

**Bushcare Network Meeting
November 28 2007 6pm
Lawson Mid Mountains Community Centre**

AGENDA

1. Welcome / Introductions / Apologies

Present: Laurel Harris, Norm Harris, Ron Withington, Karen Hising (BMCC), Ivan Jeray, Lachlan Garland, Monica Nugent, Elizabeth Van-Rose, Ruth Ley, Lyndal Sullivan, Barbara Harley, Mike Purtell, Nathan Summers (BMCC – minutes)

Apologies : Malcolm Wells, Jen Hall, Peter Fry

2. Acceptance of previous minutes

Accepted: Lachlan Garland, Barbara Harley

3. Matters arising from Previous Minutes

Point 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 requested the addition – “Any important information should however be discussed at the meeting if known beforehand. The reports can also be discussed at subsequent meetings.”

Point 3 - Bushcare Network representation at the Blue Mountains Environment Summit (24 & 25th February).

Meeting put forward motion that as many people as possible from Bushcare Network should be going to this summit, and the BCN should be forming recommendations to put forward. This is an opportunity to promote issues to State Government. Think tank is needed on Issues that effect Bushcare sites, and what changes are wanted for State Legislation and Policy. (e.g. Fencing off creek lines). The environment summit will be dealing with several subjects such as land management and climate change.

The meeting decided to bring the next scheduled Bushcare Network Meeting forward to the 13th February (2 weeks ahead of normal schedule) to allow discussion and preparation for the Environment Summit.

Action: Mike Purtell offered to pass on ideas to Lyndal. Monica Nugent and Lachlan Garland offered to assist in developing ideas.

Point 2 – Letter to be written to RTA regarding roadwork plantings for Hazelbrook Highway works.

Action – Barbara to follow up with Jessica on letter.

Point 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 which effect work in reserve.

A proposal was put forward that the next meeting include an agenda item on how to deal with weed issues on easements that adjoin Bushcare sites.

5. Bushcare community consultation for the review of the Blue Mountains Bush Fire Risk Management Plan. Suggestions and feedback to give to the Blue Mountains Bush Fire Management Committee - Nathan Summers

The Blue Mountains Bush Fire Management Committee will be rewriting the Blue Mountains Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP), and are currently seeking feedback on how to undertake the community consultation process. Community consultation has high importance in the new fire management planning framework. What is the best way that consultation should take place for the Bushcare Network?

It was suggested that we could have workshops based on interest groups, or workshops based on localities.

Two types of fire reduction situations were described, those that involved large areas of more remote bushland and those regimes that came close to the urban interface. Both would effect bushcare sites in different ways and need to be addressed differently.

It was suggested that we need both consultation meetings that involved just the Bushcare Network, as Bushcare concerns may strike controversy with the broader community in some cases, and BCN also need opportunities to be part of open community forums.

We need to obtain the Planning Framework for the BFRMP.

It is important to have effective consultation prior to the production of any drafts.

The meeting made the following resolution.

The Bushcare Network proposes that the community consultation on this matter to be a series of workshop style meetings rather than a large public meeting. Also that the Bushcare Network requests that a workshop for all member groups be held where Bushcare concerns could be discussed in depth. There should also be a series of local workshops where residents have an opportunity to be involved in their local area.

This consultation should provide opportunities for involvement on at least two occasions:

- once early in the planning process (prior to the preparation of a draft) where the different approaches to Risk Management are discussed, and
- after the production of a draft Plan, to discuss the draft.

Action: Mike Purtell and Lydnal Sullivan to draft up letter and forward to Barbara Harley to format on letterhead.

6. Utilizing final year undergraduate or postgraduate students to undertake project work on Bushcare sites including techniques, degrading factors and management plans - Mike Purtell / Malcolm Hughes.

Bushcare sites often have many irreconcilable issues that need further addressing. There has been a history of TAFE involvement with Bushcare, both in construction and weed control, and with assignments. There are opportunities to further tap into the TAFE system and also identify site issues that can be taken on by University students.

It was mentioned in the meeting that the Rural Fire Service have students undertake community consultation as part of their curriculum and forward these results to RFS.

Projects could include research trials, investigations on factors effecting sites, site strategies and contributing to Plans of Management.

Potential projects could be gathered. These could either (i) be used when a student was seeking to undertake an assignment, or (ii) a rapport could be established with a learning institution and potential project material listed for undergraduate or postgraduate assignments.

Action: A list of projects to be put together for bushcare sites. Bushcare Officers to liaise with groups and identify potential projects. Promote this idea amongst BCN.
To be brought up at next BCN meeting.

7. Email communication. Lyndal Sullivan.

The number of emails and the size of emails for people on the bushcare mailing list has been an issue, particularly from the multiple programs such as Bushcare, Swampcare, Streamcare.

Nathan discussed that this was also seen as an issue within these council programs and an agreement had been made to limit the total events between the Biodiversity, Swampcare and Streamcare programs to 10 per six months. Also communication for events from these combined programs will be limited to (i) The Gecko newsletter, once every 3 months, (ii) An email mailout once per month to update if necessary. This would be done through the Bushcare program. The only time an email would come out in addition to these if there was 'stop press' for an issue of high importance. Emails for the Bushcare Network meetings would also be in addition to these.

There may also be additional emails within the Swampcare & Streamcare programs with issues directly relating to their programs. This would take place only with people who were specifically on their mail lists for these projects.

The issue of the size of emails was also brought up. Attachments which have logos and maps can add to the size considerably and be time consuming with dial ups. This has happened with some of the Biodiversity events for example, and it was acknowledged that the extra size of logos or maps in these emails was an oversight. Ordinarily Bushcare email correspondence uses the email page only, or will have a link rather than an attachment. It was resolved to keep future correspondence within the email itself. If attachments are necessary, this can either be done by a link, or if they must accompany message, it will be ensured that the size is below 300kb.

