

**Actions arising from meeting on 21 May 2013
Joint Working Group – Land Management Meeting**

Action	Responsibility	Status
1. Welcome and Apologies		
2. Confirmation of Minutes of 7 February		
3. Grazing Study Design		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neil Nelson and Neil Griffiths, with input from the mines and their agistees, to further consider and amend the design, taking into account the issues raised by the joint working group. 	DPI, Mt Arthur Coal & Allied, SBLMA NSWMC	In progress
4. Biodiversity Reference Site Project Update		
5. Rehabilitation Principles and Commitment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A subgroup including Laurie Perry, Ron Fenwick, John Drinan and Michael McFadyen and 1-2 industry members will be formed to consider the Rehabilitation Principles and Commitments in detail and report back their recommendations for any amendments to the working group at the next meeting. 	Subgroup members, NSWMC	Completed
6. Update on integrated rehabilitation plan		
7. Other business		

DRAFT MINUTES

Joint Working Group – Land Management

Singleton Visitor In

21 May 2013: 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm

Present:

Laurie Perry	Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation
Sean Constable	Upper Hunter Shire Council - Scone
Emma Ridley	Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association Inc
Lester McCormick	Department of Primary Industries, Agriculture
Jason Desmond	Bloomfield Collieries - Rix's Creek Pty Ltd
Bill Baxter	Rio Tinto - Coal & Allied Industries Ltd
Nigel Charnock	GlencoreXstrata
Scotney Moore	Yancoal - Ashton Coal Operations Pty Ltd
John Drinan	Singleton Shire Healthy Environment Group
Leonie Ball	Singleton Beef and Land Management Association
Kirsten McKimmie	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Steve Clarkson	Singleton Council
Angela Hawdon	Fauna & Flora
Wendy Bowman	NSW Mine Watch
Neil Nelson	Singleton Beef and Land Management Association
Tony Cox	DTIRIS
Ron Fenwick	Wambo CCC - Singleton
Brooke Lavis	Anglo American Metallurgical Coal
Michael McFadyen	DTIRIS
Claire Doherty	NSWMC
Neil Griffith	Department of Primary Industries

Apologies

Clarence Robertson	Anglo American Metallurgical Coal
Chris Knight	Idemitsu Australia Resources Group - Muswellbrook Coal Company Ltd
Greg Summerhayes	NSW Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services – Maitland
Troy Favell	Peabody Energy - Wambo Coal Pty Ltd

Craig Fleming

Muswellbrook Shire Council

Gabriel Anderson

Great Eastern Ranges Initiative

Rob Hayes

BHP Billiton - Hunter Valley Energy Coal Pty Ltd Mt Arthur Coal

Steve Eccles

Hunter Central Rivers CMA

1 Welcome and Apologies

Nigel Charnock provided Clarence Robertson's apologies and advised that he would chair the group in Clarence's absence. Nigel welcomed the attendees and noted other apologies.

2 Confirmation of Minutes of 7 February

The minutes were confirmed.

3 Grazing Study Design

Tony Cox presented his case study with regard to the two rehabilitation sites. Lester McCormick presented the design of the grazing trial.

The Working Group discussed the study design and the following issues were raised during the discussion:

- The study design is a breeding operation, with blood testing for the weaners. However the breeders who will be on the site throughout the trial should also be tested to understand the long term impacts on animal health.
- How the project would understand local costs of production was raised. Neil Griffiths indicated that there are local groups working on this issue. Leonie Ball indicated that the data is very spread out as it is across a number of different operations, some of high value and others small rural blocks.
- It was agreed that a method of comparison is needed, and that may just be the comparison with the analogue sites.
- The issue of supplementary feeding was raised. Lester advised that due to the nature of the pasture supplements would be necessary; this would be a dry lick.
- The cattle for the study were discussed:
 - It was agreed that the cattle would need to be the same breed on the rehabilitation and analogue sites
 - For the breeders, these should not be too young or too old. A cow of 8 years was considered too old.
 - There were different opinions expressed as to whether the project should replicate a breeding operation, or whether it would be better to trade steers.
- The group identified a number of problems with replicating a breeding operation as proposed in the draft design:
 - The animals need to be put in calve each year this is more costly and comes with greater

risks.

