

# Minutes

## Minutes of the Tweed Coast Koala Management Committee Meeting held Tuesday 30 November 2021

### Venue:

Mt Warning Room, Tweed Shire Council, Murwillumbah

### Time:

2.00 pm

### Present:

Jenny Hayes, Bill Hoskins, Rhonda James, Lorraine Vass (online), Scott Benitez Hetherington, Marama Hopkins, Louise Bennett, Jo Green, Cr Katie Milne (online), Mark Kingston

### Apologies:

Tracey Stinson

Scott opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

### Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved: Rhonda James

Seconded: Lorraine Vass

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Tweed Coast Management Committee meeting held Tuesday 11 May 2021 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

### Actions carried over:

**Action:** Scott to contact Cheyne Flanagan at Port Macquarie Koala Hospital and discuss potential visit.

**Action:** Marama to prepare a map of 'paper road' road reserves on the Tweed Coast for distribution amongst the committee and further discussion at the next meeting.

### Business arising:

#### **BA1. Potential visit to Port Macquarie Koala Hospital (PMKH) to discuss fire response and other koala conservation and management actions**

- Further action postponed due to ongoing travel restrictions and lack of capacity to coordinate and implement
- To reconsider in 2022

#### **BA2. Preparation of a map of paper roads on the Tweed Coast**

- Council resolution made in consideration of the May meeting minutes requesting review of the *Road Closures and Private Purchase Policy* to identify if amendments required to

ensure that environmental values and potential use of these lands for wildlife habitat is considered.

- No action taken to date due to resource constraints

## **Agenda Items:**

### **A1. Vote of thanks for Cr Katie Milne**

- Scott offered thanks to Katie for her long standing support, effort and commitment on behalf of the committee.
- Katie thanked the staff and committee members for their effort and great outcomes
- Further comments on the significance of Katie's contribution were offered by Mark and Jenny

### **A2. Vote of thanks for Tracey Stinson**

- Katie offered thanks to Tracey Stinson on behalf of the committee. It was acknowledged that Tracey has provided ongoing valuable support and advocacy for the committee and the aims of the Tweed Coast KPOM.

### **A3. Term of committee – extended into 2022**

- Current council advisory committees have been extended to June 2022 to accommodate the delayed local government elections and a review of committees
- Scott to follow up on opportunities for the committee members to have input to the review

**Action: Scott to request information regarding opportunities for the committee members to have input into the proposed review of advisory committees**

### **A4. Land acquisitions – Cudgen Nature Reserve**

- Land on Clothiers Creek Rd has been sold to the NSW state government for addition to the Cudgen Nature Reserve
- It was noted that there are two further parcels currently for sale that would also be highly significant additions to the Reserve.
- Council and Friends of the Cudgen Nature Reserve have both made submissions to the NSW state government recommending purchase of these lots.
- It was also noted that the northern parcel doesn't have a building entitlement.
- Funding for acquisition of koala habitat is anticipated to be available through the NSW koala strategy, although details are not yet available.

### **A5. Koala activity surveys – Tweed Coast and Northern Rivers regional**

- Tweed Coast very close to finished (2 sites to do) that will be completed this week if the weather allows
- Analysis of the data will be completed once all survey sites completed. Preliminary consideration of the survey results indicate that activity appears to be comparable to the 2018 survey. A report of the outcomes will be prepared in early 2022.
- Lismore City and Byron Shire have also both completed activity surveys in 2021.
- All three local activity surveys will be integrated to the results of the Northern Rivers Regional activity survey which is now underway. 300 sites across the region, including sites surveyed in 2018 will be assessed for koala activity over summer 2021/22.

