



## Sydney Weeds Committees

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

### MINUTES OF STEERING GROUP MEETING National Parks & Wildlife Service Office, Parramatta Wednesday 5 March 2014

#### Present

Jonathan Sanders <b>(JS)</b>	Sydney West Blue Mountains Weeds Committee
Matthew McNaughton <b>(MM)</b>	Sydney South West Weeds Committee
Mel Hall <b>(MH)</b>	Sydney North Weeds Committee
Alex Burgess-Buxton <b>(ABB)</b>	Sydney South West Weeds Committee
Jeff Hill <b>(JH)</b>	Sydney Central Weeds Committee
Steve Smith <b>(SS)</b>	Sydney North Weeds Committee

#### Apology

Chris Stanfield (CS) Sydney West Blue Mountains Weeds Committee

#### 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

MM moved that the minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 19 November 2013 at Parramatta are confirmed. Seconded by JH. All in favour.

#### 1. Update on the Actions from the last meeting

##### (i) WAP Mandatory documents

The WAP Project Officer sent notification email on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2013 that the mandatory documents were complete and sent to DPI.

Action: WAP Mandatory documents to be placed on the SWC website.
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##### (ii) Weed Management Review

It was noted SWC did not make a submission to the weed management review

JS noted the paper had been released with a workshop to be conducted in Parramatta Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

##### (iii) SWC Members' funds in HRCC

On 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014 the Hawkesbury River County Council resolved to return the SWC members funds (non-WAP funds) subject to the Chairs of the four weeds committees signing a modified MOU. Item discussed in more detail later in the meeting. An indicative figure of \$82,000 has been provided by the HRCC General Manager subject to check of accounts from an independent account beforehand.

#### 2. Bank balance (NAB)

The Treasurer reported that the current NAB bank balance is \$27,402. Canterbury Council has paid membership fee since the last AGM.

Action: MM and JS (signatories) to arrange viewing access for internet banking.

### 3. AABR sponsorship for 2014 Forum

Correspondence received from Australian Association of Bush Regenerators requesting that the \$2,500 sponsorship be returned and that SWC makes a fresh proposal to AABR for the upcoming forum.

SS moved that the \$2500 be paid back to AABR. JH seconded. All in favour.

**Actions:** SS to liaise with AABR Secretary and Treasurer to arrange return of funds. JS to discuss alternative proposal with AABR Secretary.

### 4. Modified MOU between SWC and HRCC

It was noted that the modified MOU does not contain most of the Steering Group's proposed changes that were sent to HRCC in January 2014 (which outlined the roles and responsibilities of both parties in more detail).

It was also noted in particular that the HRCC changed the wording of section 4.5(c) to read that the Steering Group will "*provide recommendations to ensure the allocation of grant funds is consistent with the Sydney Weeds Action Project*" to replace what was written in the original MOU signed in 2012, that the Steering Group's role is to "*oversee and approve the allocation of grant funds*" and that the role of the elected Steering Group has thereby been diminished.

Concern was also raised that there is now a potential conflict of interest in having the organisation that receives the most significant amount of funds from the WAP project (ie. HRCC) making the decisions for how to allocate the project funds.

ABB moved to sign the modified MOU to ensure the completion of WAP and write an accompanying letter to HRCC regarding the Steering Group's concerns. Seconded JH. All in favour. The modified MoU was signed by all four chairs (JS, ABB, JH and MH).  
**Action:** Paul Burcher to post the signed MOU and accompanying letter to HRCC.

### 5. Sydney Weeds Professional Forum – 4 April

Valerie Close (contractor engaged by SWC to organised the forum) has submitted a draft Budget and Risk Assessment for the event.

SS moved that the Steering group approves the 2014 Forum budget in principle subject to clarification of some amounts:

- Steven Smith to clarify the amount of sponsorship given by Local Land Services (HNCMA)
- Steven Smith to clarify the amount to be paid by HRCC from Weeds Action Project
- Paul Burcher to check whether extra Events insurance is absolutely necessary for SWC or whether there is appropriate coverage through the venue's insurance and SWC's existing insurance policies. Seconded JH. All in favour

ABB moved that the Steering Group approve the draft Risk Assessment on the proviso that some additional points are included:

- A "response" team is appointed as a group of people to assist and have direct contact with the venue (through Valerie as the main coordinator) in case problems arise on the day
- There is a safety announcement at the start regarding the response team, locations of venue exits, evacuation procedures etc
- Seconded by MH. All in favour.

**Actions:**

Paul Burcher to provide feedback to Valerie Close regarding the budget and Risk Assessment.

Paul Burcher to check requirements for additional Events insurance.

Steven Smith to confirm amounts of sponsorship from LLS and WAP.

#### **6. Recruitment of SWC Executive Officer**

JS provided an update on the recruitment process. Interviews to be conducted on 13 March 2014. Interview panel composed of JS, MM and Rebecca Mooy from Local Land Services.

The Steering Group discussed that the term should be for more than a year guaranteed two days/week.

#### **7. Draft WAP Documents from Project Officer - Years 4 & 5**

It was noted that the HRCC WAP Project Officer Anthony Schofield had emailed around some proposed new procedures for allocating the remainder of Year 4 funds and Year 5 funds, including an open advertising process.

Motion: MM moved that (after the SWC Members funds are returned and before any further allocation of WAP funds for new projects) the Steering Group formally requests a WAP budget summary to date from HRCC, and monthly budget reports thereafter (as per the MOU).  
Seconded by ABB. All in favour.

#### **Next meeting/teleconference**

*It was agreed to have a short teleconference in late March, after appointment the new Executive Officer and before the Professional Forum. Possibility also of a short Steering Group meeting SG at the forum – TBC.*

Meeting closed at 1.50pm.