

MINUTES

General Meeting #25 of the
New South Wales Wildlife Council

Date: Saturday August 25 2012

Time: 9:30am

Place: The Centre, Frances Street, Randwick



Guest: An invitation to speak has been accepted by Melinda Murray, Acting Director, Conservation Programs Division, NPWS. Melinda will speak at 10am followed by morning tea.

Meeting opened at 9:35am

1. MEMBERS PRESENT / APOLOGIES

Present: Lorraine Vass - FOK, Rochelle Ferris - ASR, Audrey Koosmen - NATF, Ilona Roberts - NRWC, Meredith Ryan - FAWNA, Julia McConnell - IGLs, Peter Graham - LAOKO, James Fitzgerald – Wildcare Q, Shona Lorigan - ORRCA, Phil Machin - NARG, Shirley Lack - NARG, Geoff Bartlett - HKPS, Jane Mills - WRSC, Helen Kennedy – SMWS, Joanne Kelly – Wildlife Aid and Jackie Maisey – NTWC, Caroline Enfield – WIRES, Leanne Taylor – WIRES Alt.

Apologies: Duan March (Pet Porpoise Pool), RRANA

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil declarations.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 General Meeting No.24, May 22 2012

Motion to confirm the minutes of the General Meeting 24

Moved: Lorraine Vass FOK

Seconded: Rochelle Ferris ASR

Carried Unanimously

3.2 Special General Meeting, May 22 2012

Motion to confirm the minutes of the Special General Meeting 24 with amendment

Moved: Julia McConnell IGLs

Seconded: Ilona Roberts NRWC

Carried Unanimously

At this point our Guest Speaker Melinda Murray was invited to speak.

Melinda Murray began by thanking the group for the work they have done so far and continue to do. The direction of the Government agencies will be changing in the future. Their priorities will be regional service delivery linking with local communities. The State Plan mentions the need for volunteering partnership and also for cutting red tape. OEHL are realigning to cut 350 jobs and more recruitment at a senior level. NPWS Area managers are being cut from 65 to 50.

Public Lands Management is being considered at the moment. The acquisitions are being evaluated??

Shooting in National Parks - the final outcome is not clear. Peter Graham asked if NWC could become involved in the Game Council Board. Melinda suggested that would be a difficult position to maintain as it could cause conflict. Booked spots in NP is the usual process. Deterrents for those who abuse the rules are fine based - from a few hundred to a few thousand.

Julia asked about the formal process of the complaints. Was there any accountability or follow-up? Melinda suggested that reporting was being logged and where possible was being actioned. Lorraine recommended that people use Enviro-line to report any incidents.

Julia also asked about the progress of decision on selling wild animals in pet shops.

Nothing is known on that yet.

Strong governance in not for profits is a trigger for governments to allocate funds and Melinda suggested the Foundation for NPWS should be considered as a suitable alliance for NWC. As it has a national focus it would be a good source for funding/assistance.

Additional licences are the particular issue being received at the Minister's office. There was a discussion on the number of complaints being received by the Minister regarding perceived problems with existing groups. The point was made that OEH policies are to be followed and sometimes there will be a conflict with some volunteers who do not want to follow the processes, it is therefore unrealistic for the Minister's office to assume that the groups themselves are at fault, when they are just attempting to enact the correct processes. State wide reporting was mentioned and thanks were offered to those who are already reporting their stats, these are a vital part of the OEH.

Lorraine asked about the Council being both partner and advocate for/with OEH. Why could we not be represented at the Ministers Round Table?

More discussion on the non-availability of funding for core business of wildlife. ORRCA has specific difficulties in finding funding because their work is less visible than with terrestrials.

There was generalised discussions about various issues.

10.45am Melinda thanked the Council for their invitation and joined members for Morning Tea and more informal chat.

Morning Tea break at 11:00am

Meeting reconvened at 11:30am

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

- 4.1 Grey-headed Flying-fox Relocation Update – (Lorraine)
Regarding dispersal of FF in the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Action: Helen Kennedy will draft correspondence to Mark Savio requesting information regarding ongoing activities relating to the dispersal of flying foxes in the Royal Botanic Gardens, and request a report regarding the outcomes of the dispersal. A draft will be made available to the NWC by 31.08.12.

- 4.2 GHFF - Proposed Conservation Agreement – Minister's Response
Motion: For the NWC to forward the NWC letter and the response received from the Minister to other wildlife conservation groups to garner support. The NWC is most concerned that the grey headed flying fox is being chased to starvation unless habitat is being restored.

