

Minutes

Minutes of the Tweed Coast Koala Advisory Committee Meeting held Tuesday 5 September 2023

Venue:

Mt Warning Meeting Room, Murwillumbah Civic & Cultural Centre

Time:

1.30pm

Present:

Cr Meredith Dennis, Max Barnard (Team Koala), Rhonda James, Lorraine Vass, Irene Timmins, Scott Benitez Hetherington, Jo Green, Marama Hopkins, Brooke O'Dea.

Apologies:

Naomi Searle, Jenny Hayes.

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved: Rhonda James

Seconded: Lorraine Vass

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Tweed Coast Koala Advisory Committee meeting held Tuesday 20 June 2023 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Business Arising:

BA1. Scott to request an update from Finance Unit on the donations made to date and the process for making donations.

- Complete – approximately \$400 received in donations.
- Committee agreed to allocate to habitat restoration projects.

Action: Scott to request that the funds are transferred to the Tweed Coast Koala Plan of Management (KPOM) habitat restoration job number.

Agenda Items:

A1. Acknowledgement of Country

Marama acknowledged the Ngandowal and Minyungbul speaking people of the Bundjalung Country on whose land we work and learn and play.

A2. Introduce Brooke O'Dea, Environmental Planning & Policy Officer

Brooke introduced her role with council focussing primarily on C-zone review and implementation.

The committee members introduced themselves and explained their interests and backgrounds.

A3. Council updates

A3.1 Habitat restoration – Jo Green

- Jo shared maps from Habitat Restoration HUB, hosted on Atlas of Living Australia.
- 431 habitat restoration sites loaded in Tweed to date (all types, all agencies).

- 257 sites in the Tweed Coast Koala Plan of Management (KPOM) area (from 2009) have been entered, 327 hectares, average size of work site (individual work zone) is 1.27 hectares.
- 50 sites in Tweed Coast KPOM area 2020-2023, total 31.7 hectares.
- Estimates of cost per hectare, noting that not all costing data is entered consistently – (\$2,576 assisted regen; \$14,063 hand planting; \$10,010 combined assisted regen / planting).

A3.2 Clothiers Creek Road – Scott

- Scott provided a brief overview of current situation with Clothiers Creek Road resolutions to reduce speed limit and investigate installation of speed reduction devices.
- Working with Roads & Traffic Unit to implement the resolution. Key step to secure a consultant to complete the traffic analysis remains outstanding.

A3.3 Conservation Strategy, vegetation mapping – Scott

- Draft Tweed Conservation Strategy to be released for public exhibition on Thursday 7 September.
- Update of Tweed vegetation mapping commenced with current investigative phase.

A3.4 Regional update – Marama

- Marama noted recent discussion at Northern Rivers Regional Koala Network (NRKKN) about proposed koala forum. Likely May 2024 and proposed regional delivery over 1-2 weeks.
- Northern Rivers Koala Count 24-30 September – promotions to follow. Discussed preference for promoting north of the river and west of the highway as areas that we require more sightings data.

A3.5 Koala Plan of Management review – All

- Review templates have been provided with agenda – Parts 8 & 13. Any initial feedback or clarification required?
- Discussed suggested process for review: committee to complete feedback documents and return. Officers will prepare next Parts for review and forward to committee out of session. Marama happy to meet and discuss particular issues if required.
- Feedback for review to date:
 - funding and resourcing are key issues, how do we increase?
 - may need to review actions to ensure they can be funded and are still relevant / best practice.
 - check for duplication.
 - ensure that actions are up to date with latest research, particularly vehicle strike mitigation.
 - use of template for review process working well.
 - general comments section is useful.

Action: Committee to provide review comments/completed templates for Parts 8 and 13 within 2 weeks.

Key outcomes from the meeting – All

- Further work required to assist the community to understand what Council can and can't do. Perceptions and expectations of community do not match what is possible. Key opportunity to raise awareness and clarify as part of the KPOM review.
- Challenges of communication, messaging and understanding. Opportunity to increase presence and participation in community information days.
- Habitat restoration hub data can assist understanding and promotion of extent and value of koala habitat restoration works.

General Business:

GB1. Pottsville Road caravan park DA23/0302 (Irene)

- Noted that this DA is recommended for refusal in report to be considered at the Council meeting of Thursday 7 September. Also discussed the extent of community submissions and interest in the matter expressed through social media, direct discussion and at markets.

GB2. Recent koala vehicle strikes on M1 (Irene)

- 2 recent strikes near Pottsville interchange
- Council and committee to continue to work with Friends of Koala to inform Roads & Maritime Services (RMS) and request actions including increased maintenance, extension of fencing and investigation of measures at the interchange.

GB3. Crown Lands (Rhonda)

- Road reserve between Reserve Creek Road and Clothiers Creek Road. Noted that the existing vegetation is providing connectivity and habitat values.

GB4. Road signage (Irene)

- Discussion about use of temporary signage to raise awareness of current koala activity. Noted that Council has road works style signs that are placed at locations in response to koala activity as resources allow.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Tweed Coast Koala Advisory Committee will be held Tuesday 5 December 2023.

The meeting closed at 3.06pm

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:

Nil

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

Nil