

Notice of Meeting

Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting

A Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting of Byron Shire Council will be held as follows:

Venue	Conference Room, Station Street, Mullumbimby
Date	Tuesday, 13 May 2025
Time	4:30 PM

Shannon Burt
Director Sustainable Environment & Economy

I2025/653
Distributed 06/05/25



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)

Committee members are reminded that they should declare and manage all conflicts of interest in respect of any matter on this Agenda, in accordance with the [Code of Conduct](#).

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.

OATH AND AFFIRMATION FOR COUNCILLORS

Councillors are reminded of the oath of office or affirmation of office made at or before their first meeting of the council in accordance with Clause 233A of the Local Government Act 1993. This includes undertaking the duties of the office of councillor in the best interests of the people of Byron Shire and the Byron Shire Council and faithfully and impartially carrying out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested under the Act or any other Act to the best of one's ability and judgment.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BUSINESS OF MEETING

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY

3. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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Sustainable Environment and Economy

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MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Report No. 3.1 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9 May 2024

5

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

File No: I2025/604

Summary

10 This report provides the minutes of the Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting of 9 May 2024 for confirmation.

RECOMMENDATION:

15 **That the minutes of the Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9 May 2024 be acknowledged by the incoming Committee.**

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1

Report

This report provides the minutes of the Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting of 9 May 2024. The minutes are available for viewing here:

[Minutes of Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting - Thursday, 9 May 2024](#)

5 **Report to Council**

The minutes were reported to Council on **Comments**

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

Res 24-299:

- 10 1. Notes the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9 May 2024.
2. Determines whether the Committee or Management Recommendation(s) be adopted regarding Report No. 4.3.

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

Report No. 4.1 2023 Koala Activity Monitoring

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

5 **Report Author:** Joanne Green, Project Officer - Koala

File No: I2025/312

Summary

10 This report presents the results of Council’s 2023 koala activity monitoring program. Koala activity monitoring has been repeated every 3-5 years since 2016 in the Coastal Koala Plan of Management area. In 2023 the monitoring program was expanded to an additional 20 sites.

15 In the 2023 surveys, evidence of koala activity was recorded at 23 of the 76 sites (30%) across Byron Coast, with a mean activity level of 5.6%. Only 56% of all sites contained primary koala food trees.

RECOMMENDATION:

20 **That the Biodiversity and Agricultural Advisory Committee notes the Koala Activity Monitoring Report 2023 (Attachment 1 E2024/12210).**

Attachments:

25 1 REPORT Koala Activity Monitoring 2023, E2024/12210 , page 12  

Report

Background

5 The Byron Coast Koala Plan of Management (KPOM) was adopted by resolution of Council on 4 August 2016 and approved under State Environmental Planning Policy SEPP (Koala Habitat Protection) 2021 which commenced 17 March 2021.

This report details the methods used under the Koala Plan of management (KPOM) to survey for koala activity in Byron Shire. These surveys have been carried out every 3-5 years since the KPOM was adopted in 2016. The recognised method for survey for koalas is called the Regularised Grid-based Spot Assessment Technique (SAT for short).

10 The 2023 Koala Activity Survey was completed between September and November 2023. The survey work was undertaken by the Biodiversity team, with additional contractor costs and equipment funded under the NSW Koala Strategy (\$32,604). Field surveys replicated the 56 sites previously surveyed in 2021, with the addition of 20 new sites, so a total of 76 sites across the coastal KPOM area.

15 Surveys used identification of koala scats to assess koala occupancy and activity level over the 2023 koala breeding season. Additionally, DCCEEW installed song meters at selected sites throughout the shire as part of their Tier 2 NSW Koala Strategy to detect calling male koalas during the breeding season. The song meter program is being extended throughout the Northern Rivers region and state, and results are expected in the coming months. A report on Byron Shire's survey results is in preparation in partnership with DCCEEW and will be shared with stakeholders later in the year.

Key issues

25 In the 2023 surveys, evidence of koala activity (any site with koala faecal pellets under a tree, as per the SAT survey methodology) was recorded at 23 of the 76 sites (30%) across Byron Coast, with a mean activity level of 5.6% (Attachment 1).

30 While this activity appears low, it's important to note that only 56% of all sites contained primary koala food trees (PKFTs) as part of the 30-tree method. Survey sites have been selected across a grid as a requirement of the SAT methodology. This means that survey sites can be selected in areas with marginal koala habitat. Sites have remained in consistent locations since they have been undertaken by Council.

To continue to maintain active, healthy populations in Byron Shire, Council is working on several koala conservation programs, including 42.5ha of koala habitat restoration, use of LED road signs and lighting in koala road strike blackspots and regional community education campaigns relating to dog attack and koala road strike.

35 Next steps

Staff are hoping to carry out the next round of surveys in 2026 and are currently seeking funding from the NSW koala strategy funding.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.3	Partner with the Northern Rivers Koala Network and Northern Rivers Koala Partnership to progress delivery of Byron Shire Koala Plan of Management and NSW Koala Strategy
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.9	Seek funding to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Coastal Koala Plan of Management, Pest Animal Management Plan and Flying Fox Camp Management Plan

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

5 **State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021 (SEPP 2021)**

Chapter 4 Koala Habitat protection.

This Chapter aims to encourage the conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to support a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline.

10 **(includes SEPP 2020 Chapter 3 Koala Habitat Protection),**

Relevant sections: Part 4.2 Development control of koala habitats (development assessment in koala habitat), Part 4.3 Koala Plans of Management.

Byron Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.1

ACTION16: Implement monitoring program of the Byron coast koala population.

In the KPOM the cost of doing SAT surveys was estimated at \$5-10,000 every 2 years, dependant on methodology. Today the actual cost is around \$25 – 35,000 and Council seeks grant funding to do this.

5 **Financial Considerations**

As discussed in the report.

Consultation and Engagement

Results of this and previous surveys reported at the Koala Conversations – Regional Koala Conference Lismore March 2024 by Caitlan Weatherstone.

10



2023 Byron Coast Koala Plan of Management Monitoring Report June 2024 Byron Shire Council

Executive summary

Field surveys replicated the 56 sites surveyed in 2021, with the addition of 20 new sites, and were completed using the Regularised Grid-based Spot Assessment Technique (RG-bSAT; Phillips & Callaghan 2011).

Sampling was undertaken between September and November 2024. A total of 76 sites were surveyed; 56 of the sites surveyed in 2021, and 20 new sites.

Evidence of koala activity (any site where koala faecal pellets were recording under a tree as per the SAT survey methodology) was recorded at 23 of the 76 sites (30%) across Byron Coast, with a mean activity level of 5.6%. Only 56% of all sites contained primary koala food trees (PKFTs) as part of the 30-tree method.

One koala was opportunistically sighted during the survey period, observed resting in a tallwood, though none were within the survey sites.

Background

Koalas (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) have a long history of occupancy in the Byron Shire. They were recently up-listed in NSW and Federally (in NSW, QLD & ACT) to 'Endangered', after it was estimated that over 60,000 koalas died in the NSW bushfire season of 2019/ 20. The Byron Coast Koala Plan of Management (BCKPoM) was implemented in 2019, and now acts as a guide to managing the koala and its habitats.

Koala activity and occupancy assessments of the 13,790ha coastal portion of the Byron Local Government Area (LGA) were completed in 2011/12, 2016, 2021 and now 2023. The next monitoring round is proposed for 2026.

Status of Byron Coast Koalas

The Byron Coast Koala Habitat Study, conducted 12 years ago (Biolink 2012), identified a relatively small population of approximately 240 koalas to be utilising about 1,750ha of highly fragmented habitat distributed patchily along the coast and adjacent hinterland. While the estimated number of koalas was both unexpected and encouraging, the low habitat occupancy rate and apparent isolation of subpopulations suggested that the population may be unsustainable over the longer-term in the absence of improved connectivity and an increase in habitat cover. Based on an optimal occupancy rate of approximately 50% of available habitat, a minimum area of approximately 2,800ha of well-connected koala habitat was estimated to be required to ensure a long-term sustainable future for koalas inhabiting the Byron coast (Biolink 2012).



Since these previous estimates were made, the Northern Rivers region has endured some of the worst wildfire and flooding events in history, extended periods of hot and dry weather, and koala admissions to Friends of the Koala hospital are at an all-time high. In the wake of these disastrous events, the NSW Government has enacted the NSW Koala Strategy, delivering millions of dollars towards koalas in the Northern Rivers region and hoping to double koala numbers in the state. A Northern Rivers Koala Network (NRKN) was formed, consisting of over 20 koala stakeholders in the region coming together with a common goal to conserve the koala in the Northern Rivers.

To align with the State and neighbouring LGAs, Byron Shire has now committed to conducting koala monitoring surveys every 2-3 years (At least 2x per koala generation of 6 years) to monitor trends in their activity levels and occupancy, with enhanced methodological capabilities, using new technologies such as drones and sound meters alongside previously used Spot Assessment Technique (SAT) methodology.

Introduction to the 2023 Koala Monitoring Project

The aims of the 2023 koala monitoring project in the BCKPoM area were to:

- Engage with Byron Coast landholders to gain property access
- monitor the 63 previous survey sites for koala activity and occupancy, as well as create and monitor 20 new sites
- answer the question “Is this site currently occupied by koalas?”
- record koala activity using SAT survey methodology
- record koala occupancy using song meters (completed as part of a separate study)
- compare koala activity level and occupancy over the last 12 years
- compare koala records over the last 12 years
- compare koala habitat over the last 12 years
- work closely with and share results with koala stakeholders, project partners, the community, neighbouring Shires and the NRKN group.

Methodology – SAT surveys

The SAT methodology was chosen to ensure the koala monitoring survey was standard, efficient, repeatable and comparable with other surveys across Australia.

The SAT surveys were conducted during spring between September - November 2023 by Council staff and other ecologists.

The SAT survey methodology involved a 2-minute person search for koala scat of 30 trees (1m from base; diameter at breast height {DBH} >100mm) around a centre tree, consistent with the standardised method outlined by Phillips and Callaghan (2011).



Over 130 sites were selected in a 1km grid within the survey area as potential sites and 76 of those sites were completed (56 original, 20 new) on council land, National Park, Nature Reserve and private tenure; depending on access, permissions and habitat suitability (Fig. 1).

Seven of the original sites were not completed and another four of the original sites had to be moved due to access issues, no remnant vegetation nearby (including primary koala food trees {PKFTs}) or permission issues. Twenty new sites were chosen within the grid to increase sampling size and expand to habitat restoration areas.

Song meter minis were also deployed in the Byron Shire in the same timeframe by Department of Climate, Environment, Energy and Water (DCEEW) as a means to determine koala presence/ absence, and those results will be presented in a different report.

The Study Area

The Byron Coast koala planning area (KPA) comprised approximately 13,790 hectares of land located along the coastal portion of the Byron LGA, extending from the LGA's boundary with Tweed Shire in the north to its boundary with Ballina Shire in the south. The western boundary was defined to delimit that area within which development pressure and other land uses with the potential to impact upon koalas were perceived to be greatest (Biolink 2016).

