



Yarra Ranges Environment Advisory Committee
Minutes
Thursday 13th December 2018
Conference Room
Anderson Street Office Lilydale
5.30 – 8.00 pm

Meeting Open	5.30pm	Chairperson: Cr Mike Clarke
Members Present		Cr Clarke, Simon Woodland, David Harper, Amanda Smith, Jess Rae, Lisa Loulier, Laurence Gaffney, Graeme George, Darcy Duggan, Sophie McCracken-Evans, Valerie Stewart, Mel Birtchnell, Jo Antrobus.
Apologies		Mark Varmalis, Sarah Gaskill
Welcome	6.40	Welcome Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 11 th October 2018 (published on YRC website) Moved: Darcy Duggan Seconded: Mel Birtchnell (conditioned on actions being undertaken)
	7.09	Declaration of Interest Any members with interest in matters to be discussed to declare
	6.40 – 7:08	Matters Arising/ Actions ACTION: get back to the committee on the funding commitment regarding the WMB project from the Feds and what the conditions are. What parameters did they use to determine to fund the project. Pending ACTION: Provide the following Information to this committee; a copy of the World Trails report and their brief, copy of the Practical Ecology report and their brief, the TOR for Project Steering Committee, any advice provided by councils Environment department to RAL team in the early scoping phase. Pending ACTION: Jo (PV) provided some detail on the current control program in this region, and will follow up with additional detail in writing. Will be provided with the PV agency update for this meeting. Completed ACTION: Simon to distribute draft submission for VDMS to YREAC for comment, and seek support for the submission. Submission to be provided ACTION: Darcy to send through observations from the Perrins Ck and Sassafras Ck areas to Jo Antrobus for referral to the operations officer for that region. Darcy to provide update. ACTION: A presentation from MW on how the Yarra's environmental water entitlement is managed has been added to the forward schedule for 2019 Added to schedule for 2019 meetings ACTION: Sarah will send through some links to Vic Env Water Authority for videos about how this is governed and delivered. Will be provided with the MW agency update for this meeting. Darcy raised the C148 update. Has this been released? Mike Clarke confirmed this was received from Council – he mentioned none of the recommendations from YREAC were incorporated into the amendment. Action: Damien & Claudette requested to give an update at the next YREAC

		<p>meeting. ES should be offered a debrief of the amendment.</p> <p>Darcy requested feedback to the community. A list from Amanda was emailed to Darcy today addressing all his concerns. Amanda apologised for delay however the concerns has been responded to.</p> <p>Darcy queried training with code of environmental practice. Amanda explained a review of the CEP is occurring which will ensure the code will be embedded into contracts. The long term vision is it will form part of the tender.</p> <p>Laurence Gaffney drew attention to the WMBD Practical Ecology Report and his email to David Harper of the 22nd November 2018. That email to David noted that at the YRC environmental Volunteers forum on the 21st November 2019, "Mark Varmalis advised that the Practical Ecology Report re WMBD Project was to be subject to "peer review". The email further went on to say that this "would indicate that the Report is in a final draft stage" and suggested that "Would not it also be appropriate for the YREAC to review the document and provide comment on this report at this time?" David Harper acknowledged receipt of the email and committed to providing an answer within a week.</p>
<p>Item 1</p>	<p>5.45 – 6.40</p>	<p>Gardens for Wildlife</p> <p>Presentation on the G4W Program, recently formally adopted by Yarra Ranges Council by Sustainability Officer Lisa Loulier.</p> <p>Lisa explained the program with garden visits, garden assessments by garden guides, voucher and evaluation program. It is essentially a stewardship program.</p> <p>Graeme questioned the recommendation for Eucalypts as he was worried about fire prone species. Lisa discussed the risk of fire prone vegetation recommendations.</p> <p>Evaluation was discussed and it was suggested that participants could be followed up after a year to gauge the level of success. This could be measured through number of people involved, reassessment, plant success etc.</p> <p>Gardens for Harvest – Lisa explained this program.</p> <p>Compost Rebate – Lisa also explained this program.</p> <p>The main questions were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the success of these programs be measured? • How will these programs be shared across the Shire? <p>Graeme is going to share a planting guide for Yarra Ranges that he has developed.</p> <p>Action: Lisa to catch up with Graeme.</p>
<p>Item 2</p>	<p>7.09 – 7.42</p>	<p>Agency Reports- Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria.</p> <p>Joanne Antrobus (PV) and Sarah Gaskill (MW).</p> <p>Reassessing the Sherbrooke program it was hard to achieve the outcomes.</p> <p>YCACC – the committee is being finalised 31 Jan 2019. Jo to send link to minutes when published.</p>

