



Natural Environment Strategy 2016-26
Annual Snapshot Report 2019

Introduction

There has been great progress, and many challenges and achievement the 2018/19 year for our environment. The outcomes detailed within this snapshot report have been the result of strong leadership, an innovative approach and collaboration with our community and organisational stakeholders.

This is the third annual snapshot report for the *Natural Environment Strategy 2016 - 26* and focuses on the progress, challenges and achievements in the 2018/19 year in each of the four strategic directions.

The impacts of climate change are being felt more acutely within Bass Coast Shire with changes of weather pattern resulting in fires, floods, erosion and seasonal changes.

The *Natural Environment Strategy 2016-26* provides a framework and strong, clear direction for Bass Coast Shire Council and its community regarding sustainability of the natural environment over 10 years.

Highlight snapshots and short case studies are provided on some of the major activities and action to give an insight into the work undertaken.

Key Highlights

Key highlights achieved in 2018/19 include:

- Implementation of the *Biodiversity Biolinks Plan 2018* and attraction of over \$100,000 of funding.
- Ongoing management of Council's two native vegetation offset sites, being 40% sold at 30 June 2019.
- Participate in the Western Port Integrated Water Management Forum and the Central and South Gippsland Integrated Water Management Forum. This collaboration and understanding of catchment health (biolinks) with water quality attracted \$80,000 funding for native vegetation planting and weeds management works.
- Administered Council's *Rural Land Management Scheme* via the online system. A total of 709 properties were accepted into the scheme, which is an increase of 17 (692 in previous year). This is an increase of 3% in the third year of the online system.

- Host Council's 'War on Waste' Business Breakfast and launch Council adoption of the *Single Use Plastic Free Policy (2018)*.
- Undertake sand renourishment works to address coastal erosion at Cowes Main Beach, Cowes East and Silverleaves foreshores.
- The removal of three mature Pine Trees at the Silverleaves foreshore with the Silverleaves Conservation Association and replanting of 260 indigenous plants to return the foreshore reserve to its pre-European natural state.
- Delivery of State government funded *Local Government Energy Saver Program (Local Government Owned Facility Energy Audits)* 100KW PV solar panel system for the Wonthaggi Civic Centre.
- Ongoing education and implementation Council's Food Organic Green Organic (FOGO) kerbside three bin system, resulting in diverting over 75% of household waste from landfill.
- Successful capture and flaring of landfill gas to reduce greenhouse gases to commence carbon trading, abating 6,800 tonne of CO₂-eq.
- Work collaboratively with the Wonthaggi Rotary Club to remove bottle tops from the waste stream and recycle for prosthetic limbs – *Helping Hands Project*.
- Construction of wet sand fences as a trial and monitoring of sand movement at Inverloch Surf Beach.
- Planning for the extension of the solar systems on the Inverloch Hub and Wonthaggi Depot sites, with grant funding from Sustainability Victoria.
- Continued partnership and support to Hooded Plover Working Groups, with 18 fledglings recorded in Bass Coast Shire.
- Next steps have been taken to understand the community carbon emissions profile and how this can be done with funding from Sustainability Victoria.
- 380,000 plants were put in the ground across the Shire as part of the revegetation program by all groups (Council, PINP, WPW, BC Landcare).
- Made or contributed to over eight formal submissions to government policy/position papers on the Marine and Coastal Policy, Victorian Government Inquiry into Tackling Climate Change in Victorian Communities, State Environment Protection Authority Act review, Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management, Management and storage of combustible recyclable and waste material, Better Boating Victoria, Reducing the Impact of Plastics on the Victorian Environment, and Bass Coast Distinctive Area and

Landscape. This has also included appearing and giving evidence at Parliamentary and Senate inquiries.

The Vision

The Strategy's Vision that *Bass Coast Shire will be recognised as a unique place of environmental significance where our quality of life and sense of community is balanced by sustainable and sensitive development, population and economic growth.*

The *Natural Environment Sustainability Strategy 2016 - 2026* focuses on four strategic directions for the sustainable management of the natural environment across Bass Coast for the next ten years:

- 1. Mitigating the forecast impacts of climate change by integrating the predictions into our decision making and planning for infrastructure, services and utilities.*
- 2. Facilitate appreciation of our unique natural environment through sustainable public access.*
- 3. Improve health of the landscape through increased biodiversity and indigenous vegetation protection.*
- 4. Develop community partnerships that promote environmental awareness.*

In addition

On adoption of the strategy in April 2016 Council resolved;

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Natural Environment Strategy 2016-2026.*
- 2. Invites community representatives including, but not limited to, South Gippsland Conservation Society, Phillip Island Conservation Society, Bass Coast Landcare Network, Phillip Island Nature Parks, The Energy Innovation Cooperative, submitters to the Strategy, Councillors and Council officers to develop an on-going Working Group to:*
 - a. Assist Council in developing a Natural Environment Action Plan as part of the Natural Environment Strategy 2016-2026 that clearly articulates the actions and measures for years 1-3 of the ten year strategy*
 - b. develop natural environment plans for local areas to restore vegetation and wildlife corridors. These plans to be combined and inform the Natural Environment Action Plan.*

The Natural Environment Strategy Advisory Working Group (the Working Group) is chaired by Cr Michael Whelan and has met as scheduled on four occasions under its Terms of Reference; 25 September 2018, 18 December 2018, 26 March 2019 and 25 June 2019.

The Working Group has also convened at the request of members, with the permission of the Chair on two separate occasions regarding specific issues; 23 January 2019 to discuss the coastal pathway from San Remo to Inverloch proposed by the State Government, and 14 May 2019 to discuss the council proposed Surf Parade, Inverloch pathway project.

Council adopted its Biodiversity Biolinks Plan 2018 to provide strategic direction for council and the community to increase native vegetation across the Shire, and determine where to undertake on-ground works to meet the target to increase native vegetation across the Shire by 1.5% each year (minimum 180 hectares per annum).

The Biolinks Plan was developed after significant community and stakeholder consultation with each identified biolinks project considered to be “shovel ready”. This has attracted state government funding of over \$100,000 to assist with catchment health and biodiversity.

The Biolinks Plan meets the requirement to develop separate natural environment plans for local areas to restore vegetation and wildlife corridors.



Cape Paterson First Surf Beach

Strategic Direction 1 Progress:

Mitigating the forecast impacts of climate change by integrating the predictions into our decision making and planning for infrastructure, services and utilities.

Activity and actions

Climate Change and Sustainability activities and actions undertaken during 2018/19 include:

- Participating at forums and meetings of the South East Council's Climate Change Alliance, MAV Environment Committee, Totally Renewable Phillip Island (TRPI) and Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE).
- Delivery of State government funded *Local Government Energy Saver Program (Local Government Owned Facility Energy Audits)* and installing a 100KW PV solar panel system on the Wonthaggi Civic Centre.
- Ongoing education and implementation of Council's Food Organic Green Organic (FOGO) kerbside three bin system, resulting in diverting over 75% of household waste from landfill.
- Successful capture and flaring of landfill gas to reduce greenhouse gases to commence carbon trading, abating 6,800 tonne of CO_{2-eq}.
- Planning for extension of the solar systems at the Inverloch Hub and Wonthaggi Depot sites, with grant funding from Sustainability Victoria.
- Participated in the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances Power Purchasing Agreement business case, as a founding Council.
- Ongoing collaboration and development of a Bass Coast Shire community emissions profile.
- Participate in the Regional Renewable Energy Roadmap for Bass Coast and South Gippsland, including being a member of the Steering Committee.
- Progression towards Council's commitment to State Governments TAKE2 pledge
- Undertook annual carbon accounting and reporting of Council's emissions.
- Participated in Collaborative Council's *Southern Gippsland Solar Farm* project looking at feasibility and assessment of a solar farm.
- Participated in Collaborative Council's *Charging Gippsland for Future Transport EV – A* feasibility study for Electric Vehicles charging infrastructure project.

Climate Change and Sustainability Highlights:

Objective 1.1.2 - Continue to participate in the Low Carbon Growth Plan for Gippsland, regional climate change forums and networks to share information and develop better strategies for emissions reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation at a local and regional level.

Project

The Victorian Greenhouse Alliances have established a Local Government Electricity Contract Working Group in Nov 2017 to help Victorian councils save money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through their electricity contracting.

Progress

The Working Group is developing a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for Victorian councils to procure low cost renewable energy from 2020/21, at the conclusion of their current retail contracts. The Working Group developed a business case to assess the electricity market's interest in providing a renewable energy PPA and gained commitments from individual councils to participate in the sector-wide collaborative procurement process. Bass Coast Shire Council committed to 30% of power to be purchased through the PPA project.

A renewable energy PPA is an alternative procurement model for energy supply and environmental accreditation. Currently, most councils procure electricity through a conventional fixed-price forward contract with an energy retailer. Usually these contracts are for two to three years, which requires staff time to manage the procurement process. Any purchases of renewable energy (e.g. GreenPower) are usually on a short term or ad-hoc basis.

Leading energy market consultants Energetics conducted detailed cost modelling on behalf of the LG PPA group, providing detailed Net Present Cost (NPC) forecasts over 10 years for the combined group as well as providing a tool to predict tailored results for each Council. Based on the aggregated load currently committed by the members of the Buyers' Group, over the life of the contract, a renewable PPA will result in avoided emissions of 1,217,628 tCO₂-eq, equivalent to avoiding the greenhouse gas emissions of 263,769 passenger vehicles in one year.

The benefits include:

- An increased uptake of renewable energy creates job opportunities.
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions for participating councils by switching to renewable energy under the PPA.
- Increased renewable energy in the grid.

Objective 1.1.5 - Set and action an Emissions Reduction Target for the organisation and encourage community involvement.

Project

In December 2018, Council expanded its emissions reduction target to include the entire Bass Coast Shire community. The target for council and the community is that *by 2025 to achieve a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas levels per Bass Coast Resident compared to 2009/10.*

Progress

Corporate

Council tracks its corporate greenhouse gas emissions annually, and have done since 2009/2010 when Council moved to using the National Greenhouse Reporting (NGERs) system, as per the *National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007*.

A review of the annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory, created in May 2019, for Bass Coast Shire was undertaken, after anomalies were identified in the landfill data. The review took into account the landfill data from the following sources;

- Landfill gas data from onsite gas flaring, converting methane to carbon dioxide; and
- Waste audit data, detailing the amounts of waste types entering the landfill, each percentage of organics entering the Landfill for 2016-17 and 2018-19, since the introduction of the FOGO system.

The result of the review saw an overall decrease in emissions since implementation of the landfill gas flaring infrastructure and reduction in organics waste entering the landfill. The results for the annual emissions data was also compared to the GHG emissions target for Bass Coast Shire, showing a significant improvement in emissions with the target likely to be reached by 2019-20, 5 years earlier than the target year, subject to maintaining reduction from behind the meter solar and landfill management.

Figure 1: Annual GHG emissions since 2009-10

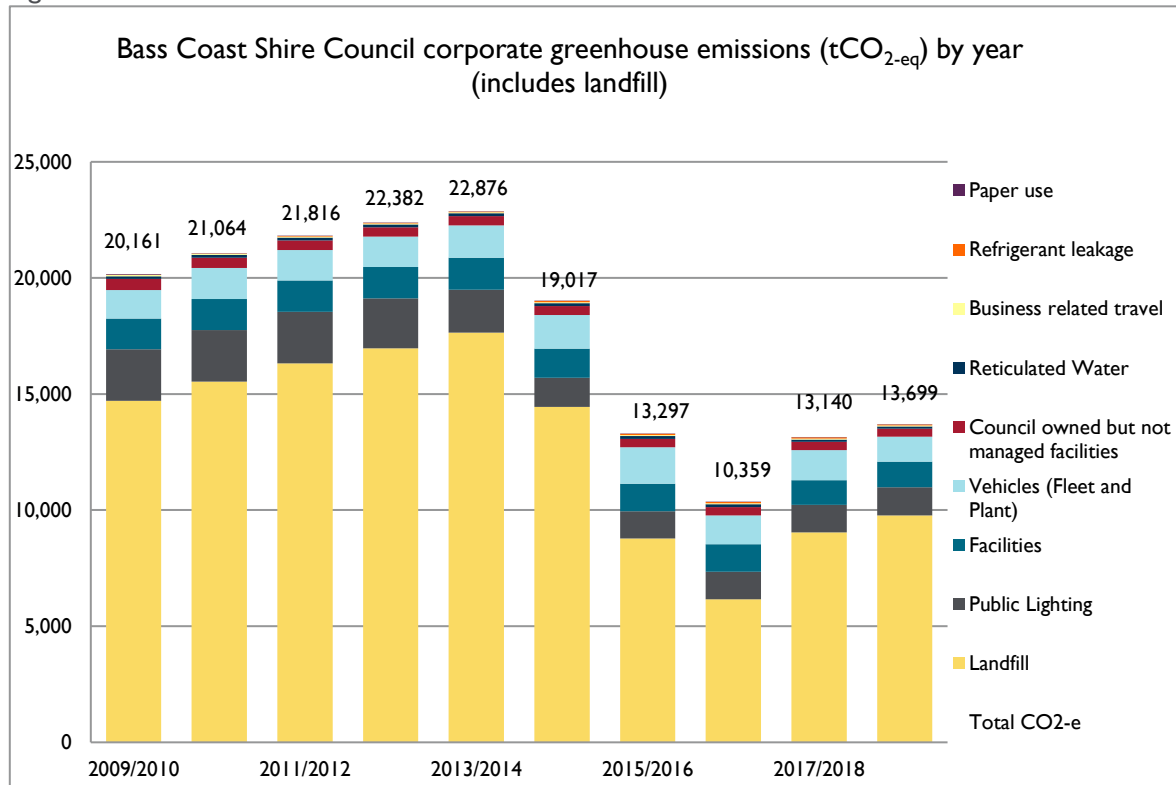


Figure 2: Annual GHG emission by Tonnes of CO_{2-eq} per Bass Coast Resident.

