



Litter Prevention Project **Sustainable Snowies**

2021

This project is a NSW Environment Protection Authority, Waste Less Recycle
More Initiative funded from the Waste Levy

Who We Are

Sustainable Snowies is a group of local stakeholders from business, government and community in the NSW Snowy Mountain region that formed in 2019. The participating partners have worked together for many years on initiatives such as Straw-free Snowies, Boomerang Bags, Clean Up Australia Day, Lakeside Scavenge and the Snowside Clean Up. The group's mission statement is to ...



"foster improved sustainability within the Snowy Mountains by building partnerships between local businesses, government and community and developing environmental projects that benefit the region socially and economically".



What We Are Doing

Sustainable Snowies is developing a strategy going forward to collaboratively tackle litter in our beautiful Snowies. The Sustainable Snowies litter prevention mission statement is to ...

reduce the amount of litter within the Snowy Mountains by utilising the learnings from research-based projects, harnessing the ability for key stakeholders to collaborate and ultimately to preserve the area's unique natural assets which will in turn improve the local and tourist experience.



The Litter Issue

The project aimed to uncover the litter issues facing the region and quantify the prevalence of litter. Below is a snapshot of just some of the recorded litter clean up events that have been held in the region over the last three years (there are also plenty of individual and small groups that do lots of ad hoc clean ups).

Historical Data:		
Event	Litter Collected	Participants
Lakeside Scavenge 2019	570kg	101
Lakeside Scavenge 2021	95kg	78
Clean Up Australia Day 2021	200kg	20
Clean Up Thredbo Business Day 2021	22 Clean-Up Bags	38
ENJO Clean up Jindabyne VOLUNTEER group	4928kg	
Perisher Valley Spring Clean Up Day	500-1000kg	50

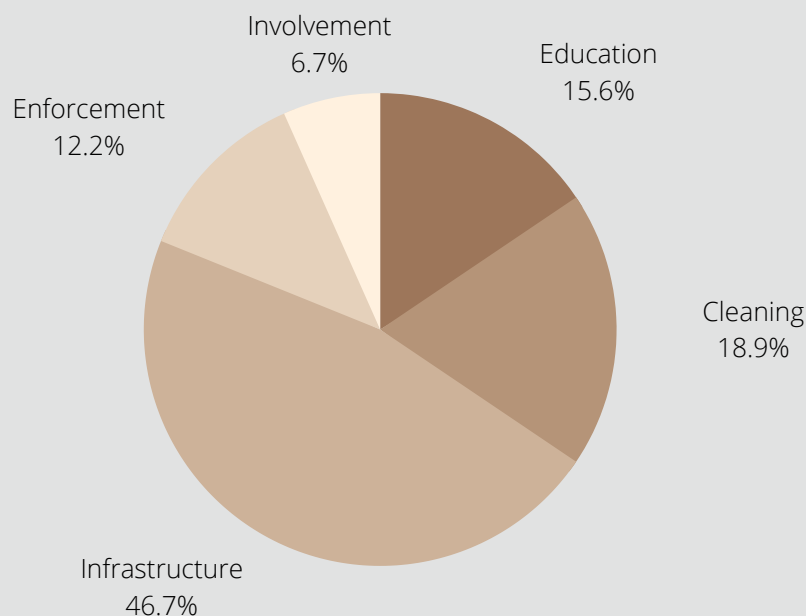
The amount of litter collected at these events represents the magnitude of the issue across the Snowy Mountains region. Not only does the data highlight the significant quantities of litter found but also the prevalence of litter found across the region. This shows the community wants to do something about litter, and is willing to support the cause. Going forward these events are an important step in keeping the community engaged in litter reduction.



Community and Stakeholder Consultation

The community wants a comprehensive approach to litter reduction. This can be seen in the survey question “What can be done to reduce litter in the Snowy Mountains?”. Each core prevention strategy (infrastructure, enforcement, involvement, cleaning, and education) for reducing litter has been highlighted by the respondents. Although, a main theme in the responses revolves around installation of bins in more locations throughout the region.

Categorisation of the question "Do you have any suggestions on what could be done to reduce litter in these areas?"



Stakeholders know the litter issues in the region, and have highlighted them: **illegal dumping, lack of bins or signage and identifying problem litter items such as cigarette butts and single use packaging.** Community support and understanding of problem litter items and locations have been a key insight into identifying litter hot spots. By talking to the community and relevant stakeholders this project emphasises how the communities’ input is at the centre of this strategy.

