
Biodiversity Advisory Group Minutes – 4/08/20

Minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Group held on Tuesday 4 August 2020, commencing at 1.00pm at the Council Chamber, 137 Havelock Street, Ashburton.

Present: Councillors Lynette Lovett (Chair) and Diane Rawlinson; Bert Hofmans (ADC); Mary Ralston (Forest and Bird and Awa Awa Rata Reserve); Val Clemens (Forest & Bird and ACCT), Jane Riach (Kanuka Trust), Tania Paddock (Kanuka Trust); Donna Field (ECan and Whitcombe Landcare Group); Alice Shanks (QEII Trust); Ian Fraser (DOC); Edith Smith (Forest & Bird and ACCT), Jayde Couper (Fish & Game); Mike Salvesen (Federated Farmers); and Bill Thomas (Ashburton Water Zone Committee).

In attendance: Aisling O'Reilly (Governance Support - minutes); Willy Leferink (Carters Creek Community Project); Cr Angus McKay (Carters Creek Community Project); Cr Leen Braam and Sue Newman (media)

1 Apologies

Mayor Neil Brown, Janine Holland, Gen de Spa, Barry Austin and Paul Wilson.

Rawlinson/Thomas

Carried

2 Extraordinary Business

Nil

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil

4 Confirmation of Minutes – 5/03/20

That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Group meeting held on 5 March 2020 be taken as read and confirmed.

Rawlinson/Edith Smith

Carried

5 Reports and Presentations

5.1 Carters Creek Community Enhancement Project

Willy Leferink and Angus McKay presented on the work the project wants to do:

- Sought feedback and wanted to hear views on what should be planted.
- Project group want to be clear on what they want and where they want to go before applying for any funding.
- Looking for community help for planting and maintaining.

5.2 The importance of eco-sourcing

Alice Shanks spoke about what is needed in this area and the consideration that should be taken when planning what to plant and where.

- Takes some forward planning what deciding what seeds to get and what to plant.
- Forest and Bird have an arrangement with Southern Woods. There is going to be a scientific reserve “Mother area” – can be reassured you are eco-sourcing from the right place.
- DF advised that if a nursery starts up in the area the group needs to strongly support them in getting the business off the ground so they can locally source seeds.
- VC advised it would be helpful to have a storage facility for seed for when groups want to plant.

5.3 Ashton Beach Enhancement Project Update

Bert Hofmans presented an update.

- Reports to Council and community consultation
- Fencing completed (July 2020)
- Dilapidated toilet removed (July 2020)
- Joint presentation to Ashburton Water Zone Committee (28 July 2020)

5.4 Conifers Lake Camp and Clearwater

Mary Ralston

- Moving wilding pines and other conifers. Been a successful piece of work. Asked if there is a need for some more work to be done in this area to prevent the spread of wilding pines.
- BH advised that the Lakes working group developed a 10 year programme for weed and pest control, tree removal and signage. Funding for tree removal is there.

It was suggested that the Lakes working group may need to meet and prepare a draft programme for the year and come back to the Biodiversity Advisory Group with a report.

5.5 Insurance Reserves

Bert Hofmans

- This group has discussed losing roadside remnants. Down to less than 1% of what was original vegetation.
- Outcome that was agreed: create insurance reserves (land a bit safer than roadsides and transplant trees to here)
- Mike Harding (Ecologist) did a survey to come up with potential sites. Has recommended 3 sites that would make good reserves. One is Ashton Beach, Plantation Road (paper road – unformed grass road), Moorhouse Road.
- Will continue to update this group as it develops.

5.6 The impact of one billion trees project on our native vegetation

Edith Smith presented

- Spoke about the impact on native vegetative by trees being planted by farmers.
- DF suggested that the group should put some information out to remind people of what they can plant where. As some farmers want to plant but don't always plant the right thing.
- MS advised that the Federated Farmers newsletter would be a good way to get this information out to a wide range of farmers.