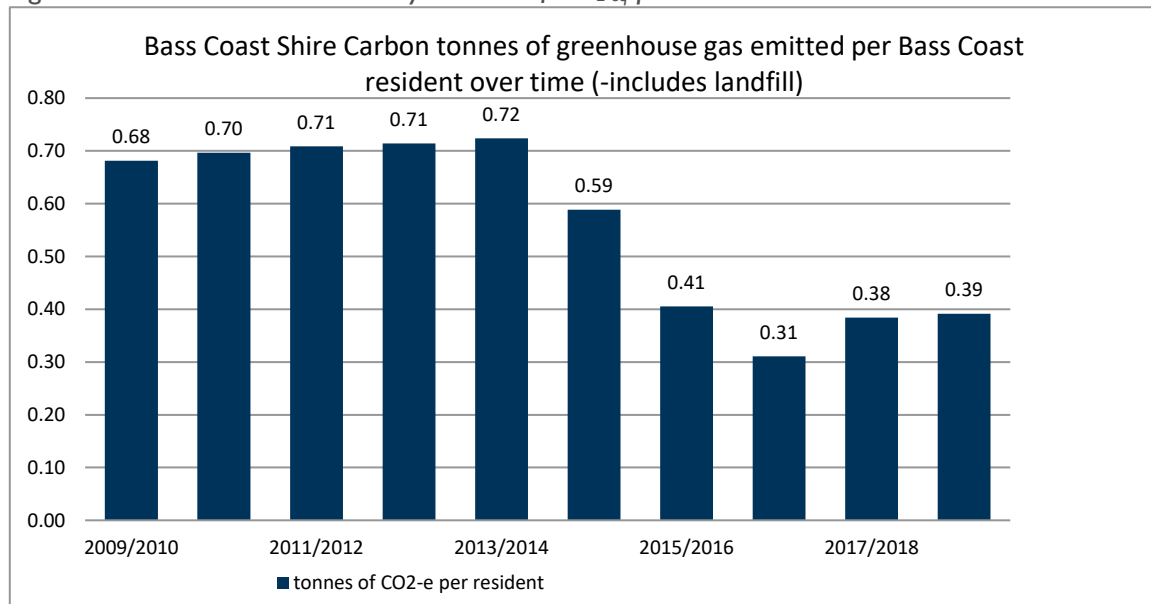
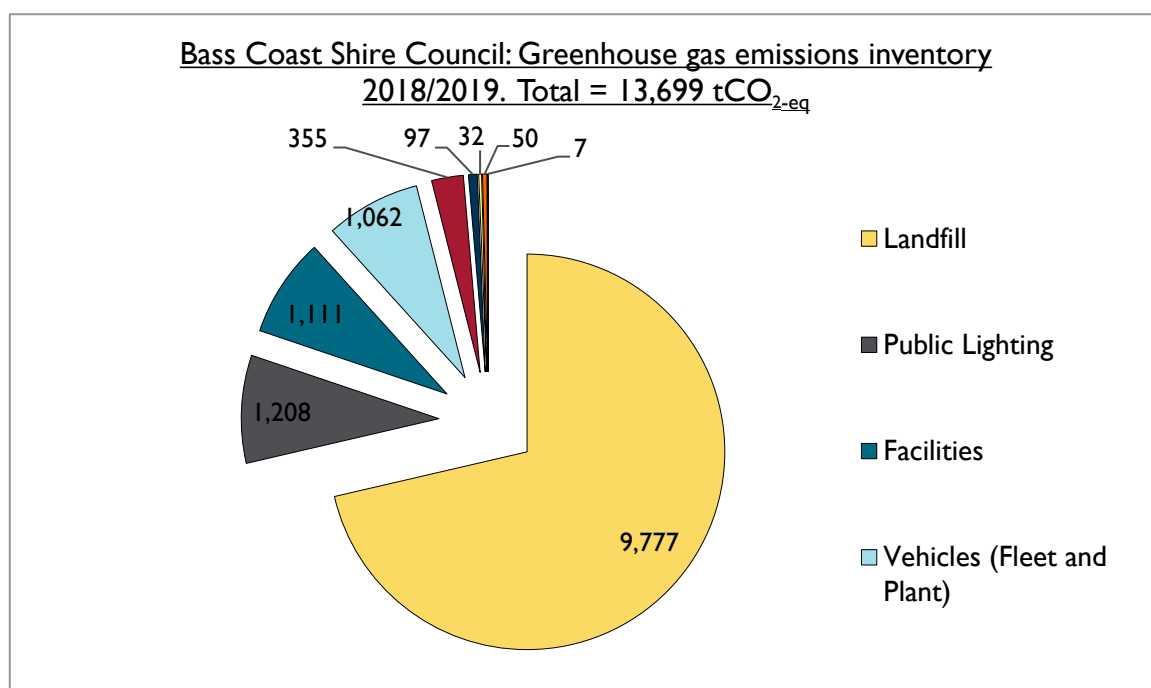


Figure 3: Revised 2018-19 Greenhouse gas emissions inventory



The Victorian Government, in the *Climate Change Act 2017*, has set a long-term target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with five yearly emissions reduction targets to keep Victoria on track to meet the long-term target. The first two interim targets- for 2025 and 2030 –must be determined by 2030.

The Victorian Emissions Reduction Targets went to consultation by State Government. Bass Coast contributed to the submission on the proposed targets prepared by the collective Greenhouse Alliances.

The Victorian Government 2020 Targets are for 30% reduction below 2015 levels by 2020.

Community

Council commenced a project to understand its community emissions profile by engaging a consultant to development of a full community-wide greenhouse gas emissions profile using the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission Inventories (GPC). The development of this profile is the first step in the preparation of a full process for mitigating climate change.

Bass Coast Shire's total annual community emissions have been calculated as 571 kt CO₂-eq, however did not include land use and agriculture. The largest source of emissions by

sector is stationary energy, which mainly comprises electricity consumed by buildings and facilities, and accounts for 71% (404 kt) of total emissions. Meanwhile, on-road transportation is responsible for 27% of emissions, emissions from solid waste account for 1% and wastewater 1%.

The profile was developed using available data and extrapolating state wide lifestyle indicators to the figures, such as population. This profile contains a snapshot of the GHGs allocated to activity within the Bass Coast municipality; it is not currently suitable as a monitoring tool for measuring the success of targets or actions. This profile is, however, appropriate for developing a broad understanding of emissions released, communicating community emissions, sectors responsible and as an aid to decision making for mitigation actions.

The next steps are underway with council commencing a project (with a grant from Sustainability Victoria in April 2019) to engage with government organisations on Phillip Island to advance collaboration, expand on existing work undertaken on determining the community emissions profile for Bass Coast Shire and share the learnings from undertaking these activities.

The project also aimed to update Bass Coast's Global Protocol (GPC) Basic community emissions profile, to include emissions from agriculture and land use. This process was dependent of the development and provision of the agriculture and land-use calculator by a consultant, (BZE) for public use. Through this project council is becoming a leader in the development of a community emissions profile, and working with communities.

Objective 1.2.4. – Work to minimise and continue to ensure the social, environmental and economic responsible disposal of municipal waste.

Project

Continue the Food Organics and Garden Organics kerbside three bin collection system for residents and businesses in the service area.

Progress

In September 2017 Council introduced its Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) kerbside three bin collection system for residents and businesses that received

the service could dispose of their food and garden waste into a separate 240L organics (green) bin collected weekly. With the introduction of the FOGO service council has:

- Saved \$283,000 in EPA landfill levy per annum
- Saved 5,100 tonne CO₂-eq in potential landfill gas
- Saved 10,000m³ landfill airspace
- Collected 10,000 tonnes of FOGO from kerbside bins
- Reduced recycling contamination rates from 10.8% to 6%
- <1% contamination rate in FOGO bin
- \$1.85/household/week net cost to ratepayer for third (FOGO) bin
- 75% diversion rate from landfill from kerbside waste



Objective 1.1.3 - Identify and deliver projects to upgrade infrastructure and reduce Council's carbon emissions.

Project

Wonthaggi Civic Centre 100 kW Solar PV Panel Rooftop Installation – delivering audit recommendation from Local Government Energy Saver Program (Local Government Owned Facility Energy Audits).

Progress

Council's 2016 Energy Efficiency Audits showed the top 5 highest energy consuming Council owned and managed buildings are:

- Wonthaggi Civic Centre
- Cowes Cultural Centre
- Wonthaggi Union Arts Centre
- Wonthaggi Depot
- Inverloch Hub



In 2017/18 Council installed a 39kW PV solar rooftop system on the Wonthaggi Union Arts Centre building as part of major building upgrade.

In 2018/19 a 100kW PV rooftop solar system was installed on the Wonthaggi Civic Centre, that will lower councils energy use and save Council close to \$40,000 per year.

Both the Wonthaggi Union Arts Centre and Wonthaggi Civic Centre solar installation have been partially funded (50%) by Sustainability Victoria.

In 2019/20 Council intends to upgrade (by extending) the solar arrays on both the Inverloch Hub and the Wonthaggi Depot sites. Council has developed the business case and applied to Sustainability Victoria for further funding.



100kW PV rooftop solar system installed on the Wonthaggi Civic Centre.

Waste Type	Current Year (2018/19)	Previous year (2017/18)
Kerbside Garbage	4,437 tonne	4,889 tonne
Kerbside Recycling Collected	4,942 tonne @ 6% contamination	4,821 tonne @ 6% contamination
Clean Kerbside Recycling	4,645 tonne	4,531 tonne
Organics	9,383 tonne	7,682.04 tonne
Percentage diverted from Landfill	74.77%	70.22%

Strategic Indicators	Current Year (2018/19)		Previous year (2017/18)
Tonnes of kerbside Waste diverted from landfill	14,028.82 tonnes 11 % increase		12,502.63 tonnes 197 % increase
Total Emissions	14% increase from the previous year	0.39tCO ₂ -e per Bass Coast resident	0.38 tCO ₂ -e per Bass Coast resident*
Reduction in Council's corporate emissions, to meet target	32% reduction in total emissions since 2009/10**	43% reduction in emissions per Bass Coast resident since 2009/10**	44% reduction in emissions per Bass Coast resident since 2009/10**
Reduction in Council's corporate water use	7% reduction	38,662 kL	41,319 kL

* Updated emissions for 2017/18, previously reported figure 0.72 tCO₂-e per Bass Coast resident.

** The Bass Coast emissions reduction target is 50% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions per Bass Coast resident from the 2009/10 emissions baseline.

Strategic Direction 2 Progress

Facilitate appreciation of our unique natural environment through sustainable public access.

Activity and actions

Coast and Bushland activities and actions undertaken during 2018/19 include:

- Ongoing maintenance and restoration of Scenic Estate Reserve. The Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve group continue to undertake working bees in the reserve with great local knowledge to enhance the flora and fauna.
- Continued partnership and support to Hooded Plover Working Groups with 18 fledgings recorded in Bass Coast Shire.
- Ongoing work to implement actions from the Rabbit Control Strategy in collaboration with Bass Coast Landcare Network and other partners.
- Successfully addressed eight cases of encroachment on Crown land.
- Issued 22 permits under *Councils Foreshore and Bushland Reserve Use Policy*.
- Collaboratively deliver an integrated Fox Control Program with Parks Victoria, Bass Coast Landcare Network and Phillip Island Nature Parks at strategic locations in Council managed foreshore and bushland reserves (e.g. near Hooded Plover habitat).
- Reconstruction of beach access stairs at Palm Beach track in the Cape Woolamai Foreshore (Safety Beach).
- Continued to work with Cape Paterson Surf Life Saving Club to redevelop the club's building, including allocation of Council and State Government funds to the project.
- Coordinated the Chilean Needle Grass Control Program with Bass Coast Landcare Network and Phillip Island Nature Parks on Phillip Island.
- Investigated seven cases of vegetation damage in Council managed foreshores.
- Reviewed, updated and implemented Council bushland reserve fire management plans with CFA
- Participate as a member of the Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve Committee.
- Responded to flooding issues at the Wonthaggi Life Saving Club and initiated the formation of a Steering Group with State government agencies to see assets assessed and lifesaving services continue for the coming 2019/20 summer.
- Ongoing monitoring of Ayr Creek lagoon for Blue Green Algae and provide notifications to the community where required.

- Formation and participation in the Inverloch Multiagency Erosion Working Group to address erosion and protect public assets.
- Construction of wet sand fences as a trial and monitoring of sand movement at Inverloch Surf Beach.
- Undertake sand renourishment works to address coastal erosion at Cowes Main Beach, Cowes East and Silverleaves foreshores.

Coast and Bushland Highlights:

Objective 2.1.1- Work in a co-operative approach with landowners, Landcare, DELWP, Parks Victoria and Phillip Island Nature Parks to reduce pest plants and animals in the Shire.

Project

Participate in the Pest Plant and Animal (PPA) meetings to co-ordinate and collaborate across land managers and tenure to reduce pest plants and animals.

Progress

The PPA Group for Bass Coast meet quarterly to discuss actions and collaborate to target species of pest plants and animals. This work is co-ordinated seasonally to achieve the best outcomes for the environment. Target activities and species include:

Fox control

The PPA group delivers an integrated Fox Control Program with each organisation working on the foreshore and bushland areas, at strategic locations that they manage. This includes near Hooded Plover habitat and where fox den activity has been detected.

Control measures include placement of soft jaw traps across all identified land areas at the same time, with regular checking. Other measures have included using scent detection dogs to find fox dens.

Foxes have been eradicated from Phillip Island thanks to an ongoing and sustained collaborative effort of all land managers. This has allowed for populations of ground dwelling marsupials to grow without threat and reintroduction of threatened and endangered species.

Rabbit control

In 2016 the Bass Coast Landcare Network lead the development of the *BCLN Coast Rabbit Strategy 2015-2020*.

This strategy is a collaborative approach between Bass Coast Landcare Network, Council, Water Authorities, Parks Victoria, Regional Roads Victoria, Phillip Island Nature Parks and the community to address and take action to reduce the rabbit population. The activity occurs in the Bass Coast Landcare Network area with the aim to protect biodiversity, agricultural and social amenity and assets.

This strategy guides organisational and community rabbit control actions, work programs, and funding applications. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure a holistic, coordinated, and strategic approach to rabbit control in the Bass Coast Landcare Network area, by;

- Aligning and coordinating organisational rabbit control and monitoring programs;
- Focussing control efforts on rabbits impacting high priority assets;
- Increase resourcing for rabbit control to allow for the expansion of control efforts;
- Foster, steer and expand community control efforts; and
- Increase public awareness of rabbit problems.

Chilean needle grass

The PPA group successfully ran and coordinated the Chilean Needle Grass Control Program with Bass Coast Landcare Network and Phillip Island Nature Parks on Phillip Island.

Chilean needle grass is a tussocky perennial in the speargrass group of grasses growing to about one-meter high. It is thought to have been introduced in the 1930s and 1940s from South America where it occurs in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Uruguay, southern Brazil and Chile.

It is found across tenure on farms, house lots, council roadsides, and rural roadsides. There are many sites to manage and the coordination allows the group to ensure all sites are identified and treated correctly before seed development to effectively minimise spread.

Chilean needle grass is not found elsewhere in the Shire, only on Phillip Island and is thought to be introduced by seed contamination on contractor equipment. The seeds

have very sharp points that have been reported to penetrate and damage the fleece, skin and eyes of livestock. Chilean needle grass also limits growth of pasture grasses for stock.



Objective 2.2.1 – Facilitate delivery and use of environmentally sensitive foreshore infrastructure, including paths, car parking, signs and access tracks working with the natural coastal processes.

