BULWER COMPLEX
Including:

Indhloveni Nature Reserve
Ingelebantwana Nature Reserve
Xotshyeake Nature Reserve
Marutswa Nature Reserve
Marwaqa Nature Reserve
Erfs 179, 180 and 181

KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa

Protected Area Management Plan:
Public Participation Report
2012

Prepared by
Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife Protected Area Management Planning Unit
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1) STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Bulwer complex consists of five nature reserves and three erfs in the immediate surrounds of the town of Bulwer. The furthest reserve being Ingelabantwana Nature Reserve which lies approximately 8 kilometres from Bulwer. These reserves fall within the Ingwe Local Municipality and the Sisonke District Municipality.

The reserves support a number of key habitats and contribute to the conservation of several threatened or protected fauna and flora species. The Marwaqa and Marutswa Nature Reserve differ from the other reserves as it has an ecotourism and environmental education component. The education centre and boardwalk at the Marutswa forest are a well-known stop for birders who want to see Cape parrots and the Bulwer Mountain in the Marwaqa Nature Reserve is used for recreation by hang gliders and para-gliders.

The reserves protect important vegetation types including Eastern Mistbelt Forest, Drakensberg Foothill Moist Grassland, Southern Kwa-Zulu Natal Moist Grassland and other and facilitate the protection of important species such as Black Stinkwood. It also provides important ecosystem services especially in terms of climate change mitigation and water services to the Pholela and uMkhomazi rivers.

The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (No.57 of 2003) requires that Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife compile and implement Protected Area Management Plans in all of the protected areas under its jurisdiction. In preparing these plans it is important that participatory processes, involving local communities and other stakeholders are implemented in an effort to ensure that all key issues are considered and incorporated into the management plan.

This public participation report provides the background to the process followed in developing the management plan for Bulwer complex. It reflects the inputs and involvement of stakeholders in developing the plan and provides a summary of the key issues that have emerged from this process. This document will be a supporting document to the management plan, providing some of the details and context of how the plan was formulated.

1.1 The context of stakeholder consultation

In terms of Section 39(3) of the Protected Areas Act, consultation is required with municipalities, other organs of state, local communities and other affected parties, which have an interest in the area, when compiling a management plan for a protected area. Furthermore, the input and support of key stakeholders is considered vitally important in the management of protected areas and in the implementation of many of the actions set out in their management plans. For this reason a comprehensive public participation process has been undertaken in preparing the management plan for Bulwer complex.

1.2 Approach and objectives of the consultation process

The approach to consultation in preparing the management plan for Bulwer complex has been to target communities in the area around the reserve together with municipalities, relevant government authorities and other key stakeholders. The process has been targeted at key representatives of stakeholder groups in an effort to enable meaningful input in the development of the management plan. The objectives of the public consultation process have been to:

- Ensure that the communities around the reserve are aware of its importance and the conservation imperatives that formed the basis for its proclamation.
- Discuss and agree on the values of Bulwer complex in order to come to a common understanding of why it is important and should be protected.
• Canvas aspirations, issues, concerns and conflicts associated with the reserve that must be resolved through the management plan.

• Provide additional information that is required by individual stakeholders and to request input and pertinent information that may aid the process and the management of the reserve from stakeholders.

The list of participants who have been consulted and who have attended meetings as part of the public consultation process is attached in Appendix A.
1.3 Consultation process

The public stakeholder consultation commenced in May 2012 when the stakeholder workshop was advertised in the Ilanga, Isolewwe and the Witness on Thursday 10 May 2012 as well as in the Mountain Echo on Friday 18 May 2012. The stakeholder workshop took place at the Mountain Park Hotel in the town of Bulwer on 13 June 2012. Prior to the stakeholder workshop a background information document was made available to stakeholders on the Ezemvelo website and was also mailed to stakeholders on request.

Groups that were invited included district and local municipalities, neighbours, neighbouring communities and non-governmental conservation organisations. A separate meeting was also held with a representative from the Sisonke District Municipality on the 30th of August at the uKhahlamba Regional offices, Midmar Dam Nature Reserve. Discussions were focussed on the integration of biodiversity requirements into municipal planning documents.

A meeting with the Bulwer Biosphere on 18th October 2012 reiterated the need for collaboration in terms of finding a sustainable solution to the effective management of the eco-cultural tourism ventures.

The draft protected area management plan was made available to public review for a period of one month. The draft plan was advertised in the Ilanga, Isolewwe and the Witness on 25th October 2012. All stakeholders who attended the stakeholder workshop were informed either through e-mail, telephonically or through verbal messages to the various Traditional Authorities by the Conservation Manager.

