

# Coorong Partnership

Communique No. 7

26 November 2020



The seventh and final [Coorong Partnership](#) meeting for the year was held on 26 November 2020 via video conference. The meeting included discussions on a range of [Project Coorong](#) and initiatives being undertaken in collaboration with First Nations and the broader community. Marking the end of the Coorong Partnership's establishment year, the meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on the Partnership achievements and to look forward to future opportunities.

The [Limestone Coast Landscape Board](#) presented an update on the [Our Coorong | Our Coast](#) (OC|OC) is focused on protecting the ecology and biodiversity of the Coorong and the Limestone Coast, in relation to habitat for migratory and beach nesting shorebirds. The Partnership discussed progress and future directions across the revegetation, land management, fauna survey, and pest plant and animal control programs. The Partnership noted the challenges of tackling land-based threats to biodiversity, in particular pest plants and animals. The Partnership discussed the increasing prevalence of rabbits in the region, noting that shack owners did not have authority to undertake rabbit control. The Partnership will seek advice from the [Department for Environment and Water](#) and the [National Parks and Wildlife Service](#) (NPWS) on how this can be better managed going forward.

The [Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin](#) (HCHB) Coorong Infrastructure Investigations Project advised the Partnership that feasibility investigations have now commenced, and will continue over the next 12-18 months, to examine a number of possible infrastructure to support the long-term health of the Coorong South Lagoon. There will be regular opportunities for the community to be informed on the ecological, engineering and socio-economic investigations, and help inform final decisions on any options that might proceed to business case development. HCHB thanked the Partnership for their input into the shortlisting process. The Partnership expressed confidence that the investigation plan will be rigorous and adaptive.

The HCHB On-Ground Works (OGW) Project advised the Partnership that a Regional Bird Refugia Implementation Plan is being finalised for Commonwealth funding consideration. If funded, the on-ground works wetland improvement projects will increase DEW's management capability to provide refugia for waterbirds of the Coorong at Tolderol Game Reserve, Waltowa wetland and Teringie wetland. The Partnership acknowledged the importance of short to medium on-ground works to provide habitat for waterbirds while longer term solutions for the Coorong are being investigated.

The [National Parks and Wildlife Service](#) (NPWS) provided an overview of how Partnership recommendations have helped inform improvements to the [Coorong National Park](#) over 2020 and into the future, including the rationalising of signage and improvements to campground facilities. The Partnership discussed the need to progress a master planning process that extends beyond the National Park and includes broader visitor experience and economic development opportunities.

Reflecting on its establishment year, the Partnership identified site visits to the North Lagoon, and the South Lagoon with the Minister for Environment and Water, David Spiers, as a highlights that showcased the breadth and complexity of the issues and opportunities.

Looking forward to 2021, the Partnership is eager to work with DEW to explore more visitor experience and economic development opportunities (particularly with First Nations), as well as facilitate community input into the Coorong Infrastructure Investigations.

The Chair, the Honourable Dean Brown AO, thanked members for their enthusiasm and commitment over the Partnership's first year, during what have been exceptional and extraordinary times. The members expressed the importance of the Partnership meetings in keeping the members informed and up-to date across all projects in the Coorong region, so that they can then share this information throughout their networks and communities. The Partnership hopes to be able to hold more face-to-face meeting in 2021, and looks forward to being able to open these meetings up to the community when it safer to do so.

The Partnership will next convene in early February 2021.

## Further Information

If you would like to receive regular updates about [Project Coorong](#) please email: [projectcoorong@sa.gov.au](mailto:projectcoorong@sa.gov.au)