MEDIA RELEASE
Offenders clear more than 900 tonnes of illegal waste from Shoalhaven

Wednesday 6 December 2017

A group of specially selected low risk South Coast Correctional Centre inmates are removing tonnes of illegal waste from dumping hotspots around the Shoalhaven in a bid to clean up the regions’ bushland.

Car tyres, mattresses, whitegoods and building materials are among the trailer-loads of rubbish being removed from fire trails and national park lands by the South Coast’s community projects team.

South Coast Correctional Centre Governor Mick Reid said the rubbish removal program gave offenders the opportunity to develop a social conscience while helping the community.

“Our community projects team is removing tonne after tonne of illegal waste from some of the most beautiful bush areas in the Shoalhaven and the offenders are genuinely dumbfounded by the disregard shown for the environment,” Mr Reid said.

“There could be up to 20 or 30 tonne of illegal waste at some of these hotspots, so the group’s hard work is making a dramatic improvement to these sites.

“By removing such a large quantity of waste, these men are not only contributing positively to the community, they’re developing a social conscience, which is an important part of rehabilitation and ensuring they don’t return to custody.”

Since August, the group has spent 330 hours removing rubbish from sites around the Shoalhaven, including one location near Kangaroo Valley that contained 27 old tyres.

The work forms part of the Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) program – a coordinated effort to eradicate illegal dumping involving the NSW Environment Protection Authority, Southern Councils Group and Shoalhaven rangers.

The partnership, which is in its third year, has already rid the region of more than 900 tonnes of building, domestic, green and hazardous waste – the equivalent of 30 humpback whales.

The project was one of many undertaken by the centre’s inmates recently, including the restoration of a picket fence at a Sanctuary Point oval and maintenance work for RSPCA Nowra.

The group has also been working to rejuvenate Nowra TAFE gardens by clearing away and mulching scrub, contributing to the total 1656 hours’ work returned to the community since August.