

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK INCORPORATED

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

Held on Thursday 28 May, 2020

On-line via the Cloud based internet provider "Zoom"

Meeting opened: at 3.30 p.m.

Convenor Ralph Cartwright. Minutes – John Arney

A/ Preliminaries, Some members took-up Ralph's invite to log-on early and iron out any bugs to ensure that they were able to do so.

Members present

Ralph Cartwright, David Robson, Peter Donley, Diane Townley, Tony Larkin, Peter Kahn, Neville Bethe, John Arney, Marin and Jenny Whitin , Alex Allchin, Paul Rendell and Helena Chan, Rhonda Daniels.

Visitors present

NPWS representatives Adrian Johnstone and Mel Keith attended 16.06 to 16.57 hours

Apologies

Ian Hill, Josie Piper, Judith Carrick, Rhonda Daniels

IT Issues Both Rhonda and Ian tried hard to join, but IT issues prevented them doing so successfully.

The meeting

Peter Donley requested that a link be placed on the FoR website to a Facebook page relating to *Formosa Lily Action Group, Sutherland Shire*. Vis:-

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/720465388428858/>

Dave / Ralph to action.

Website, Dave reported that the Royal Bushies are now listed on the NPWS Volunteers website. Comments that the details on the new link are very basic and an update is desirable (if possible).

Neville mentioned that other sites also have references to the Royal Bushies and that enquiries have been directed to him in the past.

Roads, Dave reported on the pending **8 Week** closure of a section Bertram Stephens Drive from Warumbul turn-off? to Bundeena Drive?, whilst major repairs are undertaken on the Flat Rock Creek bridge. Dates to be advised soon. Currently night work is taking place on the Garie Beach Road.

Bonnie Vale, Dave and Diane gave a report on the tidal closure of The Basin between Bonnie Vale and Maianbar.

The High tides and big seas on 23 and 24 May resulted in waves overtopping "The Spit" and moving material into the tidal channel adjacent to Constables Point, blocking the entire channel.

It has since been noted that the mangroves in the wetlands areas south of the dammed area now appear to be dying.

The web site "**Shire Maps**" has historical areal photos that show the changing flows and shapes of the channel since 1943. (More on this later in the NPWS report) See:-

<https://maps.ssc.nsw.gov.au/ShireMaps/>

Warumbul: Alex gave the meeting an overview of the work that he had done to repair and tidy-up the unoccupied cottage there after a significant attack by vandals, possibly occurring in early March.

NPWS Report. Adrian and Mel joined the meeting at 16.06.

Adrian gave an overview of the period bushfires to Covid19:

Camping Grounds, Planning for re-opening bookings for camping in the Park on 1 June. (not Bonnie Vale (BV) as yet, the BV area still has issues with buried asbestos and this is currently being addressed The site supervisor there at present is another Adrian)

The Visitors Centre will also be open soon.

Gatherings of up to 10 people and government approved numbers at weddings will be allowed.

An increase in illegal activities has been noted in the park during the Covid19 lockdown, mainly persons with dogs and dumping of waste material. Hefty fines apply.

Surveillance and reporting of dumpers has resulted in four prosecutions and some on the spot fines of \$2000.

Volunteers: A risk analysis is currently being undertaken and activities may resume soon.

Hazard reduction burns have taken place on:-- Artillery Hill, Alford's Point North and Beauty Point.

Burns are planned for Woodfield Ave. at Bundeena towards Maianbar, Goarra ridge at Heathcote NP, Near the NPWS depot (the "Workshop") on the tram line (small area), and Illawong.

Capital Works:--Public toilets are to be installed in the main office carpark to serve visitors and the EEC. Anita is conducting a feasibility study and site plans. The main office roof is currently being replaced. Access is currently restricted to staff only.

There will be an increase in staff numbers at the Royal office as people transfer in from other areas of Sydney.

A maintenance project has started on Yeramba lagoon at Picnic Point.

At Garie a Surf Club upgrade and water quality works are planned.

Mel: Update on royal volunteers website, looking into ChemCert. Training for staff and volunteers.

Peter asked Mel about numbers in the Vols' group's, now limited to 10, if over, split into two groups.

(Diane): Simpson's Sea Wall has partially collapsed again,

(Adrian): the area has been viewed and a report has been filed.

Adrian: During the Covid19 shutdown field staff have been tackling jobs that they normally cannot get to. Field crews had been split-up into different areas.

The damming of the Basin as mentioned page 1, above, at Bonnie Vale / Maianbar is being monitored by Sutherland Council and NPWS on a bi-partisan basis. 'Council are carrying out the scientific monitoring of the water quality including salinity.

(Alex) Is there an opportunity for camping in areas such as Wattamolla whilst Bonnie vale is closed?

(Adrian) not at present however the current situation will be reviewed in the preparation of the new Plan of Management (This may be available towards the end of this year).

16.57pm end of the NPWS report.

Alex continued his report on Warumbul and discussions took place on opportunities to maintain the integrity of the historic cottage. Need to feel out the NPWS Assets Manager and the Regional Advisory Committee's position on the cottage.

Meeting closed at 5.25pm

John Arney