



BUSHCARE/PARKCARE PROCEDURES

Procedure Number: PRD20/28

Adopted: 28/01/2020

Minute Number: MIN20.68

File: 1835E, 31317E

Produced By: Natural Resources and Floodplain - Parks and Facilities

Review Date: 28/01/2023

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1. DEFINITIONS

BUSHCARE: The involvement of volunteers in management of public land categorized as Natural Area under the Local Government Act 1993, or similar Crown Land for which Council is the Trust Manager or has care, control and management responsibility, or other such public land with permission of the land owner/manager.

The term 'Bushcare' in these procedures includes other volunteer groups in their role working on such public land under the direction of Shoalhaven City Council. These include Bushcare, Dunecare, Landcare, school groups, rubbish clean-up groups and other Natural Area Volunteer groups. The term Bushcare does not include volunteer involvement in management within roads, except for areas of unused road where these are managed for natural values and included in an approved Bushcare Group Action Plan.

BUSHCARE COORDINATOR: An appropriately qualified council staff member who is employed to coordinate the Shoalhaven Bushcare Program.

BUSHCARE FIELD OFFICER: An appropriately qualified staff member or contractor who is employed to provide on-site guidance and training to Bushcare groups.

BUSHCARE GROUP: A formal group of volunteers undertaking Bushcare as per the above definition.

BUSHCARE GROUP ACTION PLAN: A plan developed jointly between the Council and the Bushcare group which clearly outlines, amongst other information, the group's aims, objectives and activities for the Bushcare site.

BUSHCARE/PARKCARE PROJECT: A project that is delivered, at least in part, by a Bushcare or Parkcare group or combination of groups..

COUNCIL: The Council of the City of Shoalhaven.

COUNCIL LAND: Land that is either owned by, Shoalhaven City Council; or Crown Land for which Council is the Trust Manager or has care, control and management responsibility.

GROUP COORDINATOR: Volunteer who acts as the primary contact for a Bushcare/Parkcare group.

PARKCARE: The involvement of volunteers in management of public land categorized as Community Land categorised as a Park under the Local Government Act 1993 or similar Crown Land for which Council is the Trust Manager or has care, control and management responsibility.

The term Parkcare does not include volunteer involvement in management within roads, such as that done by 'Adopt a Road' groups, except for areas of unused roads where these are managed as parkland and included in an approved Parkcare Group Action Plan.

These 'Parkcare' procedures do not apply to registered Council volunteers that maintain mown areas adjacent to their property on an individual basis, where agreed to by Council.

PARKCARE COORDINATOR: An appropriately qualified council staff member who is employed to coordinate the Shoalhaven Parkcare Program.

PARKCARE GROUP: A formal group of volunteers undertaking Parkcare as per the above definition.

PARKCARE GROUP ACTION PLAN: A plan developed jointly between the Council and the Parkcare group which clearly outlines the groups' aims and objectives for the Parkcare site.

RECORDING SHEET BOOK: A book that is issued to volunteer Bushcare/Parkcare groups for the purpose of recording the groups volunteer hours worked, the people who participated and the type of activities that were undertaken.

SITE RISK ASSESSMENT: An assessment of the Workplace Health and Safety risks associated with each Bushcare/Parkcare group's site and the strategies that can be implemented to reduce those risks.

WORKING BEE: An occasion where members of a Bushcare/Parkcare group carry out volunteer work on their site.

2. BUSHCARE/PARKCARE GROUP ESTABLISHMENT

2.1 Priorities for support

Council has limited financial resources available for the Bushcare/Parkcare program but must ensure that groups receive support on an equitable basis and that projects are as successful as possible. Council's capacity to support Bushcare/Parkcare groups is linked to funding levels and the number of staff available.

As resources permit, Council will support all Bushcare/Parkcare projects, which comply with the Bushcare/Parkcare Policy and Procedures and will do so on an equitable basis.

If resources are insufficient to fund all projects, the following criteria will be considered when assessing projects for potential support:

1. Land should be public land, owned or managed by council. This includes crown land reserves of which Council is the trust manager.
2. The conservation/ecological values of the land and its broader environmental values to the landscape/region, such as connectivity within an existing or proposed flora/fauna corridor.
3. The potential environmental, social and economic or other benefits of the project(s);
4. Potential of the project(s) to meet its aims and achieve sustainable results. This may depend on the number of people wishing to be part of the group, and the amount of time they are able to commit;
5. Consistency of the project with local and regional environmental management priorities and its contribution to achieving those priority management objectives; and
6. The existence of a community Bushcare/Parkcare within the same reserve/catchment, beach or local area, to avoid duplication of resources.

