



Yarra Yarra Catchment Management Group

February 4th, 2010
2.00 pm
YYCMG Office Kalannie

General Meeting - Agenda

1. Open General Meeting (Approx 2.20pm)

1.1. Attendance

Barrye Thompson, Peter Syme, Richard Lee, Dene Solomon, Lizzie King, Stacey Hudson, Ian Fordyce, Max Hudson

1.2. Apologies

Keith Camac, Jan Macpherson, Keith Carter, Jo Ashworth

2. Minutes of previous General Meeting, held 22nd October 2009

2.1. Amendments

Max wanted an endorsement to send a letter from the WCA about the Avon Catchment changing their name to Wheatbelt NRM, with support from YYCMG, which was given (this is still in progress).

2.2. Matters Arising

Carbon trading scheme, Dene followed up the feasibility of YYCMG becoming involved with this with Euan Scott. It would be possible but would be quite involved

2.3. Sign previous minutes if true and correct record (Chairperson)

Moved Dene Solomon, 2nd Ian Fordyce that the minutes of the meeting held 22nd October 2009 be confirmed as a true and accurate record

Carried 7/0

3. Executive Reports

3.1. Correspondence (SH)

3.1.1. Correspondence In - tabled

- Green oil tree Nursery: 2010 tree order form
- Letter from Prime Super: Employer statement, 1/07/08 to 30/06/09
- Woolworths; regarding the successful sustainable farming grant.
- Caring for Our Country; re successful community action grant.
- DEC native vegetation branch; requesting further details of clearing in 2008

3.1.2. Correspondence Out – tabled

- Letter to Bankwest regarding depositing cheques as didn't have the deposit book.
- Letter to John Stephens with a cheque for \$10 to cover the ten year lease.
- Notification of change of ownership form to Dept. of Infrastructure & Planning for oil mallee truck

3.2. Funding & Finance (SH) Financial Reports tabled

3.2.1. Audited accounts for year ended 30th June 2009 – tabled and independent auditor's report read aloud.

Richard Lee questioned whether if something does go wrong, are YYCMG members protected? Yes, members are covered by insurance

Moved Stacey Hudson, 2nd Richard Lee that the audited accounts report be received

Carried 7/0

3.2.2. YYCMG – as at 31st January 2010

- Accounts receivable are mainly outstanding drainage maintenance fees, some of which are two years worth of fees. Baxter is waiting for the official lease agreements and for the lease maps to be corrected before he pays. Discussion regarding who is the appropriate person to speak to Counsels regarding their payments. As Max has been dealing with this up to now, we will continue with this until the lease agreements are in place. Believe none of the other accounts should cause any problems
- The YYCRC owe YYCMG \$14,388 for DOW monitoring works. This includes Ian's time spent writing the report, fieldwork, field assistants. This project has now finished. Of the \$175,000 initially granted, only \$3,133,91 was not applied for.
- The Kalannie house is no longer rented by the YYCMG. Newholstein (Kevin Lyon) is paying YYCMG \$2,200 towards the rent, this money will then be put towards the WCA proposal.
- Income from the Lake Goorly project will be \$700, plus \$200 reimbursement for DEC costs. This money will be put towards monitoring wages.
- Richard Lee raised the question, what charges are paid by farmers who add a spur drain? They are invoiced an additional amount of \$150/km as an access fee for using the main drain, due to resulting silt that will be deposited in the main drain. The drain maintenance fees will not be used for servicing these spur drains. There is currently \$22,060 (less outstanding accounts) in the drain maintenance accounts.

Richard moves that the YYCMG staff follow up outstanding drain maintenance fees.

Max is going to follow up on the outstanding drainage accounts by phone or meeting with the farmers.

3.2.3. YYCRC as at 31st January 2010

- \$64,804 owed by NACC to pay for NRMO's from 1st January to 31st March 2010. At the moment, YYCRC money is being used to cover the NRMO salaries.
- Still waiting for NACC to invoice YYCRC for unused project funds.
- Received \$20,000 from the DEC grant, so far Ian has spent 5 days work on this project.

