

MINUTES

NSW Wildlife Council Inc. General Meeting #35

Tuesday, 24th February 2015
OEH Offices, Room 1.04, 43 Bridge St., HURSTVILLE

CHAIR: *Audrey Koosmen*

MEETING OPEN: 10:00 am

PRESENT:

Geoff	Bartlett	Hunter Koala Preservation Society (from 10:10)
Jan	Brazel	Wildlife ARC
Jill	Dean	Native Animal Trust Fund
Don	Eagleton	Australian Seabird Rescue
Peter	Graham	LAOKO (Snowy Mtns Wildlife Rescue)
Naomi	Henry	Wildcare Queanbeyan
Audrey	Koosmen	Native Animal Trust Fund
Shona	Lorigan	ORRCA (from 10:25)
Jackie	Maisey	Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers
Sandra	Norris	Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers (from 10:25)
Ilona	Roberts	Tweed Valley Wildlife Rescue
Meredith	Ryan	FAWNA (NSW) Inc
Lorraine	Vass	Friends of the Koala (from 10:25)
Richard	Woodman	Wildlife Rescue South Coast

APOLOGIES: List to be appended to Minutes

INTRODUCTIONS & GUESTS:

Chris Slade, Senior Ecologist, Forestry Corporation of NSW / Hardwood Forests
Welcome by Chair.

1. PRESENTATION – 10:00 TO 11:00 - Chris Slade

Address to the NWC on work done by the Forestry Corp. to create a Field guide for Koalas on Forestry land. The Field Guide is presented in electronic version for smart phones and a printed glove box version.

Chris Slade's presentation was followed by Maree McCaskill, General Manager, Timber NSW (formerly NSW FPA) who spoke about the genesis and development of the Koala Field Guide and Code of Practise.

<http://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/resources/pubs>

Open discussion points:

- logging on private land;

- koala mapping project – not very far advanced – first stage released this month; Forestry mapping project undertaken by DPI needs ground validation;
- Is there truth to poison baits being laid when forests replanted – not to Chris's knowledge;
- R. Woodman spoke about the comprehensive Wingecarribee koala mapping project;
- training for harvesting staff needs to be pitched at a layperson's level.

Chair thanked Chris and Maree for their informative presentations and expressed NWC's hope that there would be continued liaison.

2. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – GENERAL MEETING #34 on 25th November 2015.**

MOTION: Proposed: R. Woodman; Seconded: J. Brazel

That the Minutes of the NWC General Meeting held on the 25th November 2014 be accepted including editorial changes.

Motion - Carried

3. **REPORTS:**

3.1. **Chair** – Audrey Koosmen

MOTION: Proposed: A. Koosmen; Seconded: R. Woodman

That the Chairperson's Report be accepted and appended to Minutes

Motion - Carried

- It has been a very busy time of year for all groups;
- NWC committee members are also heavily committed to workload of their groups.
- Retaining the NWC Website was a major task successfully completed. FAWNA's webmaster took on the task of transporting NWC website to another server due to cancellation of services by BAMC.
- The Website Map was not transportable but after negotiations with OEH over final maps for groups' boundaries the website will improve;
- good liaison with WIRES over biodiversity legislation review and 10.50. Wombat BPG;
- Flying-fox Camp Management Policy Review submission was lodged. Thanks given to S. Lorigan, M. Ryan and I. Roberts for their work.
- NWC has not yet met with Minister Stokes.

3.2. **Secretary** – Richard Woodman

Correspondence

MOTION: Proposed: R. Woodman; Seconded: Don Eagleton

That the Secretary's verbal Report be accepted.

Motion

- The Secretary reports it has proved to be a nightmare keeping track of correspondence.
- Vast chunks of NWC correspondence prior to 31-12-14 is not accessible due to a computer malfunction.

- Dedicated email addresses and correct subject matter is improving matters.
- Correspondence list is a work in progress.

Discussion: It was questioned whether this is a systems failure or due to change of web provider. Secretary believes most important documentation has been retrieved. The meeting agreed that a Register of Correspondence is required to be presented to each General meeting and Reps were reminded that all business correspondence must be copied to the Secretary.

3.3. Treasurer – Shirley Lack

There was no Treasurer's report because of the Treasurer's absence due to illness. Treasurer¹ is to be asked for an email report that will be emailed to the Reps group.