Project

Respond to the damage caused by the 10 May 2019 flooding event at Cape Paterson, and facilitate the Wonthaggi Life Saving Club to (LSC) establish temporary summer lifesaving services.

Progress

On 10 May 2019 unofficial records indicate that Cape Paterson received approximately 100mm of rainfall within one hour. This was a significant event well above the 1:5 rainfall event design standards that standard stormwater and drainage infrastructure is designed to cope with (estimates equate the event to 1 in 2000-year Average Recurrence Interval storm event). Council, together with emergency service organisations responded to the event. Hail blocked a number of drains on the ground and in houses, resulting in extensive damage.

The Bay Beach Crown land and foreshore area provided an overland pathway for the water sheeting off the roadway and surrounding hard stand areas. Wonthaggi Life Saving Club and other community assets (car park, toilet block, playground, BBQ and seating areas) were significantly impacted due to the overland flows of flood water. Council is the Crown land Manager for the Bay Beach foreshore reserve.

The immediate focus from council, post flooding, event was to “make safe” the area. This included inspection and repair to:

- roads, drain, tracks and paths,
- the toilet block playground, rotunda and BBQ area,
- structures, septic and wiring, before switching power back on
- Municipal Building Surveyor inspections for public safety,
- Sand renourishment to fill the void created by overland flows
- Structural assessment of beach access stairs (1st Surf Beach).

Council immediately convened a meeting and a Steering Group was formed chaired by State Government (ESIA) to work in a collaborative partnership with Wonthaggi LSC, council and Life Saving Victoria to ascertain the way forward for the club to deliver services in the upcoming 2019/20 season, and beyond. The Steering Group is progressing the demolition of the Wonthaggi LSC buildings (if required) and establishing temporary facilities for lifesaving services for the next three summer periods. The State government (ESIA) is providing \$175,000 to assist the Club to demolish and set up temporary facilities for the upcoming seasons.

The *Cape Paterson Bay Beach Activity Area Master Plan (2014)* provides strategic direction for investment in the precinct. Resulting from this event council has an opportunity to collaborate with State government agencies and the Wonthaggi SLC to deliver priority key directions within the Plan, and improve services for the community.



Foreshore area and Wonthaggi Life Saving Club Observation Building, and Council toilet block showing flooding, hail and damage.

Objective 2.2.7 – Implement actions to retreat or protect public infrastructure from foreshore erosion whilst working with the natural coastal processes.

Project

Inverloch Surf Beach Protection Plan to provide short, medium and long term management options to protect the foreshore and public infrastructure.

Progress

The Inverloch Surf Beach is one of the most dynamic coastlines in Victoria, with significant regression and accretion of sand occurring in the past century. Since 2012, the volume of sand lost to erosion during storm surge events has greatly exceeded the amount returned to the beach during calmer seasons, posing significant short term risk to public assets such as the Inverloch Surf lifesaving club (SLSC) building and the Bunurong Road.

While the Inverloch foreshore is protected from the strong westerlies associated with the mid-latitudes, it is vulnerable to southerly winds and storm surge events. These storm surge events are particularly strong in winter, while spring and summer are times of calmer weather, allowing for more sand accretion.

By December 2018, the foreshore adjacent to the Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club has seen 33.5 metres of coastline retreat since 2012, and the foreshore adjacent to Bunurong Road, particularly near the Surf Parade intersection, has experienced 35.6 metres of coastline retreat since 2012.

Council together with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria, Regional Roads Victoria and the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, have formed a multi-agency working group to address erosion at Inverloch and developed a short-term erosion control plan for key areas along the Inverloch Surf Beach.

In March 2019, softer engineering options of wet sand fencing and sand renourishment were trialled at the front of the SLSC and Bunurong Road site to protect the public infrastructure which had been successful on other high powered surf beaches. The wet sand fences are designed to allow the wave energy to be dispersed and sand to be deposited behind the fences, rebuilding the dune.

However, the initial design of the wet sand fences proved to be no match for the power of the waves at Inverloch. The fences were damaged and removed after a few months. Several lessons were learnt from this trial and applied to redesign and reinstall an improved, more robust model of wet sand fences. The improved design includes poles drilled into the bed rock, walers to strengthen the bottom and reinforced cable and clips to attach the timber slats.

DELWP, in partnership with Deakin University and the University of Melbourne have begun the Victorian Coastal Monitoring Program for Gippsland. Inverloch was chosen as one of the priority sites. This citizen science program involves flying drones over the coastline, to create a 3D beach profile. Each run can then be compared to measure volumes of sand lost or gained. Community members will be trained by drone experts and conduct monitoring flights every four to six weeks for two years. The data collected through this project will inform future coastal protection works at Inverloch.

The works have been jointly funded by the Victorian Government's Protection of Victoria's Iconic Beaches and Coastline project, Parks Victoria, Regional Roads Victoria and Bass Coast Shire Council.



Moxy trucks and damaged wet sand fence at Inverloch Surf Beach.

Strategic Indicators:	Current year (2018/19)	Previous year (2017/18)
% reduction in rabbit numbers post control works	Population decrease was an average of 52%. Pre to post control population average 31 rabbits/km to 16 rabbits/km.	Population decrease was an average of 21%. Pre to post control population average 14 rabbits/km to 11 rabbits/km.
No. Fire management plans tabled at MFMPC (<i>Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee</i>) before declared fire season	1 Fire Prevention Plan. Note – all plans are in one document as opposed to individual plans.	16 Fire Prevention Plans



Strategic Direction 3 Progress

Improve the health of the landscape through increased biodiversity and indigenous vegetation protection.

Activity and actions

Land and Catchment activities and actions undertaken during 2018/19 include:

- Implementation of the *Biodiversity Biolinks Plan 2018* and attraction of over \$100,000 of funding.
- Progress work to clean up and rehabilitate warm temperate rainforest at The Gorge, Glen Forbes.
- Ongoing management of Council's two native vegetation offset sites, being 40% sold at 30 June 2019.
- 380,000 plants were put in the ground across the Shire as part of the revegetation program by all groups (Council, PINP, WPW, Bass Coast Landcare Network).
- Increase in the area (189 ha) of native vegetation planted with 2,000 plants/ha.
- Biolinks plantings over the past two years has seen the amount of native vegetation cover in Bass Coast increase from 14 per cent to 17 per cent.
- Deliver strong biodiversity outcomes through the Bass Coast Shire Council and Bass Coast Landcare Network Memorandum of Understanding.
- Administered Rural Land Management Program with changes to the online system. A total of 709 properties were accepted into the program, which is an increase of 17 (692 in previous year). This is an increase of 3% in the third year of the online system.
- Audited properties registered in the 2018/19 Rural Land Management Program.
- Administered the Covenant Incentive Scheme payments to properties with covenants on their property (e.g. Trust for Nature).
- Assessed 45 planning applications for environmental considerations.
- Participated as a member on the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) Community Engagement Network and Phillip Island Nature Park Community and Environment Advisory Group.
- Attended and participated in the Coastal Agencies Liaison Group forums.

- Ongoing participation in the Western Port Integrated Water Management Forum and the Gippsland Integrated Water Management Forum, and associated workshops. Funding received for the Biolinks project as a direct result.
- Artificially opened the mouth of Wreck Creek twice to prevent flooding of nearby housing using the procedure developed with the WGCMA.
- Delivered a program to replant 9,491 indigenous plants in Council managed foreshore and bushland reserves.
- Delivered a program to control environmental weeds in Council managed foreshore and bushland reserves.
- *Weed em and Reap* 2018 campaign resulted in a total of 1055 indigenous plants provided to the urban community.
- Partnered with Bass Coast Landcare Network to deliver the *Growing Southern Gippsland* program.
- Host Council's 'War on Waste' Business Breakfast and launch Council adoption of the *Single Use Plastic Free Policy (2018)*.



Opening of Wreck Creek, Inverloch to prevent homes flooding

Land and Catchment Highlights:

Objective 3.1.1 – Develop a Biodiversity Biolinks Plan for Bass Coast Shire, including mapping, to focus on increased connectivity for flora and fauna.

Project

Developed a Biodiversity Biolinks Plan to increase the amount of native vegetation cover across the region, and provide a strategic approach to deliver Council's strategy indicator to increase native vegetation cover by a minimum of 1.5% each year.

Progress

The *Biodiversity Biolinks Plan 2018* is providing a strategic approach to increase indigenous vegetation cover and introduce connectivity in the landscape to improve the capacity for native plants and animals. This will allow native plants and animals to adapt to predicted climatic impacts of higher temperatures and extreme weather events to move with the changing habitat. The establishment of biolinks along waterways will help filter and retain water in the landscape, thereby providing habitat for birds, fish and animals and improving water quality.

Over the last two years over 778,000 plants have been planted across the Shire. This has seen the amount of native vegetation cover increase from 14 to 17%. Council is consistently working to protect what is left and build on and connect the remnant vegetation throughout the shire.

The largest planting that has taken place is at the base of the Bass Hills, with 60,000 plants planted over a two-year period. This planting was organised by Bass Coast Landcare Network, who were able to get the fantastic support of the Wonthaggi Secondary College where over 200 students planted the site each year. Council staff and Intrepid Landcare also planted thousands of plants at this site. This area has now returned 25 hectares of pasture to native bushland and connect to the surrounding revegetated gullies.

Bass Coast Shire and Cardinia Shire are now partnering to make sure that the biolinks continue across shire boundaries. With funding received from DELWP via the Western Port Integrated Water Management Strategic Statement (\$50,000 each Shire) Cardinia

Shire will develop a Biolinks Plan with the help of the Bass Coast Shire model, and Bass Coast Shire will plant further identified biolinks that can join together, connecting the wildlife corridors between the Shire's.

Great work has been undertaken by many organisations and community groups across the Shire to see an increase in the native vegetation cover across the Shire, the challenge now is to measure the success of this work.

Council, in partnership with Bass Coast Landcare Network and Victorian University are setting a long term monitoring program to determine what contribution the biolinks are having on biodiversity across the Shire. This will look at the increase in flora and fauna both in the medium and long term. The research design is still being formulated.



Community planting day with Bass Coast Landcare Network

Objective 3.1.4 – Continue Council’s Land Management Biodiversity Incentive Scheme and Land Management Rebate.

Project

Administer Councils Rural Land Management Program to all eligible landowners.

Progress

The Rural Land Management Program (RLMP) is a component of Council’s Land Management Biodiversity Incentive Program (LMBIS) and has been running for 18 years.

The RLMP is focused on providing an incentive to better target land management works being carried out on ground. The program aims to recognise and reward landholders who adopt principles that enrich the natural environment and improve sustainable agriculture. Some of these improvements include:

- weed control and eradication
- protection/enhancement of remnant vegetation
- control and reversal of soil erosion
- protection of waterways and revegetation
- pest animal control
- control and reversal of soil salinity

The rebate is based on an amount per hectare determined by Council on an annual basis (through its annual budget process) multiplied by the area of the agricultural land. The rebate is available to all eligible ratepayers who carry out land management works on their property in accordance with Council’s *Rural Land Management Program Policy* and the Guidelines for Implementation.

As part of the program random audits are carried out to confirm on ground works have occurred. Bass Coast Landcare Network assists with the program and audits providing assistance and advice to landholders to enhance the environmental and agricultural values of their property.

A total of 709 properties were accepted into the scheme, which is an increase of 17 (692 in 2017/18). This is an increase of 3% in the third year of the online system.

Objective 3.2.4 – Work in co-operation with private land holders and relevant agencies to protect natural waterways within the Shire from threatening activities, and increase river health.

Project

To protect warm temperate rainforest areas of the Glen Forbes Gorge - control high threat weeds based on an ecological approach, which minimises herbicide use and soil disturbance and enables the regeneration of rainforest species in areas cleared of high threat weeds.

Progress

The Glen Forbes gorge is narrow, steep and follows the Gorge Creek and Dalyston – Glen Forbes Road. The rainforest remnant extends over public and private land for approximately 1.5 km of the gorge. The rainforest is bordered by grazing land, pine plantations and public road.

The gorge is locally known and valued. The road alongside the gorge was hand cut in the early 1900s and is now popular with motorcyclists. Adjoining neighbours and the Bass Coast Shire Council have invested considerable effort into looking after the rainforest remnant within the gorge.

A project is underway to control high threat weeds based on an ecological approach, which minimises herbicide use and soil disturbance and enables the regeneration of rainforest species in areas cleared of high threat weeds.

The gorge is of substantial ecological significance. The vegetation community at Glen Forbes has affinities to the Far East Gippsland (e.g. Cann River) form of Warm Temperate Rainforest, which is listed as threatened under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988). Both communities occupy gullies near sea level and have humus-rich soils derived from sedimentary geology. They also support common characteristic species, including a vine interwoven canopy of Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), Mountain Greygum (*Eucalyptus cypellocarpa*) and Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*), above rainforest shrubs and ferns.

Over the last two years' council have been removing Pittosporum from the Gorge. Pittosporum is an invasive tree species which limits the growth of the native Warm Temperate Rainforest species that are indigenous to the Gorge. These works will be followed by the removal of dumped rubbish and cars from the bottom of the Gorge. A management plan has been written to guide the future weed control and revegetation works that will take place in the coming years



The Gorge, Glen Forbes

Objective 3.2.7 – Develop and implement a project for Bass Coast Shire Council to be plastic bag free to protect our waterways and oceans.

Project

To develop Council's Plastic Free Bass Coast Policy and share this with the community.

Progress

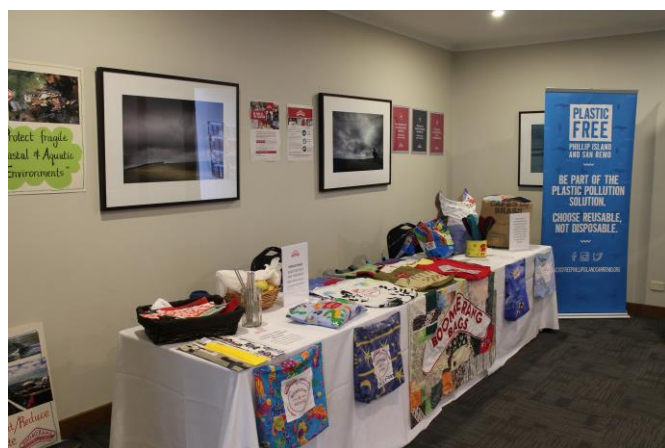
In November 2018 Council adopted its *Single Use Plastic Free Policy 2018*. The policy sets out the principles and framework to support the community and businesses in Bass Coast Shire to work towards being single use plastic free, and was developed with input and feedback from active community groups promoting 'plastic free' and various Business Associations.

The objective of this Policy is to provide direction for:

- Supporting the ‘plastic bag free’ and ‘plastic free’ community groups within Bass Coast Shire to lead the change;
- Encouraging businesses to become single use plastic free;
- Supporting State Government legislation for banning of single use plastics; and
- Providing leadership through action.

