

Minutes of Meeting No. 24 held at Meeting Room, 7-9 Symes Road, Woori Yallock on 21 November 2017

1. Welcome and acknowledgement of traditional owners of the land:

Convener Anne Langworthy opened the meeting, acknowledged the traditional owners of the land and welcomed the committee members and invited guest.

Conflicts of Interest:

In reference to Agenda Item 9(c) and potential discussion about recreation and trails in the YCA, Merryn Kelly (DELWP) and Cr. Jim Child (Yarra Ranges Shire Council) both declared that they are representatives on a Working Group for the Shire of Yarra Ranges trail development project.

Attendance:

Members: Anne Langworthy (Convener), Merryn Kelly (DELWP), Cr. Jim Child (Yarra Ranges Shire Council), Jeff Latter (Community Rep–Cardinia), Sue Tardif (Community Rep–Yarra Ranges), Peter Cooper (Community Rep–Yarra Ranges), Bob Anderson (Community Rep–Yarra Ranges), Marianne Sawyer (Cardinia Shire Council), Steve Hosking (Melbourne Water), Ben Cullen (Trust for Nature).

Guests: Victoria Purdue (DELWP), Dan Robertson (Melbourne Water), Kacie Melfi (PPWCMA), Roland Maxwell (Boojum Pty Ltd), Matt Ruchel (VNPA)

Apologies: Craig Bray (Parks Victoria), Dan Harley (Zoos Victoria), Charley Woolmore (Wurundjeri Tribe Land Council).

Executive Officer: Joan Howard (YCACC).

2. Minutes of the previous meetings:

Acceptance of the minutes meeting No. 23, held on 17 October 2017

MOTION:

1. that the minutes of meeting No. 23 held on 17 October 2017 be confirmed.

Moved: Sue Tardif **Seconded:** Jeff Latter

CARRIED

3. Correspondence

Outgoing: nil

Incoming:

- (a) Dated 16/11/2017 – Copy of letter to the Hon Lily D’Ambrosio MP from Robert Anderson OAM resigning from the YCACC.

4. Progress Report YCA Action Plan – Anne Langworthy

The finalised *Yellingbo Conservation Area Action Plan 2016 – 2018* tabled at the meeting is the result of work undertaken by the Action Plan Working Party (five meetings: 5/12/16; 29/04/17; 23/05/17; 11/07/17; and 25/07/17) and two meetings in April/May between Anne Langworthy and Keith Longridge.

On Friday 25th August, the final draft Action Plan was sent to all agencies asking them to:

- i. review the actions, priorities and responsible agencies to ensure that they match the (specific agency) strategic plans and priorities;
- ii. add the (specific agency) to the agency column where they have a current responsibility for any specific action;
- iii. add any action they (specific agency) are currently undertaking or plan to undertake that will achieve the goals specified; and
- iv. identify any gaps that they (specific agency) can address.

On the 4th October, the EO sent an email to those agencies who hadn't replied. The final agency response was received on the 16th October and all comments and suggested edits were reviewed and included.

The Action Plan has been discussed by the Committee several times. It has been the focus of a meeting workshop, and has been approved in principle.

MOTION:

2. that the *Yellingbo Conservation Area Action Plan 2016 – 2018* be accepted.

Moved: Steve Hosking **Seconded:** Jim Child

CARRIED

5. Guest Presentation – Roland Maxwell (Boojum Pty Ltd)

Roland Maxwell, Lead Designer for Boojum Pty Ltd, was invited to the YCACC meeting to advise the Committee on problems related to the design, functionality and useability of the YCACC website. Boojum have previously provided limited advice on the website and are currently contracted to provide IT support and security for the site.

A website 'workshop' explored various aspects of good website design. The Committee discussed in depth the use and function of the website as a cornerstone for community information and engagement for everyone who is interested in what is happening in the YCA. The Committee agreed the current site was not meeting expected criteria.

MOTION:

3. That, subject to funding approval, Boojum Pty Ltd is employed to re-design the YCACC website.

Moved: Sue Tardif **Seconded:** Merryn Kelly

CARRIED

6. Regular Updates

(a) Budget – Merryn Kelly

An excel spreadsheet with limited budget information was tabled. The spreadsheet contains error messages in cells where the \$ value relies on data connected by formula to other spreadsheets. Merryn will organise regular reports from the DELWP finance department.

(b) DELWP YCA Project Implementation Team – Merryn Kelly

Haining Farm

Parks Victoria are currently finalising the procurement for a contractor to undertake the detailed planning, including the design of the artificial waterbody. The inter-departmental working group set up to oversee the detailed design and implementation is expected to meet again at the end of November. Works are intended to start on site in early 2018.

