



Minutes of 2022 Annual General Meeting
Conference Room, PWS Visitor Centre, Cradle Mountain
Saturday, 8 October 2022 at 1:00pm

1. President, Glen Hayhurst opened the meeting at 1:00 pm and welcomed everyone.

Members in attendance:

Glen Hayhurst	Jan Hayhurst
Marilyn Spinks	Jim Spinks
Cathy Clayton	Michael Taylor
Graeme Pickford	Steve Brown
Chris Stafford	Richard Ruddie
John Corbett	Edie Firth
Peter Lawrence	Jenny Pearce
Teresa Conlon	Helen Thyne
Jim Thyne	Nic Deka
Kate Burton	

Members on Zoom

Nic Sawyer	Peter Walsh
Ann Wessing	

Apologies

Peter Sims	John Wilson
Patricia Ellison	Mavis Rowlands
Bruce Pike	Stephen Yam
June Hilder	Anita Truchanas
Rima Truchanas	

2. Report from Nic Deka, Regional Manager, PWS NorthWest

Dove Lake Shelter

Construction of the new shelter is complete. Works that need to be completed before it opens include installation of the connecting walkway from the shelter to the bridge including a new bridge, sealing of the bus turning circle, installation of the interpretation and decommissioning of the temporary toilets/day shed and conversion of part of the current turning circle to parking for private vehicles, commercial tour operators and service vehicles.

The formal opening of the shelter is expected to occur in December.

Cradle Gateway (Report from Office of Coordinator General)

- ✓ after a formal REOI process, the Tasmanian Government is continuing to progress the development of the Gateway Village Precinct. This is a long-term project, and it is important that we get this once-in-a-generation development right.

- ✓ planning and design is more complicated because of the precinct's need to integrate with the Cradle Valley Cableway.
- ✓ this precinct is intended to include a new Iconic building at the southern end of the site next to the PWS Visitor Centre with amazing views of Cradle Mountain, and offer a range of other services across the remaining site.

Please note: Minister Street received correspondence from the Friends of Cradle Valley on 30 September regarding their concerns with the existing Cradle Mountain Gateway site visitor experience and facilities. As you are aware, the Master Plan vision has not yet been fully realised, and a formal response is currently being prepared for the Minister.

Cradle Transport Options Study (Report from OCG)

- ✓ The Australian and Tasmanian Governments have each committed \$30 million, for a total of \$60 million to fund the cableway project
- ✓ Independent analysis has confirmed the cableway as the preferred transport solution for this iconic area
- ✓ With assistance of external transportation experts, lots of work over the past few years to design and analyse options and determine a concept that is technically possible with a low environmental and visual impact
- ✓ The cableway will only be located within the formal visitors service zone with the TWWHA, and we are currently finalising costs, and preparing the detailed business case
- ✓ The business case will be taken to Cabinet for consideration in coming months, and to the Australian Government for review and approval in order for their release of their \$30 million budget commitment.
- ✓ There will be lots of opportunities for engagement on this significant project and the Friends of Cradle Valley have been identified as a key stakeholder for early consultation.

Overland Track Huts Project

The new hut at Windermere was completed at the end of September and we are just waiting on the Certificate of Occupancy before opening it. We expect to complete and remove all the builder's temporary infrastructure from Kiaora by the end of next week and expect to open the hut to walkers by the end of this month. Both projects included the construction of new toilet facilities that are open and in use. Both will significantly improve the walker experience at these overnight nodes. The existing huts will be modified and converted to staff accommodation.

Staff Movements

- Parks and Reserves Manager –Steve Nicholson commenced in January.
- General Manager PWS – Will Joscelyn appointed in May.
- Deputy Secretary PWS – Jason Jacobi has been acting Secretary since January but returns to PWS on Monday.

Questions to Nic Deka

- Question: Has capping visitor numbers been considered as a measure to reduce crowding and its impact on visitor experience? Answer: That has been discussed but Nic considers that the added bus capacity will reduce crowding on buses. Also, the 800 beds available in the Valley and the limited flights and berths into the state will provide some controls on growth of visitor numbers. Tourism Tasmania is not keen on the idea of capping but the staff on site understand that the authentic visitor experience may be reduced if numbers are not controlled.