It was agreed that each agency will look in their area at how they can spread this information.

BH will contact the Communications Team to get information into Federated Farmers newsletter.

6 **General Matters**

Meeting schedule for remainder of the year

- 4 August
- 6 October
- 8 December

7 **Agency Updates**

Bill Thomas, Ashburton Water Zone Committee:

- Discussed Ashburton River mouth at last meeting. Consents are being reviewed to get the flow up to the right levels.
- Getting youth councillors involved.
- Had a presentation on Upper Rangitata and Rakaia Tramping Project
- Review on zone committee.

Jane Riach, Kanuka Trust:

- Wakanui Beach planting went well. Thanks to everyone involved. Planted around the gorse as per the management plan.
- Learnings from this planting day – need to be more aware of the plant health of what is being planted and the ground preparation. Aware of the continued maintenance needed after planting.
- Thinking of preparing a planting protocol before doing any more.

Ian Fraser, Department of Conservation:

- Apologised for lateness.
- Work is mostly above the gorges.
- Work programme is similar to last year. Waiting on budgets to come through.
- Trapping work and weed programmes continue to happen above the gorges.

Mary Ralston, Forest and Bird:

- Nature heritage fund application continuing. This is for the protection of Lows Cutting.
- Awa Awa reserve has their 50 year anniversary. Will plant some more areas at bottom of reserve to mark this.
- New Council sign at picnic area of Awa Awa reserve seems to have content for another location. **It was advised** that Mary should email Rhonda Gallagher about this.

Edith Smith, Forest and Bird:

- Arrival of black billed gull in Ashburton: number of birds is increasing over domain and gallery. The black hawks work well to deter the birds but only when it is windy.
- Red billed gull is in decline in Timaru.
- Signs alerting people to nesting gulls will be going up soon.

Val Clemens, ACCT:

- Another planting at Wakanui Beach on 3 September. Planning to do another seed bombing
- Harris reserve planting on 13 sept.

Donna Field, ECan and Whitcombe Landcare Group:

- Gave an update on work that ECan has done at the river mouth at Ashton Beach. Over 72 species of birds have been sighted in this area. Trying to discourage people from entering these nesting areas. Signage and fencing.
- Work is happening on Ashburton river mouth project.
- Getting ready for Ashburton river habitat survey.
- Giving advice on management of spring-fed waterways.
- Looking at some projects around Mount Harding stream.
- Whitcomb Landcare group had their AGM. Did a survey of homestead weeds about 10 years ago and removed a lot of these plants. Will do this survey again and start removal again.
- Looking at how to manage pigs coming on to farm land
- Had some goats appear in the area.
- Te Araroa Trail: People camp here and there are no toilets so this becoming an issue. Approaching the trust to see about getting some toilets in there.
- Looking at a large scale funding applications: gorge to the glaciers.

Bert Hofmans, ADC Open Spaces Planner:

Ashton Beach

- Reports to Council and community consultation
- Fencing completed (July 2020)
- Dilapidated toilet removed (July 2020)
- Joint presentation to Ashburton Water Zone Committee (28 July 2020)

Wakanui Beach

- Assisted Kanuka Trust with planting day 26 July 2020
- Weed spraying 27 July 2020
- Wakanui Beach Restoration Group meeting 28 July 2020

Lake Camp

- Completed rabbit proof fencing around spring 2019 plantings.
- Completed a rabbit shoot on 17 June 2020 which resulted in 51 rabbits, 6 hare and 2 possums.

Other

- Organised field trip for ADC Domain staff to Christchurch City Council Botanical Gardens and nursery.
- Lake Heron trapping resulted in 2 cats, 2 ferrets, 2 weasels, and 2 stoats.

The Chair requested written reports for agency updates to be sent in advance of agendas going out.

8 Next Meeting

Tuesday 6 October at 1pm.

The meeting concluded at 4:49pm