

NSW Wildlife Council, Inc.

General Meeting Number 16

Wednesday 24 March 2010 at 1.20pm
Department of Environment Climate Change & Water
Bridge Street, Hurstville

Minutes

1. Meeting open and Welcome

1.1 Present: Audrey Koosmen (Chair) NATF; Stan Wood (Vice Chair) WIRES; Shirley Lack (Secretary and Insurance Officer) NARG, Julia McConnell (Treasurer) IGL, Marny Bonner ASR, Elena Guarracino (Media Officer and Revenue Officer) LAOKO, Lorraine Vass (Minute Secretary) FOK, Philip Machin NARG (Alt.), Georgia Gowanloch SONA, John Gorham FAWNA, John Meany NANA, Caroline Enfield WIRES (Alt.), Georgie Whaley NRWC; Gwen Parry-Jones Wildlife ARC; Jan Brazel Wildlife ARC (Alt.), Sally Jacka TVWC (Alt.), Helen Kennedy, Sydney Wildlife (Alt.), Coralie Tarlinton Wildcare Qbn, Shona Lorigan ORRCA (Alt.), Brian Chetwynd NTWC, Andrew Burton Wildlife Aid, Damien Brell, Wildlife Aid (Alt.), Peter Daniels, Corrective Services NSW Wildlife Care Centre, Lisa Iwan, Corrective Services NSW.

1.2 Apologies: Ilona Roberts TVWC, Sonja Elwood Sydney Wildlife, Greg Tarlinton Wildcare Qbn (Alt.), Ronnie Ling ORRCA, Cheryl Cochrane NRWC (Alt.), John Mostyn IGL (Alt.).

1.3 Teleconferencing: Jill Taylor Hunter Koala Preservation Society

1.4 Register of Proxies: None

2. Guest speakers and presentations

2.1: 2010 Wildlife Biodiversity Survey: Dr Dan Lunney, Senior Research Ecologist, and Ms Corinna Orscheg, Project Officer, Scientific Services Division, DECCW: 9.40am -10.20am

2.2: Draft Rehabilitation of Protected Fauna Policy: Dr Miranda Gott, and Dr Daniel van Dyk, Major Projects Unit, DECCW: 3.30pm – 5.15pm

See notes in Attachment 1 (p.7)

3. **Report of Meeting with Deputy Director General DECCW/ Head, Parks & Wildlife Group, Sally Barnes**

The Chair reported on the meeting between Ms Barnes and the Council, represented by Audrey Koosmen (Chair), Julia McConnell (Treasurer) and Elena Guarracino (Revenue Officer), held on 23 March 2010 at 3pm- 4.30pm

Background

3 December 2009 the Revenue Officer wrote to Ms Barnes requesting extending the current funding arrangements which are due to expire on 30 June 2010 for a further three years.

A follow-up meeting was arranged.

24 February 2010 Ms Barnes gave in-principle support to the request for additional funding at current levels to 1 July 2013. A report on the initiatives undertaken and a new three-year strategic plan before the end of the financial year were also requested.

Meeting agenda:

1. Ongoing DECCW funding for insurance coverage to members
2. Review of NWC performance and partnering options
3. Additional secretariat/administrative support
4. Timeframe for responding to the two draft protected fauna documents presently in circulation for comment (i.e. Code of Practice and Rehabilitation Policy) and follow-up procedure

Meeting outcomes

- The D-G expressed the Department's appreciation of the work undertaken by the Council and its member groups.
- The D-G was very supportive of continuing present Public Liability and Volunteer Illness and Accident insurance coverage and adding Director Protection coverage to approximately \$25,000 pa from 2010 -2013 (assuming present day charges – she should be advised if costs rise significantly).
- The D-G supported a Memorandum of Understanding being drawn up between DECCW and the Council.
- The D-G would value early advice of wildlife management issues via the Manager, Wildlife Licensing and Management Unit in the first instance and directly from the Chair if necessary.
- The D-G would appreciate receiving an invitation to attend a meeting of the Council at least annually.
- The D-G requires annually a one-page review of the Council's achievements and of the challenges it faces to work effectively (she suggested, for example, in principle support to make DECCW office space available if the Council were to attract funding for secretariat assistance).
- The D-G is aware of other benefits brought about by the Council, such as networking between groups, putting aside differences to discuss major issues around the table, and the valuable link it provides between DECCW and wildlife groups.
- The D-G acknowledges the Council's initiating role in the development of the Draft Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Protected Fauna. An extended time-frame to the end of April for submissions to both the Draft Code and the Draft Rehabilitation of Protected Fauna Policy was addressed with the D-G agreeing to follow-up with the major Projects Unit.
- The D-G gave her assurance that the process for consideration of feed-back would be transparent.