		<p>Haining Farm – construction commenced. Cattle removed, fencing removed. Education Officer has been appointed. Parks Victoria have a project officer working in the area for Haining Farm, Warburton Mt Bike & Deer in the district.</p> <p>Olinda Golf Course – update pending. Jo to send link.</p> <p>Badger Weir – construction commenced. Opening late March.</p> <p>Redwood forest - \$300k to be spent on toilets. Carpark expanded and road sealed.</p> <p>Exec appointments – PV have new district manager. Might be a new representative from PV at YREAC.</p> <p>Deer Program – The program is to start again in April 2019. June – Nov 2018 program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 deer culled • Yellingbo: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 private properties allowed deer to be controlled on their properties ○ 41 removed in 2018 ○ 160 in total over five years • Warramate: 160 over 5 years • Sherbrooke: no deer removed. • 360 deer removed in total over last 5 years. <p>Action: Mel: what is the population of deer in the region? Jo to provide this information.</p> <p>Action: Jo to provide Val with details on sporting shooter association and shooting.</p> <p>Action: Darcy – PV land in the Dandenongs can Jo clarify ownership and no support for stream frontage program. Darcy concerned of PV approach to CWAD refusal to approve the grant has flow on effects to platypus. Darcy to send email to Jo and Conrad to follow up. Jo to ensure this is followed up.</p>
<p>Item 3</p>	<p>7.49 – 8.50</p>	<p>David’s discussion on weeds</p> <p>David Harper to lead a discussion on strategy reviews out of the Environmental Stewardship area (deferred from October meeting).</p> <p>Weed not a new space for Council. We spend \$1M on weeds per year. When this money is coupled with partnership grants it is extended beyond Council’s capacity. Along with programs such as Ribbons of Green and weed monitoring programs from the bushlands team. Council is not a research institute but offer a program of delivery for weed control.</p> <p>There will be a review of the existing programs and their objectives to ensure it is still appropriate for Council to invest in this space. Some Councillors have questioned over the years Council’s capacity and appropriateness to invest in this space. Following a number of</p>

briefings and gaining support from Council, support was provided to address weed and initiate weed control programs. Going forward we need to assess what our programs will be over the next 10 years. We have \$1M / annum for weed control. This is a financial constraint. We also have an IWM plan which addresses water quality and WSUD treatments all over the place. These treatments might not have been ideal. Now we have PCP and the WSUD treatments which are reflective of the best value for the environment. Add in pest species including deer now into the mix. A deer management strategy will help with this. Some alternative approaches:

- Biodiversity assets approach?
- Identify the critical habitats and protect these?
- Remove the threat.
- Improve the water quality weed control and water quality improvements.

We need to be tenure blind & take the same approach as peri-urban weed management plan.