- Question Eddie Firth: From where do funds for external contractors derive for hut maintenance?
Answer: All hut upkeep and maintenance comes from entry fees & parks passes.

3. Report from Kate Burton, RIC Cradle Mt Field Centre

Cradle Staffing

Staffing of the Cradle Field Centre has improved with 8 positions now filled which is critical heading into peak visitor season. Good mix of new and experienced staff. In summary;

- Taylor Benny has been extended as the Band 4 Ranger position until July 2023 whilst Garry Febey backfills the PRM West Coast role.
- Peter Dodd (Ranger) and Garry Parsons (Field Officer) retired in June and October this year, after 19 and 9 years with PWS respectively.
- Dave Whelan (Clerk of Works for the Cradle Master Plan) has transferred to Ulverstone to undertake a compliance role whilst still overseeing completion of the Dove Lake shelter.
- Two new Field Officers have recently started employment at Cradle; Michael Gee on a 6-month fixed-term B3 and Nick Kohn as a permanent B3.
- Recruitment has been completed for the next round of Graduate Ranger positions to be located at Cradle, Strahan and Lake St Clair. The Cradle position has been offered and accepted to begin in January 2023.
- A new cleaning contract has been awarded to DetailFirst initially for 1 year, starting in Sept 2022. This covers all the main visitor sites at Cradle including servicing the Waldheim Cabins.
- A Discovery Ranger will be placed at Cradle Mt for 5 weeks over summer to provide general educational activities for park visitors in the peak season.

Visitor Statistics

- Visitation to Cradle Mt continues to rebound from the COVID pandemic. Last financial year we experienced a 10% increase in visitors compared to 2020-21 with 236,000 ppl recorded on the shuttle service. This does not include variance for CTOs, private vehicles, etc.
- Whilst we did see a sharp decline in numbers over May and June this year, there has been very strong growth in the last few months e.g. double the numbers in Sept compared to last year. There has been a noticeable shift with more people travelling in the shoulder seasons to avoid larger crowds and to get better accommodation & flights deals.
- Early indications show this could be a very busy visitor season with the return of the cruise ship industry and regular coach/bus tour groups servicing Cradle.

Fire Season

- Several prescribed burns are planned in the Cradle District for asset protection in autumn 2023; East Tullah (Mt Farrell Regional Reserve), Quailes Hill 2 (Cradle-LSC National Park), Fleece Creek & Heap of Rocks (Vale of Belvoir Conservation Area), South Tor (Granite Tor Conservation Area) and Tiger Plains (Black Bluff Regional Reserve).
- Staff are currently undertaking pre-season preparation, including fitness tests, equipment checks, pump servicing and training in first aid, winching and incendiary attack.

Completed significant projects (in last 12 months)

- Track work on the Dove Lake Circuit to regravell the section between the Boat Shed & Marions Lookout Track junction which was in very poor condition. Heliops completed in 1 day.
- Twisted Lakes Track upgrade and acquittal of \$35,000 Wildcare Grant. 420m of double-plank boardwalk installed at high priority sections to reduce the environmental impact on alpine vegetation and improve visitor safety. All excess materials flown out by helicopter.
- Cradle Mt Summit Track upgrade with heliops undertaken to fly in materials and tools to replace 80m of rotten cordwood with double-planking.

- Preparation of foundations at Ronny Creek for transfer of the walker registration shelter from Dove Lake.
- Focus on completing defects & recommendations listed on our Asset Management System from engineer inspections on visitor infrastructure.
- Focus on completing all high priority maintenance tasks for staff housing over winter.
- Weed Program implemented; all known weed infestations at Cradle checked and sprayed as per database. New sites around the Gateway recorded.
- Assisting with emergency response and incidents including Tullah Fire, Severe Storm Damage in NW, Whale Stranding at Strahan, and numerous search and rescues.