2.2 Setting up a new Bushcare or Parkcare group

1. Residents inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident/Community approach Council to establish Group • Check made that land is owned/managed by Council. Gain approval from Council’s land custodian(s) • Assess whether there is another Bushcare/Parkcare group already working in the area and where possible, include within existing group
2. Group establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess whether Council has the resources to support an additional group • Council staff and potential volunteers meet • Gain registrations and completion of SCC volunteer induction process • Group nominates a coordinator and a deputy coordinator if considered worthwhile • Volunteers’ details are entered into Councils Bushcare or Parkcare Groups database with a new group also set up. • Through the database, information on the group becomes available on Council’s website • Assign a Bushcare Field Officer (BFO) to support a Bushcare group
3. Commence work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFO or Council staff and group develop a Site Safety Plan that includes Hazards Identification, Risk Assessment and Control Measures for work sites • Volunteers undertake a Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) induction for the sites • The group can commence work undertaking weed control and rubbish removal, with agreement of the Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator, prior to the development and approval of a Bushcare or Parkcare Group Action Plan. Planting is not to be done unless as part of an approved plan • Group provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), tools, waste tipping card and Bushcare Site Recording Sheets
4. Bushcare/Parkcare Group Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council staff and volunteers prepare Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plan collaboratively • Bushcare/Parkcare Plan undergoes consultation phase • Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plan adopted by Council • Group can implement actions as included in the plan

3. VOLUNTEERS

3.1 Eligibility

The Bushcare/Parkcare program is open to all residents, ratepayers and visitors to the Shoalhaven, provided they operate in accordance with Bushcare/Parkcare Policy and these Procedures and can carry out the required duties in a safe and

responsible manner. Shoalhaven City Council's Volunteer Induction Handbook (Health, Safety and Behaviour) must be adhered to at all times.

Council will develop and maintain a Position Descriptions for Bushcare Volunteers and for the group Volunteer Coordinator (Appendix 1). This will include information on the range of tasks and activities Bushcare/Parkcare programs and the physical requirements of these. It is recognised that volunteers can perform differing roles and tasks, depending on a wide range of factors such their time availability and physical capabilities.

Volunteer participating in the Shoalhaven Bushcare/Parkcare programs must be aged between 10 and 90 years of age. School groups are eligible.

3.2 Working with children

Bushcare volunteers may come into contact with children aged up to 16 years as part of their volunteer work and are required to undertake a Working with Children Check under part 2, section 6 of the Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 as part of the registration and induction process.

It is extremely rare for Parkcare volunteers to work with children. In cases where Parkcare volunteers will come into contact with children aged up to 16 years, then those individual will be required to complete the check.

3.3 Volunteer pre-existing conditions

Pre-existing conditions that may pose a risk are to be disclosed to Council upon registering and these will be passed on to the volunteer Coordinator of the relevant group. Volunteers are only to take on tasks that do not pose unacceptable risks based on pre-existing conditions.

3.4 Volunteers with carers

Volunteers that have a disability and are supervised by a Carer are welcome to participate, undertaking appropriate tasks. The Carer and where possible, the carer's client, must register and undertake the corporate induction process. Site safety inductions must be completed by both.

3.5 Temporary volunteers

Visitors, part-time residents or event-based participants may volunteer by filling out their details, date and signing on a Bushcare/Parkcare Site Recording Sheet when they work and provided they:

- Satisfy the age requirements for insurance
- Are wearing the appropriate clothing.
- Are inducted on site about safe working practices and hazards on site i.e. (site risk assessment) and risk management measures.
- Record their name, address and signature on the Bushcare/Parkcare activity sheet prior to commencing work.

3.6 De-registering volunteers

Checks on groups membership are made occasionally, including when a new member joins. Volunteers are de-registered based on the advice of the group

coordinator when there has been no participation or communication, in general, for six months or more.

3.7 Dismissal of volunteers

In instances of misconduct or breaches to the volunteer responsibilities, Council's CEO has the right to dismiss the Volunteer. This includes:

- Theft of property or funds.
- Intoxication through alcohol or other substances while volunteering.
- Verbal or physical harassment of any other volunteers, members of the community or Council employees.
- Disclosure of confidential information regarding the Council and/or clients.
- Breaching any other volunteer responsibilities or working contrary to approved works/plans.
- Malicious damage to Council or community property.
- Not working in a safe manner.

Volunteers will be informed of their right of appeal against any dismissal, managed through Council's standard governance processes.

