

CLLMM Milang Habitat Restoration Project

Community focus group – consideration of interpretative signage to be placed around the snipe sanctuary

January 19th 2017

1. CONTEXT

Invitations to participate in a Focus Group were emailed to concept plan survey respondents and key stakeholder organisations. Notification of the Focus Group meeting was also provided to the community through the Project, Milang Old School House Community Centre and Lakes Hub facebook pages and Project website.

Attendees (L – R) :

- Michael Tye
- Jill Dennis
- Tony George
- Karyn Bradford –
Facilitator (MADCA)
- Bev Stone
- John Bradford
- Scott Butler (DEWNR)
- Alice Both
- Pamela Francis
- Mike Linscott
- Alex Stone



Photographer : Kathy Hayter (Alexandrina Council)

Apologies from Kate Mason (SAMDBNRM)

The purpose of this first meeting of the Focus Group was to discuss the content of interpretive signs and potential community arts involvement.

2. FOCUS GROUP ACTIVITIES

Participants were brought up to date on the progress of the project by Kathy Hayter and Karyn Bradford. The changes made to the concept plan, as a result of the community consultation, were also discussed.

Signage

The group split into two, and each group was given a copy of each of the consultation survey responses relating to the question “Interpretive signage is an important component of the project. What stories should we be telling?”. The groups were asked to categorise the feedback.

The resulting categories identified were:

- Local flora and fauna (wetlands)
- Snipe-specific
- Milang or local history
- Signs themselves ie how they should look
- Human history - European and Ngarrindjeri, Indigenous History/Culture



The group was advised that Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority would provide content for Ngarrindjeri interpretation.

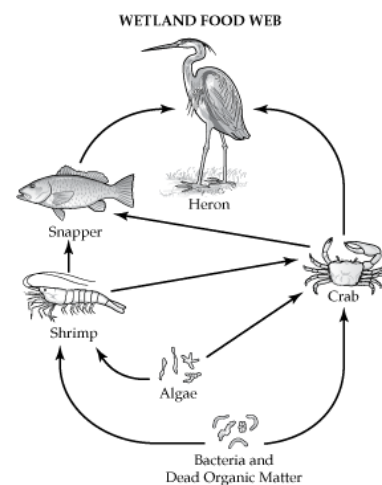
The second part of the evening was to prioritise what were the most important messages and what should be on each sign in each of the identified categories. The group's recommendation relating to the three non-Indigenous signs are:

a) **snipe**

- Picture of Snipe so people know what they are looking for in the wetland
- Scientific and Ngarrindjeri name
- Visual representation of Migratory path
- Bird habits and patterns of behaviour
- Ramsar – its importance to migratory birds like snipe and relevance to Coorong and Lakes Ramsar site.

b) **wetlands (local flora and fauna)**

- Visual representation of interconnectedness of local wetland species similar to adjacent example. Important to include frogs, bats, plant species, macroinvertebrates, birds and reptiles.
- Key Message: Everything is connected.



http://mdk12.msde.maryland.gov/instruction/clg/public_release/biology/g3_e5_i2.html

c) **history**

- importance of freshwater for agriculture and transport
- the impact of this development
- how we are protecting this environment now
- include historic photos

In regards to the overall sign content, the following suggestions were made:

- That the signs must be accessible ie
 - Able to be viewed and read easily by children, people with vision impairment, people in wheel chairs etc
 - Possibility of having some braille on signs
 - Possibility of motion activated oral information
 - Suggestion of a 3D life sized snipe sculpture that people can feel
- The language on the sign is simple and the design is uncluttered.
- Where possible, and with Ngarrindjeri approval, that Ngarrindjeri language and design/art be incorporated into signage
- That QR codes or bluetooth connectivity might be considered so that people can find out more information if they wish (although it was acknowledged that this would require ongoing maintenance/ updating)
- That the signs have some colour but be in keeping with the natural and heritage environment

Interpretation for footpath inlays

The group considered the two inlay locations and suggested:

a) **birdhide inlay**

- Migratory Path – East Asian Australasian Flyway (example adjacent of stylized flyway design, www.ramsar.org)

b) **path forecourt inlay**

- Wetland creatures
- Ngarrindjeri story – Thukeri story about not being greedy and sharing was suggested.
- Ngarrindjeri basket weaving – everything is connected
- Meaning of Milang/Milangk as a visual representation
- Ngarrindjeri Totem for Western Lake Alexandrina



Facilitators Reflection: There was a discussion about Milang being a transport hub, the route for goods from upstream to be sent to market, the place that mail travelled from Adelaide to Melbourne. The path in this place is also a hub that connects the town with the wetland and Lake, the heritage with the environment. Is there also a connection for Ngarrindjeri people with Milang as a spiritual place? Should the theme of the forecourt reflect all of these interconnections – past, present, future?

3. OTHER SUGGESTIONS

- Can the community be involved in a community arts project for the inlays?
- Response: At the moment the path inlays are part of the tender for all of the infrastructure works due to the tight time frames. It could be that the inlays are installed at some later date if other funding was sourced for a community arts project.
- Wind Sculpture or wind instrument in at forecourt.
- Installation of a Peace Pole – When you plant a Peace Pole in your community, you are linking with people all over the world who have planted Peace Poles in the same spirit of peace. Every Peace Pole proclaims the prayer May Peace Prevail on Earth in the language of the country and often several other languages as well. Peace Poles can be found on all the continents around the world. see www.peacepoleproject.org

4. NEXT STEPS

Project Team to consult with Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority regarding appropriateness and possibilities regarding forecourt inlay design.

The project team will draft the content of the signage incorporating feedback provided and will forward to Focus Group for further input by end February.

Thanks to all community members who have contributed to this process.

Thanks also to the Milang Regatta Club for use of venue and provision of delicious refreshments.

Report prepared by Karyn Bradford
Milang and District Community Association Inc.
20th January, 2017