Upcoming focus (next 6 months)

- Transition to the new Dove Lake Shelter development in Nov-Dec 2022. Works still to be completed include sealing of the new shuttle turning circle, delineation of the new carpark, installation of interpretation, addressing defects, installing the connecting FRP walkway from the building to the lake and landscaping.
- Regravelling 265m section of Dove Lake Circuit near Truganini Point on the eastern side of the lake.
- Stage 2 Horse Track upgrade to complete installation of FRP boardwalk between Crater Peak & Marigold Valley. Mountain Trails will be engaged to supply track workers to undertake the project from mid-November.
- In collaboration with Blandfordia Club, hardening 32m of the Mt Kate Track to delineate the start of the track to divert walkers away from the hut and protect a sensitive wet area.
- Continue conservation works on Yackandandah Hut with Mountain Huts Preservation Society. Works completed so far include repairing the floor, restumping, shoring up the fireplace, etc. Future works include building a replica fireplace, repairing the roof, inserting a myrtle log as part of the building foundations, internal repairs, etc.
- Recladding external walls for all nine of the Waldheim Cabins. Two cabins will be taken off-line per month from Nov-Mar during which time we will undertake renovations. New timbers will be rough-sawn, hardwood cladding and left to age naturally (without paint) to match the character of the other historical buildings in the area.
- Improving the Winterbrook Falls Track with pruning, minor track repairs and sign plan to replace all ex-Forestry signs.
- Commence planning to upgrade the Rainforest Walk and Crater Falls elevated structures.
- Resealing and expanding the Ronny Creek carpark to maximise current spacing.
- 3-week volunteer spring program in November with focus on track pruning for peak season.
- Wombat mange monitoring program with TasTafe and Wildcare.
- Weed control program over summer to target thistles, ragwort and blackberry.
- Other major projects are still awaiting funding approval for 2022-23.

Questions to Kate Burton

- Question Glen Hayhurst: Re parking at Ronny Creek, as mooted last year. Answer Kate: The proposal to expand to 26 spaces has been approved and awaiting release of funds.
- Question Glen Hayhurst: Re improving pedestrian safety in Ronny Creek precinct. Steve Brown suggested a "hang off" pathway to separate vehicles and pedestrians.
- Question Eddie Firth: Re provision of toilets at Ronny Creek. Nic Deka responded that was not being considered separately as it will probably be part of infrastructure for the cableway.
- Question Jim Spinks: Possibility of a track from Visitor Centre to Interpretive Centre. Kate Burton indicated that Kentish Council is responsible, a shared walk/cycle track has been discussed. Nic added that funds could be available from State Works and Kentish Council. Jim suggested that FoCV raise the matter with Kentish Council's new Mayor, Kate Haberle, to keep them interested.

- Question Anne Wessing: Re feral cats in the Park. Answer Kate: There are upsurges at times, especially autumn, for which trapping is employed. Other businesses in the valley also do trapping. Nic mentioned that recently there is more bio-security awareness and available funding. Anne added that she is aware some farmers groups in the Tamar have begun trapping programs.
- Question Eddie: Re who is responsible for pest control within Parks and Reserves. Nic says PWS accepts responsibility and had carried out very successful projects including trapping 11 feral cats at Lillico Penguin Reserve and closely monitoring Couta Rocks infestation.
- Question Anne Wessing: Re potential of feral deer getting into Parks. Answer Kate indicated that none recorded to date but deer have already invaded areas in the north, north-east and north-west.

Glen Hayhurst thanked Nic and Kate for their willingness to participate and keep our group informed and involved. Nic and Kate left the meeting at 2pm.

4. General Meeting Business

Glen Hayhurst welcomed new member John Corbett, who has recently come to the valley as landowner at Sunshine Creek near Leary's Corner.

5. Confirmation of minutes of the 2021 AGM.

Moved Helen Thyne seconded: Steve Brown that minutes of the 2021 AGM as circulated and as published on the FoCV website were accepted and confirmed as a true record. Carried.

6. Business arising

Glen Hayhurst was disappointed with lack of input from members before submitting our comments on the Master Plan for Cradle Valley. Helen Thyne was the sole contributor. So far no politicians have made any commitment to the Plan. Helen sent a copy of our submission to PWS but as yet has had no response, even from Nic Deka. Face to face meetings agreed to last year have also not occurred yet.

