

**Blue Mountains Bushcare Network
Minutes
Lawson Mid-Mountains Community Centre
6pm 23 May 2007**

1. Welcome

Present: Ivan Jeray (Chair), Matt Chambers (BMCC), Warwick Atkinson, Sue Atkinson, Barbara Harley, Karen Hising (BMCC), Lyndal Sullivan, Neil Stuart, Chris Dewhurst (BMCC – Minutes)

2. **Apologies** – Jennifer Wigan, Ruth Ley, Lachlan Garland

3. Acceptance of Previous Minutes

Moved: WA **Seconded:** LS

It was noted that in response to the question asked about Item 6 of the minutes of 28/2 meeting, Eric Mahony's report had been included in the minutes under the authority given to Chris Dewhurst by a resolution of a previous Bushcare Network meeting.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- *Was Eric's report presented to the last meeting?- Neil Stuart*
- *Item 6 in the minutes of the last meeting: further information about the HNCMA grants for Katoomba Falls Reserve and McRae's Paddock.*

The meeting raised an issue about relevant Bushcare groups finding out about funded projects through the listing of such projects in Eric Mahoney's report, rather than through having been directly consulted prior to the funding applications being lodged.

BMCC response was that generally only the direct Bushcare Group (or other Community Group) which is the joint partner to the project will be consulted. This consultation will take place via the Bushcare Officer. Notification to other Bushcare Groups will take place through the Bushcare Network Minutes or the Gecko Newsletter.

Meeting Resolution: The meeting re-affirms that Bushcare Groups need to be involved in the conception phase of grant projects & be fully consulted throughout.

BMCC response was that whenever possible this will be the case. Funding Authorities often restrict this by imposing very short time frames on applications,

often involving a submission before the next workday. In these cases only the Community Coordinator will be consulted.

- *Invitation of CMA Board Member Jenny Smith – Lyndal Sullivan*

Jenny Smith from HNCMA has responded to Lyndal's invitation and said she would like to attend a Bushcare Network meeting. The invitation will be extended for the next meeting on Wed 28 August 2007.

The meeting suggested a range of issues they would like to discuss with Jenny:

1. Funding is limited to primarily limited to primary Bush Regeneration / Revegetation work only.
2. Extremely limited funding available for follow-up Bush Regeneration work.
3. No acknowledgement of previous work (only work taking place in the funded financial year can be used as in-kind)
4. Funding agreements by-passing Landcare "Groups" but directed to Individual Landowners
5. Importance of continuing projects within the Blue Mountains such as "Threatened Species Officer" working at BMCC

- *Council to Community Consultation Protocols – Barbara Harley*

The Network tabled a letter stating they received correspondence from Eric Mahony (BMCC Bushland Management Officer). A copy is included below:

Dear Barbara and Mike,

Thank you for your letter relating to the Bushcare Network's request for the development of consultation protocols between Council and the Bushcare volunteer community.

The letter highlights a number of areas of Blue Mountains City Council operations that the Bushcare Network would like to see protocols for consultation between Council and the community further developed.

As you may be aware the areas of operation identified in your correspondence are located across a number of different Branches and Groups within Council. In order to provide for a coordinated response to your letter a request for comment from each of the effected areas will be sought.

Council will then provide the Bushcare Network with a detailed response to the points outlined in your letter.

Should yourself or other members of the Bushcare Network require further information on this matter or would like to discuss further please contact me at emahony@bmcc.nsw.gov.au or directly on my phone 47 805 539.

Regards

*Eric Mahony
Bushland Management Officer
Blue Mountains City Council*

Meeting Resolution: The Network notes Eric Mahoney's written response at this point, the alleged complexity of the issue, and agrees for the issue to be revisited at future Bushcare Network meetings.

5. **Update and Question Time with BMCC Environmental Scientist – Matt Chambers**

Matt Chambers has worked for 2.5 years at BMCC. His work is mainly in policy development – bushfire, fauna management, ground water. Also works with other State agencies, especially on Bushfire. Job focuses on: lifting Council's environmental performance and providing technical information to other sections of Council.

6. **Strategy for Bushcare Groups during absence of Bushcare Officer – Ruth Ley**

Types of absence include: unplanned (sick) or planned (annual leave, resignation and recruitment periods)

BMCC Response was to make it clear at time of departure of previous Bushcare Officer that any work day without a Bushcare Officer could still take place under the supervision of the Community Coordinator, if that was acceptable to all people involved. The Group would still be insured. The Group could elect to cancel the workday if they wish. During the time of no officer the Bushcare Team Leader will communicate with the group by making follow up phone calls and providing assistance when practical.

Meeting resolution: BMCC will also consider the potential to employ staff on a Casual basis during the leave of absence time period and in the periods between termination and recruitment.

7. **RTA Plantings – Mike Purtell / Barbara Harley**

The Blue Mountains Bushcare Network makes a submission to the RTA on its draft Landscape Plan for section 2 on the basis that:

- i. Only plant species found within 5 kms of the location be considered 'native', not plants from other parts of Australia or NSW*
- ii. All local native plants should be propagated from locally collected seed to maintain genetic integrity*
- iii. No hybrid 'natives' should be planted because of the genetic pollution implications*
- iv. Exotic plants should only be planted if they are not known to be weeds in the local government area, and not listed in LEP Weeds List, and if the Botanic Gardens recognises that the species has no potential to become a weed in the Blue Mountains in future.*

Changes made to original item included above.
Moved : BH Seconded: WA

8. Weeds of Blue Mountains Bushland Booklet re-printing Update – Barbara Harley / Chris Dewhurst

The Booklet was tabled in the “Final Draft” form.