An example of the community's involvement and eagerness to contribute to litter prevention efforts is the grass roots community group ENJO clean-up volunteer group, run by a local community member. The group, which began in 2020, focuses on organised group and individual clean-ups throughout the town and arterial roads of Jindabyne. SMRC have provided support for this group through grant funding to dispose of waste collected from these events.

What Visitors Think About Litter In The Snowies

For each survey collected that stated the respondent was “not local”, *all agreed that litter is an important issue to the community.*

They also selected places that are key tourist locations such as *Nuggets Crossing, Thredbo, and the Lakeside Foreshore Parks as litter hotspots* listed in the survey responses.¹

Whilst the overall maintenance of these areas is generally considered a high standard, the impact of litter diminishes a person’s perception of a place that has not been cared for.² An example of what a visitor could be noticing when they visit the Snowy Mountains can be seen in the images below of Banjo Paterson Park showing a well maintained space (Figure 1.), but in the second photo (Figure 2.), on closer inspection there are several items of litter found. Litter in these high tourist visitation areas could negatively impact the location's sense of ownership and community pride.³



Figure 1.

... generally considered a high standard



Figure 2.

... upon closer inspection there are several pieces of litter found

1. Appendix 5: Community Consultation - survey responses

2. [Things you should know about litter and litterers \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/your-local-government/your-local-government).

3. [Impacts of plastic debris on Australian marine wildlife \(environment.gov.au\)](https://www.environment.gov.au/your-government/your-local-government/your-local-government).

The Impact Of Litter On The Snowy Mountains Ecosystem



The Snowy Mountains Ecosystem is a unique and sensitive environment with a large network of waterways including the iconic Snowy River. The Snowy River catchment is listed as an endangered ecological community, meaning the fauna and flora are under threat, one of these threats being pollution of their habitat. Plastic debris (with the main source derived from littering) is proven to have a harmful impact on animals, particularly marine animals, through the injuries that they can suffer from entanglement and ingestion.⁴

The presence of litter and plastic in the Snowy Mountains may impact a visitor's perception of the pristine ecosystem, due to the growing knowledge of microplastics (plastic litter <5mm) impacts on waterway ecosystems and potential harm it may cause from the consumption of animals containing plastics.⁵



Figure 3 Examples of microplastics found on Lake Jindabyne



Figure 4 The iconic Snowy River

⁴ Marine microplastics – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au).

⁵ Litter Prevention Strategy appendix 5: community consultation - survey response

Where To Tackle Litter



As stated in the strategy the locations listed below have been selected as a result of research and assessments conducted through this project. This was done by analysing historical data, litter audits, community consultation responses and site stakeholder engagement. These factors were all reviewed against best practice litter management and understanding littering behaviour theories as outlined through various EPA resources.

Hot spot locations

Summer

- Banjo Paterson Park & Lake Foreshore
- Jindabyne Claypits

Winter

- Perisher Resort car park
- Thredbo Resort car park

Year round

- Jindabyne Town Centre car park
- Nuggets Crossing Shopping Centre car park

Banjo Paterson Park
& Lake Foreshore



Claypits
Recreation Area



Perisher car park



Thredbo car park



Town Centre
car park



Nuggets Crossing
Shopping Centre car park

Below are some recommendations of how to tackle litter in these locations. They should be considered for short-term achievable projects to improve these hot spot locations:

- Visible litter prevention signage in the Town Centre. These signs will be installed to draw attention to bins when standing in the car park
- Bin upgrades in the Claypits. Providing more visible bins, in more locations at the Claypits
- Expand and improve current dog waste stations around the lake foreshore
- Trial cigarette butt bin infrastructure and signage upgrades in all locations



Through the EPA grant Sustainable Snowies has gained the funds to implement new infrastructure in the region. Above are some of the trials that will be undertaken.

How To Tackle Litter

These are recommended projects that have been designed through the strategy recommendations. They provide concepts of key stakeholders to implement going forward. The descriptions below broadly outline just some of the projects listed in the litter prevention action plan.

Project 1. Roving Litter Educator

Engage a litter educator to visit key foreshore locations during summer peak periods to remind people not to litter, to provide rubbish bags if they need them, advise visitors where the nearest bins are located, and to lead by example by collecting rubbish. This program could be replicated in the ski resorts potentially involving ski school groups, and snow players within the National Park.