The Chair declared her satisfaction that the meeting had been both positive and productive.

Brian Chetwynd, representing NTWC and a new-comer to the Council expressed his appreciation to the delegation, and commended the Chair for her report and its content.

4. Confirmation of Minutes of General Meetings nos. 14 held 7 May 2009 and 15 held 13 August 2009

4.1 Marny Bonner moved and **Georgie Whaley** seconded ratification of the draft Minutes of meeting number 14 held on 7 May 2009. **Carried unanimously**

4.1.1 Julia McConnell moved and **Georgie Whaley** seconded adoption of the draft Minutes of meeting number 15 held on 13 August 2009. **Carried unanimously**

4.2. Business arising

4.2.1 Telstra Sponsorship Proposal

As no progress has been made on this item in 18 months it was agreed to move it from the agenda.

4.2.2. Meeting with NSW Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water

The Chair will arrange for the new Executive to meet with the Hon Frank Sartor as soon as possible.

4.2.3. Impact Statement

Phil Machin outlined progress in compiling the statement and its relationship to the Strategic Plan's priority objective 1 (establish and consolidate the Council's position as a viable and respected participant in the conservation and environmental movement, strategies 1 and 2).

Although still incomplete it has been used to support bids for grants and to prepare briefs and letters.

There was agreement that further compilation was unnecessary at this stage. The project would be removed from the agenda until such time that a future joint data collection project with DECCW might warrant re-examination of the concept.

4.2.4. Native Animal Keepers Consultative Committee

Stan Wood who represents WIRES on the Committee reported briefly on the most recent meeting held in February focusing on the widespread expectation that reptiles will soon be for sale in pet shops. The matter is presently with the Minister.

Helen Kennedy moved and **Coralie Tarlinton** seconded that Julia McConnell draft on the Council's behalf a letter to the Minister for the Environment, The Hon Frank Sartor, opposing the introduction of reptiles being sold through pet shops and setting out the reasons which include anticipated over-supply with contingent problems of public's lack of knowledge about husbandry, disease, release and lax licensing requirements. **Carried unanimously.**

Georgia Gowanloch moved and **John Meany** seconded that the Council write to the DECCW expressing its grave concern about the licensing requirements for holding reptiles; in particular the low age of 12 years and there being no training requirements. **Carried unanimously.**

Actions: Julia McConnell to draft both letters and forward to the Secretary for formatting etc.

4.2.5. Strategic Plan

It had been agreed during the Annual General Meeting to defer review of the strategic plan priorities until the meetings in August.

4.2.6. NSW Wildlife State Emergency – NWC Capability and

4.2.7 Major Incident Response

Contingent on successful discussion with the Department of Primary Industry and

Investment (DPII) regarding the appropriateness of wildlife rehabilitation involvement, it was agreed to defer these items for incorporation into the review of the strategic plan.

Shirley Lack moved and **Julia McConnell** seconded that Audrey Koosmen, Elena Guarracino and John Gorham meet with appropriate DPII personnel as soon as practicable to discuss matters of mutual interest and benefit including Council members' involvement in and preparedness for dealing with wildlife affected by natural disasters and report back to the Council's meeting in May. **Carried unanimously.**

Action: Chair to arrange meeting.

4.2.8 Flying Fox Information Conservation Network (FFICN) Conference

Members were referred to Ilona Roberts' report on the Conference emailed 11 August 2009. There was agreement to remove this item from the Agenda.

