

Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting

An Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting of Byron Shire Council will be held as follows:

Venue	Conference Room, Station Street, Mullumbimby
Date	Thursday, 19 May 2022
Time	9.00am

Shannon Burt
Director Sustainable Environment & Economy

*12022/538
Distributed 12/05/22*



**BYRON
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

What is a “Conflict of Interests” - A conflict of interests can be of two types:

Pecuniary - an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated.

Non-pecuniary – a private or personal interest that a Council official has that does not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Code of Conduct for Councillors (eg. A friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union or involvement or interest in an activity and may include an interest of a financial nature).

Remoteness – a person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to a matter or if the interest is of a kind specified in the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Who has a Pecuniary Interest? - a person has a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is the interest of the person, or another person with whom the person is associated (see below).

Relatives, Partners - a person is taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter if:

- The person’s spouse or de facto partner or a relative of the person has a pecuniary interest in the matter, or
- The person, or a nominee, partners or employer of the person, is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

N.B. “Relative”, in relation to a person means any of the following:

- (a) the parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descends or adopted child of the person or of the person’s spouse;
- (b) the spouse or de facto partners of the person or of a person referred to in paragraph (a)

No Interest in the Matter - however, a person is not taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter:

- If the person is unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of the spouse, de facto partner, relative or company or other body, or
- Just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, the Council.
- Just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of the Council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter provided that the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

Disclosure and participation in meetings

- A Councillor or a member of a Council Committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the Council or Committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- The Councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or Committee:
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or Committee, or

- (b) at any time during which the Council or Committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

No Knowledge - a person does not breach this Clause if the person did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which he or she had a pecuniary interest.

Non-pecuniary Interests - Must be disclosed in meetings.

There are a broad range of options available for managing conflicts & the option chosen will depend on an assessment of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of the interest and the significance of the issue being dealt with. Non-pecuniary conflicts of interests must be dealt with in at least one of the following ways:

- It may be appropriate that no action be taken where the potential for conflict is minimal. However, Councillors should consider providing an explanation of why they consider a conflict does not exist.
- Limit involvement if practical (eg. Participate in discussion but not in decision making or vice-versa). Care needs to be taken when exercising this option.
- Remove the source of the conflict (eg. Relinquishing or divesting the personal interest that creates the conflict)
- Have no involvement by absenting yourself from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue as of the provisions in the Code of Conduct (particularly if you have a significant non-pecuniary interest)

RECORDING OF VOTING ON PLANNING MATTERS

Clause 375A of the Local Government Act 1993 – Recording of voting on planning matters

- (1) In this section, **planning decision** means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979:
- (a) including a decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but
- (b) not including the making of an order under that Act.
- (2) The general manager is required to keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee, the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.
- (3) For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is required to be called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.
- (4) Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document, and is to include the information required by the regulations.
- (5) This section extends to a meeting that is closed to the public.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL
BUSINESS OF MEETING

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 3.1 Report of Minutes of previous Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting held
9 September 2021 5

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Sustainable Environment and Economy

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December 2021 108
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ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

**Report No. 3.1 Report of Minutes of previous Biodiversity
Advisory Committee meeting held 9
September 2021**

5

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy
Report Author: Michelle Chapman, Project Support Officer
File No: I2022/499

10

RECOMMENDATION:

**That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9
September 2021 be noted.**

15

<Section5>

Attachments:

20

1 Minutes 09/09/2021 Biodiversity Advisory Committee, I2021/1433 , page 7 [↓](#)

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1

Report

The attachment to this report provides the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting of 15 September 20221 .

Report to Council

- 5 The minutes were reported to Council on 25 November 2021. **Comments**

In accordance with the Committee Recommendations, Council resolved the following:

Res 21- 557 **Resolved** that Council notes the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9 September 2021.

STAFF REPORTS - CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report No. 4.1 Delivery Program - Workshop Session

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

5 **Report Author:** Heather Sills, Corporate Planning and Improvement
Coordinator

File No: I2022/516

Summary:

10 The draft *Delivery Program 2022-26* and *Operational Plan 2022/23* is currently on public exhibition. Council is seeking feedback from community and stakeholders.

Advisory committees are asked to contribute to this process, specifically addressing the Community Objectives and Strategies related to their areas of interest and expertise.

15

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee provide input into the development of the draft Delivery Program 2022-26 (Attachment 1 E2022/19411).

20

Attachments:

1 Draft Delivery Program 2022-26, E2022/19411 , page 17 [↓](#)

Report

5 The draft Community Strategic Plan (CSP) has been developed to guide long term future planning to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. This review was an opportunity for Council to consider the objectives and strategies which sit at the highest level of Council's planning hierarchy to set the framework for the Delivery Program.

Outcomes

The review of the Community Strategic Plan is an evolution of the 2028 Community Strategic Plan. The review has led to a revised 'vision' and redefined the five community objectives.

10 **Vision - Our Byron Shire is a 'meeting place': Where all people can come together to connect, share, grow, inspire, and create positive change.**

The *community objectives*, while retaining the five original themes, have been refreshed to ensure continuing relevance, based on feedback from the community.

15 The inclusion of values-based terminology at the heading level seeks to better reflect community values and aspirations: Effective, Inclusive, Nurtured, Ethical, and Connected.

The associated *strategies* have also been redefined and realigned with the community objectives to more clearly articulate the intended priorities and aspirations of the community. A summary is below:

20 **Community Objective 1: Effective Leadership** – We have effective decision making and community leadership that is open and informed.

