



Community and Environment Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



Meeting held at 4pm on Wednesday 8 February, Chisholm Room Koala Conservation Reserve

1	Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners – Welcome, including introduction of new members & Apologies		
1.1	<p>Joint Chairs (Patrice Mahoney OAM and Jane Jobe) provided the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners, the Bunurong, and welcomed attendees, declaring the meeting open at 4.05pm. All members new and existing, were welcomed.</p> <p>Members in attendance: Patrice Mahoney OAM Chair (Board Member), Jane Jobe Chair (Board Member), Michaela Salvato (Board Member), Jeff Nottle, Alycia James, Gil Smith, Ron Day, Jill Sunderland, Mike Cleeland, Penny Manning, Phil Dressing, Robbie Gray, Shane Livingstone, Bradley Janson, Katrina Knight (on behalf of Gareth Kennedy) , Serena Cabello, Penny Manning, Jess Patman, Cheryl Owens, Michael Kendrick-Wells, Robyn Holman, Gayle Seddon, Phil Wright</p> <p>In Attendance: Kevin Love (Chair Board), Catherine Basterfield (Board Member), Jessica McKelson (Conservation Manager), Sarah Hain (Community and Engagement Officer/Minutes).</p> <p>Guests: Nil</p> <p>Apologies: Linda Cuttriss, Bill Young, Terry Nott, Simon Woodland, Nick Say, Doug Waugh, Cheryl Overton, Jim Kiley</p>		
3	Minutes from previous meeting	ACTIONS	STATUS
3.1	Minutes from the December 2022 meeting were approved as read.	Community Engagement Officer to finalise minutes and add to - www.penguins.org.au/community	
4	Matters Arising from the minutes	ACTIONS	STATUS
4.1	No matters arising		
5	Declared conflicts of interest	ACTIONS	STATUS
5.1	No declared conflicts of interest		
6	Board Update	ACTIONS	STATUS

6.1	<p><i>Board Chair, Kevin Love provided the following update:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Nature Parks Board do not meet in January. Since that last meeting in December 2022, the Board has made progress with regards to the Penguin Parade Boardwalk and Viewing Stands project and a preferred tenderer had been selected. The project would require robust planning to suit both wildlife welfare and cultural heritage. ▪ The Board noted progress in relation to vendor research to support the new ticketing system and preferred system provider. ▪ The Board was happy to note a busy summer period, with increased visitor numbers resulting in improved financial outcomes. ▪ Three Nature Parks 'Board positions would become vacant later this year and would be advertised locally. 		
7	Nature Parks Update – Chief Executive Officer	ACTIONS	STATUS
7.1	<p><i>Catherine Basterfield, CEO reported on the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The CEO reported on a successful summer period, highlight the Penguin Parade's record 18-day consecutive sellout streak, with 21 sell out nights experienced in total across the period. The CEO noted however, that record breaking total visitor numbers were not experienced, due to the reduced capacity – though an improved visitor experience was observed! ▪ January statistics indicated the Penguin Parade was tracking at 85% of revenue compared to 2019 results. In addition, all other Nature Parks sites performed well across peak period and experienced high visitation. ▪ The CEO reported on sales complexities of Nature Parks Four Parks Passes (4PPs), highlighting how the new ticking reservations system would create improvements in how the passes are promoted and sold. ▪ The CEO reported on international visitation, which was increasing. In June 2022, international visitation represented 10% of visitation, and now, it was observed around 17% (according to our ticketing system). It was assumed to be approximately 10-15% higher than recorded, given tickets are often purchased by locals for visiting international guests. ▪ Over the busy summer months, there were multiple Ranger patrols across the beaches and reserve networks. Overall, good behaviour and compliance with regulations was observed by the Rangers, with a small number of fines were issued and no reports around aggressive behaviour in visitor centres were recorded. ▪ The CEO provided clarification around an enquiry regarding Forrest Caves future planning requirements, noting that visitation to the beach was increasing and that future planning would be addressed in the future as needs arise. ▪ The CEO clarified that information regarding the proposed roads scheme for Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay area and any potential impacts to Nature Parks managed land would be advised by Bass Coast Shire Council. 		
8	Community Engagement projects update – Community Engagement Officer	ACTIONS	STATUS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sharing Our Shores update – this campaign is tracking well and will continue until 30 April. We have seen high engagement levels on socials and will be focusing on local school engagement with the campaign via the local school poster competition over the coming weeks. ▪ Conservation News update – we will be moving the Conservation Update to an online newsletter format; this will be named Conservation News and our first edition is planned for late February/early March 2023. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dark Sky So Shearwaters Fly 2023 campaign – this campaign will be launched in a couple of months; planning is now commencing with our objectives being to build on the success of 2022 with more local business participating and resident participation. 		
8	Bush Stone Curlew Future Plans- Conservation Manager	ACTIONS	STATUS
	<p><i>Eastern Curlews</i> 24 Eastern curlews have been spotted right here on the island, these birds have migrated from Russia, are an internationally protected species.</p> <p><i>Bush Stone Curlew Update</i> Nature Parks has been working on a long held aim to bring this species back to the wild here on the island. It is not easy to re-introduce this species back into the wild, they are critically endangered in Victoria. Phillip Island can play a role in establishing a population here on the island. Currently we are working with Australian National University who will be conducting a feasibility study into using the island and three other locations as potential areas where they can be re-introduced. The program would be somewhat similar to our EBB program, we would aim to roll out a community engagement strategy including information sessions. Will take a minimum of ten years to re-establish this species on the island. Chicks have a high mortality rate. If all goes well we are looking at releasing a group of the birds later this year possibly on the island. All government approvals are in place. It has taken a number of years to get to this point, with a lot of research and science being undertaken in the background,</p> <p><i>Eastern Barred Bandicoot (EBB)</i> We are now receiving many EBB sightings in the Cape Woolamai area. This is great as it confirms the species has now established itself into this area of the Island. Please remember to use our online portal to log sightings. https://www.penguins.org.au/conservation/research/eastern-barred-bandicoots/ This helps us to understand their distribution across the island.</p>	<p>Community Engagement Officer to investigate ways to share information with the community around “Living With EBB”</p>	
9	Group Update	ACTIONS	STATUS