Moved Lizzie King, 2nd Max Hudson that the financial statements for the YYCMG and the YYCRC be received

Carried 7/0

4. Reports

4.1. YYCRC CEO report (Barrye Thompson) – tabled

31st October 2009 to the 5th Feb 2010

- Have received two letters regarding future funding for drainage, from Tony Burke (Federal Minister for Agriculture) and Graham Jacobs (Minister for Water & Mental Health, WA). Neither was very encouraging for deep drainage. The Minister for Agriculture will be sending officials from his department and personal staff to explore options for salinity funding in WA and the YYCRC will be having a meeting with them early this year. Graham Jacobs highlighted the State NRM funding opportunities available.

- Received a letter from the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu to record that they will withdraw from the regional council as of 1st July 2010, but will review this decision if the YYCRC are able to secure further funds.

Discussion: It is key do get the issue of salinity raised at federal level, how can we do this? It will have to be through the state agencies. The State is not currently focusing on salinity. It is no good asking the state for money without a professional proposal of what we want to do and how we can do it. This is what the WCA are currently working on. Due to previous Howard government focus on salinity, the new government does not want to focus on it.

4.2. NRMO reports (DS & LK) – tabled

Dene

- CFOC incentives remain the main work priority for NRMO's. The Oil Mallee incentive rate is much reduced from last year, and there has been much lower interest in it. The Fodder shrub incentives are proving quite popular
 - Surface water monitoring: The new flume has been delivered to Burakin and we need to organise an excavator to get it installed into the drain. Kel Baldock will hopefully help with the installation.
 - Over the next few months will be downloading data from all the loggers and
 - Still waiting for Peter Syme's lease agreements, these will be taken to Landgate and hopefully the rest will be rolled out soon after
- Lizzie
- Hidden Treasures update. Hidden treasures are areas of remnant vegetation that have been identified as particularly valuable
 - Red Card for the Red Fox Program – we hope to be involved in this again this year, and will be encouraging other groups and towns to get involved too.

There has been no further news of NRMO contracts after June

4.3. Lease updates (DS) – see above

4.4. Project Manager report (MH)

This has been a busy period, although not very productive on the ground.

- Sorted out finishing the DoW grant as otherwise they wanted the remaining \$40,000 returned. Used this money for vegetation monitoring (\$11,000) for Ian's work, the rain gauges (\$8,000), and the new weir for Burakin and assays (\$6000). The \$11,000 can go towards extending out the monitoring program. YYCRC have paid \$6,000 to Chem Centre for the assays.
- Submitted an application to the State NRM grants round (application tabled). The project is to look at surface water planning in the face of climate change. Asked for \$143,000 and should hear in April (80 hours work)
- Also submitted an application to look at the extent of salinity from the Wheatbelt Catchment Alliance (WCA) (60 hours work)
- Have put in requests to 16 shires, Landmark and Gindalbie plus others, asking for letters of support and funds towards getting the report written to take to the Ministers. So far have not had meetings with any of the shires, but have had acknowledgement from the Shire of Koorda and a cheque.
- Burakin flume: We need to work out what expertise is needed for the concrete footings for the flume; they need to be poured on site. There are issues with the water flowing while the flume goes in so we will have to either block it off or divert it.

- Tim Sparks (in charge of the wheatbelt drainage alliance) says we need to get something on our website to show what we've been doing and to counteract claims about drainage from Russell Speed. All our monitoring works in a report need to go up on the website.
- Alan Bradley has emailed Jo Ashworth a request from Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) whether the monitoring data can be updated monthly and sent to them (BOM). Jo advised this will be difficult with funding running out shortly. Perhaps BOM can be asked for future funding to continue this work.
- Richard Lee asked if we should set up a process of building a report to answer Russell Speed's comments, and this is already in the pipeline.

4.5. Ian's report (IF)

- After four years of monitoring, we are seeing the first detrimental impacts on vegetation from the drainage water. This is at Jibberding 19, about a kilometer downstream from where the new drain joins the old drain (i.e. near the mouth of the old delivery drain). The samphire is dead up to about 20metres from the drain. For the first 18months, nothing detectable happened to the vegetation. It is unclear whether this damage is from water logging or from acidic water and also not sure how far this damage extends downstream. This is the biggest impact seen so far but it is not very extensive.
- Acidic waters are an issue here. Generally acidity is approximated by pH, but here it comes from high concentrations of iron, aluminium and to some extent manganese. Normally acidity is measured by the amount of lime needed to neutralise it. Details tabled of the acidity for some of the drains, with measurements taken at different times over the past two years, with elevated levels highlighted
- By itself pH does not mean that much, what actually matters is whether the total acidity (real acidity) is high, as this allows the mobilisation of certain heavy metals.
- There is a rusty coloured slime downstream of where the water stops flowing at JB19. This is probably killing the samphire by coating the root hairs (or the entire plant if water levels are high); it is iron oxides and hydroxides.
- To neutralise acid groundwater, it needs a mix of at least 9:1, fresh water (rain water): acid drain water. For this area to be recolonised with aquatic invertebrates, it would need a very large rainfall to flush the system.