Strategies:

- 1.1 Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership
- 1.2 Engage and involve community in decision making
- 1.3 Ethical and efficient management of resources

25 1.4 Enhance organisation capability through innovative practices and regional partnerships

- 1.5 Empower community leadership through collaboration, capacity building, and cultivating community driven initiatives

30 **Community Objective 2: Inclusive Community** – We have an inclusive and active community where diversity is embraced, and everyone is valued.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Foster opportunities to express, celebrate and participate in arts and cultural activity
- 2.2 Enhance safety and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health and wellbeing of our people

35 2.3 Respect Aboriginal culture, value cultural knowledge, and acknowledge history

- 2.4 Enrich lifelong learning and education and support services to help young people thrive
- 2.5 Create social impact and initiatives that address disadvantage

Community Objective 3: Nurtured Environment – We nurture and enhance our natural environment.

Strategies:

- 3.1 Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology
- 5 3.2 Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment
- 3.3 Protect the health of our coastlines, estuaries, waterways, and catchments
- 3.4 Support and empower our community to adapt to, and mitigate our impact on climate change
- 10 3.5 Minimise waste and encourage recycling and resource recovery practices

Community Objective 4: Ethical Growth – We manage growth and change responsibly

Strategies:

- 15 4.1 Manage responsible development through effective place and space planning
- 4.2 Enable housing diversity and support people experiencing housing insecurity
- 4.3 Promote and support our local economy
- 4.4 Foster sustainable visitation and the impacts of tourism on the Shire
- 20 4.5 Support a resilient community that can adapt and respond to change

Community Objective 5: Connected Infrastructure – We have connected infrastructure, transport, and facilities that are safe, accessible, and reliable.

Strategies:

- 25 5.1 Provide a safe, reliable, and accessible transport network
- 5.2 Connect the Shire through integrated transport services
- 5.3 Invest in renewable energy and emerging technologies
- 5.4 Provide accessible community facilities and open spaces
- 5.5 Provide continuous and sustainable water and sewerage management

30 **Delivery Program and Operational Plan**

Cascading out of the ten year strategies of the CSP come the four year actions in the Delivery Program. The Delivery Program outlines Council's commitment to the community on how it will work towards the CSP strategies during its term. The annual activities in the Operational Plan detail how Council works towards the Delivery Program year by year.

- 35 The Biodiversity Advisory Committee is asked to consider and inform the development of the Delivery Program actions that contribute to the following strategies:

Community Objective 3: Nurtured Environment – We nurture and enhance our natural environment.

Delivery Program:

3.1 Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology



3.1.1 Native species	3.1.2 Pest and weed management	3.1.3 Habitat restoration	3.1.4 Biodiversity
Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	Continue best practice Integrated Pest Management on council owned and managed land	Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value	Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity

A brief workshop session will be held as part of the meeting to provide opportunities for input and discussion.

5 **Strategic Considerations**

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 5: We have community led decision making which is open and inclusive	5.2: Create a culture of trust with the community by being open, genuine and transparent	5.2.1: Provide timely, accessible and accurate information to the community	5.2.1.2	Undertake a community engagement program to review and develop Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework documents

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

The requirements for the Community Strategic Plan are governed by [Section 402](#) of the Local Government Act 1993.

- 10 Further requirements are outlined in sections 403-406 and in the Integrated Planning and Reporting [Guidelines](#) and [Handbook](#).

Financial Considerations

Not applicable.

Consultation and Engagement

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

4.1

This discussion forms part of the community engagement program, as outlined in the [Community Engagement Strategy](#) for the Community Strategic Plan.

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

**Report No. 4.2 Review Constitution of Biodiversity
Advisory Committee**

5 **Directorate:** Sustainable Environment and Economy
Report Author: Arika McElroy, Project Support Officer
File No: I2022/471

Summary:

10 Attached is the Constitution for the Biodiversity Advisory Committee, for the Committee's
review and recommendation for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

15 **That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee recommends to Council to adopt the
constitution at Attachment 1 (E2021/147945)**

Attachments:

1 DRAFT Biodiversity Advisory Committee Constitution 2022, E2021/147945 , page 68 [↓](#)
20

Report

The constitution is attached for the Committee's review and endorsement.

5 Future meetings have been scheduled for 15 September and 17 November 2022 at 9:00am.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 5: We have community led decision making which is open and inclusive	5.2: Create a culture of trust with the community by being open, genuine and transparent	5.2.4: Support Councillors to carry out their civic duties	5.2.4.5	Implement and manage Code of Conduct training programs for Councillors, staff, and committee members

Recent Resolutions

- 22-026

10 Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

Not applicable.

Financial Considerations

Not applicable.

Consultation and Engagement

15 Not applicable.

Report No. 4.3 Regenerative Agriculture

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

File No: I2022/189

5 **Summary:**

This report explains the process of regenerative agriculture and the role of regenerative agriculture in improving soil health, soil carbon, water storage and biodiversity to create a more sustainable resilient healthier local environment.

10 The report outlines work done so far to promote and encourage regenerative agriculture, and some of the progress that has been made by our local landholders.

RECOMMENDATION:

15 **That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes this report and that regenerative agriculture principals will continue to be encouraged and promoted in line with Council’s Agriculture Action Plan, Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and other land management plans and strategies.**

Attachments:

20

1 Rural land ownership change Byron Shire, E2022/38011 , page 81 [↓](#)

Report

5 This report outlines the role of regenerative agriculture in sustainable land management in Byron Shire and summarises the work that Council is doing to support and promote regenerative agriculture.

What is Regenerative Agriculture?

10 Regenerative agriculture has an array of definitions. Put simply, it means working with nature, not against it, to manage land to produce food. This means managing land using principles that work with biological processes to improve soil health, which makes the land more productive and more resilient to environmental pressures.