Across the globe 40% of plastic produced is for packaging and single use, designed to be discarded quickly. In Australia it is estimated that four billion or 20,700 tonnes of plastic shopping bags are used annually by consumers with less than 3% of these being recycled (Clean Up Australia, November 2017).

To engage with the community and capture the momentum created by the community groups *Plastic Free Phillip Island and San Remo*, *Plastic Free Bass Coast* and *Boomerang Bags*, who were actively promoting reducing plastic use Council hosted a “War on Waste” Plastic Free Business Breakfast. Craig Reucassel from ABC television was the key note speaker for the event, with support from Lauren Barker from *Plastic Free Phillip Island and San Remo*. The breakfast was a great success, with over 250 people attending at the Silverwater Resort San Remo.



Plastic Free Phillip Island and San Remo display and Newhaven primary School Straw-Bassadors

Strategic Indicators:	Current Year (2018/19)	Previous year (2017/18)
Increase in the area (ha) of native vegetation planted (NES) 2,000 plants/ha	189ha 1.5% increase	192ha 1.6% increase
Area (ha) protected under Council's Native Vegetation Offset Scheme	8.5ha	8.5ha
Kilometres of roadsides treated for invasive plants	249km	210km
Undertake activities to increase the number of Hooded Plover eggs and chicks fledged within the Shire each year (NES)	3 fledged chicks on Bass Coast managed land. 18 fledged Hooded Plover chicks within the Shire* <i>includes non-Council managed land.</i>	2 fledged chicks at Bass Coast Shire managed land. 24 fledged Hooded Plover chicks within the Shire* <i>includes non-Council managed land.</i>
Native Vegetation Offset Scheme site 2017/18	Sold	Remaining
Smiths Beach Drainage Reserve	0.053 General habitat units	0.094 General habitat units
Little Screw Creek	0.493 General habitat units	0.722 General habitat units

Strategic Direction 4 Progress

Develop community partnerships that promote environmental awareness.

Partnership activity and actions

Partnership activities and actions undertaken during 2018/19 include:

- Successful grant funding submission to the State government were received for revegetation of Biolinks corridors, threatened species protection works, foreshore erosion at Cowes foreshore, Cowes East foreshore and Inverloch surf beach, Local Government Energy Saver Program, E-waste infrastructure and transitioning to lower carbon emissions.
- Assist volunteer groups with support for Coast Action grants and community grant applications. This includes letters of support and auspice arrangements.
- Ongoing facilitation and support for the Lions Club proposal for a sound shell in The Glade, Inverloch.
- Use of social media to tell community what's happening (e.g. Inverloch erosion, FOGO three bin system, Hooded Plover chicks, Ayr Creek lagoon, recycling crisis, Biodiversity Biolinks project, community consultation on environment matters, wildlife, lifesaving and rips, community information sessions, Volunteer Planting events, coastal erosion, beach access infrastructure upgrades, links to other organisational activities).
- Ongoing activity and support for Council's Natural Environment Strategy Advisory Working Group.
- Made or contributed to over eight formal submissions to government policy/position papers on the *Marine and Coastal Policy*, Victorian Government Inquiry into Tackling Climate Change in Victorian Communities, State Environment Protection Authority Act review, Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management, Management and storage of combustible recyclable and waste material, Better Boating Victoria, Reducing the Impact of Plastics on the Victorian Environment, and Bass Coast Distinctive Area and Landscape. This has also included appearing and giving evidence at Parliamentary and Senate inquiries.
- Attend meetings and workshops with stakeholders and represent Council's views including DELWP, MAV Environment Committee, West Gippsland Catchment

Management Authority, PP&WPCMA, Sustainability Victoria, Regional Roads Victoria, EPA Victoria, Gippsland Resource Recovery Group, Western Port Biosphere, etc.

- Lobby and advocate for state and federal government support on climate change research, climate change adaptation and coastal erosion, climate change research and adaptation, use of the EPA landfill levy for recycling issues, review for the State regulations on vegetation removal, recycling waste, container deposit scheme, reducing plastic waste, water quality concerns and kerbside recycling processing.
- Support and facilitate the activities of the 18 volunteer groups active in Bass Coast Shire's coast and bushland reserves
- Respond to many media inquiries and placed 20 media releases on environmental items. Officers appeared in over three television news items and did over five ABC Gippsland live radio interviews.
- Over 40 social media items from the Sustainable Environment Department.
- Ongoing membership of UN Western Port Biosphere Reserve.
- Work collaboratively with the Wonthaggi Rotary Club to remove bottle tops from the waste stream and recycle for prosthetic limbs – *Helping Hands Project*.



Partnership Highlights:

Objective 4.3.2 – Continue to work in a supportive partnership, and within a Memorandum of Understanding with Bass Coast Landcare Network to achieve agreed biodiversity outcomes.

Project

Work collaboratively with the Bass Coast Landcare Network (Landcare) to encourage sustainable land use and promote the conservation of biodiversity across the Shire.

Progress

Council and Landcare continue to work together under a MoU to achieve common goals. Key Performance Indicators were developed for Landcare to assist Council to achieve its strategic indicators. These KPI's have a focus on increasing biodiversity, pest plant and animal control and engaging private landowners.

Works Landcare have undertaken within the MoU agreement include:

Weeds

Coordinating the Rural Roadside Weed Spraying Program utilising mapping and local knowledge, including acquittal of the State Government grant.

- Bass Coast Shire Council roadside weed control program (a total of 277km of roadsides across the shire had at least one pass of weed control)
- Gorse, blackberry, and watsonia were targeted (and other weeds sprayed eg. thistles) along all of priority roads. Bridal creeper and asparagus fern spraying was increased along Phillip Island roads
- Bass Coast Shire Council program responding to community pest plant and animal concerns (administered by Bass Coast Landcare Network).

Rabbits

Rabbit Harbour was sprayed on the two roadsides (Veterans Dr and Churchill Rd), and the rabbit fence was repaired along Churchill Rd (a section of Veterans Drive had been removed during a new driveway construction). Through other projects the rabbit fence at Newhaven was maintained, spot light monitoring was undertaken pre and post baiting, rabbit baiting, and warren destruction was undertaken on 200Ha of farmland from the Forest Caves rabbit fence eastwards across Churchill Rd and Veterans Drive, to Newhaven township on Phillip Island.

Biolinks projects

Large scale revegetation projects have seen the increase in native vegetation from 14% to 17 % across the shire. The projects that were completed in 2018/19 saw the planting of 64,000 indigenous plants along 8 biolinks, examples are listed below;

- Large creek line site with established Blackwood's and Eucalypts. Threatened species - Growling Grass Frog, and Giant Gippsland Earthworm (6,000 plants, 2.63ha)
- Large Revegetation project including weed control; required project - Powlett project, focus project - Threatened Species VROT's Giant Gippsland Earthworm, WGCMA partner project (8,000 plants, 3087ha)
- Large revegetation project along Lance Creek tributary with some remnant large old trees, WGCMA partnership project. (14,000 plants 6.36ha).

Advocacy

Landcare staff participate in Council's Rural Engagement Group and the Natural Environment Strategy Advisory Working Group, providing advice to landholders and representing views of its members, and assist with audits of the Rural Land Management Program.

The Bass Coast Landcare Network represents over 10 separate Landcare volunteer groups across southern Gippsland and French Island. Without Council's support the Bass Coast Landcare Network would not enjoy the stability and leverage funding as successfully, and Council would not be able to achieve its revegetation goals and have the cooperation of private land holders experienced.



Objective 4.2.2 – Participate in regional networks and forums, and work co-operatively to ensure alignment with regional, state and federal environmental sustainability strategies, policies and programs, and influence outcomes.

Project

Explore joint procurement option to ensure kerbside waste services are collected and diverted from landfill, and high level of service is provided to the community to meet environmental, economic and social expectations – *Gippswide Kerbside Procurement Project*.

Progress

Bass Coast Shire Council is a member of the Gippsland Resource Recovery Group (GRRG), a State government statutory authority under the *Environment Protection Act 1970* (the EP Act) as amended.

GRRG is facilitating and project managing a collaborative procurement process on behalf of the Gippsland councils to explore the waste sector and industry knowledge and expertise in shaping an innovative solution in kerbside collections, resource recovery and minimising waste to landfill.

Currently, kerbside collection services are managed across individual council contracts of varying service levels, size and nature. There are no joint contracts in place. The scope of the project is kerbside waste (garbage, recycling, green/organic waste).

Drivers for the project include reduce overall costs, encourage new infrastructure, growth and regional investment, drive network efficiencies, increase resource recovery and divert waste from landfill through increased commercial viability through material aggregation.

All six Gippsland councils signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to participate in the market sounding exercise and Expression of Interest (EOI), authorising GRRG to lead the project.

Bass Coast Shire has been insistent throughout the process that current service levels must be maintained (three bin system including FOGO) and that the existing contracts

will be exhausted prior to Councils joining, though a phased approach as to not incur any financial impost due to breaking existing contract.

Objective 4.3.4 - Facilitate the activities of volunteer community coast action groups, conservation societies and friends groups to achieve agreed environmental outcomes.

Project

Work together and facilitate the established environmental and conservation volunteer groups within the Shire to undertake their annual work plans.

Progress

Silverleaves Conservation Association

In 2018 Council worked with the Silverleaves Conservation Association to develop a project to remove three mature Pine Trees and plant 260 indigenous plants. The Silverleaves Conservation Association was successful in attracting grant funding totalling \$8,510 from *Coastcare Victoria Community Grants 2018* to remove three mature Radiate Pine trees (*Pinus radiata*) and spray other environmental weed species.

Radiata Pine is a non-native environmental weed which threatens the biodiversity of natural systems. This includes its ability to change soil nutrient and water cycles, reduce soil fertility, significantly reduce light levels and produce thick leaf litter, all of which reduces the ability of native plant species to compete. If left uncontrolled the species threatens to spread and to further impact biodiversity. At the Silverleaves foreshore project site this is evidenced by two dead Banksia stags that have succumbed to being outcompeted by the Radiata Pines.

As a manager of a Crown land conservation reserve, Council has a legislative obligation to control environmental weeds and conserve biodiversity.

The removal of the three Radiata Pine and re-introduction of 260 indigenous plant species through revegetation is important to conserving biodiversity in the Silverleaves foreshore area. The Silverleaves Conservation Association volunteers have planned for 60 Coastal Banksias, and Coastal tea tree, Sweet Bursaria, White Correa and Coastal Daisy Bush at their upcoming working bees.

Council support for 18 volunteer environmental groups

Council currently supports 18 volunteer environmental groups active in our coast and bushland reserves. These volunteer groups play a crucial role in protecting and enhancing the Bass Coast Shire environment. In 2018/19 approximately 9,491 indigenous plants have been planted thanks to these dedicated and much valued volunteers.

The locations in which volunteers have been active are Ventnor, Saltwater Creek, Red Rocks, Cowes West, Silverleaves, Rhyll, Newhaven, Cape Woolamai, Scenic Estate Reserve, Smiths Beach, Tenby Point, Coronet Bay, Kilcunda, Cape Paterson, and Inverloch (Ayr Creek, Thompson Reserve and Screw Creek).

Council directly supports the activities of these groups by:

- assisting with annual works plans and project planning for revegetation, weed control and grant applications,
- providing technical advice,
- funding weed control to prepare planting sites and for maintenance after planting,
- supplying equipment, tools, guards and stakes for working bees/planting days,
- supplying indigenous plants for revegetation,
- collecting and disposing of weeds after working bees, and
- responding to issues observed by volunteers in reserves,
- promoting working bees and other volunteer activities on Council website, media releases, and via social media, and
- providing Public Liability Insurance for these volunteer groups.



Objective 4.2.3 – Continue to lobby and advocate for sustainable development that protects and enhances our region.

Project

Advocate to achieve environmentally sustainable outcomes for the community at a local, regional, state and federal level to protect the environment, create better awareness and to deliver Council's top advocacy priorities.

Progress

Waste Recycling – EPA levy

Under Section 70 of the Environment Protection Act 1970, the State Government impose a Municipal and Industrial Landfill Levy on every tonne of waste received at landfill.

That the Local Government sector advocates for the Municipal and Industrial Landfill Levy funds collected to be invested directly back into the waste sector to address the recycling crisis in Victoria. This is to find new technologies to improve recycling and undertake research, development and delivery to address the failures of the waste market to properly process, recycle and reuse materials collected through kerbside waste management programs.

Container Deposit Schemes

The concept behind Container Deposit Schemes (CDS) is that the consumer pays a deposit on certain beverage containers that are refunded when the container is returned to a collection deposit site.

That the Local Government sector supports the introduction a Container Deposit Scheme in Victoria, and throughout Australia. It writes to the State and Federal Environment Ministers advocating for them to manage and support a Container Deposit Scheme, because of the financial, social and environmental benefits.

Climate Resilience and Adaptation Research

The Australian Government funding allocation to support climate resilience and adaptation research through the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) and Commonwealth Scientific and Industry Research Organisation (CSIRO) has been reducing.

That the Federal and State Government commit to ongoing and increased funding to support climate resilience and adaptation research through the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) and Commonwealth Scientific and Industry Research Organisation (CSIRO) research.

Climate Change Adaptation and Coastal Erosion

The natural environment is one of the States greatest asset; the economy for coastal areas is based on tourism. The coastline is subject to damage from storm surges and coastal inundation which causes significant erosion and is placing public, natural and community assets at risk such as Surf Life Saving Clubs buildings, emergency vehicle access tracks and recreational pathways.

That the Australian Government commits to urgent mitigation action, in order to implement critical erosion infrastructure across the coastline of Victoria. A vital step in preserving and protecting our coastal environment is to implement a more strategic and holistic approach to foreshore management, and install erosion control infrastructure.

We need a national strategy for erosion mitigation and adaptation due to impacts of climate change on coastal communities and environments. A collaborative approach involving Federal, State and Local Government will be key in moving forward.

We further call on the Australian Government to support initiatives by councils to develop and implement coastal climate change adaptation plans, to improve the sustainability and resilience of coastal settlements vulnerable to increasing climate change risks.



Objective 4.3.3 – Progress regional partnership projects and leverage value from collaboration with other Councils.

Project

Participate as a member of the UN Western Port Biosphere Reserve to work collaboratively with the other Western Port Shires and community to encourage sustainable land use and promote the conservation of biodiversity across the Shire.

Progress

The Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Biosphere Reserve Foundation Ltd (Western Port Biosphere) was established in 2003, following the establishment through UNESCO of the UN Westernport Biosphere Reserve.

Its constitution and charter reflect the “Man and the Biosphere” objectives with a mission of:

- Conserving and improving biological diversity;
- Building and sharing knowledge by facilitating, monitoring and utilising research;
- Fostering, encouraging and facilitating project partnerships; and
- Engaging with, and providing education for, all elements of the biosphere community.



