



Annual General Meeting 19th May 2019 Weetangera Primary School Minutes

The meeting opened at 2:35 pm.

Present:

Members: Barbara Allan, Warren Bond, John Brannan (Convenor), Pax, John Fitz Gerald, Denise Hall, Mike Hall, Margo Hellyer, Bob Hodgson, Gilbert Hughes, Grahame Muller, Elizabeth Smith, Len Taylor, Wendy Whitham, Alana Wilkes

Non-members: Sarah Hnatiuk (Friends of Mt. Painter), Marty Bajt (ParkCare Ranger, Parks and Conservation Service)

Apologies:

Mark Hallam, Lesley Harland, Christian Stricker, Keith Thomas

Welcome by the Convenor

John Brannan welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He also acknowledged and paid respects to the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, their elders' past and present, who have cared for this part of the land from time immemorial.

Thanks were also extended to the Weetangera Primary School for enabling this meeting occur in their premises.

He then introduced the meeting's guest speaker.

Guest Speaker

Dr Brett Howland Ecologist, Parks and Conservation Service (PCS)

Brett started with a brief history of the fire ecology work in PCS. The grassland burning program began about 6 years ago. Before that most of the grasslands under the care of PCS hadn't been burnt for a very long time. Because of a lack of good information about the effect of fire in ACT grasslands, an adaptive management approach was followed. Various fire regimes were applied and burnt areas were monitored carefully for effects on plant species (both native and weed species), fauna, particularly reptiles, and overall biodiversity. A lot has been learnt in that time and environmental burns are being rolled out across many areas of grassland in the ACT. *[In fact two small environmental burns are planned for the Pinnacle Extension before winter this year, weather permitting. WB]*

Fire has been found to be beneficial to *Themeda* grassland although not so much to C3 grasslands (eg speargrass, *Poa*). Burning in late autumn with a cool burn is most beneficial. Big increases in biodiversity have been observed as a result of such burns. Where wild oats are a major problem spring burns are better.

Unfortunately many weed species (such as African lovegrass) also benefit from burning, so it is important to spray before and after burning to produce good results.

After some discussion of the above, Brett was asked about revegetation after hazard reduction burns, which tend to be not so cool and beneficial. It is currently recommended to burn in autumn and seed a month later with the right mix of native forbs. PCS has a [list of recommended species](#) that Brett sent to us after the meeting.

There are also nutrient issues, particularly with phosphorus. *[Australian native plants evolved in an environment with very low levels of phosphorus but it was introduced to farmland in the mid-20th century and used widely to boost crop and pasture production. WB]*. PCS have been carrying out soil tests and associating phosphorus levels with different types of grassland and grassland species. Through this they have established what the maximum desirable values are and have started working on ways of removing high levels similar to those trialled in [fotpin's Native Grass Restoration](#)

[Project](#), such as slashing and removal of wild oats. He noted that in general it is beneficial to remove weed biomass to reduce nutrient levels.

Len pointed out that with an increase in hazard reduction burns and an increasing likelihood of wildfire as a consequence of global warming it would be good, if carrying out revegetation, to plant species that will survive fire. Brett said that PCS will have a list of natives easy to germinate and that do well under fire regimes. Sarah Hnatiuk said that Friends of Mt. Painter also had a list of species that regenerated after a grassland burn in their reserve.

Sarah also gave a quick summary of the Friends of Mt. Painter experience with their prescribed burn in the Wildflower Triangle in March 2018. The grassland was mostly *Themeda*, *Phalaris* and *Paspalum* but also *Poa* and *Festuca*. When the grasses resprouted after the burn, the exotic grasses in part of the grassland were sprayed. Volunteers have since planted *Themeda*, *Poa*, lilies, a sedge and native daisies into bare areas between regenerating native grasses. The two grasses planted last winter have done particularly well; all survived the summer.

All in all it was an excellent discussion and exchange of information and we were very grateful that Brett was able to come along and bring us up to date on what is happening on these topics in PCS.

AGM Business Meeting

1. Ratification of decisions made at the 2018 AGM and confirmation of [Minutes of the 2018 AGM](#)

Because the 2018 AGM was 1 person short of a quorum, the business of that meeting was conducted under “reduced quorum” rules as used by some other groups. This required not only that the 2019 AGM confirm the minutes of the 2018 meeting as a true and correct record but that it also ratify the decisions made by that meeting. The decisions requiring ratification were the approval of the [minutes of the previous \(2017\) AGM](#) and the election of the Coordinating Committee.

Bob Hodgson moved that the minutes of the 2018 AGM be accepted and the decisions made at that meeting, including the confirmation of the minutes of the 2017 AGM be ratified.

Seconded: Denise Hall.

Agreed unanimously.

2. Convenor’s Report

John Brannan presented a verbal report; a written report will follow soon as a *fotpin Update*. He outlined some of our key activities for the year and issues impacting upon the group, including:

- Weed control for the 2018-19 season (see [weeding effort 2018-19](#) for a summary)
- Update on the Molonglo 3 Watermain Pipeline construction (see [latest update](#) on web)
- A summary of our displays at public events during the last 12 months
- Fotpin’s Clean-up Australia Day
- May 2019 planting event in Bottom Pinnacle
- Vegwatch
- Update on the Pinnacle Extension (offset)

Discussion:

Pax suggested that fotpin carry out some monitoring and recording following the environmental burns in the Extension and it was agreed that it would be a worthwhile thing to do.

Report noted.

3. Treasurer’s Report

Margo Hellyer presented the [audited financial statement for 2018-19](#) noting the changed reporting period of 9 months (1 July 2018 to 30 April 2019) reflecting the holding of the AGM 3 months earlier than previously.

Warren Bond moved that the Treasurer’s Report be accepted; seconded John Brannan
Accepted.

4. Stand-down of the current Coordinating Committee:

Members of the 2018 -98 Coordinating Committee stood down in accordance with meeting rules and all positions were declared vacant.

5. Election of new Coordinating Committee

Barbara Allan volunteered to act as Returning Officer and conduct the election.

The following office holders and ordinary members were nominated and elected unopposed.

Convenor: John Brannan

Nominated: Elizabeth Smith; Seconded: Wendy Whitham

Secretary: Warren Bond

Nominated: Margo Hellyer; Seconded: Elizabeth Smith

Treasurer: Margo Hellyer

Nominated: Elizabeth Smith; Seconded: Bob Hodgson

Ordinary Members:

Denise Hall

Nominated: Mike Hall; Seconded: Margo Hellyer

Len Taylor

Nominated: self; Seconded: Warren Bond

Alana Wilkes

Nominated: self; Seconded: John Brannan

6. Other business:

Nil.

Meeting closed at 3:45 pm and was followed by lively conversation over afternoon tea.

Warren Bond
Secretary
21 May 2019