SMRC
Perisher
Thredbo
NPWS

Project 2. Bin Placement Review - Foreshore Park

The community feedback highest ranking request was for more public place bins throughout the Foreshore Park. Before installing bins an assessment needs to be made on:

- the type of bin,
- the configuration of bins available
- the impacts on litter
- signage and it's location

Additionally, adding temporary wheelie bins during peak periods during summer near key littered locations like the Claypits carpark, and near the outdoor stage to assist in the influx of visitors to these areas.

SMRC





Project 3. Specific Litter - Specific Locations

Retail Tags

A retail-based campaign at Point Of Sale (POS) and for employees at major retail outlets within the region. Conveying the message to staff that by removing retail tags at the store you are reducing one of the highest littered items within the ski resorts.

Perisher,
Thredbo

Wrappers

This campaign would identify wrappers as the most common littered item noted in clean-up results. The message will state that when outdoors in the Snowy Mountains the expectation is to hold onto your wrappers and do not drop them, or do not let them get caught in the wind.

All Key
Stake
Holders

Packaging

Similarly to the wrapper campaign messaging of holding onto your packaging when outside in the Snowy Mountains and praising people for doing the right thing, it will additionally convey this message within businesses that create this litter item in the Snowy Mountains.

All Key
Stake
Holders

Cigarette Butts

Adopting the EPA's "bin your butt" campaign signage available to use. Also assessing and upgrading cigarette butt bins to make them more obvious to users.

All Key
Stake
Holders



Project 4. NPWS Designated Rubbish Drop Off Point

It has been noted that a potential cause of dumping of rubbish into the Claypit bins is due to campers within the National Park not being able to dispose of their waste. A proposed trial to install designated rubbish drop off points in key locations within the park, along with signage installed at campgrounds hopes to address this issue.

NPWS

Project 5. Litter Measurement - Perisher & Thredbo

To understand and monitor the impact of litter in the ski resorts, accurate methods of litter measurement need to be established. This should be achieved by measuring the weight of litter collected during the yearly spring clean-up, and by conducting audits from bags of litter collected throughout the resorts to understand litter content. These audits should categorise items based on the local litter check.

Perisher
Thredbo
NPWS

Project 6. Ski Resort Car Parks - Outdoor Areas

As some of the most littered locations in the region are Perisher and Thredbo car parks, stakeholders for these areas should consider multiple approaches to reducing litter. Infrastructure & signage upgrades are needed in key litter hotspots such as car parks. Improvement is needed in the placement of outdoor seating area waste and recycling bins. Targeted messaging for guests before they arrive addressing litter prevention in the resorts. The resorts would benefit from an expansion and development of litter prevention messaging and signage.

Perisher
Thredbo
NPWS

Next Steps

To date, no comprehensive strategy towards litter prevention has been developed for the Snowy Mountains. Efforts from government bodies like EPA, CRJO and SMRC as well as not for profit and community group initiatives have been pursued within the region but have lacked an ongoing strategic vision. Whilst each project has value, ultimately, we can achieve more meaningful outcomes together. The project has made this clear and aims to ensure this going forward.

Collaboration

Ensure correct steps are followed to enable collaboration between stakeholders involved in litter prevention projects. One example of this is presenting and discussing potential project plans before conducting a litter prevention project within an organisation to facilitate involvement and collaboration within Sustainable Snowies.

Recording Data

Improve current data collection methods for clean ups and audits, following a consistent methodology. Litter data from clean ups will be stored and accessed digitally.

Community Engagement

How the community will be involved in litter prevention and how they will be notified and educated about litter prevention. The main method will be through the communication of clean up events and supporting litter prevention education and awareness events.



Get Involved

The community involvement in litter prevention is one of the most important strategies.



YOU CAN GET INVOLVED BY:

- Attending 'Clean Up Days'.
- Follow [Sustainable Snowies on Facebook](#) to be kept up to date with the next 'Clean Up' event in the area.
- Get involved and have a fun day helping out your community.
- Always put your rubbish in the bin when you're in the Snowy Mountains
- Whether you're out in the wilderness, walking by the lake, or having a coffee in town, remember your litter will likely end up in Lake Jindabyne or the National Park, so let's keep it clean.
- If you see someone littering, report it to the EPA by using the report to EPA website. The updated website is simple and quick to use.



[Report to EPA \(nsw.gov.au\).](https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/reporting-and-incidents/reporttoepa)
<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/reporting-and-incidents/reporttoepa>



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Design layout completed by Tall Red Poppy Marketing and Lemonade Marketing
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