The geographic scope of the Biosphere covers 2,142 square kilometres around the edge of Westernport, including French Island. It does not encompass the whole of Bass Coast Shire, or extend into the upper catchment areas.

The Western Port Biosphere Reserve was given its UNESCO charter in recognition of the outstanding natural values of the region. These are found in the inner conservation core, French Island and the seagrass beds, mudflats, mangroves and saltmarshes that fringe the bay. These start the food chains that sustain the fishery and also include the international migratory shorebirds. The Buffer Zone is the ring around Western Port where conservation and human activities coincide. This includes the all-important Green Wedges and the agriculture and horticultural industries on which we all depend.

In the outer Transition Zone, featuring residential and industrial development, much of the economic wealth of the region is generated and supported.



In 2016 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was developed between the Biosphere and the five Councils. The purpose of the MoU is to guide the relationships and have achievable measures to demonstrate value for membership.

The member Councils of the Western Port Biosphere meet quarterly and are represented by Councillor delegate, Cr Michael Whelan, and the Manager Sustainable Environment.

The Western Port Biosphere Foundation carries out projects to test ways of balancing conservation with development. An example of this is its water stewardship project where businesses large and small manage their water use.

Objective 4.1.2 - Encourage, support and promote local business economic sustainable development innovation and initiatives, and assist by identifying grant opportunities.

Project

Growing Southern Gippsland - enabling Southern Gippsland farmers to respond to climate change challenges through climate resilient opportunities for innovation and diversification.

Progress

The Bass Coast Landcare Network (BCLN) has successfully secured funding through the Victorian State Government's *Virtual Centre for Climate Change Innovation*. The Bass Coast Landcare Network are working with key partners RMIT University, Federation

University Australia, Bass Coast Shire Council and South Gippsland Landcare Network to implement the project over two years.

The project will develop 12 key agricultural property case studies providing detailed guidance on the landscape's capacity and capability to innovate and diversify as a response to a changing climate. These case studies will be further supported by a series of field days and other events designed to inform and guide the broader agricultural community through decisions around a changing climate.

The project will culminate in the development of a web-based decision-making portal allowing farmers and industry support organisations to make informed decisions about their response to a changing climate and sustainability.



Photo curtesy of BCLN, Soilkee Renovator, a machine combining cultivation, mulching, aeration, and seeding into a one pass approach in the paddock, which improves grazing systems and builds soil carbon.

Objective 4.1.1 – Encourage, support and promote local community sustainability innovation and initiatives and assist by identifying grant opportunities for agreed on ground works.

Project

Work collaboratively with the Wonthaggi Rotary Club to remove bottle tops from the waste stream and recycle for prosthetic limbs – *Helping Hands Project*.

Progress

Council supported the Wonthaggi Rotary Club's *Helping Hands Project* to remove bottle tops from the waste stream. The community were asked to help by collecting bottle tops from milk cartons, soft drink, juice and water bottles and putting them in the

“Helping Hands” recycling bin in the foyer at the Wonthaggi Civic Centre. Collection bins were also placed at other businesses and organisations around Wonthaggi.

373 million bottle caps end up in landfill in Australia each year. Envision, a not-for-profit charity that provides support to long-term and disadvantaged job-seekers to deliver the Envision hands project which turns recycled plastic bottle tops into prosthetic hands for children in developing countries. Using 3D printers to create the prosthetic hands for those in need.

In November 2018, Council introduced its *Single Use Plastic Free Policy*. One of the objectives of this Policy is ‘providing leadership through action’. Projects like this further encourage and teach our community about the additional benefits of recycling.

Council provided recycling bins for the “helping Hands” project at twelve collection points around Wonthaggi and provided media and publicity. The project collection area grew significantly with the Rotary Clubs and community across the Shire becoming involved.



Launch of the Helping Hands Project with Bass Coast Health, ANZ and Wonthaggi Rotary Club at the Wonthaggi Hospital.

Strategic Indicators:	Current year (2017/2018)	Previous year (2016/2017)
No. of submissions made to State and Federal government draft policy, strategy and position papers.	8 submissions	7 submissions
Increase promotion of environmental education opportunities through Council's social media each year (NES)	40 social media items from the Sustainable Environment Department.	19 social media items from the Sustainable Environment Department.
Increase the number of environmental activities with community volunteer groups and schools each year (NES)	110 activities	112 activities
No. of programs delivered jointly with Bass Coast Landcare Network under MOU.	Roadside weed spaying program administration, assistance with community inquiries, pest plant and animal control on private property, auditing of Councils Rural Land Management Scheme, Regional Engagement Group participation and delivery of Council's Biolinks Biodiversity Plan.	
No. of active (planting day) volunteer community groups.	72	69



Bass Coast Natural Environment Advisory Working Group Meeting, MINUTES

25 June 2019

9.30am – 11.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber, 76 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi

In Attendance

Meeting Chair: Deirdre Griepsma, Manager Sustainable Environment

Meeting supported by: Diana Whittington, Coordinator Land and Catchment, Bass Coast Shire Council.

Working Group Members:

David Sutton – South Gippsland Conservation Society

Phil Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society

Dave Bateman – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Susan Davies - Energy Innovation Cooperative

Ben Thomas – Phillip Island Nature Parks

Brian Martin – Parks Victoria

Bruce Atkin – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Geoff Glare – Friends of the Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve

Kevin Brown – Small Coastal Township Alliance

Alison Brewster – community member

Alison Oates – community member

Guest by invitation

Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation representative

Apologies

Susan Davies - Energy Innovation Cooperative

Ben Thomas – Phillip Island Nature Parks

Bruce Atkin – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Cr Michael Whelan – Bass Coast Shire Councillor

Reference documents

- *Bass Coast Natural Environment Advisory Working Group Terms of Reference;*
- *Natural Environment Strategy Action Plan Years 1-3.*

http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/51491da8-3720-4b64-a759-f3cb6bb869e9/h5_attachments_merged_16_August_2017.pdf.aspx

Hard copies of these documents can be provided on request.

Additional Information:

- *Natural Environment Strategy 2016-26*
- *Natural Environment Strategy 2016-26 - Annual Snapshot report 2017;*
- *Natural Environment Strategy 2016-26 - Annual Snapshot report 2018;*

Hard copies of these documents can be provided on request.

Agenda Items

Item Number	Item	Responsibility
9.30 – 9.45 am	Chairs welcome ○ Apologies ○ Minutes of the previous meeting ○ Outstanding actions	Deirdre Griepsma
9.45 – 10.00am	Update on Council activities	Cr Whelan and Deirdre Griepsma
10.00am – 10.20 am	NES Action 4.3.7 - Noise	Phillip Wright - Phillip Island Conservation Society

10.20am – 10.30am	Report from sub group discussions	Group members involved
10.30 – 10.55 am	Information sharing around the room	Group members
10.55 – 11.00 am	Next Meeting and Future agenda Items Meeting closed	Cr Michael Whelan

Minutes

Item I

Chair welcome working group members and apologies.

Discussion was held about the previous minutes and detail in member report backs to the meeting.

Outstanding actions from previous meeting in table below.

Actions from 14 May meeting	Responsibility	Status
Re-drafted communique to be finalised and sent to Deirdre for circulation to Group Members and guests present.	Dave Sutton	Complete
Re-drafted communique to be circulated for endorsement	Deirdre G	Complete
Copies of presentations to be provided to council (Deirdre) Aileen and Allison	Aileen and Allison	Complete
Submission with communique to be made to Council as part of draft budget submission	Dave Sutton	Complete
Communique submitted on behalf of Group to Shared Pathway consultation.	Deirdre G	Complete
Group members to provide a short summary of their activities in electronic format (e.g. email, word doc, etc.) to Deirdre to include in meeting minutes	Group members	Ongoing

Item 2 – Presentation

Requesting BCSC to work with EPA to develop noise control guidelines for Phillip Island and present draft to next NES meeting.

Phillip Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society presented concerns regarding noise from the race track, helicopters and other activities on Phillip Island and outlines previous correspondence with EPA Victoria and Council.

Phil will “tidy-up” his presentation and provide it to Deirdre for distribution to the Group members.

Deirdre will prepare a response and further information for the next meeting.

Item 3 – Sustainable Environment Updates from Council.

An update was provided by Deirdre Griepsma on environment items including:

- Grant funding received – Integrated Water Management Gippsland grant was successful with \$30K received. Integrated Water Management Western Port was successful with \$50K received and Cardinia received \$50k to commence their biolinks plan. These works will take place on waterways. Melbourne Water funding has been received for The Gorge along Dalyston Glen Forbes Rd with \$18,700 received for weed control and rubbish removal.
- Forums and Conferences - Coastal Forum was attended by staff, volunteers and Cr Whelan in early June. Deirdre sat on a panel discussion with others to discuss the theme of working together. Derek Hibbert presented on Inverloch erosion and the successful working partnership with stakeholders.
- Council budget was adopted with funds allocated for;
 - Distinctive Areas Landscapes;
 - an allocation of \$30K for prevention of wildlife being killed on roads;
 - Reduction for weeds on roadsides has been increased to \$100K including DELWP funds;
 - Norsemans Rd plan, including toilets and amenities for visitors and locals.

Report from sub-group discussions - no reports back

Item 5 – General Business

Bass Coast Landcare Network update

- Environment Minister visit - Bass Coast Landcare had the pleasure of organizing the Launch of the Victorian Landcare Facilitators funding and Victorian Landcare Grants with DELWP. Minister Lily D'Ambrosio announced the funding on Friday the 3rd of May at Paul Speirs farm. It was a great opportunity to showcase the great work Landcare does, with a very important audience with a guest list that included Martin Fuller WGCMA CEO, Peter Jennings WGCMA Chair, Jordan Crugnale Local member for Bass, Deirdre Griepsma BCSC and Councillor Geoff Ellis BCSC.
- Bunurong Land Council - BCLN have been working with the BLC on conducting both desktop and physical inspections of our major revegetation projects. Three BLC reps conducted pedestrian inspections of our main revegetation sites to look for cultural heritage artefacts. This was a great opportunity for both BCLN staff and the landholders involved in revegetation along waterways to get to learn more about cultural heritage and what we might come across when planting.
- Climate Change Land Capacity and Capability Project. - The project has been branded 'Growing Southern Gippsland'. Progress on the website is moving forward. Logo development is finalised. The format and design of the website has also been finalised. We have a preliminary web landing page that has been set up. This will ultimately become our operational website. Refer to the following link.
<https://www.growingsoutherngippsland.org.au/>
- The initial round of landowner interviews is complete, we have targetted 30 landowners from Southern Gippsland (Bass Coast and Southern Gippsland Landcare Network areas). From the 30 landowners 12 sites have been prioritised that will become our project case study sites. Detailed case study development will be commencing soon.
- Biolinks - We are continuing to work with Diana Whittington on Biolinks project proposals. We have Wonthaggi Secondary college booked in on the 30th of August, to plant our largest site this year, 14000 plants at a property at Lance Creek. The Biolinks plan has been very helpful in regards to drawing in funding for large scale revegetation projects across the Bass Coast.

Report from Community Member, Alison Oates

- Newhaven residents unhappy with the stormwater discharge into Western Port Bay from the new development site in Newhaven. Sites of geological and geomorphological sites along the coastline were in the planning scheme but has been removed. Would like to see if this can be put back into the planning scheme.

South Gippsland Conservation Society, Dave Sutton

- Coastal conference was fantastic and the Inverloch erosion was presented at the conference. Council are doing a great job at advocating for a Regional and Strategic Partnership.

Parks Vic, Brian Martin

- Southern Brown Bandicoot project has had good success removing foxes. Baiting is more successful than injectors. Working on the wet sand fence at Inverloch, now have cultural heritage approval to install fence on the dune. Successful opening of the Powlett River. Flooding at the rescue station, so PV have works underway to alleviate by installing new culvert. A meeting will be held this week on the Bunurong Coastal Park with stakeholders to determine the vision of the area.

Small Coastal Township Alliance, Kevin Brown (provided post meeting)

- No update available from our group for the proposal to include Bass Coast in the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes provisions.
- There is a project proposed for the northern boundary of Coronet Bay that will be advertised for approval in the near future. It is a large residential hotel/restaurant/function centre to be built directly beside the foreshore Banksia grove and water retention pond at 92 Norsemen Rd Coronet Bay. The zoning is Rural Activity Zone (RAZ), meant for agriculture with a possibility of small scale tourism that must be complimentary to local agriculture and the adjoining land uses.
- Our members should avail themselves of the details of this project, which have been made available by the developers consultant for download at <https://spaces.hightail.com/receive/vyI4CCVB2Z> . Any updates to these reports will be available when the advertising commences.
- This is a contentious project in this quiet and delicate coastal location and the proponent has stated they are prepared to take this through VCAT for success. It has implications for all the 4 RAZ areas of Bass Coast and is seen as a test case. I have attached the relevant BCSC Planning System documents for your consideration. I will advise when this project is advertised for submission.

Phillip Island Conservation Society - Phil Wright

- The Phillip Island Conservation Society want to prepare a significant tree register for the shire. Landholders at Smiths Beach are digging dams on watercourses in.

Friends of Wonthaggi Heathlands - Geoff Glare

- Southern Fulmars have been found in Bass Coast, both dead and alive which is a rare bird in Australian and normally found in sub-Antarctic regions.

Next meeting – 24 Sep 2019

Meeting closed 11.07am.

Actions arising from this meeting

Action	Responsibility	Status
Requested that Council look into the issue of noise pollution from the Phillip Island racetrack and helicopters. Deirdre will investigate and come back to the next meeting after looking at the issue, the planning permits issued and EPA's position.	Deirdre G	
Phil will "tidy-up" his presentation on Noise and provide it to Deirdre for distribution to the Group members.	Phil W	
A presentation on the Distinctive Areas Landscape's at the next meeting.	Deirdre G	
Group members to provide a short summary of their activities in electronic format (e.g. email, word doc, etc.)	All	



Bass Coast Natural Environment Advisory Working Group Meeting, MINUTES

26 March 2019

9.30am – 11.30 am

Venue: Council Chamber, 76 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi

In Attendance

Meeting Chair: Cr Michael Whelan, Bass Coast Shire Councillor

Meeting supported by: Deirdre Griepsma, Manager Sustainable Environment, Bass Coast Shire Council.

