

WHALE HERITAGE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES



CANDIDATE

Date: Wednesday 26th April 2023 Time: 10:30am Venue: Zoom

Item	
1	<p>Members Present: Olivia Brodhurst, Crystal Lacy, Lindsay Simpson, Tony Fontes, Micca Veltri, Cass Hayward, Robert Congoo, Gary Warrener, Nicole Rosser, Deb Duggan, Agnes Boyd-Smith, Stuart Allright</p> <p>Apologies: Trevor Rees, Arpad Romandy, Emily Monacella, Fiona Merida, Lynne Boyce, Adell Henry, Roxanne Bowden, Renee Branton-Brown, Katie Tuesley, Heather Ewing, Brie Sherow, Charlie Morgan, Ben Buchan, Bec Timmins</p> <p>Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners: Robert welcomed us to Ngaro sea country and Gia land, and paid his respects to elders past, present and emerging.</p> <p>Acceptance of previous minutes and previous actions: Minutes accepted</p> <p>Membership Update: Welcome members joining their first meeting - Robert, Micca and Gary. Lynne Boyce from Whitsunday Luxury Sailing Holidays has joined the project Steering Committee. She has lots of photos and video from past years and is very keen to collaborate.</p> <p>Actions from last meeting:</p> <p>WoW video – Crystal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Script was sent to Master Reef Guides (MRG’s) within the region, with 14 wanting to be a part of the project- MRG’s pieces to camera to be spliced together by Crystal who showed an example of one MRG’s piece.- Topics to include a welcome to country, rules and regulations for whale watching, fun facts, what types of whales are found here, why the Whitsundays are so special and important for cetaceans <p>Information night 7th June – Crystal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- GBRMPA are keen to assist with the planned pre whale season information night. Topics to include how to use EOTR app, what to do when near whales and if there is an incident. Introduction to the HappyWhale platform and the importance of getting fluke photos.- To be held at the Lookout Lounge at Coral Sea Marina, with back up at Coral Sea Marina Resort if large numbers expected.
2	<p>Happy Whale & EOTR update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- EOTR data base and fluke photos. Fluffy (Chris Jones) has agreed to supply fluke photo’s to the steering committee for them to send on to the Happy Whale platform. This will hopefully start to tell a story about the whales in the region and track their movement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deb has had 2 whales identified by HappyWhale. One was sighted 19 years previously in the outer Whitsunday waters and the other was last sighted in the Whitsunday Passage in 2018 and off of the coast of Hervey Bay in 2004! When you get a match on a picture you can name the whale by donating \$500 or more to a marine charity. Red Cat Adventures has agreed to sponsor one and will be running a naming competition, with the other naming opportunity has been 'donated' (Thanks Deb!) to Reef Festival to run a whale naming competition there.
<p>3</p>	<p>Welcome Whale Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planned for the 16th June - Purpose of the event is to signify the start of the humpback whale season in the Whitsundays - Ideas include Traditional Owners storytelling, dancing, smoking ceremony, traditional artwork - Master Reef Guide movie to be shown, followed by the whale and the snail movie which Liv has been discussing with Council. - Liv is presenting the idea to the TORG on Friday 28th April. - Sponsors include ARC Energy and hopefully WRC (to be confirmed 10th May) - Agnes spoke about trying to organise traditional dancers for the event.
<p>4</p>	<p>Comms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lindsay is working with Liv on a number of articles ready for the start of the season - Lindsay – there is a lot to cover and working on who to interview. Suggested JCU minke whale project. Need things to grab people’s attention. - Agnes mentioned how the whales are half awake when resting with their calves as calves can’t maintain their buoyancy; that whales look for the more protected bays/locations to give birth. - Crystal suggested to talk to Brent Chatterton as he has witnessed a whale calving at night and potentially has footage - Anyone who has an interesting story to email Lindsay - Nicole – surveillance cameras are being installed on the islands and could be good for footage and potential analysis for whale sightings – anyone will be able to access the footage. - Cass – suggestions for getting information out there to operators and general public, posters, handouts to guests, pictures of common cetaceans, potentially QR code to scan to take them to webpage and EOTR. Potentially an information video on the boats. Decided that poster would be best for the majority of operators with a QR code. - Verve do the marketing for Tourism Whitsunday (TW) and are excited to be involved with the project. They will be able to assist with getting it out there on a national platform including news. - Liv is working with Emily and Deb on the Whales of the Whitsundays Facebook Page. Need to get more posts happening. Emily will keep managing the page with social media with assistance from Deb - Liv reminded all to say ‘approved candidate site’ not just approved - Lindsay asked timeframe for when the project would be approved and the need for getting an announcement ready. Liv noted that it would be potentially by Christmas once all the required information etc has been submitted and approved. - TW are going to have a page on whales on their website. Suggest TW page links to a website dedicated to whales of the Whitsundays with photos and sound recordings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lindsay/Liv – suggest regular column in local paper/news. <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whale one page with QR code to project ideas list
5	<p>Funding - Liv</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waiting to hear back regarding Qantas and DES applications for funding - GBRMPA are 110% on board and will assist with marketing and the information night. - Call for anyone interested in helping with grant applications. - Liv – seek funding for more specific events may be easier moving forward - Coral Sea Marina are donating the use of venue/s
6	<p>General Business/Open Session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony – congratulated Liv & Crystal on their impressive work - Agnes – suggested playing sound recordings of whales in the background the evening of the Welcome Whale event - Liv is talking to real estate agents about doing a mural on a wall in town (Micca to do art). Asked if anyone knows a tenant who may let us paint a mural. - Suggestion of Whales on Whitehaven welcome event in the future <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liv to gather whale song recordings to play on Welcome Whale night
8	<p>Actions Arising from the Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whale one page with QR code to project ideas list - Liv to gather whale song recordings to play on Welcome Whale night
10	<p>Meeting Closed at 11.35am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liv thanked all attendees for coming together – a super exciting project!

Important Dates

- 16th May – Under 8's Day – St Catherine's Christian Collage – Whale education with mini whale rules and regulations game
- 20th May – Presentation at 'Cruising the Whitsundays' Coral Sea Marina Coral Sea Academy Event for start of cruising season
- 7th June – GBRMPA Skipper info night / EOTR
- 15th June – presentation to WLMAC
- 16th June - Cultural Welcome Whale Event
- 15th July - Hydrophone training
- 3-6th August - Great Barrier Reef Festival
 - Thursday 3rd – Environmental Workshop in evening
 - Sunday 6th – Whale Immersive experiences (boat trips) and Whale activity at Family Fun Day