15 Regenerative agriculture has significant potential to help mitigate climate change and increase ecosystem health. As well as improving soil fertility, biodiversity and productivity, regenerative agriculture also draws down carbon out of the atmosphere and stores it into our soil. Soil carbon in turn increases soil water holding capacity - every 1% of soil carbon increase allows that soil to store an extra 88,000 litres of water/acre. Improved water storage builds drought resilience and reduces stormwater run-off during flood events.

20 In Byron Shire, cattle grazing represents 88% of our agricultural land use, cropping 3% and horticulture 9% (Attachment 1). Historically, much grazing land has not been managed in a sustainable way, so one of our biggest opportunities to improve landscape resilience and carbon storage is to implement regenerative agriculture practices on cattle grazing land. This is done through a process known as rotational grazing, where fencing is used to divide a farm into multiple small paddocks, and cattle are moved between paddocks every few days, acting as tools that build the soil. This process mimics the ecological pattern seen in natural grassland systems (e.g. in the African savannahs and American prairies), where large herds of grazing animals move rapidly through the landscape, grazing and defecating intensively for a short period of time and then allowing the landscape to rest as they migrate. By giving paddocks time to rest, rather than continually grazing them, grasses grow higher, photosynthesise more, and put down larger roots systems. These natural processes put more energy into the soil and build organic matter and carbon.

30 The following links provide more information on regenerative agriculture processes and how these are being adopted globally to improve our natural environment and mitigate climate change:

- Local Byron Shire Resident and Advocate of Regenerative Agriculture –
[Damon Gameau talks about the power of regenerative agriculture - YouTube](#)
- 35 • Australian Regenerative Agriculture pioneer Charles Massey - ['From the Ground Up – Regenerative Agriculture' - YouTube](#)

Regenerative Agriculture in Byron Shire

We have some great farmers in our region that have been following regenerative agriculture principles. In some instances, local farmers have increased their soil carbon

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STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.3

from 3% to 14% over a 5-year period. In Australia, this level of soil carbon increase is exceptional - generally an increase of 1-2% soil carbon over 5 years is considered very good. In Byron Shire the high rainfall and nearly 365 days a year growing season enable much greater opportunities for soil carbon storage.

5 At a recent field day at a local organic vegetable farm in Goonengerry, land managers Liz and Bob Gray advised that the carbon sequestration in their garden beds was 20% higher than the highest current rating, due to regenerative farming methods as well as rebuilding native wildlife habitat, all without the use of chemicals. Byron Shire needs more farmers like these. [You can view the field day on Youtube.](#)

10 However, there are many landowners in the region that simply don't know what is required to implement regenerative farming practices, or lack the knowledge or resources to get started.

15 Council's Agricultural Extension Officer is working with local farmers to help support and promote regenerative agriculture in Byron Shire, through projects such as the Combatting Pests and Weeds Project and the Smart Farms Small Grants Project. Extension activities include:

- Establishment of a 300+ member farmers data base. Regular emails (over 50 to date) have been sent out round this network, with advice and information relating to regenerative agriculture.
- 20 • 79 on-site consultations providing expert advice and support to local farmers regarding regenerative agriculture.
- Grant funding for 6 local farmers to implement rotation grazing to manage weeds on 204ha of farmland through the Combating Pests and Weeds Project.
- 25 • Regenerative agriculture mentoring program for farmers, in collaboration with Southern Cross University.
- 14 field days, workshops and events promoting sustainable agriculture.
- Development of a collaborative network with 10 local organisations and businesses interested in being involved with the rural economy and sustainable local food production.
- 30 • Collaboration with Carbon 8 Which enabled 88 of our farmers receive two free books of their choice on Regenerative Agriculture with plans for more collaboration in the future.
- 4 radio appearances and 5 newspaper articles supporting regenerative agriculture and encouraging farmers to seek advice from council.

35

Next steps

To develop a resilient landscape, increase soil biodiversity and protect our food security, we need to continue to educate and inspire our community to support and implement regenerative agriculture. This means building a culture of custodianship rather than landownership, where what we, as landholders, “own” is the responsibility to look after country and ensure it is there for future generations.

To do this we can continue to educate and inspire our landholders to contribute positively to their landscape and community. We can connect new farmers with other farmers who are like minded and those that have a wealth of knowledge to share. We can connect landowners with limited farming capacity with people who don’t own land but want to farm sustainably. We can continue to grow the Byron Farmers Network, connecting farmers to the wealth of resources that are out there from workshops, to grants to inspirational information and webinars. We can provide farmers with advice on current carbon credit schemes that allows them to receive income from increasing their carbon. We also need to encourage those who live in urban areas to support and encourage regenerative farming practices, by purchasing their food from local sustainable growers, for example through farmers markets.

Most farmers don’t have a big budget and it is easy to get overwhelmed with the information available. Byron Shire Council’s agriculture extension service has been extremely valuable for landholders to get expert advice and help with figuring out their next steps. Some simple guidance, together with networks and support, can make all the difference. We also need to seek ways to continue to incentivise and reward land holders who commit to regenerative practices.

If the BAC is interested in learning more, there are several local farmers who would be happy to demonstrate the work they are doing on their farms. Staff have also worked with regenerative agriculture educator [Glen Chapman](#), who would be happy to spend some time with any committee/council members to help educate on this further. Glen is currently running a mentor program with some local farmers, funded by the SmartFarms project.