4.2.9 Hunting in National Parks

Julia McConnell moved and **Georgie Whaley** seconded that Vice Chair, Stan Wood have delegation to act on behalf of the Council within the existing partnership of groups opposing the introduction of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Amendment Bill 2009*. **Carried unanimously.**

Matter arising: In order to maximize the impact of the Council's opposition form letters should be forwarded to member groups at the appropriate time.

Action: Coralie Tarlinton to arrange forwarding of the Council letterhead and logo to Stan Wood.

4.2.10. Statewide Database

In Ilona Roberts' absence discussion on this matter was deferred.

4.2.11. DECCW Boundary Maps

The shortcomings of the emailed version of the boundary maps forwarded by the Secretary was discussed at length.

Action: Andrew Burton will request Allan McLean (DECCW) to distribute the interactive maps on disc to all member groups.

4.2.12 NWC Organisational Change

There was agreement to remove this item from the Agenda.

5. Reports

5.1. Treasurer's Report

5.1.1 Statement of Accounts

Julia spoke to her report, noting there had been little expenditure.

5.1.2 Approval for Expense Reimbursements

Representatives may claim for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses incurred in meeting attendance, namely fares (or fuel) and accommodation if it is impossible to arrive and depart on the day of the meeting. Receipts must be forwarded with the Council's form for reimbursement.

Coralie Tarlinton moved and **Stan Wood** seconded that claims for reimbursements to be lodged by Marny Bonner, Lorraine Vass, Illona Roberts, Julia McConnell, Audrey Koosmen, John Gorham, Georgie Whaley, Coralie Tarlinton, Brian Chetwynd, Sally Jacka and Elena Guarracino be approved for payment. **Carried unanimously.**

Action: The Treasurer to distribute the Expenses Reimbursements Claim Form by email.

Lorraine Vass moved and **Coralie Tarlinton** seconded that the Treasurer's Report, comprising payments, receipts, balance statement and expenditure against budget from 1 July 2009 to 28 February 2010, be adopted. **Carried unanimously.**

5.2 Insurance Officer's Report

Shirley reiterated the DECCW offer to cover Directors' protection insurance. She will re-circulate the product disclosure documents and certificates of currency. Attention was drawn to an incident involving a WIRES member. All members were reminded they should submit reports to the Insurance Officer of any incident that could potentially result in a claim. Claims and incident reports must be forwarded by members' insurance contacts and not the individual involved.

Action: Stan Wood will circulate the WIRES Incident Report Form for other groups to adapt if they choose.

Georgia Gowanloch moved and **Julia McConnell** seconded that the Insurance Officer's report be adopted. **Carried unanimously.**

5.3 Media Officer's Report

Nothing to report.

5.4. Revenue Officer's Report

Ellie tabled her revised report covering the period November/December 2009 to March 2010, together with a funding proposal to DP11 regarding the Department's annual Animal Welfare Grants Program.

In view of the earlier decision to arrange a meeting with DP11 (see items 4.2.6/4.2.7) the funding proposal is for information at this stage.

Action: Secretary to list DP11 Funding Proposal on the agenda of the May General Meeting.

5.5. Nature Conservation Council of NSW (NCC) Report

Sally Jacka moved and **Coralie Tarlinton** seconded that the NCC Representative's report of the 2009 Annual Conference and recommendation that the NWC develops strategies which will result in more active membership of the NCC be noted. **Carried unanimously.**

6. General Business

7th National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference Adelaide June 22-24 2010

Marny Bonner moved and **Helen Kennedy** seconded that the Chair proceeds with preparing a presentation for delivery at the 2010 National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference to be held in Adelaide in June 2010 to include the Council's objectives, achievements, and position on a national council, etc. Council will meet the costs for the Chair to attend the Conference. **Carried unanimously.**

7. Other Business

7.1. Companion Animal Act 1998

Julia spoke to her report which had been circulated by email on 18 March, explaining that she and a colleague had been invited to attend the February meeting of the Companion Animals Stakeholders Committee held by the Division of Local Government, Department of Premier & Cabinet to provide a wildlife protection perspective.