Moved: Shona Lorigan ORRCA
Seconded: Audrey Koosmen NATF
Carried Unanimously

Action: Secretary to prepare correspondence with the NCC regarding a motion to address this issue.

- 4.3 Shared Database – update (Rochelle)
Action: Rochelle to prepare a scope document detailing the work done so far on the shared project.

- 4.4 Grants to Wildlife Carers – Assessment of Applications (Rochelle)
Voting forms were received and a small group convened to count the votes.

Action: The NWC representative of the winning applicant's group will present the cheques and acquire a photograph of the event. Stories to be included in the NWC newsletter.

Voting was conducted during the lunch break by three representatives.
The successful applicants were –

- Sandy Norris & Wendy Attrill from Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers
- Diane Hansford & Alan Wylie from Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers
- Roz Holme from Native Animal Trust Fund
- Howard Ralph from Native Animal Rescue Group
- Raymond & Marie Wynan from Wildlife Rescue South Coast & Looking After Our Kosciuszko Orphans

4.5 Impact of Flooding on Wombats - (Rochelle)
No correspondence was received from Bob Conroy regarding the impacts of flooding on wombats.

4.6 Game and Feral Animal Control Regulation 2012 – Unsupervised hunting by children and shooting in NP (Lorraine). Premier’s response listed in Correspondence.

4.7 NWC Promotional Brochure (Rochelle)
5,000 will be printed.

Action: Rochelle will proceed with printing, including amendments for IGLs and checking name of Pet Porpoise Pool. The NWC list will be contacted for distribution shortly.

4.8 Firearms Licensing – (Phil)

Phil outlined the history of the issue. Phil notes there is a fully accredited firearms safety training course currently being delivered.

The question was raised regarding liability in a public place:

- Is the wildlife care group liable for the action of a firearms license (animal welfare clause) holder in the event that the shooter is acting in their role as a member of a wildlife care group? or;
- Is the firearms license holder solely liable for their actions when euthenasing wildlife under the conditions of the firearms license?

Motion: That the NWC authorises Phil Machin and Lorraine Vass to continue communication with Phil Houlton regarding firearms issues, including clarification regarding liability.

Moved: Phil Machin NARG Alt

Seconded: Audrey Koosmen NATF

Carried Unanimously

Action: Phil will report to the next NWC meeting regarding correspondence with the Firearms Registry.

4.9 NSW Kangaroo Management – Change to S121 & S123 Occupier Licence Applications Proposal – (Phil)

Motion: Phil to draft a response expressing the NWCs disappointment in the response from Sally Barn’s office.

Moved: Audrey Koosmen NATF

Seconded: James Fitzgerald Wildcare Q

Carried Unanimously

Action: Phil will draft a response to the most recent correspondence.

Motion: That the NWC puts forward a motion to the NCC regarding NSW Kangaroo Management – Change to S121 & S123 Occupier Licence Applications Proposal

Moved: Julia McConnell IGLs
Seconded: James Fitzgerald Wildcare Q
Carried Unanimously

Action: The NCC representative to act.

- 4.10 Public Fund Progress – Bank Account – (Shirley)
Forms and procedures received by the Treasurer. Patrick Medway, Andrew Ryan, Jill Taylor, Shirley Lack and James Fitzgerald. The bank will require a copy of the constitution and the minutes of the meeting endorsing the opening of the bank account.

Motion: That in accordance with NWS Wildlife Council Constitution Clause 43(1) a bank account will be opened with (BANK) in the name of NWC Public Gift Fund, with three signatories being (James Fitzgerald, Shirley Lack, Patrick Medway). Any two signatories are required for all withdrawals from the account.

Moved: Shirley Lack NARG
Seconded: Meredith Ryan FAWNA
Carried Unanimously

Action: Shirley invite Patrick Medway to be a signatory to the Public Gift Fund account, and if he declines, that the NWC approach Andrew Ryan to be a signatory.

- 4.11 Ratification of Anti-Bullying Policy (circ. 30 May 2012) – (Caroline)
Motion: That the NWC ratify the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Moved: Caroline Enfield WIRES
Seconded: Pete Graham LAOKO
Carried Unanimously

A note of thanks to Caroline, and Shirley for their assistance in developing this policy.

- 4.12 Smart Phone App Update – (Lorraine)
The code is available from the Californian contact via Steve Amesbury. Resources are limited in terms of the development of the code for NWC use.
Motion: That Shirley will contact Steve Amesbury to ascertain the likely costs involved in expediting the development of the Smart Phone Application.

Moved: Shirley Lack NARG
Second: Rochelle Ferris ASR
Carried Unanimously

- 4.13 Wildlife Rescue Inc. (Lorraine)
NATF requested a meeting and the group did not accept.

