



Yarra Ranges Environment Advisory Committee

MINUTES

Thursday 8th July 2021

Online Zoom Meeting

5.30pm – 7.30 pm

Meeting Open	5.30pm	Chairperson: Cr Johanna Skelton
Members Present		Ron Sawyer (member), Graeme George (member), Laurence Gaffney (member), Lauren Dwyer (member), Melanie Birtchnell (member), Cr Johanna Skelton, David Harper (YRC), Amanda Smith (YRC), Jessica Rae (YRC), Kym Saunders (YRC), Jess Baillie (YRC), Suzanne Burville (YRC), Corinne Mays (Port Phillip and Westernport CMA), Darren Wandin (YRC), Garry Detez (YRC)
Apologies		Jeff Barlow (member), Merryn Kelly (DELWP), Joanne Antrobus (Parks Victoria), Cr Tim Heenan, (YRC), Julian Hill (member), Steve Hosking (Melbourne Water), Mark Varmalis (YRC)
Welcome	5.30	Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 20 May 2021 Moved: Graeme George Seconded: Melanie Birtchnell
	5.35	Declaration of Interest There were no disclosures of conflicts of interest made for this meeting.
	5.35 – 5.40	Matters Arising/Actions ACTION: YRC to commence recruitment for next committee over the coming months (rather than end of the year), due to number of vacancies. Jess Rae ACTION: David to determine how best to achieve reporting on the Liveable Climate Plan and how this is reported at YREAC. Ongoing
Item 1	5.40 – 6:10	Firestick Discussion: Darren Wandin and Garry Detez <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5-10 trial sites determined• “Country is boss” approach• Sites to be in public view so they can see results• Narrap Ranges leading cultural fire practice, YRC to support• Consistent messaging is key• Working with other agencies where possible• Legislation is a barrier i.e. navigating pathways through policy

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main goal is healing country, not to reduce fuel – this needs to be clearly communicated • Opportunity to get private landholders involved <p>ACTION: Organise a site visit to Dixon’s Creek to observe the impact of firestick practice over time. <i>Darren Wandin/Garry Detez to follow up</i></p>
Item 2	6:10 – 6.40	<p>Planned Burns at Bellbird Reserve, Launching Place: Laurence Gaffney</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation outline of controlled burn at Bellbird Reserve queried– was it fuel reduction or environmental? • EVC to this reserve not assigned • A delay on receiving on final report • Questions regarding if the burn has reduced fuel load • How can we do better next time – consider using Adaptive Management Principles • Fuel reduction is not council’s usual practice of land management and will utilise this as a learning opportunity to help plan future burns should they arise • Laurence provided 9 recommendations to assist in managing reserves prior to future burns • Officers to discuss recommendations and follow up with response <p>ACTION: Consider a YREAC motion in regards to Laurence’s recommendations, determine at the next committee meeting. <i>All Committee</i></p> <p>ACTION: Officers to consider Laurence’s recommendations and provide response. <i>David Harper</i></p>
Item 3	6.40 – 6.55	<p>Report from Biodiversity Sub Committee: Amanda Smith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with the Biodiversity Investigation Team assessments – inconsistency’s i.e. flora identification, overlooking vegetation classes • Graeme Lorimer proposed to carry out an audit of 10 sites (i.e 10% of total assessments), an analysis of this data will be undertaken to determine if further audits will be required <p>ACTION: Biodiversity sub-committee recommend Graeme Lorimer be engaged to audit biodiversity assessments. <i>Amanda Smith</i></p>
Item 4	6.55 – 7.10	<p>Committee Members: Open Floor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laurence and Mel request data from the DELWP surveys conducted at Hoddles Creek and other areas in 2012. Amanda indicated "The targeted vegetation condition and assessment project 2010-2012" has been received and will provide this to committee in map format.

		<p>ACTION: "The targeted vegetation condition and assessment project 2010-2012" to be supplied in map format to YREAC Amanda Smith</p>
<p>Item 5</p>	<p>7.10 – 7.20</p>	<p>Sustainability and Environment Team Updates</p> <p>Committee Reset: David Harper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council endorsed advertising for a new committee, current members to state their intentions (if they haven't already) and council will reappoint new committee (see council meeting 22/6/2021 - https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Council-meetings/Minutes-and-agendas) • A Sustainability Victoria rep to be invited to join committee • The new committee name is Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee (SEAC) • Member's term will be for 3 years <p>Storm Update: David Harper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YRC has been in discussion with state and federal government for storm support and is working with Bushfire Recovery Vic who will assist with private property clean up • A new fifth directorate has been established for storm recovery (will operate for 18 months to 2 years)
<p>Item 6</p>	<p>7.20 – 7.30</p>	<p>Agency Reports</p> <p>Port Phillip & Western Port CMA</p> <p>Corinne Mays invited members to look at/contribute to the Port Phillip & Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy which can be found at https://portphillipwesternport.rcs.vic.gov.au Closes: Sunday 1st August</p> <p>Melbourne Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rain/storm event • Erosion Control Works – Yarra River Millgrove • Yellingbo Landscape Conservation Area collaboration <p>Parks Vic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm effected parks • Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden – Junior Ranger Program • Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden – 'Care for the Rare' Alpine Recovery Project • Planned burning success • Bridge upgrade works • Partnering with the local Men's Shed • Bridge removal works • Preparing for snow season • Smoky Mouse hiding in unusual places • Lowland Leadbeaters possum population increase

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful compliance of illegal mountain bike trail construction • Successful deer control at Haining Farm • High Risk Trees Removed from Yarra Ranges National Park <p>Discussion: Consider reinstating the time allocation to agency update.</p>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings could be held during work hours if it suited all members – need to wait until new committee is established • Next meeting preferably to be in person
Next Meeting	9 September 2021
Meeting Close	8:12pm
Deferred Topics	ROG presentation