

**Bushcare Network Meeting
October 25 2006 6pm
Lawson Mid Mountains Community Centre**

AGENDA

1. Welcome / Introductions / Apologies

Present: Eric Mahony (BMCC), Chris Dewhurst (BMCC), Lyndal Sullivan, Lachlan Garland, Barbara Harley, Kate Thomas, Melissa Clarke, Dianne Simon

Apologies : Karen Hising, Toula Anastas, Mike Purtell

2. Matters arising from Previous Minutes

Item 2 : Weed Management Plans

Update on Weed Management Plan from Eric Mahony – the plans are going to GM on Monday 23 Oct for his delegated authority sign off. Excellent input was received from the BC network, most changes were adopted. Final plans will be hosted on www.weedsbluemountains.org.au

Meeting Resolution : In future it will be a matter of course that BMCC consult with the Bushcare Network and Bush Regeneration industry over all Noxious Weeds matters.

Item 4: Bushcare Accommodation

A meeting was held between Dave Allen (BMCC City Services Group Manager), Damien Drew (BMCC Civil Operations Manager), Chris Dewhurst (BMCC Bushcare Team Leader), Barbara Harley (Bushcare Network), Mike Purtell (Bushcare Network) over this matter. The outcome was not very satisfactory, and the network is still concerned about the impact of moving Bushcare to South St Depot.

Meeting Resolution: A letter is sent to Peter Adams (BMCC Community & Corporate Group Manager) CC Frank Garafalow as the “Purchaser” of Bushcare services from the point of view that the volunteers are the recipients of that service. Raising the issues of previous meeting motion:

“Why is the Bushcare section being moved to South Street? How is it envisaged that the Bushcare Program maintain its contact with Community & Corporate management

once they have moved, and how will the community access Bushcare staff given that there is no community access to South Street Depot.”

The Network will consider taking the issue to Council after a reply is received from PA.

3. Acceptance of Previous Minutes / Actions

Accepted Barbara Harley, Seconded Lyndal Sullivan.

4. Protocols for consultation between BMCC and Bushcare Groups/Bushcare Network – Barbara Harley

The Bushcare Procedures Manual adopted in October 2002 states that – *“It is recognised that Bushcare groups act as reserve stewards, often having had a long association with the site and spending many hours in its care. This means that the group will be consulted and involved whenever possible in any planning for future works that may impact upon the reserve. This will take place either via the Bushcare Officer or directly from the relevant project manager. The groups may also bring to the attention of Council, any activity that they witness having an adverse impact on the reserve or within its proximity.”*

The meeting felt the independence of the network needs to be reaffirmed to Council management and Bushcare volunteers are seen as co-managers of their sites.

The letter to Peter Adams will also include this.

The meeting identified the **Main Consultation areas** in relation to the work of BMCC:

- Tree Removals
- Fire Hazard Reduction
- Development Approvals
- Noxious Weeds Spraying
- Walking Track Construction
- Road Grading
- Drainage Works
- Professional Bush Regeneration works
- Use of Bushcare Group in-kind hours for grant applications

Meeting Resolution on Development Approvals – Should be a protocol that identifies whenever a site has a DA that is adjacent or downstream of the Bushcare Site that the Community Coordinator and Bushcare Officer is notified.

The meeting resolved that a range of protocols be adopted by Council over these issues.

5. “Tree Assessment Protocol” on Bushcare Sites – Toula Anastas

A meeting was held with Damien Drew (BMCC) and Water Nymphs Dell Bushcare Group (Wentworth Falls) over the removal of a significant tree from their Bushcare Site that was assessed as being dangerous by BMCC.

The Group felt that even though the tree did contain some Mistletoe (a parasitic native plant) it was still structurally sound, it had a significant lean away from the road and therefore posed no public risk.

Damien apologised on behalf of Council for the lack of consultation with the group and the inappropriate assessment of the situation. The Group accepted this apology and sought a commitment that it would not be likely to happen again. DD agreed to adopt the “Tree Assessment Protocol” that would include consultation with groups when tree/s is to be removed on Bushcare Sites.

6. What do we want at Network meetings? Discuss future meetings and election of office bearers, as per the Procedures Manual – Barbara Harley

That the network functions as per the “Bushcare Procedures Manual” and fosters a positive working relationship with Council.

Meeting are to be no longer than 2 hours. Council will provide all administration and a light meal at 6pm to facilitate people coming straight from work.