Hard copies of the documents were made available at the Impendle Local Municipality, Ingwe Local Municipality, Sisonke District Municipality, Bulwer library and at the following Traditional Authority offices.

Closing dates for comments was 26th November 2012 and the document was available for review for one month. The comments that were received were mostly contextual in nature. See Appendix B – F for scanned copies of advertisements, Background Information Document, Minutes of stakeholder meetings and standard copies of invitations, and scanned attendance registers.

This process and the overall process for the development of the protected area management plan are summarised in Table 1.1 below.
### Table 1.1 Summary of the protected area management plan development process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 May 2012</td>
<td>Adverts for stakeholder workshop in Ilanga, Isoleswe and the Witness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 May 2012</td>
<td>Advert for stakeholder workshop in Mountain Echo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 June 2012</td>
<td>Stakeholder workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 June 2012</td>
<td>Internal Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife meeting with the Bulwer complex Nature Reserve protected area planning committee to finalise the draft management plan prior to public review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th October 2012</td>
<td>Draft protected area management plan for public comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26th November 2012</td>
<td>Public comment closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2012</td>
<td>Consideration of public comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2013</td>
<td>Submit final document to Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife committees for approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submission of final protected area management plan and supporting documentation to MEC for approval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) KEY FINDINGS OF THE STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS

The most critical interventions required to increase management effectiveness of this complex of protected areas will be financial and human resources to manage the area. The forest complex is currently managed from Impendle Nature Reserve and budget is also taken from the Impendle budget. Especially challenging is the management of poaching and other illegal activities where field staff cannot be on scene immediately and visible law enforcement is also limited. The provision of human and financial resources will enable effective management of the reserves and assist with dealing with issues such as poaching, stakeholder engagement and other. There is also a great need to manage the reserves within the broader conservation landscape in collaboration with stakeholders, communities and other partners. Specifically relevant here is the Bulwer Biosphere who manage the eco-tourism facilities at the complex. The sustainability and maintenance of these facilities are currently re-looked at and possible partnerships with Wildlands Conservation Trust investigated.

There is an urgent need to formalize an agreement with the municipalities, communities and the Department of Works from whom Ezemvelo lease the erfs in terms of the boundaries, as a second step the areas need to be surveyed and proclaimed. The Sisonke municipality indicated that they will be initiating a regeneration programme for Bulwer town including further developments of services, houses and other and it is important that Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife work with the municipality to agree on areas that needs to be set aside for conservation and how to address the threats to these protected areas.
3) COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Comment received</th>
<th>Action carried out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dave Povall – Chairman: Bulwer Biosphere</td>
<td>P16 1.3 : The building of the education/tourist centre at the Marutswa forest was funded by Sappi under the auspices of The Wildlands Conservation Trust with financial support for Bird guide training from Bird Life South Africa and N3 toll Roads. It is managed currently by the volunteers from the Bulwer Biosphere. The Bulwer take-off site for Paragliders and Hanggliders is managed by the Bulwer Biosphere in conjunction with pilots from Bulwer Airsports club who from their site fees fund signage, alien plant removal as well as the access road repairs, as well as providing valuable conservation assistance in being able to spot plant removal, illegal digging and building of dwellings, as well as poachers, and hunting dogs from the air. This activity is relayed to rangers responsible for the area who are often too far away to act immediately therefore it is imperative that rangers are present more permanently in the Bulwer reserves.</td>
<td>Thank you for providing clarity on the eco-cultural tourism projects. This background information was incorporated into the Protected Area Management Plan under section 1.3: Introduction on Page 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P25 2.5.3</td>
<td>The Forest There is currently one forest receptionist present five days a week between the hours of 8.30 -4.30 to collect fees, provide information and sell crafts. Bird guides are now currently available only on advance booking and are sourced by the Biosphere through Bird life Sisonke. Marutswa has provided an excellent platform for local crafters of practical and more esoteric items and we note that Mrs. Shezi one of the first local artists showcased at the forest making woven ‘dream animals’ has since become a featured artist at the Tatham Galleries in Pietermaritzburg.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Flying**

Annual Hang gliding and Paragliding competitions do take place from the mountain including a 2008 qualifying competition for the national paragliding championships as well as the annual mixed free flying splashy challenge for cross country flight to Splashy fen music festival. In addition there are ongoing and expanding PDA projects to embrace more local community members into both sports as recreational pilots, eventual National team members, tandem pilots and potential instructors.

Thank you for providing clarity on the eco-cultural tourism projects. This background information was incorporated into the Protected Area Management Plan under section **1.3: Introduction** on Page 3.

