



Sydney Weeds Committees

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

MINUTES OF THE SYDNEY WEEDS STEERING GROUP MEETING National Parks & Wildlife Service Office, Parramatta 19 November 2013

Present

Jonathan Sanders (JS)	Sydney West Blue Mountains Weeds Committee
Matthew McNaughton (MM)	Sydney South West Weeds Committee
Mel Hall (MH)	Sydney North Weeds Committee
Alex Burgess-Buxton (AB)	Sydney South West Weeds Committee
Jeff Hill (JH)	Sydney Central Weeds Committee

Apologies

Steve Smith (SS)	Sydney North Weeds Committee
Chris Stanfield (CS)	Sydney West Blue Mountains Weeds Committee

Welcome

Jonathan Sanders opened the meeting at 10.55am.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

The following attendees declared their organisations are recipients of WAP funding:

- Matt McNaughton (Camden Council)
- Alex Burgess-Buxton (Wollondilly Council)
- Jonathan Sanders (NPWS Metro South West region)
- Mel Hall (NPWS Metro North East region)

Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the previous Steering Group meeting held on 20 August 2013 by teleconference were confirmed.

Action: A hardcopy of the minutes was signed by JS

Agenda:

1. SWC Members & Sponsorship funds held in Hawkesbury River County Council

SWC Inc. sent a letter to HRCC Chair on 4 November 2013 regarding the balance of members' and forum sponsorship funds, some unauthorised expenditure of WAP funds and several accounting errors in *SWC Financial Reports* dated 10th October 2013 provided to the HRCC Board. To date, no response has been received from HRCC.

It was moved that the Steering Group pursues the matter of the members funds through the Department of Local Government as a next step. All in favour.

Confirmation was received that Anthony Schofield was recently appointed as the WAP Project Officer employed by HRCC. It was noted that none of the other Steering Group members in attendance were aware of this appointment, did not take part in the recruitment or interviewing process, nor had they seen WAP Project Officer terms of employment.

2. Recruitment of SWC Executive Officer

A draft Conditions of Engagement (employment) and draft advertisement have been prepared for SWC's first employee.

Matthew McNaughton moved that:

- (i) Jonathan Sanders and Paul Burcher proceed with seeking legal advice to check over the conditions of employment, for the initial flat fee of \$330
- (ii) The Steering Group approves up to an additional \$1000 for additional legal advice and work (if required) and advertising costs. Seconded by Mel Hall. All in favour.

Action: Paul Burcher to send the final drafts of the documents (after legal advice) to the Steering Group for approval before advertising.

Alex Burgess-Buxton moved that the Executive Officer position starts off working 5 days per fortnight, with the potential to increase hours/days at a later stage if required. Seconded by Mel Hall. All in favour.

Matthew McNaughton moved that the Executive Recruitment panel comprises of:

- Jonathan Sanders and Matthew McNaughton
- And Steering Group to invite a female representative from the Hawkesbury Nepean CMA for the independent panel member.
- Seconded by Mel Hall. All in favour.

Action: Jonathan Sanders to invite a staff member from HNCMA to be on the panel

Alex Burgess Buxton moved that Steering Group temporarily extends Paul Burcher's contract as the Interim Project Officer in order to continue assisting with the recruitment process and urgent SWC business, until the new executive officer commences work. Seconded by Matthew McNaughton. All in favour.

3. Year 4 WAP allocations

The proposed allocations from Year 4 funds, as well as unspent funds from years 2 and 3 were reviewed by the Steering Group members in attendance.

The spreadsheet of allocations is based on:

- the approved strategy and activities for Years 3-5
- confirmation of same funding requests for continuation of activities - from the majority of project partners at the WAP Planning Day in May 2013
- some applications to vary activities in year 4
- some applications for follow up weed control of Year 1 activities (high risk weeds)
- new requests for funds

Comments:

- HRCC must submit all of its own outstanding reporting before receiving Year 4 allocation
- The effectiveness of Alligator Weed control in Kemps Creek NR needs to be checked before approving any more WAP funds for the area
- A small amount of contingency funds for the *Ludwigia Longifolia* new incursion in Wollondilly LGA, should be set aside as contingency, should it be needed later in the year
- All other proposed allocations were approved as they match the WAP project's highest priorities and targets for Years 3-5.

Alex Burgess-Buxton moved that the Steering Group approves the allocation of funds for WAP year 4, with the above minor modifications and answering of queries.
Seconded by Matthew McNaughton. All in favour.

Action: The process for releasing the approved list of allocations for WAP Year 4 will be determined pending the outcomes of the meeting with DPI on 26th November 2013.

5. WAP Mandatory documents

The draft mandatory documents (as per WAP funding guidelines, pages 22-23) and non-mandatory documents (Business Plan, MERI plan) are being developed under the supervision of HRCC.

Matthew McNaughton moved that the Steering Group requests for:

- (i) HRCC's logo to be removed from the front cover of the mandatory documents, and that HRCC's role is appropriately acknowledged elsewhere
- (ii) SWC Inc. to be copyright holder of the mandatory documents
- (iii) The draft Business Plan to omitted
- (iv) The draft MERI plan to be omitted

Seconded by Mel Hall. All in favour.

6. Meeting with DPI in the city on 26th November

The meeting called by DPI was discussed. The Steering Group's position on various matters was discussed and agreed on by those in attendance:

- The Members funds held in HRCC must be returned to SWC Inc. If this matter is not resolved on the day, the Steering Group will pursue it through the Department of Local Government.
- The core business of the Sydney Weeds Committees is much bigger than the WAP project and there is a large number of organisations involved and supported by the weeds committees that do not receive WAP funds.
- If the decision is made for HRCC to remain as the WAP project lead agency until 2015:
 - All expenditure of WAP project funds is to be approved by the Steering Group
 - The WAP Project Officer's work plan is to be reviewed and approved by the Steering Group
 - The WAP Project Officer is required to report on a regular basis against their work plan to the Steering Group.

7. Review of Weed Management in NSW

The Natural Resources Commission is inviting community and stakeholder submissions on the Issues Paper for the review of weed management in NSW.

Submissions are due 6th December 2013.

Actions: Jonathan Sanders to coordinate a submission from SWC Inc, with input requested from Steering Group members

Meeting closed at 1.50pm. Next scheduled meeting TBC