

## 2017 Geographe and Capes Regional Coastal Forum 2017

1<sup>st</sup> December 2017

10.45am – 1.45pm

Naturaliste Community Centre, Dunsborough.

Tea and Coffee from 10.45am

Open 10.10am

### 1. Introductions and apologies.

#### Geographe and Capes Forum Attendees

Jen Mitchell	SWCC
Lisa Massey	Geocatch
Jan Trainer and Danae Plowman	DCALC
Fiona Brown and Shelley Dorizzi	Tangaroa Blue
Don	YCCLC
Jackie Roberts	Lower Blackwood
Craig Perry	Peron Naturaliste Partnership

#### Apologies

Caroline Hughes	Nature Conservation Margaret River Region - see written report
Graham Fisher	Meelup Park Management Committee
Janet Duffal	M/R Coastal Residents Assoc. – see report / update
David Boykett	Friends of Gracetown and Cowaramup Bay group and the Environment Committee for the Gracetown Progress Association – see written report / update

John McKinnin	Augusta Margaret River Shire – see written report / update
Sarah Yani Sands	Surfrider Foundation
Cr. John McCallum	CoBusselton Councilor and PNP Chairperson

## 2. Round Table Updates

### Craig – Peron Naturaliste Partnership Update

- PNP Is a regional group focused on Coastal Adaptation organisation with 9 local governments
- Focused on Coastal Climate Change Adaptation
- PNP Coastal Monitoring Program
- Coastal Values Study - Currently working on a coastal values study – 3 sites – Old Dunsborough is one of the 3 sites. Undertaking Beach User Surveys – would appreciate your involvement and getting the word out.

Comments and questions:

Lisa – Is there any opportunity to expand to other sites?

- Craig – not as part of this discrete project

Jan – Wat sorts of questions are you asking?

- Craig/ Jo - Survey hard copy provided to attendees.

Danae – Has done the survey, thought it was great and highlighted the cost of decisions.

Lisa – we are losing a lot of our coastal reserve when protecting our private assets.

DCLC – Environmental reserves should be registered on the assets list.

Peppermint woodland will be at further risk.

City of Busselton has a possum working group exists currently

There is a lot of sand in Geographe Bay but isn't equating to sandy beaches (resting offshore)

Craig – PNP Coastal Monitoring Program – implementing year 1 of 10 year action plan, available on PNP website( [www.peronnaturaliste.org.au](http://www.peronnaturaliste.org.au))

Don – Where does the PNP Monitoring stop? Is there any similar monitoring for Yallingup / Smiths Section?

Craig – not included in PNP project but CoB or Seshores Engineering may have further info

Jan – there is changes according to those that have been living in Dunsborough for over 20 years, is this cyclical?

Craig – complex, there are short term, medium term and longer term cycles and trends to consider.

Jan – We have run 2 surveys at Meelup – people love the bush, they value the bush, even though they go there for the beach. Shade from Peppermints is so essential to the Wa community.

## Fiona and Shelley - Tangaroa Blue Update

– see notes on power point on desktop (attachment).

Related comments and updates –

- Danae (Question) - Light the night candles at Busso Jetty – where they let go? Or just held? Fiona was talking about balloons and then the ladies from DCALC were asking about the lanterns and what debris they might cause.
- Lisa from Geocatch – mentioned possible clean-ups in the estuaries where people could paddle through on canoe's & kayaks.
- DCALC mentioned that they are responsible for clearing the scrub from part of the Cape to Cape Track each year for the City of Busselton, and suggested it could be valuable to record any rubbish collected at the same time.
- Meelup Park Regional Group mentioned they now have a paid position for someone to manage the coastal track in the Meelup Area and were interested in recording debris data regularly.
- Don YCCLC – mentioned he had noticed that debris collected at Yallingup during the beach clean-ups had significantly reduced over the years, and interested in what difference the Container deposits scheme will make to the amount of empty bottles/cans still being left in coastal areas.
- Jen SWCC mentioned about International student groups coming to WA and cleaning Boranup Beach as marine debris was part of their educational program. They did log the data.

Extra related updates –

- Tree guards an issue
- Thank you to our volunteers, plans for strengthening our organization and expanding partnerships.

