



# Community and Environment Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



Meeting held at 4pm on Thursday 15 December 2022 at the Penguin Parade Visitor Centre

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners</b>		
1.1	<p>The Co-chair opened the meeting at 4:05pm and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting was taking place, the Bunurong.</p> <p><b>Members in attendance:</b> Jane Jobe Chair (Board Member), Michaela Salvato (Board Member), Jeff Nottle, Jill Sunderland, Warwick Tempny, Mike Cleeland, Gareth Kennedy, Jim Kiley, Doug Waugh, Shane Livingstone, Bill Young, Linda Cuttriss, Michael Kendrick Wells, Cheryl Owens, Phil Wright, Penny Manning, Robbie Gray, Simon Woodland, Nick Say, Jess Patman, Bradley Janson, Aaron Stephens</p> <p><b>In Attendance:</b> Catherine Basterfield (Chief Executive Officer), Jessica McKelson (Conservation Manager), Jarvis Weston (Projects and Planning Manager), Sarah Hain (Community and Engagement Officer/Minutes).</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Patrice Mahoney OAM Chair (Board Member), Kevin Love (Chair Board), Robyn Holman, Alycia James Phil Dressing, , Terry Nott, Gill Smith, Gayle Seddon, Ron Day, Ben Thomas Head Ranger, Serena Cabello, Cheryl Overton</p>		
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes from previous meeting</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
2.1	Minutes from the October 2022 meeting were approved as read.		Community Engagement Officer to finalise minutes and add to - <a href="http://www.penguins.org.au/community">www.penguins.org.au/community</a>
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the minutes</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
			<b>STATUS</b>

3.1	None		
<b>4</b>	<b>Declared conflicts of interest</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
4.1	No declared conflicts of interest were raised with the agenda.		
<b>5</b>	<b>Board Update</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
5.1	<p><i>Jane Jobe provided the following Board highlights from the 15 December Board meeting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor numbers to the Nature Parks sites are tracking well. We have now reached 72% of pre-COVID revenue this financial year, which exceeds forecast. International visitors now make up 23% of total visitation.</li> <li>• Peak period operation hours have been altered slightly to suit capacity and staff resourcing.</li> <li>• The Penguin Parade boardwalk project is continuing to progress. The Board has reviewed the tenders and agreed to proceed to contract negotiations with the preferred tenderer.</li> <li>• Research has commenced into the new ticketing system.</li> <li>• A report into the Rhyll former landfill site was shared. This site is currently leased to Bass Coast Shire Council for remediation. BCSC continue to be proactive land managers of the site, and the Board considered the next steps in this management arrangement.</li> <li>• An animal ethics committee update was shared.</li> <li>• Risk management continues to be a focus, including cyber security.</li> <li>• A fire risk update was provided (see below for details).</li> <li>• The Phillip Island Wildlife Management Plan was discussed. The steering committee is preparing to report on year one.</li> <li>• The board acknowledged the pressure on wildlife rescue activity on the island. While the board cannot commit to solving the problem with increased resources, Nature Parks will work with key partners to investigate potential improvements.</li> </ul>		
<b>6</b>	<b>Nature Parks Update – CEO, Conservation Manager</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
6.1	<p><b>Nature Parks Update, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)</b></p> <p>The CEO shared the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced new PINP staff – Kym Evans, Project manager Penguin Parade Boardwalk</li> <li>• Very happy to report on good visitor numbers. December has been tracking very well, and we are optimistic that we will reach financial targets as planned.</li> <li>• Following the state election we have a new minister, Ingrid Stitt.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With regards to the Wildlife Management Plan, Minister Stitt will be offered a briefing on the plan and the wildlife balance issues on the island. The steering committee is expected to release its progress report in late January 2023. Recruitment is underway for a new project manager to replace Simon Ruff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conservation Update Conservation Manager</b></p> <p>The Conservation Manager shared the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KCR is thrilled to be opening a new koala viewing area in December 2022.</li> <li>Eggs have been laid by both pairs of Bush Stone Curlews (BSC), adding to the one chick we now have at KCR. It is hoped that these new chicks will form part of our BSC recovery program.</li> <li>We have secured a three-year grant to improve the habitat of the Fairy Tern. This species is critically endangered, and we will be working with the Bunurong Land Council to remove marram gras as we try to encourage nesting.</li> <li>Strategic fuel breaks and vegetation modification will be undertaken within the Summerland Peninsula to create a cooler environment. We have received a grant via NAB for this project.</li> <li>With regards to species introduction to the island, the Bush Stone Curlew will be released later in 2023. Work will be undertaken to encourage genetic diversity in the population.</li> <li>The Bushbank is also working hard to propagate threatened plant species for use across the island. Some of these are available for purchase. Everyone is encouraged to visit the Bushbank and purchase indigenous plants to support threatened species.</li> </ul>		
7	<b>Community Engagement Projects – Community Engagement Officer, CEO</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
	<p><b>Sharing Our Shores</b></p> <p>Over the busy summer months, Phillip Island Nature Parks is thrilled to be running a new community campaign, “Sharing Our Shores”. This campaign aims to raise awareness of our precious wildlife who call our shores and beaches home, and awareness of what we can do to help protect wildlife during the busy summer period. Local primary school children are being invited to submit an entry in our poster competition. To find out more about the campaign and what you can do to help, please visit <a href="https://penguins.org.au/about/local-community/news/sharingourshores">https://penguins.org.au/about/local-community/news/sharingourshores</a></p> <p><b>Community Open Day</b></p> <p>Prior to planning the event for 2023, we are asking key stakeholders to give feedback on the Community Open Day. We want to ensure this event continues to provide opportunities for the community to engage with Nature Parks whilst recognising that the event needs to be run efficiently given available resources.</p> <p><b>Feedback:</b></p> <p>Approximately half of those present indicated they had attended an open day.</p>		