Informed by the 2012 Habitat Study, the KPA was divided into two Koala Management Areas (KMA); southern and northern; recognising two distinct koala populations. Genetic studies have established that differences occur between koala populations on either side of the Brunswick River, those to the north being affiliated with the Tweed – Southeast Queensland koala genome, while those to the south represent a different genetic lineage most likely associated with or derived from populations in the Lismore – Ballina area.

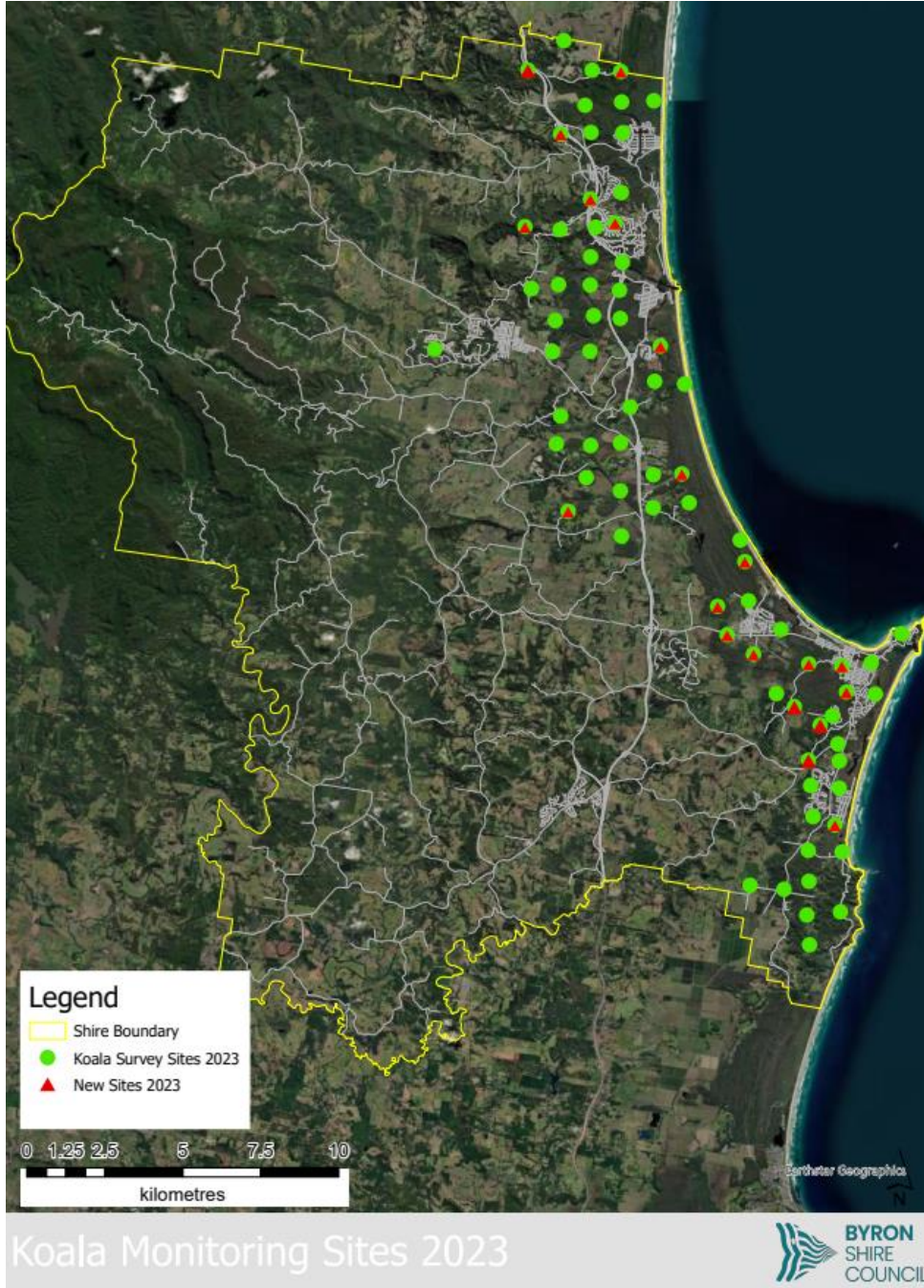


Figure 1. 2023 Koala Monitoring site locations along the BCKPoM area (red dot = new sites)



Results

2023 Koala Activity and Occupancy

Seventy-six field sites at 1,000 m intervals were surveyed between Mullumbimby in the west, Yelgun in the north and Broken Head in the south. 30% of sites (n=23) were recorded as ‘active’ or ‘occupied’ for koalas as per SAT methodology (Table 1). Only 9% (n=7) had high koala activity levels >22.5%, indicating a significant resident/ breeding population at those sites (Fig.2).

The mean activity level of all sites was 5.6%. When the 20 new sites were excluded, the average activity level of the persistent sites was slightly higher at 6.3%.

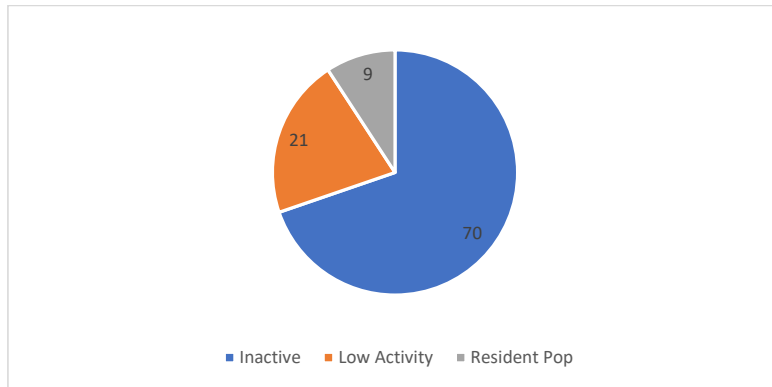


Figure 2. 2023 Byron Coast Koala Activity results (n=76)

The majority, 91% (n=21), of active sites were found in the southern KMA between Brunswick Heads and Broken Head. The highest koala activity levels were recorded at sites closest to Byron Bay township; in Suffolk Park, Byron Bay, Myocum and Skinners Shoot. North of the Brunswick River had a high occurrence of inactive sites compared to south. Just over half of all the sites (56.5%; n=43) had PKFT’s present.

One (1) live koala was observed in a Tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*) incidentally during the field program, about 250m from an active SAT site in Myocum.

Table 1. 2023 Active/ Occupied koala sites

2023 Active/occupied sites	KMA	Trend 2021 -2023
BY16	southern	No Change
BY17	southern	No Change
BY2	southern	No Change
BY24	southern	No Change
BY34	southern	No Change
BY4	southern	No Change



BY50	southern	No Change
BY52	southern	Uptake
BY100	northern	New Site
BY136	southern	New Site
BY137	southern	New Site
BY15	southern	No Change
BY11	southern	Uptake
BY74	northern	Uptake
BY53	southern	Uptake
BY57	southern	Uptake
BY66	southern	No Change
BY20	southern	No Change
BY14	southern	No Change
BY35	southern	No Change
BY131	northern	New Site
BY62	southern	Uptake
BY65	southern	Uptake

2011 – 2023 Koala Activity Comparison

When compared with results from 12 years ago in 2011, the number of sites with resident koala populations (high activity) in 2023 have declined by almost half (from 16% - 9%) and the number of sites with low activity recorded has nearly doubled (13% - 21%). The number of active sites has remained relatively stable between 30 - 40% over the last 12 years (Fig.3).

When compared with results from 2 years ago in 2021, the 2023 results show the same percentage of sites with resident koala populations at 9%. Similarly, there was the same percentage of active sites in each KMA (91% in southern KMA and 9% in the northern).

Activity level percentages could not be compared for all years due to missing data in 2016 (Rapid SAT methodology), although 2011, 2021 and 2023 could be (Table 2).

Table 2. Summary of koala activity over 12 years on Byron Coast

Year of Survey	No. of sites	No. of active sites	Activity Level
2023	76	23	5.6%
2021	58	23	6.1%
2016	58	15	n/a
2011	63	18	11.6%

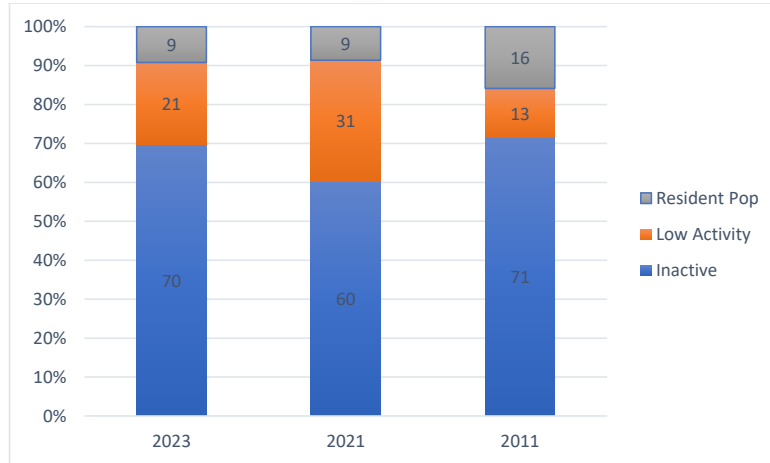


Figure 3. Byron Coast Koala Activity Results over 12 years; 2023, 2021 & 2011

2011 - 2023 Koala Occupancy Comparison

Fifty-six sites could be compared for koala occupancy across all 4 survey periods: 2011, 2016, 2021 and 2023 (Fig. 4).

Majority of these sites, 76% (n=10), north of the Brunswick River (in the northern KMA) had no koala occupancy recorded over the last 12-year period. Only 6% (n=3) of sites recorded koala persistence over the last 12 years in the southern KMA (Brunswick Heads – Byron Bay area). About half (51%) of sites recorded no change from the previous survey.

Seven sites were found to be newly occupied by koalas in 2023 and were not in previous years. Majority (6 out of 7) of these uptake sites were found in the southern KMA.

Ten sites were found to be occupied by koalas in 2021 and were not in 2023. Majority of these reduction sites were found in the centre of the CKPoM area; between Tyagarah, Mullumbimby and Brunswick Heads.

The total number of active/ occupied sites in 2011 was 18, 15 in 2016 and 23 in 2021 and 2023 (Table 3).

