



DATE 15th October 2013
SUBJECT Environment Policy

APPROVED BY BOARD of MANAGEMENT 15th October 2013

Maroochy S.L.S.C is an active participant in the cooperative network of community organisations that promote environmental stewardship in the protection of Maroochy Beach's ecologically sensitive coastal environment.

MISSION

Maroochy S.L.S.C is committed to the ecologically sustainable use of the coastal environment. The Club will demonstrate this commitment through the promotion of environmentally sustainable practices and raising community awareness of environmental issues to ensure the ecologically sustainable use of coastal resources.

Background

Maroochy SLSC is committing to an Environment Plan for Maroochy Beach. Currently Sunshine Coast Regional Council has responsibility for managing the litter on the beach, parking, sand pumping and dune reclamation areas, with the latter ably assisted by some community groups. Sunshine Coast Regional Council performs this job well.

Maroochy Beach is becoming an increasingly popular destination all year around, but particularly in summer. This demand for recreation space, as well as the presence of the Maroochy River and the major beach erosion recently, makes the challenge of managing beach litter a difficult one for Sunshine Coast Regional Council and its staff.

Maroochy SLSC would like to partner with Sunshine Coast Regional Council to assist in actioning many elements in this encompassing Environment Plan. This partnership would allow the Surf Club to use its considerable resources to develop and implement environmental initiatives that complement and build upon existing programs conducted by Sunshine Coast Regional Council. This initiative will also encourage the broader community to assist with the important and worthwhile task of maintaining a clean beach and Beach Dunes.

This will involve over 1200 Members of Maroochy SLSC. It is recognition that the Club and its activities are dependent on the condition of the beach, dunes, River estuary tidal zone and public areas. It is with this level of dedication and achievement that the Club will direct its energies to the initiatives contained within this Environment Plan. The Club recognises that while its primary task is to maintain a safe beach for its members and the visiting public it has sufficient resources to assist to help clean the beach and assist with the preservation of its unique biodiversity.

DEFINED BEACH AREA

Proposed Area defined should be from northern edge of the Sea Breeze Caravan Park to the Northern edge of the Cotton Tree Caravan Park .

ACTION PLAN

Maroochydore SLSC environmental initiatives are as follows:

1. Encourage the development of a Coastal Education Unit into the Maroochydore Nipper program; this will expose Nippers to, and improve their understanding of, the biological diversity of the coastal intertidal zone.

The Maroochydore S.L.S.C believes that Nippers will make better environmental custodians if given the appropriate skills to manage the environment.

2. Recycling bins will be deployed throughout the beach;

The Club proposes to work with Sunshine Coast Regional Council to design a highly visible recycling bin system that caters for the summer demand. The three-bin system is a popular one and if adopted would be well sign posted highlighting that this is one of many environmental initiatives employed by Sunshine Coast Regional Council and the S.L.S.C.

3. The S.L.S.C and its membership will contribute to existing dune regeneration projects; currently, there is one environment group active in dune regeneration. The Maroochydore S.L.S.C recognises the need to contribute to this collective effort. Additionally, an on-site meeting with Sunshine Coast Regional Council, DERM and other active groups would be beneficial to ascertain how the Club can best use its resources to accelerate the existing regeneration programs.

4. The Maroochydore S.L.S.C will liaise with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council to monitor and identify any inundation of the White Tail Rat to assist in its eradication in the sand dunes and in the Club house. This rat had come ashore from Foreign fishing vessels in the Eighties and is not an Australian native. It preys on bird life, lizards, snakes and other dune native residents

5. Beach litter signs to be displayed on all patrols;

Three signs will be strategically positioned on all patrols and should encourage visitors to remove and recycle their garbage. The Council may help with the production of the signs. Two rubbish wheelie Bins with Appropriate signage for Rubbish and One recycled wheelie bin to be allocated in the patrol area on each patrol. The Club Environment officer to liaise with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council for the supply, positioning and servicing of the Bins

6. Voluntary Lifesavers duties to be amended to encourage litter collection in the Beach area.

This additional task will not be at the detriment of their primary duty but would allow the Lifesavers collectively to set a positive and visible example to the community about litter collection.

