

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Cr Julie Boyd, Lisa Kermode, Stuart Fyfe, Bruce Miles, Joan Fitzsimmons, Cr Alison Jones, Helen Paulsen, Derek Ball.

APOLOGIES: Stuart Holley.

The Mayor extended a welcome to Derek Ball, the new Mackay Whitsunday NRM group representative.

1. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES - MATTERS ARISING

1. Discussion about possible review of Natural Environment Plan

The Natural Environment Plan was discussed at length. Key points included:

- The report was completed prior to the regional ecosystem maps being finalised, so there is now more updated, accurate and detailed mapping available.
- IPA will also be reviewed shortly.
- Mirani and Sarina areas should be included in the plan.
- Significant faunal habitat needs to be included including migratory birds, dugongs and marine turtles.
- Pest plants and animals as well as fire management considerations need to be included, as do coastal environments.
- Incentive programs need to be followed up.
- Should the coastal plan be separate to or incorporated into this document?
- Areas of urban expansion should be priorities for additional mapping.

It was suggested that the new regional council work with MWNRM to discuss the review of the document and possible funding sources. NEAC to formulate a brief for discussion/scoping document by the end of January.

Action: Formulate a scoping document for the possible review of the natural environment plan by the end of January.

2. Review of action list

- Gooseponds tidal reaches masterplan
Joan and Lisa met on site to discuss some of the recommendations in the report. The proposed dog off leash area isn't considered appropriate, given its proximity to a watercourse with potentially high biodiversity values. There is potential however to consider purchasing the two blocks of land in private ownership. The potential constraints and restrictions on development of these blocks needs to be investigated, as does whether the purchase of these blocks falls into the guidelines for acquisition of land using environmental levy funds.

It was considered that the Council/PRIT owned land could be better managed taking into account the recommendations contained in the masterplan.

Action: EMIS to investigate the potential purchase of the two blocks of privately owned land.

3. Reliance Creek

Joan advised that she had spoken to Mike Rinki from the EPA who indicated that the EPA would be willing to be trustees of the proposed reserve.

Action: EMIS to contact EPA and formalise arrangements regarding joint trusteeship of the proposed Reliance Creek Reserve.

4. Slade Point Reserve project

NEO to contact Friends of the Reserve regarding when the stair and landscaping project will start at Slade Point Reserve. SEO to send a letter to the Friends of the Reserve notifying them that \$30,000 has been allocated to the project.

Action: NEO to contact the Friends of the Reserve.

Action: SEO to send notification letter to the Friends of the Reserve.

2. **BUDGET UPDATE**

Budget tabled at meeting

3. **UPDATE ON STORMWATER PROJECTS**

An update on stormwater projects was given by Robyn Birkett and Daniel Radovic.

Recent Stormwater Management Actions

EIRP Project

- Event Sampling (sampling groups, training, equipment)
- Automatic Sampler Program
- Stakeholder Discussions (Data Sharing)
- WHMP continued (Ambient)
- GIS: Defining Catchment Boundaries & Landuse
- Commissioning Consultants – WBM & Ecological Engineering

Gooseponds Creek Catchment Management Plan

- Literature Review - Master Plans, Reports
- Consultation – Community & Stakeholder
- GIS - Catchments, Land Uses
- MUSIC Modelling – Existing, Possible Improvements
- WQ Data Review – 1995 – 2007
- Strategies & Plans – Edu. Com. Envir. Funding

Water Quality Issues

- Highly Elevated Nutrient Levels
 - high proportion of agriculture in catchment
 - (rural 75 % residential 15%)
- Elevated Suspended Sediment Concentration
 - (rural 67 % residential 19%)

- Development sites
- Large Quantities of Gross Pollutants
 - Gross pollutants from untreated Urban stormwater
 - (urban 58 %)

Strategies – Water Quality Improvement

- Stormwater Quality Improvement Projects
- Riparian Rehabilitation Program
- Community Involvement (in Projects)
- Communication
- Council Projects eg Natural Environment Program
- Natural Resource Organisations eg MWNRM's Sustainable Landscapes Program, Pioneer Landcare
- Seek funding assistance from relevant Groups, Authorities & Agencies

Where to from here

- Draft Gooseponds Ck CMP under internal Review (Dec/Jan)
- Report to Council to seek Public Comment on Draft
- Information Sessions & Stakeholder Workshops
- Report to Council to seek Endorsement of Catchment Management Plan
- Implementation of CMP

4. **OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Bringing back the beach scrub funding

SEO submitted three project funding applications:

1. Fencing in Slade Point Reserve (2 sites) to stop motor bike access, plus weed control work. (\$5515)
2. Fencing in Shoal Point Foreshore Reserve, and weed control work. (\$20,161)
3. Weed control at Blacks Beach and Blacks Beach spit, plus support for a community revegetation day to engender support to develop a 'Friends of Blacks Beach' group. (\$8460)

All projects were successful and will be started next year. Total funds received **\$34,136**.

2. Update from MWNRM including:

1. Potential partnership between Council and MWNRM to finalise the Coastal Management Plan and include content similar to Sarina's Management Guidelines for Coastal Zones.

Derek suggested that MWNRM are very interested in a partnership arrangement to finalise and implement the coastal management plan, using the Sarina Coastal Management Guidelines as a model and producing individual beach-by-beach plans.

A \$200,000 project over 18 months, funded 50/50 MWNRM and Council was suggested.

Action: SEO and Derek to meet next year to discuss further and identify potential funding sources.

2. Review of MWNRM Plan.
A much more concise document is proposed.

3. Sandfly creek management plan

Opportunities to fund the review and finalisation of this document were discussed. It was suggested that the Sandfly Creek management plan review be given priority for funding when the funding is available next year. It was also agreed that it be suggested that Sandfly Creek be declared a dog free zone.

4. Pennyleaf control in Lynette drive

Action: Stuart and Joan to meet on site to discuss possible weed control work.

5. **NEXT MEETING**

To be determined after elections/amalgamations.

Committee to set dates for 2008 meetings. It is likely that the next meeting will be in early April 2008.

Meeting closed at 10.30 am

RECORDED BY: Lisa Kermode