

Recreation User Stakeholder Group (RUSG)

MINUTES

14th June 2017

5:00pm – 6:00pm

Canberra Nara Centre

1 Constitution Avenue, Canberra, ACT

Chair	Stephen Alegria	Director, City Services
	Jenny Priest	Director, Active Canberra
	Rebecca Kelley	Deputy Director, Active Canberra
	Mikaela Jade	Manager, Community and Visitor Programs PCS
	Jasmine Foxlee	Project Officer, Community Visitor and Programs PCS
	Peter Langdon	Forestry Coordinator, Parks and Conservation Services
Secretariat	Alesha Brown	Program Officer, Active Canberra

Recreation Users Group Representatives

Beth Stone	ACT Equestrian Association
Wayne Gregson	ACT Rogaining Association
Andrew Welsh	ACT Walking for Pleasure
Peter Ford	Brindabella Bushwalking Club
Matt Elliston	Canberra BMX Club
Brendon Mulloy	Canberra Off-Road Cyclists
Rachel Lynskey	Pedal Power ACT
Geoff Wood	Orienteering ACT
Adam Horner	YMCA of Canberra
Tony Caruana	Canberra Skateboarding Association
Graham Scully	National Parks Association

1. Welcome and Introduction

2. Key activity from Government

I. Cycle tourism strategy

- Destination Marketing Store (DMS) has been appointed to work with on the development of the cycle tourism strategy. DMS has extensive experience in destination planning and marketing that includes a broad cross section of sectors inclusive of nature and cycling.
- DMS is currently undertaking a review of all relatable research material and the Mountain Biking Strategy has been provided.
- Consultation is in the early stages, with a timeline of 3-5 months for completion.
- Jasmine Foxlee requested groups who may have any information suitable for this strategy who have not already been contacted to please contact Kelly Ryan, Strategy and Insights Manager of Visit Canberra on kelly.ryan@act.gov.au
- Brendan Mulloy (CORC) queried where the funding was for the project, particularly implementation, and expressed his reservations given the hold-off on releasing the Mountain Biking Strategy.
- The involvement of Pedal Power in the strategy was noted.

II. Recreation in plantation forests

- Peter Langdon explained that the pine plantations have been highly valued for recreation in ACT for many decades.
- Volunteer building of single track for mountain biking took off in the 90s in Stromlo plantation and focus shifted to Kowen after 2003 bushfires.
- Plantation managers (ACT Forests and now PCS) approve individual trail builders activity on the proviso that all trails are temporary due to the known harvesting of the crop upon maturity.
- Typical plantation rotation in the ACT is a 30 year crop cycle, seedlings planted at 1000 to the hectare, thinned at 15-20 years of age and clear felled at 30 years.
- Harvest scheduling process involves annual 'tactical' plan that indicatively shows the next 5 years of clear fell and thinning areas based on constraints like requirements and timber supply agreements, log volume/quality in different parts of the plantation, accessibility in wet weather.
- Two 'tactical' harvest plans for Kowen were displayed to groups and explained that they are a decision support tool rather than a rigid schedule, as such trail builders were expecting the clear fell at east Kowen to start in a different area than it has.
- Peter stressed that the ACT's plantations are a commercial enterprise producing timber and that the long term future for all recreation activities associated with the plantation roads and trails rely on the success of that enterprise.
- Majura pines were raised in discussion and Peter responded that from PCS forestry perspective current clear fell harvest plans have a focus on public safety given difficulties experienced last winter in keeping the area open to the public.
- Stephen Alegria (TCCS) asked about Isaacs pines, Tuggeranong pines, Majura pines future management; Peter responded that Forestry had no interest in commercial harvest at Isaacs but was assisting Athllon district staff in monitoring safety along edge with houses, at Tuggeranong forestry has interest in harvest of current crop but no current plans to replant afterwards. At Majura PCS intention is to re-plant with pine after clear fell but at a much wider tree spacing so that commercial thinning isn't needed and future clear fell decisions can be deferred.
- Peter mentioned that PCS has plans for a website page with map showing the public where current and future harvest operations are scheduled, in meantime all rec users are welcome to contact Peter on 0408 358 026 or peterd.langdon@act.go.au for information about harvesting sites.
- Group discussed the current communication issues within Government and recommended further engagement with users of the Kowen area.
- Brendan Mulloy (CORC) stressed that without community consultation of future plans major events will be lost.

III. Active Canberra operations

- Jenny Priest explained that as of 1 July 2017 sportsground operations will transfer from Active Canberra to Transport Services and City Services (TCCS) and aquatic management will transfer to ACT Property Group.
- Functions to remain will include elite sport performance funding, sector development, funding programs, community partnerships, including strategic and facility planning. The ACT Academy of Sport will also remain part of Active Canberra.
- All sportsground and aquatic facility operations will remain with the Minister for Sport and Recreation's portfolio.
- Noted Venues CBR still manage larger Canberra venues such as Stromlo.

IV. Australian AAS

- Rebecca Kelley explained that the Core Standards are currently sitting with a group of identified stakeholders to seek their input on the updated content provided from the public consultation process.
- Outdoors Victoria has been liaising with Bushwalking Australia to define the term 'dependant participant'.
- Noted that these standards will not be mandated by the ACT Government but essentially a set of voluntary guidelines that will be useful to refer to when going over your own risk assessment plans.

V. Outdoor Research Project

- The work of Skills IQ (NSW based) in conducting a research project on the economic contribution of nature based activities in Australia was highlighted. There are two components of the project - a report on state jurisdiction economic contribution and a national calculation of the economic contribution of outdoor activities in Australia.
- Rebecca Kelley encouraged groups to gather data, research and statistics which may assist with the SkillsIQ economic activity research paper which was emailed to groups on 8 March 2017.
- Further information/update will be distributed as it comes to hand.

ACTION:

- Rebecca Kelley to send group further information on timelines and content distribution

VI. Event Sponsorship Essentials Workshop

- Alesha Brown briefed group on upcoming *Event Sponsorship Essentials Workshop* hosted by Events ACT.
- Details will be provided in this week's Activate Newsletter along with upcoming education and training opportunities provided by Active Canberra.
- Noted group were receiving activate newsletter editions.

VII. Road closures and safety messages

- Jasmine Foxlee reminded the group of the common road closures during winter months and suggested any groups heading towards Namadgi give the visitors centre a call see if there are any closures ahead.
- Parks and Conservation Services website and facebook pages will keep members up to date with recent closures.
- Brendan Mulloy (CORC) asked whether the dirt roads closed through winter are also closed for Mountain Bikers. Jasmine could not see why not but would investigate further.

ACTION:

- Jasmine to confirm with group whether roads are also closed for Mountain Bikers.

3. Issues and opportunities

- Peter Ford (Brindabella Bushwalking Club) asked how clubs assist disabled people with their activities.
- Group discussed innovative opportunities currently undertaken in the sport sector.
- Group agreed to continue discussion at next meeting.

ACTION:

- Invite Rob Regent, Special Olympics ACT, to next RUSG meeting.

4. Schedule next meeting

Will be scheduled for Mid September – RUSG members will be notified of date in the coming months

Action Summary

Action	Responsibility
Distribution of further information on timelines and content regarding SkillsIQ economic research project.	Rebecca Kelley
Confirmation on whether dirt roads closed through winter are also closed for Mountain Bikers.	Jasmine Foxlee
Invite Rob Regent, Special Olympics ACT, to next RUSG meeting.	RUSG Secretariat