Dilapidated Creek: How our beloved waterway became a ruin

Five years ago, Silverwater Creek was pulsating with life – children’s laughter filled the town with delight, as families gathered picnics beneath the rays of beacon light. Today, the down is barren without the creek, as noxious gases cover the blanketed sky. Warning signs replaced picnic areas and the only visitors were the environmental scientists measuring samples with grim expressions. It transformed from a lake that was teeming with life to a dystopian demolition, leaving the community shattered. It grew a throbbing laceration within their hearts, how their local hub of recreation was a dump of garbage overflowing the banks of the river. Where life once was teeming with enthralling beauty, now turned into a place where toxicity thrives rapidly spreading – to the extinction of the creek, left desecrated.

The industrial contaminants flowing into the Creek decimates what was a living ecosystem, with a wealth of biodiversity. Environmental surveys around the area conducted in 2017 and 2018 documented that 37 fish species, 21 types of aquatic seaweed and a thriving population of amphibians lived in the Creek. Last month’s recent survey conducted that 89% of all aquatic life that was supported by the Creek has completely dissipated and those that continue to survive are stuck in a wormhole of struggles. The once heard echoes of the kookaburras and the chorus of frogs have fallen drastically unable to develop their eggs within the polystyrene drowning them to their death.

Marine toxicologist Jamie Wang commented her professional concerns with despair, “How can a thriving community collapse into this plastic mess trap, that emanates the scent of danger lingering nearby. Metals, Plastic and algae continue to thrive within the area – one of the most severe cases of freshwater pollution I’ve documented in my 25-year career.”

This catastrophic collapse within the environment is facade for the plastic future struggles that are looming nearer. Damaging the thresholds of an entire ecological community – marking the disarray that they have faced. It’s a reality that displaces communities from their bonded connection to nature. The ecological devastation raving through the aquatic crops of life serves a stark warning to start acting now rather than facing the reality.

Proponents of this lake’s severe condition has struck disaster with diseases, threatening locals around the area. Thousands of families are struggling to cope up with the contamination burdened on their crippling children. Facing the debt of a lack of medical support and reliability. Local mother Wong Mei describes after watching her six-year-old son sobbing with pain, as the rashes erupting like volcanic explosions enduring the pain echoing through her heart due to a brief excursion.

“He scratches until he bleeds, erupting with pain to sleep,” she recounts, her voice breaking. “No parent should have to witness their child suffering when it could be prevented by safety measures.”

These quotes describe the mental toll these serious illnesses have taken on the parents. Their children are barricaded from the walls of reality and their playground of cheers and jubilant smiles. Excruciating pain throughout their lifeless bodies, feverishly mumbling to sleep. Diseases that are spreading around the community is a severe cause of the pain that many families have to face before the reality arrives for everyone.

As the sunset cosplays its beauty across the Silverwater Creek, no longer remembered for its pristine environment but the damaging effects that plays a role within the body of their community. The chemical cocktail that seeps through the groundwater, inevitably injecting bodies with poison. The children of Silverwater Heights grow up learning that their second home was stolen from them – the cool embrace of the rippling water, now flushed with the toxic burden and a collective failure to react and preserve. We stand at a critical highway with two paths that can no longer be postponed. Either we face the cost of inaction within our ecosystems, declining health and the community heartbreak. Or we choose to push forward through the obstacles, replacing negligence with accountability and regulatory conditions should replace the willful blindness and the determination must replace resignation. Silverwater Creek can be reborn, and every solution can replace this atrocity. So Silverwater Creek here we come!