Strategic Considerations

30 Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.1: Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	3.1.1: Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.11	Deliver the 'Drought Pests and Weeds' grant funded project
Community Objective 3: We protect	3.4: Support and secure our	3.4.1: Develop and implement strategies to	3.4.1.1	Continue implementation of the Agriculture

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and enhance our natural environment	farming future	support agriculture, agri-business and farmers		Action Plan
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.1: Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	3.1.1: Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.1	Seek funding to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Coastal Koala Plan of Management and Flying Fox Camp Management Plan (Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.32)

Recent Resolutions

21-149

Resolved that Council adopts the Byron Shire Agricultural Action Plan 2020-2025 with the following change to the Aim in the plan.

- 5 AIM
1. To arrest the trending decline in the economic performance of the agriculture sector by the end of 2023.
 2. To increase the annual value of primary production in the shire by \$20 mil by the end of 2025
 - 10 3. To have a database of 300 landowners aware of and practicing some form of conservation land management by 2025Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

Financial Considerations

N/A

15

Report No. 4.4 Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer quarterly reports June to December 2021

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Arika McElroy, Project Support Officer

5 **File No:** I2021/1757

Summary:

This report tables the activities of the Landcare Support Officer quarterly reports, from June to December 2021.

10

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the report.

Attachments:

15

- 1 Landcare Support Officer report June to September 2021, E2021/133613 , page 110 [↓](#)
- 2 Landcare Support Officer Interim Report December 2021, E2022/30519 , page 113 [↓](#)

20

Report

5 Council provided an allocation of funds in the 2021/22 budget to continue to support the Brunswick Valley Landcare, Landcare Support Officer position for 1 day per week to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and respond to customer enquiries.

Attached are the quarterly reports, June to September and October to December 2021, from the Landcare Support Officer for the Committee’s reference.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	L2	CSP Strategy	L3	DP Action	L4	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.2: Strive to become a sustainable community	3.2.2: Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.5	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries	Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.2: Strive to become a sustainable community

10 **Recent Resolutions**

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

N/A

Financial Considerations

15 Funding allocated in 2021/22 budget.

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

Report No. 4.5 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

5 **File No:** I2022/392

Summary:

This report provides the Biodiversity Advisory Committee with an update on current projects and programs being undertaken by the Biodiversity team, including:

- 10 • Wildlife corridor mapping
- Mapping restoration sites
- Mitchell's Rainforest Snail habitat likelihood mapping
- Updates to vegetation and HEV mapping
- Recently funded biodiversity projects
- NSW Koala Strategy
- 15 • 2021 Koala activity study
- Koala vehicle strike
- Koala habitat restoration
- Pest animal management (wild dogs, feral deer)
- Bringing Back the Bruns
- 20 • Keeping Cats Safe at Home project
- Smart Farms project
- Combating Pests and Weeds project

25

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the update on current projects and programmes being undertaken by Council staff.

30

Report

Wildlife Corridor Mapping

Landmark Ecological have developed draft wildlife corridor mapping for the shire, which is currently being peer reviewed by local ecological experts.

- 5 The wildlife corridor map is aimed at protecting core habitat and dispersal opportunities for key threatened species (flora and fauna) in the shire – i.e. those species that have core habitat in the shire, and the most limited dispersal capability. The methodology takes into consideration current and historic species records, existing land use constraints and connections (e.g. highway underpasses), mapped corridors in adjacent shires, and the likely impacts of climate change (through consideration of flood prone land, south facing slopes, riparian habitats etc.).
- 10

The intent of the wildlife corridor mapping is to:

- Support Council, environmental groups, and landholders to strategically focus their restoration activities to where they can have the greatest biodiversity benefit. For example, by buffering and linking areas of intact vegetation and refugia to facilitate the movement of plant and animal species with poor dispersal capabilities, and reduce the impacts of anthropogenic climate change and other key threatening processes.
 - To support Council and environmental groups in seeking grant funding for key strategic biodiversity conservation projects.
 - To support the implementation of Council's Biodiversity DCP (Chapter B1) during the development assessment process, by supporting planning decisions that best protect and enhance our biodiversity, while continuing to facilitate permitted land uses, e.g. on rural or residential zoned land.
 - To incentivise the community, in both rural and suburban corridors, to take steps to help create and maintain wildlife connectivity in their backyards, through showing people a bigger picture view of the importance of their backyard habitat in the overall landscape.
- 15
- 20
- 25

The draft wildlife corridor map was presented to Councillors at a Strategic Planning Workshop on 7 November 2021, to local expert stakeholders through an Expert Stakeholder Workshop on 26 November 2021, and to Council's Agriculture Cluster Group on 9 November 2021.

30

Some housekeeping amendments will be required to the Biodiversity DCP to:

- Ensure that the definition of a wildlife corridor in the DCP reflects the new mapping,
 - Ensure that management intent is clear for both corridors in rural and built-up areas.
 - Ensure that management intent is clear for both vegetated and cleared parts of corridors.
- 35

The draft wildlife corridor map will be presented to Council within the next few months, seeking support for public exhibition and minor amendments to the Biodiversity DCP. Staff are currently developing an interactive map for Council's website, to encourage community interest and engagement in the corridor map.

5 **Other Mapping Projects**

A number of mapping projects identified as key actions in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy have been progressed this financial year, including:

Mapping restoration sites

10 Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.20: Map areas that have been revegetated: a) using public funds, and b) for conservation purposes.

15 Council has engaged Ascent Ecology to develop a GIS database that shows restoration sites in Byron Shire, including planting and restoration projects done by Council, and those done on private land by groups such as Landcare (where landholders permission has been obtained). This dataset is currently being finalised. This information has also been used by DPE to help develop the Koala Habitat Restoration Archive, an on-line database listing all koala habitat restoration sites in the Northern Rivers. This project has been funded by the NSW Koala Strategy and contractors have been engaged to add Byron Shire sites to the database.

