



**Andrew Stoner MP**  
Deputy Premier of NSW  
Minister for Regional Infrastructure  
and Services

**Duncan Gay MLC**  
Minister for Roads and Ports

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NSW GOVERNMENT'S \$2.5 MILLION FOR SWANSEA CHANNEL DREDGING**

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services Andrew Stoner and Minister for Roads and Ports Duncan Gay today announced the NSW Government would provide \$2.5 million for the long-term navigational dredging of Swansea Channel.

"The NSW Liberal and Nationals Government is delivering on its promises and rebuilding regional infrastructure neglected by the former NSW Labor Government," Mr Stoner said.

"In December last year I announced NSW Government funding of \$360,000 for early summer dredging works of the Swansea Channel. I made a commitment then that the Government would consider a larger scale dredging campaign for the channel in 2014.

"Today's announcement delivers on that commitment, with this large "once-off" dredging campaign set to establish a stable navigation channel.

"This project is an important investment by the Government due to the channel's regional significance as the entrance to Lake Macquarie, which is currently used by 18,000 boats. Over 25,000 boats are expected to use the lake by 2020, resulting in a potential increased value to the local economy of up to \$3.7 million a year.

"The dredging campaign was a key recommendation of the Swansea Channel's long-term navigational dredging strategy, which was developed with significant community input.

"The full report, *Towards a Sustainable Framework for Navigation in Swansea Channel*, is available on the Crown Lands website at [www.crownland.nsw.gov.au](http://www.crownland.nsw.gov.au)."

The report favours a channel form of 60 metres minimum width and of 3.5 metres depth which would cater for most of the Lake Macquarie users.

The report also favours potential beneficial use of the dredged sand, including beach nourishment at Blacksmith Beach. A program of smaller periodic maintenance dredging – with responsibility shared by NSW and local government and key stakeholders – could be required to maintain a stable channel into the future.

Mr Gay said the large scale dredging campaign of Swansea Channel formed a part of the Government's commitment to maintaining safe boating access along the NSW coast.

“The dredging campaign has been made possible through a funding arrangement between NSW Trade & Investment Crown Lands and Transport for NSW,” Mr Gay said.

“Planning for the works, including environmental assessments and approvals, will commence immediately, with dredging works proposed to commence later this year.

“As the marine gateway to Lake Macquarie – an important community asset and an outstanding recreational waterway used by local and regional boating enthusiasts – it is important we get the Swansea Channel dredging right.

“Any lack of certainty regarding the channel’s navigability affects the reputation of Lake Macquarie as a boating destination and this dredging will create more reliable navigable depths.”

Member for Swansea Garry Edwards said the summer dredging campaign, which was progressing well, had been reducing current navigational risks and improving access for most vessels entering the channel.

“This work will remove up to 20,000 cubic metres of sand from the channel between the southern entrance to Swan Bay and the dropover,” Mr Edwards said.

“The NSW Government has worked long and hard with local stakeholders such as the Boat Owners Association of NSW to make this happen and I congratulate all involved.

“This additional funding of \$2.5 million will not only improve navigation but will also provide a boost to the local recreation and tourism economy and the potential generation of new jobs.”