General comments and questions-

- Jen – comment – city of busso doing an audit of the guards
- Lisa – doggie bags are now biodegradable at the City of Busselton
- Jen – micro plastics project over 200 sites using volunteers to analyse sand on beaches for microplastics
- Don – Indonesia is a hotspot for Rubbish, Gilli Meno had there own clean up program

## Jan – Meelup Coastal Reserve Update

- Meelup – biggest problem is excessive use of beaches,
- Meelup Committee worked with council- has employed a part time employee to be present on the Meelup Reserve (opportunity to get Kay to do marine debris / rubbish monitoring data)
- Other major issues are weeds, particularly Arum where its likely that birds and people spread the seed
- Eagle Bay – Pyp Grass is a big battle (spraying has occurred – will replant in its place)

- Management committee is concerned with events being held at Meelup and also incidental crowds on days like Australia Day, monitoring is occurring and police are onside for monitoring visitation.
- Leavers is now run well, now everyone comes by bus
- Ambition for access to become more controlled and potentially even force bus
- Battling to preserve Meelup
- Mountain Bikes are allowed on three tracks that are maintained for mountain bikes, excluding walking tracks have signage for restricting bikes
- Die back is another major issue

#### Don – Yallingup LCCC

- YLCC – Cape Naturaliste to Quinanup (including part of the Cape to Cape track)
- Committee of 13 plus volunteer list of 18-19 people.
- Planting and weed removal (garden escapees a major issue)
- Brushing primary dunes (can use native cuttings from peoples gardens)
- Historically building hay bale walls on Injinup Point for combating erosion (also have planting naturally regenerating in hay bales (looking on Google the bales have been extremely successful) – still monitored (photographs annual)
- Craig – any dune migration surveys being undertaken?

Jen – comments – great to look at photographs annually on google earth to see the change

- A fair bit of time working on tracks and rubbish removal
- Cape Gooseberrys now become an issue
- Three bears and Cape around to Meelup – double G's are an issue
- Vehicles being contained to where they should be is an issue

#### Danae - Dunsborough CCLC -

- Pour house 19<sup>th</sup> birthday on Sunday
- Glen Cross has stepped away and wanting others to step up
- Had a coordinator for around 12 months to develop a strategy and objectives
- Committee of 6 people
- Reveg Works and community awareness sessions,
- Ran a Possum Talk had 63 people, installed possum boxes
- Friends groups cannot apply for funds may sit within DCCLC for applying for funds for smaller friends groups
- Café on foreshore – current concept plan being put to public for Café on foreshore (it was not clear in the original survey - clearing info for a car park (within critical Possum habitat) wasn't clear) café has expanded beyond original proposal

Don - Question - It sounds like Toby's Inlet is being reopened or maintained to be open?

Lisa – reply – CoB will maintain the opening at a level that has been modeled for water quality in the Toby Inlet.

## Lisa - GeoCatch Update

- 1. Revitalising Geographe Waterways** is a State Government initiative to improve water quality, waterway health and management of Geographe Waterways. The program is delivered through partnerships and is overseen by the Vasse Taskforce. Over four years 2016-2019, projects and activities focussing on improving water quality across five key water assets – Geographe Bay catchment, Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands, Lower Vasse River, Toby Inlet and rural drainage networks.
2. Geocatch has held regular **Community updates** on the science being undertaken as part of Revitalising Geographe Waterways, including the biology and ecology of fauna in the Vasse Wonnerup estuary (black bream and invertebrates) and update on the food web research project, the Vasse Wonnerup sediment investigation, the lower Vasse River water treatment trials, and the Vasse estuary model and seawater inflow trial results.
- 3. Bay OK garden workshops** have been very popular, six Low Nutrient Gardening Workshops have now been held in Busselton, Dunsborough and Gelorup. Participants knowledge and understanding has been greatly improved including the important role home gardeners have in reducing fertiliser use and runoff. This Urban Fertiliser initiative also includes gardening displays, development of demonstration sustainable gardens and a new gardens guide.

### **4. Fish kill mitigation**

The oxygenation plant was installed and operated at the Vasse Surge Barrier gates for the 2016 and 2017 summers. To support current operations and planning intensive water trials and monitoring occurred in late summer through to early spring.

### **5. Sediment investigations**

The Water Corporation, Department of Water and City of Busselton have worked together to remove sediment around the Vasse Surge Barriers using new technology. Sediment cores provided information on the depth and extent and make-up of the sediments. Used a small scale vacuum pump system to reduce disturbance of the sediment and risk to fish due to reduced oxygenation in the water column. Sediment was transported to the Busselton Wastewater Treatment Plant and dried as part of the waste treatment process.

### **6. Seasonal variation in estuarine macro algae**

Dr Jane Chambers from Murdoch University samples macro algal and aquatic plants in the Vasse Wonnerup estuary annually.

### **7. Fish behavior movement studies,**

Dr James Tweedley from Murdoch University has been investigating the commercial fish populations (Black Bream and Yellow Eyed Mullet) and fish behaviour in the estuaries. A community fishing day is being held on 6th December 2017 – where fish will be caught and tagged for tracking purposes.

### **8. Vasse surge barrier scenarios**

Various scenarios have been tested over the four year program looking at different water levels that could be maintained in the estuary system in summer. This investigation will report on whether water can be kept in the system for migratory birds and how salt water can be let into the system without altering sediment and water

chemistry. This 2017/2018 summer maintaining the water level in the Vasse estuary at - 0.1 AHD will be trialled.

