

WA FERAL CAT WORKING GROUP

A Working Group to improve native fauna conservation trajectories with a focus on effective and humane management of feral cats.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES – MEETING #3

Held on Friday 9 October 2020, 1.00pm start (finish 4.00pm)

(via Zoom due to COVID-19 Distancing Restrictions - :

In attendance (1:00 – 4:00pm):

Hon Kerry Sanderson, AC CVO	Chair WAF CWG
Tory Weir	Manager of Invasive Species, DPIRD (Attending on behalf of Victoria Aitken, Director of Invasive Species, DPIRD)
Dr Dave Algar	Member, National Feral Cat Taskforce
Tim Allard	CEO, Australian Wildlife Conservancy
Elisabeth McLellan	Manager, Bush Heritage Australia
Jane O'Malley	CEO, PHCC (on behalf NRM WA)
Dr Rachel Paltridge	Member, Indigenous Desert Alliance
Dr Fran Stanley	Executive Director, DBCA
Dr Bruce Webber	Program Director, WABSI
Naomi Briggs	Volunteer Minute Taker

Apologies:

Professor Simon McKirdy	Chairman, WA Biosecurity Council
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Advisory Group (2:30 – 4:00):

Di Evans	Senior Scientific Officer, RSPCA
Dr Garry Middle	A/Manager Environment Policy, WA Local Government Association
Joanna McKenzie	Chair, Chamber of Minerals & Energy, Environment Committee (from 2.45)
Jennie Loveland	Coordinator Albany and Surrounds Feral Cat Working Group
John Kargotich	WA Farmers
Doug Hall	Policy Officer, Pastoral & Graziers Association
Dr Owain Edwards	Senior Principal Research Scientist, CSIRO
Dr Trish Fleming	Murdoch University
Graham Pratt	Australian Veterinary Association

Apologies

Prof Stephen Van Leeuwen	Indigenous Chair, Biodiversity & Environmental Science, BHP Curtin
Mick Davis Chair,	WA Landcare Network
Nolia and Jodie Ward	Kiwirrkurra Indigenous Ranger Group
Lisa Adams	WA Chapter President, Environmental Consultants Association of WA

Guest Speakers (2.30-4.00)

Dr Sally Box	Threatened Species Commissioner
Alex Hams and Jeff Pinder	Bush Heritage (Fitzgerald/Stirling Fauna Recovery Program)



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GENERAL BUSINESS

- *Resourcing of the Working Group*
 - Employment of Executive Officer. Still waiting on decision on whether the State NRM Grant has been successful.
 - WAFCWG Website. Funding for the website has been successful. Awaiting the formal contract and first payment.

WORKING GROUP PLAN OF ACTION – STRATEGIC PLANNING

Next steps for identified priority strategies and objectives for Action, under each of the key pillars:

a. Accessible Information

The Feral Cat Working Group will make available and act as a conduit for information and experience on feral cat management solutions.

The difficulty of progressing the proposed survey of stakeholders without the procurement of an Executive Office resource was discussed. It was agreed that the beginnings of a survey would be drafted ensuring alignment with agreed objectives. It may be useful to consider other feral cat surveys that have been recently conducted eg Zoos and Aquarium Association; Threatened Species Commissioner.

The FAQ Sheet is to be progressed.

b. Prioritised Research Program

https://wabsi.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/WABSI_Mitigating-cat-impacts_FINAL.pdf

A Feral Cat Research sub-group has been formed and was endorsed by the Working Group.

Discussions have commenced with BHP and the Southwest Biodiversity Partnership on potential research project collaborations.

c. Co-ordinated Management

The Working Group reconfirmed their priorities.

Discussion within the group on how to progress the concept of a Feral Cat Management Plan with general agreement that this would be a major project to be undertaken by the proposed Executive Officer. All members agreed that discussion of the WA Wild Dog Action Plan and its relevance to the development of a WA Feral Cat Management Plan will be included as an agenda item for the next meeting. Members committed to familiarising themselves with the WA Wild Dog Action Plan before the next meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

A communications template was submitted and discussed. It was agreed that a Communications sub-group will be formed to work the template into a more comprehensive plan.

Members are requested to use the following hashtags when doing any social media promoting the Working Group.

#WAFeralCatWG

#ProtectingWAsBiodiversity

OTHER BUSINESS

The current inquiry into the problem of feral and domestic cats in Australia was discussed.

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Environment_and_Energy/Feral_landdomesticcats

Next Meeting Date: 10 February 2021.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND ADVISORY MEMBERS

At 2.30pm, guest speakers and members of the Advisory Group joined members (via Zoom) of the Working Group and introduced themselves. The guest speakers and all members of the Working and Advisory Groups each gave a brief overview of themselves, the organisation they represent, and their interest/involvement in feral cat management and/or biodiversity management.

The following gave presentations on their involvement in feral cat management.

- Sally Box, National Threatened Species Commissioner
- Alex Harris and Jeff Pinder – Bush Heritage, Fitzgerald-Stirling Fauna Recovery Program
- Jennie Loveland – Albany and Surrounds Feral Cat Working Group

The meeting closed at 4.00pm at the conclusion of the introductions from Advisory Group members and presentations.