



MINUTES OF MEETING

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER, 2014

NOTE: All minutes are subject to confirmation at a subsequent Council or Planning and Strategy Committee meeting.

PRESENT:

Councillors

Cllr Hugh Burns

Chair

Other Representatives

Karen Pitt

Diana Deeley

Jacqueline French

Lloyd Keen

Jan Ritchie

Janne Seletto

Penguin Warden

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Council Staff

Judy Reizes

Jacob Sife

Manager, Manly Environment Centre

Biodiversity Officer, LUS, Manly Council

(Present for part of the meeting)

TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS OF THE COUNCIL

The **Community Environment Advisory Committee** met on 8 October, 2014, to consider the matters referred to it and now provides the following advice to Council.

OPEN The meeting commenced at 7.10pm.

ITEM 1 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cllr Cathy Griffin, Michella Burgers, Natasha Hammond, Keelah Lam, Jon Panic, David Thomas.

In the absence of Cllr Cathy Griffin, Cllr Hugh Burns Chaired the Meeting.

ITEM 2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Nil

ACTION

ITEM 3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Committee meeting held 10 September, 2014 are confirmed.

MATTERS ARISING

Difficulties have been encountered by Committee Members in downloading the papers for the meeting from the drop box which is only available for a week. Committee Members have requested that the Manly Environment Centre sends the papers out to Committee Members.

ITEM 4 MEC REPORT and MANLY ENVIRONMENT CENTRE ISSUES

That the monthly MEC Report as tabled be accepted.

ITEM 5 LONGNOSED BANDICOOT UPDATE. REPORT ON TRAPPING AND OUTCOMES

Jacob Sife, Council's Environmental Officer gave the following presentations:

1. SUMMARY REPORT TO MANLY COUNCIL ON LONGNOSED BANDICOOT TRAPPING ACROSS EASTERN HILL IN THE RESIDENTIAL AREA – AUGUST 2014. DR. CATHERINE PRICE, SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

This round of trapping was timed to coincide with the biennial bandicoot trapping by NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) to monitor the population on North Head. We are still uncovering interesting facts about this population which will contribute to the management of the population.

Long-nosed bandicoots are within the Critical Weight Range (CRW) of mammals. The CWR refers to an observation that mammals of a medium weight (between 35 and 5500g) have experienced the greatest levels of extinction in recent times. The persistence of our Longnosed Bandicoots are therefore, even more astounding.

Aim:

The project aims to expand our understanding of the demographic profile of the bandicoots within the urban area of North Head and their relationship to the bushland population. This is needed to assess the contribution of these animals to the overall viability of the population an action with the Draft Recovery Plan. By undertaking trapping at the same time as the regular OEH trapping direct comparisons of demographic characteristics between the urban and bushland portions of the population and a full headland population estimate can be completed.

The November 2014 trapping will again coincide with the headland trapping, and will lead to the first whole of Population Viability Analysis.

Trapping results:

Over 2 weeks in May 2014, 16 transects of 6 traps each were monitored for 5 nights, as close as possible to previous trapping sites. This resulted in 480 trap-nights.

26 bandicoots (16 males and 10 females (16M 10F)

56 captures -16 animals were new records, 10 (4M 6F) were recaptures from previous trapping

Adult biased (<450g for females and <650g for males)

Juveniles: 6 juveniles caught

Breeding Females: Five females had pouch young with another two showing signs of recent breeding activity/Between 1 and 3 young

Average: 2 Total: 10

Conclusions:

The results are very similar to the results from previous urban trapping.

- . The area supporting multiple females remains the southern and eastern areas of Eastern Hill are relatively close to St. Patrick's Estate or the National Park Boundary.

- . The presence of females with evidence of recent breeding was surprising given that May is considered to be past the end of the breeding season and catching females with pouch young in new locations was unexpected.

- . In contrast to previous sessions, males were only caught on a single transect. This may indicate that during this time of the year, movements are reduced and bandicoots maintain a smaller home range.

Comparison of bushland vs urban areas

Sex ratio: An almost even sex ratio was observed in the bushland area (50M:52F). Whilst the urban area was slightly male-biased (16M:10F), although the difference is not statistically significant (z-score=1.14;p=0.13).

Juveniles trapped: The proportion of the animals trapped that were juveniles was higher in the bushland than in the urban area, although not statistically significant.

Reproduction:

- . The proportion of females that were breeding in May is significantly higher in the urban area than in the bushland area

- . In the urban area, 7/10 females showed evidence of recent breeding activity (5 carrying pouch young)

- . Only 10/52 females trapped in the bushland (19%) showed breeding evidence, 3 carrying pouch young.

- . Only 32% of the adult females in the bushland area showed signs of recent breeding activity compared to almost 78% in the urban area.

Interesting findings:

- . 3 animals caught previously around the Spring Cove site in the bushland transects were caught in urban transects.

- . bushland trapping only 7 animals (7%) were recaptures from previous trapping sessions, compared to 5 animals (19%) in the urban trapping session.

- . (excluding recaptures from May 2014 bushland trapping). (z-score = 1.93, p = 0.053),

- . the direction from the bushland to the urban area.