4. SUPERVISION AND COORDINATION OF GROUPS

4.1 Group coordinator

A member of each Bushcare/Parkcare group will be appointed by the group to be the Group Coordinator. The Coordinator must volunteer to undertake the role and have the support of the majority of the group members. The role can be shared if the group wishes, provided it is clear who the primary contact person is at any one time. A Deputy Coordinator may be appointed by the groups and may be especially useful for taking on the role when the Coordinator is away.

The role of the Bushcare/Parkcare Group Coordinator is to;

- Act as the group's primary contact point for Council, other organisations and the public.
- Provide a contact phone or email address that can be made public
- Make all volunteers aware of safety issues and risks associated with Bushcare/Parkcare site, risk management procedures and good work practices.
- Ensure that the Bushcare/Parkcare Activity Sheets are completed and submitted to Council in a timely manner.
- Ensure all the group's activities comply with the Action Plan, except that approved weed control and rubbish removal can be undertaken in other areas following WHS risk assessment.
- Nominate training needs for the group
- Pass on relevant information to group members

Council will supply a copy of the Bushcare Group Coordinator Role Description to each Bushcare Group Coordinator.

Council encourages Bushcare/Parkcare groups to rotate the Group Coordinator position every two years. A Bushcare/Parkcare Group Coordinator may resign the

position at any time. The new Coordinator must let Council's Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator know when the Coordinator (or deputy) changes.

4.2 Records

Council will provide each Bushcare/Parkcare group with a Recording Sheet book, which will have carbon copy sheets for the groups use at each working session. The logbooks record the following information;

- Site name
- Bushcare/Parkcare Group
- Risk assessment and first aid kit check
- Date of work session.
- Names and signature of people attending the work sessions.
- Hours worked by each person.
- Type of activity carried out
- Herbicide spray record (when needed)

A copy of the log sheets can be retained by the group but the original must be forwarded to the Council's Bushcare Coordinator or Parks Officer preferably within 8 weeks of the group's activity. This information is recorded into a database and group activity updates will be posted in the Shoalhaven Bushcare/Parkcare newsletter annually.

Council will maintain:

- A register of each Bushcare/Parkcare group coordinator's contact details, groups meeting dates, times and frequency that is publicly accessible via Council website.
- A confidential register of Bushcare/Parkcare volunteer's details will be held on an internal database.
- A register of groups' activities i.e. the number of hours contributed by each group will be held on an internal database.

Council will obtain personal information from volunteers including names, address, and telephone numbers, child protection screening (where applicable) and other contact details for administering the Bushcare/Parkcare Program. Personal information obtained by Council is governed by the NSW Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. This legislation provides direction for the collection, protection, storage, disposal, access and use of personal information by Council.

5. NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Council's Bushcare Coordinator will, each year, develop an engagement plan to foster networking and interaction between volunteer coordinators, volunteers and with other organisations (example template given in Appendix 2). The types of events and gatherings where networking can occur may include:

- National events such as National Tree Day and Bushcare's Big Day Out
- Local events such as Bushcare/Parkcare Christmas Picnic, planting days
- Training courses, seminars, field days

Council staff will actively develop relationships with external organisations such as schools, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Landcare, Correctional Services, Local Land Services and encourage the involvement of Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers. These connections will assist with knowledge-sharing and cooperation across land tenures, as well as for the intrinsic benefit in forming connections across our communities.

The engagement plan will identify key potential partners, how engagement will be sought, staff and volunteers involved and their responsibilities.

6. TRAINING

Training is an integral part of an effective Bushcare/Parkcare program and its delivery will be reviewed annually to consider the needs of volunteers and the type of work they are carrying out. A variety of training opportunities will be offered and may include formal courses. Courses will focus on local issues whilst offering the participants opportunities to develop a diverse range of skills and knowledge.

6.1 Work, Health and Safety volunteer induction training

Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers are required to complete Council's Volunteer Health, Safety and Behaviour Induction. This can be completed on-line or in hard copy. This must be completed prior to undertaking any work on a Bushcare/Parkcare site. The Volunteer Health, Safety and Behaviour Induction training will address:

- Work, Health and Safety issues and working in a safe and effective manner in bushland and/or park areas.
- Rights and responsibilities under relevant Acts and policies.

Each participant must have access to, and read Shoalhaven City Council's Volunteer Induction Handbook – Health, Safety and Behaviour. A signed acknowledgment of the handbook's contents is to be returned to Council. The group coordinator shall not permit any person who has not undergone such training to participate in Bushcare/Parkcare activities.

6.2 Informal training

Council will also provide on-site training in bush regeneration, for those Bushcare groups who access the services of the Bushcare Field Officer. This will be done in an informal capacity with non-accredited training being provided.