YCA Project Implementation Team

Victoria Purdue advised that she has been seconded to Parks Victoria as a temporary replacement for Craig Bray, that her position will not be back-filled, and that Merryn Kelly will direct the YCA Implementation Team activities in her absence. Victoria also advised that Martin Kilner has moved to another position, and that Doug and Amelia will be required for fire duties at various times in the next few months which leaves the team with little capacity to undertake YCA activities over the next few months. Amelia will work on the first draft of the YCA Plan during this time.

YCA team activities have included:

- working with the Office of the Surveyor General to discuss the completion of the first round of surveys;
- working with DELWP's Policy team in the preparation of survey plans and the new Schedule 4 under the National Parks Act;
- meeting with Parks Victoria and the owner of Lyrebird Falls to discuss the future of the site in the context of the YCA;
- attending and participating in the targeted stakeholder sessions;
- meeting with local CFA brigades with Kevin Tolhurst and Justin Leonard to provide info about YCA and request assistance to develop the YCA bushfire management plan;
- assisting in the preparation of the Engage Victoria website for the first round of engagement on the draft plan; and
- assisting with the letter to all adjoining land holders and licence holders.

The DELWP project team have met with several stakeholders including the following:

- Office of the Surveyor General;
- Yarra Ranges Council to discuss the Yarra Valley Trail;
- YCACC licence working group;
- private landowner from Yarra Junction to discuss the YCA plan; and
- Parks Victoria and the owner of Lyrebird Falls.

(c) Parks Victoria – Victoria Purdue

Victoria advised that:

- a small fire from a neighbouring property had crossed over into the NCR. Immediate response from Parks Victoria and the CFA had contained the fire quickly and damage to the NCR was minimal. There is no evidence that any helmeted honeyeaters were impacted;
- additional Bell Minor and deer control programs have been initiated;
- consultations and licence agreements with Lyrebird Falls have resolved encroachment issues;
- Haining Farm design consultations are proceeding and cattle are being moved off-site;
- Funding for the Haining Farm development does not include infrastructure development and further funding sources need to be investigated.

(d) Melbourne Water – Steve Hosking

Steve advised that:

- Melbourne Water are undertaking their annual program maintenance review assessing project capital, operational expenditure and delivery team capacity;
- projects underway at the moment include:
 - ground water investigations at Yarra Bridge;
 - 4 year weed control program in the NCR; and
 - levee removal works in the NCR to improve habitat.
- Melbourne Water contribute 1.6 million dollars to community grants and are currently supporting 270 community projects. The application/submission process is available on the Melbourne Water website.

(e) YCACC EO – Joan Howard

Website: the redevelopment of www.ycacc.com.au continues to be a work-in-progress - see Agenda Item 5 above.

YCACC email addresses: domain specific email addresses (xxxx@ycacc.com.au) have been created for the YCACC community members who are currently using their personal email addresses.

Newsletter:

- The YCACC website now has capacity to generate newsletters / regular news updates using the MailChimp app. A new e-news template will be created, and regular e-news messages will be produced.
- A traditional long-form newsletter has been drafted and circulated to Committee members with a request for news items, edit suggestions and further comment. YCACC currently aims to produce quarterly newsletters.
- The YCACC website currently has very little traffic and newsletter subscriptions remain low.

Database:

- The YCACC stakeholder database will be used for the initial newsletter mail out. Contacts will be encouraged to sign up for further newsletters and this will:
 - i. establish a current valid database of people who are interested in the YCA;
 - ii. highlight any contacts on the database who do not have viable email addresses; and
 - iii. provide people with the opportunity to withdraw from the list.
- a follow up assessment of the responses to this email out will enable us to update the database.

MOTION:

4. that the long-form newsletter be posted to the YCACC website; and the e-news, highlighting the Engage Victoria link, be emailed to contacts in the ycacc database by the end of the week.

Moved: Merryn Kelly **Seconded:** Marianne Saywer

CARRIED

7. Guest Speaker: Matt Ruchel (VNPA)

Matt provided an organisational overview of the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) including a summary of: VNPA mission and vision; VNPA's role in nature conservation, education, advocacy and recreation. The PowerPoint presentation included a number of maps of Victoria demonstrating the distribution of national parks, reserves, public land, rivers and other water bodies. Matt also discussed the importance of riparian land as an integral factor in the healthy functioning of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems; the impact of riparian land on fire behaviour; and the impact of grazing on riparian landscapes.

Matt's PowerPoint presentation will be available on the YCACC website. More information about the Victorian National Parks Association can be found at: <https://vnpa.org.au/>

8. Business Arising

(a) Report from the Riparian Licence Working Group – Steve Hosking

The Riparian Licence Working Group was formed in response to concerns about the criteria underpinning the issue of riparian licences in the YCA.

