

WILSON INLET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 19 DECEMBER 2007 AT THE SHIRE OF DENMARK RECEPTION ROOM AT 1.00PM

PRESENT: George Ebbett, Ben Chuwen, Zak Launay, Brad Kneebone, Helen Heydenrych, Dave Rushton, Craig Carter, John Xanthis, Danny Burkett, Stephen Bondini, Kim Stanton (City of Albany), Geoff Findlay

IN ATTENDANCE: Wayne Webb, Toni Webb & Anthony Galante (DIA)

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1.00pm

1. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Open forum session was not required.

2. APOLOGIES

Phil Shaw, Chris Gunby, Melinda Lyons, Basil Schur has been replaced as WICC representative by Craig Carter.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 24 October 2007 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

- 4.1 Hay River Reserve 23579 Hay River – Brad Kneebone to provide electronic copy of letter (to be signed by George as Chairman)
- 4.2 Correspondence from the South Coast Licensed Fisherman's Association to the Shire of Denmark supporting the Shire's efforts to not open the bar under current circumstances. Also letter from Owen McIntosh, Warren Miller, Derrick Beale & Craig expressing dissatisfaction with the decision not to open the bar.
- 4.3 Correspondence from the Albany Bird Group to the Department of Water regarding concerns at the impact that management of the Wilson Inlet sandbar has habitat.
- 4.4 Denmark Boating Strategy – group to provide guidance to the Shire in relation to outcomes and recommendations in the strategy document. The Shire NRM Officer to address this in 2008.
- 4.5 Proposal to establish monitoring bores within foreshore reserve adjacent to 'Springdale' subdivision. DoW & Denmark Shire to confirm funding availability.
- 4.6 Results of mussel testing - Zak still waiting on results.
- 4.7 Management Plan for future bar openings – Dave (DoW) & Danny (Water Corporation) provided update and tabled preliminary task document (draft). WIMAG members requested they be actively involved in the development of any future management plan for the sandbar. DoW developing frequently asked questions regarding this issue and requests feedback from the Water Corporation (Chris Morris) on draft document.
- 4.8 Membership – Kim Stanton replaces John Jamieson as City of Albany representative. Advertising for vacant community positions in Denmark Bulletin and Albany Advertiser (submissions close late January).

5. WILSON INLET NUTRIENT REDUCTION ACTION PLAN

Craig Carter tabled a WINRAP implementation progress update report and provided information regarding recent and upcoming WINRAP initiatives. Craig also distributed copies of the 2nd edition of the WINRAP newsletter.

7. RESTORING CONNECTIONS – INDIGENOUS HERITAGE STUDY

As explained during a WIMAG meeting earlier this year a project is being undertaken by David Guilfoyle (South Coast NRM) and Myles Mitchell (DIA) to identify indigenous cultural heritage places and values associated with Wilson Inlet. The project is also supported by the Dept of Water and will involve consultation with traditional owners in the hope that management of the area's unique cultural values will have a more strategic focus in the future.

Anthony Galante, Wayne Webb and Toni Webb provided an overview of this project (refer to attached report).

6. BAR OPENING – STATUS

As discussed during the previous meeting in October the EPA set the level of assessment for the proposed bar opening as 'Formal' under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act*. Apparently this level of assessment is seldom used but it gives the EPA the maximum flexibility in defining the documentation/information and the public review period required. The basis for the level set was due to a number of factors such as the rushed nature of the decision to stop the bar being breached, the lack of existing information regarding environmental and other values, and the need to maintain a high degree of flexibility in the process.

It is important lessons are learnt in the present situation by monitoring the impacts of the sandbar closure. Also, the DoW has prepared a table of research that should be undertaken that might provide useful input to the EPA assessment of the sandbar opening or the planned review of the Wilson Inlet Nutrient Reduction Action Plan. Members were invited to provide comments to Chris Gunby in relation to the attached table.

Danny informed the group that a decision in relation to the Water Corporation's appeal to the EPA has been deferred until February 2008.

Discussion also focused on a proposal by Zak Launay and Ben Chuwen (refer to document 'Alternating Sand Bar Openings: A management option for the Wilson Inlet sand bar for inclusion in the Review of the Bar Management Plan').

8. WILSON INLET FORESHORE RESERVES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Wilson Inlet foreshore reserves vested in the Shire of Denmark have, in the past, been managed under several separate management plans. These plans are out dated and in need of review. The development of a single management plan that covers the 13 Shire of Denmark reserves along the Wilson Inlet foreshore will be used to replace existing dated management plans. The plan will only cover those areas of the foreshore reserve which are vested with the Shire of Denmark.

Shire of Denmark will appoint an environmental consultant to develop a comprehensive management plan for all Shire Inlet foreshore reserves. Funding for the work will be provided by South Coast NRM.

9. CLASS 'A' RESERVE 23579

Reserve A23579 at the Hay River mouth and extending north along the lower Hay River has been recognised by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) as having significant conservation value, particularly in providing a habitat corridor from Wilson Inlet to Mt Lindesay National Park.

Subsequently, DEC has invited the Department of Water to provide comment on a proposal to class this area as a conservation reserve. WIMAG wholeheartedly endorses this initiative by DEC.

10. MEMBERS REPORTS

Geoff Findlay – Regional marine planning community workshop in Denmark on 23 January 2008. Extra focus on marine enforcement during the festive season and summer holiday period.

Brad Kneebone – farewelled the group as his term expires.

Craig Carter – Nil

John Xanthis – has observed that fishing at Prawn Rock channel has been particularly good but expressed some concern regarding inability to access Prawn Rock for dog exercise.

Ben Chuwen – Flying-fox approximately 8km up the Hay River from the South Coast Hwy road bridge presents a serious public safety / boating risk (Geoff will look into it). Also, requested the DoW address the varying scales on the Inlet levels website. Volunteered to record the minutes at future meetings.

Dave Rushton – officially informed the group he will be leaving the DoW on 21 December 2007 to take up a new position in Perth. Dave wished the group all the best in its future endeavours.

Zak Launay – aware of a boating hazard (buoy) approximately one mile NE of his mussel lease. Farewelled the group as his term expires.

Kim Stanton – will endeavour to get a City of Albany Planning Officer to attend future meetings as a CoA staff representative.

Stephen Bondini – Nil.

Danny Burkett – Farewelled the group as he leaves the Water Corporation in January and begins a new job in Noosa, Queensland.

George Ebbett – Thanks for another great year and all the best for the festive season.

11. NEXT MEETING – 20 February 2008