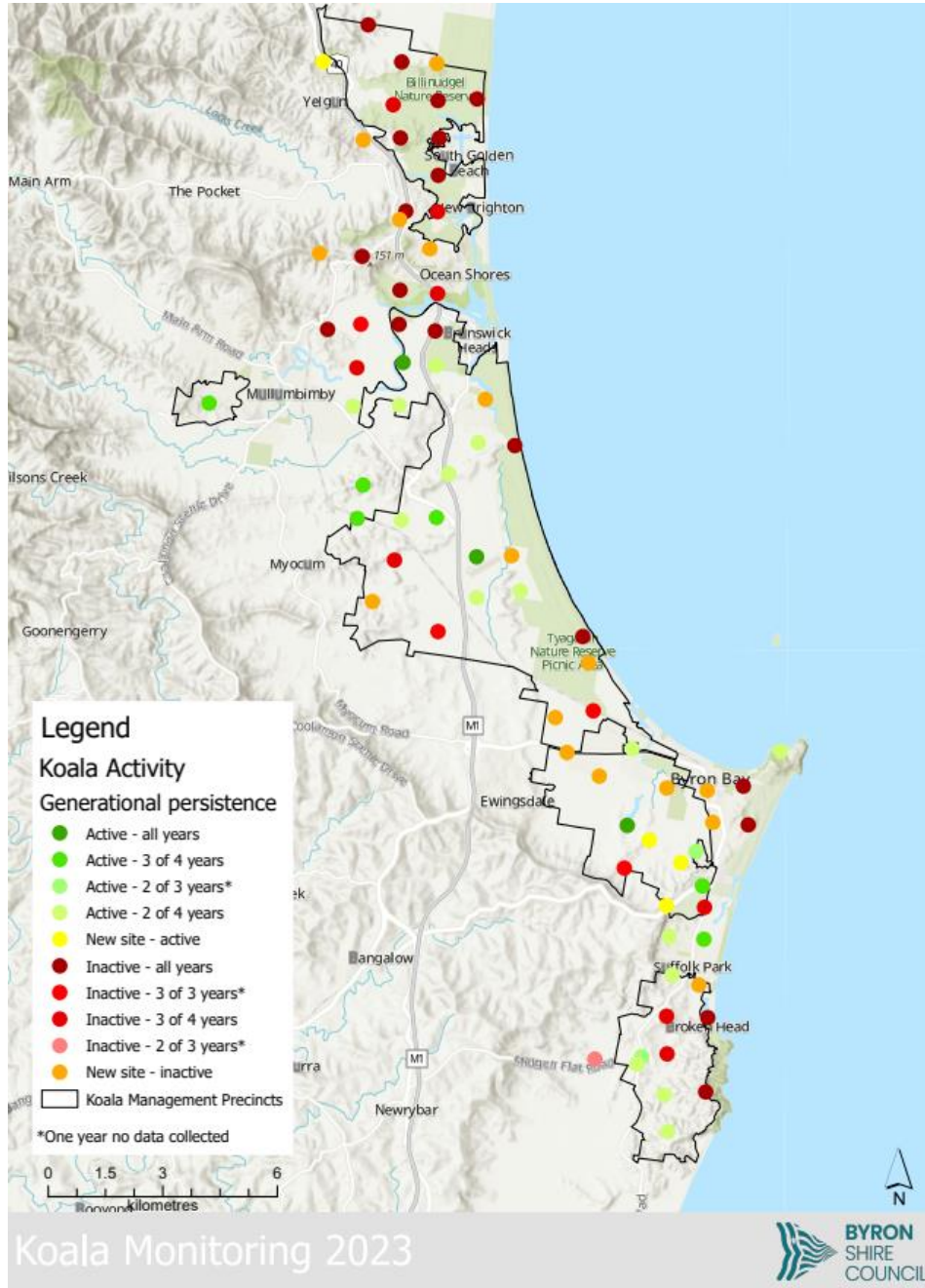


Figure 4. Koala occupancy comparison over 12 years in the BCKPoM area; 2011, 2016, 2021 and 2023; Total 76 sites (active= scat recorded, inactive= no scat recorded)



Table 3. Details of Byron Coast monitoring sites and their koala occupancy status surveyed over 12 years; 2011, 2016, 2021 and 2023.

Site No.	Active 2011?	Active 2016?	Active 2021?	Active 2023?	Trend 2016-2021	Trend 2021 - 2023	Site moved to PKFT 2021?	Site moved 2023?	PKFT present 2021?	PKFT present 2023?
BY 10	no	yes	yes	no data	No Change	no data	yes	n/a	yes	n/a
BY 11	no	no	no	yes	No Change	Uptake	no	no	no	no
BY 12	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 14	no	no	yes	yes	Uptake	No Change	yes	no	yes	yes
BY 15	no	no	yes	yes	Uptake	No Change	yes	no	yes	yes
BY 16	no	yes	yes	yes	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 17	yes	no	yes	yes	Uptake	No Change	yes	no	yes	yes
BY 18	no	yes	no	no	Reduction	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 19	no	no	no	no data	No Change	no data	no	n/a	no	n/a
BY 2	no	no	yes	yes	Uptake	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 20	no	n/a	yes	yes	no data	No Change	yes	no	yes	yes
BY 21	yes	yes	no data	no data	no data	no data	no	n/a	yes	n/a
BY 24	yes	yes	yes	yes	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 27	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 3	no	no	no data	no data	no data	no data	no	n/a	no	n/a
BY 32	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 34	no	no	yes	yes	Uptake	No Change	no	yes	yes	yes
BY 35	no	no	yes	yes	Uptake	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 36	no	no	no data	no data	no data	no data	no	n/a	yes	n/a
BY 38	no	n/a	no	no	no data	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 39	no	n/a	no	no	no data	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 4	no	no	yes	yes	Uptake	No change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 45	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 46	yes	no	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	yes	yes

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL



BY 47	yes	yes	no	no	Reduction	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 49	no	yes	no	no	Reduction	No Change	no	no	yes	no
BY 5	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 50	yes	yes	yes	yes	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 52	yes	yes	no	yes	Reduction	Uptake	no	no	yes	yes
BY 53	yes	no	no	yes	No Change	Uptake	no	no	yes	yes
BY 54	yes	yes	yes	no	No Change	Reduction	no	no	yes	yes
BY 56	yes	yes	yes	no	No Change	Reduction	yes	no	no	no
BY 57	yes	no	no	yes	No Change	Uptake	yes	no	yes	yes
BY 6	no	n/a	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	no	no
BY 60	yes	no	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	no	no
BY 61	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 62	yes	yes	no	yes	Reduction	Uptake	no	no	yes	yes
BY 63	yes	no	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	yes	yes
BY 64	yes	no	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	yes	yes
BY 65	no	no	no	yes	No Change	Uptake	no	no	no	no
BY 66	yes	yes	yes	yes	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 67	yes	yes	no	no	Reduction	No Change	no	no	yes	no
BY 69	no	no	no	no	No Change	No change	no	no	no	no
BY 7	yes	yes	no	no	Reduction	No Change	yes	no	yes	yes
BY 70	no	n/a	no	no	no data	No Change	no	no	no	yes
BY 71	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	no
BY 72	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 73	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 74	no	no	no	yes	No Change	Uptake	no	yes	yes	yes
BY 75	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	yes	no	yes
BY 76	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	yes	no	yes
BY 77	no	no	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	yes	yes
BY 78	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL



BY 8	no	no	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	no	no
BY 80	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 81	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 83	no	no	yes	no	Uptake	Reduction	no	no	yes	yes
BY 84	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	no	no
BY 85	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	no
BY 86	no	no	no data	no data	no data	no data	no	n/a	yes	n/a
BY 87	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 88	no	no	no data	no data	no data	no data	no	n/a	yes	n/a
BY 89	no	no	no	no	No Change	No Change	no	no	yes	yes
BY 130	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY99	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY100	no data	no data	no data	yes	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY136	no data	no data	no data	yes	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY107	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY104	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY106	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY113	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY114	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY119	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY108	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY137	no data	no data	no data	yes	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY120	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY122	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY124	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY110	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
BY134	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY126	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	no
BY131	no data	no data	no data	yes	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes



BY12 1	no data	no data	no data	no	no data	New Site	n/a	new site	n/a	yes
No. of Active Sites	18	15	23	23						

Koala Records Comparison over 10 years

In the Byron Shire, the number of koala records rose after the 2011 period and has remained relatively constant since, peaking in 2019-2021 at 766 records, hovering between 500 and 800 records each year (Fig.5). Koala records were concentrated in residential areas such as Byron Bay – Suffolk Park, Ewingsdale, Tyagarah, Bangalow, the Byron hinterland and along major roads (Fig.6). Data in the last 2 year period (2022-2024) is still being loaded into the Bionet system so these numbers are expected to rise.

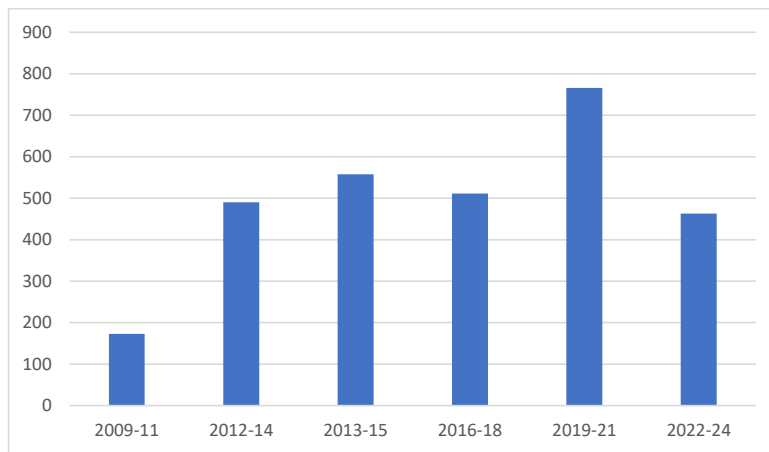


Figure 5. Number of Koala Records in the Byron Shire over the last 15 years (Source: Bionet Wildlife Atlas and Friends of the Koala)

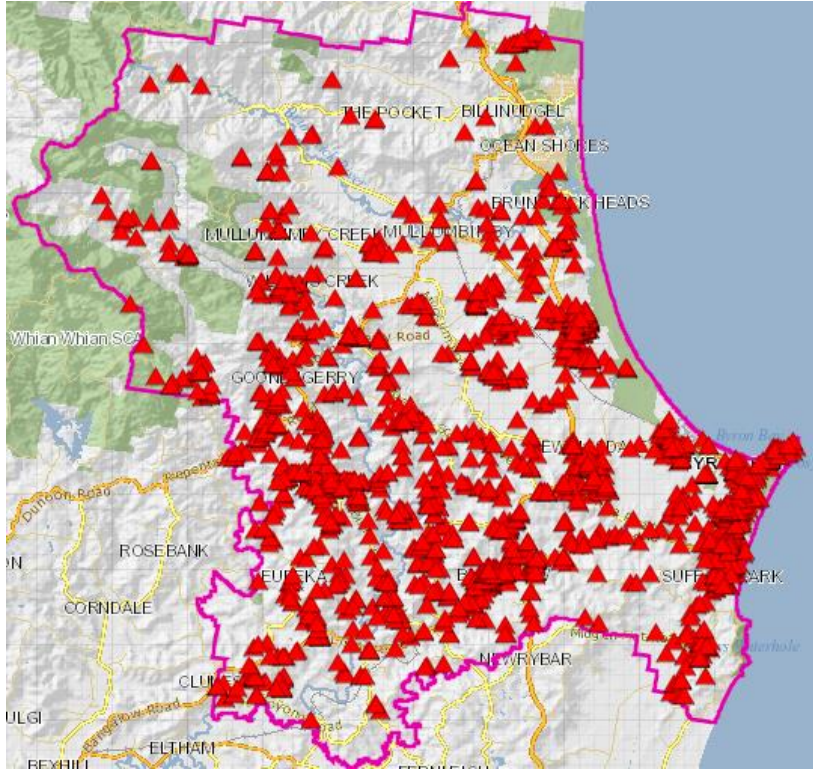


Figure 6. Distribution of Koala records over the last 15 years in the Byron Shire
 (Source: Bionet Wildlife Atlas)

Discussion

Byron’s coastal koalas are persisting in highly fragmented urban and agricultural landscapes. Byron Coast’s koala activity has remained relatively stable over the last 2 years, but has declined over the last 12 years. Between 2011 and 2023, the percentage of sites with ‘high activity’ levels declined by 40%. This could indicate a reduced population since KPOM surveys commenced in 2011.

