

Maclean Flying-fox Working Group
Minutes and Meeting Outcomes from 8 November 2016

Attendees:

DY	Dimitri Young	Office of Environment & Heritage
BP	Bob Pearl	Maclean High School
LW	Linda Wright	Valley Watch
IJ	Imelda Jennings	Wildlife SOS
RW	Rod Wright	Clarence Valley Council
CS	Cat Smykowsky	Bush Regenerator
AP	Andrew Petroschevsky	Trade & Investment – Crown Lands
GB	Gill Bennett	Bat Historian –Yamba Resident

Apologies:

DS	Des Schroeder	Clarence Valley Council
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Meeting Commenced 1:10pm

Open by Chair DY

General Business:

1. Acceptance of previous meeting minutes from 9 Aug 2016:

- DY gave an update on previous meetings actions.
- Business arising: education materials: send to primary feeder schools for Maclean High School.

Group accepted meeting minutes.

Action 1: BP to email DY with a list of feeder schools in the area.

2. Update on follow up with DET offset requirements from certificates:

- DY: Tracked files to Grafton. Rachel Binskin going through the reports to see if they're there. If they are there, they may have already complied.

Action 2: (DY) Still to follow up on offset requirements and finalise what we are going to do, if anything. DY will call BP if there's anything outstanding.

3. Clarence Valley Council Education Centre Update:

- CS/RW: It's up and running (for 6 months). Recently installed Biodiversity display etc. There is opportunity to put feature displays up. CS commented that this centre could be a showcase of Maclean rainforest restoration work and would like to keep it an agenda item.
- RW: still unsure of what will be feature and what will be permanent. Need to talk about this to council education team.
- This centre is targeted from primary to adult. Flexibility to tailor content to certain groups will need to work out how to tailor to the groups.

Action 3: Leave on the agenda – discuss about feature displays, perhaps Maclean rainforest restoration and RW to talk to Education Centre. It could be about habitat restoration, bush regeneration rather than just solely flying foxes. Overall habitat restoration.

4. Maclean Country Woman's Association (CWA) and wildlife SOS public seat installation:

Both the CWA & SOS are interested in helping fund/organise a public seat with a plaque in appreciation of Kathleen Goodrich near the Flying-fox information sign near Macfarlane Bridge:

- LW: With CWA (Kathleen and ex member passed away) and SOS funding the community is wanting a memorial plaque and a public seat. RW: To do this kind of work there is a policy on the website. LW: The Plaque and sign has gone up, but there is nowhere to sit. It's a positive addition to provide memorial to important community member. Kath was an environmental advocate. RW said the cost for aluminium bench seat would be approx. \$800. LW also said Valleywatch would be happy to pay for a sign/plaque for Ferry Park. This should come through the working group.
- GB: discussed promoting through tourist info centre and online.

Group very much supports concept.

Action 4: RW asked LW for CWA to write to council with background info and what they addressed to GM (look at website and criteria prior to sending the letter). CWA will fund the seat. LW has CWA meeting tomorrow. IJ to be cc'd in.

Action 5: RW: Council to investigate potential for another sign highlighting fly out, good location to view it from. Funding from Valleywatch.

Action 6: RW to progress the potential of publicising the location of the fly out view point on council's tourist information website.

5. The MFFWG response to the installation of solar panels and the implication it has for other public work projects and students at the school:

- DY: discussed the action in previous minutes (referring to sending out the letter regarding policy to Maclean High School). DY sent the letter on behalf of the MFFWG and BP contacted DY. DY said the letter hasn't put things in the best way possible so he wants to have another discussion (DY was acting in another position and policy/minutes may have been misinterpreted). The letter that was sent to BP may have been too definitive in the wording and may not have accurately reflected the previous meeting's minutes. DY also commented that the previous meeting did not discuss works for air conditioning, which will also need to be discussed.
- BP: (Giving background info) The Maclean High School were beneficiaries of \$360K (MacLean community). The school needs air con (smell from flying foxes etc.). The goal was to update teaching facilities to have air con and to offset electricity cost they would install solar panels on the library block. Working through public works (Kristy Harvey). On 2 AUG 2016 Kristy prepared solar documentation and acknowledged MFFWG needs to be consulted for works to be done at this site noting previous installations that were completed. Response to this was the letter from DY.
- DY: Kristy explained to DY that the project had an air con and solar component. The reports Kristy completed review environmental factors (REF) was based on works being completed by the end of September. So DY acknowledged the letter should have gone out much earlier. Now Kristy explained tender process is held up, REF not accurate and now proposing to re assess it.
- DY: Need to write another letter incorporating more info to provide better advice, AND if solar was an issue what methodology they will be using to install. We haven't seen policy

