



Yarra Ranges Environment Advisory Committee
Minutes
Wednesday 11th December 2019
Conference Room
Anderson Street Office Lilydale
5.30 – 8.00 pm

Meeting Open	5.32pm	Chairperson: Cr Mike Clarke
Members Present		Graeme George (member), Jeff Barlow (member), Lauren Dwyer (member), Michelle Masterson (member), Ron Sawyer (member), Jessica Fettell (member), Steve Hosking (Melbourne Water), Victoria Purdue (Parks Victoria), Cr. Mike Clarke, David Harper (YRC), Simon Woodland (YRC), Sarah Bond (YRC), Kym Saunders (YRC), Mark Varmalis (YRC)
Apologies		Laurence Gaffney (member), Melanie Birtchnell (member), Benjamin Viola (member), Luke Boontjes (member), Julian Hill (member), Darcy Duggan (member), Corinne Mays (Port Phillip and Westernport CMA), Joanne Antrobus (Parks Victoria), Leah Wheatley (DELWP), Jess Rae (YRC), Cr. Tim Heenan
Item 1	5.33 – 6.05	<p>Tree Strategy</p> <p>Nick Magree presented the progress of the Tree Strategy.</p>
		<p>Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Management Plan (2009) –the original tree policy was developed for Officers to plan and undertake works, not as a public document. • Tree Policy (2016) – was developed as a document to manage risk however lacked a long term vision for trees in Yarra Ranges. • New Tree Strategy – will contain a vision for Yarra Ranges’ townships- including a lens of climate change, along with other challenges such as aging tree stock. • Urban Forest Consulting are developing the draft Strategy. Meg (project lead) has consulted broadly across council and reviewed and integrated feedback, including from YREAC. • Strategy targets are until 2040. A key target is to increase canopy cover. Commercial areas are currently at 10.5% canopy cover – the strategy plans to increase this to 30%. • Another target is to increase annual street tree plantings from 500 to 2000 over the next few years to replace vacant street tree planting sites. • More data, mapping and photos are being sought to accompany the preliminary draft Strategy. • Comments from YREAC will be sought before the draft Strategy is presented to Council in early 2020

		<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft Strategy will outline the use of exotic and indigenous tree species depending on location. The intended outcome is robust and resilient tree canopy cover tolerant of increased temperatures in light of climate change. Roadsides that connect high biodiversity value will be planted with indigenous species. • The new draft Strategy will identify a long term vision for trees, replacement options and how to manage ageing trees, not only from the perspective of safety, which is covered in the existing Tree Policy (2016). • The draft Strategy will be complementary to existing strategies, such as the Environment Strategy (2015) and plans and strategies currently in development (Biodiversity Asset Strategy and the Liveable Climate Plan). The draft Tree Strategy will provide guidance for spending on priority areas and will also outline measures to evaluate tree management activities. • Department of Transport (VicRoads) plays a significant role in roadside tree management, as per their Tree Policy (2016). Plantings on roadsides managed by VicRoads will need approval to guide the process and outline maintenance agreements. VicRoads recognise that trees have benefits and it's not just about risk. • The draft Tree Strategy focuses on benefits of shade and cooling from large trees. Feedback on altering this to include multi-story trees and shrubs will be welcomed when the strategy next comes to YREAC for comment. • The draft Strategy will take into account avoiding heights that interfere with power lines – with the clear message: 'Right tree, right place'. • The draft Strategy will be presented to ELT in February and YREAC early in 2020. <p>ACTION: Incorporate Tree Strategy as an agenda after February.</p>
<p>Welcome</p>	<p>6.05-6.10</p>	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Acknowledgement of Country</p> <p><i>We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri People as the Custodians of this land. We also pay respects to all Aboriginal Community Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the history of this region.</i></p> <p>Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 3rd October 2019 (published on YRC website)</p> <p>Moved: Michelle Masterson</p> <p>Seconded: Jeff Barlow</p>
		<p>Warburton Mountain Biking Project (Mark Varmalis):</p> <p>Council staff intend to submit our EES Referral this Friday (13th December) for the Warburton Mountain Biking project.</p> <p>Once DELWP formally accept the referral (approx. 3 working days</p>