20 These datasets will help Council and other organisations to strategically plan future restoration sites, to identify restoration investment priorities, and in the long term to monitor the effectiveness of different restoration activities.

25 Following the recent flood events in February and March, Council has also received support from DPE to monitor flood-impacted koala habitat restoration sites. Contractors are currently surveying sites in Byron Shire for immediate impacts, and repeat surveys are planned 6 and 12 months after the flood.

Mitchell's Rainforest Snail habitat likelihood mapping

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.25: Map potential habitat areas for Mitchell's Rainforest Snail.

30 Earthscapes Consulting have developed a draft habitat likelihood map for Mitchell's Rainforest Snail (MRS), based on current records and knowledge of MRS habitat preferences. The map has been peer reviewed by MRS expert Dr. Jonathan Parkyn, and is currently being finalised. The map will be used to guide Council as to when further searches for MRS may be required as part of land development, as well as to encourage the community to conserve MRS habitat and report MRS sightings.

35 Updates to Vegetation and HEV mapping

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.14: Update and maintain Council's vegetation and HEV mapping with revised Plant Community Types (PCTs) and current aerial photography.

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5 Council's 2017 High Environmental Value (HEV) and Vegetation mapping have been updated to reflect ground truthing of approximately 250 sites carried out as part of the C-Zone review. This updates also include integrating other recent vegetation mapping surveys and known koala habitat restoration sites into the mapping and updating remnant boundaries using NearMaps aerial photography. Database attribute fields were also updated with more user-friendly text instead of numbers. 1274 vegetation polygons were reviewed as part of the update process, covering a total area of 3,809 Ha. These updates will shortly be available on Council's GIS.

10 Updates to Byron Shire Threatened Species Lists

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.11: Conduct a review of Byron Shire's biodiversity values as a baseline for ongoing biodiversity monitoring. Including updated Byron Shire flora and fauna lists and Status of threatened flora and fauna.

15 Landmark Ecological Services are updating the threatened species lists that were included in the 2004 Byron Shire Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. These lists will be made available on Council's website. They will provide a useful resource to anyone wanting to find out more about the Shire's threatened flora and fauna and, because they are in digital format, it will be easy to update them where status changes occur.

Recently funded Biodiversity Projects

20 In March this year, more than \$70,000 in funding from the NSW Government was received to support delivery of actions in Council's Biodiversity Strategy. The funding will be spread across four projects:

Budget	Project	Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action
\$24,000	Updating vegetation and high environmental value mapping.	1.14 Update and maintain Council's vegetation and HEV mapping with revised Plant Community Types (PCTs) and current aerial photography. 1.19 Update vegetation mapping to clearly identify recently listed threatened ecological communities e.g. Coastal Swamp Oak (<i>Casuarina glauca</i>) Woodland.
\$11,000	Identifying and mapping open forest ecosystems that will benefit from the reintroduction of ecological fire management.	4.4 Identify priority open forest ecosystems requiring restoration through the reintroduction of fire.

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\$8,800	Auditing threatened plant species along Council roads.	4.28 Audit and renew roadside threatened vegetation mapping.
\$30,000	Studying the impact of recreational use on coastal biodiversity, wildlife, and habitats	1.30 Continue development of Coastal Management Programs for the Shire's coastline and estuaries, ensuring CMPs are consistent with the intent of this Biodiversity Strategy.

All projects will begin shortly and need to be completed by end March 2023.

Koalas

NSW Koala Strategy

- 5 The new NSW Koala Strategy has been released, backed by a \$193.3 million investment. This is the largest government commitment ever made to single species in Australia. [NSW Koala Strategy | NSW Environment and Heritage](#)

10 The new five-year strategy includes:

- \$107.1 million to conserve koala habitat - funding the protection, restoration, and improved management of more than 47,000 hectares of koala habitat
- \$19.6 million to support local communities to conserve koalas - funding community-led initiatives and a range of partnerships with non-government organisations (NGOs), councils, landholders, and Aboriginal groups
- \$23.2 million to improve koala safety and health – funding wildlife care, rehabilitation, and emergency response, establishing a translocation program, and addressing threats such as vehicle strike
- \$43.4 million to build our knowledge of koalas – funding ongoing monitoring and research to inform conservation actions and better manage diseases and other threatening processes

25 The strategy builds on the groundwork and achievements of the previous \$44.7 million NSW Koala Strategy. The NSW government has stated that partnerships, both existing and new, are critical to the success of the new program of work, and that the NSW Government will work in partnerships, strategically and across land tenures, to get the best
30 outcomes for koalas and their habitat.

Byron Shire Council is already involved in one or these partnerships, through the Northern Rivers Regional Koala Group and Regional Koala Partnership. This partnership was developed under the previous NSW Koala Strategy, and we will be continuing to work with

this group of Northern Rivers Councils and Friends of the Koala to deliver koala conservation outcomes throughout the region.

Koala Activity Study

5 Council's coastal koala activity monitoring program for 2021 is now complete, funded with a \$20,000 grant from the NSW 2018-2021 Koala Strategy. This round of monitoring repeats surveys done in the coastal Koala Plan of Management (KPOM) area in 2011 and 2016 and uses the Spot Assessment Technique (SAT) to assess changes in koala activity. The surveys involved repeat monitoring of sites for koala scats (droppings), which are used as an indicator of koala presence/absence and activity.

