

Branch / Group: Waterways – River Health Group

Issue / Topic: **Western Treatment Plant Biodiversity Conservation Advisory Committee**

Meeting Date: 5 February 2008

Location: Western Treatment Plant, Discovery Centre

Meeting Room: Conference Room

Present: John Barkla, Cr Bob Fairclough, Maarten Hulzebosch, Chris Lester, Richard Loyn, Colleen Miller, Clive Minton, William Steele

Apologies: Bernie McCarrick, Brad Mclean, Peter Menkhorst, Marc Cassenet

Guests: Philippa Charlton, Bob Swindley, Eddie Walker,

Absent: Aaron Organ

Item No.	Details / Issues	Responsibility	Due Date
<b>1</b>	<b>Confirmation of minutes</b>		
	p. 6 MH corrected "David Cartwright" to read "David Williams". p. 6 MH corrected "to investigate <i>Schoenoplectus</i> management in area south of 160 South Road" to read "to investigate <i>Schoenoplectus</i> management in conservation ponds". p. 7 MH to provide text accurately conveying his point.	MH	asap
<b>2</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>		
2.1	Representative from Geelong Field Nats. MH reported Tom Fletcher nominated. WKS to arrange letter of appointment from Melbourne Water.	WKS	asap
2.2	EW to invoice Melbourne Water for \$ 5,000 for nest-box study, providing ABN.	EW	asap
2.3	WKS has arranged for drawdown of L. Borrie Ponds 28 and 29. Planned to pump water out during mid-Feb to provide optimal foraging habitat for shorebirds prior to northward passage. Issues of exposing contaminated sediments?		
2.4	Probably best to monitor midge larvae rather than adults. Should be component of planned monitoring of planktonic/benthos communities at L. Borrie Ponds 9		

	and 24 (decommissioned ponds) and 25W Pond 3 (operational pond). WKS is discussing with Phil Pappas of ARI.		
2.5	WKS to remind Brad Mclean of his idea of maintaining water levels in some old ponds by reducing levels in others over mid-summer when water allocation is scarce.	WKS	asap
2.6	WKS and MH to meet on site to discuss veg management in conservation ponds.	WKS/ MH	8 Feb 08
2.7	MH will contact Darren Coughlan to discuss Willow Herb removal.	MH	asap
2.8	WKS still to learn volume of MCPA used at WTP per annum.	WKS	asap
<b>3</b>	<b>WTP Land Use Strategy and Private Sector Partner Plans</b>		
	Philippa Charlton (Melbourne Water Strategy & Planning) briefed the Committee on these plans. Philippa thanked for notifying Committee at early stage.		
<b>4</b>	<b>Pesticides and heavy metal contamination</b>		
	WKS briefed Committee: in general treatment removes these elements by deposition in sediments. Biosolids dredged from ponds prior to 1970s Trade Waste Practices Act have high levels and are not usable. Soils subject to sewage irrigation have high levels but these are immobilised in soils due to high pH (due to shallow depth of saline groundwater and high biomass—due to constant irrigation). The salinity management strategy is targeted at ensuring these chemicals don't become mobilised and biological available.		
<b>5</b>	<b>Parks Victoria activities</b>		
5.1	Rabbit and fox control programs planned for March		
5.2	Vehicle removed from The Spit Nature Reserve		
<b>6</b>	<b>Tall Wheat Grass</b>		
	MH showed example of this unpleasant weed, now found along 29 Mile Road and probably spread by roadside slashing. He will liaise with BMc to contact Geelong Council.	MH	asap
<b>7</b>	<b>Conservation pond management</b>		
	CDTM stressed importance of his research program and asked that T-5, 85WC-9 and 5W-11 be managed to facilitate shorebird trapping over Christmas and New Year period. It was agreed to 'reset' ponds every few years by ploughing in vegetation.		

<b>8</b>	<b>EPBC Act Compliance</b>		
8.1	WKS reported that funding application to DEWHA for Western Lagoon works had not been successfully concluded. These works to proceed as we can afford them.		
8.2	Annual report to DEWHA now in prep.		
<b>9</b>	<b>Site access</b>		
	WKS presented map showing planned installation of gates and new locks. This is generally in line with agreed 'WTP Access Management Strategy'. Committee members anxious to have induction to east of Plant arranged as soon as possible.	WKS	asap
<b>10</b>	<b>Committee review</b>		
	Questionnaire reviewed. Same comments as last year. Committee appointments will be up for renewal in August this year.		
<b>11</b>	<b>Other Business</b>		
	JB reported tracks across saltmarsh at Kirk Point. WKS to see to more rock placement.	WKS	asap

File Path: M:\Waterways & Wetlands\ Habitats\ 3 WTP Conservation Management Program\ 2 Communication\ WTP-Spit Forum\ WTP\_Spits\_Forum minutes 050429.doc

- Next Meetings:
- Wednesday, 7 May 2008
  - Tuesday, 5 Aug 2008
  - Wednesday, 5 Nov 2008

Venue: Conference Room, Western Treatment Plant Discovery Centre