	<p>after receiving the submission and verifying it's complete) they will publicly publish the associated documents, including all reports.</p> <p>Documents will be available on the following website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/referrals-and-decisions <p>We will also be submitting our EPBC Act Referral. This will also be published on the following website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://epbcnotices.environment.gov.au/referralslist/ <p><i>These websites will not be activated until DELWP have formally accepted the referral.</i></p> <p>Stages 2 & 3 trails are included in the EES submission, resulting in a total length of potential trails of 186kms.</p> <p>Feedback through the EES may result in refining the extent of trails that will ultimately be included in the final Masterplan and stages of trails that would be delivered.</p> <p>The final Masterplan will be determined through the EES process and through consultation with land managers (PV & DELWP)</p> <p>The referrals are expected to be assessed by the end of January 2020. Feedback from the referrals process will be incorporated into the final draft Masterplan. The final draft Masterplan will form the basis of community and stakeholder consultation, anticipated to commence in March 2020.</p> <p>Information going out on the website won't be open for consultation. It is there for process transparency to show the information that DELWP are using to make their decision on the EES.</p>
6.12	<p>Declaration of Interest</p> <p>Any members with interest in matters to be discussed to declare.</p>
6.12 – 6.18	<p>Matters Arising/ Actions</p> <p>ACTION: Melanie to draft motion for next meeting on actions to declare a biodiversity emergency. Pending</p> <p>ACTION: David to address concerns about first and second order streams with stat planning and follow up on the inclusion of the updated data. Completed</p> <p>ACTION: David to send through a copy of the brief detailing the extra work Ecology Australia has been asked to provide. Completed</p> <p>ACTION: Include Jeff's information to committee with minutes. Completed</p> <p>ACTION: include Ribbons of Green evaluation with minutes. Completed</p> <p>ACTION: Steve to make high flow footage available to YREAC. Pending</p> <p>ACTION: Schedule time in next agenda for Tree Strategy update. Completed</p> <p>ACTION: check if Graeme's comments have been passed on to Tree Strategy Team. Completed</p> <p>ACTION: Schedule 15 minutes in the next agenda for Laurence to present on the planned burn at Launching Place. Completed</p> <p>ACTION: Subcommittee meeting – in next 3 weeks. Open to full YREAC. Wednesday 5:30-7:30. Completed</p>

