

Update from the Convenor 15 April 2010

Hi Team

Another update. I need your feedback on a few matters.

1) Simon Corbell has agreed to release/announce our draft Community Weed Management Plan, with the event planned for 11am Sunday 16 May. Senior PCL officers will likely attend, and I have previously reported that the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment wants to come. A Ngambri elder will welcome us.

I will use my networks to engage other VIPs. Let me know of anyone that should be invited. We will prepare specific invitations for VIPs, and a community one we can all circulate by email (also need to let schools know).

This will require planning and effort. I have attached a tasklist, if you can help please let me know. What tasks have I missed?

Further, PCL have committed to providing consolidated agency comments tomorrow - let me know if you would like to see those comments.

For those of you who would like to go over the draft plan/PCL comments in detail, with a view to making minor adjustments, come over for a cuppa the weekend of 24/25 April. If you have any concerns with the draft Plan next week is the window of opportunity to work through them with me/Don/Penny. After that it goes to the designer.

2) The University of Canberra have got back to Don and me with an indicative map of potential Pink Tail Worm Lizard habitat, and I have committed to working with them to do some field verification. If you're interested in helping please let me know and/or if you want to see the map.

3) To implement the Weed Plan - especially taking and disbursing monies for the grass experiment, and being able to receive private donations - we need to lift our governance arrangements and elect a committee.

Apparently FOAB have something like this. Also, I'm aware that from time to time I pursue policy/strategy agendas and opportunities on behalf of the group, without FOTPIN authorisation - not a perfect situation. An elected subgroup of members could meet regularly to agree on strategies, priorities, policy, jobs, deadlines etc and maybe represent interests/skills sets.

Please consider the above, and if we proceed with this, that we elect a committee. I've personally resisted the idea of such formality, but it's got to come if we're to be taken seriously.

4) I understand from Benj Whitworth that there is a small patch of Natural Temperate Grassland somewhere above the dam - a priority asset for the Pinnacle. Anyone interested in mapping it? Also, I believe we need people to go up and map the boundaries of predominantly native grass patches. We need this for the final weed plan, and as a general overlay for any management activity. Just need grass id and GPS skills please let me know if you are interested and you need to be confident with a GPS.

5) The rabbit plan has stalled for a bit, as I'm engaging Maurice and Maureen Tully, lessees of the southern horse paddocks, on the need for an integrated rabbit control program across the area. I understand PCL are cranking up to rip and fumigate, so please look out for activity. They promised to advise us of what, when and where.

6) PCL have advised in clear terms that only chemcerted volunteers may spray herbicides at the Pinnacle. Non-chemcerted can use roundup for cut and dabbing, supervised, but that's it. Until John is trained in late April, spraying parties will be solitary events.

7) In the second week of term a group of Yr 5s and 6s from Weetangera Primary School are going to the Pinnacle to do some weeding. I was thinking horehound grubbing, however, my discussions with PCL have them now investigating trialling MCPA spraying of horehound - so not so sure (yes, PCL are now taking horehound control seriously). If you think you might be interested escorting the kid/teachers, maybe pre-briefing teachers and doing some follow-up during business hours - that would be great.

8) You might recall warren mapping, and that we counted the number of burrows in each warren. As it turns out we should also have counted the number of active entrances, to better estimate rabbit numbers and activity - the total number of burrows (active and inactive) could misrepresent rabbit activity over time.

I plan to soon revisit a significant number of mapped warrens - mostly the larger warrens - and count active entrances. Is anyone interested doing this with or instead of me? I can supply a GPS with the pre-loaded route to take you to the priority warrens. It will take 4-6 hours.

9) I have been liaising with the Belconnen Community Council, and have offered to brief its June meeting - they said "***We are particularly interested in your type of group in Belconnen and would appreciate your giving a short presentation to the forum put on by the Council ...***". I'll need a scientist to back me up, any takers?

I hope the above makes sense, and that you find these updates useful.

Enough for now.

Cheers

Pax