Working Group Members:

David Sutton – South Gippsland Conservation Society

Phil Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society

Dave Bateman – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Susan Davies - Energy Innovation Cooperative

Geoff Glare – Friends of the Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve

Kevin Brown – Small Coastal Township Alliance

Brian Martin – Parks Victoria

Bruce Atkin – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Alison Brewster – community member

Ben Thomas – Phillip Island Nature Parks

Apologies

Kellie Nichols – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Alison Oates - community member

Agenda Items

Time	Item	Responsibility
9.30 – 9.45 am	Chairs welcome ○ Apologies ○ Minutes of the previous minutes ○ Outstanding actions	Cr Michael Whelan
9.45 – 10.00am	Report back on Community emissions renewable energy roadmap	Cr Whelan
10.00am – 10.20 am	Works on Coastal Erosion - Inverloch	Derek Hibbert, Co-ordinator Coast and Bushland
10.20am – 10.30am	Report from group discussions	Group members involved
10.30 – 10.55 am	Information sharing around the room	Group members
10.55 – 11.00 am	Next Meeting Future agenda Items Meeting closed	Cr Michael Whelan

Minutes

Item I

Chair welcome working group members and apologies.

Actions arising from previous meeting

Action	Responsibility	Status
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Send out GHD report on Inverloch coastal erosion.	Diana W	Complete. GHD advised that the report is not publically available.
Report back on Community emissions renewable energy roadmap	Cr Whelan	Complete. Report given at this meeting.
Each member go back to their representative groups to ask where they would like to see a pathway from San Remo to Inverloch	Group members	Complete
Wed 23rd Jan 9.30 working group meeting to map and collate potential pathways from San Remo to Inverloch. Book room and print map	All	Complete
Group members to provide a short summary of their activities in electronic format (e.g. email, word doc, etc.) to Deirdre to include in meeting minutes	Group members	Ongoing

Item 2 – Update on Regional Renewable Energy Roadmap

Regional Renewable Energy Roadmaps are strategic and aim to direct appropriate investment in renewable energy to advance Victoria's transition to clean energy. They do this by providing guidance for future project proponents; consider the role of and opportunities for various participants such as industry, community energy groups, the broader community, locally based businesses as well as other significant considerations such as social licence and "energy justice".

DELWP has engaged the Energy Innovation Co-operative to be the Project Co-ordinator to develop the Renewable Energy Roadmap for Bass Coast and South Gippsland, leading to a high-level version for the whole of Gippsland which it will also deliver. The work includes assessing local levels of renewable energy generation, and appetite for further development, as well as engaging in a study of grid capacity to manage that development. There will be four community consultation opportunities across the area.

Moragh MacKay and Max Rictor met with other people involved in the regional roadmap project

Item 3 – Presentation - Works on Coastal Erosion at Inverloch by Derek Hibbert, Co-ordinator Coast and Bushland.

The presentation showed historic and current erosion information at Inverloch and Cowes East in particular. The recently installed wet sand fence at Inverloch was discussed and the possible suitability for other areas in the shire.

Item 4 – Report from group discussions

Distinctive Areas and Landscape - Kevin Brown reported that there is no action at this stage. There is a meeting with the Parks District manager next week (12 April). The project is being managed through DELWP Environment Group. Jordan Crugnale was not able to provide an update when contacted. The focus will be on Net Gain.

See report form Kevin below.

Item 5 – Information sharing around the room.

PINP

- Shearwater fledglings due to depart in mid-April.
- Poor 2018/19 Penguin breeding season due to food resources being further out to sea than usual, causing delays in penguin chicks being fed by parents and many chicks dying of starvation as a result. Also, heatwaves coinciding with penguin moult caused many penguins to die from overheating. Although a bad year for breeding overall population numbers remain very high.
- Revegetation season to start soon with the focus being on the rehabilitation of old carparks and visitor centre Nature Parks is soon to relocate offices and works depots to Cowes and KCC.
- Quarterly Hooded Plover and Gull count taking place on Tuesday 2nd and Island-wide Cape Barren Goose count taking place on Wednesday 3rd. Contact Jon Fallaw if you would like to participate (jfallaw@penguins.org.au)

BCLN

- Revegetation and Biolinks.

Last financial year was our biggest ever planting season with 266000 plants in the ground. This year will be down on the previous year due to less funding available. We estimate that there will be between 140000 to 180000 plants this year. Big thankyou to Bass Coast Shire Council and Diana Whittington for helping bring in such a great deal of funding for Biolinks.

We have completed some monitoring of our biggest Revegetation site at Karl Russo's in partnership with Greening Australia. Early results indicate about a 70% survival rate at this site. It has been an incredibly dry period so we are hoping for rain. The previous year's plantings are going really well.

Our Environmental detectives program is currently without a major sponsor.

- Sustainable agriculture projects.

Climate Change Land Capacity and Capability Project is funded through to June 2020.

The project has been branded 'Growing Southern Gippsland'.

Progress on the website is moving forward. Logo development is nearly finalised with two to three final draft versions being developed for final approval from the project team. The format and design of the website is also underway with initial site map development and table of contents development underway.

The initial round of landowner interviews is nearly complete, we have targeted 30 landowners from southern Gippsland (Bass Coast and Southern Gippsland Landcare Network areas). From the 30 landowners 12 sites will be prioritised that will become our project case study sites. The 12 case study sites will be presented for discussion and endorsement to the next project team meeting on April 29th 2019. Detailed case study development will commence once they are endorsed.

- Smart Farming in Westernport Project. (Funded through to June 2024).

One soil carbon trial is underway at Bimbadeen on Philip Island. Soil chemistry and soil carbon has been benchmarked and will undergo annual monitoring to document change. Methodology used includes planting of peas to fix nitrogen and then planting of radish as a soil carbon crop. Site is irrigated using Westernport Water waste water. Drone monitoring is also being used to monitor plant health indicators. A field day at Bimbadeen will be held on May 29th.

A Grazfert nutrient management program is underway. Workshop one was held on Feb 21st with workshop 2 being held on March 21st.

Numerous other events are also planned for the next few months, all will be advertised on the BCLN website, ENEWS and Facebook page. 12 farmer discussion group events are funded in 2018/19. 7 events have been held to date.

Alison Brewster

The only item in my report is that Wonthaggi Seed Bank and Nursery has some surplus indigenous plants available that were grown for the Carney's Road Reserve and are ready for planting, but the reserve will not be ready for planting (no fence, etc) until late this calendar year.

Energy Innovation Co-operative

The Energy Innovation Co-operative has the contract (held by GCCN) to develop a Renewable Energy Roadmap for Bass Coast and South Gippsland, leading to a high-level version for the whole of Gippsland which it will also deliver. The work includes assessing local levels of renewable energy generation, and appetite for further development, as well as engaging in a study of grid capacity to manage that development

The Co-op has presented a proposal that it be selected and funded as a Community Power Hub as per a policy from a prospective Federal Labor Government. Bass Coast and South Gippsland Shires and others tendered letters of support.

Totally Renewable Phillip Island's 6 working parties (renewable energy, food/waste, soil carbon, education, transport, co-ordination(monitoring/measurement) are continuing to make progress with planned activities, still currently relying largely on volunteer effort. A funding application to support the top priority activity for each work group has been submitted by the Energy Innovation Co-op, to the State government.

The Co-op now has the legal structure, draft legal documentation and on-line mechanisms to raise funds from local investors wanting to invest in local community energy solar or wind generation projects. Taking this capacity to project delivery is intended as part of the Totally Renewable Towns initiative but will require funding for coordination and project management.

The Co-op is developing an on-line tool for a "Smart buy" of batteries and solar" to make it easy for households to install solar and batteries, using vetted local companies and businesses, and quality materials. This will also be incorporated into the "Totally Renewable Towns" activities.

The Co-op's Southern CORE (Community Owned Renewable Energy) Fund, has some (still limited) capacity to support community groups to install solar on the buildings they manage. Grantville Hall has been approved for a no interest loan, but is waiting for the outcome of a matching grant application from Bass Coast Shire. Two further organisations on PI have provided initial expressions of interest.

The Co-op's 90 kW solar & 45kW battery storage installation at the State Coal Mine Wonthaggi will provide an ongoing income into that Fund, for projects across Bass Coast and South Gippsland Shires and beyond. It is due for switch on shortly.

Phillip Island Conservation Society

- Significant Trees Register.

PICS is very concerned about process that resulted in removal of a 150 year old tree at Cultural Centre. We are proceeding with the development of a Trees Register which includes stands of remnant vege.

- Caves Caravan Park - VCAT

PICS had a strong turnout at VCAT yesterday (25/3/19) but the hearing was postponed for 6 months due to incorrect information on applicant submission.

- Dogs on Beaches

Recent online survey conducted by BCSC and PINP resulted in PICS position "No dogs on any PINP beaches and dogs on BCSC beaches must be on a lead at all times".

- Vicroads Vegetation Trimming

Concern at extent and damage of trimming native vege in road reserves west of Woolamai and both sides of Smiths Beach.

- Noise from PI Racetrack

What Actions have Council Officers taken to deliver VES Objective 4.3.7?

Work together with EPA Victoria to develop a better understanding of roles in pollution related events (eg noise) within the Shire, to protect the natural environment.

RESPONSE – An action from the minutes of the 25 September 2018 was for:

PICS to write to Council about their concerns regarding noise from the Phillip Island race circuit and requesting an update on action 4.3.7 in the Natural Environment Strategy

This action remains an outstanding

- South Coast Vegetation Protection

PICS expresses concern at lack of protection of remnant stands vegetation on South Coast and will work with SBA to manage increasing visitor numbers and activities including schools and school camps and the strategy of "More Feet less Footprints".

Small Coastal Township Alliance

I have a brief following update for the Small Coastal Township Alliance, being information from your Manager Strategy and Growth, Jodie Kennedy to Veronica Dowman :

“By way of an update, on 5 February 2019, DELWP representatives met with Council officers to discuss the Victorian government’s commitment to declare the region a ‘distinctive area and landscape’. The meeting covered what would need to be considered as part of the proposed work program and partnership arrangements, as well as the technical work required to inform the Statement of Planning Policy (SPP).

These conversations are still at the early stage and we are continuing to liaise with the DELWP representatives. We will continue to keep you and the Small Coastal Towns Alliance group informed as the project progresses. I have cc’d Rewa Smith into this email as she is taking the lead on this project.”

Coastcare – DEWLP

- Coastcare grants closed late February and currently being assessed with outcomes likely to be announced in May - around 58 applications received, about 15 or so from Gippsland.
- Summer by the Sea again considered a success – strongly supported the Pot Welshpool Seadays Festival and many activities in Bass Coast area presented by Bunurong Coast Education
- Coastcare training – volunteers have recently undertaken training in First Aid, Grant Writing, Project Planning, Chemical use and Social Media.
- Coastal ecology and management workshop for volunteers Lakes Entrance, April 6th/7th
- Statewide Marine and Coastal Forum, Melbourne June 13th/14th - Expressions of Interest from potential attendees and presenters are invited. See: <https://www.coastsandmarine.vic.gov.au/coastal-programs/forum>

Parks Victoria

- Parks have had a busy summer period with tourism and fires in the Gippsland area. (Grantville, Yinnar, Wilsons Prom, Licola, Dargo). There will be ongoing fire recovery work for a number of months. Planned burns have been put on hold due to resources being deployed to active fires.
- PV is the land manager for the foreshore area along the Cape Paterson-Inverloch Rd and heavily involved in the foreshore erosion project and approvals.
- There have been discussions with Bass Coast Health regarding vegetation removal on the western side of the hospital to minimise through redesign.
- Drainage at the new Wonthaggi Secondary College site has caused issues on the rail trail side. Changes to design to protect vegetation on the rail trail.
- Funding has been received to treat mine shafts in west area road, tent city site, opposite Donmix.....

South Gippsland Conservation Society

- Inverloch Coastal Resilience Project.

The Bass Coast erosion project has changed its name to Inverloch Coastal Resilience Project. There is currently a display in the Inverloch Hub. Monitoring is occurring with Melbourne University and four reports have been commissioned; geomorphological, flora and fauna, cultural heritage and value of the coast economic study.

- Surf Parade Inverloch Pathway Options

SGCS has been invited to participate in the consultation on the project. What other consultation is planned? They have concerns regarding the removal of native vegetation.

RESPONSE - Follow up with project officers regarding the Surf parade Inverloch Pathway Options has found:

- Resident and landowner (Inverloch Township) letters being sent today (26 March) with delivery being Friday or possibly Monday
- Information sessions for key stakeholders organised for the 29 March at the Inverloch Hub, invitations now issued
- Media release and information to be provided on Council's website and social media on the 29 March
- Saturday 6 April at Inverloch - ParkRun pop up from 7:30 – 9:00am
- Tuesday 16 April at Wonthaggi Civic Centre (staff and councillors only) - Facebook Q&A from 5:30pm to 8:00pm
- Saturday 20 April at Inverloch Rec Res - Inverloch Kongwak home game from 12:00 – 2:00pm
- Online survey opens on 29 March and closes on 26 April

Communication sent out as follows:

Stage 2 of the Surf Parade Shared Path, Inverloch - Veronica Street to Surf Life Saving Club

We are seeking your input to find out which option you prefer for the next stage of the Surf Parade Shared Path. In response to a submission to the 2018/19 Budget, Council has designed a second option for the Path to include more formalised parking bays.

Option 1 features 20 parallel parking bays while Option 2 has 138 parallel parking bays. Option 2 will require increased vegetation removal which is subject to approval from the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP).

Shortly Council will be commencing an consultation period to ask the community of their preferred option. You will be soon be able view more details and have your say online at www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/surfparade, in person at one of our pop-ups (to be announced shortly) or via this session.

It is anticipated funding for the construction of Stage 2 of the Path will be allocated in the 2019/20 Budget.

Council welcomes your involvement and if you wish to bring along people who may be interested in this project up to five places can be accommodated.

Written submissions can be forwarded to Council via surfparade@basscoast.vic.gov.au

If you have any questions please contact Council's Senior Project Officer, Mr Glenn Wearne on (03) 5671 2498 or glenn.wearne@basscoast.vic.gov.au.

Friends of the Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve

- The group are following up and preparing information for the George Bass Coastal Walk Extension project managed by DELWP.
- Works are underway planting tube stock and monitoring flora and fauna.

Next meeting – 25 June 2019

Meeting closed 11.30am.

Actions arising from this meeting

Action	Responsibility	Status
What Actions have Council Officers taken to deliver NES Objective 4.3.7?	Deirdre	Completed within these minutes
Details of consultation for Surf Parade path Inverloch	Deirdre	Completed within these minutes
Invite Jessica McKelson to discuss the PINP – 'Beyond The Horizon 30-Year Conservation Plan' https://www.penguins.org.au/assets/About/PDF-Local-Community/Beyond-the-Horizon-30-Year-Conservation-Plan-2018.pdf	Deirdre	Complete

18 December 2018

9.30am – 11.30 am

Venue: Council Chamber, 76 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi

In Attendance

Meeting Chair: Cr Michael Whelan, Bass Coast Shire Councillor

Meeting supported by: Diana Whittington, acting Manager Sustainable Environment, Bass Coast Shire Council.