from 2010 details or REF report. Kristie couldn't give DY an accurate description of what works will be involved. If the solar does pose an issue, can we install air con now and solar later? Is this feasible?

- BP: Discussed the report from Kristie had the following comments:
- Solar Noise, battery powered tools and truck. Hand passed tools.
- Air con: 15 minutes of noise per unit (inside class rooms). Powered tools to fix the unit (10 mins per unit). Approx. 10 units.
- BP: overall they don't qualify for air con only a few rooms which need mitigation from flying foxes. They can install solar and air con by 12th Dec. The hold up with solar was the MFFWG letter. HE doesn't think disturbance will be more than the road works.
- DY confirmed the policy for operational works is unclear.

Group: No concerns for the work and the conclusion: operational activity (air con solar panels) are not going to create significant disturbance to flying-foxes. Happy for works to proceed.

Action 7: this week/asap DY to send another letter (noting the works involved are low impact methods and especially not more than the current background noise of road works) and on that basis happy for works to proceed at any time. Confirm group fully supports these works and notes it as an action to be completed asap.

BP: noted future further works upgrading front of the school (ripping up concrete, minimal small excavation etc.). BP said the consultants (Kristy) were going to contact DY in due course. Project will be approx. 6 months. Wanting to complete works over Christmas holidays.

Action 8: BP to contact Kristie to ask for info to be sent out to Dimitri and the rest of the group.

Group: Happy for these works to be completed pending receipt of information.

Action 9: After receipt of details from BP, DY to send a letter to BP confirming mitigating factors for the front of the school upgrade and meeting overall strategy of the group. Group agrees these works will comply with overall strategy.

Note from DY: Solar panels: protocols are the mitigations from 2010 in email sent out from Kristy Harvey.

6. Use of leaf blowers /Chainsaws along Cameron Street:

- CS: Council's team has been blowing underneath colony. She is also concerned they will cut down camphor laurel trees with chainsaw.
- RW: followed up who did the work and team leader at Maclean and operational teams. They can improve on a number of things. While they tried to condense activities over 1 day, he's requested that more intensive work is done annually. Things that were done recently were - scrubbing handrails, clean footpath, leaf blowing. Noted they can use battery powered leaf blowers or broom rather than petrol.
- RW Got a commitment from Maclean team leader to note mitigating factors more diligently. Roadside workers needs to understand the site – need to be inducted to the site. They might need to do an REF for these minor sites.
- RW Road side activities (slashing etc.) don't have an REF but might need to look at doing a general one for these areas. IJ advise of FF in these locations. It is also hard as multiple teams working in these areas
- RW is confident it won't happen again

- RW: Completed an REF for chainsaws around this area. He needs to update REF. Will look at same mitigation. May-June is the time to complete works and avoid doing things on a hot day. There may be disturbance but low impact at that time of year.

Action 10: Operational comments, email directly to RW.

7. Grants (strategy delivery) and any additional opportunities:

- RW: Council was successful on grant they applied for recently. \$58,000. \$34,000 (\$14k labour green army/bush regen). 2 weeks in rainforest bush regen and 2 weeks in the gully (near Camden St). The funds won't go far but it will be a start. Tidying up along footpath and that area. Traffic control, chipper etc. last time was approx. \$28K.
- *IJ and CS noted they don't like the chipper that is used.*
- RW said they can relocate the trees and do it elsewhere but it adds to the cost. Stags can be taken away easily rather than chipped. They didn't want to leave the logs due to mess and weed control. Looking at getting more funding in the future.
- RW Hasn't looked at REF yet. Aiming for May for works to be done as they need to be completed prior to June. He welcomes any further comments.