3.4. Insurance – Shirley Lack –

There is no report due to illness. Treasurer² is to be asked for an email report that will be emailed to the Reps group.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING #34 HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2014:

4.1. PROGRESS ON WOMBAT BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES (WBPG) – Audrey Koosmen

There have been several project officers employed by OEH and one has been tasked with finalising the WBPG. WIRES has been contacted with a timeframe to reply. Wombat BPG is under review by OEH at present. Review guide will be sent out to an independent reviewer for comment, and it is then planned to adopt the WBPG by April 2015.

Question: Will this WBPG be subject to a review period? It is intended there will be a trial period, followed by a review, before the WBPG becomes a Code in a possible timeframe of 18 months.

4.2. FIREARMS UPDATE – Audrey Koosmen

Letter received from Firearms Registry Rep Tina Walker supporting NWC's request that legislation be changed to validate wildlife rehabilitators to be recognised as eligible to hold Animal Welfare category on firearms licences for purpose of euthanasia of injured wildlife.

Question: Is this a point where we could ask for permission to shoot in National Parks?

¹ Chair to ask Treasurer to provide Treasurer's and Insurance Officer's Report.

² Chair to ask Treasurer to provide Treasurer's and Insurance Officer's Report.

Suggestion: Let's get this step satisfactorily achieved first – then proceed to that next step.

Action: ³Chair to provide copy of letter to Reps.

4.3. OEH Project Officer – Audrey Koosmen

Ron Haering is reemployed by OEH in Biodiversity Unit as a Project officer looking after Strategic Planning and other specific projects. He sends his greetings to all Reps. It was stressed that Geoff Ross is still the formal contact liaison between OEH and NWC.

4.4. PROPOSED MEETING WITH Environment Minister, Rob Stokes re: Regional Office discretionary funding – Lorraine Vass

Meeting has not yet taken place but will be arranged after the NSW Elections.

4.5. LAPTOP COMPUTER & PRINTER – Audrey Koosmen

These have been purchased and are held at Chair's private premises. The previous laptop has been assessed as obsolete and will be written off.

Motion: That the Vice Chair is approved to spend up to \$100 on provision of an external hard drive and to put NWC documents on a thumb drive for the Chair. Proposed: J. Maisey; Seconded I. Roberts – **Motion Carried.**

5. GENERAL BUSINESS:

5.1. REGIONAL KOALA STAKEHOLDER MEETING SPONSORED BY SYDNEY UNIVERSITY KOALA HUB, FACULTY OF VETERINARY SCIENCE held on 3rd February '15 – Lorraine Vass

Activity previously reported. It was a most interesting day with a good exchange of information. The aim was to bring across the board people who work with koalas to liaise and attempt to work out a few issues that the Koala Hub people could progress. About 15 presentations were given including from within the faculty and by external scientists, a few local government people and a few carers. Hunter Koala, WIRES, Friends of Koala were represented – not attending were the specialist koala groups, KIC and KPS.

Conclusion: 3 broad issues were reviewed and three working groups established:

- Training
- Risk assessment: release or translocation
- Koala distribution density and disease distribution and prevalence.

Genesis of the Hub was from early days of Pennant Hills Koala Park's funds originally slated for a koala clinic that was never developed. Funds were invested and expressions of interest were called for the funds to be used. Application process was undertaken resulting in the formation of the Koala Hub.

³ Chair to send copy of letter to Reps.

L. Vass reported the Koala Hub has been of real assistance in transfers, tests, and other matters and she believes the group will be extremely helpful in the future. What the faculty is doing will start to benefit koala conservation across the state.

Question: Is it possible the individual groups could be included on the information distribution list? L. Vass⁴ could suggest to the Koala Hub that all care groups licensed to handle koalas could be included.

L. Vass is on the current Board of the Koala Hub as representative for wildlife rescue and rehabilitation groups.

5.2. NORTH COAST AND OTHER KOALA ISSUES – Lorraine Vass

- Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management has been adopted by Council and Ballina's Koala Plan of Management has been approved for exhibition.
- Pacific Highway Campaign currently continuing. 70 animals need to be captured for sampling. Need a paper-based petition of 10000 signatures to trigger debate to realign stage 10 of the Pacific Highway.
- Book published: *Dexter by Jesse Blackadder* is available from FOK for \$15.00
- Labor's Plan for a Great Koala National Park
- Victoria/NSW Translocation project involving Strzelecki koalas to SE Forests NSW

5.3. WILDLIFE RESCUE Inc. Current Status – Lorraine Vass

FOK advises there have been a lot of reports from the Kyogle area about a Van painted with Wildlife Rescue Inc telephone number. Anyone know about this? NATF gets occasional complaints from WRI because rescuers will not go into roofs, etc. Apparently a WRI rep was moving around the state in an attempt to set up rescue arrangements with licensed groups.