7. President's Report, presented by Glen Hayhurst

We were extremely saddened to learn of the recent passing of Melva Truchanas, a Friend since the inception of our group and a giant within the conservation movement. Melva was passionate about the protection of the Valley and was doggedly determined in her attempts to ensure that its natural values weren't compromised by development. She frequently asked direct and challenging questions of the Park Managers and expected detailed and transparent responses in return. Melva justly deserved to be included in *The Kate and Gustav Weindorfer Honours List* in 2017. She will be missed and remembered. Our meetings will never be the same again.

It was great to catch up with many Friends and other like-minded people at the 100 year anniversary of the Cradle Mountain area being declared a scenic reserve. Let us hope that the next 100 years are kind to our Valley in the face of increasing pressure by government to extract more economic value from our Parks through their continuing support for further development and greater visitor numbers.

I again wish to thank Nic Deka and Kate Burton for providing us with their Park management highlights reports and for the opportunity to hold our meetings in the Conference Room in the Visitor Centre.

With the difficulty we've experienced in finding a replacement Secretary/Treasurer for FoCV this year I think that it is appropriate that during the AGM we review the role of FoCV. Should we continue to be

an advocacy group on behalf of the Valley, with the effort that this requires at times, or is there some other role that we could take on that better meets the needs of our Members? I think that it is a healthy exercise for an organisation to reassess its goals from time to time.

8. Treasurer's Report 2022, presented by Glen Hayhurst, Acting Treasurer

Balance carried forward from 2021 AGM	\$273.12
Income	Nil
Expenditure	Nil
Balance as at 2022 AGM	\$273.12

Outstanding Invoices – Reimbursement to Glen Hayhurst for:

30/06/2021	ROBTEC Hosting (website hosting, 2 years)	\$36.00
23/02/2022	ROBTEC Hosting (website domain name registration, 1 year)	\$20.00
	Expected balance carried forward:	\$217.12

Moved Peter Lawrence seconded Cathy Clayton that Secretaries Report, Treasurer's Report, and outstanding invoices be paid. Carried

9. Discussion on future role of Friends of Cradle Valley group.

Glen Hayhurst has been acting as president, secretary and treasurer over the past year. He is concerned by lack of interest from members in positions on FoCV committee and emphasised his determination to not proceed this year without the support of a secretary and treasurer. Feels a "one man band" is very poor governance and provides limited active consultation. Glen raised the following questions:

- Should we continue as an advocacy group (with the effort that this requires at times)?
 - Should we have more or less input into the high level management of the Valley?
 - Should we restrict our area of focus to just Cradle Valley or it is appropriate that we are proactive in addressing issues affecting the whole of the TWWHA?
 - Do Members simply want to be kept informed of what is happening at Cradle?
 - Is there some other role that we should have?
- Graeme Pickford paid tribute to Glen's work but feels ill equipped technically to take on executive role himself. Feels liaison with PWS is important to continue and that the Cradle Valley staff of PWS greatly appreciate the input.
 - Helen Thyne supported comments on Glen's valuable work and PWS appreciation of input.
 - Glen will continue with hosting web site but will not stand again as President. With 80 members he is sure someone suitable will emerge to play an active role.
 - Peter Lawrence offered to assist with secretarial and email correspondence and suggested a change of venue may produce better member attendance. Feels face to face is preferable to email in obtaining response from members.
 - Peter Walsh suggested possibility of maintaining group status but reducing work load so task is not as daunting for less experienced members.
 - Helen Thyne recalled starting off as group to keep watch on Cradle Valley developments and holding meetings in Devonport, Ulverstone, Burnie.