In the past, we have argued that small, isolated lakes and claypans can be used as disposal points for acid groundwater without any environmental impact due to their buffering effect. Except in cases where there is regular and substantial dilution with surface water, like the mouth of the Burakin drain (where the drainwater discharges into a small saltlake before it ultimately makes its way to Lake Hillman), the evidence no longer supports this argument. The buffering capacity is not large enough to neutralise some of the high-iron/high-aluminium water we have encountered.

Moved Richard Lee, 2nd Stacey Hudson that reports from Barrye Thompson, Dene Solomon, Lizzie King, Max Hudson and Ian Fordyce be that all reports be received

Carried 7/0

5. General Business

5.1. Insurance is due to be renewed this month for the 12 month period February 2010 to February 2011

PJ office has \$70,000 and Kalannie office has \$40,000 worth of non-portable equipment listed. Can this be reduced?

PJ to \$40,000 and Kalannie to \$10,000? There is no point in paying more to be over insured
Depreciation schedule examined.

Association insurance (i.e. public liability) is \$20 million

Aggregate insurance, (professional indemnity) reduced to \$2 million (?)

Dene's Ute insurance will be renewed with everything else. How long should the insurances be renewed for, 6 or 12 months?

Moved Richard Lee, 2nd Max Hudson that insurance is renewed for 6 months dependent on a review of the cost and if it is significantly more than half, then reconsider a 12 month renewal.

Carried 6/1

5.2. Nissan Navara (Ian's Ute), discussion of ownership/lease

The YYCMG own the Ute, but the YYCRC paid for it therefore it is an asset of the YYCRC. \$12,000 was added into the salaries project, which was then transferred to the YYCMG. While doing the YYCRC budget it was decided that the YYCMG would pay the YYCRC back \$12,000 at \$1,000 per month. So far no payments have been made to the YYCRC but the vehicle needs to be transferred to the RC's name

5.3. Discuss reimbursing YYCRC for portion of Kalannie office expenses and Stacey's time.

These costs can come from the NRMO budget. The YYCRC will draw \$3000 per quarter for administration costs. There is therefore no need for the YYCMG to reimburse the YYCRC.

5.4. YYCMG Meeting dates for 2010

2010 regional council meetings: Morawa on the 11th May, Perenjori August 10th, Dalwallinu on 9th November

YYCMG meetings: 29th April at Perenjori, 29th July at Kalannie, 28th October Perenjori (AGM)

5.5. LCDC Progress (JA)

Max and Jo will proceed with this

5.6. Funding applications – all discussed above

5.6.1. State NRM Funding – see above

5.6.2. CFOC Revegetation project at Morawa – see above

5.6.3. Woolworths Sustainable Farming Grant – Sandalwood extension project

Will YYCMG pay for the venues for (\$140) and to join the Australian Sandalwood Network as a community member at a 50% subsidy (\$120)

Moved Richard Lee, 2nd Stacey Hudson that the YYCMG pay the venue costs for the sandalwood workshops and join the ASN on a community membership

Carried 7/0

5.7. Red Card for the Red Fox – discussed above in NRMO report

5.8. Mid West Regional Council Climate Change workshop (19th Feb, Carnamah)

Dates noted in diaries, Peter Syme and Barrye Thompson attending?

6. Business without Notice

6.1. Can YYCMG donate \$400 to the Broombush growers co-operative as a membership fee?

February 4th, 2010
2.00 pm
YYCMG Office Kalannie

Moved Richard Lee, 2nd Dene Solomon that we join the broombush growers co-operative

Carried 7/0

7. Close Meeting (Approx 5.30 pm)

7.1. Agenda items for next meeting

7.2. Date of next meeting 29th April 2010, Perenjori

7.3. Close Meeting

I certify that this copy of the Minutes is a true and correct record of the meeting held on 4th February 2010.

Signed: _____
Chair of YYCMG

Date: _____

Please see website for copies of all previous minutes
www.yarrayarracatchment.org.au