5.4. CRECHE FEES – Jackie Maisey

- Should we find out who is creching all the Casino heat stress flying-foxes and offer financial help?
- NRWC is concerned they are going to be getting a huge number for crèche.
- WRSC took some in and they have gone to Queensland. Wildlife ARC's have gone to Trish Wimberley in Queensland. FAWNA has 21 and is creching now. NATFs will be released by FAWNA.
- Northern Rivers are charging NTWC \$100 per bat for release. FAWNA charges release fees at actual cost of fruit at the end of the release period.

5.5. DISASTER PLANS – Jackie Maisey raised some discussion points about questionable management of the Casino Heat Stress event in 2014.

- Casino Flying-fox colony went down in the heat stress event.
- Details were given of the procedures that were followed by the groups licensed in the area.

⁴ L. Vass to query with Koala Hub whether Koala-licensed groups could be included on information distribution list.

- Shortcomings were identified including there being no co-ordinated disaster plan and chain of command
- Lack of expertise on the species by some rescuers led to less than optimal outcomes, including long delays in triage and intensive care.

Suggestion and discussion points:

- If any group has a Disaster Plan that works it should be distributed through the State. NATF has offered their Flying-fox Heat Stress Disaster Plan when it is available.
- It was pointed out that the paper *Managing Heat Stress in Flying-fox Colonies* prepared by Sonya Stanvic, Viki McDonald and Linda Collins paper is appropriate for use. Vice Chair will email a copy to Reps line⁵.
- S. Lorigan – every single ORRCA incident is based on marine mammal incident control system (ICS). All training is done to this co-ordination plan. ORRCA is willing to make ICS details available to all interested parties via training or powerpoint presentations, etc. ⁶Reps to contact S. Lorigan if they wish to receive more information.
- J. Dean referred to confusion over the first flying-fox drop due to lack of experience in this situation. An open and frank debrief led to a co-ordinated and controlled approach – can still be streamlined further.
- L. Vass believes such events should be regarded as a regional event, not owned by any group. All people on the ground need to work together on a non-partisan basis.
- J. Brazel spoke of historical conflict and confusion in a flying-fox heat stress event in the Wildlife ARC area where there is more than one licensed group. It was stressed that MoUs and proper disaster plans are important, particularly in areas where multiple licensed groups operate.
- P. Graham suggests we ask OEH to become involved with approvals of Disaster Plans and take some oversight role in the future to avoid inter-group conflict. It was pointed out that DPI is generally the Emergency Agency in such situations.
- Audrey Koosmen advised in the Hunter there is a designated NPWS person acting in a liaison capacity. Also stressed was the importance of a proper debrief. It was suggested NPWS should be the agency in charge of any debriefs after any disaster incident.

5

⁶ Reps who wish information to contact S. Lorigan direct

Motion: Proposed: P. Graham; Seconded N. Henry That NWC if required seeks OEH assistance to organise a multi-agency debrief on the Casino Flying-fox heat stress event and to facilitate the development of a Management Plan for future heat stress events in NSW. – **Motion Carried**

Suggested P. Graham That individual species disaster plans should be recommended in NWC's Strategic Planning session.

5.6. MINUTES AVAILABILITY – Jackie Maisey

Members present expressed their concern at the delay in receiving Minutes of meetings, necessitating notes to be taken by the participants at each meeting. Timeliness aids relevance of what is happening in NWC and the Record of Meeting should be received and used as a basis for background notes for Reps to report to individual groups.

Motion: Proposed J. Maisey; seconded J. Dean That the Confidential Record of Meeting be emailed quickly by the Minutes Secretary to all Reps in attendance at each General Meeting **Motion Carried**

All reps attending General meetings should be trusted to receive the confidential Record of Meeting and use it appropriately i.e. only as a background for their own reports.

5.7. "JOEY" BONE PROBLEMS and DIVETELACT – Audrey Koosmen

There is an alert out from Taronga Western Plains Zoo Vet about reduced amounts of Calcium and phosphorus in the formula due to a quality control problem with the manufacturer. Individual groups should be advised of this potential problem with the use of Divetelact for macropods in particular.