The VEAC recommendations and government's response make several references to conservation agreements with adjacent landholders and the exclusion of stock grazing in this area.

It is recognised that public land managers are unlikely to be sufficiently resourced to manage all public land within the YCA and in accordance with the recommendations, the effective engagement with adjoining landholders to take out conservation agreements and assist in the management of the land is a critical outcome to achieve.

To engage adjoining landholders effectively across the entire YCA requires effective balancing of conservation and land management issues. Shared management should deliver win-win outcomes.

It is important that licensing emphasises that nature conservation is the primary management objective and that ongoing effort will be made to reverse habitat fragmentation and improve biodiversity.

The working group drafted a comprehensive list of principles and objectives to guide the process for licence applications in the YCA. A final Working Group meeting will test and refine the principles against a number of actual YCA scenarios. Final recommendations will be made to the December YCACC meeting.

(b) YCA Plan – Community Engagement

The first round of targeted key stakeholder meetings has been completed. Following the YCACC and Agency stakeholder meeting on 19th September the YCA Implementation Team organised three meetings as follows:

- i. A conservation group meeting on 25th October at Yarra Junction – 19 attendees including 4 YCACC representatives;
- ii. A conservation group meeting on 26th October at Monbulk – 18 attendees including 7 YCACC representatives;
- iii. A recreation and tourism meeting on 2nd November at Lilydale – 10 attendees including 5 YCACC representatives.

The format of these group meetings facilitated by YCACC convener Anne Langworthy, comprised of: a powerpoint presentation providing background information; small group workshops; a prioritisation exercise; a plenary session; and a next steps discussion.

In addition Anne Langworthy [YCACC Chairperson], Victoria Purdue [YCA Project Implementation Team Manager]; and Craig Bray [Parks Victoria] presented to the Shire of Yarra Ranges Rural Advisory Committee on 3rd November. These presentations will be posted to the YCACC website.

A further two presentations with the local Councils complete this round of community consultations: Cardinia Shire Council on 20th November; and Yarra Ranges Shire Council on 5th December.

The information gathered at these sessions will be collated and an initial engagement report will be produced and posted to the YCACC website.

The proposed youth consultation had been delayed until February, however preparatory consultations with the Yarra Ranges Youth Development Service and the Scout network will provide the basis for a proposed youth forum in February 2018. Victoria Purdue advised that the implementation team would not have the capacity to assist YCACC with this activity.

9. Progress Report

(a) Annual Report to the Minister – Anne Langworthy

A draft *Annual Report to the Minister* was tabled. The report consolidates information gathered from: an initial YCACC planning day and follow-up online committee evaluation survey; the Agency Meeting on 19/09/2017, and follow-up online evaluation; the Action Plan (YCACC KPIs); and a YCACC self evaluation and workshop process.

Members of the Committee were asked to review the document and provide feedback.

(b) Business Plan

The Business Plan has not been completed because YCACC still do not have access to required financial information in order to develop a YCACC budget.

(c) Recreation Issues Paper

Due to lack of time the revised issues paper was not discussed at this meeting.

10. Other business

(a) *Engage Victoria Website*

Merryn Kelly advised that the YCA community consultation page and survey has been activated on the Engage Victoria webpage on Friday 17th November. The survey questions will be monitored and collated by the YCA Implementation Team who will report on the outcome of the survey. Information about the Engage Victoria process will be included on the YCACC website and newsletter.

(b) *Committee membership changes*

Anne Langworthy advised that Bob Anderson has resigned from the YCACC. Bob is retiring and moving out of the area and thus is unable to continue his work with YCACC or the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater. The Committee thanked Bob for his significant contribution to YCACC and his longterm commitment to the Yellingbo NCR.

(c) *Parks Victoria (PV) staff changes*

Craig Bray has requested a leave of absence from the YCACC as he has been seconded temporarily to another position within Parks Victoria. *See 6b above.*

(d) *Field assessments*

There was some discussion about the field assessments being undertaken in preparation for riparian licence applications. Some committee members are concerned that information about the land under consideration for licence issue is insufficient.

(e) *YCA re-naming*

Victoria advised that there had been no response to date from the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Council regarding the re-naming of the Conservation Area.

(f) *Committee feedback*

Committee members acknowledged the intrinsic value of the additional voluntary workload taken on by the Chairperson, Anne Langworthy to facilitate improved functioning of the Committee. Committee members also noted that the work of the EO had assisted in this process.

Meeting Close

14:30

Date of Next Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 19 December 2017

Time: 09:00 to 14:00

Place: Symes Road, Woori Yallock VIC 3139