Stan Wood moved and **Georgie Whaley** seconded that the Council write to the Hon Barbara Perry, Minister for Local Government requesting a place on the Local Government Companion Animals Stakeholders Committee, and delegating Julia McConnell with the authority to represent the Council at future meetings. **Carried unanimously.**

Action: Secretary to prepare the letter in consultation with Julia McConnell

7.2. Operational Processes

The Chair reiterated that all initiatives must be authorized by the Executive. She will discuss with Executive members appropriate processes and practices regarding communication and consultation.

7.3. Friends of Waterways Wildlife Park, Gunnedah

It was agreed to follow progress of the situation.

Action: Chair to liaise with the Manager, Wildlife Licensing and Management Unit, DECCW

7.4. Nomination for Membership: Corrective Services (NSW) Wildlife Care Centre

Julia McConnell moved and **Audrey Koosmen** seconded that the nomination for membership received by Corrective Services (NSW) Wildlife Care Centre be approved. **Carried unanimously.**

7.5. 2009 WPSA Serventy Conservation Medal

It was agreed that the Council write to June Butcher, founder of the Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre in WA, to congratulate her on being awarded the 2009 Serventy Conservation Medal.

Action: Secretary to prepare and forward letter.

7.6 Notices

Georgia Gowanloch, SONA advised of an Australian company, AustBanners, working off-shore in the Phillipines which is offering competitive prices on good quality, weather resistant banners. Contact Greg through website.

8. Next General Meeting

Subject to room availability, Wednesday 19 May at DECCW, Hurstville, to commence at 9.30am

Action: Chair to book and advise.

Meeting closed at 3.27pm

Attachment 1

2. Guest speakers and presentations

2.1: 2010 Wildlife Biodiversity Survey

Dr Dan Lunney is inviting wildlife rehabilitation groups to contribute their records to the above Survey which is updating the statewide postal survey carried out in 2006. He outlined the on-going relationship between the Department's Scientific Services Division and wildlife rehabilitation groups, referring to the potential that voluntary wildlife rehabilitators have to make a valuable contribution to scientific research and to wildlife management across the State.

He circulated copies and spoke to a summary document, (*Realising the potential of carer records to contribute to the conservation of wildlife in NSW: an ecologist's perspective*, Dan Lunney, DECC NSW), sample graphs derived from koala data, and two maps (Probability of Koala Occurrence) and (Animal Road-Kill), from the 2006 Survey.

Following discussion about the considerable confusion which surrounded member groups' involvement in the 2006 Survey, **Lorraine Vass** moved and **Stan Wood** seconded that the Secretary write to Dr Lunney requesting that he contacts each member group in writing, outlining appropriate background information, the species he wants reported, period, data fields, format, deadline, payment and anything else of relevance. **Carried unanimously.**

Action: That the Secretary address the letter to Dr Lunney, attention Ms Corinna Orscheg, Project Officer.

2.2 Draft Rehabilitation of Protected Fauna Policy

Dr Daniel van Dyk briefly outlined background to the review and the consultation of the past twelve months which has engaged the Wildlife Licensing and Management Unit, Regional Managers and Rangers. The NWC had been consulted at the start of the project and again in May 2009. In response to a question from NARG, Daniel said there had been no direct contact with wildlife groups or IGLs in forming the draft policy since May.

A particular aim of the revision is to clarify the requirement that DECCW regional offices must be involved in wildlife rehabilitation and to standardize that involvement.

He clarified the short notice, confirming that circulation prior to the meeting was for purposes of preview and group discussion. **Written submissions from member groups are invited until 4 May 2010 and can be emailed to: daniel.vandyk@environment.nsw.gov.au**

WIRES and Friends of the Koala voiced support for the overall direction of the revision.

Friends of the Koala drew attention to the impracticality of clause 12 in regard to single species groups. This was readily acknowledged.

Several NWC members including ASR, NARG, IGLs, and SONA had significant concerns about the impact of some of the proposed changes.

Dr Gott spoke to 'administrative fairness', meaning that any policy, which cannot detail every option, must be applied with a view to fairness.

She emphasized that the process for consideration of feed-back will be issues-based; with comments collated and summarized and amendments proposed brought back to the Council for discussion.