As indicated by historical koala records, there is a significant koala population also persisting in Byron’s hinterland areas, although this is not within the CKPoM areas.

In 2023, koala occupancy showed its biggest uptake in the southern KMA (Byron Bay - Broken Head), showed its biggest reduction in the southern KMA (Mullumbimby – Brunswick Heads – Tyagarah), and showed very little change in the northern KMA. This could indicate dynamism in populations south of Brunswick River and stagnancy to the north.

Only 56% of the SAT sites had PKFT’s present, which may be one of the reasons why Byron Coast are seeing so few active sites.



The historical koala records echoed what we found during our surveys, limited records north of the Brunswick River. They showed a big jump up in LGA-wide records from 2012, and small fluctuations since. The increase in koala records 2019-2021 could be a side effect of the covid-19 pandemic sandwiched by natural disasters – as there may have been more opportunities for humans to cross paths with koalas. The data from the last two years is expected to rise as more records are added to the Bionet database. These historical records need to be taken with a grain of salt, as they are more likely to indicate where humans are spending their time (in townships and on major roads), rather than koalas.

Long term, regular monitoring will be highly valuable in managing our koala populations into the future. More data will give us a better picture of trends over time, thus we will be striving to increase our survey efforts and monitor their populations every 2-3 years (two monitoring events each 5-6 year period). Our next koala monitoring survey is planned for 2026, and includes the 20 new sites. We wish to continue using new technologies to determine koala occupancy more efficiently and accurately, so we aim to incorporate sound meter technologies alongside SAT surveys into the future.

Drivers of mortality and other threats also need to be adequately assessed, especially in the sensitive coastal areas susceptible to coastal development, as well as Byron's hinterland which can be sensitive to further fragmentation from clearing and other agricultural activities.

With the decline in koala activity on the Byron Coast over the last 11 years, a review and update of the CKPoM may be necessary to address these threats adequately and thoroughly assess koala population dynamics, activity level, distribution, occupancy and threats.

We are very fortunate to have a community who is actively engaged with koala issues, both in planting and restoring koala habitat, recording koala habitat restoration sites on the Atlas of Living Australia's (ALA) Restoration Hub, and recording koala sightings to the Friends of the Koala and ALA websites.

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Byron Shire Council 2015, Byron Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management, Byron Shire Council, Mullumbimby, NSW.

Phillips, S. and Callaghan, J. 2011, The Spot Assessment Technique: a tool for determining localised levels of habitat use by Koalas *Phascolarctos cinereus*, *Australian Zoologist*, vol 35 (3), pp.774 – 780

End of Report.

Report No. 4.2 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Liz Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

5 **File No:** I2025/239

Summary:

10 This report provides the Biodiversity Advisory Committee with an update on current key projects and programs being undertaken by the Biodiversity and Agriculture team, in accordance with Council's Operational Plan, Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Agriculture Action Plan, Koala Plan of Management, Pest Animal Management Plan and Flying Fox Camp Management Plan, including:

- Bringing Back the Bruns projects
 - Wildlife Corridor Mapping and website
 - Koala Conservation
 - 15 • Pest Animal Management Program
 - Sustainable Agriculture Program
 - Flying Fox Management
 - 20 • Cockatoos and Curlews project
-

RECOMMENDATION:

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

Report

Bringing Back the Bruns Initiative

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

- 5 **4.29** *Continue to develop and implement 'Bringing back the Bruns' branded projects to address improvements in riparian and instream habitat, water quality, fish passage and habitat connectivity on Council and private land along the Brunswick River and its tributaries.*
- 10 ['Bringing back the Bruns'](#) is a program that aims to rehabilitate the Brunswick River, estuary and catchment. It involves us working with partners and the community on a series of projects. Projects include bush regeneration and restoration of the riparian corridor, addressing riverbank erosion, reconnecting fish habitats, improving soil health and working with and supporting landholders. This program is ongoing and generally delivered through
- 15 partnership arrangements and grant funding opportunities. Some of the current Bringing Back the Bruns projects are described below.

Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative (NRWI)

- 20 The NRWI project is a \$300,000 habitat restoration project, funded by DPIRD via Rous County Council, aimed at restoring natural hydrologic functions in upper catchment areas that deliver improvements in stream bank condition and river health and contribute to reduced flood risk within the catchment.

Byron Shire Council's project started in October 2024 and, to date 11 sites have been identified for restoration works and planting. These include 8 sites on private land and 3 Council-managed sites.

- 25 Contractors have been engaged for work at all sites, landholder agreements signed and progress monitoring set up. Works completed to date include development of site action plans, fencing remnant vegetation and planting sites, site preparation and preliminary bush regeneration work. The bulk of the planting will occur April-May 2025 (subject to weather), with follow up maintenance until September 2026.
- 30 Projects of this scale, involving large numbers of landholders, are complex and time-consuming to deliver, but provide our best opportunity to achieve habitat restoration and tree planting at scale, as the bulk of suitable land in Byron Shire is in private ownership. Projects such as these not only get on-ground work done, but are also effective in kick-starting landholders on their regeneration journey. Many landholders who have received
- 35 Council grants for restoration in the past continue to restore their properties using their own funds and new skills, as well as applying for more grants.

Caring for Catchments

5 Brunswick Valley Landcare are continuing to deliver the Caring for Catchments project at six sites in the Brunswick River catchment. Sites were selected, together with NRWI sites (above) through a landholder expression of interest process, with sites prioritised subject to position in the catchment, impact of the project on catchment restoration, landholder capacity/willingness, proximity to wildlife corridors and inclusion of working farms to demonstrate the benefits of catchment restoration to farm productivity and resilience. Contractors have been engaged for this work and works are underway.

Marshalls Creek Foreshore Remediation Project

10 DPIRD - Fisheries in partnership with Council as part of the NSW NEAP Program have progressed with planning for a site at New Brighton on Marshalls Creek for future erosion and bank stabilisation works. Bank undercutting from wash and current scour is threatening public access to the foreshore and the Council Road. Public trampling of the riverbank is also having an impact on the stability of the area. The erosion at this location
15 was also identified as a key concern by communities in Ocean Shores, New Brighton and South Golden Beach during the recent master plan consultation.

DPIRD - Fisheries have engaged a consultant to identify planning pathways and approvals advice and to develop detailed designs for foreshore remediation. A consultant was engaged in January 2025 and the project will be completed by June 2025. Council is
20 supporting the project through provision of advice, data, information, and staff review of designs.

Brunswick Valley Riparian Planting Booklet

25 Council partnered with Brunswick Valley Landcare to update and reprint the *Planting Rivers and Streams in the Brunswick Valley Catchment* booklet that was developed in the 1990s. The new booklet gives simple, updated information on what species to plant where in riparian zones and how to plant. The new booklet focusses on keystone riparian species that held banks and slopes well in the recent floods.

30 Printing of the booklet was funded by BVL and a \$3,000 grant from DCCEEW. The booklet was launched at Kohinur Hall on 14 February, with presentations from BVL, Council and Local Land Services staff on riparian restoration, and a walk and talk along the creek to discuss on-site restoration strategies.



Wildlife Corridor Mapping and Biodiversity DCP review

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

1.18 Update Council's wildlife corridor mapping and liaise with other NRJO Councils to ensure consistency in wildlife corridor mapping across the region.

- 5 The Byron Shire Wildlife Corridor System was adopted by Council on 7 December 2023 (Resolution 23-594). In 2024, Council received a \$10,000 grant from DCCEEW to develop a user-friendly GIS web map to showcase the Byron Shire wildlife corridor network at an individual property scale.

10 The web map was presented to the community on 14 February 2025, together with the launch of the Revegetating Streams in the Brunswick Catchment booklet. The map (image below) enables people to zoom in on their property, find out information about the plants and animals that might use their local wildlife corridor, and find information on how to restore wildlife habitat. Map users can explore and print a list of native plant species suited to their local area, as well as follow links for more information on wildlife habitat restoration.

15

The wildlife corridor map is a useful conservation planning tool for Council and conservation groups such as Brunswick Valley Landcare. The map has been used to guide site selection for multiple current private landholder habitat restoration projects, including the Northern Rivers Watershed project, the Caring for Catchments project and the Koala Arks project.

20



Wildlife Corridors Interactive Map

48 Myocum Ridge Road, MYOCUM
Lot 1 DP1251207

What to Plant:
The rich soils here create perfect conditions for rainforest plants to thrive, transitioning to wet sclerophyll forest on the higher ridges. This list is just a small selection of the plants that will grow on these soils:

Plant Species	Habit	Growth Rate	Height	Availability	Flower Colour
Native Ginger (Alpinea caerulea and Alpinea arundelliana)	Shrub	Medium	< 0.5m	Easy to propagate.	Pink/White
Cunjevoi Lily (Alocasia brisbanensis)	Lily	Fast	0.5m - 1.0m	Easy to propagate.	Green/Yellow
Dianella (Dianella caerulea)	Herb/Ground Orchid	Fast	< 0.5m	Easy to propagate.	Blue
Rainforest Lomandra (Lomandra spicata)	Grass-like Plant	Slow	< 0.5m	Easy to propagate.	Yellow/Purple
Native Violet (Viola hederacea)	Herb/Ground Orchid	Medium	< 0.5m	Easy to propagate.	White/Purple

500 m

See web site for license constraints. | Liz Caddick - Biodiversity Team Leader SEE - E... Powered by Esri

Koalas

Koala Habitat Restoration

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

- 5 **3.9** *Seek grant funding opportunities for combined Council-private landholder restoration and revegetation projects on private land.*

Council has received a grant of \$85,000 from the NSW Koala Strategy to restore 42.5ha of koala habitat in Byron Shire, under the Northern Rivers Ark Project. To date 8 sites have been identified, in Yelgun, Myocum, Mullumbimby and Tyagarah. Staff are currently in the process of engaging contractors, setting up site monitoring and starting work.