<p>9.1</p>	<p>PICS Update Very pleased to be approached by Restoration Decade Alliance to be a part of the decade restoration projects. Wanted to share concerns raised by their volunteers in relation to the Scenic estate reserve. It has been observed that youths riding BMX bikes are creating tracks and jumps, also have noted vegetation has been slashed by unknown persons, this is being followed up with BCSC and PINP to rule out fire management. Continue to hold concerns about off leash dogs in the estate and dog poop bags being left on the ground. PICS would like to request PINP create a map of existing tracks and trails through the estate.</p> <p>Also wanted to advise they are very concerned about removal of trees at the community hospital site in Cowes (near the transit centre, which has already lost its trees), and have voiced concerns to the local member, Bass Coast Health, and BCSC. PICS have since received advice that under final building plans, all trees must be removed. This has prompted PICS to suggest that the value of these trees be determined and acknowledged as part of the development approvals process. Bass Coast Health are going through the process to have two trees valued. PICS hope to see this methodology implemented locally and throughout the state.</p> <p>Newhaven Coast Action Group Update Happy to report that BCSC have set up signage and monitoring and cameras in the foreshore area in an attempt to reduce vandalism in this area.</p> <p>Bass Coast Shire Council (BCSC) Update Currently BCSC are considering how the trees in the Cowes site can be saved and are also developing the significant tree register. They are hopeful that this new register may result in these trees and others being awarded extra protection.</p> <p>Landcare Update The removal of thistles is continuing, this period is now almost at an end. Also noted that concerns have been raised in relation to die back on the island. A Die Back committee has been formed and they are currently investigating cause and level of damage. This is a widespread phenomenon across southeast Victoria.</p> <p>Smiths Beachcomber Association Update Progress is continuing with regards to the Smiths Beach Masterplan, a group now being formed to represent key stakeholders who will work to support implementation of the plan.</p> <p>Surf beach Sunderland /Care Group Update Monitoring has commenced and rabbit baiting now happening within the fence line of the rabbit exclusion fence at Surf Beach. Rabbit numbers generally across the island are high which is concerning.</p> <p>Westernport Water Update The annual Community Support program is again being offered in 2023/2024 and applications will open soon. Keep an eye out here on our website, on our Facebook page and in the local newspapers for updates on how to apply for funding for your local non-profit community group's event or project for the 2023-24 financial year.</p>	<p>Conservation Manager to share this report with Ranger in Charge</p> <p>Conservation Manager to investigate the creation of a MAP.</p>	
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	<p><i>Phillip Island Integrated Transport Study Community Reference Group</i> Stage 2 of the Roads Review has stalled, which is concerning given that 2000 wildlife kills were recorded over 3 years. Stage two covers all unsealed roads, some of which speed limits are up to 100 km per hour. This work and next steps are in the hand of Regional Roads Vic.</p>		
10	General Business		
10.1	No further business was discussed.		
11	Close of meeting		
11.1	The Chair closed the meeting at 6.05pm		