Council, in cooperation with the Shoalhaven Landcare Association and other interested agencies run programs of training workshops, field days and conferences that are commensurate with local community issues and needs.

6.3 Formal training

Council will also provide for formal accredited training for volunteers that are required to make their work safe such as First Aid, Chemical Users Certificate and Chainsaw Operations. The Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator will consider all requests for training based on:

- the requirements of actions in the relevant Bushcare or Parkcare Group Action Plan
- the overall skills-needs of each group with consideration of the working environment;
- and funds available.

In general, up to two group members from each group will be trained by Council for such training courses.

The Group Coordinator is to nominate members for training and should consider equity across the group, as well as identifying the most relevant group members for training.

7. GROUP ACTION PLANS

7.1 Plan contents

Work proposed by a Bushcare/Parkcare group must be carried out in accordance with a group Action Plan. The plan will outline the objectives of the group and the actions by which they will be achieved. The Bushcare Coordinator has the responsibility for compiling and preparing the Bushcare action plans in consultation with the Bushcare Field Officer and the Bushcare Group. The Action Plan will include the following;

1. Reserve information.
2. Aims and Objectives of the group.
3. Map showing the groups site/s and indicating what activities are to be undertaken and where.
4. A table showing details of the actions to be undertaken by the group, their priority, the methods used and the timing. These should include monitoring and evaluation actions.
5. List of Council support items.
6. Identification of projects for future funding opportunities.
7. List of relevant local and regional plans.
8. List of environmental weeds on the site; and
9. List of common native plant species occurring on the site.

The Action Plan should not conflict with any other plans or strategies prepared for the site or surrounding areas, such as Reserve Plan of Management, Estuary Management Plan or generic policies or plans. If any potential conflict arises, Council's Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator should be notified immediately.

Bushcare group action plans are to be based around Council-managed land. However, adjacent areas owned by other entities may be included in the plans and worked upon by Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers, if there is a written agreement including grant funding agreements from the land owner or delegated manager. Council policies and procedures are to be adhered to.

The Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plans have a review period of six years.

7.2 Community consultation

Once the draft Action Plan is completed to the satisfaction of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator/Parks Officer and the Group Director, the Action Plans will be subject to community consultation.

Under the Shoalhaven Council Community Engagement Policy, all Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plans are categorised as Local Area and Low Impact. As per the policy, Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plans will utilise submissions in most circumstances. Meetings, social media may be used more rarely.

Other methods of consultation that can be utilised by Bushcare/Parkcare Groups are publications, factsheets, newsletter articles, website/s, media, direct communication such as site tours or on-site meetings.

The following table lists the criteria to determine the level of consultation required for a Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plan:

Minor Consultation	Major Consultation
There is either no planting of shrubs or trees proposed, or the planting proposed will not impact on existing views from properties or reserve lookouts – for example, because of remote location	There is planting of shrubs and trees that may impede existing views from adjacent properties or reserve lookouts
There are only minor changes to the reserve’s usage/status because of the plan’s actions	There are major changes to the reserve’s usage/status because of the plan’s actions
There is no installation of infrastructure	There is installation of infrastructure

The level of consultation will be determined by the Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator based on the above criteria. As a minimum, the following individuals/organisations will be consulted:

Minor Consultation	Major Consultation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Staff 2. State Government Agency staff (excluding Parkcare) 3. Local Aboriginal Land Council (excluding Parkcare) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Staff 2. State Government Agency staff 3. Local Aboriginal Land Council 4. Councillors 5. Community Consultative Body (CCB) 6. All residents and ratepayers within 200 m of the reserve boundary of the Bushcare/Parkcare site

Once all consultation is considered and modifications to the Action Plan are completed, all Action Plans are to be forwarded to Council for formal adoption.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Council will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the success of the Bushcare and Parkcare programs and will assess these programs for their success in engaging with community and in achieving on-ground outcomes.

Council's Bushcare Field Officers in cooperation with individual Bushcare groups are to provide annual progress reports (Council MIN18.1010, Dec 2018). These will be brief reviews, mainly of progress against actions.

Additionally, Council will support and encourage longer-term assessment of bushland condition. Volunteers, Council staff and contractors may all contribute to this and external funds will be sought as opportunities arise. Involvement in citizen science applications, such as the 'Budawang Coast Nature Map' will be encouraged and supported.

9. FUNDING

9.1 Administration of funds

Bushcare/Parkcare groups can be involved in a range of activities other than work on Council owned or managed land and it is possible to raise money or apply for grant funding for these activities; such as education initiatives. A distinction should be made between projects associated with Council, and any other work in which the group is involved.