- Marilyn Spinks suggested committee model can work fine with occasional meeting for update. Review is good for any organisation.
- Jim Spinks served 5 years as Secretary, 3 as President. Feels Nic and Kate greatly appreciate input when responding to PWS and to get feedback from Park users. Group must continue.
- Cathy Clayton offered assistance with minutes etc but is too committed to penguins and Landcare to take on executive position. Feels strongly about the importance of facilitating input from a wide range of park users to PWS proposals, which will be diminished if FoCV does not continue.
- Graeme Pickford feels that meeting at the Cradle gives greater opportunity to keep in touch with on-site developments and check out proposals more thoroughly.
- Steve Brown says Nic and Kate can and do often reference FoCV in meetings with PWS. FoCV will become increasingly important in the future when the challenges in Park developments will become ever greater.
- Glen Hayhurst asks will FoCV be ready for future challenges if we don't get more involved?
- Richard Ruddle. The historic involvement with FoCV took many years to evolve and develop to become a recognised group that improves advocacy effectiveness. His health prohibits any increase in involvement, but he offers any help, even financial, to ensure the continuation of FoCV.
- John Corbett, although new to the group, feels FoCVs relevance is to get inside information that enables effective advocacy and raising public awareness of issues within the Cradle Lake St Clair Park FoCV is a unique voice for the Valley. Sees potential to network with other environmental and eco groups to maintain relevance into the future. John feels more comfortable with electronic exchange, as it can be managed within the individual's own timeframe. Groups such as FoCV also serve to preserve the important history of special places.
- Eddie Firth recalled the group has waxed and waned over the years, suggests perhaps a smaller committee-based entity, with a Face book presence may be the way to continue with one committee member dealing with social media.
- Peter Lawrence asked if there are other groups dedicated to other national parks in Tasmania and/or affiliated with Tasmanian National Parks Association. Nick Sawyer responded saying other groups such as Wild Care are overseen by PWS so FoCV is the only truly independent body and highly respected as such. Nic is happy to contribute as committee member and agrees meetings should remain at Cradle Valley.
- Jenny Pearce. Web site is important to maintain and expand but also feels personal contact with rangers and visiting Cradle site is valuable to good outcomes. Occasional meetings closer to home may be valuable, and offered her home at Leith as a meeting space.
- Teresa Conlon. Agrees website important for members to participate at their own convenience but meetings at Cradle are vital to maintain connections. She sees our independence as our strong point. Suggests considering increasing options for education of day to day Park users which may recruit support. Suggests writing 'job descriptions' for committee on our website may get greater responses and perhaps offering shared roles may make committee roles less daunting.
- Nick Sawyer said Facebook not his preferred option and suggests we consider using Facebook to steer people to our main website, as do TNPA.
- John Corbett offered to assist with technical support in any way. Considers we could make better use of potential for discussions online with larger groups of members involved
- Jim Thyne was concerned about the need to maintaining strong connection with PWS as lead up to next discussions on cableway proposal. Important to keep group intact.

- Peter Walsh said it is essential to have a designated leader to represent us, to initiate meetings and request input. Glen has done great job and committee members must commit to supporting the President

10. Election of Committee for 2022-23

The following persons offered to serve and were elected unopposed.

President: Chris Stafford

PWS contact: Helen Thyne

Secretary/Treasurer: Peter Lawrence

Web master: Glen Hayhurst

Committee members: Steve Brown, Peter Walsh, Nick Sawyer, John Corbett, Cathy Clayton

The meeting agreed to switch the FoCV bank account from a cheque account to operating the account on-line. Treasurer Peter Lawrence to arrange.

11. The Weindorfer Honours List

It was noted that there is no information on the FoCV web site about Mavis Rowlands who was inducted into the Honours List in 2016. Peter Lawrence agreed to follow this up with past members who know Mavis.

12. Walkway from Visitor Centre to Interpretation Centre

Helen Thyne agreed to write a letter to the Kentish Council requesting that they prioritise the development of a walkway linking the Visitor Centre with the Interpretation Centre.

13. Unveiling of a Plaque in Memory of Bert Hanson

Chris Stafford and Eddie Firth will represent FoCV at this event (Thu, 27 Oct 2022 at 11am, Ulverstone General Cemetery)

Glen thanked members for their attendance and participation and wished all a safe journey home. Thanks to Cathy Clayton & Glen Hayhurst for recording the minutes