

# Blue Mountains Bushcare Network

## Minutes

### Lawson Mid-Mountains Community Centre

### 6pm 29 August 2007

#### Welcome

**Apologies** – Erst Carmichael, Ruth Ley, Lyndal Sullivan, Neil Stuart

Present: David King, Barbara Harley (Chair), Elizabeth Mitchell, Ivan Jeray, Jessica , Lachlan Garland, Jenny Smith (HNCMA), Karen Hising (BMCC), Nathan Summers (BMCC), Chris Dewhurst (BMCC)

#### Acceptance of Previous Minutes (23 may 2007)

Ivan noted some spelling mistakes & grammar, and the need to add details to Item 5 and a resolution to Item 6. Update bushcare officer recruitment process.

#### Matters Arising from the previous Minutes

Adjustments needed to be made on Council website with Bushcare introduction page regarding the history of the Friends of Katoomba Falls, in order to match the [weedsbluemountains](http://weedsbluemountains.com.au) website.

#### Agenda

1. Discussion with Jenny Smith from Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority. These questions were raised previously (Minutes 23/5/2007) as items of discussion (25 Mins):

Jenny is a Director on the Board of the HNCMA. The board determine strategic policies for the CMA. They need to make impartial decisions and must justify funding targets. The HNCMA consists of a board of directors appointed by the Minister for Environment & Climate Change, 5 subcommittees and staff.

- i. Funding is limited primarily to primary Bush Regeneration / Revegetation work only.

The CMA need to look at the catchments as a whole, and identify “hot spots”. To an extent, funding does tend towards primary works. Because of a strong need to prioritise, they are looking for the ‘best outcome for the buck’. Due to the high amount of quality bushland in the Blue Mountains area, it often rates lower on the priority list, however there are other factors put into the prioritizing system which will bring this up, e.g protecting threatened communities.
- ii. Extremely limited funding available for follow-up Bush Regeneration work.

A formula is used to justify funding. Primary work will rate highly as it is seen to produce a greater benefit for their dollar, however conservation and sensitivity are other values that are recognized, which can put up the weighting. Therefore project merits are decided on a case by case basis.
- iii. No acknowledgement of previous work (only work taking place in the funded financial year can be used as in-kind)

It is a policy rule for in kind contributions to be in the time frame. This is to prevent a “pandora’s box” of funding request based on numerous previous actions and not to risk ‘double dipping’, and leaves a wider scope for argument. Despite this, good project history of on site work and well managed funds has high merits, and the commitment needs to be ongoing. This is currently being written into the funding agreements. Agreements will look for longer term outcomes with the applicants beyond just the term of the project.
- iv. Funding agreements by-passing Landcare “Groups” but directed to Individual Landowners

A change has occurred within the CMA due to auditing, and all agreements have to be made with the ‘landowner’ in order to allow groups to work on their land. Part of the agreement however, may be to ask the group to manage the funds and do the work. There has been some feeling with Landcare Groups that they are being ‘squeezed’ out

of the process due to this, however this is not meant to be the case, and they strongly value the role and function of community groups. It is recognized that accountabilities have to be flexible for good outcomes.

- V. Importance of continuing projects within the Blue Mountains such as “Threatened Species Officer” working at BMCC.

CMA can't guarantee any ongoing funding for these “Extension” positions and it depends on funding amounts the CMA receives from year to year. These positions are often used to “kick start” positions that may be adopted by Council. With respects to applications, being largely federally funded, the CMA tend to value catchment and regional approaches, and they are looking for quality in applications rather than quantity.

*(Note: Jenny would like to thank the Bushcare Network for allowing her the opportunity to talk at this meeting)*

2. The RTA roadwork's planted exotic trees and laid turf as a part of the Highway work at Leura. Can we get a proposal raised where we can get natives and mulch used for all sites? I'm concerned that Hazelbrook will suffer the same exotic fate. – David King (10 Mins)

Examples from the Leura project were discussed. One problem brought up was that there is no list of endorsed environmental weeds. Also list of recommended nurseries. It was also pointed out that the REF stage is critical. Council officer for RTA issue, Matthew Brewster.

Resolution: The network prepare a letter to RTA Representative. Jessica to write the letter, Barbara to review.

3. Bushcare Network representation at the Blue Mountains Environment Summit – Lachlan Garland (5 Mins)

Chris to forward any information to Mike Purtell and Lachlan Garland.

4. Adopt a resolution to give authority to the Bushcare Team Leader to attach reports to minutes post-meeting that then form part of the meeting minutes. – Ivan Jeray (5 Mins)

This was resolved that as ok.

5. Displaying unconfirmed meeting minutes on the Bushcare web site as "Not yet confirmed" until confirmed at the subsequent Bushcare Network meeting. – Ivan Jeray (5 Mins)

This was resolved as ok.

6. Proposal for Junior Bushcare Award – “The Rian Strathdee Memorial Award”. Ideas? Suggestions? – Jasmine Payget / Erst Carmichael (Chris Dewhurst) (5 Mins)

This will be a perpetual annual award. It was suggested that a shield may be more appropriate than a trophy. Also a book to accompany award.

7. How can we get funding for areas surrounding the Bushcare sites? Horseshoe Falls has some large pockets of weeds that are external to the reserve but as they feed into the Reserve by streams and storm water runoff it defeats a lot of the good work. – David King (10 Mins)

Chris to investigate if bush regen team can work there. David to provide more info on details of land parcels.

8. Collation, re-formatting and web publication of past un-minuted Bushcare Network Meetings. – Ivan Jeray (10 Mins)

It was resolved that there would not be enough interest in this to justify this project. It was agreed to pass on details of past meetings to Ivan where the records were reasonably accessible.

9. Bushcare / Landcare / Swampcare listing and advertising in The Blue Pages – Barbara Harley (5 Mins)

This is a monthly events newsletter for the Blue Mountains, distributed to outlets and via email. Anyone interested in promoting their events can add to this project. Contact Hajni & Mary [thebluepages@gmail.com](mailto:thebluepages@gmail.com) PO Box 7145, Leura NSW 2780

10. Election of Bushcare Network office bearers – Barbara Harley (10 Mins)

At next meeting Barbara Harley will stand down as office bearer and the role will be up for election.

11. BMCC Bushcare Program Update – Chris Dewhurst (5 Mins)

After working 10 years as the Bushcare Team Leader, Chris Dewhurst has moved into a new role at Blue Mountains City Council as the Green Team Coordinator. He will be based at South St Depot and work in the capacity of coordinating the works of Bushcare, Bush Regeneration, Noxious Weeds, Walking Tracks and Fire Mitigation. He will also function as the weeds coordinator in relation to the Noxious Weeds Act.

Nathan Summers is currently acting in Team Leader role.

Natalie Knipler is the new Bushcare Officer who replaces Andy Forster.

**General Business**

The recent grant application for a heritage walk in the Katoomba Falls Gully was raised by Ivan including the lack of notification and availability of information to the community & Bushcare groups. This is of concern as the lack of notification was also raised at a previous meeting of 23 May 2007. This grant is a joint application between the Gully Traditional Owners, Rouse Water and Blue Mountains City Council. Liaison to take place with Gully Traditional Owners and Council.

Close: 8.38pm