

**Keep Australia Beautiful
Australian Clean Beaches Awards 2009**

Casuarina Beach NT
Highly Commended: Energy Conservation category award

Introduction

Casuarina Beach is located a short drive out of Darwin's central business district and is one of Darwin's coastal playgrounds.

Nestled amongst wonderful grassed areas with numerous BBQ facilities is Darwin Surf Life Saving Club, the main infrastructure and focal point near the beach. This is the first time a Northern Territory beach has been entered in the Clean Beach Awards.

Community Partnerships

- Recognises achievement in community beautification, presentation and pride.
- Recognises communities which proudly preserve and value cultural history.
- Recognises partnership achievements by government and/or business with local communities.

Casuarina Beach is a well maintained coastal asset for the city of Darwin, with many activities being undertaken on the coast. These include not only the full range of surf life saving activities, but also kite-surfing, outrigger canoe paddling, blo-karting and of course swimming during the season.

Darwin City Council have done an excellent job creating and maintaining a wonderful coastal reserve and the area is very welcoming to visitors.

Environmental Innovation

- Recognises achievement through innovation by community, government and business under the principles and practical actions associated with environment protection and sustainability.

Darwin Surf Club, ably supported by Surf Life Saving Northern Territory, supports and utilises the EcoSurf project. As part of this initiative and as part of its role within the Darwin community, Darwin Surf Club runs education programs through its Nippers program introducing them to not only water safety and first aid skills, but also to environmental messages as well.

Resource Recovery

- Recognises achievement in community litter management and reduction including the undertaking of litter audits, and litter education programs.
- Recognises achievement in resource recovery and waste management including initiatives which conserve resources, water or energy minimisation practices; the recovery and reuse of materials including packaging, and the appropriate disposal of non-recyclable materials.

Darwin City Council, and through its support for the Surf Club, has an active environmental management strategy which is evidenced by its Sustainability Framework. Council has a community focussed Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and an Environmental Management System (EMS). These initiatives focus on maintaining a balanced approach to coastal visitation and conservation of priority areas. This was evidenced by the area being litter free and with excellent signage and appropriate litter bins strategically located around the coastal reserve.

Protection of the Environment

-Recognises achievement in the protection of the natural environment and, specifically, the preservation of native flora and fauna.

Council has identified in its Casuarina Reserve report that the Casuarina Coastal Reserve has the following features...

- Part of the Darwin foreshore listed on the register of the National Estate.
- Cretaceous siltstone reefs within in the tidal zone contain ichthyosaur fossils and well preserved fragments of fossilised wood.
- Melaleuca forests, mangroves, riparian, monsoon vine thickets
- Sand dunes, foreshore and intertidal fauna and flora habitats
- Marine habitats (Seagrass Meadows)
- Habitats for birds inc. Migratory species ...”

And, as such, has developed a strategy to protect and enhance this area.

The Surf Club delivers Ecosurf lessons to members, especially Nippers, and these lessons include specific talks from experts such as Rangers from NT Parks & Wildlife.

In addition, the Club is replacing its heavier 4 wheel drive beach vehicles with lighter, fuel efficient All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) in order to reduce carbon emissions. Also, these vehicles are driven below the high tide mark to minimise impact on the beach berm and facing slope.

Water Conservation

-Recognises sustainable water management within communities which has combined innovative water conservation and water re-use initiatives at the private, industrial and municipal levels, benefiting society and nature.

Darwin Surf Club has adopted the EcoSurf Environmental policy and works hard to reduce and manage water use during Club activities.

Energy Conservation

-Recognise sustainable energy management within communities which has combined innovative energy conservation initiatives at the private, industrial and municipal levels, benefiting society and nature.

Energy management systems were evident and the Club has adopted the EcoSurf Environmental policy and works hard to reduce and manage energy use during Club activities.

Young Legends

-Recognises environmental achievement through youth initiative and/or by a community, which encourages and promotes youth initiative and environmental education.

The Darwin SLSC was the one of the first small group of surf life saving clubs to adopt the SLSA Ecosurf policy and apply it to the club's activities. This has predominantly been done by encouraging youth involved in the Club to volunteer to work on the foredune to stabilize the area, which includes maintenance on the access ramp to reduce and control erosion, keeping the area litter free, and encouraging local residents not to light fires on the beach.

Special Thanks

Tony Snelling from SLSNT

Norm Farmer from SLSA

Heimo Schober and the Team from KABC(NT)

Carolynne James, Executive Officer - Statehood Steering Committee

What is ECOSURF?

Ecosurf is about affirmative, local action in the face of the consequences of climate change, with the objective of promoting protection of coastal biodiversity and our beaches.

It is a program which encourages surf lifesavers to work together with corporate and government partners and other community groups to positively impact on the environment. Through this program, our members will make a greater contribution to Australia's safety, sustainability and well-being.

Our playground – the Australian coastline – means Surf Life Saving will be among the first to confront the forecast effects of climate change including rising sea levels. We need to be among the first to act.

The Ecosurf program perfectly aligns with SLSA's mandate to provide protection and education about and on Australian beaches.

Our members work in sensitive eco-systems and it is expected, and in the future will be demanded, that Ecosurf be a part of everything we do.

ECOSURF operations

Surf Life Saving Australia has 306 clubs and 140,000 members volunteering time to saving lives.

Our members are uniquely placed to lead by example in their own communities by implementing practices that will lighten the ecological footprint of individual clubs.

At the same time we can work to increase awareness of the actions people in the broader community can take that will make a positive difference to the environment.

ECOSURF education

SLSA has the potential to motivate communities and facilitate change through our clubs, members and the people we influence (beachgoers and supporters).

By example, we will demonstrate practical and highly visible ways in which we can all have a positive impact on the environment. We will position ourselves as leaders for good environmental practice.

Programs are currently being driven at a 'grass roots' level through a variety of club initiatives including renewable energy, recycling, water consumption programs, education, green clubhouses and marine and coastal care.

SLSA, with the support of our partners, will expand local initiatives nationally.

Ecosurf offers simple approaches to complex environmental issues by showcasing achievements and building community morale.

http://maps.google.com.au/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=casuarina+beach+nt&ll=-33.790588,151.287596&sspn=0.003968,0.004849&ie=UTF8&ll=-12.360701,130.867971&spn=0.004664,0.004849&t=k&z=17