This will encourage the public to participate in the collection of litter for the benefit of the coastal environment. In particular, children see Lifesavers as mentors- this is an opportunity not to be overlooked. If patrols lead by example it is more likely that the public will follow their example and take up the challenge. Patrols would report on the existence of substantial trees, logs and flotsam to the duty council officer.

7. Assist Council in addressing the pollution generated on the beach by the river system in flood times and any ocean born pollution generate large amounts of gross pollution in the form of glass bottles, plastics, Styrofoam, oil, trees, logs, dead animals and marine life etc. This pollution is unsightly, environmentally damaging and very often dangerous to the public.

8 Maroochydore SLSC to assist at major community events to raise awareness and support for these environmental initiatives;

Maroochydore SLSC, will assist at, in conjunction with Sunshine Coast Regional Council, coast care and the community, any community events at Maroochydore Beach that raise awareness of the degrading state of the beach, the benefit of the sand pumping project and the range of initiatives in this Environment Plan for the sustainable use of the beach for recreation. These events will allow the community to participate in activities, including dune regeneration, native tree plantings and rubbish removal. These events will tie in with other environmental initiatives, including Coast care Week, Clean up Australia Day and others.

9. The Club will participate in annual environmental competitions;

Competitions like the "2012 Clean Beach Challenge" keep the Club active and environmentally innovative, necessary ingredient in stimulating the enthusiasm of Club members and hopefully helping the club maintain its environmental credentials. Maroochydore SLSC will utilise these opportunities for promoting actions within this plan.

10. Clubhouse to be environmentally compliant;

With the Club promoting an environmental plan it is vital the Clubhouse be compliant and be seen by the public to be so. With the Clubhouse undergoing renovation the Building Committee should take the opportunity to incorporate long life light fittings and three star efficient water fittings. Additionally the Club will adopt rigorous recycling practices for all waste it generates.

11. Maroochydore SLSC will seek funding opportunities for major initiatives through its partnerships.

Maroochydore SLSC will use its partnership with Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Coast care groups and the community to apply for funding assistance from major Government and non-Government grant programs, including Envirofund, Climate Change Fund, Landcare Australia, Greening Australia and others. The successful receipt of these grant funds will allow the S.L.S.C to complete many of these environmental initiatives, including holding a major community event, establishing recycling bins and beach litter signs.

12. The installation of a Tank rainwater system;

The Club will pursue this initiative after the rainwater system to include the Members toilets and showers. The merit of the Tank rainwater system is that it further reduces potable water consumption and is consistent with the Clubs holistic environment plan. The club will instigate a survey of all the potable water outlets to reduce the water usage by changing outlets to water conservation units.

13. Clubhouse to reduce its dependence on grid power;

The Club will seek to reduce its environmental footprint where possible. This can

be achieved with the installation of an energy efficient Lighting, energy efficient equipment, solar and or wind turbine system. This initiative is dependent on both Council approval and funding via sponsorship.

14. Installation of bicycle racks.

Encouraging the use of bicycles in and around the beach environment reduces noise and air pollution and traffic congestion. This can be funded by sponsorship.

BENEFITS

The Maroochydore SLSC compiled this environment plan in 2013 as a holistic approach, committing the clubs resources to promote the better protection of the coastal zone of Maroochydore Beach.

The benefits of this plan are many, including:

1. Improved protection of the coastal ecosystem
2. Encouraging the sustainable use of the beach for recreation
3. Reduction in rubbish and pollution at the beach
4. Improved understanding of the coastal zone and the need to manage it in a sustainable manner by Nippers and all Club Members
5. Increase in energy and water efficiency of Maroochydore SLSC Clubhouse; and reduce the environment footprint
6. Greater participation by the general community in beach maintenance.

CONCLUSION

The Maroochydore SLSC has been fortunate in recent years to see its membership grow rapidly in unison with its strong performance at carnivals. As a result, the Club has a vibrant and active membership that is proud of its beach and Club facilities.

It has become clear to the Club and its members that we need to take a far more active role with the Council and other active environment groups to protect an asset that is immensely valuable to us and the many families that visit Maroochydore Beach.