

National Landscape Murray River Tri-State Steering Committee

MINUTES – 25.05.09

*Lock 9 Lodge, via Lake Cullulleraine, Victoria
Meeting Open at 7.30pm*

PRESENT: Shane Strudwick (Discover Murray), Mark Eckel (Mildura Council), Tony Sharley, Graham Clarke (Harry Nanya Tours), Ray Jones (Euston Club), Paul Cohrs (Murray Darling Holidays), Jock Robertson (Chowilla Station), Richard Mintern (Parks NSW)

OBSERVORS: Alison Stone (Discover Mildura), Lis Robertson (Chowilla Station), Karen Arnold (Wentworth Visitor Information Centre), Paul Hansen (Kulcurna Station). Allan Carthew (Renmark Tours)

APOLOGIES: Hank van Apeldoorn, Carolyn Caddy, Duncan McKenzie, Julie Jewel, Kristine Harrington, Rod Trowbridge, Merridie Martin, Grant Whiteman, Fluer Carthew, Steve Millington

WELCOME: Shane welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their commitment.

DISCUSSION ON MINUTES 18.03.09

Shane clarified that the use of the word “sustainability” in the National Landscapes forum should embody outcomes that blend environmental and economic sustainability.

MINUTES of MEETING 18.03.09

Moved they be accepted – Mark Eckel, Seconded - Richard Mintern.

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE and COMMUNICATION

Shane distributed the National Landscapes Newsletter to Steering Committee. He highlighted the new grants program TQUAL.

The National Landscapes Updates from Parks Australia was circulated and key points made:

- The Alps master plan is moving ahead and we can learn the outcomes;
- Australia.com is gradually being updated with National Landscapes reference;
- Kangaroo Island is about to be accepted as a National Landscape;
- Other regions under consideration include Tasmania, Great Barrier Reef, Kimberley Region, Cape York, Sydney Harbor.

National Landscapes is creating some new business opportunities.

- Small grants for indigenous tourism business
- Bushfire package for Victoria = \$10m of which \$3m is to be invested in Parks Victoria for National Landscapes opportunities.

The meeting discussed briefly the key messages re Aboriginal significance of Lake Victoria, and noted that it was formed by the same process that created Lake Bonney, Lake Mungo and the Kerang Lakes. All have significant Aboriginal heritage.

The meeting noted there is a new website under development for National Landscapes. There has been a solid number of visitors to the Murray Tri-state Region pages and these should continue to be tracked.

Shane advised we can all track new Google listings using the *Google Alerts* function for National Landscapes.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION

Shane to discuss the ongoing support for this role with Ken Smith, Riverland Development Corporation regarding the resignation of Kristy Vriends from the EO position.

The meeting agreed it is important to fill this role to maintain good communication between all stakeholders.

Shane requested that all members discuss opportunities to support this role from their respective regions.

Shane advised that CEO of South Australian Tourism Commission, Andrew McEvoy is fully committed to National Landscapes.

Agreed that the State Reps on the Steering Committee should brief their federal members.

Shane should prepare an update so that all approaches are consistent. Ultimately we will be seeking letters of support from stakeholders to attach to our submission.

The meeting agreed that each State steering committee member should prepare a list of key contacts at the Regional (Mayors and Tourism CEOs), State & Parks (MP's and Tourism CEO's) and Federal level (MP's).

STRATEGY

The meeting amended the DRAFT objectives 20.5.09 and agreed to provide feedback on the strategies to meet each objective to the committee.

Shane advised that the term Tri-State Region would remain until we undertake the branding audit.

There was discussion about the regional assets that define us and it was agreed that this be included in the definition of the region in the PRE-AMBLE. Shane agreed to provide a draft definition in the DRAFT PLAN for the Steering Committee to refine.

FUNDING

No further discussion.

COMMITTEE

No further discussion

OTHER BUSINESS

Shane has made a presentation to Southern Mallee District Council (South Australia) south of Tri-State Region and will continue to keep neighbours informed so that they are supportive.

Tony accepted the position of Deputy Chairperson.

Jock Robertson advised he will be conducting a tourism famil for local operators in the Riverland region and members of the National Landscapes committee are most welcome.

Graham advised Yanga National Park is opening next weekend (31 May, 2009) and suggested we include Yanga National Park and the Murrumbidgee River Junction with the Murray River in the Tri-State boundary. It was agreed that the committee will consider additional boundary changes in future if they meet the experience seeker market but will maintain our existing boundary until our region is accepted as a new National Landscape.

Next meeting – Mark and Graham to liaise and set a date and venues. Agreed to keep neighbours informed.

Shane advised he will be soon be speaking at the Tourism Futures Conference regarding On-line Marketing and Distribution for the Murray River region.

Graham advised he will be attending his 10th ATE Conference (Australian Tourism Exchange) and offered to take willing operators brochures. Graham briefly outlined the pricing structures involving Travel Agents, Wholesalers and Inbound Operators.

Meeting Closed at 9.40 pm