	<p><b>What are benefits of the day?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Info available by various community groups/stalls</li> <li>• Opportunity to engage kids with hands on activities</li> <li>• Engaging activities such as guided walks</li> <li>• Allows community to become invested, creating advocacy</li> </ul> <p><b>How do we engage more people/better/not just the free aspect?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure people with special needs can attend, for example by opening early</li> <li>• Conservation champions</li> </ul> <p><b>If you have been before? Change suggestions?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better promotion of the activities, promote to holiday-home-owners</li> <li>• Water bills could include details of community events</li> <li>• Promote the datewell in advance</li> <li>• Include something on education pathways/engaging younger employees/volunteers/students</li> </ul> <p><b>Further feedback:</b> Please email suggestions to: <a href="mailto:community@penguins.org.au">community@penguins.org.au</a></p>		
8	<b>Fire Management Plan – Head Ranger &amp; Damian O’Connor CFA</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
	<p><b>Seasonal outlook:</b> Significant growth of grass fuel in paddocks and roadsides is already evident across much of the state and Phillip Island is no exception. The increased potential for above average rainfall over the summer months means this exceptional rate of grass growth is likely to continue for some time and lead to a delay in grassland curing. Therefore, whilst we expect below normal grassland fire activity in the first half of summer the risk of grassfire will increase as curing advances. The saturated soils across our reserve network caused a long delay to the start of our annual vegetation management program with most tracks and trails inaccessible to vehicles and machinery. The mechanical removal of vegetation makes up the majority of our annual Fire Operations Plan, namely slashing of management vehicle and pedestrian tracks and trimming adjacent vegetation to maintain safe access for emergency vehicles. Summerland Peninsula has been prioritised and was finished last week. The remainder of the reserve network will be prioritised simply by whatever area comes ‘online’ first. That is, whichever area dries out first. It is highly likely that the track network will require a second cut later in the season due to continued grass growth.</p> <p><b>Fire management plan:</b> A draft of the 2022-2027 Fire Management Plan (Attachment 1) has now been produced and distributed for internal comment. Once comments have been received and incorporated the document and then released for</p>		

	public and stakeholder comment, of course including CEAC members. We hope to have this out in January 2023.		
<b>9</b>	<b>Group Update</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
9.1	<p>Newhaven Residents Association and Coast Care are combining. They advised the group has been approached by a councillor re: donating some land to create a path through to Churchill Island. Residents were not concerned about environmental implications of building a path in this location. Group discussion on this included recommending the group further investigate regulations that relate to this and that concerns could be raised via a submission on the Bass Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes public hearing (for those that have already submitted in earlier consultation).</p> <p>Bass Coast Landcare advised they are finalising preparation for a summer of rabbit control, with a focus on the Summerland area. They are also pleased to share that the Sunderland Bay project monitoring will now commence as the fence construction is complete, and it looks like it is having an impact. They have also finished fox baiting on western side of San Remo buffer zone with good results and will run another pulse in February.</p> <p>PICS shared that they held their eco arts launch in November at PINP, and this will now roll out throughout 2023. PICS is also involved with other alliance partners putting together a framework for protection for Western Port, for presentation to decision makers. Also topical is the off-shore wind turbine zones. PICS want more engagement about the sites being declared, and have asked for more time from the federal government. The Port of Hastings role in the project is currently open for comment. The "Animals of Oz" event is being held on 7 January at Olive justice place.</p> <p>Coastcare Ventnor is progressing well with a grant, including interpretive signage and planting. Thanks to BCSC and Bushbank for plants. Thanks to PINP for the volunteer t shirts! Suggestion: sell toy penguins at all PINP sites.</p> <p>BCSC has released a draft Urban Forrest Strategy this week, aiming to increase canopy coverage by 40%. Community members are encouraged to complete the consultation survey. Through partnership with Landcare, BCSC has broken planting records. Greenhouse emissions are down a further 10% and there are plans to roll out electric vehicle charging.</p>		
<b>10</b>	<b>General Business</b>		
10.1	Mike Cleeland shared the below poem with the group:		

	<p><i>Yes Phillip Island's "Mutton Birds" are really quite a sight Their huge flocks silhouetted in the evening summer light</i></p> <p><i>There's thousands upon thousands flying in when day is done To rest up in their burrows 'ere they see the morning sun</i></p> <p><i>And you may have wondered sometimes of the change shearwaters cause To the weather patterns locally, and the other natural laws</i></p> <p><i>For every spring the Island's lashed with gales from the west The violent roaring "mutton bird gales" as locals do attest</i></p> <p><i>It's said that these birds flapping with a hundred million wing Creates a gale of wind that strikes the island every spring</i></p> <p><i>And whether it be true or no, the locals tell the tales Of birds a - flapping all their wings, to cause the "Mutton Bird Gales"</i></p>		
<b>11</b>	<b>Next meeting 2023 Meeting Dates</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
11.1	<b>Boardwalk Walk and Talk</b>	.	
<b>11</b>	The group took a tour with the Projects team to the proposed site for the Penguin Parade boardwalk project.		
	<b>Meeting Closed at 6pm</b>		