Action 11: Group: Operational comments, email directly to RW Other: RW has emailed grant details to all the group. Grant info report – signed by GM. Council report on info of the grant, will report on 5 year progress update as an attachment. Is an internal report.

8. Further to the agenda:

- IJ raised news article: need to discuss because:
 - Not everyone gets this paper and we should see what's happening in the media
 - It is misleading. Misleading community impacts on strategic actions. It's worth noting the challenges to implementing the strategy. And for the future, how can we use media better for education. Politicians in this article are contradicting the department's strategy.
- *Group: noted not worth writing to the Mr Gulaptis.*
- IJ: is concerned it influences how community thinks. I.e. why isn't MFFWG doing their job?
- GB: Mr Gulaptis (in the article) was a part of the dispersal team in 2000 and thinks it can be done again in 2016. The Strategy talks about co-existence in the aims, not dispersal.
- RW: main thing is that the newspaper reporter has written a well-balanced article.

*Note: **Strategy is due to be reviewed in 2020***

9. Other items:

- DY: Sarah Armstrong Maclean High School P&C. BP confirmed the P&C are concerned about impact of flying foxes near the school and he discusses their mitigation strategy. The Group will accept their confirmation to decline membership to the working group.
- AP from Crown lands: Received grant to do bush regen \$9k, to maintain previous works done (weeds, vines etc.) in Maclean rainforest reserve. If there are animals, according to REF, work around bats. If they're in there we don't go in.
- DY noted group is acting holistically and it's encouraging to see.

10. 2017 Quarterly Meetings:

Quarterly Meetings are to be the third Tuesday of the month - 21 Feb, 23 May, 15 Aug, and 21 Nov.

Action 11: Dimitri to send out invites. Seek to meet at council chambers but group is open to other venues.

Meeting closed: 2:50pm

Next meeting: 21 February 2017 1pm – 3pm Clarence Valley Council Chambers.

Table 1: Action Items 8 November 2016

Agenda Actions	Action	Responsible
1	Educational materials to feeder primary schools for Maclean High School. BP to email DY with list/details of the schools. DY to then forward education materials	BP and DY
2	DY Still to follow up on offset requirements and finalise what we are going to do, if anything. DY will call BP if there's anything outstanding.	DY
3	Discuss about feature displays, perhaps Maclean rainforest restoration and RW to talk to Education Centre. It could be about habitat restoration, bush regeneration rather than just solely flying foxes. Overall habitat restoration.	Ongoing - All
4	LW to write council on behalf of CWA with background info and what they propose re the seat and funding - addressed to council General Manager. IJ to be cc'd in.	LW
5	RW to investigate potential for another sign highlighting fly out, good location to view it from. Funding from Valleywatch.	RW
6	RW to progress the potential of publicising the location of the fly out view point on council's tourist information website.	RW
7	<u>This week/asap</u> DY to send another letter (noting the works involved are low impact methods and especially not more than the current background noise of road works) and on that basis happy for works to proceed at any time. Confirm group fully supports these works and notes it as an action to be completed asap.	DY
8	BP to contact Kristy & ask for info regarding future upgrading of the front of the school to be sent out to DY and the rest of the group.	BP
9	Regarding the front of the school upgrade: After receipt of details, DY to send a letter to Bob confirming mitigating factors and meeting overall strategy of the group.	DY
10	Operational comments, email directly to RW	All
11	Operational comments, email directly to RW Other: RW has emailed grant details to all the group. Grant info report – signed by GM. Council report on info of the grant, will report on 5 year progress update as an attachment. Is an internal report.	RW
12	2017 Quarterly Meeting requirements send out invites for 21 Feb, 23 May, 15 Aug, 21 Nov	DY

NEXT MEETING: Next meeting 21 February 2017