- 10 Field Guide to Koala Habitat Trees of Far North Coast NSW

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

4.13 *Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships.*

- 15 In 2024, Byron Shire Council received a grant of \$10,000 from DCCEEW to develop, deliver, and distribute a Field Guide to Koala Habitat Trees of Far North Coast NSW. This project came about following regular koala activity surveys carried out by Byron Shire Council and other local councils, where field staff and other conservation practitioners expressed a need for a field identification guide to koala habitat trees that is geographically
20 specific to the Northern Rivers.

This collaborative project was co-funded by WWF Australia and included input from expert local botanists and koala conservation practitioners, to develop and test a taxonomic key and simple descriptions of eucalypt and related genera growing in this region, as well as other sclerophyll species commonly found in koala habitat survey sites.

- 25 200 copies of the field guide were printed in March 2025, and these are being distributed to conservation practitioners in the region for use and testing, with a second print run planned for later in the year. DCCEEW has since engaged a contractor to deliver workshops on how to use the guide in the Northern Rivers region.

Koala Vehicle Strike

- 30 *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions:*

4.25 *Work with RMS, local wildlife groups and Regional Koala Communications Group to identify road strike hotspots in Byron Shire.*

4.26 *Seek funding for road strike mitigation trials at priority road strike hotspots.*

- 35 **4.27** *Consider roadkill mitigation measures and opportunities to improve wildlife connectivity into design work for new roads and road asset upgrades.*

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.2

- Staff are continuing to progress the Koala LED radar speed signs project, funded by a \$185,029 grant from the NSW Koala Strategy, which includes variable message signs and pavement treatments at koala road strike blackspots on Coolamon Scenic Rd, Coorabell Rd and Broken Head Rd. LED radar speed signs were installed at the three sites in
- 5 October 2024. Pavement painting is complete at Broken Head Rd and partly complete at Coorabell Rd (delayed by wet weather). The new signs have been well received by the community and driver speed data is being downloaded every 6 months and sent to DCCEEW, who are investigating the impact and effectiveness of different types of wildlife signs across the region.
- 10 Staff are currently working with DCCEEW and Transport for NSW to seek support for lighting and signage on Hinterland Way-Granuaille Rd, to the north of Bangalow, which is a known black spot for koala road strike. TfNSW are a concurrence agency for any infrastructure installed along this road, and their Traffic Engineering - Guidance and Delineation (TEGD) team have advised that they would not support Council installing
- 15 Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) on Hinterland Way at this time. This is because the TEGD team are developing a Transport for NSW Enhanced Warning Signage Technical Direction which will create a standard fleet of koala VASs that can be rolled out on any State road in the future. The design and development of these VASs is likely to be complete by July/August this year and trialled from Sept/Oct this year.
- 20 TfNSW have flagged Hinterland Way with the TEGD team as a possible trial site for them to consider. This would be subject to the site being suitable for accurate collection of key data, including animal presence, animal strikes, speed and traffic data.
- The TEGD team have consulted with the Qld Dept of Transport and Main Roads on what is and isn't working with Qld's standard koala VAS signage, which has brought about a
- 25 focus on trying to create signage that is targeted at reducing speeds at optimal times to reduce koala strikes, rather than reducing speeds at all times (of the year) with diminishing effect over time. The VASs being developed will likely be seasonal LED warning signage (picturing a koala) that will be activated during breeding season only with wording indicating koalas are 'active' at that time. This may be supported by additional speed zone
- 30 signage indicating a 'koala zone'. Staff have been advised by this region's TfNSW Community and Safety Partner that we'll get an update on progress in June 2025.

Northern Rivers Koala Network (NRKN)

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

- 35 **4.13** *Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships.*

The Northern Rivers Koala Network (NRKN) is a group representing koala conservation practitioners/organisation in the Northern Rivers, including local councils, State Government, Landcare, Friends of the Koala, WWF, IFAW, Local Land Services,

40 Conservation Volunteers Australia, etc. Similar partnerships occur elsewhere in NSW and are supported by the NSW Koala Strategy.

5 The group meets every two months to share information and resources and to develop ways to work strategically and collaboratively on koala conservation goals. Through this group, Council has been involved in the development of community engagement campaigns and collateral, the Northern Rivers Regional Koala Strategy, research and lobbying for grant funding for habitat restoration and road strike mitigation.

Pest Animal Management Program

Pest Animal Management Plan 2018-23

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

10 **4.23** *Work with North Coast LLS and private land managers to develop a coordinated cross-tenure approach to pest animal management.*

15 Last year Council engaged Ecosure to develop a revised Pest Animal Management Plan, part funded by a \$25,000 grant from DCCEEW. The draft plan has been reviewed by Local Land Services, who are the primary agency for pest animal management in this region. The draft plan will be sent to Council for endorsement to go on public exhibition in April. Following the public exhibition period, community feedback will be considered and a final plan reported to Council for adoption.

20 The primary purpose of the Plan is to support Council with the management of vertebrate pests on Council owned and managed land. The plan also provides relevant pest management information to local community, however Local Land Services are the primary agency responsible for providing information and support on pest management to private landholders – this is not the role of Council. The Department of Primary industries and Regional Development is responsible for invertebrate and freshwater pest species as well as new pest incursions and research.

Some new elements of the revised plan include:

- 25
- Greater collaboration with neighbouring Councils in recognition that many pest animals are highly mobile.
 - Greater emphasis on management of feral deer.
 - Acknowledgement of the cultural and ecological importance of dingoes, and actions to work with Traditional Owners and dingo scientists to improve our understanding of dingo occurrence and behaviour in Byron Shire and present a range of management alternatives.
- 30

Cane Toads

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

35 **2.1** *Provide expert advice regarding how people can help protect biodiversity*

2.7 *Support and promote local biodiversity-related events and citizen science initiatives.*

2.8 *Develop and implement a Pest Management Education and Awareness Plan for target pest animal species in Byron Shire.*

In January 2025 Council carried out a community cane toad bust event and education session.

5 Byron Shire Council's 2025 Cane Toad Program has been a great success, thanks to the dedication of local environmental champions. The program provided a drop-off point (fridge/freezer), managed by a volunteer, available for cane toads collected by our community, leading to an increase in toad removal efforts. Council also a hosted educational session, followed by a toad bust event, which saw over 40 participants, and a
10 4-day toad bust challenge.

This was the first-ever online toad-busting challenge in Byron, although initially slow to gain traction, it effectively promoted education, engagement, and measurable reductions in local cane toad populations. In total, 133 people participated in our cane toad program, a total of 6385 cane toad/tadpoles were removed from our local environment. Contributing to
15 more than 200,000 cane toads/tadpoles controlled this season so far in Australia.

The program's long-lasting impact is clear, as many community members continue to remove cane toads and submit data through the [Watergum Dashboard](#). Notable achievements include one individual removing over 13,000 tadpoles and another controlling 1,400 adult toads. These efforts are crucial for protecting local wildlife and preventing further ecological damage. Council plans to continue supporting cane toad control in future years, with plans to make tadpole traps available for community use.
20

Feral Deer

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

25 **4.13** *Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships.*

Councils on the Far North Coast have had some push back from LLS regarding the development of Rapid Response Plans to control deer, so instead have moved into the education space. Under the coordination of the *Northern rivers is on Deer alert* project manager, community workshops were organised in Tweed, Kyogle and Byron Shires. The
30 Feral Deer Free Community Workshop took place in Mullumbimby on 28/11/2024 and achieved maximum capacity and interest (20 people).

The 3-hour workshop was held at Mullumbimby Civic Hall and focused on impact of deer, ecology, species identification, legislation, landscape signs of deer, available control
35 measures, monitoring and a practical demonstration on wildlife cameras-up including advice on where to set them up. The workshop was attended by local landholders as well as Council outdoor staff.



Indian Myna

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

5 **4.22 Develop and implement Operational Plans for target pest species**

Council's Indian Myna trapping program is currently in progress (October to May), with traps being distributed to interested landholders. However, the contractor has reported low numbers in decoy birds. Since October, Council has focused media releases and distributed letters in mailboxes in specific townships where community members have reported increased sightings of Indian Mynas (through phone calls and [FeralScan](#)). Articles were published in Bangalow Herald and Byron Times (October 2024 and December 2024 respectively).

10
15 While community interest in the Indian Myna trapping program has increased, with many residents expressing willingness to participate, the contractor has observed a slow uptake when reaching out to initiate trapping efforts. A final report detailing the program's outcomes is expected at the end of the season.

Imported Red Fire Ant

20 The National Fire Ant Eradication Program is continuing actions to control Fire Ants in the Northern Rivers. Management of Alert Species like Fire Ants is the responsibility of the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

25 Following Cyclone Alfred, the NSW Government has taken immediate action to ensure flood fodder is fire ant free, suspending the permit for moving hay from infested areas of Southeast Queensland into NSW for 1 month, effective on 13th March 2025. The swift response follows the discovery of multiple fire ant colonies rafting in flood waters in Queensland, within the Logan River catchment. While the catchment flows to the northeast and into Moreton Bay, the risk of mobile fire ant colonies being transported into NSW in known carrier materials is increased.

The NSW Government has also indefinitely suspended movement of turf movement from Queensland Fire Ant Infested Areas. These revised regulations were distributed to relevant Council staff immediately and staff will continue to do this, guided by DPIRD.

Sustainable Agriculture

5 Regenerative Agriculture Small Grants for Farmers.

In 2024 Council launched a pilot regenerative agriculture small grants program to support local farmers to undertake on-ground regenerative agriculture initiatives to improve their farm sustainability and productivity.

10 The first round of small grants for farmers was a great success with 18 expressions of interest received. Four projects were supported, including:

- Installing a worm farm to create a circular waste management and fertilising system at a farm/restaurant,
- Providing irrigation and fencing to support fencing a rotational grazing system,
- 15 - Introduction of beneficial insects for an organic pest management trial in a macadamia orchard, and
- A trial to develop biological sprays from compost, to promote seed health in a market garden.

20 This has proven to be a great way to encourage on ground farming support that enables farmers to be more productive and sustainable. Each successful applicant has agreed to host a field day to showcase the great work they have done so the learnings can be shared amongst the farming community. Information on each project will also be shared on Council's website.

Slow the Flow Grant

25 Council has a 2-year, \$50,000 grant under the Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative to trial a more holistic regenerative approach to managing soil erosion and protecting our water ways. The project has successfully recruited and onboarded 11 farmers into the Soil Mentor program, which is an app designed to help farmers observe and monitor soil health and enable better decisions for more effective outcomes.

30 We held our first on farm workshop in Jan 2025 with all farmers successfully completing their first round of soil tests by mid March. We have had great feedback from farmers and much accelerated learnings as a group.

35 The second round of soil tests will happen in June (dry season). Following this, participants will attend a workshop to review their data and identify management interventions to improve soil health specific to their site. Landholders will submit a proposal for soil health actions in July, and these actions will be reviewed and funded by the Slow the Flow grant.

