

Blue Mountains Bushcare Network
Minutes OF Meeting Wednesday 10TH February 2010 at 6 pm
Mountains Community Resource Network Meeting Room Lawson

Present: Lachlan Garland (Braeside, Valley of the Waters), Clive Heywood Barker (BM Conservation Society), Elizabeth Mitchell (Birdwood Gully), Barbara Harley (Tree Fern Gully, Lindeman Road), Monica Nugent (Braeside, acting NPWS Volunteer coordinator), David Porter (Glenbrook Lagoon), Mike Purtell (Else Mitchell & Deanei), Jasmine Payget (BMCC), Lyndal Sullivan (BMCC),

Apologies: Karen Hising (Valley of the Waters), Allan Murray (Glenbrook Lagoon), David King (Gundungurra), Veronica Paul (Katoomba Creek)

Chaired by: Monica Nugent

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting December 2009 Accepted with amendment to item 1 as follows "Clive to send photos of weedy acacias to Barbara, then Barbara to write article for website" moved/seconded Clive Barker/ Lachlan Garland

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

1. Integral vegetation clearance work program & protocols

Barbara and Monica had agreed to defer this invitation until after the Christmas period.

Action: Monica and Barbara to write to Integral, on behalf of the Bushcare Network requesting their attendance at the next Meeting on 12th May. The letter of invitation outline the question for discussion as outlined in the December minutes with the additional question of " Would Integral consider the use of bundled cables in sensitive areas?"

2. Bushcare Promotion

(a) posters

The meeting commended Jasmine on the set of posters produced for use for displays, having incorporated suggestions made by members. Each will be printed in A2 size and also available in smaller sizes.

Action: Jasmine to have the set of 6 posters printed ready for groups to use by 17th February.

(b) Bushcare/Landcare brochure

It was agreed that the revised brochure should be finalised with one change from "Learning new techniques...." to " Learning to identify plants and treat weeds".

Action: Jasmine to finalise brochure and have printed by 19th February

(c) photographic project

A professional photographer has started to visit groups over February and march. This is to develop a photo library of each site/group as part of the historic records, and also to use some for promotional purposes, such as for the A frames as background images.

(d) site A frame designwork

Action jasmine to amend the poster designs to use on the A frames; in order to allow space for the group name to be added (on magnetic strips) and for a leaflet holder.

3. Event Participation

Item deferred until Annette was present.

4. Highway Water Issues Working Group

It was noted that 3 community representatives had been appointed to the Working Group
Action: Lyndal to include contact details in minutes of those representatives who are happy to be contacted by bushcare groups to raise issues of concern.

Note: Two community representatives have already indicated that they are willing to be contacted by interested Bushcare groups:

Bob Cantwell 4751 3215

Cesidio (Sid) Parissi 4759 2058 c.parissi@uws.edu.au

5. Papers from Provenance/Bioregionalism Forum for website

Defer report on Action: Allan to investigate whether copyright would prevent the papers on provenance to be scanned and placed on our website or whether there could be links.

6. Weed Trees exempted from Tree Preservation Order

Following discussion of the TPO weed tree list, it was agreed that the existing BCN list of weeds first needed to be updated.

Action: (1) Clive to assess the completeness of the existing Bushcare Network Weeds list of trees and suggest additions for discussion at next meeting.

(2) Clive to compile a list of those species which are currently not exempt from the TPO process as a draft proposal for additions to this exemption list, for discussion at next meeting.

7. Review of BMCC Weed Management Strategy -

The planned review was proceeding over the next 4 weeks. Linda Thomas has asked to meet with interested members of the Network and of Consoc to discuss the key issues.

Suggested meeting to be: Thursday 4th March in Lawson at 6pm if food provided, otherwise 7 pm. 2nd preference Monday 1st March

Action Linda Thomas to arrange meeting to discuss BMCC Weed Management Strategy

GENERAL BUSINESS

8. Election of Convenor/s for 2010

As no nominations were received for convenor/s, Barbara and Mike agreed to continue in the interim.