YREAC thoughts and questions:

- Catchment approach
- Control problem weeds (identify types that cause a real problem) with available funds.
- Define a weed
 - A plant that should not be in the place it is found.
 - Define a problem weed, context and place based.
 - Category for weeds – noxious weeds, environmental weeds (species demonstrated known to have deleterious effects on ecosystem function, requires control to mitigate) – reference Graeme’s document regarding definition of weeds.
- Prevent new and emerging weeds then control spread.
- Tenure blind partnerships.
- Strategic approach:
 - Habitat / biodiversity focus document as this will include control methods that support ecosystem function, viewed as a whole system.
 - Landscape scale document with climate change included
 - Habitat management instead of a weed strategy
- 2005 strategy refers to the problem but doesn’t define problem.
 - Environment Strategy consulted 5 years ago 2014/15. Is this community consultation data still relevant?
- Scientific evidence:
 - Involve the community – citizen science. Look at surveys etc that could be rolled out from the community.
 - Where is the scientific database?
 - Science based and appetite from Councillor and

community to invest in this space based on community consultation results from the Environment Strategy.

- Weed mapping – Paul Smitka has been weed mapping.
 - Is this data enough?
 - Key threat and identification of new and emerging weeds - have these been identified?
- How do we define the problem? Who do we ask? Is it YREAC?
- There is some positive value to weedy species
 - Some of these species are essential for revegetation i.e. after a bushfire silver wattle re-propagates and stabilises the land.
 - To what level are we trying to 'fix' the land? What are we trying to achieve in the context of the management of the site?
- Next year run a detailed workshop on weed strategy.
- Yarra Ranges needs a broader framework than just to address weeds.
- Neighbouring Council Strategy:
 - Manningham's strategy where pick a location and place a lot of money in that reserve and do a blitz.
 - Look delivering 'sites of biological significance' – Manningham reference this document.
- Could we spend some of the \$1M on a document that supports a strategic approach to weed control? Offers baseline data, and ensure monitoring can be assessed adequately.
 - Monitoring of sites – failure of landscaped sites these are full of weeds.
 - Work out appropriate timing / program of works.
 - Resourcing works appropriately
 - Realistic timeframes. Context of the site with competing priorities.
 - Brief on the document.
 - Weed management per catchment / EVC model
 - Strategy for major plant pest species
 - Weed management in riparian zones
 - Identify source points of major infestations
- Community approach:
 - Collaboration with local environmental groups.
 - Community supported business case for investment in the environment.
 - Council to coordinate efforts
 - Whole of community approach.
 - Incentive program – reference Manningham Leaf Program. This links to whole of catchment approach to specific weed species.
 - Mapping of existing projects that community groups

		are currently completing.
Item 4	8.50 – 8:56	<p>YREAC Update on 2019-21 committee</p> <p>Update on the recruitment process and expectations for 2019. Amanda is in the recruitment process. There have been many applications. Decision on new committee will be made in Feb, following Council meeting. New committee in the March meeting. Amanda thanked everyone on the committee for their involvement.</p>
Item 5	8.56 – 9:07	<p>Council Environment & Sustainability Update</p> <p>Simon Woodland – Environmental Stewardship; Jess Rae – Sustainability, Amanda Smith – Biodiversity</p> <p>ROG – review - Mel helped review this.</p> <p>BOP – credit register & data sharing. 2 compliance officers.</p> <p>Senate inquiry – deer, pigs & goats. Amanda presented. Submission available online.</p> <p>ERPAN – MW, VicRoads, CMA, brief for a consultant to complete a regional pest animal strategy.</p> <p>Staff workshops – rate rebates for encouraging conservation on private land.</p> <p>Future landscapes forum – RMIT synopsis on urban fringe municipality. Inc. impacts on street lighting.</p> <p>Gardens for Harvest – new program for Council.</p> <p>Gardens for Wildlife – new program.</p> <p>Sassafras – commencing in late Jan.</p> <p>Solar Landfills – tender will be in the market late Jan</p> <p>Electric vehicles – 2 in the fleet in early Jan.</p>
Item 6	9.07 – 9.08	<p>Other Matters</p> <p>Darcy wished Council staff well.</p>
Next Meeting		TBD once new committee elected.
Meeting Close	9.08	