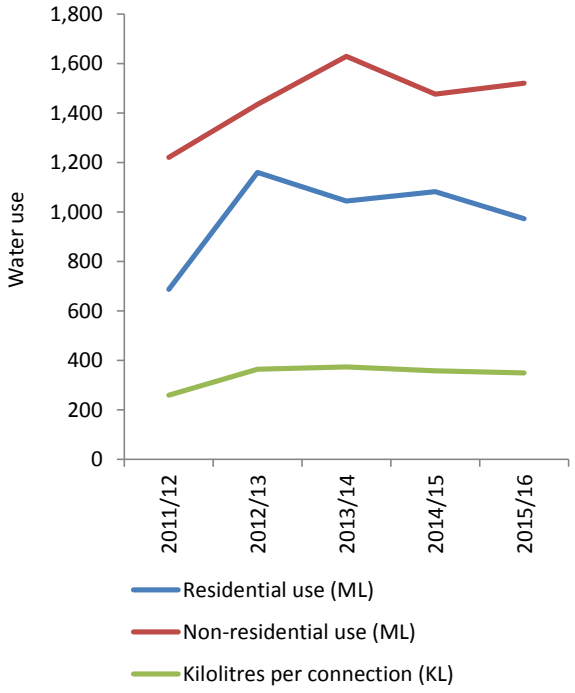
PEOPLE &THE ENVIRONMENT CONT. 1

WATER USE

349 KILOLITRES
total water use per connection annually - up by 34% from 2011 and the highest in the region

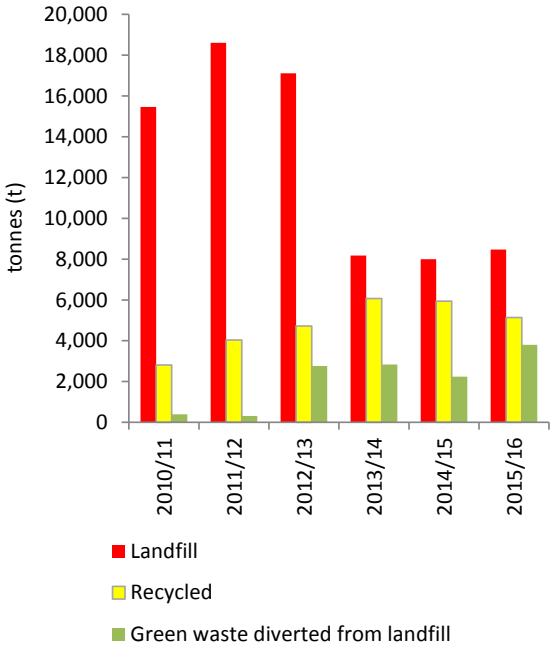
Residential water use

172 KILOLITRES
per connection annually, equal to the NSW regional average of 172kL



WASTE

Overall WASTE generated
DECREASED BY 7% SINCE 2011



WASTE TO LANDFILL DECREASED BY 45% since 2011

357 kgs KILOGRAMS
waste generated by each person in 2015, with 45% recycled, below the NSW target of 66% domestic waste diverted from landfill

Greenwaste and biosolids are
COMPOSTED

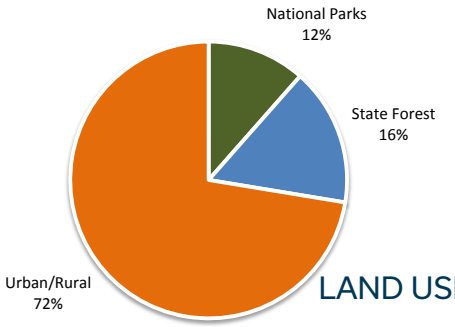
51% of all waste generated is RECYCLED

BIODIVERSITY & VEGETATION 2

RESILIENT LANDSCAPES

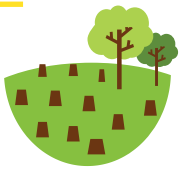
A further 4,369 HECTARES OF LAND is protected under Council's Local Environmental Plan

5 CONSERVATION AGREEMENTS PROTECT 1,282 HECTARES OF PRIVATE LAND



LAND USE

VEGETATION LOSS



189 APPROVALS FOR PRIVATE NATIVE FORESTRY were granted in the LGA since 2007 covering 35,725 HECTARES (16.2%) OF PRIVATE LAND

From 1988 to 2007, 5,773 hectares were harvested under forestry and agricultural operations, highlighting the contribution of private native forestry to vegetation loss outside of State Forest and protected areas if all areas approved are harvested