Action: all to invite Bushcare volunteers to attend BCN meetings to increase number of volunteers involved in the Network. Election of convenor/s to be held when some expression of interest is received.

9. Resident Survey results

Following discussion of survey results, the experience of others trying to engage birdwatchers and bushwalkers was noted, ie that there were confronting/emotional barriers to participation:

- feeling overwhelmed by the size of the large weed plumes
- the view that weeding out exotic plants from bushland was playing god and raised the confronting issue for non indigenous people of the right to be in this country

It was agreed that 'before and after' photos on display can assist with helping people realise that they can make a difference.

10. Volunteer registration and agreement forms

It was agreed that a simple registration form to collect contact information was necessary, but whether it should contain an agreement to be signed between council and the volunteer needs to be explored further.

Reasons for having an agreement discussed were:

- To remind new volunteers of safety and other considerations
- To have a basis for resolving possible problems arising from the behaviour of either a bushcare officer or a volunteer.

Action: that the concept of a council-volunteer agreement be discussed with groups; and if seen as desirable then the draft wording (in the attachment to the minutes) be used as a basis for discussion and suggested amendments.

11. Financial report

Balance of bank account \$354.03 at 31/12/2009.

12. Open Gardens Exhibition Awards for good environmental practices

Elizabeth reported that the mountains wide exhibition no longer occurs.

13. Bicycles in Bushland

It was noted that council has a Dirt Jump Bike Strategy which guides where sites are closed or retained. A current issue of downhill bike riding is effecting bushland at mt Riverview and East Blaxland. A report is being prepared for the Council meeting of 16th March.

14. Blue Mountains Bushfire Risk Management Plan

This plan is on exhibition until 24th March. Display at council office and RFS (4784 7444). Copies available from RFS district office. Submissions to BMBFMC Executive Officer at bluemountains@rfs.nsw.gov.au or to PO Box600 Katoomba NSW 2780.

15. Fitzgeralds Creek

Mike reported on discussions between Long Angle Landcare group, BM Conservation Society, BMCC and Sewerfix. Sewer fix is responsible for identifying “ options to protect the Blue Mountains Sewer Tunnel against possible system failure and ensure it continues to operate efficiently during extreme wet weather”. In response to concerns about the dumping of raw sewage into Fitzgeralds Creek, Sewerfix has undertaken to review its strategy. One alternative being considered is to redirect overflow into same creek which currently receives overflow from the STP.

The **Network supports** the concerns of the Long Angle Landcare Group about the impact of the Sewerfix strategy on the Fitzgeralds Creek catchment, by dumping untreated sewage into the creek. **Action:** Mike to monitor the progress of the Sewerfix review.

Meeting Closed at 8.45 pm

Next meeting: 12th May 2010

APPENDIX

Draft Volunteer / Council Agreement for discussion

The Bushcare/Landcare Volunteer agrees to:

- *Follow BMCC health and safety requirements and risk management procedures*
- *Register attendance at each volunteering session*
- *Participate in orientation and onsite training as required*
- *Follow agreed site strategies and guidance from the bushcare officer*
- *Undertake tasks in a safe and responsible manner*
- *Comply with all conservation requirements and legislation as outlined*
- *Support a non discriminatory and harassment-free work environment*
- *Communicate in a courteous and respectful manner to all volunteers, council staff and members of the public*
- *The use and publication of images of the volunteer taken during volunteer sessions unless the volunteer requests otherwise*

BMCC agrees to:

- *Provide appropriate supervision, training and tools*
- *Provide technical advice and assistance to volunteers*
- *Establish a clear plan which details volunteer activities*
- *Provide risk management procedures and necessary safety equipment*
- *Cover volunteers for insurance in case of injury*
- *Provide an avenue for volunteers to contribute to site planning and to raise questions or complaints*
- *Encourage and recognise volunteer efforts and achievements*
- *Support a non discriminatory and harassment-free work environment*
- *Communicate in a courteous and respectful manner to all volunteers*