- 4.14 Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference Report – (Rochelle & James)
Rochelle and James report that their presentation was well received and is available for viewing by contacting Rochelle. Although it was only short (15 minutes), feedback was positive.

Leanne Taylor (Alt. for WIRES) joined the meeting 2:40pm

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

4.15 NWC Constitution

Discussions among the group indicated that the constitutional amendments proposed at the Special General Meeting were appropriately assessed by the group, but received outside of the consultation review period, but that this did not preclude WIRES raising these issues again in the future.

Action: That a Constitutional Review working group be developed.

WIRES Correspondence re Firearms Registry

Motion: That the Management Committee prepare correspondence to WIRES.

Moved: Jackie Maisey NTWC

Seconded: Shirley Lack NARG

Carried but the representative for LAOKO expressed opposition.

Action: The Management Committee prepare a polite reply to WIRES and acknowledge the good work by Phil Machin.

5. REPORTS

5.1 President

Lorraine outlined the meeting of the Management Committee.

Audrey added some information regarding concerns over the NATF wildlife carer audit.

Discussion by the group covered -

- policy issues and whether the process was undertaken according to policy
- boundary change issues which have been raised in the NATF audit and whether this should be part of an audit procedure
- unlicensed carers and the fact that these carers are not under the scrutiny of such audits
- the withholding of informing by OEH regarding breaches which disables the groups ability to address complaints
- concern has been raised by local OEH staff who are otherwise supportive of the group
- concern over criticism regarding rescue phone lines being manned 24/7.

Motion: That the NWC Management Committee prepare correspondence to Sally Barnes cc Ron Haering to express their concern over the NATF Wildlife Carer Audit and request policy documentation that underpin to the wildlife carer audit, including clear definition of the audit process, including step-by-step procedures and timeframes, and the appeal process.

Moved: Helen Kennedy SMWS

Seconded: Julia McConnell IGLs

Carried Unanimously

Action: NWC Management Committee prepare correspondence to Sally Barnes cc Ron Haering to express their concern over the NATF Wildlife Carer Audit and request policy documentation that underpin to the wildlife carer audit, including clear definition of the audit process, including step-by-step procedures and timeframes, and the appeal process. Including an invitation to the November NWC General Meeting,

5.2 Secretary

Correspondence report

Date	From	Regarding
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May 29	EDO	KHMP
June 8	NCC	Call for donations
June 12	Centre for Volunteering	Invitation to renew
June 18	WIRES	Constitution
July 3	EDO	Kangaroos
July 5	EDO	Application process Sec 121 NPW Act
July 9	Premier NSW	Game and Feral Animal Control Act
July 11	DSEWPC – wildlife	Flying foxes
July 19	NCC	Will you help protect public lands?
July 25	Pet Porpoise Pool	Reps
July 26	LAOKO	Reps
July 29	WRSC	Reps
July 30	RRANA	Reps
July 30	WPSA	Winter Magazine
July 30	Env. Liaison Office	Local Government Elections
July 30	NTWC	Reps
July 30	Wildlife Aid	Reps
July 30	Wildcare	Reps
July 30 (to exec)	Anonymous	Complaint
July 30	Crown Content	Invitation to list
Aug 2	Eleanor Pollock	National Wildlife Rehab Body
Aug 4	Meredith Ryan	Election Nomination
Aug 4	WIRES	Reps
Aug 6	FOK	Reps
Aug 7	ORRCA	Reps
Aug 10	NCC	Invitation to renew
Aug 11	R. Witham	Audit Report
Aug 12	IGLs	Reps
Aug 13	WIRES	Firearms
Aug 13	Meredith Ryan	Election Nomination
Aug 14	NCC	Protect the laws that protect places you love
Aug 14	OEH	Commercial and non-commercial kangaroo m'tment
Aug 14	IGLs	Reps
Aug 15	NRWC	Reps
Aug 17	HKPS	Reps
Aug 19	WIRES	Reps
Aug 22	Ron Haering	Codes of Practice
Aug 24	Sydney Wildlife	Reps

Date	To	Regarding
June 6	Bob Conroy, PWG OEH	Impact of flooding on wombats
June 8	Sally Barnes, CE OEH	Congratulating her on position
June 8	Hon. Katrina Hodginson MP	Unsupervised hunting by children
June 8	Invasive Species, DPI	Unsupervised hunting by children
June 11	Hon Tony Burke MP	Proposed GHFF conservation agreement
June 14	Premier O'Farrell	Amendments to the Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002
June 18	Kirsty Ruddock, EDO	Kangaroo Management Proposal - Brief
July 2	Hon Robyn Parker MP	NSW Koala Summit
July 9	Kirsty Ruddock, EDO	NWC – Terms of Engagement
July 17	Sally Barnes, CE OEH	NSW Kangaroo Management – proposed change

