

**NSW Wildlife Council, Inc.  
Meeting Number (15)**

**Thursday 13 August 2009  
Department of the Environment & Climate Change  
Bridge Street, Hurstville, NSW  
9:30 am**

**Minutes**

1. **Meeting Opened** at 9:35am.
  - 1.1 **Present:** Audrey Koosmen NATF, Julia McConnell IGLs, Stan Wood WIRES, Shirley Lack NARG, Phil Machin NARC, John Gorham FAWNA, John Meany NANA, Marny Bonner ASR, Don Gowing WARC, Caroline Enfield WIRES, Elena Guarracino LAOKO, Georgina Whaley NRWC, Carmel Frances Woods Minutes.
  - 1.2 **Apologies:** Lorraine Vass FOK, Gwen Parry-Jones ARC, John Donnelly NTWC, Coralie Tarlinton Wildcare, Ilona Roberts TVWC, Andrew Hudson WCMR, Ronny Ling ORRCA, Paige Sinclair PPP.
  - 1.3 **Teleconferencing:** Nil
  - 1.4 **Guest(s):** Sally Barnes, Deputy Director General & Head NSW Parks & Wildlife Group (from 3.30PM).
- 2 **Register of Proxies:** No proxies were registered
- 3 **Guest Speakers:** Sally Barnes, Deputy Director General & Head NSW Parks & Wildlife Group, to discuss the need to cull Wombats.
- 4 **Previous Meeting No 14 held on 7 May 09**
  - 4.1 **Adoption of Minutes**
    - 4.1.1 **Amendments to Minutes of Meeting No 14:** There were no changes
    - 4.1.2 **Review Content of Minutes** As there was not a quorum to officially conduct business the previous minutes were provisionally accepted, but subject to ratification at the next meeting.  
  
**Action:** Ratify Meeting No 14 minutes. (Audrey Koosmen NATF)
  - 4.2 **Business Arising:**
    - 4.2.1 **Telstra Sponsorship Proposal:** was not discussed, as Coralie Tarlinton WILDCARE was not present to give a brief.
    - 4.2.2 **Meeting with new NSW Minister for Environment & Climate Change, Carmel Tebbutt and Opposition Shadow Minister Catherine Cusack:** Audrey Koosmen NATF is hoping to make arrangements soon. She will advise the NWC at the next meeting.  
  
**Action:** Brief the NWC about the arrangements to meet the Minister at the next meeting (Audrey Koosmen NATF).

**4.2.3 NWC Impact Statement:** Phil Machin NARG briefed the NWC on the lack of progress to obtain statistics from member groups to complete the Impact Statement. Only 8 groups and three individual license holders out of 24 and 35 respectively have responded. The Council felt the work was important and members were encouraged to cooperate. It was felt that DECC statistics may be useful too.

**Action:** Send out the Impact Statement request again and contact DECC to see if they have any useful statistics (Philip Machin NARG)

**4.2.4 Native Animal Keepers Consultative Committee:** Stan Woods WIRES attended a recent meeting. Whilst he was originally opposed to the sale of reptiles through pet shops, he now feels that if the trade were regulated, he would be in favour. There is no requirement for NWC action at this stage.

**4.2.5 Wildlife Watch:** John Donnelly NTWC was not present, but he has reported that the person he had in mind to produce Wildlife Watch is not able to do so. The Council felt it was important to produce a newsletter to ensure member groups and others were kept informed. Phil Machin NARG agreed to produce a newsletter, but in a different format to Wildlife Watch.

**Action:** Produce an NWC newsletter (Philip Machin NARG)

**4.2.6 Upkeep of Contact List:** Coralie Tarlinton WILDCARE is unable to continue to maintain the contact list. In the medium term the Secretary will maintain the contact list.

**Action:** The contact list is to be maintained by the Secretary (Shirley Lack NARG)

**4.2.7 Strategic Plan:** Audrey Koosmen NATF stated that after several attempts she has not been able to obtain a record of the strategic planning conducted at the last AGM in 2008. This is disappointing. The Strategic Plan will be reviewed at the AGM on 29 Nov 09.