10 In 2021, 58 sites were surveyed in the coastal part of Byron Shire on public and private land. The results showed 40% of all sites recorded koala activity, the majority between Brunswick Heads and Broken Head. The highest koala activity levels were recorded at sites at Suffolk Park, Byron Bay and Skinners Shoot. Low to no koala activity was recorded at most (81%) of the sites, therefore only 19% of all sites currently show evidence of supporting a resident population of koalas. When compared with previous surveys over the last 10 years, koala activity level has decreased by 53%, although the number of active sites has increased by 22%. The majority of koala activity uptake sites (78%) were in the southern third of the Shire between Byron Bay and Broken Head. These results are currently being interpreted, but perhaps suggest a decreased population of koalas in the northern half of the coastal zone, an increase in koala activity in the southern area of the Shire, and generally a more transient and fragmented population of koalas now compared with 10 years ago.

25 As well as providing us with updated information on koala activity in the shire, the project has been a great opportunity to talk with landowners in the CKPOM areas about koala conservation on their land and what they can do to help. Byron Shire staff are currently comparing their results with Tweed and Lismore Councils' survey results to interpret the data and the implications for koalas in the Northern Rivers. The full results and interpretations will be reported to the September Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting.

30 Koala Vehicle Strike Project

In February, staff met with DPE and Transport for NSW to discuss opportunities to mitigate koala vehicle road strike in Byron Shire. Over the next few weeks we will be seeking input from local wildlife carers and Infrastructure Services staff to identify high priority hotspots in Byron Shire. A feasibility and vehicle strike mitigation options assessment will then be completed for two high priority sites. Funding for the feasibility assessments will be provided by the NSW Koala Strategy.

Koala Habitat Restoration

40 The NSW Koala Strategy is co-funding a new koala habitat restoration project, which aims to plant 6 ha and restore 2 ha koala habitat on six private properties in the shire. Landholders will be contributing to costs of fencing and plant maintenance.

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Other recent koala habitat restoration projects in Byron Shire are now largely complete, with some follow up maintenance extending over the next few months. Achievements of these projects are summarised below:

Project	Budget	Achievements
North-East Hinterland Koala Conservation Project	\$45,000 + \$9,000/year for 3 years from Council	15 sites, totalling 16.5 ha planted with over 2000 trees.
Koala Food for the Future Project	\$18,750	11 sites, totalling 9.6 ha planted with 996 trees.

- 5 All koala habitat restoration projects are being added to the Koala Habitat Restoration Archive, developed by DPE to catalogue koala habitat restoration across the region.

Pest Animal Management Plan

Wild Dogs, Cats and Foxes

- 10 Trapping is on-going on Council lands through our contractor- JR Trapping. A new contract for 8 trapping weeks has just begun, and JR Trapping was also engaged by Council to trap on private land in the Shire for 15 weeks under the Australian Government Drought Pest and Weeds project. Wild dogs, foxes and cats are targeted through this program, using soft-jaw trapping.

Feral Deer

- 15 Feral deer are a relatively new issue in Byron Shire and can cause significant environmental damage, including grazing rainforest trees and ring-barking trees with their antlers, grazing ground covers, including mosses and lichens to expose soil, making it more vulnerable to soil erosion, fouling waterways and spreading weeds. Deer also compete with livestock for grass and grain, damage orchard crops by ring barking, damage fences and spread both livestock diseases and agriculture weeds.

- 20 There have been several recent sightings of feral deer in the shire. Sightings are reported to LLS and council's trapping contractor is engaged to control deer where possible.

Next financial year Council will be partnering with other regional councils to support Feral Deer Coordinator hosted by Tweed Shire Council. This officer will engage the community in the Byron Shire relating to deer sightings, control etc.

- 25 For more information about deer and the campaign in the Northern Rivers go to www.feraldeeralert.com.au.

Bringing Back the Bruns

Fish Habitat Restoration Program – work commencing Winter 2022

5 The *Bringing Back the Bruns* project on the Brunswick River in Mullumbimby is progressing with permitting and approvals currently being sought by project partners North Coast Local Land Services. Pending suitable weather, erosion control works by Soil Conservation Service are expected to commence in Winter 2022. Riparian revegetation will subsequently be carried out in Spring with the help of Ozfish and the Brunswick Heads Angling and Deep Sea Fishing Club.

Keeping Cats Safe at Home' Project - RSPCA NSW

10 Keeping Cats Safe at Home is a 4-year behaviour change project aiming to reduce the impacts of pet cats on wildlife. The project encourages cat owners to keep their cats safe at home either exclusively indoors or indoors and outdoors using cat enclosures or modified fencing.

15 This project has been assisted by the NSW Government through its Environmental Trust. The project is being led by RSPCA NSW, in partnership with several NSW local councils. In Byron Shire, Council compliance are supporting the project by engaging their local communities, disseminating project messaging, and assisting with local project activities.

20 The project will develop tailored behaviour change strategies for subgroups of cat owners within Byron Shire based on extensive consultation with all stakeholder groups, especially cat owners. The data collection phase of the project has just been completed – gathering information about cat impacts, specific to each Council. The RSPCA are now preparing a Council specific project proposal (for the 4 year period) with aim of changing behaviour to reduce the impacts of cats on wildlife in the Byron Shire.

Sustainable Agriculture

25 SmartFarms

The handbook for aspiring farmers - *Starting Out! - An introductory Guide to Farming in the Byron Shire* has been reprinted to allow for broader distribution, for example to local real estate agents that have contact with new landholders in the area.

SmartFarms workshops have commenced with 4 workshop co-hosted by BVL:

- 30
- You and your land – planning what to do.
 - Soils our national capital with BVL and Casino Food Co Op.
 - Integrated pest management on macadamia farms.
 - Trees for your Land.

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Two more workshops are planned over the next few months. Due to the impact of COVID-10, an extension of time to deliver the workshops has been granted by the Federal Government.

