

# *Minutes*

## *NSW Wildlife Council Inc.*

### **General Meeting #27**

28 February 2013

9.30am to 3pm

OEH Offices, Bridge Street Hurstville

**MEETING OPEN:** 09.37 - Round table introductions of those present.

**PRESENT:** Julia McConnell IGLs, Shirley Lack NARG, Audrey Koosmen NATF, Meredith Ryan FAWNA, Geoff Bartlett HKPS, Jackie Maisey NTWC, Jane Mills WRSC, Lorraine Vass FOK, Rochelle Ferris ASR, Peter Graham LAOKO, Leanne Taylor WIRES (until lunch break), Bill Thompson WIRES (until lunch break), Gwen Parry-Jones Alt. Wildlife ARC, Jan Brazel Wildlife ARC, Ilona Roberts NRWC and Shona Lorigan ORRCA.

**APOLOGIES:** Phil Machin NARG Alt, Duane March PPP, Helen Kennedy SMW, Tweed Valley (no current rep), James Fitzgerald Wildcare Q, Bruce Mulligan Wildlife Aid.

**GUESTS:** Josey Sharrad IFAW (until lunch break), Ron Haering OEH (until morning tea break)

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Steve Coleman RSPCA (until morning tea break) – see Attachment.

**GUEST:** Ron Haering advised that only ½ of groups have submitted their reports and not all of these have submitted as required. Ron hopes to give a comprehensive report at our next meeting when all reports have been received and collated.

**NWC Website Map** – The Secretary clarified with Leanne Taylor which branches cover certain areas for the NWC Website map as some branches on the WIRES website are not consistent with the OEH map. The Secretary advised if any groups are not happy how their areas are delineated on the NWC Website map, would they please advise without delay. OEH needs to liaise with NWC Secretary when changes to license areas are made or made known to OEH in order for the NWC Map to be updated on the NWC Webpage.

**Hunting Issue** – Points raised in discussion with Sally Barnes

- Sally said the Minister was doing her best to make these safe.
- How it will work – areas open for hunting within National Parks will have a liaison officer to inform members of public when and where hunting will be conducted and/or closure of a National Park.
- People advised to look at NPWS website for all details of areas open for Hunting.

Geoff Bartlett Proposed “That NWC conveys to the Minister (Environment) our dissatisfaction with her administration should she not repeal amendments to the Game and Feral Animal Control Act, 2002 which allows shooting in national parks and other reserves. And at the same time repeal the amendments to the Game & Feral Animal Control Act and the National Parks and Wildlife Act that transfers the responsibility for hunting native ducks to the NSW Game Council.” Seconded L. Vass - Carried

**MORNING TEA** - Meeting reconvened 11.40

1. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** –Declarations have still not been received from Representatives of Koala Preservation Society, Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers, Wildlife Carers Mudgee Region, Corrective Services NSW, SONA and from Alternates of Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers, Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers, ORRCA, Pet Porpoise Pool, RRANA, Wildlife Carers Mudgee Region and SONA.

2. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 8 November 2012** – Minutes tabled and moved for acceptance I Roberts, Seconded M. Ryan – Carried.

3. **BUSINESS ARISING**

3.1. **Shared Database Update** – Helen Kennedy reported that it is too difficult to resource and for all groups to agree on a shared database as needs are different in each area. Thanks given to all those involved, Rochelle Ferris, Andrew Burton in particular.

3.2. **Grants to Wildlife Rehabilitators** – James Fitzgerald’s contribution has not yet been received and James has advised he does not have the funds. He has committed to pay his share by June 2013 and the Secretary is to follow up with a letter to James. The full grant has so far been funded by the NWC. There has been some local media which is shown on the Website.

3.3. **Firearms Licensing** – Phil Machin – NSW Firearms Registry has agreed to the Firearms Safety Brief proposal. Information has been distributed to the groups. Phil Machin was thanked for his determination and follow through to bring this vexed subject to a good conclusion. Lorraine Vass thanked also for her efforts with the Firearms Registry.