**4.2.8 Invitation to Scott Cardamatis** It had been intended to invite Scott to brief the Council on fundraising. However Audrey Koosmen briefed the Council that he has moved jobs and is no longer available. Elena's attempts to speak with Scott about fund raising have been unsuccessful. There is no further action required.

**4.2.9 NSW Wildlife State Emergency – NWC Capability:** Details on this matter were not been recorded. This topic is to be discussed at the next meeting.

**Action:** Discuss NWC State Emergency capability at the next meeting (Audrey Koosmen NATF)

**4.2.9 Major Incidence Response:** John Gorham FAWNA has produced a draft plan, which was good. It was felt that it might need further work before being submitted and discussed with DPI staff. Audrey Koosmen NATF has an operation plan, which she will give to John to consider. The NWC plan looks at a major incident response, with local groups handling incidents within their boundaries. There is a need to build a register of resources Statewide to assist in providing resources for a major incident e.g. floods, bushfire etc.

**Action:** Further develop the NWC Major Incident Response planning (John Gorham FAWNA)

- 4.2.10 National Wildlife Council:** Lorraine Vass FOK was not present to brief the Council.
- 4.2.11 Attendance at Meetings:** This is the second meeting this year where the NWC hasn't had a quorum to officially conduct business. Audrey Koosmen NATF, as the Chair, encouraged all members to take a greater interest in the NWC and help to make it work by attending meetings and becoming involved.
- 4.2.12 FOK Koala Conservation Conference:** Audrey Koosmen NATF briefed the Council on the conference, which was a great success.
- 4.2.13 FICCN Conference:** Ilona Roberts was not present to brief the Council on this conference.
- 4.2.14 Hunting in National Parks:** Stan Woods WIRES lead a wide-ranging discussion on the Shooter's Party attempt to push through a State Parliament Bill to permit shooting in National Parks. There had been considerable publicity on this matter and the NWC, its member groups and others had written protests to the Government about this matter. Stan had earlier ensured the NWC was included in an NCC letter of protest. The Bill has been placed in abeyance and was not discussed in Parliament, but the Council members were worried that the Shooter's Party may try again and the Council members were asked to be vigilant.
- 4.2.15 Statewide Database:** Ilona Roberts was not present to brief the Council on this conference.
- 4.2.16 Saving Our Native Animals (SONA) Ratification:** Prior to the meeting, Shirley Lack NARG had gained Council member agreement to include SONA as an NWC member and they have been accepted as the newest member of the NWC. There is a need to formally ratify this.
- Action:** Formally ratify the acceptance of SONA into the NWC (Audrey Koosmen NATF).
- 4.2.17 DECC Boundary Maps:** Shirley Lack NARG will forward a recently received DECC boundary map to members.
- Action:** Distribute the DECC boundary map to members (Shirley Lack NARG)
- 4.2.18 NWC Running out of Puff:** Following on from an NWC email discussion, Phil Machin NARG led on a discussion as to whether the NWC has 'run out of puff' and whether an alternate or modified approach may help. Given the voluntary nature of the NWC and the demands on members from their own groups, the Council was asked to explore other ways of doing business, including the eventual possibility of having a paid Secretary or CEO with a Board of elected members; having an NWC committee only; and/or just make improvements to the current status quo. It was agreed that a discussion paper should be prepared on the points raised; this is to be circulated to members prior to the next meeting.
- Action:** Produce and circulate a discussion paper on the pros and cons of making changes to the NWC business structure to make it more effective (Phil Machin NARG)

**5.1 Treasurer's Report:** Julia McConnell IGLs provided a statement of accounts. Julia will arrange for the audit of the NWC accounts.

**Action:** Arrange for the audit of NWC accounts. (Julia McConnell IGLs)

**5.2 Insurance Officer's Report:** Shirley Lack NARG briefed the Council on insurance matters. There had been a small overpayment in the NWC insurance (\$15) and it was agreed to donate this money to the NWC. There had been one claim from a member of WIRES (dog bite). There was a concern that shooters may not be insured. However it has been confirmed that as an authorised activity within the DECC authority to operate under their licence shooters are indeed covered.

