



Sydney Weeds Committees

• Sydney Central • Sydney South West
• Sydney North • Sydney West – Blue Mountains

SWC Board Meeting

Camden Civic Centre

Oxley St, Camden

Thursday, 29th October 2015, 10:45 AM to 1:00 PM

Present

Jonathan Sanders (JS)	Sydney Central Weeds Committee
Jeff Hill (JH)	Sydney Central Weeds Committee
Michael Pattison (MP)	Sydney West Blue Mountains Weeds Committee
Matthew McNaughton (MM)	Sydney South West Weeds Committee
Alex Burgess-Buxton (ABB)	Sydney South West Weeds Committee (from 11:00)
Gareth Debney (GD)	Sydney North Weeds Committee (from 10.55)

Part (phone from 11.00)

Steven Smith (SS)	Sydney North Weeds Committee
-------------------	------------------------------

Ex-officio

A. Duncan (AD)	SWC Executive Officer
----------------	-----------------------

Part

R. Adam (RA)	Senior Strategic Planner, GSLLS
Graham Wilson (GW)	Biosecurity Manager, GSLLS

Apologies:

Rod Ensbey (DPI)

Chris Stanfield (CS)	Sydney West Blue Mountains Weeds Committee
----------------------	--

Minutes

1. PRELIMINARIES

Item 1.1 Welcome (Chair)

- The Chair welcomed attendees.
- Apologies from Chris Stanfield were noted.
- Agenda was confirmed.

Item 1.2 Declaration of pecuniary and any other conflicts of interest (All)

- It was noted that this was not a Weeds Action Program Steering Group meeting and that conflict of interests relating to being in receipt of WAP funds were not relevant.

Item 1.3 Visitors to Meeting (Chair)

- Mr Graham Wilson and Mr Robert Adam (Greater Sydney Local Land Services, GSLLS) were in attendance to discuss developments in NSW Government's approach to regional weed management.

- It was noted that relevant information had been provided at Attachment A (Model terms of Reference for Regional Weed Committees) and Attachment B (FAQ Weeds Reform).
- The Chair gave a brief introduction re Sydney Weeds Committees (SWC) for the benefit of the GSLLS visitors, indicating that SWC main aim was weed management across the landscape, regardless of tenure, but noting the that the degree of commitment by some agencies was patchy and that the formal RWCs may assist in addressing this.
- Mr Robert Adam indicated that GSLLS recognised that Sydney was a bit different from other regions and were conscious that they did not want to reinvent the wheel but wanted to build on existing structures such as SWC.
- Gareth Debney, Steven Smith (phone) and Alex Burgess-Buxton joined the meeting.
- Mr Robert Adam gave a presentation about LLS's approach to development of regional weed committees and progress made to date (power-point slides attached to the minutes).
- The subsequent discussion between GSLLS and the Board included the following:
 - LLS acknowledged that there are 43 local governments and it does not presently have the capacity to run a major communication /collaboration network for that number of Councils, whereas SWC already has such a network in place, with relatively good level of participation.
 - GSLLS requested that SWC should continue to do business as usual for a period of at least 2 years. LLS suggested that it would need some time to sort out its roles and responsibilities as well as operations required to underpin the functioning of the Regional Weed Committee. It was also noted that the local government reform process in progress may lead to some changes in the numbers and distribution of Councils, which might affect operation of SWC.
 - The SWC Board agreed that it was important not to duplicate LLS functions, and that SWC should keep actively monitoring the progress of the reforms, and any resultant changes required to the role and function of SWC.
 - It was noted that the relationship of the GSLLS RWC with SWC needed to take account of the legal structure of SWC Inc. The four regional (subregional) weed committees (SRWCs) are sub-committees of SWC Incorporated and it was suggested by the Board that an MOU may be a good way to define the relationship and "services" that SWC might provide.
 - It was agreed that SWC could provide a representative from each SRWC to the GSLLS RWC. This could be the Chair of the current SRWCs, with the Deputy Chair providing an alternate. Those representatives would attend the LLS RWC to represent the agreed views and interests of the SRWC as a whole.
 - Other key bodies suggested by the Board for inclusion in the GSLLS RWC were the nursery and garden industry and floristry industry. The SWC Chair informed GSLLS about recent developments in relation to a major Environmental Trust education/accreditation program for industries including nurseries, aquaria, floristry, landscaping and horticulture and markets.
 - It was recognized that, if LLS was able to take a comprehensive co-ordination role in the future, then the role of SWC might become redundant. However, GS LLS advised that this was unlikely in the short term, and that the continued operation of SWC was therefore important to support ongoing weed management, and the transition to the new arrangements.

- It was agreed there be further discussion with GSLLS, post the upcoming SRWC meetings, which GSLLS were attending.

2. PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND INTERSESSIONAL MATTERS

Item 2.1 Minutes of previous meeting (Chair)

- Minutes of the previous Board meeting of 15th April provided at Attachment C were accepted.
- It was noted that the collaborative assessment process discussed to downsize the regional WAP application could not be implemented.

Moved: Jeff Hill

Seconded: Matthew McNaughton

All in favour.

- Minutes of the Board teleconference of 15th June provided at Attachment C were accepted.

Moved: Michael Pattison

Seconded: Alex Burgess-Buxton

All in favour.

Item 2.2 Actions arising (Chair)

- The summary of Actions Arising from previous meeting and teleconference provided at Attachment D was considered and it was noted that all items had been completed or were ongoing.

Item 2.3 Correspondence list (Chair)

- The summary of the Correspondence list provided at Attachment E was noted.

Item 2.4 Out of Session decisions (Chair)

- The summary of Out of Session decisions provided Attachment F was noted.

