

Kooragang Wetland Rehabilitation Project: opportunities and constraints in an urban wetland rehabilitation project

Streever, W.J.

Abstract

This paper describes the Kooragang Wetland Rehabilitation Project (KWRP) in Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia. The area's wetlands have been degraded over the past two hundred years by resource extraction, alterations to hydrology, clearing for agriculture, cattle grazing, and industrial development. KWRP objectives include (1) habitat rehabilitation at three sites totaling 1560 ha, (2) involving the community with rehabilitation, and (3) developing wetland management models through a research program. Rehabilitation in an urban setting is accompanied by various constraints and opportunities. Constraints experienced by KWRP include requirements to (1) avoid disturbance of urban infrastructure, (2) demonstrate that rehabilitation will not increase flood risks to populated areas, and (3) develop methods of increasing wetland habitat without aggravating an existing mosquito problem. Opportunities include (1) availability of financial sponsors and skilled personnel, and (2) close proximity to a university, which allowed establishment of a research partnership. By conducting wetland rehabilitation in a densely populated area, KWRP exposes a large number of people to the challenges associated with ecosystem rehabilitation and the importance of preserving wetland resources.

Streever, W.J. 1999, Kooragang Wetland Rehabilitation Project: Opportunities and constraints in an urban wetland rehabilitation project, *Urban Ecosystems*, Vol. 2, pp. 205-18.