Clive Barker has been engaged to check the weed potential of “Alternative Plantings” recommendations.

It is expected to go to print in the next 4 weeks.

It was suggested that a display be developed of “Alternative Plantings” mentioned in the Booklet.

9. Bushcare Network Meeting Agenda Protocol – Ivan Jeray

Meeting Resolution: Meeting Notification (reminder) should go out via Email 2 weeks before the meeting. Agenda Items should be called for and be submitted one week before the meeting. Agenda will then be emailed back to the Network in the week before the Meeting. Late Agenda items may still be accepted if the meeting agrees.

10. Website Omission – Neil Stuart

The Bushcare Website (www.weedsbluemountains.org.au) is to be amended to reflect the long history of Friends of Katoomba Falls Valley Bushcare Group and their involvement in the early stages of the program’s development.

BMCC response was this was an unfortunate oversight and the website will be updated accordingly.

11. National Parks Pest Management Strategy – Lyndal Sullivan

This document is currently out for public comment and can be obtained here:

http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/Content/blue_mountains_pest_strategy

Meeting Resolution: Bushcare Network supports the proposal for paid volunteer coordinators in each Park section / area and that these staff are properly qualified in Bush Regeneration and community capacity building. The staff member should have a core focus toward volunteer coordination and not be required to do other Ranger duties.

Meeting Close: 8.32pm

Post Meeting Reports

Chris Dewhurst – Bushcare Team Leader Report

Stats for the past quarter (March to May 2007):

- Total Active Groups = 57
- Total Volunteer hours (Bushcare & Landcare) = 2,310
- Average Number Volunteers per month = 250
- Total Area worked = 24,857 M²

Biodiversity Workshops have been held in the following locations:

- Popes Glen, Blackheath 19 People
- Jamison Creek (Bird Watching Morning) 5 People
- Sun Valley 20 People
- Horseshoe Falls, Hazelbrook (Bird Watching) 5 People
- South Lawson – postponed due to rain (re-scheduled June 30)

The Swamp Sedge Workshop with Van Klaphake was held with 22 People Attending

A new Bushcare Group has commenced in Coates Park, Hazelbrook. Regular workdays will be first Saturday afternoon from 1.30pm. Community Contact: Matt Rudge

The Autumn Edition of the Gecko (Bushcare Newsletter) was released and is available on-line. http://weedsbluemountains.org.au/gecko_autumn_07.pdf

A Bushcare Stall was held at Bullaburra Open Day

Any comments on this report please feel free to get in touch. (Chris Dewhurst - Bushcare Team Leader cdewhurst@bmcc.nsw.gov.au or 4780 5528)

Eric Mahony – Bushland Management Officer Report

COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE BUSH REGENERATION AND WEED CONTROL CONTRACTS 2006/07

Projects to commence shortly or recently started

Degraded lands program – revegetation and conservation earthworks

The reserves to receive works are;

- Bluff Lookout, Glenbrook (complete minor maintenance issues)
- Lapstone Reserve, Lapstone (final round to be completed in 07/08 as well as access issues resolved)

- Skarret Park, Lapstone (final round to be completed in 07/08 as well as access issues resolved)
- Knapsack Park, Glenbrook (further staged works to be completed in 07/08 - medium term project)
- South Lawson Park, Lawson (final round to be completed in 07/08 as well as minor access issues resolved)
- Old Ford Reserve, Megalong Valley (final round to be completed in 07/08 as well as access issues resolved)
- Megalong Reserve, Megalong Valley (works to commence in 07/08)
- Michael Eades Reserve, North Katoomba (further staged works to be completed in 07/08 as well as ongoing access issues to be addressed -medium term project)
Barden Lookout, Mount York Reserve, Mount Victoria (nearing completion – minor works required)
- Mount Boyce Lookout, Mount Victoria (stage II works to be completed 07/08)
- Lockyers Head trackhead. (works to commence in 07/08)
- The Crescent (North Leura) (Stage II works to be completed 07/08)

Bush regeneration contracts external funding involving ongoing works in 07/08

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|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Lilianfels Park South Katoomba | HNCMA |
| South Lawson Park | HNCMA |
| Katoomba Falls Reserve South Katoomba | HNCMA |
| McRaes Paddock South Katoomba | HNCMA |
| North Katoomba Creek (stage II) | HNCMA |
| Central Park Wentworth Falls | HNCMA |

Private

Lower Blue Mountains Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC's) ongoing work with private landholders and a number of identified public lands.

Weed control contracts external funding for completion in 07 Calendar year.

- Bridal Creeper - Lower Mountains Reserves (various)
- Gorse - private lands Blackheath / Wentworth Falls
- Crofton Weed - Knapsack Park and Knapsack Creek
- Pussy Willow - private lands South Lawson
- Himalayan Honeysuckle – Wentworth Falls Lake and Jamison Creek (Central Park)

!! Next Meeting !!

Blue Mountains Bushcare Network

Wed 29 August 2007 6pm

Lawson Mid-Mts Community Centre

Dinner Provided @ 6pm, Meeting commences between 6:15 – 6.30pm
Agenda Items will be called 15 – 22 August 2007.

"Please come along, all Volunteers or interested people are very welcome to attend"

