Lower Limestone Coast WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group
Minutes

Meeting No. 11, 25 October 2023, 10:30 am – 12:55 pm

Chardonnay Lodge, Coonawarra

NOTE: The Stakeholder Advisory Group did not meet again with this membership and as such these minutes have not been formally endorsed. Continuing Stakeholder Advisory Group members were provided an opportunity to review.

Objectives:

- Wrap up the review of the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan
- Introduce how the Limestone Coast Landscape Board is walking with First Nations

Attendees:

Attendees: Penny Schulz (Chair), Pete Bissell (Chair), Jim Prescott, Melissa Herpich, Belinda Williamson, Claire Harding, Claire Davies, Darren Shelden, Kerry DeGaris, Peter Balnaves, Terry Buckley, Alan Rossouw, Graeme Hamilton (online), Kylie Boston, Wayne Hancock, Michelle Irvine, John Hunt.

LC Landscape Board Staff: Sue Botting, Liz Perkins, Ryan Judd, Chelsea Burns

Welcome and agenda

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked advisory group members and staff for their attendance.

Minutes

Minutes from Meeting 10 were confirmed as true and correct. Moved by: Alan Rossouw. Seconded by: Claire Harding. All were in favour.

Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan review wrap up

Liz Perkins provided a presentation wrapping up the review of the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan.

Discussion:

- What report will the Minister receive versus what will be put out publicly? The Minister will be provided with a more comprehensive report, the public a more summary version but both very similar in content.
- Earlier in the process of review some in the group had considered that substantial amendment might not be required but after understanding what was happening with groundwater dependent ecosystems the outcome is not a surprise.
- Generally in the community there is a low understanding of what is happening with groundwater dependent ecosystems.
- The big issue is sustainability of the resource the rest is more tweaking.
- It was queried by one member why the Minister had been kept informed of progress of review when industry hadn't had an opportunity to lobby the Minister. Review was an election commitment and the LC Landscape Board had a responsibility to keep the South Australian

Government informed of progress. Industry has been lobbying the Minister during the review process, the LC Landscape Board has participated in responses to these approaches.

- One member believed that if September monitoring data looks "good" the Plan should not be amended. It was discussed that the reasons for amending the Plan are more substantial than one year of monitoring data. This includes a need to amend for the Plan to be consistent with legislation.
- Amendment will also be able to create greater alignment with the National Water Initiative.
- There is a need for an approach that recognises the complexity of the region. The Lower Limestone Coast is a big area and there are many regional differences that need to be taken into consideration. Not a one size fits all approach.
- Any amendment process will create uncertainty.
- There will be trade-offs.
- There was discussion around the conflict between producing food and fibre and preserving biodiversity.
- Focus shouldn't always be on environment, sustainable management of the resource is also about intergeneration equity, the resource being available for future generations for industry and the increasing costs for water extraction.
- Discussion around how community are generally unaware of the challenges, critical that there is more communication and public education about this.
- Needs to be improvement in how licences are communicated. Need to be able to be read and understood by people who don't usually read government documents.
- Are there likely to be any changes to the Border Groundwaters Agreement, it may create challenges in amendment? Can change be lobbied for? At this stage we need to work out how to work with the Agreement as it is superior to the Plan.
- What do other states do about forestry in their water management plans? Generally managing forestry and surface water catchments as opposed to groundwater. Other states do not licence forestry.
- The new forestry science is a continuation of previous work, not completely new. Forestry researchers are following through on meeting requirements re peer review and rigour. Rigour is needed for all science for confidence in the Plan. Science by the department is also externally peer reviewed.
- Landscape Board needs to be stronger on sustainability, and scientific rigour. Is a key part of the Act and we need to do a better job of it.
- Risk assessment can be a flawed tool. They can depend on the people in the room, depend on the questions being asked, the complexity of risk assessment being used.
- Water market and water value will also be an important part of amendment.

Walking with First Nations

Liz Perkins provided a presentation on how the Limestone Coast Landscape Board walks with First Nations.

Discussion:

- Stakeholder group will meet with First Nations on country to progress First Nations involvement in the amendment of the Plan.
- What's the net effect of Native Title? Rights on private land are extinguished, rights applied to crown land.

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- One Forty One have been building relationship with First Nations and now progressing to on ground action. Doing some training with Burrandies to build their work skills – build their own fire crew.

Other Business

The Stakeholder Advisory Group won't meet again in 2023 but will be kept updated via email with meetings to commence again in 2024. All documents on the Stakeholder Advisory Group online page will be provided to the group via USB so that they have a copy.

Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 12:55 pm.
The Chair thanked the stakeholders and staff for attending.