3.4. **NSW Kangaroo Management Change to S121 & S123 Occupier Licence Applications Proposal** – Audrey Koosmen, Shirley Lack and Julia McConnell met with Sally Barnes, Ann King and Terry Bailey yesterday. There was no good news on this issue from yesterday’s meeting. There will be no changes to licenses. There will be no consultative process with neighbouring landholders. It was suggested by Sally and Terry that a group or person should establish a good working relationship with local wildlife officers to gain local information on problem spots. There can be problems with too many rehabilitated animals being released in one area, causing unnatural populations – groups should take caution and ensure their release protocols are not contributing to this problem. Suggested a Register of where care groups were working with Kangaroos. This should be done on a local basis. Minimum area for a licence to cull is 25 acres. A licence given to a 15 acre property was issued improperly. Did Rangers go out to inspect? They should but this does not always happen. NPWS were adamant they were not going to change the licensing system. In a non-culling area the local NPWS reps should inspect individual properties prior to any culling license being issued. There needs to be a really good reason for issue. Came away from the meeting very disappointed particularly with the deaths of kangaroos from recent wildfires and bad weather events. Julia took from the meeting that groups should establish very good working relationships with their area NPWS offices and ensure no overpopulations due to release protocols. Groups need to ensure they are not rehabilitating animals where there are no places to safely and properly release them. The kangaroo meat industry is a million dollar business and this negates our voice making it very difficult for us to have an effect. Gwen asked if anyone was involved with the Canberra kangaroo cull.

3.5. **Public Fund Bank Account Update** – Shirley Lack reported that the Public Fund account is with Westpac but currently has no funds. Secretary to contact Register of Environmental Organisations to enquire progress of NWC’s application for Tax Deductible status.

3.6. **Smart Phone App Update** – Shirley Lack – Josey advised that IFAW are not able to develop the App in house and suggested that rather than an App, a Mobile-based website be developed which would be a cheaper option and would be accessible from any device. This would be easier for content management. The data needed would be an Excel spreadsheet of all groups, areas, postcodes and area of operations, including rescue telephone number. Agreed it should include some basics of what to do until help is available. This data is needed within two weeks to get this operating by the end of June. Promotion could be via websites, local media including community radio. IFAW will fund and manage the project. The information to be used will be supplied by our webmaster and those details will be checked against the OEH website. Josey was thanked for her work on this and her participation at today’s meeting.

**3.7. NATF Wildlife Group Audit** – Audrey Koosmen -- Audrey tabled documentation detailing the Audit results and that the Minister is to take some of NATF's area next June which will be offered to other neighbouring groups or offered to a new group. NATF can reapply. The area to be taken is a good operating area for NATF. The Audit has been instigated by the Minister and not by the area office which is not consistent with OEH policy. An appeal process has been denied.  
Moved Meredith Ryan - "NWC to write to Robert Quirk, Regional Manager OEH Hunter NP Division questioning the Audit process of NATF, and why the Audit deviated from the process described in the Wildlife Rehabilitation Policy (include Section numbers)" seconded L. Vass – Carried (WIRES abstained from the vote).

## LUNCH

**3.8. Codes of Practice, Wombats, Macropods & Reptiles** – Audrey Koosmen – Moved Meredith Ryan "That no further action be taken to develop Species Rehabilitation codes until the Audit process is settled to the satisfaction of NWC member groups". Secunder R. Ferris – Carried unanimously.

**3.9. Grant Opportunities** – Audrey Koosmen – Rochelle Ferris has a list of weblinks for grants that are open at the moment. Rochelle will distribute the links to the list. Lead Community Grant is available for environmental groups for administrative assistance. Solid projects are needed to apply for grants. Decisions need to be taken before the next meeting so Rochelle Ferris will be in contact quickly.

## 4. REPORTS

**4.1. Chair** - The Chair spoke to her report which was tabled.

**4.2. Secretary** – Correspondence list circulated and appended to Minutes. Moved for acceptance Jane Mills, seconded Jackie Maisey - Carried

**4.3. Treasurer** – Treasurer's Report circulated and appended to Minutes. Moved for acceptance Peter Graham, seconded Rochelle Ferris – Carried.

**4.4. Membership** – list dated February 2013 circulated and amended. Members are responsible for ensuring their contacts are up to date.

**4.5. Insurance** – due for renewal on 5 May 2013. The AON questionnaire has been sent to all groups for completion. Member groups must expedite return of the forms to the Insurance Officer to facilitate insurance renewal.

**4.6. Media** – IFAW press release went out to local media without a photograph. FAWNA media area resulted in 2 articles – Port Macquarie and Great Lakes with photos provided by FAWNA.