HABITAT REGENERATION

5 hectares of land rehabilitated by Council annually, and

numerous other sites managed by the many local Landcare groups

INVASIVE SPECIES

Key weed threats are TROPICAL SODA APPLE AND HYMANACHNE

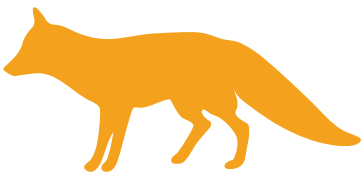
FAR NORTH COAST WEEDS (FNCW) CONDUCT WEED CONTROL WORK IN THE LGA

OVER 2,500 KILOMETRES of weed control completed annually on rivers, roadsides and railways

HIGH RISK WEED SITES INSPECTED AND TREATED IN 2015 include waterways, wetlands, nurseries and sale yards

Vertebrate pests - CANE TOADS, WILD DOGS, FERAL CATS, FOXES AND INDIAN MYNAS are pests of concern in the LGA

There is an annual CARP MUSTER undertaken by the local fishing club



NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA

2 NEW KEY THREATENING PROCESSES SINCE 2012:
Myrtle rust pathogen;
Noisy miners excluding other native species from habitat

3 NEW ENDANGERED SPECIES SINCE 2012
Black-tailed antechinus
Wollumbin Dogwood
Torrington mint-bush

KOALA declared vulnerable

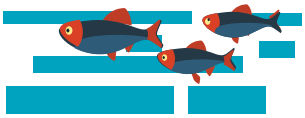
LAND USE & SOILS 3

4 SOILS TYPES found in the LGA
MOST IN FAIR TO VERY GOOD CONDITION, but organic carbon, acidity, gully and sheet erosion, and soil structure are issues

1 CURRENT MINING LICENCES IN THE LGA FOR CLAY AND SHALE

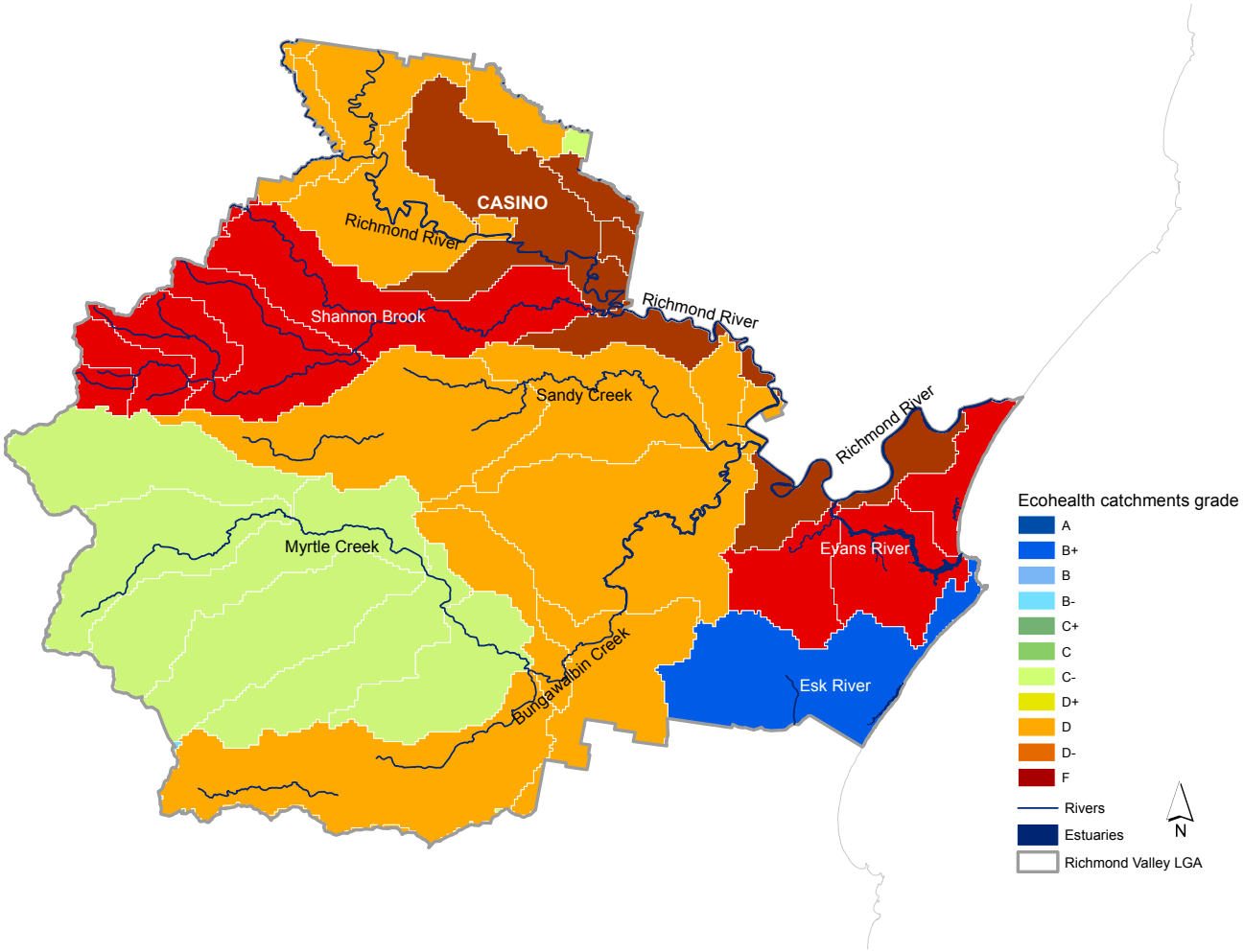
0 CURRENT/ACTIVE MINERAL OR COAL SEAM GAS EXPLORATION LICENCES