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Lower Limestone Coast WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group Action Table

Action	LLC WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group Actions	Status	Meeting 11 Update
2.4	Provide summary report that takes recommendations from the Plan and places them against actions that have been undertaken.		
2.7	Request for 10 year timescale (of the plan) resource condition trends for sharing more broadly with interested stakeholders	Ongoing	

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Action Table – Closed Items

Action	LLC WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group Actions	Status
8.1	LC Landscape Board Staff to provide information on results from water values survey	Complete
2.2	Session in future meeting on Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems to assist with stakeholder clarity.	Complete
2.6	Arrange a presentation from industry representatives around how useful they have found the different licencing components and how they have used them in their businesses.	Complete
2.1	Provision of presentation, provision of reports from presentation	Complete
2.3	Paddock Tree report to be provided on the project portal.	Complete
2.5	Arrange a presentation from DEW Water Licencing on licencing components and their experiences and perspectives as the body that administers them.	Complete
1.3	Ground rules to be drafted and provided back to group	Complete
1.4	LC Landscape Board Staff prepare recommendation for the LC Landscape Board Governing Body on behalf of the Stakeholder Advisory Group. Recommendation to be considered by the LC Landscape Board Governing Body at its 28 October 2022 Meeting.	Complete
1.5	Convey stakeholder concerns around the Australian Rare Earths Limited development to the LC Landscape Board Governing Body.	Complete
1.2	LC Landscape Board Staff to provide relevant papers on the project portal for Stakeholder Advisory Group members to access	Complete
1.1	Provide an overview of the Science Review process, outcomes and the work that has occurred since then at Meeting 2.	Complete

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Lower Limestone Coast WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group
Decision Register

Issue	Meeting	Decision
Landscape Act review	Meeting 10	The LC Landscape Board remains the designated authority to undertake the review, creation and amendment of water allocation plans in the Limestone Coast landscape region under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*.
Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements	Meeting 10	The Stakeholder Advisory Group recommends that the LC Landscape Board reviews the monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements of the water allocation plan including relevant monitoring program and resourcing.
Holding allocations and unused licence	Meeting 10	The LC Landscape Board: • Reviews the implications/risks of holding allocations and • Reviews the implications/risks of unused allocation as part of amendment.
Review process	Meeting 9	That the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan moves to amendment.
Groundwater dependent ecosystems	Meeting 8	The Stakeholder Advisory Group recommends the LC Landscape Board review the GDE protection principles in amendment of the current Plan.
Groundwater dependent ecosystems	Meeting 8	The Stakeholder Advisory Group recommends the LC Landscape Board investigate adaptive management in amendment of the Plan that includes ecological thresholds relevant to GDEs.
Drainage authorisations	Meeting 8	The Stakeholder Advisory Group recommends that where drain water is demonstrated to be groundwater, an application to extract drainage water should be subject to the same principles and requirements as groundwater extraction is under the LLC water allocation plan (e.g. hydro test).
Water market	Meeting 7	The Stakeholder Advisory Groups recommends that the LC Landscape Board, through amendment of the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan: 8. Include mechanisms that ensure movement of water onto a land parcel requires land owner permission.

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Trades and transfers	Meeting 7	The Stakeholder Advisory Groups recommends that the LC Landscape Board, through amendment of the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan: 6. Develop a single set of objectives for managing the resource that applies to the entire Plan, rather than separate objectives for each section. 7. Allow conversion and transfer of a forestry licence to a water (taking) licence.
Confined aquifer	Meeting 7	The Stakeholder Advisory Groups recommends that the LC Landscape Board, through amendment of the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan: 3. Retain Objective 8.1 a) specified in the current Plan which is to: "cautiously manage the confined aquifer so that it may continue to be available for the social, economic and environmental needs of current and future generations." 4. Review current allocation in the confined aquifer and assess the risks in relation to that level of allocation. 5. Consider mechanisms to adaptively manage the confined aquifer resource.
Target management levels	Meeting 7	The Stakeholder Advisory Groups recommends that the LC Landscape Board, through amendment of the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan: 1. Review the use of total available recharge as the basis for sustainable water management. 2. Consider mechanisms to adaptively manage the resource.
Farm forestry	Meeting 5	The Stakeholder Advisory Group recommends that the Limestone Coast Landscape Board undertakes a review of the farm forestry principles and its risks and benefits.
Forestry principles	Meeting 5	The Stakeholder Advisory Group recommends that the Limestone Coast Landscape Board undertakes a review of the assumptions that underpin the deemed rate. Review should consider available lines of evidence to inform the deemed rate.

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Licencing components principles	Meeting 4	The Stakeholder Advisory Group recommends that the Limestone Coast Landscape Board undertakes a comprehensive review of the principles for licencing components to determine if amendment is required. Review should look at whether the principles could be simplified but must also consider risks to the environment or primary producers that changes could introduce. Review should also consider opportunities such as environmental allocations.
Volumetric conversion and bridging volume principles	Meeting 2	Recommend that the LC Landscape Board remove the volumetric conversion and bridging volume principles from the water allocation plan under amendment.
Representativeness of Group	Meeting 1	Group agreement that a nomination should be sought from hardwood plantation forestry for representation on the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

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