		<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The document requested by Council from Ecology Australia relating to C148 has just been released. It has been sent to the Biodiversity sub-committee. There will be a chance to discuss when sub-committee are next back together. <p>Report back on the Biodiversity Asset Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In early December, Forum was presented with a report on what a Biodiversity Asset Strategy could do to improve the accuracy of the modelled data in C148. It outlined that ground truthing would be beneficial as it would help to gather health and condition information on vegetation as well as providing an investment tool for managing current assets. There will be further presentations on this in 2020 detailing a business case for funding the program of works. This will look at potential funding partners (DELWP, Parks Victoria, Port Phillip and Westernport CMA etc). The biodiversity sub-committee will continue to be consulted as these presentations continue.
Item 2	6.18– 7.05	<p>Liveable Climate Plan</p> <p>Simon Woodland to present the updated liveable climate plan</p>
		<p>Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last 17 of the last 20 years have been well below average rainfall. Climate Kelpies – good for talking about and explaining climate systems in Australia. Risk assessment on what are the top 10 risks to the global economy and well-being: Majority contributing to climate change or would only get worse in a climate changed world. Five priority actions for council, 5 priority actions with Our Communities. Principally supported targets: 60% below 2005 levels by 2025, zero emissions by 2040. Influencing the broader community in updated plan: Businesses, visitors and residents <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycling – fits into the principle that targets moving to a circular economy. The plan should look at bringing suburbs together with agriculture so that people can source food locally. None of the priorities presented incorporate fostering resilience through connection with local community. There is a big opportunity to connect people who feel helpless about the climate crisis with landholders where they can combine to build sustainable ventures. It would also attract eco-tourism. The two sites for the landfill solar farms are large enough to generate 150% of councils energy needs. It's estimated that the electricity needs of Council will increase in the future but there will still remain a surplus which will be sold into the grid. Funds from this will go into the community energy fund.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good that all departments are taking the plan on board. It would good if it could be emphasised with the grants team. Only a very small percentage of the \$250,000 worth of grants for this year went to the environment and an even smaller percentage to community energy. • Having electric charging stations is absolutely essential as they're a very visual reminder. Given the hills in Yarra Ranges, you cannot completely remove the need for cars.
Item 3	7.05 – 7.40	<p>Agency Reports Agency representatives to report.</p>
		<p>Discussion: ACTION: Reattach the agency reports with the minutes as they didn't open Melbourne Water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melbourne Water are about to embark on a program promoting the amenity of waterways (they're aesthetic appeal and the importance of removing litter). They are looking for hotspots where it is actively used by large number of people and where litter is presenting a problem. Program to promote removal of litter by those using the space. Interested to hear about places in Yarra Ranges where opportunities exist. • Suggested locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Warburton – Yarra River ○ Lilydale – Olinda Creek ○ Wonga Park, homestead road – Yarra River ○ Belgrave Lake Park ○ Healesville – near Queens Park <p>Parks Victoria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haining Farm – done with plantings. Waiting on road crossings that will likely go in early next year. • Deer Control - Completed deer control for district. Will be updates next year about deer control in the peri-urban area. • Chemical drums dumped in Dandenong Ranges NP – CFA & EPA cleaned up. Investigating and close to finding out who dumped it. Media release coming soon. • Recently changed park closure triggers. On TFB days all parks will be closed in Dandenong Ranges NP. Looking at around 6-7 days a year that will be TFB. • Suggested that PV could make areas along the road in the Dandenong's 'no parking' during Total Fire Ban days • A pilot project is happening soon to work with commercial harvesters harnessing deer carcasses. This will assess whether it's feasible given the number of restrictions on selling commercially. Need to be able to clean and refrigerate within an hour for human consumption but a longer time for pet food. Testing whether a refrigerated vehicle can be brought close enough to the shooting site.
Item 4	7.40 – 7.45	<p>Sustainability and Environment Team Updates Sustainability and Biodiversity Coordinators to report.</p>

		<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great event on at Mooroolbark – Liveable Homes in a Changing Climate. Around 150 attendees and Rod Quantock as MC. • Upcoming regional Conference run by EASL.
Item 5	7.45 – 8.04	<p>Committee Discussions</p> <p>A call for any other business to be discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFNP • YREAC Contact Form Process • Integrated Transport Strategy and feedback process
		<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There wasn't much appetite from committee in having a 'public' YREAC session as it likely wouldn't convey much to the public. • It would be good to demystify YREAC – who is part of the committee and what/where they represent. This could be included on the website but without contact information. <p>ACTION: Clearer summary on the website of what YREAC is and what it does</p> <p>ACTION: Discussion point next meeting to discuss further about having committee names on the website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need seen to continue having the contact form on the website as the kind of enquires that come through would be better addressed through existing council contact means. These enquiries should go to officers, not the committee. <p>ACTION: Remove the contact form for YREAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forums for environmental groups will be reintroduced in 2020 so that there is the opportunity to connect across the community. • Not everyone has been added yet to Gov Teams. <p>ACTION: Re-add members to Gov Teams</p> <p>ACTION: GFNP on next agenda including the circulation of information provided by Jeff</p>
	8.04	Supper
Next Meeting		Thursday 13 th February
Meeting Close	8:04pm	