5 As part of the SmartFarms Mentoring Program, Council has partnered with Southern Cross University to deliver a Regenerative Agriculture mentoring workshop, and four field days have also been delivered:

- Misty Creek Agroforestry Farm Tour.
- Rotational grazing to reduce pasture weeds at Dingo Lane Farms.
- 10 • Organic vegetable and flower growing, hosted by Liz and Bob in Goonengerry which was filmed for a video to get out on Social media and beyond.
- Field day at The Farm.

Combating Pests and Weeds Grant (Commonwealth) 2020 - Agricultural advice, weed and pest animal control in Byron Shire

This project finishes in April 2022. Key achievements include:

- 15 • Engagement an Agricultural Extension Officer provided best practice farming information and advice to local farmers regarding drought preparation, business profitability, biosecurity, and natural resource management. A focus on regenerative farming has been a key feature of the extension as it achieves all the objectives sought. Since November 2022 the Agricultural Extension Officer has communicated
- 20 with rural land managers through 5 newspaper articles, 3 newspaper advertisements, 4 radio appearances, 31 social media posts, over 700 letters/emails to targeted landholders, 79 on-farm consultations, 14 field days/workshops/events and 7 presentations as well as developing partnerships and collaborations with 10 local organisations or businesses involved in the rural
- 25 economy.
- Development of the Byron Shire Farmers Network, which now has over 300 members signed up. This database enables targeting of information dissemination, consultation and expressions of interests to farmers of all types in the Shire including grazing, horticulture and orchards, and will continue to be a critical
- 30 resource for Council to support our rural land managers.
- A local pest animal trapper worked with local farmers trapping wild dogs, foxes and feral cats on private lands. 29 wild dogs, 18 foxes and 2 feral cats were trapped on primary production lands within Byron Shire.
- 35 • Local weeds authority, Rous County Council, controlled over 5ha of Tropical Soda Apple (the known extent of the weed) in the Byron Shire. Tropical Soda Apple was controlled at 28 properties and monitored more than 850ha of land on each of the 4 treatment runs.

- 5 • Local bush regenerators carried out strategic environmental weed control in 19.4 ha of riparian and high biodiversity areas on local farms. Weeds targeted and site selection was guided by the North Coast Strategic Weed Management Plan. Final sites were selected through expression of interest, with landholders at suitable sites committed to maintain restoration areas for a minimum of 3 years after treatment, to ensure long-term environmental and productivity benefits. Over 10 species of woody environmental weeds as well as annual weeds and exotic grasses controlled.
- 10 • Weed management was also addressed through a program that supported farmers to manage weeds using rotational grazing. Following an expression of interest process, the grant provided funds for 8 farmers to attend a site planning workshop, and for 6 farmers to purchase and install infrastructure to transition their business from conventional to rotational grazing. As a result, an additional 204ha of farmland in Byron Shire is being managed using rotational grazing.

15 Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 2: We cultivate and celebrate our diverse cultures, lifestyle and sense of community	Enhance community safety and amenity while respecting our shared values	Enhance public safety, health and liveability through the use of council's regulatory controls and services	2.4.3.6	Facilitate companion animals education
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.1	Implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.2	Revise Wildlife Corridor Mapping (Biodiversity Conservation Strategy action)
Community	Partner to	Protect and	3.1.1.6	Investigate

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Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	enhance our natural environment and biodiversity		opportunities for Council to provide incentives for landholders to conduct restoration works on their properties that will assist with long term biodiversity conservation. (Biodiversity Conservation Strategy action)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.9	Implement the Flying Fox Camp Management Plan
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.10	Continue to undertake the Flying Fox National Census
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.11	Implement the Koala Plan of Management
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.12	Partner with key stakeholders on koala research and management projects, including - NE Hinterland Koala Conservation Project - North Coast Koala Linkage and - Maximising outcomes for koalas on private land project.

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				(Koala Plan of Management action)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.13	Deliver and report on feral animal projects (Action in Pest Animal Management Plan)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.14	Deliver the pests and weeds grant funded project
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.1	Provide coastal, environmental and sustainability information and encourage and support community activities and groups
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.2	Participate in regional sustainability and environmental working groups and initiatives.
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.4	Support Friends of the Koala, Bangalow Koalas and Wires through the Regional Koala Communications Group.
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.5	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries

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Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance the health of the Shire's coastlines, estuaries, waterways and catchments	Implement Coastal Management Program	3.3.1.3	Continue Bringing Back the Brunswick River Project
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance the health of the Shire's coastlines, estuaries, waterways and catchments	Implement Coastal Management Program	3.3.1.1	Continue preparing a Coastal Management Program (CMP) in accordance with the staged process for Cape Byron to South Golden Beach
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance the health of the Shire's coastlines, estuaries, waterways and catchments	Implement Coastal Management Program	3.3.1.4	Continue preparing a Coastal Management Program (CMP) in accordance with the staged process for Cape Byron Southern Coastline (including Tallow and Belongil Creek Catchment)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Support and secure our farming future	Develop and implement strategies to support agriculture, agri-business and farmers	3.4.1.1	Finalise and commence implementation of the Agriculture Action Plan
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our	Support and secure our farming future	Develop and implement strategies to support	3.4.1.2	Continue to deliver Smart Farms – Small Grants

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natural environment		agriculture, agri-business and farmers		project
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Support and secure our farming future	Develop and implement strategies to support agriculture, agri-business and farmers	3.4.1.3	Continue to convene Agricultural Cluster Group Meetings

Recent Resolutions

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

5 N/A

Financial Considerations

Where relevant, budgets for specific projects noted above.