8. Junior Bushcare Award – “The Rian Strathdee Memorial Award”. Further ideas and suggestions - Jasmine Payget/ Erst Carmichael (Nathan Summers).

A perpetual shield will be put together which the child recipient will have on loan. The recipient will also receive a gift (e.g. a book), however it was decided that the gift should come with something permanent (e.g. a small certificate or a book plate) which the child can remember.

9. Management of companion animals on Bushcare sites - Lachlan Garland.

It was discussed at the meeting that it may not be appropriate to have dogs on Bushcare sites. An example was brought up of an incident where someone on site had been nipped on site by a dog. Other examples were brought up of dogs near herbicide. It was acknowledged that more open sites (e.g. adjacent to Ovals) lend themselves to being more appropriate to dogs than bushland sites.

It was then stressed at the meeting that council has sufficient regulations for managing and controlling dogs in public spaces.

Council pointed out that the bottom line for managing dogs on sites at the moment is the Companion Animals Act (NSW). Under this Act, people may take their dogs onto public land provided they are on a leash and under effective control. Dogs must also be kept away from

childrens play areas, food consumption areas, wildlife protection areas, public bathing areas, etc.

It was noted at the meeting that the Companion Animals Act should be sufficient to manage dogs on Bushcare sites in terms of safety and having the animals under control. It was suggested that the Bushcare Officers should be made aware of their obligations under this Act.

It was also noted that there were two main issues, one was safety & controlling dogs, the other was the effects of dogs on wildlife. With respect to wildlife, the proposal was put forward to consider lobbying council for Wildlife Protection areas, similar to other local government areas.

10. Bushland Management Report (inserted post meeting) – Eric Mahony

BUSHLAND MANAGEMENT WORKS REPORT	
2nd quarter 2007/08	
RESERVE- PROJECT SITE	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Megalong Reserve - Megalong Valley	Conservation earthworks undertaken on eroding landscapes which have involved soil conservation, track rationalisation, revegetation works and access management
Mount York Reserve- Mount Victoria,	
Historic roads - Lockyers and Lawson's Long Alley - Mount Victoria	
Blackheath Quarry - Blackheath	
North Katoomba Quarry - North Katoomba	
Yosemite Creek (east - The Crescent) - North Leura	
San Jose bushland - North Lawson	
Cross Street and Rickard Road - Warrimoo	
Mitchells Pass – Glenbrook	
Katoomba Creek (south) - North Katoomba	Bush regeneration works and creek line restoration works. Note this table does not include Council's internal works program. These works are in addition to this and the works listed are primarily funded through a combination of the BMCC Environmental Levy and external grant funds
Yosemite Creek (west) - North Katoomba	
Yosemite Creek (east) - North Katoomba	
Echo Point - South Katoomba	
South Lawson Park - Lawson	
Deanei Reserve - Springwood	
Summerhayes Park - Springwood	
Springwood Golf Course - Springwood	
Sun Valley Reserve - Sun Valley	
Skarret Park and Coxs Reserve - Lapstone	
Explorers Reserve - Glenbrook	
Catalina Park - South Katoomba	Bush regeneration works and target weed control works principally targeting Scotch Broom
McRaes Paddock - South Katoomba	
Wentworth Falls Lake - Wentworth Falls	Bush regeneration works - Himalayan honeysuckle control
Central Park - Wentworth Falls	
Jamison Creek - Wentworth Falls	Creekline and swamp restoration
Braeside water Reserve - Blackheath	
Pussy willow control - South Lawson	Gorse, Pussy Willow and other targeted noxious weed control on public and private lands.
Gorse Control - Blackheath	

Targeted weed control North Katoomba/Leura

Note this table does not include Council's internal works program. These works are in addition to this and the works listed are primarily funded through external grant funds.

This is joint Noxious Weeds Team / Landcare / Bushland Management administered project

General Business

Using trees for promotion. Trees in reserves had been used for promotional signs for some Biodiversity events. This should not be done as it encourages other people to do this. It was resolved that this was not an appropriate method for promoting events in future.

Promotion of the new Weeds of the Blue Mountains Booklet. It was mentioned that an active person involved with the Conservation Society recently noted that they were not aware of the weeds booklet. It was suggested that Council arrange a better display for its pamphlets in the main Katoomba foyer. If this was not possible for council officers to arrange, the community may consider lobbying for this. It was suggested to promote the new booklet on the Council page in the gazette, and in News from the Hill (rates notices). The new weeds booklet also needed an official launch.

Bushcare Picnic. The meeting congratulated the new venue of Sun Valley which would be more accessible to lower mountains residents. The suggestion was put forward to consider another time of year for the 'Thankyou party' as February is often quite hot. We will also consider alternating between Sun Valley (lower mountains) and the Megalong (upper mountains) if this is successful.

Bushcare Team Leader position. It was noted that the advertising for the new Bushcare Team Leader position could have been done much more effectively to reach a wider audience, and to ensure that we get the best applicants. It was stressed that it was important to allow for at least 3 weeks when a position is advertised in order to allow time to attract more people.

New Bushcare Network Office positions. This won't be convened until the Bushcare Team Leader has been selected and has been in the job for sufficient time.

The next Bushcare Network Meeting will be scheduled for 13 February 2008.

This will be **two weeks ahead** of the normal schedule so that the Bushcare Network can prepare for the **Environment Summit**. The Bushcare Officers and the Network will make efforts to promote this new date.

Bushcare Network Meeting Dates for 2008- 28 May 2008; 27 August 2008; 26 November 2008.