5.3 Treasurer – Shirley Lack
Report Tabled

5.4 Membership – Shirley Lack
Report Tabled

5.5 Insurance – Shirley Lack
Report Tabled

5.6 Media – No report tabled

5.7 NCC Contact – NSW Koala Summit Proposal
Protect the Laws Campaign - COAG and Fed. Environmental Deregulation
2012 Annual Circular (circulated)

Motion: That the reports be accepted as tabled at the meeting

Moved: Rochelle Ferris ASR
Seconded: Jackie Maisey NTWC
Carried Unanimously

Caroline Enfield (WIRES rep) left the meeting

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1 Australia-wide approach to wildlife rehabilitation proposal – (Lorraine)

The proposal of a nationwide approach was discussed. The NWC strategic plan outlines the pursuit of cooperative alliances with other states. Members discussed the opportunities that will arise from a loose alliance, as endorsed by the other three active state wildlife rehabilitation councils; issues that a federal group should address; the influence a federal body may have as a lobby group; the pressure that more work will place on the NWC.

Motion: That the NWC supports the development of the Australian Wildlife Forum, option three in the paper prepared by Steve Amesbury, Australian Fauna Care

Moved: James Fitzgerald Wildcare Q
Seconded: Lorraine Vass FOK
Carried – Julia McConnell IGLs abstained.

6.2 IFAW Presentation Proposal (November) – (Lorraine)

An invitation to Isabel McCrea, Oceania Regional Director would be accepted to discuss with NWC a plan to restructure IFAW in the Oceania region.

Action: The Management Committee extend a letter of invitation to Isabel McCrea to attend the November NWC meeting.

6.3 Subscription renewals, Centre for Volunteering, Nature Conservation Council

Action: Shirley to renew subscriptions to Centre for Volunteering and the Nature Conservation Council.

6.4 NPWS South Coast Area Meeting – (Shirley)

Met on August 17 at Shoalhaven as a ‘get together’ of wildlife care organisations. OEH officers from the licensing division were in attendance. The meeting was very successful with a broad scope of issues being discussed openly and candidly. The meeting will recur annually.

Members noted that only terrestrial groups were in attendance.

6.5 Codes of Practice – Reptile, Wombats, Macropods

The OEH have said that they are unable to contribute resources to the development of codes of practice as it has been done before. However, OEH were supportive in NWC leading the development of these codes and can provide some services such as draft review and editing.

Motion: That the NWC proceeds with the development of codes of practice for reptiles, wombats and macropods, concurrently.

Moved: Pete Graham LOAKO
Seconded: Ilona Roberts NRWC
Carried Unanimously

Action: That the NWC identify possible facilitators for the development of Codes of Practice.

6.6 NWC Email list protocols – (Meredith)

Please think before you click. Click REPLY not REPLY ALL when necessary.

6.7 Agreement on standard reply to complaints within groups – (Rochelle)

The NWC has a standing resolution regarding complaints within groups, or between groups. Please refer to the following advice:

- ***If you have immediate concerns regarding the welfare of a native animal in care, please call your local wildlife care group, the RSPCA or your regional National Parks and Wildlife Office as a matter of urgency.***
- ***Anonymous complaints will not be considered.***
- ***Complaints regarding wildlife rehabilitation licensing issues should be directed to the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.***
- ***Complaints regarding the Incorporated Associations Act should be reported to the Police and/or advice should be sought from the NSW Office of Fair Trading.***
- ***Where there is conflict between individuals, the NWC recommends the group refer to their internal Conflict Resolution Policy. The NWC can provide a model policy if one does not exist.***

Motion: That the standard reply be used for future complaints received to the NWC, and that this reply be posted to the website.

Moved: Shona Lorigan ORRCA
Seconded: Peter Graham LAOKO
Carried Unanimously

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 GVESHO grant opportunity

Funding available for administrative assistance. The NWC will consider the application and review the consultancy register to find someone who would be able to write the application.

7.2 Online Vets

There is interest in making veterinary advice available online for remote carers. Council noted that IFAW had been gathering a list of veterinarians who have an interest in wildlife (Tania Duratovic), and that this may be a source of contact for future investigation.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held in Thursday 8th November 2012, at the OEH office in Bridge Street, Hurstville.

Meeting Closed at 5:20pm.