Council's role in the management of funds on behalf of Bushcare/Parkcare groups will only apply to works on Council owned or managed land and will act as the principal manager of the funds.

9.2 Contractors and consultants

Any internal or externally funded projects that involve works undertaken by contractors or consultants on Council owned or managed land will be the responsibility of Council. This includes the following;

1. Preparing tenders and briefs.
2. Preparing scope of works.
3. Site meetings (in consultation with the Bushcare/Parkcare group).
4. Contractors progress reporting.

Upon completion of the project, the submission of the final report will be the responsibility of Council and the Bushcare/Parkcare group who applied for the grant in cooperation with the Council. Council would normally prepare the report with input from the group.

9.3 Grants from external sources

When work is being carried out on Council land, Council has the legal responsibility to ensure that the relevant Acts and policies (i.e. Procurement, WHS and Insurances) are complied with.

Council also has the responsibility to set management and funding priorities across its jurisdiction. This involves taking an overview of needs and considering local and regional priorities. Projects identified for inclusion in external funding applications will be consistent with such priorities. This helps ensure that the effort required for preparing applications and managing projects is used as effectively as possible.

Where work is to be carried out on Council land, Bushcare/Parkcare groups cannot apply for external grants or manage projects independently of Council. Such projects can be undertaken as a partnership between Council and the group. In such partnerships, Council will act as the financial trustee for the projects.

9.4 Selecting projects for external funding

Projects on Bushcare/Parkcare sites which are suitable for external funding can be identified by volunteers and Council Officers during the development or review of the group's action plan.

Grant applications should be developed jointly by Council and the Bushcare/Parkcare group.

Grant applications need to be signed by Council's Section Manager or Director and ten working days need to be allowed for this.

Projects will be selected for funding submissions by Council in consultation with Bushcare/Parkcare groups according to;

- Suitability of the project to funding program's stated priorities and objectives.
- Ability of the Council and the group/s to fulfil associated project commitments.
- Potential social, ecological, educational and other benefits of the project.
- The consistency and ability of the project to meet Council's objectives and other regional and local objectives and guidelines.

9.5 Allocations of Council funding

Council will provide Bushcare/Parkcare groups with small amounts of funding to manage ongoing expenses such as removal of weed waste, training, materials, equipment and education activities. A total of \$400 p.a. will be nominally allocated to each group. Additional funds may be allocated for under special circumstances. Priority for such funding will be allocated according to;

- How many in-kind person hours a Bushcare/Parkcare group works on their site as per the Bushcare/Parkcare Activity Sheets (how active is the group).
- Projects that meet regional and local priorities.
- The ability of the group to undertake the project.
- Budgetary constraints

9.6 Donations to groups

Council is unable to arrange for donations to Bushcare/Parkcare groups to be tax deductible.

9.7 Small purchases by group coordinators

Small purchases may be made by group coordinators provided that prior approval is given by the Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator. These will be reimbursed by providing a receipt to the Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator

10. ACCIDENTS AND INSURANCE

10.1 Reporting injuries, incidents and near-misses

Any accident involving injury or damage that occurs whilst under the care and control of Council must be reported to the Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator by filling out an incident report form and returned to Council's WHS Unit within 24 hours. If the incident happens out of normal business hours it can be reported to Council's WHS 'Hotline' on 4429 3542, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All claims need to be accompanied by completed paperwork as required by Council's Insurance and Risk Management Unit. Near-misses must also be reported.

10.2 Personal Accident Insurance

Council's personal accident insurance policy covers volunteers whilst performing activities authorised by Council.

It should be noted that the policy only covers volunteers aged between 10 and 90 years. As a result, persons outside of this age bracket are not able to be engaged in any voluntary activities.

Council will take all reasonable care to ensure that volunteers operate in a safe working environment. Volunteers are required to act in a responsible manner and in accordance with standard operating procedures. Wilfully or deliberately causing injury is not covered by Council's insurance.

10.3 Public Liability Insurance

Whilst working under the care and control of Council, volunteers are protected against public liability claims under Council's public liability insurance cover. Council's insurance does not cover incidences where damage has been caused through wilful or deliberate acts.

11. TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

11.1 Requests for materials/equipment

Bushcare/Parkcare groups wanting to request materials or equipment need to do so in writing on the section provided at bottom of the Bushcare/Parkcare Site Recording Sheet or via the Bushcare Field Officer/Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator. A 14-day period must be allowed for Council to respond to the request. Exceptions include:

- Loaning of Bushcare/Parkcare tool kits
- Supply of essential safety equipment.