It has been great to see farmers understand their soil and land through a new lens and see ways in which they can improve soil health, to hold more water and be more productive.

Agriculture Workshops/Field Days

Agriculture Action Plan actions:

5 **1.4** *Develop and deliver (or refer landholders to) workshops and field days on best practice farming, innovation, productivity, sustainable land use and biodiversity.*

1.6 *Source and provide current best practice farming information and techniques to assist farmers to improve productivity and sustainability by practice change*

10 We ran a second chemical free Camphor workshop in December 2024. It has been a huge success with another workshop full capacity.

A compost workshop is scheduled for April 5th at The Paddock which doubles up as a show case of the trials that have been undertaken as part of the Regenerative Agriculture small grants.

Flying-Fox Management

15 Education and engagement

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions:

2.1 *Provide expert advice regarding how people can help protect biodiversity*

4.9 *Implement actions in the Flying Fox Camp Management Plan 2024-2029 (FFCMP).*

20 *Flying Fox Camp Management Plan (FFCMP) 2024-2029: Proposed Actions For all camps*

1.2 *Education and awareness services:*

- *In partnership with other organisations e.g. National Parks and Wildlife Service – Discovery Ranger Program, investigate opportunities to facilitate talks in schools to staff and students regarding flying-foxes and health*

25 • *Review roost signage*

30 Council is continuing to distribute the A3 educational booklet Facts About Bats to local schools, preschools and libraries. Offering a 20 to 30 minutes talk about the importance of flying foxes in our local ecosystems. Council has been to Wilson’s Creek Public School on 28/02/2025 presenting tailored pollinator information in partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia and the ecologist Professor Sarah Legge, followed by a pollinator garden planting with the children.

Council also presented the flying-fox talk at the Mullumbimby Public Library during the History time for 10 children and parents.



5 Interpretive Signs

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

2.14 Seek funding for design and fabrication of engaging interpretive information regarding native wildlife at locations receiving high visitor numbers.

5 Council has successfully applied for a \$15,400 grant from DCCEEW to review and improve the flying-fox educational signs located at our main urban roosts. The current signs are outdated, damaged and would have more impact if messaging and images are better tailored to the local community. Council will be working with one of the most renowned flying-fox photographers in Australia to collate text and images for the signs.



Flying Fox Camp Management

10 **Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:**

4.1 Progress restoration of remaining Council-managed sites identified as requiring restoration to an on-maintenance level

Flying Fox Camp Management Plan Action:

1.4 Routine camp management

15 Council is implementing this action of the FFCMP 2024-29, starting with restoration works at the Middleton Roost, in Byron Bay. A partnership has been sought with the new landowner and works are being planned to start this financial year.

Monitoring flying fox health

Flying Fox Camp Management Plan Actions:

1.5 Protocols and procedures to manage incidents

1.13 Participation in research projects

- 5 Council's Biodiversity Team has partnered with the Sustainability Team to install sensors to monitor temperature and humidity in flying fox camps. This information will be made available to Western Sydney University researchers (Dr Justin Welbergen and Samantha Yabsley) and local wildlife carer groups. Flying-foxes are extremely sensitive to high temperatures and heat stress events can start at 38°C.
- 10 Council is also supporting researchers the Bat One Health (BOH) project (Griffith University) who are undertaking research on flying fox health in the Mullumbimby Roost.

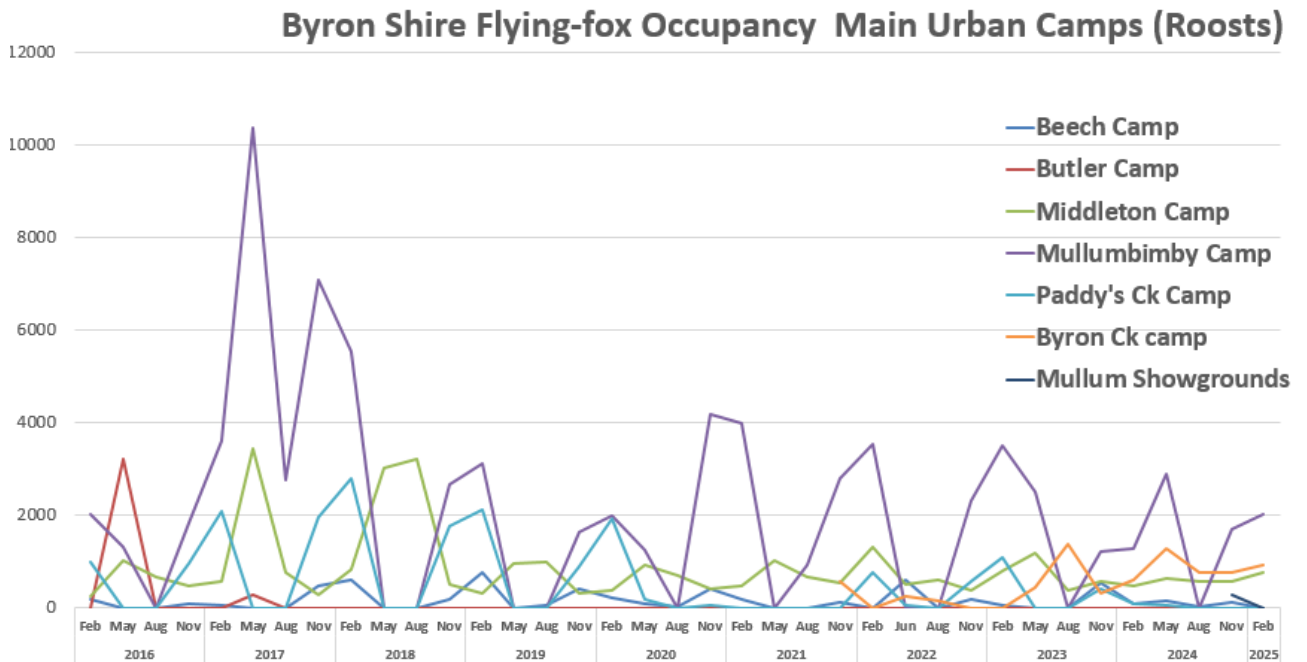
National Flying-Fox Monitoring Program - Census

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

- 15 *4.9 Review and implement monitoring programs to assess effectiveness of Council ecological restoration.*

Flying Fox Camp Management Plan Action:

- 20 Council conducts quarterly surveys at 7 flying-fox urban roosts as part of the National Flying-fox Monitoring Program (NFFMP):
- Bangalow: Paddy's Creek and Bryon Creek
 - Suffolk Park: Beech Drive
 - Byron Bay: Middleton St and Butler St
- 25
- Mullumbimby: Mullumbimby Garden Ave and Showgrounds

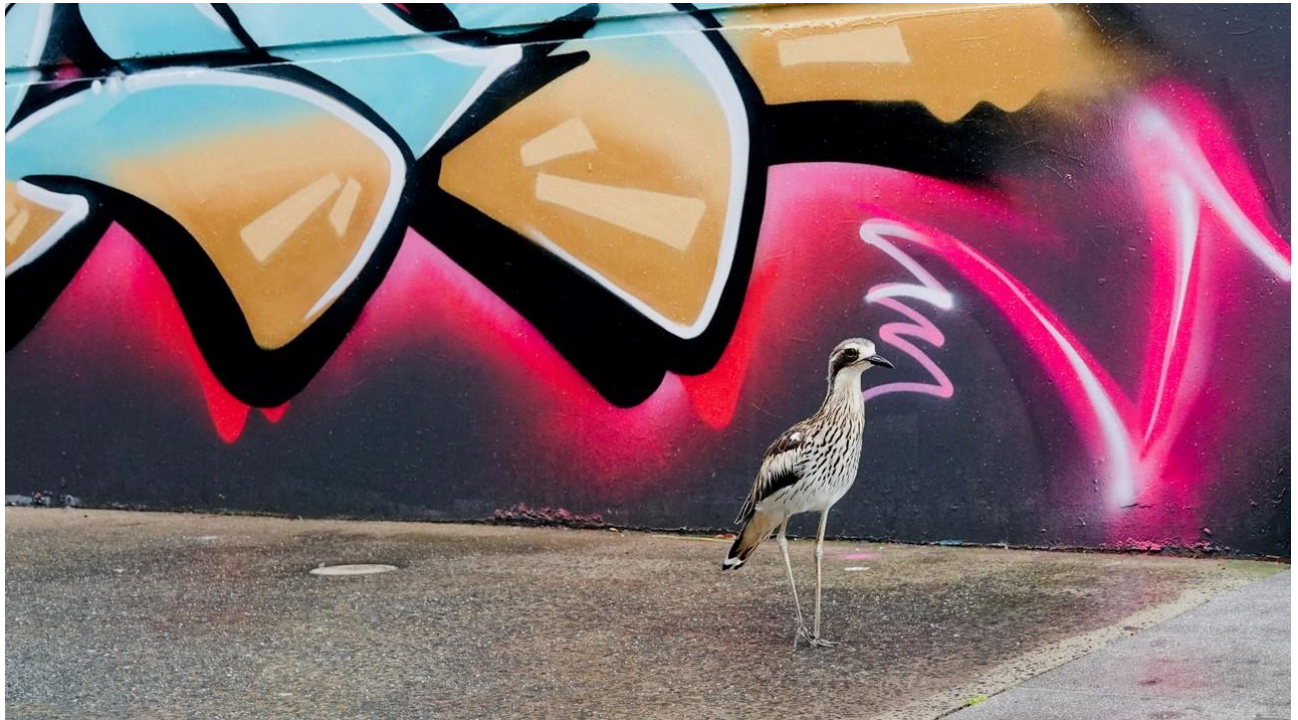


Bush Stone-curlews

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

5 Byron Council has partnered with Tweed Shire Council to extend Tweed Council’s highly successful Conserving Cockatoos and Curlews project, funded by the NSW Environment Trust. As a project partner, Byron Council staff and Byron Bird Buddies volunteers are working to monitor curlew pairs and nest sites in Byron Shire and to teach the community about Bush Stone-curlews.

10 Bush Stone-curlews like open grassy habitats for nesting, including schools, road reserves and holiday parks. We have been working with holiday park managers and residents to report curlew activity and protect nesting sites. Through the project we have developed information postcards and road signs, and monthly social media posts to encourage people to drive carefully and report curlew sightings. Later this year staff will be attending local farmers markets with more information on curlews for our local communities.



Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.3	Partner with the Northern Rivers Koala Network and Northern Rivers Koala Partnership to progress delivery of Byron Shire Koala Plan of Management and NSW Koala Strategy
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and	3.1.1.7	Complete quarterly National Flying Fox census

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.2

		reduce threats to biodiversity		
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.9	Seek funding to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Coastal Koala Plan of Management, Pest Animal Management Plan and Flying Fox Camp Management Plan
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.10	Support and promote restoration of Byron Shire wildlife corridors
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.11	Partner with DPE to implement koala vehicle strike mitigation as part of the NSW Koala Strategy 2022-2026
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.2: Pest and weed management - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.2.2	Implement Indian Myna Trapping program

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.2

3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.2: Pest and weed management - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.2.3	Participate in Northern Rivers Feral Deer Management group
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.2: Pest and weed management - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.2.5	Respond to biosecurity threats in accordance with regulatory direction and agreement
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.2: Pest and weed management - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.2.7	Review of Pest Animal Management Plan
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.3: Habitat restoration - Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value	3.1.3.4	Continue progressing the 'Bringing Back the Bruns' river restoration initiative
3: Nurtured Environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and	3.2.2: Environmental	3.2.2.1	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.2

	education programs to encourage protection of the environment	education and awareness - Coordinate and support environmental education to the community		deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries
3: Nurtured Environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of the environment	3.2.2: Environmental education and awareness - Coordinate and support environmental education to the community	3.2.2.8	Implement Council's Flying Fox Camp Management Plan
3: Nurtured Environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of the environment	3.2.2: Environmental education and awareness - Coordinate and support environmental education to the community	3.2.2.9	Deliver NSW Environment Trust Cockatoos and Curlews Project in partnership with Tweed Shire Council
3: Nurtured Environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of the environment	3.2.3: Planning - Plan to improve the quality of the natural environment	3.2.3.3	Participate in coastal and environmental working groups and initiatives
4: Ethical Growth	4.3: Promote and support the local economy	4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers	4.3.5.1	Maintain and update Byron Shire Farmer database

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.2

4: Ethical Growth	4.3: Promote and support the local economy	4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers	4.3.5.2	Provide extension services and mentoring to farmers to support and promote sustainable agriculture
4: Ethical Growth	4.3: Promote and support the local economy	4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers	4.3.5.3	Activate and promote local sustainable farming

Recent Resolutions

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

N/A

5 N/A

Financial Considerations

N/A

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

10

Report No. 4.3 Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer quarterly reports, October-December 2024 and January-March 2025.

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

5 **Report Author:** Liz Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

File No: I2025/318

Summary:





This report tables the activities of the Landcare Support Officer via two quarterly reports: from 1 October – 30 December 2024 and 1 January – 30 March 2025.

10

RECOMMENDATION:

15 **That the Biodiversity and Agricultural Advisory Committee note the reports (Attachments 1 and 2 E2025/27132 and E2025/36131).**

Attachments:

- 1 REPORT - BSC Landcare Support Officer report - Oct-Dec 2024 - 12/3/25, E2025/27132 ,
page 49  
- 20 2 REPORT - BSC Landcare Support Officer report - Jan-March 2025 - 1/4/25, E2025/36131 ,
page 51  

Report

Council provided an allocation of funds in the 2024/25 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.

- 5 Attached are the quarterly reports for 1 October – 30 December 2024 (E2025/27132) and from 1 January – 30 March 2025 (E2025/36131), from the Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer, for the Committee’s reference.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
3: Nurtured Environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of the environment	3.2.2: Environmental education and awareness - Coordinate and support environmental education to the community	3.2.2.1	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries.

10 Recent Resolutions

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

N/A

Financial Considerations

- 15 Funding allocated in 2024/25 budget.

Consultation and Engagement

N/A



Landcare Support Officer Report for Byron Shire Council

1st October – 31st December 2024

LFW

Total of 161 properties registered in Byron Shire

97 registered by BVL, 67 registered by BSC

3 new EOI's pending assessment as at end-December.

LANDCARE GROUPS

- 16 BVL locality groups active
- 10 working on council managed land
- 1 BVL special interest group – Byron Bird Buddies.
- 8 Incorporated Landcare groups working in Byron Shire (not under BVL's umbrella).

Held a meeting with the 3 new locality groups 15 October – Yelgun, Upper Coopers Creek and Upper Main Arm to see how we can support them and offer some additional funding if required for planning, and event or materials for a project.

PROJECTS

- **ET Broken Head Coastal Corridor Restoration Stage 3** \$170,000 over 4 years working on 7 properties, 10.18ha of restoration and 4.9ha of planting. Stage 2 report completed with positive feedback from assessors. Stage 3 has now commenced.
- **Phyllanthus Project, NSW Saving our Species** final follow up maintenance completed at project sites
- **MNES Grant** from LLS (Matters of National Environmental Significance). Further funding of \$17,000 secured to work on a minimum of 4 sites / 14ha until June 2025.
- **Revegetating Streams for the Brunswick River Catchment brochure.** Hard copies are now available. Launch that was scheduled for Friday 22nd November had to be postponed due to localised funding. Rescheduled for February 2025.
- **Landcare / NEMA "Caring for Catchments"** site visits and plans complete, landholder agreements signed and contractor engaged. Baseline monitoring mostly completed. 2 sites remaining for January.
- **Rous Watershed Initiative** application by Council successful. 8 sites chosen from Riparian EOI's to be included in this project. BVL to help project manage this grant and landholder engagement. Liz Caddick is project managing.
- **FRRR Junior Landcare Project** Funding of \$25,000 has been received from FRRR all school plantings completed with some maintenance visits left to do in the new year.
- **North Coast Regional Seedbank Project** BVL collaborating with Tweed Landcare. Future workshops are planned.

EVENTS

- "Healthy Soils for Healthy Livestock" workshop with Dr Judi Earl at Mevlana 18 November 2024
- BVL AGM and Christmas party held 24 November: Peter Ryan returned as President, Jenny Hartigan returned as Treasurer and new Secretary appointed, Felicity Watsford. Other positions: Sue Haining, Vice President and Doug Porter Public Officer. Invited Guest Speaker, Tweed Landcare's Chair Chris Roberts, presented on TLI's "Filling the Biodiversity Gaps" NSW Environmental Trust Project.
- Positive Change for Marine Life workshop presentation "Planting for Habitat" 7 December 2024

December 2024 Report by Harry Hackett and Alison Ratcliffe



Soil Health Workshop at Mevlana with Dr Judi Earl
18th November 2024



Spoke at Positive Change for Marine Life - River
workshop on 7th December 2024

PENDING GRANTS

- NRCF for community food garden at Mullumbimby District Neighbourhood Centre - unsuccessful
- Landcare Australia for 6 workshops for private landholders - unsuccessful

BVL STAFFING

- Harry Hackett is working for BVL as Project Officer 3 days per week.
- Alison Ratcliffe is now back in the Coordinator role working 3 days per week.

OPERATIONAL

- The new BVL website has now relaunched

Harry attended the 2-day regional community of practice in Coffs Harbour with the other 11 networks from the north coast on 5th & 6th November.

Alison & Harry attended North Coast Regional Landcare network meeting in Alstonville 2 December

ENQUIRY TOPICS/ ISSUES

Phone	Email	Website	Social Media	Walk in	In Person
Climate Resilient Landscapes booklets – to Central Tablelands Landcare	2 x Volunteering	Volunteering			Singapore daisy weed control
Wildlife poster	Cane toads				Mullum Town Landcare
Osprey	Properties for myrtle rust research				
2 x Support for event	2 x Support for project				
Croften weed	Weed ID				
LfW	Letter of support				
Butterfly poster	Indian Mynas				
Weed ID	Locality group funding opportunity				
Koala food BBWH	Pole camera loan				
10	11	1			2
					24

December 2024 Report by Harry Hackett and Alison Ratcliffe



Landcare Support Officer Report for Byron Shire Council

1st January – 31st March 2025

LFW

Total of 164 properties registered in Byron Shire

97 registered by BVL, 67 registered by BSC

4 new EOI's pending assessment – scheduled for next month.

LANDCARE GROUPS

- 16 BVL locality groups active
- 10 working on council managed land
- 1 BVL special interest group – Byron Bird Buddies.
- 8 Incorporated Landcare groups working in Byron Shire (not under BVL's umbrella).

Currently talking to 2 groups of residents who are interested in starting groups – Waterlilly Park Ocean Shores, and Tallows Creek, Suffolk Park. Also had a lot of enquiries re the dunes so am working on a short article for the next newsletter about sand erosion and accretion.

PROJECTS

- **ET Broken Head Coastal Corridor Restoration Stage 3** \$170,000 over 4 years working on 7 properties, 10.18ha of restoration and 4.9ha of planting. Stage 3 in progress – report due end July 25.
- **MNES Grant** from LLS (Matters of National Environmental Significance). Further funding of \$17,000 secured to work on a minimum of 4 sites / 14ha until June 2025.
- **Revegetating Streams for the Brunswick River Catchment brochure.** Hard copies are now available. Successful launch workshop held on 14th February 2025 with 39 attendees.
- **Landcare / NEMA "Caring for Catchments"** all baseline monitoring completed. Milestone 1 report submitted. Primary regen has commenced on 2 sites, plantings at 5 sites will commence April.
- **Rous Watershed Initiative** all baseline monitoring completed and submitted for first report. Harry attended the first planting at Dingo Lane Farms to assist the team, support the landholders and take photo documentation.
- **FRRR Junior Landcare Project follow up** maintenance weeding workshops completed at all schools with the exception of Goonengerry PS – there have ongoing access and safety issues at their planting site, Byrangery Grass Reserve, compounded by Feb-March rainfall and then cyclone Alfred. Project Acquittal Report to FRRR is due 12 April.
- **North Coast Regional Seedbank Project** BVL collaborating with Tweed Landcare. Future workshops are planned.

EVENTS

- Revegetating Streams in the Brunswick Catchment workshop held in partnership with Byron Shire Council and North Coast Local Land Services' Riparian Restoration Project Team. Friday 14th February at Kohinur Hall. Speakers included:
 - Jo Green on using the Revegetating Streams guide
 - Liz Caddick on the Wildlife Corridor mapping and the species suggestions
 - Craig Hart, LLS on navigating the approvals pathway for in-stream works
 - Shaun Morris, LLS on managing and preventing riverbank erosion

March 2025 Report by Harry Hackett and Alison Ratcliffe

Presentations were followed by morning tea before heading out to the stretch of upper catchment riverbank behind the Hall for a practical in-the-field demonstration of application of the guide and riparian restoration principles. One participant's feedback "a really educational and inspiring day".



- Harry attended NRWI planting at Lindsay Murray's (Dingo Lane Farms) on 18th March.



March 2025 Report by Harry Hackett and Alison Ratcliffe

Report No. 4.4 Wallum Heath on Pleistocene Threatened Ecological Community listing Working Group

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

5 **Report Author:** Shannon Burt, Director Sustainable Environment and Economy

File No: I2025/327

Summary:

10 Council considered Notice of Motion No. 9.3 Nomination of Wallum Heath as a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) [Agenda of Ordinary Meeting - Thursday, 27 June 2024](#) and resolved to inter alia establish a Working Group under the Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee to prepare a nomination to the Scientific Committee for listing Wallum Heath on Pleistocene as a Threatened Ecological Community.

The purpose of this report is to promulgate the working group.