Bushcare Officers are to promote the network through their groups, special events, Gecko newsletters and website.

The Network agreed that the current arrangement of Barbara and Mike being the main spokespeople for the group was fine, and would look at the election of office bearers in 2007.

**7. A network meeting timeframe that can be advertised well in advance
– Barbara Harley**

Please put these dates in your diary now. (Note: The venue was not available on Tuesday nights)

Meetings will be held quarterly. Meeting time frame for 2007:

- Wed 28 Feb 6pm
- Wed 23 May 6pm
- Wed 29 August 6pm
- Wed 28 November 6pm

The venue is “Mid Mountains Community Centre Lawson” A free light dinner will be provided when you arrive to assist people coming straight from work. All volunteers and any interested people are welcome to attend.

8. Proof Copy of Blue Mountains Weeds Calender – Chris Dewhurst

This was tabled by Chris Dewhurst and accepted by the meeting. The calendar is a joint project with the Department of Primary Industries and BMCC. It describes control techniques and timing for 10 major Mountains weeds. It will be made available to the full network and hosted on the website when complete. 1000 hard copies will also be generated.

9. BMCC Bushland Management Report – Eric Mahony

- **Pesticide Notification Plan**

Eric is finalising the Draft Pesticide Notification Plan for the Blue Mountains and will be seeking community input from Bushcare Network members and contract staff in regards to the Draft Pesticide Notification Plan during November.

- **Resuscitation of the local weeds committee**

Eric has requested two community representatives for the local weeds committee with an intention to meet in mid to late November to establish meeting schedule for next year, terms of reference and to review draft pesticide notification plan.

Please email emahony@bmcc.nsw.gov.au / 4780 5539 to register interest.

- **Update on class 4 weed control plans**

Covered in “Item 2”

- **Upcoming weed control grants**

Hawkesbury Nepean CMA, is currently funding weed control works looking at strategic weed control program which protect areas of high conservation value, take a whole of catchment approach similar to North Katoomba broom control program and can significantly advance the control of individual weed species. 70% of the work will occur on private land. The work is really targeted at dealing with weeds at a landscape scale and not on an individual block by block approach.

- **Bushland projects 2006/07**

The following projects have either been externally funded, are funded through the Environmental levy and other bushland management budgets or are funded through a mix of all three. Council is continuing to apply for further funds throughout the remainder of the financial year.

Katoomba Creek North Katoomba	Blue Mountains Swamp restoration works
Sun Valley Reserve	Cabbage Gum Forest restoration works
Springwood Golf Course	Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest restoration works
South Lawson Park	Blue Mountains Swamp restoration works
Wentworth Falls Lake	Blue Mountains Swamp restoration works
Jamison Creek, Wentworth Falls	Blue Mountains Swamp restoration works / creekline restoration works
Springwood EEC's	public / private lands works across a range of EEC's
Wetlands restoration works	Various sites addressing impacts on Blue Mountains swamps.
Lillianfels Park	Bush regeneration works
Degraded lands program	Eastern escarpment reserves, South Lawson Park, North Katoomba and Mount York.

10. Report from Council's Bushcare Team Leader – Chris Dewhurst

The Spring Gecko was released in October and is available via Council libraries and the website http://weedsbluemountains.org.au/gecko_spring_06.pdf All

Bushcare volunteers should either be receiving a copy via post or email. Contact Chris Dewhurst cdewhurst@bmcc.nsw.gov.au / 4780 5528 for alterations to the mail list.

A New Bushcare Group has commenced work. The Cumberland Walkway Bushcare Group is working on the corner of Hope & Cumberland St, Katoomba. Total groups supported by BMCC is now 56.

BMCC celebrated National Weedbusters Week in Springwood this year. It was coordinated by Bushcare Officer Tracy Williams. It was a very successful (albeit hot!) day. All of the Council's "Green Team" were represented – Noxious Weeds, Fire Mitigation, Bush Regeneration and Bushcare. We set up a stall in Springwood's town square on Oct 12 and gave out lots of information on weed control, bushland management and fire hazard reduction.

Nathan Summers coordinated the Knapsack's Historic Walk yet again this year. It was a very successful event in spite of a very hot day with 35 people attending.

11. General Business

Meeting closed 8.30pm

— *Next Meeting Wed 28 Feb 2007 6pm* —