Council will be responsible for the provision of the necessary tools and equipment for volunteers Bushcare/Parkcare groups. Procedures are;

- Tools and equipment will be made available to registered Bushcare/Parkcare groups on loan.
- Volunteers are responsible for maintaining tools and equipment and returning them to Council in the event of the group folding or the individual volunteer leaving the program.
- Hand-held power tools may be used on Bushcare/Parkcare sites provided that their use is covered by the WHS Hazard ID and Risk Assessment and relevant Work Instructions are followed.

11.2 Issue of tools and equipment

All essential equipment will be provided by Council depending on the activities nominated in the Groups Action Plan and may includes:

- 'Bushcare' long-sleeve shirts
- first aid kit
- basic gardening tools
- equipment for maintaining tools
- gloves
- safety glasses
- ear protection
- appropriate mask for activity
- eye protection
- sunscreen (30+ SPF)
- insect repellent
- herbicide
- weed bags

Replacement products will be provided as required.

Other equipment and tools such as bush regeneration pouches, saws, loppers, mattocks, shovels, spray knapsacks, power augers, water trailer and plant propagating materials will be loaned out to Bushcare/Parkcare groups as required.

11.3 Maintenance and replacement of equipment

Bushcare/Parkcare Groups will be responsible for;

- Ensuring all tools and equipment are maintained in good working order.
- Recording any loss or damage to equipment in the activity log book.

Council will be responsible for;

- Repair of tools and equipment (to limit of funds).
- Replacing equipment that has been damaged or worn over time (as funds permit).

There is no guarantee that Council will replace equipment that is lost or stolen due to limited funds. Council is also not responsible for the repair and replacement of tools and equipment that it has not provided unless these have been hired or loaned under agreement.

12. WORK PRACTICES

12.1 Tree guards

Tree guards to be used on Council-managed land are to be selected based on the following considerations:

- Effectiveness – Guards and stakes must meet the site-specific requirements. For example, taller mesh guards may be required to protect plants from kangaroos, compared with smaller guards that are effective protection against rabbits.
- Environmental protection – where there is a high risk that guards may be lost to the environment, biodegradable types will be used. High-risk areas will include foreshores and along waterways.
- Ease of installation – this particularly applies to where volunteer groups such as schools, may require guards that are easy to install.
- Cost – after the above considerations are made, the most cost-effective guards are to be used.

12.2 Rubbish removal

- Bushcare/Parkcare groups are encouraged to mulch their weed waste on site wherever possible using techniques such as solarisation (including using black plastic to break down the weed matter), pile burning and using the green waste as mulch.
- Each Bushcare/Parkcare Group will be issued with a Council Waste Tipping Account card, which will allow the group free waste tipping fees up to a set value (currently \$27 per visit).
- Volunteers are not to attempt to remove any potentially dangerous material. For example: asbestos, syringes, or chemical waste. Council staff must be notified immediately if such items are found.
- If the amount of waste requiring disposal exceeds the set \$27 for the waste tipping fee account or is beyond the ability of the Bushcare/Parkcare group to physically remove it from site Council will arrange to remove or chip the green waste provided 14 days' notice is given by the Bushcare/Parkcare group and the waste is taken to a predetermined collection point.

12.3 Pile burning of green waste

There are occasions where it is appropriate to pile burn the weed material on site. This is an option when heat is required to stimulate native plant regeneration from the seed bank or when alternative disposal options are limited.

- Burning of weed waste can be arranged after consultation with Council's Fire Mitigation – Bushland Management Officer, or Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator.

- If on-site burning is required, then arrangements will have to be made before work commences (see NSW RFS website - Guidelines for Pile Burning).

12.4 Road safety

Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers are only permitted to work on roads or road reserves where these are trafficable, if the required level of safety training has been undertaken by the volunteers.

13. PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

13.1 Sharing information

The sharing of information is a key aspect of Bushcare and Parkcare. Council will promote the sharing of information in a range of ways.

Council will produce a newsletter and host Bushcare/Parkcare web pages that will advertise the Bushcare/Parkcare programs including groups' events, dates and times of activities. Bushcare/Parkcare groups will be strongly encouraged to submit updates and articles to the Bushcare/Parkcare newsletter.

Council will also assist in the printing and photocopying of brochures, such as for letterbox drops to inform the local community about the group, or to publicise special events. Local newsletters will also be used to publicise Bushcare/Parkcare activities as funds permit. The level of assistance available for newsletters and brochures will depend on resources available.

Bushcare and Parkcare coordinators will share other relevant information directly with group coordinators who have the role of disseminating this information to their group.

