

Coorong Partnership

Commuque No. 4

17 June 2020



SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Government of South Australia
Department for Environment and Water

The fourth meeting of the [Coorong Partnership](#) was held on 17 June 2020 by teleconference.

The [National Parks and Wildlife Service](#) presented on the [Nature-Based Tourism Co-Investment Fund](#), a pilot grant program designed to assist eligible businesses and organisations to partner with the South Australian Government to deliver sustainable, quality tourism experiences in South Australia. The \$5 million Nature-Based Tourism Co-investment Fund will provide the stimulus and support that businesses need to activate or build on existing ecologically sensitive tourism offerings in the state's national parks, reserves, botanic gardens, and Crown land. The Partnership recognised that the Coorong region could benefit from the fund and undertook to promote it by encouraging businesses and organisations through its networks to explore this opportunity.

The Coorong Partnership recognises the significance of the [Coorong National Park](#) to the region and is committed to advocating for improvements to the visitor experience. The Partnership discussed a number of potential ideas to improve the Mark Point to Long Point region of the park, including signage and campsites. The National Parks and Wildlife Service explained that signage and facility improvements in the park are being rolled out from south to north as funding becomes available, and that feedback received from visitors recently has been complimentary. The intention is to develop a new Coorong National Park Master Plan, in consultation with the community, to identify a forward plan of improvement works to roll out over time. The Partnership made a specific request that the National Parks and Wildlife Service install signage at Long Point warning visitors of the risks (to children in particular) posed by Long-Nosed Fur Seals. The Partnership will continue to exchange ideas with the National Parks and Wildlife Service at future meetings.

The Partnership received an update from [democracyCo](#) on the current community consultations underway for Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin's [Coorong Infrastructure Investigations Project](#). Partnership members participated in two community workshops to develop a set of values to assist the community to inform short-listing and decision-making on possible long-term management solutions for the Coorong. The Partnership agreed that it is essential to preference option/s that best contribute to improving the ecology of the South Lagoon as determined by scientific evidence, given water availability and constraints. The Partnership was acknowledged for its contribution to date and encouraged to participate, along with the broader community, in the remaining workshops and surveys to short-list options for further investigation.

The Partnership received a presentation on Healthy Coorong, Health Basin's Water Resources Optimisation Project. The project includes an expansion to the existing Coorong water quality monitoring network, coupled with development of a Coorong automated forecasting system and online data interface, to improve the provision of monitoring information, and the effectiveness, timeliness and efficiency of water operations and environmental water decisions. The Partnership identified that there is real opportunity for the community to report observations and share data into these projects and welcomed the opportunity for the community to help shape the online data interface at later stages of the project.

The Partnership received an update on Healthy, Coorong Healthy Basin's On-Ground Works Project, which is examining the feasibility of on-ground works to support key Coorong species in the short to medium term while long-term management solutions are investigated and implemented. The Partnership provided feedback on the current concepts to support Coorong ecosystem restoration and noted that any determination on which concepts might proceed to implementation will be the subject of further community consultation later in the year.

Partnership Chair, the Hon Dean Brown AO, acknowledged the ongoing effort and generosity of Partnership members in attending a number of community and advisory workshops.

The next meeting of the Partnership will be a site visit to the Coorong North Lagoon on 29 July 2020. As COVID-19 restrictions further ease, the Partnership looks forward to holding face-to-face meetings with local community.

Further Information

If you would like to receive regular updates about the Partnership and [Project Coorong](#) please contact Kerri Waldhuter, Community Engagement Officer via email: kerri.waldhuter2@sa.gov.au