

Coorong Partnership

Communique No. 16

3 February 2022



The 16th meeting of the [Coorong Partnership](#) was held on 3 February 2022 by videoconference.

Coorong Partnership Chair, the Hon Dean Brown, opened the meeting by acknowledging that the Minister for Environment and Water, David Speirs MP, has extended the Partnership to the end of 2022. The Partnership will continue to provide community insight, ideas and perspectives to inform government decision-making relating to the Coorong, and ensure that management actions taken incorporate local knowledge and contribute to achieving community needs and aspirations.

The [National Parks and Wildlife Service](#) (NPWS) and [EFFECTIVER](#) presented an update on the Coorong Visitor Experience Plan. Targeted stakeholder and broader community consultation has commenced and will continue into early March 2022, with the final plan to be delivered in April 2022. The consultation will partner with local government, involve workshops with First Nations, tourism, business, and community stakeholders, and include an online survey. The Partnership will participate in a consultation workshop in March 2022 where it will provide perspectives on how the Coorong can be better activated for tourism, potential infrastructure and facility improvements, and how the visitor experience can be improved. The Partnership expressed its strong interest and continued support for the Coorong Visitor Experience Plan, and encourages the community to participate in the consultation process.

The [Department for Environment and Water](#) (DEW) provided an update on the *Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin's* (HCHB) [On-Ground Works Project](#). The Partnership welcomed the [recent announcement](#) that the Commonwealth and South Australian governments are investing \$10 million to improve the quality and availability of waterbird habitat throughout the Ramsar-listed Coorong and Lower Lakes. Small-scale wetland management infrastructure will be constructed at three priority wetland sites at Tolderol, Waltowa and Teringie with regulators, pumps, pipes and earth works put in place to manage water levels to improve the extent, quality and duration of inundation.

The Partnership noted the importance of implementation of short to medium term on-ground works while long-term management solutions are investigated and implemented. The Partnership welcomed the advice that another HCHB funding proposal for possible wetland restoration works at Lake Hawdon North (near Robe) is nearing completion. The Partnership noted DEW's close and ongoing collaboration with both the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation and First Nations of the South East on these projects.

DEW provided a presentation on the HCHB [Coorong Infrastructure Investigations Project](#) Draft Feasibility Assessment Report, which has been released for community consultation through to until early March 2022. The [Draft Feasibility Assessment Report](#) synthesises the infrastructure feasibility investigations and presents a number of key findings. The Draft Feasibility Assessment Report does not make a specific recommendation on a preferred infrastructure option at this time, but will be revised and finalised to do so following community consultation. The current consultation process includes information webinars, online open house events offering a more interactive follow-up opportunity to discuss the findings with project specialists, and an online survey. Face to face community events planned for Meningie, Salt Creek, Goolwa and Kingston SE have had to move online due to the current COVID-19 conditions. The Partnership welcomed DEW's genuine and ongoing commitment to understand and incorporate community views into any final recommendations for future infrastructure in the Coorong. The Partnership encourages the community to visit the [Project Coorong](#) website to participate in the consultation process.

The Partnership Chair thanked the members and presenters for their attendance and ongoing participation.

The next meeting of the Partnership is scheduled for 7 April 2022.

The Partnership will undertake a site visit to Tolderol and Waltowa wetlands as soon as COVID conditions permit.

Further Information

If you would like to receive regular updates about Project Coorong please email: projectcoorong@sa.gov.au