Concern was expressed that the Manufacturer/distributor has not advised this information to wildlife rehabilitation groups.

5.8. WIRES Inc. NATIONALLY ACCREDITED "RESCUE & IMMEDIATE CARE COURSE (RICC) – Audrey Koosmen

- The meeting was advised of WIRES new training procedures under the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) auspices of RSPCA
- Secretary⁷ will send out a request for information on each groups intentions re. accepting WIRES RICC training for members/new members and waiving of membership fees/training requirements.

⁷ Secretary to send out request for information from member groups re. training.

- Several NWC groups advise that they will not be discounting or changing their group membership fees as all groups should teach to Code or BPG standards and to each group's own level of standards and procedures relevant to its membership.
- It is understood the new WIRES RICC course is made up of three components: Online course; One day face-to-face training; and a Practical Skills Assessment.
- Specialist species groups, e.g. ORRCA, ASR and FOK believe WIRES training not suitable for their specialist groups and in some cases geographic differences find Queensland procedures more relevant.

Suggestion:

- perhaps this is an issue we need some advice from the licensee. OEH needs to decide whether it wants NWC members to follow the WIRES system or whether NWC should develop its own code-compliant training modules.
- NWC needs to consider becoming the licensing body/secretariat and have a training standard accepted by Government. The matter is to be discussed further in the forthcoming Strategic Planning session.

Around the table discussion ensued about perceived government plans to attempt to accredit and standardise all wildlife rescue/rehabilitation training. (From Biodiversity Review - "Accrediting peak bodies or wildlife care providers").

NWC needs to hear from someone who is advising Government just what is intended and/or proposed for the rehabilitation sector. NWC needs this information for an effective strategic planning session on 25-2-2015. Chair is attempting to make contact.

Concern was expressed about the multiplicity of costs for volunteers and expectations to pay additional amounts for proscribed training places an unrealistic and unfair burden on volunteers and poorly-funded licensed groups.

The use of accredited training protocols has been mainly aligned to people in employment. The need for accredited training was questioned. It is not believed that the wildlife rehabilitation sector volunteers need a nationally-accredited training program to do what they do. Government needs to understand this sector meets expectations of 24 hour duty and unrealistic and costly training expectations should not be imposed on volunteers.

Question: Do other groups require Cert IV trainer status. Answer: No.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

6.1. Wildlife Scams – I. Roberts

It appears there may be a fundraising "scam" operating in Northern NSW with fundraisers claiming to be affiliated with organisations in Victoria and Queensland and collecting for the benefit of wildlife rescue. Approaches from a local licensed group to Fair Trading and Office of Liquor Gaming and Racing were not successful in action being taken.

Groups should be aware that this scam is operating. Groups reminded that their fundraising authority number needs to be on all collection materials.

6.2 Boundaries: Snowy Mtns Wildlife Rescue – P. Graham

SMWR/LAOKO is asking how many groups' boundaries are based around Local Government Areas. Suggested process for group and inter-group licensing should be

- Groups agree on license holder for the area and MoU prepared is appropriate
- Recommendations made to OEH for licensing as per agreement above

6.3 Foxes – now have a Pest Order

Thanks given to P. Graham for his submission on the declaration of Foxes as pests and the desired outcome being achieved.

6.4 Birds of Prey

Bird of Prey Best Practice Guidelines Review is now completed from NWC standpoint. Consultation process has started and includes Taronga Wildlife.

Thanks extended to Shona Lorigan for her excellent facilitation and her hard work in preparation of the documentation of the above review.

6.5 Casual vacancy on the NWC management committee

An email to the ⁸Reps will be sent calling for candidates for casual vacancy on management committee.

6.6 Request for assistance with species specific information for NWC submissions

S. Lorigan requests a response for requests for assistance in developing NWC submissions

6.7 Rescue baskets

Anyone knowing wholesale or retail outlets for these please contact the Secretary.

7. NEXT MEETING:

General Meeting #36

Tue, 26th May 2015

OEH Hurstville

MEETING CLOSED: 4.38 p.m.

Minutes ratified at the
General Meeting held on:

24 May 2015

Minutes Book copy signed A. Koosmen

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Date: 24-5-2015

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Confirmed: (Signature)

⁸ Secretary email reps with call for candidates for vacancy on management committee

