

Blue Mountains Bushcare Network
Minutes
Mountains Community Resource Network (MCRN) Meeting Room
Lawson
Wednesday 14th May 2014 at 6pm

Chair: Paul Vale

Minutes: Monica Nugent

Apologies:

Barbara Harley; Ivan Jeray; Jenny Hill; Elly Chatfield; Linda Thomas.

Attendees: Paul Vale (Bushcare Network Coordinator; Popes Glen + various); Mike Purtell (Deanei Forest + Else Mitchell); Ray Richardson (Homeschoolers, Nth Lawson); David King (Garguree Swampcare); Neil Stuart (Friends of Katoomba Falls Ck Valley); Neil McGlashan (Glenbrook Lagoon); Maeve Dunnett (Minnehaha Falls); Susan Jalaluddin (Leura Cascades Catchment); Diana Levy (Birdwood Gully, Remote Bushcare), Monica Nugent (Acting Bushcare Team Leader, BMCC).

Acceptance of Previous Minutes

Feb 2014 minutes confirmed by Maeve Dunnett; seconded Mike Purtell.

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Invitation to all volunteer site co-ordinators to add items to the BCN meetings, send them the minutes and to find out what we can do to assist them.

This item was merged with Item 3.

Previous Minutes: (Agenda Item 4: Acceptance and distribution of BCN minutes)

- There appears to be no confirmed or published minutes for 2013. Concern was expressed at the lack of minutes from June and December as decisions were made and actions agreed to, but no minutes have been distributed.
- The meeting agreed that draft minutes should not be published until confirmed at the next meeting.

Action: Monica to follow up.

Nature Based Recreation

Michael Hensen provided the journal article he referred to at the February meeting; it was circulated with the draft minutes of that meeting. The paper is titled "Environmental management of endurance running events in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area". It was prepared by Amy Dula for a Masters research project with the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute in June 2012.

Bushfire Recovery

Mike reported on his discussion with Rob Agars (resident of Buena Vista Rd affected by 1013 fire) who emphasised that the most common issue confronting the community is fear and that many of those who lost homes have relocated from the area but those whose properties were damaged but not destroyed are grappling with the emotional effects of continuing to reside in the burnt out landscape constantly reminding them.

The Deanei Bushcare Group held an informal “workshop” at the Agars home and also visited Glen Parry’s place, in order to assist them with advice regarding weeding and regenerating the native vegetation on their blocks. It was partly an exercise in information exchange and education, partly moral support.

Other possible avenues for Bushcare to offer similar support to bushfire affected residents were discussed eg: working bees, workshops, development of plant lists. Monica informed the meeting that insurance and liability issues prevent Council from hosting these events on private land.

AGENDA

1. Bushcare Network Conference – outcomes; report & possibilities for future conferences

- Ray proposed that the Network make a decision about whether to proceed with a 2015 conference given that bi-annual conferences were proposed last year.
- The meeting agreed to proceed with planning for a 2nd conference on 29th August 2015, topic and content to be decided at the next meeting, to be held at the Mavis Woods Hall, Lawson Community Centre.

Actions:

1. Monica to check venue availability and make reservation;
2. Mike to bring the 2013 Conference Treasurers’ report to the next meeting;
3. Monica to arrange for invoicing and receipt of a \$150 donation from the Network towards the expenses relating to the 2013 conference.

2. Community Education Project

- Maeve reported that she’d discussed the proposed “living with fire” community education project with Liz, the Community Development Worker at Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre and that the focus of Liz’s work is to assist residents deal with the fear they are experiencing post-fire, to rebuild trust and community connection, and to address any mental health issues arising.
- Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre has received funding for community development and it is feasible that the Bushcare Network develop a joint project with them.
- Monica relayed Linda Thomas’s offer to attend the meeting as there is likely to be considerable overlap between this proposal and a project Linda is developing for the area and meeting agreed we should avoid duplication and ensure clear messages are communicated.

Actions: Maeve to discuss the project with Linda; Monica to invite Linda to the next meeting.

3. Suggestion to canvass all Bushcare/Landcare group coordinators directly, to ask for feedback on how their site is going / what's needed

David raised a question about the need for group co-ordinators to have the opportunity to ask for advice, support, and ideas about how to find resources or develop their groups. It seems unclear whether all group co-ordinators know about the Bushcare Network and how to get information and advice. Can we make sure every group knows what the Network is about and how it works.

Susan provided an example of where a group might seek support from the Network. Her group (Cumberland Walkway) has become frustrated by the lack of co-operation of a neighbouring landholder. The group understands that Council's Environment Branch have a written agreement with the landholder regarding his activity, however it appears to hold no weight. The group has written to Environment Branch but they have become so frustrated they are likely to close the group and stop working the site.

Action: Paul Vale to circulate the Bushcare Procedures manual

4. Acceptance and distribution of BCN minutes;

This item was addressed as a matter arising from last meeting.

5. Work Health Safety practices audit and plans;

Monica provided a brief outline of the recent meeting between some of the Network members (Ray, Jenny, Barbara and Paul), Monica Nugent (BMCC Bushcare) and Jai Cooper from Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA), who have developed the "In Safe Hands Toolkit" - a guide for establishing safe work practices on conservation volunteers project sites. With Jai's guidance, we audited the current risk management systems and identified gaps in current practice. Those present at the meeting agreed the kit sets the standard we would like to have BMCC Bushcare follow and that the audit would be a useful tool for the rewriting of the Bushcare Procedures manual and Community Conservation Program Review.

Action: Monica to circulate the audit document resulting from the meeting, prepared by Jai Cooper.

6. Other business

- Aboriginal rock engraving at Birdwood Gully: Diana expressed concern regarding the management of an engraving at the Boomerang Rd entrance to Birdwood Gully. She thinks it may have been covered in mulch and questioned whether this is acceptable practice.

Action: Monica to check that the site is registered on the Aboriginal Heritage Information & Management System (AHIMS).

- Diana suggested the Bushcare program consider holding a "Bushcare for Singles" event. She has heard very positive feedback about similar days in other areas and believes it could be a

great PR exercise and a fun event that could attract large numbers and inject new energy into the program.

Action: Monica will research further and discuss the possibility with the Bushcare Team and report back to the Network.

- Working Bee to support fire-affected residents. We discussed the idea of supporting residents whose properties have been burnt by organising working bees to manage the weeds germinating as a result of the recent fires. Again, the issue of insurance and public liability prevents Council's Bushcare Program from hosting such events. This could be included in planning and discussions around the community education project.

Actions Summary Table:

| Item | Action | Person(s) |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Previous Minutes | Chase data & reconstruct minutes of the December 2013 meeting; Check minutes of all 2013 meetings and establish which are missing, which need confirmation and publication | Paul Vale, Monica Nugent |
| Community Education | Discuss project plans with Linda Thomas Invite Linda Thomas to next meeting | Maeve Dunnett Monica |
| Work Health Safety practices audit | Circulate CVA audit | Monica |
| Birdwood rock engraving | Check AHIMs and report back | Monica |
| Bushcare for Singles | Research ideas & report back | Monica |
| Inviting all group co-ordinators /role of the Network. | circulate the Bushcare Procedures manual | Paul Vale |

NEXT MEETING: 6pm Wednesday 13th August,

MCRN meeting room, Lawson Library Building, cnr San Jose Ave and Loftus St Lawson