Working Group Members:

David Sutton – South Gippsland Conservation Society

Phil Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society

Dave Bateman – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Susan Davies - Energy Innovation Cooperative

Geoff Glare – Friends of the Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve

Kevin Brown – Small Coastal Township Alliance

Brian Martin – Parks Victoria

Bruce Atkin – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Alison Oates – community member

Alison Brewster – community member

Ben Thomas – Phillip Island Nature Parks

Apologies

Kellie Nichols – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Alison Oates - community member

Ben Thomas – Phillip Island Nature Parks

Brian Martin – Parks Victoria

Phil Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society

Agenda Items

Item Number	Item	Responsibility
1.	Chairs welcome - o Apologies - o Minutes of the previous minutes - o Outstanding actions	Cr Michael Whelan
2.	Sustainable Environment update	Diana Whittington
3.	Revegetation projects in the catchment	Matt Bowler - Team Leader Project Delivery, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
4.	Communication - tools and mechanisms to provide good stories	Christian Stefani – Manager Advocacy and Engagement, Bass Coast Shire Council
5.	General business	Committee members
6.	Meeting closed	Cr Michael Whelan

Minutes

Item 1

Chair welcome working group members and apologies.

Discussion was held about the previous minutes and detail in member report backs to the meeting.

Outstanding actions from previous meeting in table below.

Action	Responsibility	Status
Feedback on priority actions within the Natural Environment Strategy Action Plan: Years 1-3 provided collated and presented back to the Advisory Group at the next meeting.	Deirdre	By 18 Dec 2018.
Links to the <i>Natural Environment Strategy - Annual Snapshot Report 2018</i> presented to Council at the Ordinary Meeting 15 August	Deirdre	Complete with

2018 to be sent out. Item H.3. Officer report in the Minutes at http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/cbcf7457-f8df-4ba8-92a3-9effb7451745/Open_Minutes_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx <i>Natural Environment Strategy - Annual Snapshot Report 2018</i> at http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/6a3099c9-2d0f-4b84-976a-0322097072e2/h3_merged_attachments_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx		minutes
Send link for Cowes and Cowes East Erosion Management technical reports presented to Council at the Ordinary Meeting 15 August 2018. Item H.3. Officer report in the Minutes at http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/cbcf7457-f8df-4ba8-92a3-9effb7451745/Open_Minutes_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx Cowes and Cowes East Erosion Management technical reports at http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/1bfadacf-703e-4bfb-af98-5fe52081dec4/h4_attachments_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx	Deirdre	Complete with minutes
Group members are welcome to provide a short summary of their activities prior to the meeting to be circulated with the agenda and included in the minutes. These are to be in an electronic format (e.g. email, word doc, etc.)	All	Submit prior to the meeting.
Letter from the Minister for Local Government to be distributed	Deirdre	Complete with minutes
Invite Matt Bowler from the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority to speak with the Advisory Group about revegetation projects in the catchment at the next meeting.	Deirdre	By 18 Dec 2018.
Council's communications team to come and speak about the tools and mechanisms to provide good stories when these are provided to Council. Include in the agenda for the next meeting.	Deirdre	Completed on 18 Dec 2018.

Item 3 – Presentation - Revegetation projects in the catchment.

Matt Bowler - Team Leader Project Delivery, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

Item 4 – Presentation - Communication - tools and mechanisms to provide good stories
Christian Stefani – Manager Advocacy and Engagement, Bass Coast Shire Council

Item 2 – Sustainable Environment Updates from Council.

An update was provided by Diana Whittington on environment items including:

- o Council, parks Vic and DELWP are undertaking investigations into coastal erosion events across the Shire, particularly Inverloch, Cowes East and Cowes Main beach. Council received two technical reports at its Ordinary Meeting 15 August 2018. Council has received grant monies from DELWP to undertake sand renourishment works at Inverloch and Cowes Main Beach. The Inverloch work will have technical engineering studies completed by the Coastal Engineers to inform the design of the works. Regional and Strategic Partnership project to discuss the issue of coastal erosion and flooding issues can be explored.
- o Council has participated in the DELWP Integrated Water Management (IWM) forums and discussions for the Western Port and Central and South Gippsland catchment regions. The Minister has signed off the Western Port IWM and we have received \$50 000 for revegetation works along designated biolinks. Cardinia Shire Council is using our model to develop a biolinks plan for Cardinia Shire.
- o NES prioritised actions were passed around and highlighted most points are a priority so this indicates that we are focusing on working on the correct strategies.
- o Presentation from Matt Bowler from WGCMA on revegetation works and direct seeding within the shire.
- o Christian presented on communication strategies and the promotion of good stories and outlined how to make an emotional connection with the imagery to tell story. Telling the intergenerational story is a key component, also using drone footage and aerial imagery. Close the loop in projects to reflect on what has been done.
- o Other groups such as landcare, Energy Innovation Co-op and SGCS are able to send through social media items that Council are able to share and like on our social media.
- o Regional renewable energy roadmap - meeting will be convened by GCCN and attended by council officer and Cr Whelan to develop a regional renewable energy roadmap.
- o Distinctive Area Landscapes – strategic planning process to declare distinctive areas landscape for significant areas. This will permanently protect Phillip Island and Bass Coast from over development, with planning protections enshrined in law.

- o Coastal walk from San Remo to Inverloch - \$19.5m to extend the George Bass Coastal walk, making it possible to walk from San Remo to Inverloch and open the area up to campers for the first time.
- o Reducing Community emissions Notice of motion went to Council on Wed 19th Dec and was adopted.

That Council:

1. Clarify Council's intention that the Council Plan Strategic Indicator: "Emission Reduction • By 2025 achieve a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas levels per Bass Coast resident compared to 2009/10" is intended to be a community wide target
2. Acknowledge that 2009/10 baseline data only exists for corporate emissions and that council has a project underway to determine the community wide emissions for the 2017/18 year and that the 2017/18 baseline data will inform a new emission reduction target
3. Support the development of a 'Totally Renewable Towns' model in two areas of Bass Coast Shire, as a new approach to supporting place-based community-energy projects and notes that it will make a significant contribution to achieving the Council's Emission reduction target set out in the Council Plan
4. Notes that the Totally Renewable Phillip Island (TRPI) project is underway and:
 - aims to achieve zero net emissions by 2030
 - That the working groups that form the Totally Renewable Phillip Island collective are:
 - Carbon Accounting
 - Carbon Farming
 - Clean Energy
 - Communication and education
 - Food and Waste
 - Towards zero emissions transport
 - that the model developed for Phillip Island will also be offered in a Waterline town where there is strong community commitment and then be available for roll out across Bass Coast Shire
5. Council commits to cooperate with the Energy Cooperative on the 'Totally Renewable Towns' project and refers the request to provide seed funding of \$50,000 per year for three years to the 2019 2020 budget
6. Notes the Victorian Government's strong commitments for household solar and battery installation and will work with the Energy Cooperative to ensure that:
 - a. maximum benefit for Bass Coast residents across the Shire and that Bass Coast residents can maximise access to this opportunity for clean energy and energy savings.
 - b. Bass Coast business are strongly supported in their adoption of renewable energy and other carbon neutral options.

Item 5 – General Business

Bass Coast Landcare Network update

- 140,000 plants funded for 2019 – more applications to go in to try and increase this to 200,000
- We are looking at expanding our species selection in response to a changing climate, this includes collecting seed from further afar as well as introducing some northern species as part of a series of trails
- We are looking at developing a larger soil carbon project replicating the work of the Davie's farm, this is in partnership with the Phillip Island Landcare Group and the Renewable Phillip Island Project
- Growing Gippsland, our Climate Change Innovation project is rolling along nicely. We are waiting for ethics approval from RMIT and then then landholders survey's will commence.

Report from Community Member, Alison Brewster.

It's good to see more native plants in Council's road and roundabout plantings. They are perennial, beautiful, and should save ratepayers' money as they won't need replacing like annual flowers.

- The Plastic Bag Free Bass Coast (PBFBC) group is pleased to see Council's Single Use Plastic Free Policy, and would like it publicised more – eg on Council website. We would like to see examples of actions Council is taking in the community to support this policy.
- PBFBC has stopped supplying Boomerang bags to Foodworks Inverloch (where have the 7000 thousand Boomerang bags gone that Foodworks customers took home?). The supermarket is no longer providing plastic bags for customers, but selling compostable bags to those who don't bring their own bags. Boomerang Bags and Clean Ocean Foundation volunteers held a stall outside Foodworks on 17 Dec 2018 offering Boomerang bags to customers for a gold coin donation, and observed that more than half of customers had brought their own bags. There has certainly been a change in culture/behaviour regarding shopping bags & packaging in Inverloch.
- The Wonthaggi Seed Bank & Nursery has permission to create a display garden for indigenous native plants at the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi. This will be developed over the next few years.

Other agency updates...

Next meeting – 26 March 2019

Meeting closed 11.30am.

Actions arising from this meeting

Action	Responsibility	Status
Send out GHD report on Inverloch coastal erosion.	Diana W	Seeking approval from DELWP before sending
Report back on Community emissions renewable energy roadmap	Cr Whelan	
Each member go back to their representative groups to ask where they would like to see a pathway from San Remo to Inverloch	All	Meeting scheduled
Wed 23rd Jan 9.30 working group meeting to map and collate potential pathways from San Remo to Inverloch. Book room and print map	All	
Group members to provide a short summary of their activities in electronic format (e.g. email, word doc, etc.)	All	



Bass Coast Natural Environment Advisory Working Group Extraordinary Meeting, MINUTES

14 May 2019

9.15am – 11.00am

Venue: Inverloch Surf Lifesaving Club, Inverloch

In Attendance

Meeting Chair: Cr Michael Whelan, Bass Coast Shire Councillor

Bass Coast Shire Council officers:

Deirdre Griepsma, Manager Sustainable Environment,

Derek Hibbert, Co-ordinator Coast and Bushland

Craig Dinsdale, Co-ordinator Infrastructure Delivery

Working Group Members:

David Sutton – South Gippsland Conservation Society

Phil Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society

Susan Davies - Energy Innovation Cooperative

Geoff Glare – Friends of the Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve

Kevin Brown – Small Coastal Township Alliance

Alison Oates – community member

Guests approved by the Chair:

Ken Hailey – Cowes East Foreshore Preventative Action Group

Michael Nugent – community member

Aileen Venning – community member

John Old – Friend of Harmers Haven

Apologies

Alison Brewster – community member

Brian Martin – Parks Victoria

Bruce Atkin – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Ben Thomas – Phillip Island Nature Parks

Dave Bateman – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Agenda and Activity/Action Items

Time	Item	Who
9:15am	Arrive Brief look at SGCS project public display, maps and info	All
9:30am	Arrival: • Walk to the beach and trial wet sand fence. • Brief outline of its function and how it is supposed to operate • View current erosion extent and proximity to SLSC & Road	Deirdre Griepsma
9:45am:	Acknowledgement of Traditional owners: And Welcome	Cr Whelan
	Background: SGCS - Project “Outline <i>Inverloch Coastal Resilience Project.</i> ” Studies: • Flora and fauna • Geomorphology • Cultural • Economic	Dave Sutton

	Expected Outcomes to Inform: • Coastal Hazard Study; • Community; • Govt – State, Local & Agencies	
10:00am	Ecological Values of the Inverloch and Point Smythe Coastal Dune System	Alison Oates
10:15am	Coastal Erosion, Climate Change and Sea Level rise	Aileen Venning
10:30am	Shared Path Proposal: Options 1 & 2	Deirdre Griepsma
10:45am	Cowes East Foreshore - Erosion	Ken Hailey
10:55	Questions & Discussion Where to?	All
	Meeting Close	

MINUTES RECORD

Arrival:

Brief look at SGCS project public display, maps and info - participants viewed the display at their leisure.

Beach walk - wet sand fence

Participants walked down to the Inverloch surf beach foreshore and viewed the wet sand fence recently installed. Derek Hibbert explained about the wet sand fence, its purpose, effect and recent repair and learnings. Discussion held about location of previous track, lifesaving towers and erosion events over past 6 years.

This has been a collaborative project with BCSC, DEWLP, PV, RRV and WGCMA. This is a preferred option than hard boulder walls that change the aesthetics of the entire beach. Measuring

and monitoring is occurring for the wet sand fence and activity after the summer period will indicate the degree of success.

Do we protect the natural environment or the build environment?

Opening – Cr Michael Whelan

Cr Whelan opened the meeting, acknowledged the Traditional Owners and explained that it had been called at the request of Dave Sutton representing the South Gippsland Conservation Group (SGCG). Apologies were noted.

The purpose of the meeting was to receive information about the erosion activities that had occurred, actions to mitigate and studies that are underway to understand the history, cause and effect of the erosion in Anderson Inlet and the Inverloch Surf beach.

There were guests present at the invitation of the Chair to contribute to the discussions. Cr Whelan informed all that the media would be arriving at approximately 10.00am.

SGCS - Project “Outline *Inverloch Coastal Resilience Project*.”

Dave Sutton (SGCS) gave the background and overview of the project underway. The work being undertaken by the SGCS is with the goal for a Local Coastal Hazard Study (LCHS) to inform future coastal planning leading to an adaptation plan, community conversation and greater certainty.

The studies are complete and are being rationalise into a report to inform a LCHS:

- Short term
- Medium Term
- Long Term

The information will be shared with Council and DELWP, and is funded by a grant from the Lord Mayor Foundation to the SGCS.

The SGCS understand the proposed Surf Parade shared path project to be detrimental to the environment and dune system due to removal of the vegetation, loss of ecological value causing increased erosion.

Ecological Values of the Inverloch and Point Smythe Coastal Dune System

Allison Oates spoke and gave a presentation explaining the work she has been doing for the Flora and fauna, Geomorphology, Cultural and Economic studies to inform the “*Inverloch Coastal Resilience Project*”.

Coastal Erosion, Climate Change and Sea Level rise

Aileen Venning gave a presentation and overview of the historic erosion in Anderson Inlet and concerns regarding ongoing patterns, including data.

Shared Path Proposal: Options 1 & 2

Deirdre Griepsma and Craig Dinsdale spoke to the current status of the Shared Path Proposal: Options 1 & 2 consultation process and how the project came about (Council resolution). The governance of the process was discussed with Council making the decision at the upcoming Ordinary Meeting, not the council officers. The extent and method of the consultation was discussed and the volume of responses received to date.

There was a clear preference voiced by those present for no clearing of vegetation as this may contribute to further erosion of the dune system. The option for a one-way road was voiced and a pre-prepared Communique on the matter circulated and redrafted by those present.

The process for making a budget submission by parties was explained and any further submission to the Shared Path Proposal: Options 1 & 2 consultation process.

