

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

2.5°C

Increase in average
max temperatures

**MORE
STORMS AND
FLOODING**

related to
temperature rise

**OVER 30
MORE HOT
DAYS**

Increase in hot days
per year

**35 LESS COLD
NIGHTS**

Decrease in cold
nights per year

**CHANGE IN
RAINFALL
PATTERNS**

More in summer and
autumn, less in
winter/spring

**MORE SEVERE
FIRE
WEATHER**

Increase in number of
severe fire weather
days per year

Our climate is
changing... How are
we responding?

yass valley council

the country the people

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE YASS VALLEY



Changing weather patterns caused by climate change can pose physical, financial and legal risks to people and organisations. Council is exposed to various natural disasters and environmental changes that are elements of climate change. These present risks to Council's operations, assets and employees.

Our Community Strategic Plan captures the importance of Climate Change, with the Environment pillar specifically referring to respecting the environment as "considering both the local natural and atmospheric environment and the broader global environment considering issues such as resource use and climate change".

This puts Council's recognition of the risks presented by Climate Change in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the NSW Climate Change Policy Framework, and Australia's response to the Paris agreement, including the 2022 Climate Bill.

RISKS

In 2021 Council engaged carried out a Risk Assessment to better understand the likely impacts of Climate Change and Natural Disasters on the LGA. The Assessment assists Council to plan to and prioritise actions to achieve its strategic goals and increase the resilience of Council operations and assets in a changing climate.

Twenty eight climate induced risk events were considered to have a potential risk level of medium or greater. The most significant impacts of these risks on Council's operations, employees, community and local environment may arise through:

- Significant damage to energy infrastructure leading to loss of reliable power supply;
- Damage to, and accelerated deterioration of, transport infrastructure including roads, bridges, pavements;
- Reduced water storage, increased demand for water resulting in reduced availability of clean water and imposition of water restrictions;
- Damage to water treatment facilities resulting in reduced availability of clean water;
- Increased demand for community services including aged care facilities and libraries;
- Increased use of power for council facilities and community centres leading to increased emissions and costs;
- Reducing the sewerage system's ability to cope causing contamination;
- Trapping people in floods and fires leading to death and injury;
- Need for evacuation centres for community in fire and flood zones requiring council buildings and assets as evacuation centres and provision of additional services to support evacuees;
- Loss of agricultural crops, livestock, forestry industry leading to ratepayers defaulting on rates and businesses moving away;
- Water and temperature conditions ideal for breeding and dispersion of pests and weeds leading to increases in populations and distribution of pest plants and animals;
- Over burdening the capacity of the stormwater system, watercourses and flood sinks causing flooding.

ADAPTATION ACTIONS

Adapting to climate change is embedded into our everyday operations. We are already taking actions that reduce or avoid impacts on Council assets and operations. Council also has a series of actions in the 2022-2026 Delivery Plan which will continue to address risks identified in our Risk Assessment.

Environment

Current and Ongoing Actions

- Applying legislation to reduce & control the number of trees cleared
- Monitoring high risk pathways for new populations of priority weeds
- Selection of street trees shifting to consider changing conditions
- Design and augmentation of sewerage systems considers climate risks

Actions in the Current Delivery Plan

- Complete a flora and fauna management plan for the riverbank in Yass
- Undertake flora and fauna surveys on Council owned and managed land, and apply for grants to help manage for increased biodiversity
- Complete a Strategic Tree Management Plan for trees on Council managed land and road reserves
- Yass Dam and Yass River Improvement Program
- Street and Amenity Tree maintenance program

Water

Current and Ongoing Actions

- Capability to quickly issue Boil Water Alerts
- Installation of reticulated water pipeline to Murrumbateman
- Encouraging installation of rainwater tanks
- Treatment options utilised at Yass Dam to deal with water quality issues from increased heat and flooding
- Assist EPA in managing any water pollution event
- Monitoring population growth areas
- Submit monthly water quality data from the Yass River to Waterwatch

Actions in the Current Delivery Plan

- Complete the Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan to identify the water and sewerage requirements for the LGA
- Complete the Future Source Water Strategy and advocate for State & Federal funding for the development of alternative water sources for the Yass Valley
- Upgrade of Yass Water Treatment Plant
- Programmed renewal and upgrade of Yass water distribution network
- Repair of Morton Low Level Reservoir to improve water network resilience

ADAPTATION ACTIONS

Infrastructure

Current and Ongoing Actions

- Backup generators installed at some critical infrastructure sites
- Servers relocated to data warehouse in Canberra to reduce risk of damage
- Infrastructure insured appropriately for increased storm risk
- Staff trained in designing for greater storm risk
- Increased capability for contractors to do short notice repair work
- GIS layers are kept up to date to consider changes in climatic risk
- Climate Change considered as a risk factor in all Asset Management Plans
- Ability to respond quickly with road closures

Actions in the Current Delivery Plan

- Install solar power generation as part of the Crago Mill Precinct Development
- Investigate and install solar power generation systems on Council facilities
- Repair, maintenance and renewal of Yass Soldiers Memorial Hall
- Construction of a new Companion Animals Facility more able to deal with weather extremes
- Construction of Crago Mill Precinct
- Implementation of Strategic Plans of Management for Council Managed Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities
- Upgrade of sewer network and planning for duplication of Yass Sewage Treatment Plant
- Apply for grants for upgrades and new infrastructure

ADAPTATION ACTIONS

People and Planning

Current and Ongoing Actions

- Bushfire prone land mapping completed
- Flood studies and associated risk management plans completed
- Use of existing buildings for Evacuation Centres
- Staff are able to work from home if conditions for travel are unsafe
- Debt Management Policy and Financial Hardship Policy
- Reviewing alternative arrangements for use of community venues, eg Joint Use arrangements for the use of School Halls
- Monitoring by staff of local and global climate trends
- Participation in Local Emergency Management Committee
- Business Continuity Plan considers operations in emergency situations

Actions in the Current Delivery Plan

- Plan for a new library space that reflects the growing community needs, eg as a heat refuge on extreme heat days
- Active participation in the CRJO Resilience Blueprint development to assist response to natural disasters
- Complete the Comprehensive Development Control Plan
- Complete a planning proposal to insert the planning controls from the Yass Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan into the Yass Valley LEP 2013
- Complete review of the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy 2036
- Begin review of the Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Completion of Yass Valley Open Space Strategy and implementation of priority projects



WHAT NEXT? FURTHER ACTIONS

COMMUNITY

Council will be pursuing funding to conduct a Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Action Plan for the broader Yass Valley community

PRIORITY PROJECTS

Council will be pursuing funding and partnerships to target priority projects identified in the Risk Assessments

PARTNERSHIPS

Council recognises that community, government, business and industry group partnerships are critical for success

REVIEW

The Climate Change Risk Assessment and Action Plan will be reviewed regularly, including a major review in 2027.