13.2 Use of the media

Volunteers are not permitted to make any comments to the media on behalf of Council. Any queries for a statement to the media must be referred to the Bushcare or Parkcare Coordinator prior to release to the media.

13.3 Volunteer group websites

Individual groups may utilise independent web-sites or social media. The volunteers that are responsible for those pages must respect Councils media protocol and not make comments on behalf of Council, unless with permission. All content must conform to the Bushcare/Parkcare Policy and Volunteer Induction Handbook.

13.4 Field days

Field days are an effective way of informing and promoting Bushcare/Parkcare activities in the local community. If included in the engagement plan and dependant on current funding, Council will assist with the cost of publicity (brochures,

advertisement in the local press), venue hire and light refreshments. Field Days will be subject to approval from the Bushcare Coordinator.

13.5 Displays

Council will assist where possible with the loan of displays and with production of displays including photography, enlargements and laminating.

14. APPENDIX 1 DRAFT BUSHCARE POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

SHOALHAVEN BUSHCARE VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title

Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator

Job Description

Recruit and manage a team of volunteers to assist in the regeneration, management and maintenance of remnant bushland areas on public land within the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA).

The Aims of the Bushcare Volunteer

1. Restore and regenerate areas categorised as natural areas - community land in accordance with best practice bush regeneration techniques.
2. Re-vegetate with local native plants and increase public awareness and appreciation of the natural values through education initiatives and training.

Types of Volunteers

1. Bushcare Volunteer – A new volunteer can join an existing Bushcare Group
2. Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator – A volunteer who is the primary contact for a Bushcare Group and coordinates the group at a local level.
3. Non Active - You do not have to be an “active” volunteer but can nominate to receive the Shoalhaven Bushcare Newsletter “Shoalhaven Bushcare Links”.

Important Volunteer Coordinator Attributes

1. Essential Skills and Attributes:
 - a. Enthusiasm and interest in bushland preservation and restoration.

- b. A desire and willingness to expand skills and knowledge by participating and undertaking training in ecological restoration.
 - c. Willingness to work as part of a team
 - d. Willingness to work towards the aims and objectives of the Shoalhaven Council Bushcare program.
 - e. Team management and communication skills
 - f. Physical ability to work outdoors, on uneven terrain in a bushland setting
2. Desirable Skills and Attributes:
 - a. Current First Aid Certificate.
 - b. Bush regeneration skills, qualifications or work experience..

Estimated Hours of Work

1. Approximately, but not limited to 3 hours per month for a volunteer coordinator of a Bushcare Group
2. As many hours as desired by an individual volunteer up to 16 hours per week (a volunteer should not work more than 16 hours per week).

Duties and Responsibilities of all Bushcare Volunteers

1. Volunteers must comply with all Shoalhaven City Council policies and procedures, the Council's code of conduct, state and federal legislation including the *Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations 2011*.
2. Whilst working volunteers have a responsibility to ensure a safe working environment for themselves, other volunteers, paid employees and visitors. This includes following guidance and instructions on Bushcare site safety, using personal protective equipment (PPE) when required; particularly wearing sturdy covered footwear, a long-sleeved shirt and long pants when working on a Bushcare site. A Hat and sun protection has to be worn if the weather conditions require it.
3. Volunteers must sign and date the "Bushcare Site Recording Sheet" every time they attend a Bushcare activity and report any injury, near miss, hazard or damage to or loss of equipment during a Bushcare activity.
4. Volunteers must also ensure they participate and complete any training relevant to their role, including Council Volunteer Induction.

Tasks of the Coordinator Role

1. Assist in the development of a Bushcare Group Action Plan that sets out the group's responsibilities and tasks.
2. Work with Council staff to guide the work of Bushcare volunteers to ensure that the aims of the Bushcare Group Action Plan are achieved.
3. Provide advice and support to Bushcare volunteers in basic bush regeneration and ensure that all volunteers are working safely.
4. Coordinate Bushcare Group working bees in regards to meeting times, work program and tool maintenance.
5. Ensure the Bushcare Site Recording Sheet is filled out by all volunteers and sent through to Council.
6. Act as the public contact person for the Bushcare Group and primary contact with Council.
7. All other tasks of a Bushcare Volunteer.