**9. Reconnecting Rivers and Toby Inlet Modelling**

The Reconnecting Rivers and Toby Inlet Modelling work has been assessed against flow rates and also nutrient loads. A key finding is that no single option will solve the collective problems of algal blooms, nutrients and sedimentation. If additional water is used to flush the rivers it is important that it is of good quality and does not add nutrients to area or the sediments. The Taskforce will be making recommendations to the City of Busselton on the best solutions.

**10. Vasse Diversion Drain Enhancement project**

A project to make into this drain into a living stream, identified as a nice area to improve access, seating, paths, fishing areas, launching and will address weeds, erosion, revegetation opportunities.

**11. Better information for the community**

GeoCatch has led the development of the new website and social media for Revitalising Geographe Waterways providing a one-stop shop for information for the community and project partners. It will hopefully be available in December but information is currently available at [www.geocatch.asn.au](http://www.geocatch.asn.au).

**12. Keep Watch Seagrass** annual monitoring funded through WaterCorp

GeoCatch regular **presentations** on water in the landscape to the community, schools, groups

**13. Western Ringtail Possum Program**

Suggested invite Department of Water and Environmental Regulation district manager to present at next year's Forum

Jen – SWCC Update (see slides - attachment)

Jo - Coast SWaP Presentation

- See Strategic Plan and slides (attachments) and
- State and National coastal matters update (particularly WA Coastal Strategy, Guidelines and Coast Adapt)

3. Light Lunch (working lunch)

4. Written Reports (read out at Forum)

Nature Conservation Margaret River Region

**Caroline Hughes** Executive Officer

Nature Conservation continues to deliver its Caring for Coast Program focusing predominantly on supporting coastcare groups to undertake on ground coastal rehabilitation work. Since the last forum Nature Conservation has undertaken the following activities on the coast:

- Secured Coastwest Grant funding on behalf of a partnership between Margaret River

Coastal Residents Association volunteers, ARMSC and Nature Conservation to continue rehabilitation on the coastal dunes at Gnarabup/Prevelly. Nature Conservation staff are administering the Coastwest Grant on behalf of the partnership, participating in the project steering group, organizing photo point monitoring for the area and coordinating pyp grass control.

- Assisted the Friends of Gracetown with a number of volunteer workdays and citizen science monitoring activities as part of its wider support to Friends of Reserves funded by the Shire of Augusta Margaret River;s Environmental Management Fund.
- Coordinated 3 Schools planting excursions during May/June 2017 and 3 follow up excursions in Oct/Nov 2017 at Redgate Beach, Gracetown and Flinders Bay as part of Nature Conservation's 'Adopt a Spot' Program funded by the State NRM Program. The 'Adopt A Spot' Program has also connected schools at these sites with local Friends of Reserves groups to form a long term partnership for managing these sites.

### Shire of Augusta/ Margaret River

John McKinney

Coordinator Environment/Landcare Services

- Implementing recommendations relating a limestone cliff stability report that identified a series of high priority actions relating to public safety and management of risk to infrastructure. Report was CAP grant funding, implementation internal funds.
- Developing and undertaking Coastal monitoring programs at Gracetown, Prevelly-Gnarabup, and Augusta. CAP grant funding.
- Planning for removal, relocation or adaptation of coastal tracks and associated beach access points at Prevelly Gnarabup., CAP grant funding. Following 2 years of monitoring undertaken by UWA with Shire and CAP funding.
- Planning for adaptation of Gnarabup Boatramp to accommodate erosion processes. Internal funding .
- Implementation on ground actions (erosion control, revegetation weed control, education) at Gracetown, Prevelly-Gnarabup and Augusta in collaboration with volunteer groups. Volunteers critically important to management of coast and don't get enough recognition or support.

### Friends of Gracetown and Cowaramup Bay group and the Environment Committee for the Gracetown Progress Association

David Boykett

Since he last Forum we have:

- Met with SWCC (Jen) and NCMRG (Drew) and friends FoGCB participants and planned and discussed activities for the future.
- Planting and Brushing with Jen on the Beach at Cow Bay. Big turn out 50+ people and schools a few days later.
- Night walk for animals 50+ turn out (too many).

- Weeds and Wildflowers walk in September with SWCC, NCMRG, smaller turn out good fun but we could have planned route better.
- 3 grants from SAMR for weed management planting and brushing at Swimmers beach, Cowaramup Creek and South Point.
- Engaged with DBCA on South Point work.
- Engaged with Cow Bay Boardriders to be part of Adopt the Bay... Should be a great partnership.
- Met and walked with Iszaac Webb great to work with him.
- Learnt about liaising with Indigenous custodians when planning works.
- Need to manage cats in our area.
- Need to build group to include more inclusion with neighbouring communities i.e. Cowaramup.
- Need to formalise groups committee and goals better.
- Would like to do fauna surveys and plan for walk trail set ups.

5. Close 1.45pm