

MEDIA RELEASE

Environmental Solution for Brownhill Creek

For Immediate Release: Wednesday 29th October, 2014

The degraded urban creek must be upgraded as part of a Brown Hill Keswick Creek Stormwater Management Plan. The essential upgrading and rehabilitation of upper Brownhill Creek is an environmental solution for flood mitigation.

Brownhill Creek Association Inc. spokesperson, Professor Meyer says: "Comprehensive studies have established that the existing urban channel has inadequate capacity to handle urban flash flooding and this poses a significant risk to property owners and their neighbours."

"Creek rehabilitation works and limited channel widening are needed and planned across **all** options, involving the removal of invasive vegetation, rubbish and obstructions to flow."

"Our large community environmental group is keen to see the creek rehabilitated and cared for to enhance its environmental value."

"We do **not** support unnecessary, expensive and destructive concrete channels or concrete dams. We are pleased to support the project plan that **improves and restores** the natural environment of urban and rural Brownhill Creek."

According to the Project Report and Project Spokesperson:

- **NO** concrete channel will be constructed through creek owners' backyards or public parks.
- **NO** plans exist to bulldoze Brownhill Creek.
- **NO** easements will be forced on creek owners.
- **NO** land will be lost by creek owners.

Professor Meyer points out that, "the project aims to **improve** native biodiversity and habitat along the creek (in backyards and public parks) by replanting with suitable native vegetation, under the guidance of the NRM Board."

“Expert research has concluded that if the mandatory creek upgrade is carried out to a higher standard under Option D”, says Professor Meyer, “then **no dam is required.**”

Option D only involves the additional removal and replanting of 50 non-significant trees that are blocking flows in the creek, and the additional widening of the creek on 44 properties, by up to only 1 metre in most cases.

This option is now **preferred** by the Project for the following reasons:

- It provides the required level of flood protection (1in100 year).
- It provides the best protection for shorter duration storms, increasingly important due to expected increases in urban density and redevelopment.
- It has the lowest capital cost and lowest ongoing maintenance costs, enabling Part B works to meet budgeted cost estimates.
- It preserves existing sites of heritage significance.
- It does not require bypass culverts in urban streets.
- It satisfies the endorsed position of **all 5** catchment councils to give preference to a feasible ‘no dam’ solution.

According to Professor Meyer, “Creek owners have a legal responsibility under the NRM Act of 2004 to maintain their section of creek in ‘good condition’. The project aims to help creek owners fulfill their legal responsibility by restoring Brownhill Creek to ‘good condition’, in an environmentally sensitive manner.”

“This project option provides a very rare win, win, win outcome”, says Professor Meyer; “a **win** for flood mitigation, a **win** for the environment and a cost effective **win** for ratepayers.”

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Creek rehabilitation works

All eight options include rehabilitating the creek towards achieving 'good condition' in order to assist flow capacity along the full length of upper Brown Hill Creek. This includes removing invasive vegetation (native and non-native) and other obstructions that might impede large water flows.

Although creek owners are responsible (under the Natural Resources Management Act) for maintaining the creek in 'good condition', it is proposed that, in liaison with all creek property owners, the BHKC Stormwater Project

undertakes initial works at the cost of the project to rehabilitate the creek including:

- Selectively removing and cutting back trees and vegetation in the creek bed and side banks that are obstructing flow and therefore increasing the potential for flooding
- Re-planting on top of the banks with suitable native vegetation to ensure the creek is returned as far as possible to an improved and sustainable environment.

The Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board (AMLRNRMB) is preparing a guide to assist property owners understand and carry out their responsibilities to keep the creek in good condition.

An earlier brochure 'Urban Creeks – A property owner's guide to managing healthy urban creeks' produced by the AMLRNRMB in conjunction with the City of Burnside is available on the project website www.bhkcstormwater.com.au

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CREEK CAPACITY UPGRADE TREATMENTS