**Action:** Donate the slight overspend in insurance money to the NWC (Julia McConnell IGLs)

**5.3 Media Officer's Report:** Marny Bonner ASR briefed the Council on media matters and, given her busy life, explained the difficulty in coping with her role as Media Officer. The Council understood the situation and felt that there needs to be a greater load sharing.

**5.4 Revenue Officer's Report:** Elena Guarracino LAOKO circulated her report by email and discussed it at this meeting. Elena continues to look at opportunities to obtain funds, but it is difficult due to NWC not being a registered charity / Deductible Gift Recipient status. All the philanthropists require this. Also, the lack of statistics / outcome of the Impact Statement needed to justify bids for funds and grants. Having a current NWC Newsletter also would be helpful for fundraising.

**Actions:**

- a. Elena should not send any more fundraising letters until statistics from the Impact Statement became available thus ensuring a stronger approach (Elena Guarracino LAOKO)
- b. Approach the Department of Primary Industries with regard to funding possibilities (Audrey Koosmen NATF)
- c. Investigate obtaining Charity status (Deductible Gift Recipient status) for NWC (Julia McConnell IGLs).

**5.5 Secretary's Report:** Shirley Lack NARG presented her report with no actions arising.

**6**

**General Business:**

**6.1 Re-imburement of expenses:** The reimbursement of travel expenses for this meeting were discussed and agreed.

**Action:** Reimburse members claiming travel expenses (Julia McConnell IGLs)

**6.2 Sally Barnes - Culling Wombats:**

Late last year it was reported in the media that DECC had issued a number of culling licenses to kill off a large number of wombats. The NWC wrote to DECC on this matter seeking the evidence that supports the view that there are too many wombats that need this type of management. The initial response from DECC did not provide an evidence based approach to justify the issue of licenses and Sally Barnes was invited to discuss the matter with the Council.

Sally explained that, because of the interest shown by the NWC, she had investigated the matter. She acknowledged that she was surprised to find that there was not a consistent approach on these matter, there was no DECC framework to work within to inform decision, making in the issue licenses to applicants. There were no policies and principles in place. Sally intends to implement a review program within DECC to establish new procedures to authorise the culling of wildlife, starting with wombats. Sally's preferred approach is a non-lethal method to manage wildlife in the first instance. More education is needed and improved spot checks. Sally said that no culling would be permitted during lactating periods, however Council members wondered how this would be achieved given the lack of research in this area. Sally mentioned there were some moratoriums in place to stop the culling of macropods on properties less than 25 acres due to safety risks.

A wide-ranging discussion ensued, which included similar problems with kangaroo and flying fox culling. Contrary to Sally's belief the Council members argued that the view there is an explosion of the wombat population is a myth and lacks veracity; kangaroos should not be assumed to be in large numbers throughout its traditional range; indeed mange and road kill was decimating local populations. A review of flying foxes had recommended stopping culling, but it continues. Firearm safety is an issue especially in rural residential and more populated areas. There is also a concern about a shooter's knowledge and ability to humanely kill and be aware of dependent young.

Sally found the discussion with the Council very useful and asked if a similar forum could be arranged in the future. Sally mentioned that 2010 is the Year of Biodiversity and the NWC may wish to consider activities to support this.

- 6.3 Membership Fees:** Marny Bonner ASR led on a discussion that perhaps introducing NWC membership fees might encourage members to be more active and provide the Council with some funds. Currently many members do not get involved in NWC discussions and actions, but readily accept the benefits in belonging to the Council.

**Action:** Include this suggestion in the action at 4.2.19 (Phil Machin NARG)

**7 Other Business:**

Nil

**8 Future Meeting Dates/Venues**

The next general meeting and the AGM will be held at The Centre on Saturday and Sunday 28 and 29 November 2009. Stan Woods WIRES agreed to coordinate people's requests for accommodation at The Centre.

**Action:** Arrange and coordinate the accommodation at The Centre for the AGM weekend (Stan Woods WIRES)

**9 Close of Meeting**

Meeting was closed at 4.10 pm