

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 1st April 2014 – 12.30 – 2.30 PM

Engineering Services Conference Room

<b><u>ATTENDANCE:</u></b>	<i>Councillors:</i>	Cr Morgan, (chair)
	<i>Council staff:</i>	Lisa Kermode, Peter Cluff, Gerard Carlyon
	<i>Group reps:</i>	Kerri Woodcock, Kate Steel, Kym Seebohm, Christine Peterson
	<i>Community reps:</i>	Bruce Milles, Joan Fitzsimmons

**APOLOGIES:** Cr Jones

1. **CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were accepted as a true and correct record. (Moved Bruce Milles, seconded Lisa Kermode)

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Kym Seebohm reported that the post cyclone clean up of the SLCMA nursery and the Sarina native community gardens has been completed.

3. **GENERAL BUSINESS**

1. **Coasts and Communities project/coastal activities update**

The committee received a report on this item as per the agenda.

2. **Land for Wildlife Program**

The committee received a report on this item as per the agenda. Note the contract with the Landcare groups to deliver this project runs from November 2013 to November 2014.

Promotion of the program and attracting new participants was discussed. The peri-urban project which the Landcare groups are also delivering with non-council funding was discussed. This project generally targets smaller properties with lower biodiversity values than the Land for Wildlife program.

In addition to reporting on the number of properties registered as Land for Wildlife, the next report will aim to include the area of land covered as well.

The nest box program that PCL received Community Environment Grant funding for was discussed. The nest cylinders are being distributed to appropriate Land for Wildlife properties in the region. A potential owl nest box project was also discussed, which nightowl stores may sponsor Landcare groups to deliver. This initiative is currently being negotiated between the store and Landcare.

### **3. Landcare Group support projects**

As per reports in the agenda.

### **4. Special projects updates**

A report was provided on the Sarina Community Native Garden Project.

SLCMA are currently negotiating with a potential funding provider regarding securing funding for species identification signage and an A4 folded brochure promoting the gardens.

It was noted that as the funding for this project has now been spent, and the project completed, the committee no longer requires updates on this project. Updates can be provided under the Landcare Group support projects report if funding from this source is being used to undertake ongoing maintenance and promotion work.

### **4. FINANCIALS**

Financial statements at 28<sup>th</sup> February were noted.

### **5. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **NEP priority projects for 2014/15**

NEP priority projects for 2014/15 were presented and discussed.

Some projects originally presented at the February meeting have been investigated further and it is not recommended to proceed with allocating funding to them at this stage, due to land ownership issues, detailed design requirements etc. They may be considered again in future years, when planning/liaison work has been undertaken. Some projects have been brought forward and will be completed in 2013/14. The \$50,000

contribution to coastal projects from Reef Catchments was noted, as was the contribution to waterways projects including Porter's Rd Causeway fish barrier removal.

It was noted that although the committee recommended allocating \$750,000 for NEP priority projects in 2014/15 at the February meeting, all the listed projects could be undertaken next year if the allocation was increased to \$1,023,345. Projections of 2013/14 budget actuals will be developed to determine whether funds exist to allow this. It was noted that as the \$250,000 allocated to infrastructure at Blacks Beach Spit was unlikely to be spent due to hard infrastructure not being in line with the management intent for the site, additional funding for NEP priority projects is likely to be available.

There was general discussion of the budget proposed for 2014/15. It was noted that funding for a nursery coordinator was included in the budget and this position was supported by the committee, given the recent upgrade to the Mackay Natural Environment Centre and increased opportunities to propagate plants for various projects. The position would coordinate the operation of the MNEC nursery and volunteers, but could potentially work collaboratively with other nurseries e.g. SLCMA nursery, SGAP etc including information sharing and the development of best practice operations. There is potential to collaborate with existing nurseries in many ways such as seed sharing, joint collection outings, coordinated propagation of species etc.

### **Pioneer River Improvement Trust**

Kate Steel asked what was happening with the Pioneer River Improvement Trust and whether the organisation still existed. David McKendry is the contact person for the group, for further information.

### **Mackay and District Turtlewatch request**

A general letter has been received from Mackay and District Turtlewatch Association requesting funding for turtle monitoring work. The project would be in association with JCU scientists and would involve attaching transmitters (4) to Flatback Turtles at the start of the 2014/15 breeding season, to determine where turtles reside between laying cycles, where they feed and their movements between foraging habitats and nesting beaches. School students and interested people will be able to track the turtles' movements online. The group is seeking a total of \$22,000 to purchase 4 units at a cost of \$5,500 each.

The committee agreed to consider this request as part of the August Community Environmental Grant round.

Meeting closed 2.30 pm

Next meeting: Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June - Council Chambers 12.30-2.30pm