- . too close? May need to re-classify and re-run the statistics

- . juveniles too small to trap or microchip, cannot currently be tracked.

- . Less movement in May than during the core of the breeding season.

CONCLUSION:

Population Viability Analysis can be prepared from the next round of trapping.

Office of Environment and Heritage are paying for the trapping and will fund Dr. Catherine Price.

The Final Report will inform management.

2 . LONG-NOSED BANDICOOT ROAD MORTALITY

i. Recommendations from OEH Bandicoot Recovery Team Meeting in April 2014

. Action 14.4: All to make recommendations on how to improve reporting of LNb -deaths to the mortality register.

Action 14.6: Jacob Sife to investigate feasibility of speed humps or fauna crossing tunnel on Darley Road by Manly Council.

Most road deaths occur on Darley Road near Manly Hospital (since speed humps were installed on North Head Road) Between 1995-2014 there were 31 deaths on Darley Road.

ii. Current Mitigation Tools considered include: Bandicoot Monitoring Signpost, Speed Bumps, Enforced Speed Limit, 'Bandicoot Crossing' Signposts, Quarantine Station Mortality Register;

Other Options: Bandicoot Monitoring Signpost Re-evaluation, Wildlife tunnels, High Frequency bandicoot Deterrent, Roadside Wildlife Moat, Roadside Fencing, Speed Bumps; Speed Cushions; Rumble Strips; Wildlife Crossing Signs.

iii. Bandicoot Monitoring Signpost Re-evaluation With Rumble Strips:

This device works to draw attention to the endangered LNB population, while also providing a numerical representation of annual mortality for the area.

The sign will be paired with rumble strips across Darley Road to bring awareness to drivers.

The sign and strips will install a sense of responsibility in drivers, and will allow them to slow to an adequate level. This will not impose any physical restrictions upon any ambulances or other emergency vehicles.

RECOMMENDATION:

Following a discussion of various options for Darley Road in the vicinity of Manly Hospital, the committee fully supports:

- Visually striking signage, ie picture of 3 orphan bandicoots, with a text of "slow down for us" **IBM**
- Electronic sign which tells drivers "how fast you are travelling now" **IBM**
- Rumble strips to slow traffic down **IBM**
- Council should consider installing a security camera **IBM**

Jacob Sife will make a similar presentation to Council's Traffic Committee and determine the feasibility of various actions.

CONCLUSION:

The Committee thanked Jacob Sife for his comprehensive and interesting presentation on the conservation of one of Manly's two Icon Species, which this Committee initiated back in 1991.

ITEM 6 OUR ENDANGERED GREY-HEADED FLYING FOX COLONY, LISTED AS VULNERABLE UNDER STAE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION.

According to the Royal Botanic Gardens Wildlife ecologist, Dr. John Martin, the estimated population of this colony peaked at 5,700 some months ago in July 2014. In October, 2014, the count was 3,600 animals.

Council is required to prepare a Management Plan for this threatened colony.

The committee suggested that an interpretative sign be placed at the carpark in Balgowlah Road.

A request for quotation for the management plan has been prepared by Council's Environmental Officer and will be sent out this month.

ITEM 7 LITTLE PENGUIN REPORT

Council is awaiting the Office of Environment and Heritage Monitoring Report for 2013/2014 which counted 70 pairs compared to the 17 pairs when the Committee applied them to be listed as a threatened population. OEH was going to issue a press release for this good news story.

Council staff and MEC have commented on numerous drafts of the brochure for residents adjoining Critical Habitat. Staff will enquire again as to when the information night for residents.

ITEM 8 AMENDED 10/50 VEGETATION CLEARING CODE OF PRACTICE FOR NEW SOUTH WALES – NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Due to Council's and community concerns and extensive press coverage, the government has decided that:

- Clearance entitlement zone can be reduced from 350m to 150m for Category 2 bushland
- Councils should reclassify their bushland and make submissions by 14 November, 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Bushland staff should ground truth their classification of remnant bushland areas, parks and reserves to ascertain whether they pose a fire risk to neighbouring properties. **IBM**
2. Council write to Rural Fire Commissioner to request a suspension of the present clearing regime and the return to the status quo while the proposed new regime is reviewed. **IBM**
3. Council prepare another submission by 14 November. Due to the prevalence of steep slopes of 18 degrees or more in Manly, Council should map or work to refine the definition in order to avoid soil erosion and landslip risk. **IBM**

ITEM 9 SQUID FISHING IN NORTH (SYDNEY) HARBOUR AQUATIC RESERVE

Given Premier Mike Baird's concern about marine protection, This committee strongly urges that the existing regime is maintained as a vital part of the ecosystem in line with his public commitments.

ITEM 10 MANLY 2015 PROJECT

Various aspects of the Manly 2015 Project were discussed and the committee expressed its concern for the environmental cost to the Village Green (Manly Oval), including the proposal to raise it by 800 metres.

Recommendation:

This committee unanimously expresses its concern for the environmental cost to the Village Green (Manly Oval), including the proposal to raise it by 800 metres.

IBM

ITEM 11 NEXT MEETING DATE:

Date: Wednesday 12 November, 2014

Time: 7.00pm.

Venue: Manly Council Chambers.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.