## A6. Outstanding council resolutions

- An overview of the current status of the individual actions of current council resolutions was provided. This included the following resolutions (with status provided in brackets following):
  - That the committee notes that DCPA19 needs to be updated in response to the introduction of NSW Koala SEPP 2021 due to the need to address references to the superseded SEPP 44 and the adoption of the Tweed Coast KPOM (*action on hold, subject to staff resources and/or a concurrent trigger to update the DCP*)
  - That the Chair follows up on behalf of the committee seeking to ensure the requested meetings occur as a matter of urgency (*actions taken including negotiation with the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation Board to prepare a submission on behalf of the NRJO. Response to date to any of the letters has been limited to referral to other Ministers*)
  - That the Chair write on behalf of the committee to Team Koala thanking the members for their efforts in advocating for better protection for the Tweed Coast koalas (*complete*)

## A7. Habitat restoration status update

- On-ground koala tree planting and habitat improvement work continuing at sites including:
  - 3 sites at Duranbah
  - 3 sites at Pottsville
  - Beltana Drive at Bilambil where 500 trees were planted last Saturday on a council land site and where there are a further 4-5 landholders interested in also planting koala habitat
  - 2 sites (Urliup and North Tumbulgum) as part of the North-East Hinterland project
- Jenny noted that Team Koala volunteers are looking forward to when they can participate in community plantings.

## A8. Other actions

### a. Tweed Coast Rd fence

- Vegetation clearing complete to allow assessment of repairs required
- Repair audit complete
- Scope of works for quotes on repairs in preparation with works to be completed in early 2022

### b. Koala Research Hub

- Operational – generally full occupancy and facility operating smoothly
- Includes koalas involved in research project and through local rescue / care

**Action: Scott to request a report and / or presentation from Currumbin Wildlife Hospital on the operation of the hub, numbers of koalas, vaccinations and release status**

### c. Koala habitat restoration database

- Set-up of the Habitat Restoration Archive is now complete and operational. NSW DPIE has funded commencement of data entry for koala habitat plantings and restoration

- Link to project page:  
<https://biocollect.ala.org.au/ecoscience/project/index/6a30203b-3205-4af4-a201-2b3a812106de>

#### **d. Koala donations in rates notice**

- Following a council resolution, a call for donations to koala conservation projects was made in this year's rates notice.

**Action: Scott to request an update from finance unit on the donations made to date and the process for making donations.**

#### **General Business:**

##### **GB1. Kings Forest update**

- Turners land offset planting 23,700 trees planted (20 ha) complete
- Development proponents are planning to get planting underway in other offset areas
- Hazard reduction burns are required in some areas prior to plantings
- Other minor issues with fencing and bond conditions being worked through
- Koala activity recorded on site as part of the Tweed Coast activity survey

##### **GB2. Clothiers Creek road sign**

- A directional traffic sign has been installed in front of the eastern koala zone variable message sign
- Scott has submitted a request with council's traffic unit to relocate it
- The koala zone sign requires repairs which has been difficult to implement due to the current border closure

##### **GB3. Land for sale – Cabarita and Pottsville**

- In addition to the land for sale at Cabarita discussed at item A4 above, there is also a significant parcel of land adjoining the northern boundary of Pottsville Wetland.
- The committee discussed the issues involved in identifying land for acquisition, securing funding and management arrangements.

##### **GB4. Regional koala group meeting**

- Marama provided an update on the recent regional koala group meeting, hosted by Friends of the Koala at Lismore. This included a presentation from Billie Roberts of NSW DPIE who is coordinating the state-wide delivery of the NSW koala program. As part of this presentation, the following key information was provided:
  - Brendan Taylor was introduced as DPIE regional partnership coordinator
  - A regional partnership based on the current North East Hinterland project to continue regional work, prioritise and coordinate investment is in development
  - A regional koala project officer position is proposed to assist with coordination and delivery of regional koala conservation and recovery actions
  - The first action required is to develop a regional koala conservation strategy that applies the ARC Linkage project to prioritise works and investment.
  - The funding details are unable to be released but there is proposed to be investment in priority areas including koala road mortality, land acquisition and habitat restoration

# Minutes

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**Action: Scott to invite Brendan Taylor to the next Koala Management Committee meeting**

**Action: Marama to access Dan Lunneys' presentation on koala rehabilitation and release outcomes and share with the committee.**

## **Next Meeting:**

2022 meeting schedule to be determined and advised

The meeting closed at 3.45pm

## **Action summary:**

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## **EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:**

## **EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS:**