15

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity and Agriculture Advisory Committee:

1. **Confirm the promulgation of the Wallum Heath on Pleistocene Working Group;**
- 20 2. **Agree to terms for the Working Group including:**
 - a) **Confirm a chair/lead and meeting convenor for the working group.**
 - b) **Confirm how meetings are to be recorded.**
 - c) **Confirm working group membership.**
 - d) **Confirm frequency and location of meetings.**
- 25 3. **Notes that staff involvement is not a required and provided at the discretion of the Director Sustainable Environment and Economy.**

Report

5 Council considered Notice of Motion No. 9.3 Nomination of Wallum Heath as a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) [Agenda of Ordinary Meeting - Thursday, 27 June 2024](#) and resolved:

24-315 Resolved that Council:

- 10 1. Gives in principle support for a nomination of Wallum Heath, including associated woodland and shrubland, as a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC); makes Council-held information available to those making the nomination; and offers minor support to them, at the discretion of the Director Sustainable Environment & Economy;
- 15 2. Enables nominated members of the current Biodiversity Advisory Committee (BAC) to form a working group to complete the nomination form for submission to the Scientific Committee nominating Wallum Heath on Pleistocene sands as a TEC;
3. Notes this work would be done in kind by the BAC members; and
4. Receives a report on this work once prepared by the BAC members for Council endorsement as the nominating organisation.

The current Committee Terms of Reference are shown below:

17. Committee Working Groups

Committee Working Groups may be established as sub-groups to consider special interest items. Committee working groups are to be established by Council at the recommendation of the Committee to address issues clearly identified by the Committee.

The Committee Working Group will meet as required to consider the specific matter/s.

Staff involvement in working groups is not required however could be provided at the discretion of the Director. Council will provide a suitable meeting space for the working group.

The Committee Working Group may prepare reports and recommendations to the committee for its consideration.

Committee Working Groups operate in accordance with the *Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members, Delegates of Council and Council Advisers*.

20 Next steps

- Confirm a chair/lead and meeting convenor for the working group
- Confirm how meetings are to be recorded

- Confirm working group membership as per Resolution 24-315
- Confirm frequency and location of meetings

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
3: Nurtured Environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of the environment	3.2.2: Environmental education and awareness - Coordinate and support environmental education to the community	3.2.2.2	Provide coastal and biodiversity information and encourage and support community activities and groups

5 Recent Resolutions

- 24-315

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

Committee working groups operate in accordance with Council’s Code of Conduct for Council Committee members, delegates of Council and Council Advisors.

- 10 [Statutory-Policy-Code-of-Conduct-for-Council-Committee-Members-Delegates-of-Council-and-Council-Advisers-current_policies.pdf](#)

Financial Considerations

There is no budget allocation for committee working groups. Costs associated with meetings to be borne by members or managed as part of the normal committee costs.

15 Consultation and Engagement

Not relevant to the report.

Report No. 6.1 Wildlife Corridors

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

5 **Report Author:** Shannon Burt, Director Sustainable Environment and Economy

File No: I2025/634

Summary:

10 Council considered Notice of Motion No. 9.2 Byron Shire Biodiversity: Supporting Wildlife Corridors, Koala Habitat Protection and Ending Native Forest Logging [Agenda of Ordinary Meeting - Thursday, 24 April 2025](#).

Part of the NOM was removed from the final Res 25-159 during the discussion because of the staff comments that provided a response to the matters raised. [Minutes of Ordinary Meeting - Thursday, 24 April 2025](#)

15 Item 2 (as removed) response is referred to the Committee for information by way of Councillor request.

20

Report

Staff response below.

- 5 **2. Receives a report to the June 2025 meeting on the integration of wildlife corridor planning in Council's strategic land use documents, including completed, planned and potential actions to incorporate wildlife corridor planning in the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan.**

10 Councillors should refer to Report No. 13.3 Byron Shire Wildlife Corridor System [Agenda of Ordinary \(Planning\) Meeting - Thursday, 7 December 2023](#) for a detailed summary of where the wildlife corridor map sits within Council's strategic land use documents.

Some key points from this report are provided below. They may also like to look at the frequently asked questions relating to land use planning at [Wildlife Corridors map - Byron Shire Council](#)

- 15
 - The primary intention of the wildlife corridor system is to provide a decision planning tool to help Council and other conservation groups to plan and prioritise habitat restoration. As per Council **Resolution 23-594**, Council endorsed the Byron Shire Wildlife Corridor System as a conservation planning tool to support and encourage wildlife habitat restoration.
- 20
 - The corridor map is non-statutory because Council's [Local Environment Plan](#) (LEP) 2014 already protects high conservation value land in Byron Shire, as [Conservation Zones](#) (C-Zones), which have been identified through **on-ground** assessments and an extensive landholder consultation and engagement process. The wildlife corridor map is a GIS **model**, based on
- 25
 - vegetation mapping, threatened species records, topography, climate, protected areas and land use constraints. To implement a statutory wildlife corridor map would require ground truthing of every parcel within the corridor, and species-specific surveys to determine what areas are being used as a corridor. Council does not have the resources to do this.
- 30
 - When the wildlife corridor map went on public exhibition, the key community concerns raised related to restrictions on land use planning. The community is not going to get behind this map and proactively restore habitat if it is perceived as another planning restriction, that penalises landholders who have already created or protected wildlife habitat and creates additional
- 35
 - costs for landholders to carry out permitted land uses or compliant development. There is a real risk that using the map to restrict land use may discourage people from planting/restoring habitat, for fear of what restrictions this may create for them in future.
- 40
 - The wildlife corridors do not include all the high environmental value vegetation in Byron Shire. They also include a lot of cleared farmland

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

6.1

(because our habitat is fragmented). Native vegetation threatened species habitat, areas of high environmental value and areas that maintain habitat connectivity are already protected under DCP Chapter B1 (see B1.2.1), whether within or outside of wildlife corridors.

- 5
- Additionally, Council’s Guidelines for preparing Vegetation Management Plans or Biodiversity Conservation Management Plans (E2019/31834 - Developing Vegetation and Biodiversity Conservation Management Plans - Byron Shire Council (nsw.gov.au)), require that wildlife corridors are identified on VMP and BCMP site maps so that these areas can be considered as priority areas for planned management and restoration activities (e.g. tree planting required for tourist cabins).
- 10

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.10	Support and promote restoration of Byron Shire wildlife corridors
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.9	Seek funding to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Coastal Koala Plan of Management, Pest Animal Management Plan and Flying Fox Camp Management Plan
3: Nurtured Environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.3	Partner with the Northern Rivers Koala Network and Northern Rivers Koala Partnership to progress delivery of Byron Shire Koala Plan

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

6.1

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
				of Management and NSW Koala Strategy
3: Nurtured Environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of the environment	3.2.2: Environmental education and awareness - Coordinate and support environmental education to the community	3.2.2.1	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries

Recent Resolutions

- 25-159

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

5 Projects and Programs are funded and managed through annual Budget and Grant allocations.

Financial Considerations

Projects and Programs are funded and managed through annual Budget and Grant allocations.

Consultation and Engagement

10 Not relevant to this report.

Report No. 6.2 Integrated Planning and Reporting

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Report Author: Amber Evans Crane, Corporate Planning and Improvement Coordinator

5 **File No:** I2025/652

Summary:

10 This report provides an overview of Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The Committee is invited to view the Draft Delivery Program 2025 - 2029 and 2025/26 Operational Plan, Budget, and Revenue Policy in the 8 May Council Planning Meeting Agenda - [Minutes & Agendas - Byron Shire Council](#). A link to provide a submission through will be circulated once the documents are on public exhibition.

15

Background to Integrative Planning and Reporting (IP&R)

5 The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework in NSW requires all councils to adopt a suite of strategic plans. These long-term plans provide transparency and make it possible for Council to plan in a manner which ensures that community needs and priorities are responded to well into the future. Council also has a suite of strategies, plans and policies which help inform operations and decision making, and these policies are adhered to in alignment with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

The central IP&R documents are outlined in more detail:

10 Year Community Strategic Plan

10 Leading the Council's planning hierarchy, the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) captures the community's vision, aspirations, and expectations for the future. It identifies key social, economic, and environmental priorities and long term strategies to achieve these goals over the next 10 years.

15 The CSP outlines the vision, community objectives and supporting strategies which will guide Council's long-term decision making. Robust engagement with the community about their desires and expectations has guided the long-term future planning to meet the needs and aspirations of the community.

10 Year Resourcing Strategy

20 The resourcing strategy addresses the sustainable long term financial, asset management, and workforce planning requirements. This is the point where Council assists the community by sorting out who is responsible for what, in terms of the issues identified in the Community Strategic Plan.

4 Year Delivery Program

25 The delivery program translates the community strategic plan goals into actions. It is Council's commitment to the community, outlining what it intends to do toward achieving the goals of the community strategic plan during its term of office. The Delivery Program is the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by Council. All plans, projects, activities, and funding allocations must be directly linked to the four-year delivery program.

30 Annual Operational Plan

35 The Delivery Program is supported by an annual Operational Plan which details the individual projects and activities that will be undertaken each year to achieve the commitments of the Delivery Program. The Operational Plan is supported by a detailed budget and a statement of revenue policy, which also sets the fees and charges for that year.

Advisory Committee Input into IP&R

Key IP&R documents described in the Background section are in the process of review as is the requirement following a local government election.

- 5 The current Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2032 has been reviewed and the next iteration, the CSP 2035, was placed on public exhibition at the 28 November 2024 Ordinary Council meeting with submissions open until 9 February 2025. The revised CSP will be presented back to Council for endorsement on 8 May 2025. The draft and more information can be found on Council’s website at www.byron.nsw.gov.au/communityplan.
- 10 The Delivery Program 2025 – 2029 and Operational Plan 2025/26 are also being presented to Council on 8 May 2025 to be placed on public exhibition for feedback. The Committee is invited to view these documents in the 8 May Planning Council Meeting Agenda at Report 13.2 “Draft Delivery Program 2025 - 2029 and 2025/26 Operational Plan, Budget, and Revenue Policy” and consider any comments or suggestions. This can be found on Council’s website - [Minutes & Agendas - Byron Shire Council](#).
- 15 Subject to Council placing the documents on public exhibition a submission form will be made available, and a link circulated to the Committee inviting submissions.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
1: Effective Leadership	1.1: Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership	1.1.1: Leadership - Enhance leadership effectiveness, capacity, and ethical behaviour	1.1.1.3	Develop 2025/26 Operational Plan
1: Effective Leadership	1.1: Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership	1.1.4: Performance Measurement and Reporting - Embed a robust performance management system through the development of an outcomes measurement framework	1.1.4.4	Prepare the 2025-2029 Delivery Program

Statutory Considerations

Integrated Planning and Reporting is governed by:

- 'Local Government Act 1993'.
 - 'Local Government (General) Regulation 2021'.
- 5
- Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW': outlines the statutory planning and reporting requirements that councils, county councils and joint organisations must meet