Cowes East Foreshore – Erosion

Ken Hailey discussed the erosion experienced at the Cowes East foreshore and Silverleaves area to broaden peoples understanding of erosion happening in other areas of the Shire. The purpose and activity of the Cowes East Foreshore Preventative Action Group was explained.

The advocacy work being undertaken by council for climate change adaptation and coastal erosion was explained. Discussion continued around the good collaborative approach with all parties and government.

Questions & Discussion Where to?

Further discussion by those present resulting in the action table below.

Note: WIN News (Gippsland) recorded approximately 30 minutes of the meeting and interviewed some participants.

Meeting closed 11.00am.

Actions arising from this meeting

Action	Responsibility	Status
Re-drafted communique to be finalised and sent to Deirdre for circulation to Group Members and guests present.	Dave Sutton	Complete
Re-drafted communique to be circulated for endorsement	Deirdre G	Complete
Copies of presentations to be provided to council (Deirdre)	Aileen and Allison	Outstanding
Submission with communique to be made to Council as part of draft budget submission	Dave Sutton	Complete
Communique submitted on behalf of Group to Shared Pathway consultation.	Deirdre G	Complete



Bass Coast Natural Environment Advisory Working Group Meeting, MINUTES

25 September 2018

9.30am – 11.10am

Venue: Council Chamber, 76 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi

In Attendance

Meeting Chair: Cr Michael Whelan, Bass Coast Shire Councillor

Meeting supported by: Deirdre Griepsma, Manager Sustainable Environment, Bass Coast Shire Council.

Working Group Members:

David Sutton – South Gippsland Conservation Society

Phil Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society

Dave Bateman – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Susan Davies - Energy Innovation Cooperative

Geoff Glare – Friends of the Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve

Kevin Brown – Small Coastal Township Alliance

Brian Martin – Parks Victoria

Bruce Atkin – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Alison Oates – community member

Apologies

Alison Brewster – community member

Kellie Nichols – Bass Coast Landcare Group

Ben Thomas – Phillip Island Nature Parks

Agenda Items

Item Number	Item	Responsibility
1.	Chairs welcome ○ Apologies ○ Minutes of the previous minutes ○ Outstanding actions	Cr Michael Whelan
2.	NES Snapshot Report and environment updates	Deirdre Griepsma
3.	Information sharing around the room	Committee members
4.	General business ○ Other business ○ Future agenda items	Committee members
5.	Meeting closed	Cr Michael Whelan

Minutes

Item I

Chair welcome working group members and apologies.

Discussion was held about the previous minutes and detail in member report backs to the meeting. Susan provided feedback that she would like more detail than what was minuted for the Energy Innovation Co-operatives activity.

Outstanding actions from previous meeting in table below.

Action	Responsibility	Status
Feedback on priority actions within the Natural Environment Strategy Action Plan: Years 1-3 to be provide by 3 July 2018.	All	Complete.
Send out links to upcoming forums/conferences/seminars on coastal erosion and Coastcare workshops	Deirdre	Complete.

Send link for VAGO report on Coastal Assets report	Deirdre	Complete.
Council to approach South Gippsland Shire Council to continue biolinks into the upper catchment	Deirdre	Complete.
PICS to write to Council about their concerns regarding noise from the Phillip Island race circuit and requesting an update on action 4.3.7 in the Natural Environment Strategy	Phil Wright	Outstanding

Item 2 – Environment Updates from Council.

An update was provided by Deirdre on the NES Snapshot Report and environment items including:

- Council received the *Natural Environment Strategy - Annual Snapshot Report 2018* at its Ordinary Meeting 15 August 2018 and noted the operation of the Natural Environment Strategy Advisory Group. The minutes of these meeting were provided.
- An investigation has been undertaken into the lagoon formation and odour at the Ayr Creek foreshore in Inverloch. This included community workshops and a report exploring options. Council deferred the report from the 19 September 2018 Ordinary Meeting to discuss further. The report will be presented at the 21 November 2018 Ordinary Meeting.
- Council, parks Vic and DELWP are undertaking investigations into coastal erosion events across the Shire, particularly Inverloch, Cowes East and Cowes Main beach. Council received two technical reports at its Ordinary Meeting 15 August 2018. Council has received grant monies from DELWP to undertake sand renourishment works at Inverloch and Cowes Main Beach. The Inverloch work will have technical engineering studies completed by the Coastal Engineers to inform the design of the works.
- Council has participated in the DELWP Integrated Water Management (IWM) forums and discussions for the Western Poet and Central and South Gippsland catchment regions. The Minister will sign off the reports with actions, however little funding to improve IWM projects.

Item 3 - Information sharing around the room.

Key items are captured below. Group members are welcome to provide a short summary of their activities prior to the meeting to be circulated with the agenda and included in the minutes.

Cr Michael Whelan

- Met with, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Lily D'ambrosio and discussed a number of topics including net zero emission targets, emissions profiling, climate change adaptation plans, support to Councils as to expert advice on Climate Change. This was a positive meeting.

- A letter from the Local Government Minister has been received regarding coastal risk management. This will be sent out with the minutes.

Dave Bateman – Bass Coast Landcare Network

- Landcare has achieved its biggest 12 month (FY) of tree planting, with 250,000 plants in 17/18. This has been with a lot of grant funding for the Biolinks Plan (\$114K) and the Federal Government 20 million trees funding. It has been a good planting season. This planting also includes planning permit conditions (e.g. Cloverdale Dalston). Karl Russo – 30,000 plants this year, 55,000 plants on property. Intrepid Landcare (under 35 years) had planting and social dance gathering.
- Thanks to BCSC for their ongoing support through the MoU.
- Landcare have observed feral animals (pigs deer, goats) in areas not seen before.
- Landcare were successful (with BCSC) in State Government Biodiversity Response Planning funding for \$450,000 for pest and plant management projects (Holden Proving Ground and Lang Lang area)

Dave Sutton – South Gippsland Conservation Society

- Clearing of native vegetation within urban settings is an ongoing issue. This is a consideration for the localised planning scheme. Legislation regarding clearing of native vegetation (10/30) rule is inhibiting retention, allowing clearing of quality vegetation.
- Coastal retreat
- The SGCS have been successful in gaining Lord Mayor funding for a Bass Coast Climate change Resilience Coastal Erosion project between Cape Patterson and Venus Bay. This will look at soft engineering options in collaboration with stakeholders, (i.e. DELWP, CMA, Councils).
- State Government Biodiversity Response Planning grant - \$590K Victorian Coastal Wetland Restoration (blue carbon projects) led by Deakin University with a number of stakeholders, including the SGCS. Including the Bass River (remnant salt marsh and mangroves on private property).

Brian Martin – Parks Victoria

- PV have had recent success with Southern Brown Bandicoot program, including fox control and cat trapping in areas of Kilcunda, Harmers Haven and the Wonthaggi Heathland.
- There was a successful planned burn at the Wonthaggi Heathland as part of the burning strategy for the Heathland.
- Illegal dumping of rubbish is growing and illegal firewood removal in reserves suspect its for commercial sale (incl. Hallston).
- Parks Vic are involved in the project and discussions regarding the erosion at Inverloch surf beach coastline (with Council, DELWP and VicRoads)

- Fire season has commenced – very dry in East Gippsland. Parks Vic has bought their fire standby commencement forward into September. The Southern Gippsland and local areas are not as bad as East Gippsland.

Bruce Atkin – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

- A DELWP officer from Natural Resource area may attend these meetings in future as Bruce's focus is specifically coastal.
- DELWP have been involved with the coastal erosion on northern beaches at Phillip Island (i.e. Cowes and Cowes East). Four new groynes at Cowes East have been installed and were funded by DELWP. There is significant lobbying and advocacy in this area by Council and the community. The coastal woodland being lost to erosion in Cowes East. The two Water Technology report on Cowes East and Cowes Main Beach will be helpful to gain funds and implement evidenced based project work.
- The State government have \$24 mill over 4 years (2 years gone) under the Coastal Environments Program; Protecting Victoria's Iconic Beaches and Coastline (DELWP). The drone monitoring at Cowes East, Inverloch, Seaspray done 4 weeks for 2 years to collect data are funded through this.
- Preparing the funding bid for next tranche of Coastcare funding.

Alison Oates – community member

- Rhyll coast action group received funding from Barb Martin Bush Bank. This is for a native vegetation survey.

Kevin Brown – Small Coastal Township Alliance

- The Alliance is working with Council to get protection in planning system to preserve neighbourhood character. The State government are not actively engaged in this topic. Resources are needed to introduce and provide protection in the local Planning Scheme for sustainable living space. Promoting growth is the objective of the Victorian Planning Authority as discussed in a recent meeting.
- The Alliance would like the Local Planning Scheme approach to put town boundaries into place. Population growth is high and coastal towns are experiencing change of character. (E.g. redevelopment of existing property with bigger houses).
- 400 wedge tail eagle deaths have been confirmed by insecticide/herbicide product (Lannate L) used in agricultural crop management. Need sustainable and appropriate use with environment and agriculture.

Phil Wright – Phillip Island Conservation Society

- Wonthaggi is included in the Plan Melbourne and the Growth Corridor Plan as a Regional Centre to serve the smaller towns.
- PICS 50th year celebration will be held on the 30th Sept Sunday 2pm-4pm. The greatest project from PICS is the Scenic Estate Conservation Reserve. This has provided a template

for restoration for wildlife across Phillip Island. John Eddy has lead the Friends group and working with BCSC. Installation of signage recently has been appreciated.

- The AGL Crib point and industrialisation of Western Port is a serious concern. PICS have recently discussed this with Brian Paynter, including the AGL Crib Point proposal and LV Hydrogen proposed project.

Geoff Glare – Friends of the Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve

- There has been Facebook discussion about birds and animals poisoned by pesticides. This is an ongoing concern.
- Revegetation has been occurring in the Heathland area however this has been hampered by wombats and kangaroos grazing on the plants.
- Monitoring of bird activity has been occurring pre and post the planned burn by PV. There are sightings of previously unobserved bird species in the Heathland and Riffle Range wetlands.
- There is a weed eradication program in the Cape Paterson area including targeting sea spurge and then revegetating parts of the foreshore. Working bees are organised for ongoing projects.

Susan Davies - Energy Innovation Cooperative

- The Co-op is doing a lot of work to reduce emissions.
- The documents have been signed off with Parks Vic for the Old Energy New Energy Project at the State Coal Mine. The installation of the project will commence soon with panels and batteries.
- Totally Renewable Phillip Island (TRPI) are very active. There has been a structure put in place with the existing groups working on projects but under a common brand, with a target to boost activity and funding attraction. This includes a carbon accounting exercise for emissions on Phillip Island. TRPI have a target to be carbon emission neutral by 2030, with six groups working towards this. Collaboration and discussions are occurring with Western Port Water, PINP and BCSC. Funding application for project include bulk buy of solar and batteries, education activities, subsidise batteries and monitoring for renewable energy set ups, supporting community groups. The Co-op is able to do donation funded and investment funded activities.
- To date projects and organisation has all been volunteer time and energy, and the Co-op is seeking a supportive model from Council.
- Co-op is looking for buildings to place panels/battery systems to be part of future projects, and investment. Members of community, owners, energy businesses – as capacity builds offer electricity to sell and purchase. Cop-op is working closely with Ausnet Services to negotiate possibilities for distributed energy. Projects are behind the meter, intent of activities is to develop Local Area Network capacity.
- Co-Op is running education sessions for reading electricity bills and comparing bills.

Item 4 - General Business

- Phil Wright (PICS) requested consider two registers 2 registers; projects that have been delivered and achieved good outcomes (planning, funding, working bees), and an environmental hotline for people to record things like tree removal that are not acceptable and should be investigated. Discussion concluded that this information is captured in the Annual Natural Environment Strategy Snapshot Report, and through calling council and lodging a complaint/request of activities as this is recorded in the database.
- There was further discussion of cross pollenisation of ideas particularly where there is dissatisfaction on issues such as coastal vegetation clearing. Each organisations is encouraged to take up issues with State government where Council is not the authority (e.g. 10/30 rule).
- Dave Sutton (SGCS) discussed clean-fill build up on private property and the effect of this to change the hydrology of surrounding land. Maher's landing is an example where this is proposed and can create acid sulphite soils.
- Ayr Creek Lagoon Investigation report is coming back to the November Ordinary Meeting of Council. The lagoon has formed and the stagnation of the water due to changing climate, this is a natural occurrence.
- Group members have contributed to the prioritisation of the NES actions. The list will be brought back to the group at the next meeting.
- Newspaper is not accepted at the transfer stations for recycling as it is a different recycling collector to the kerbside collector. Newspaper can be placed in the yellow recycling kerbside bin for collection.
- Frequency of meetings was discussed and agreed to stay with quarterly as in the adopted TOR. It was suggested that interested parties from the Advisory Group (Phil, Dave, Geoff and Kevin) may get together more often to discuss common topics. The TOR for the Advisory Group provides the mechanism for independent subgroups to be formed where interest is present.

Next meeting - 18 December 2018

Meeting closed 11.10am.

Actions arising from this meeting

Action	Responsibility	Status
Feedback on priority actions within the Natural Environment Strategy Action Plan: Years 1-3 provided collated and presented back to the Advisory Group at the next meeting.	Deirdre	By 18 Dec 2018.
Links to the <i>Natural Environment Strategy - Annual Snapshot Report 2018</i> presented to Council at the Ordinary Meeting 15 August 2018 to be sent out.	Deirdre	Complete with minutes
Item H.3. Officer report in the Minutes at		

http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/cbcf7457-f8df-4ba8-92a3-9effb7451745/Open_Minutes_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx <i>Natural Environment Strategy - Annual Snapshot Report 2018</i> at http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/6a3099c9-2d0f-4b84-976a-0322097072e2/h3_merged_attachments_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx		
Send link for Cowes and Cowes East Erosion Management technical reports presented to Council at the Ordinary Meeting 15 August 2018. Item H.3. Officer report in the Minutes at http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/cbcf7457-f8df-4ba8-92a3-9effb7451745/Open_Minutes_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx Cowes and Cowes East Erosion Management technical reports at http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/getmedia/1bfadacf-703e-4bfb-af98-5fe52081dec0/h4_attachments_15_August_2018.pdf.aspx	Deirdre	Complete with minutes
Group members are welcome to provide a short summary of their activities prior to the meeting to be circulated with the agenda and included in the minutes. These are to be in an electronic format (e.g. email, word doc, etc.)	All	Submit prior to the meeting.
Letter from the Minister for Local Government to be distributed	Deirdre	Complete with minutes
Invite Matt Bowler from the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority to speak with the Advisory Group about revegetation projects in the catchment at the next meeting.	Deirdre	By 18 Dec 2018.
Council's communications team to come and speak about the tools and mechanisms to provide good stories when these are provided to Council. Include in the agenda for the next meeting.	Deirdre	By 18 Dec 2018.