

UPPER ORARA RIVER FLOOD STUDY

NEWSLETTER NO.1

August 2011

About the Project

As part of the NSW Government's Floodplain Risk Management Process, Coffs Harbour City Council is developing a Flood Study for the Upper Orara River and its Bucca Bucca Creek tributary.

The Orara River and Bucca Bucca Creek catchments are located to the west of Coffs Harbour, and drain northwards to the Clarence River catchment. Orara Way and the Grafton to Coffs Harbour railway line are located on either side of the Orara River.

The Orara River passes near/through the villages of Karangi, Coramba, and Nana Glen before crossing the Coffs Harbour City/ Clarence Valley Shire boundary and flowing on to Glenreagh. Bucca Bucca Creek flows through Central and Lower Bucca before joining the Orara River below Nana Glen. Attached is a map outlining the study area.

Floodwaters rise quickly and can isolate properties and communities for several days. Many houses could be affected during a flood, necessitating evacuations.

Rainfall and river gauging data in the catchment is limited, however significant events have been recorded on gauges at Karangi and Glenreagh. In April 2009, the second highest flood level on record was recorded in the Upper Orara Valley.

The objective of this Flood Study is to define the flood behaviour under recent historical conditions and design flood behaviour under existing and future conditions in the study area. The output will provide flood levels, depths, velocities, flows, hydraulic categories, and provisional hazard categories.

GHD have been contracted by Council to carry out the Upper Orara River Flood Study.

Study Tasks

In general terms, the following key tasks will be undertaken:

- Collect, compile and review available flood data relating to the study area in order to obtain a full understanding of flooding issues in the study area;
- Undertake community consultation to gather information on historical flooding in the area and the impact of flooding on the local community;

- Gather additional survey of watercourses, structures (for example bridges, culvert, road levels);
- Develop flood models to simulate historical and design floods. Calibrate and validate these models against recent historical flood data (for example the April 2009 event; and
- Flood map flood extents, flood level contours and provisional flood hazards for the study area.

Community Information

Council and GHD are committed to listening to the concerns and issues of the community and stakeholders, and strategies are in place to ensure that this information is integrated into the study. There will be opportunities throughout the study for the local community and stakeholders to feedback their concerns and issues.

As a first step, the project team is keen to learn when and where previous flooding has occurred in the Orara River and Bucca Bucca Creek catchments and the surrounding areas, and how you and your property were affected.

Attached is a survey questionnaire that all members of the community are encouraged to complete and return (postage paid). This is an opportunity to ensure that you have your say and that the information is captured.

For more information contact:

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