**4.7. NCC Contact** – Nothing to report

## 5. GENERAL BUSINESS

**5.1. FF Emergency Contingency Plan** – Ilona Roberts – The need for an Emergency Contingency Plan was discussed. Audrey Koosmen and Ilona Roberts to discuss bringing together all Flying Fox groups to look at a plan.

**5.2. Wildlife Group Locator** – Jane Mills – covered in 3.6

**5.3. Funding** – Audrey Koosmen – included in Chair's Report

**5.4. Strategic Plan** – Shona Lorigan – NWC has updated the Strategic Plan and it has been distributed. Phil Machin raised a concern around Goal d Objective 4, however Phil was not present. To be revisited next meeting

**5.5. NSW fox rescue organisation** – Moved Peter Graham that “NWC needs to contact DPI to find out the background to this reported group (Website [www.sydneyfoxrescue.com](http://www.sydneyfoxrescue.com)) and take appropriate action if they are the licensing authority expressing concern that there could be any form of licensed Protection Society for an animal group that is regarded as vermin.” Seconded L. Vass – Carried. Suggested by Julia McConnell that it may already be too late to have any affect.

**5.6. Bow & Arrow Issue** – Jackie Maisey – There are no “competencies” required for the use of bows and arrows in National Parks.

**5.7. Wildlife Rescue Inc Media Release** – Meredith Ryan – contact is continuing with Glenn Storrie OEH re problems with WRI.

**5.8. Vets on Line** – (Moved up on Agenda) Audrey Koosmen & IFAW – Josey Sharrad advised that this project was a conception when she arrived at IFAW and that she has looked into it and feels it will be very expensive. IFAW can only pay for 5 hours per week. The concept is that a vet would be on line to advise online however could only advise on nutrition and husbandry and not diagnose or be able to prescribe. Originally it was intended to be used in times of disaster. Lorraine Vass made the point that there are no career paths for wildlife vets as there is no money for them at the end of the process and that Government sponsored Wildlife clinics would provide a career path for them.

A suggestion was made by Peter Graham that participating vets would need to have wildlife experience. Lorraine Vass queries whether the need has been ascertained. Proposal started as an On-Line Service to carers in NSW in remote areas and/or in Emergency situations.

Jackie Maisey felt that a 24 hour time delay was too long. There is already in place a good networking system in NSW where there are a lot of experienced carers available for advice and guidance.

Shirley Lack felt there would not be a “bang for your buck” and that Vets are not really the right source for husbandry information.

Josey will liaise with Kathryn Keene of Ozark to see if there is a similar service being offered.

ORRCA has specialised need with organisations like Taronga backing up local vets. Shona wondered whether money might better be put into further training and education on specialised fauna species.

Pete Graham talked about the more remote groups, e.g. Broken Hill, suggesting RFDS or someone in a remote area could hold drugs and developing or promoting bodies such as Charles Sturt University to set remote area wildlife veterinary clinics with students doing training stints.

Lorraine Vass commented the Government gets off scot free with wildlife veterinary costs – that IFAW could be involved in propounding government supported regional wildlife clinics. Josey has been networking vigorously on wildlife issues, and with the Australian Veterinary Association on a proposal for wildlife training workshop for vets, and vet staff.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS –**

Audrey Koosmen advised that at the meeting yesterday with Sally Barnes, Ann King had confirmed that our Insurance funding for a further 3 year period was assured.

Jane Mills advised Equine Hendra vaccine is now available.

Lorraine Vass advised the NSW Koala Count will be undertaken in November 2013.

Cooma/Monaro Shire Council has set up a Koala Management Committee

Lismore Koala Plan of Management approved after an 18 year period

Rochelle Ferris has resigned as General Manger of Australian Seabird Rescue effective 26 April and Kath Southwell will be taking over. Rochelle will remain as NWC Rep.

Geoff Bartlett was tasked to find more information on report re. Chlamydia in koalas. Lorraine Vass reported NSW Animal Ethics approval and Scientific Approvals needed prior to more research on the vaccine.

Jackie Maisey suggests isolated groups who aren't able to participate in NWC meetings are given contacts for help with animal issues.

- 1. NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, 28 May 2013, OEH Office, Hurstville
- 2. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** Saturday, 24 August and Sunday 25 August, 2013 at The Centre, Randwick

**MEETING CLOSED: 2.54pm**