Benefits of the Bushcare Volunteer Position

As a Shoalhaven Bushcare Volunteer you will:

1. Gain personal satisfaction of restoring your local natural areas.
2. Learn new skills and knowledge.
3. Meet new friends and new people.
4. Improve your mental and physical health (research has proven that volunteering in outdoor activities improves an individual's mental and physical health)
5. Have valued input into the current and future management of bushland reserves under the care and control of Shoalhaven City Council.
6. You will be covered by Council public liability and personal accident insurance when working on a reserve.
7. You will be eligible to become member of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Representative Group to assist in the management of the Shoalhaven City Council's Bushcare Program

To apply to be a volunteer of the Shoalhaven City Council Bushcare contact the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator P – (02) 4429 3592 E –

Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au or via the web at

<http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Environment/Bushcare>

SHOALHAVEN BUSHCARE VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title

Bushcare Volunteer

Job Description

Assist in the regeneration, management and maintenance of remnant bushland on public land within the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA).

The Aims of the Bushcare Volunteer

1. Restore and regenerate areas categorised as natural areas - community land in accordance with best practice bush regeneration techniques.
2. Re-vegetate with local native plants and increase public awareness and appreciation of natural values through education initiatives and training

Types of Volunteers

1. Bushcare Group Volunteer – A new volunteer can join an existing Bushcare Group
2. Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator – A volunteer who is the primary contact for a Bushcare Group and manages the group at a local level.
3. Non Active - You do not have to be an “active” volunteer but can nominate to receive the Shoalhaven Bushcare Newsletter “Shoalhaven Bushcare Links”.

Important Volunteer Attributes

1. Essential Skills and Attributes:
 - a. Enthusiasm and interest in bushland preservation and restoration.
 - b. A desire and willingness to expand skills and knowledge by participating and undertaking training in ecological restoration.
 - c. Willingness to work as part of a team
 - d. Willingness to work towards the aims and objectives of the Shoalhaven Council Bushcare program.
 - e. Physical ability to work outdoors, on uneven terrain in a bushland setting
2. Desirable Skills and Attributes:
 - a. Current First Aid Certificate.

- b. Bush regeneration skills, qualifications or work experience.

Estimated Hours of Work

1. Approximately, but not limited to 2 hours per month for a volunteer of a Bushcare Group
2. As many hours as desired by an individual volunteer up to 16 hours per week (a volunteer should not work more than 16 hours per week).

Duties and Responsibilities of all Bushcare Volunteers

1. Volunteers must comply with all Shoalhaven City Council policies and procedures, the Council's code of conduct, state and federal legislation including the *Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations 2011*.
2. Whilst working volunteers have a responsibility to ensure a safe working environment for themselves, other volunteers, paid employees and visitors. This includes following guidance and instructions on Bushcare site safety, using personal protective equipment (PPE) when required; particularly wearing sturdy covered footwear, a long-sleeved shirt and long pants when working on a Bushcare site. A Hat and sun protection has to be worn if the weather conditions require it.
3. Volunteers must sign and date the Bushcare Site Recording Sheet every time they attend a Bushcare activity and report any injury, near miss, hazard or damage to or loss of equipment during a Bushcare activity.
4. Volunteers must also ensure they participate and complete any training relevant to their role, including Council Volunteer Induction.

Tasks of the Role

1. All aspects of bush regeneration as per the goals and actions of the Bushcare Group Action Plan and as directed by the Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator and/or Council staff.
 - a. Particularly environmental weed identification and control.
 - b. Revegetation with local native plants.
 - c. Seed collection and propagation
2. Flora and fauna monitoring, recording and surveys such a citizen science programs.
3. Walking Track construction and maintenance.

4. Bushcare site assessment, planning and monitoring.
5. Communication, public awareness raising and marketing of the Bushcare program.
6. Newsletter production.

Benefits of the Bushcare Volunteer Position

As a Shoalhaven Bushcare Volunteer you will:

1. Gain personal satisfaction of restoring your local natural areas.
2. Learn new skills and knowledge.
3. Meet new friends and new people.
4. Improve your mental and physical health (research has proven that volunteering in outdoor activities improves an individual's mental and physical health)
5. Have valued input into the current and future management of bushland reserves under the care and control of Shoalhaven City Council.
6. You will be covered by Council public liability and personal accident insurance when working on a reserve.
7. You will be eligible to become a member of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Representative Group to assist in the management of the Shoalhaven City Council's Bushcare Program

To apply to be a volunteer of the Shoalhaven City Council Bushcare contact the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator P – (02) 4429 3592 E – Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au or via the web at <http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Environment/Bushcare>

15. APPENDIX 2 TEMPLATE ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Year: _____

Event/Activity	Partners	Participants	Goal
Examples:			
National Tree Day	Shoalhaven Landcare Association	Landcare and Bushcare volunteers, general Public	Active participation by the community in natural resource management activities; exposure to Bushcare
Weed control by work crew	Correctional Services; Berry Corridors Project	Inmates	To provide assistance to Bushcare Groups. Active participation of inmates in natural resource management