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

**Report No. 4.6 Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road
Avifauna Survey 2021**

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

5 **File No:** I2022/415

Summary:

Byron Bird Buddies are contracted by Council to conduct regular monitoring of the avifauna (birds) inhabiting Council managed utilities sites at West Byron STP Wetlands and Vallances Rd STP. The 2021 report is presented here.

10

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the report at Attachment 1 (E2022/36650).

15

Attachments:

1 Summary report Byron Wetlands and Vallances road Avifauna 2021 - Final 22/4/22, E2022/36650 , page 135 [↓](#)

20

Report

Byron Bird Buddies (BBB) is a not-for-profit organisation that undertakes community avifauna education, monitoring and conservation activities within Byron Shire and extends the education program into surrounding shires as required.

- 5 Byron Bird Buddies (BBB) have supplied Byron Shire Council (BSC) with avifauna monitoring reports since 2008. This 2021 Summary Report continues to document the results of monitoring the avifauna populations at Byron Wetlands (Byron Bay) and Vallances Road STP (Mullumbimby) so as to observe the trends in bird diversity and populations at both sites. Key objectives of the monitoring include:
- 10
- To identify all known bird species utilising the study sites
 - To count waterbird and shorebird numbers
 - To identify avifauna species in the NSW Threatened Species conservation Act (1995)
 - To identify shorebirds covered by International Agreements, such as the JAMBA, CAMBA & ROKAMBA agreement with Japan, China & Korea
- 15
- To identify breeding activity.

The construction of the West Byron Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) commenced in 2001. Prior to construction, the site was typically low lying coastal plain comprising paperbark swamp forests, sedge and fern lands. The wetlands now comprise a number of settling ponds with one pond (Cell H) set aside specifically for threatened avifauna species, migratory waders and regionally significant species. Byron Shire Council purchased land at Vallances Road in 2006 for the development of the Mullumbimby Sewage Treatment Plant. Since purchase, BSC have extensively re-vegetated the site with native plant species and regular weed management is being undertaken.

20

25 Results

Byron Wetlands

A total of 122 bird species were identified between 09/02/2021 & 07/12/2021. This is 38 species fewer than the year 2020 and 45 species fewer than 2019. Three threatened species were recorded from a total of 23 recorded for the site.

- 30 Reasons for the decline in bird numbers over this reporting period are likely to be a complex interaction of several factors. Lower water bird numbers were also recorded at neighbouring wildlife sanctuary, Seapeace, and the high rainfall this year may have contributed to this – with many birds moving to breed in inland areas that aren't always in suitable environmental condition. Water levels in all ponds have also been too high for shorebirds to feed. The 2019 drought and fire may also have had an impact on local bird numbers, as may significant water weed cover, which is currently being managed by Utilities staff. Ongoing monitoring is critical to identify any key trends and issues.
- 35

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Vallances Road

5 A total of 132 bird species were identified between 11/01/2021 & 17/11/2021. This is 17 species more than the year 2020, and 13 species more than 2019. This is the greatest number of avifauna species recorded at the site since 2007. Three new species recorded this year include the Painted Button Quail, Yellow-billed Spoonbill and Yellow-rumped Thornbill. Four threatened species were recorded from a total of 12 known for the site.

Next steps

10 Byron Bird Buddies meet annually with Utilities and Biodiversity staff to discuss issues relating to the management of these sites. Council is currently developing an Operational Environmental Management Plan for West Byron Wetlands and will be carrying out further ecological studies and consulting with BBB as development of this plan progresses.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.1	Implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.2	Participate in regional sustainability and environmental working groups and initiatives.
Community Objective 1: We have infrastructure, transport and services which meet our expectations	1.5: Provide continuous urban water and sewerage services within the Shire	1.5.6: Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	1.5.6.5	Develop Environmental Management System for Utilities Department

Recent Resolutions

- N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

N/A

5 Financial Considerations

N/A

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

Report No. 4.7 Renewal of MOU with Brunswick Valley Landcare

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

5 **Report Author:** Sharyn French, Manager Environmental and Economic Planning

File No: I2022/485

Summary:

Council has had a longstanding relationship with Brunswick Valley Landcare which is acknowledged through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

10 The MOU is considered for renewal every three years and is now due.

The MOU has been reviewed by both parties and an additional item has been included.

It is presented to the Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting for consideration.

15

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee recommends to Council that the Memorandum of Understanding between Brunswick Valley Landcare and Byron Shire Council (Attachment 1 – E2021/121393) be endorsed.

20 **Attachments:**

1 Brunswick Valley Landcare (BVL) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Template, E2021/121393 , page 161 [↓](#)

25

Report

Council has a longstanding relationship with Brunswick Valley Landcare which is acknowledged and formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was originally entered into in 2013.

- 5 The MOU allows both organisations to recognise and value the role each party plays in raising the awareness of natural resource management within Byron Shire.

The MOU is considered for renewal every three years and is now due.

The MOU has been reviewed by both parties and the following has been included under Council’s input:

- 10
 - Provide BVL a designated space for storage of equipment within the Mullumbimby depot for as long as this activity is considered to fit within the designated use of the land and can be carried out without impact upon Council operational requirements.
 - In the event BVL is requested to relocate, Council will use its best endeavours to offer replacement storage facilities.

- 15 It is presented to the Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting for consideration.

Next steps

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee recommends to Council that the MOU between Brunswick Valley Landcare and Council be endorsed.

Strategic Considerations

20 **Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan**

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.2: Strive to become a sustainable community	3.2.2: Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.5	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

This MOU does not entitle any legally enforceable obligations between BSC and BVL.

Financial Considerations

Funds are provided for in the 2021/22 budget.

Consultation and Engagement

Council staff and Brunswick Valley Landcare staff were consulted in the preparation of this report.