3. BOARD DECISIONS

Item 3.1 Draft Business Plan

Background

- The draft SWC business plan for 2016 provided for discussion at Attachment G was discussed.
- It was noted that this was essential if SWC to be successful in obtaining other funding.

- It was also noted that such funding would need to be aligned with the new Strategic Weed Management Plan for the region and that SWC could usefully provide focus on bridging the gap between regional strategy and local (sub-regional) priorities.
- The Board noted that the goals were appropriate and agreed that the document provided a useful draft which should be circulated to members.
- It was noted that the detail in Section 3 was yet to be developed, but it was agreed that it was appropriate to first agree on the framework.

Actions

- 3.1.1. Board to review in detail by Tuesday 3rd Nov and provide feedback to the EO.
- 3.1.2. EO to circulate draft to all members for their consideration prior to the upcoming sub-regional meetings.

Item 3.2 Weeds Field Day

Background

- The Board, based on feedback from members, have previously agreed that SWC undertake a Field Day instead of its traditional Forum.
- It was noted that a working group was established to progress this initiative and that it had been agreed that such a field should occur in 2016, so as not to compete with the 2015 NSW Weeds Conference.
- Members of the working group had attended the recent Field Day associated with the 2015 NSW Weeds Conference, which had had a format that potentially could guide the SWC Field Day.

Discussion

- Some of the issues associated with a Field Day were discussed, including complexity, cost, risks and the challenges of finding an appropriate site.
- Suggestions for locations included Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute, UWS, Mt Annan, Scheyville National Park.
- Topics suggested included equipment, techniques, research and knowledge sharing. It was suggested that companies who supplied equipment might be prepared to attend for free. It was also suggested that GSLLS and AABR could be approached to be partners.
- It was agreed that the focus of the day should be for members rather than the general public (technical/professional audience).

Actions

- 3.2.1. EO to liaise with NSW weed conference organisers to learn from their experience
- 3.2.2. Develop project plan and costs for further Board consideration.

Item 3.3 Cloud Record Storage (Administration matter)

Background

- The Board considered the options to upgrade the administrative infrastructure of SWC using Cloud based storage (from portable hard drive).
- It was agreed that Microsoft 365 for Business appeared to provide the best suite of features – including: best compatibility with Office software, capacity to easily maintain existing folder structures, excellent reviews of its backing up, security and privacy offerings and cost effectiveness.

Recommendation

- The Board agreed that
 - SWC move its primary electronic records to a cloud based storage/backup service with a once a month physical back up of its records.
 - The EO arrange the purchase of Microsoft 365 Business Essentials package at a cost of \$84 per annum (\$7 per month) for this purpose.

Moved: Matthew MacNaughton

Seconded: Alex Burgess-Buxton

All in favour.

Action

- 3.3.1. EO to purchase Cloud storage system and install.

Item 3.4 AGM Matters

- It was agreed that the AGM be held on Thursday 10th December at Parramatta.

4. REGIONAL WEEDS COMMITTEES ISSUES (Committees Chairs to report)

Item 4.1 Regional Weeds Committees Issues for Discussion

- Time delay for declarations in context of drafting of new Biosecurity Act (SWBM).
 - The EO noted the advice of Rod Ensbey that the existing declarations of the Noxious Weeds Act would stand until the regulations of the new Biosecurity Act had been drafted and enacted. The time frame for this was expected to be 18 months- two years. Rod had suggested that DPI were proposing to undertake this development in a consultative fashion and that this would commence early in 2016.
- SWC schedule for updating of strategies and tools (SWBM).
 - This suggestion was noted.
- Sydney Flower Markets developments (SC).
 - The Chair noted that Sydney Central had met with the Flower Markets on a number of occasions, facilitated by Cameron Jackson, who had been employed by Strathfield Council to monitor the markets and who had made great progress. The meeting record of 7 August was noted.
 - Cameron had developed a list of species of concern, some had been removed from sale, and a number of other cases requiring transitional arrangements identified (e.g. interim management arrangements until phasing out or substitution achieved). The key challenges remaining were privet berries, tortured willow and Asparagus spp. A further meeting with the markets had also been attended by DPI and agreement in principle to transitional arrangements had been agreed.
 - The Chair also noted that he and Cameron had attended an Environmental Trust workshop, who are interested in pursuing nursery accreditation based around prevention of weed distribution.
- Sydney North Chair noted that they had discussed Glyphosate issues and that material from the SN had been shared with other committees. It was also noted that they had reviewed Weed Risk Assessments for Asthma Weed and Cape Ivy and had decided not to further pursue declarations as a result.

- The Chair noted that a new species of Coral Tree had been discovered in western Sydney, which was otherwise only recorded on the north coast. It resembled a willow but with thorns, and was found in drainage lines.

Action

- 4.1.1. EO to circulate further information about the new Coral Tree to members.

5. REPORTS

Item 5.1 Financial Report to 30 June 2015

- Draft financial statements were circulated and considered and the Board agreed that it was suitable to be sent to the auditor.

Item 5.2 FY2015-16 Budget

- The draft budget was circulated. It was noted that the costs of SWC exceed the income from membership and that there was a need for the incoming Board to identify a strategy to redress.

Item 5.3 Executive Officer

- The EO's report covering report covering work in progress was noted.
- Brochure Update
 - It was agreed that every member would get one box free (600 brochures at a cost approx. of \$100) and orders would be taken for subsequent boxes.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Item 6.1 Future Board Meetings (Chair)

- It was noted that a forward schedule would increase efficiency.
- New Board to consider for 2016.

Item 6.1 Other matters

- No other matters were raised.

Item 6.3 Meeting Close (Chair)

- Meeting concluded at approximately 1.00PM.