4 WATER



RIVER HEALTH

The Ecohealth water quality monitoring program was conducted in 2014 for the Richmond system. The overall rating for the Richmond system was "D+" (poor), with scores of "F" (fail) near to and downstream of Casino. Condition improved to "C-" (Fair) in Myrtle Creek and was "B+" (good) in the Esk River. Key issues were poor riparian vegetation, eroding river banks and associated sediment loads, and elevated nutrients. See Council's website for the full Ecohealth report card.



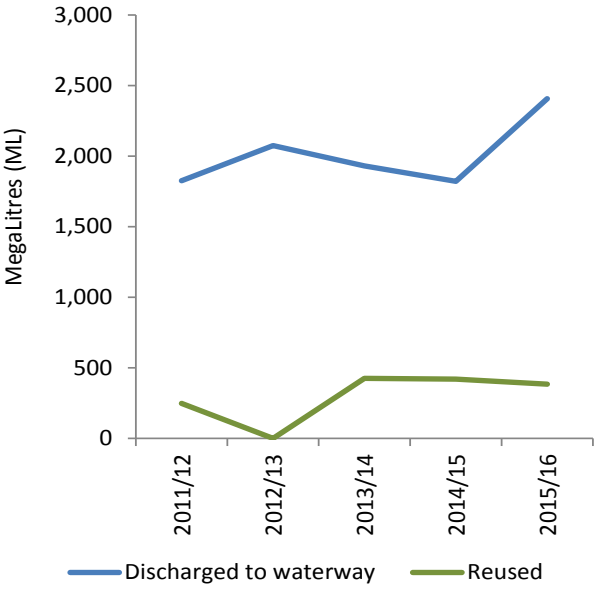
4 WATER CONT.

WASTE WATER

Waste water discharged to waterways has increased by 32% since 2012 with 2,407 ML discharged in 2015/16

14% of waste water was reused in 2015/16

Biosolids are composted



GROUNDWATER STATUS

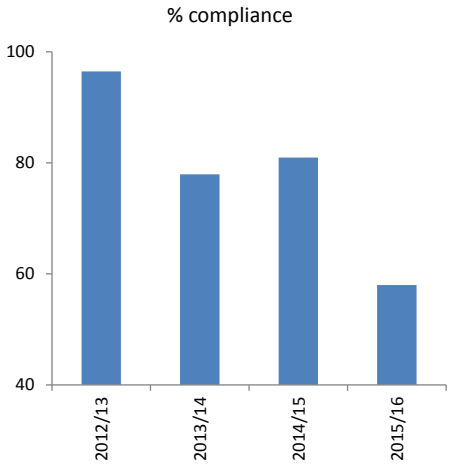
7 groundwater sources, all with commenced water sharing plans as of 1 July 2016

There are no known allocation concerns

0 identified GROUNDWATER-DEPENDENT ECOSYSTEMS in the LGA

OSSM COMPLIANCE

On-site sewage management systems compliance is variable ranging from 97% TO 58% COMPLIANCE for inspected systems since 2012



COASTAL & RIVER MANAGEMENT

The Evans River Coastal Zone Management Plan was completed and adopted by Council in 2013

The Coastal Zone Management Plan for the Richmond River Estuary was completed in 2011 and is implemented by Richmond River County Council 9now Rous County Council)

Council continues to implement the BEACH WATCH water quality program in summer months, with 3 OUT OF 4 LOCATIONS BEING RATED AS VERY GOOD