- With a small herd there is a risk that failure of any of the cows to conceive or death of a calf will impact on the results.
- Another alternative that was discussed was starting with weaners and running these for two years.
- John Drinan said that he thought that it would be important to find out whether you can develop and maintain good pasture, whether the sites maintain good topsoil, and what the productive capacity of the land will be and that this could be done with steers.

It was agreed that the testing of most parameters was possible with either a breeding operation or running steers. The important issue is to what extent does the study need to replicate common operations in order to be acceptable and provide valuable information for landholders. Some members of the group thought what was most important was the cost of production, regardless of the type of operation.

Neil Griffiths suggested that a different approach could be taken or monitoring the cattle that are already on the rehabilitation. This would potentially involve choosing a number of cattle from the herd and monitoring them over the period of the study.

It was suggested Ron Fenwick and agreed by the joint working group that given the concerns raised the most appropriate next steps would be for Neil Griffith and Neil Nelson to look at the options for breeders and steers, and include the mines and their agistees in the discussions. Claire Doherty confirmed that NSWMC would fund Neil Nelson's work on the study design.

ACTION

- Neil Nelson and Neil Griffiths, with input from the mines and their agistees, to further consider and amend the design, taking into account the issues raised by the joint working group.

4 Biodiversity Reference Site Project Update

Bill Baxter provided an overview of the project's scope. The mines have commitments to restore Central Hunter Ironbark Grey Box Woodland and Central Hunter Ironbark-Spotted Gum-Grey Box Forest communities. The project aims to identify common performance criteria and reference sites. The performance criteria will feed into the new mining operations plans, which will need to

set targets for performance of rehabilitation at different stages. The new MOP Guidelines will require the two things that the project aims to produce, performance targets and a way of monitoring progress.

The project will identify different criteria for different stages of rehabilitation and identify reference sites to set the target and monitor against. A number of sources will need to be looked at to identify benchmarks, including:

- Benchmark sites that have been used in BioBanking
- Existing Offsets
- Other remnants which might be on mine sites.

The group discussed possible sources of reference sites. Belford National Park was identified, although there were some concerns that this area might be largely remnant vegetation. My Baxter clarified that reference sites in different states will be needed to reflect the different stages of rehabilitation.

A number of members of the group questioned how this project related to the type of rehabilitation undertaken and how that is decided. It was clarified that this project will assist to bring about good quality native vegetation rehabilitation once the decision is made to pursue that particular type of rehabilitation.

Other projects, in particular the integrated mine rehabilitation plan are designed to look at how to make the best of the land use opportunities provided by rehabilitation.

5 Rehabilitation Principles and Commitments

Brooke Lavis gave an overview of the project, noting that while the other two projects being undertaken by the group are designed to improve quality of rehabilitation, this project is about ensuring progress. Mr McFadyen commented that he though the Principles were broadly consistent with Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services, Division and Resources and Energy's new Mining Operations Plan Guidelines.

Ms Lavis proposed that the Principles be considered by a subgroup of the working group who would report their recommendations back to the next meeting. Laurie Perry, Ron Fenwick, John Drinan and Michael McFadyen volunteered to join this subgroup.

ACTION

- A subgroup including Laurie Perry, Ron Fenwick, John Drinan and Michael McFadyen and one to two industry members will be formed to consider the Rehabilitation Principles and Commitments in detail and report back their recommendations for any amendments to the working group at the next meeting.

6 Update on integrated rehabilitation plan

This paper was noted. NSWMC will keep the joint working group advised.

7 Other business

No other business.

8 Meeting close

Meeting closed 5.15 pm.