**P30 2.7 cultural context**

I am not sure if this is the appropriate section for it but we note the seemingly apparent omission of comment about the continued preservation of the Bushmen paintings above the Amahaqwa 600 flying site.

Thank you for providing clarity on the cultural context in terms of the Bushmen paintings. This background information was incorporated into the Protected Area Management Plan under section **2.7: Cultural context** on Page 17.

Further to the provision of additional information in terms of cultural context the Bulwer Biosphere have recommended in a mail received on 6th December 2012 that a meeting between the Bulwer Biosphere, Ezemvelo and Amafa be initiated in 2012 regarding the protection and preservation of these paintings. This request is supported and will be given through to the management team for implementation.

**P30.2.9.1**

The education centre has not received any funding for two years, so that maintenance and salaries has relied solely on the entrance fees obtained or the goodwill of local volunteers. The Bulwer Biosphere is currently in discussion and negotiation with an NGO to revive the project more sustainably in relation to eco-employment in 2013.

We note this information and recommend that meetings and negotiations regarding the education centre project include the management team as well as all other relevant stakeholders in order to reach a sustainable outcome for the project.

**Access road**

The mountain road runs partially through Mondi Shanduka’s plantation – the best efforts of the Biosphere and Airsports club have over the years failed to find help or funding to fix the road, so that in recent months we have resorted to using the site fees from pilots to hire a work crew to fix the most dangerous sections by hand.

We note the issue regarding the maintenance of the road and again recommend the need for all relevant stakeholders to meet and to formalize all agreements regarding maintenance and access control.
### Appendices

We note that there is no extended list of bird species – there is a handwritten list of nearly 200 birds recorded by Esther Alms over the period 1980-2009 which we would be happy to provide you with should it prove useful.

Thank you for providing this information, this has been given through to the reserve manager and could be typed up and used by visitor and staff.

### Maps

The Bulwer Biosphere run by volunteers was formed in the 1980’s and received its certificate of registration as a declared conservancy based on the map boundaries shown below from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife on 15th April 2010. It is a member of the KZN Conservation Association.

Thank you for the contextual information. The boundaries of the Bulwer biosphere have been incorporated in map 6 of the protected area Management Plan.

As a volunteer organization with very limited resources we are often faced with threats of and actual development projects that negatively impact upon the conservancy and by default also valuable eco-tourism, and have found it extremely difficult to gain urgent assistance or advice in the past from Ezemvelo on projects that will and do destroy threatened species, such as the Arts centre built on Protected Mist belt grass land which not only has eroded a large footprint of this dwindling species but also remains unused since being built.

The IEM and PA Planning Unit deal with applications on a case by case basis. For any future queries please contact the Integrated Environmental Management & Protected Area Planning Unit:

Dinesree Thambu – Acting Coordinator IEM
thambud@kznwildlife.com
or
Phumelela Dlamini – PA SM: IEM & PA Planning
033 845 1346

Therefore we further bring to your attention that key elements of the declared conservancy including both the main Hang Gliding and Paragliding landing and training fields are not included for conservation purposes in your map appendices.

Paragliding landing/training field Co-ordinates S29°48'806" E029°45'801" approx 500 metres x 500 metres.

Hang gliding landing / pg/hg training /winching field Co-ordinates S29°47'.290" E029°44'.269" approx 1000 metres x500metres

We note your comment and this information have been incorporated under section 1.3 - Introduction, Page 4.
Both these fields have been in use for Free flying purposes since the early 1970’s and are the only safe landing sites in the Bulwer area. They are also registered with SA.H.P.A and R.A.A.S.A as CAA designated flying areas.

In Addition the Hang glider landing field, whose plant ridge is described below, is not only the only possible safe landing site for Hang Gliders in Bulwer, it is also the site of very many rare plant species, and the home in particular to the rare three coloured, red necked and montane millipedes. Research was carried out in early 2009 by Ezemvelo on this particular piece of ground in relation to an opposed dolerite quarry and members of Ezemvelo were present at a REMDEC meeting in Bulwer in February 2009.

We note your comment and this information have been incorporated under section 1.3 - Introduction, Page 4.

We do hope that our comments have been useful to you in your planning for the very necessary organized conservation of dwindling nature resources in our area. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions about our comments or if you would like any further information.

Ezemvelo we would like to thank the Bulwer Biosphere for assisting us with with important additional info. We look forward to working closely with the Biosphere and other stakeholders to better conserve the broader conservation landscape in the area.
REFERENCES

## Appendix A

### List of Stakeholders Who Have Participated in or Been Invited to Participate in the Preparation of the Protected Area Management Plan for the Bulwer Forest Complex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation / Position</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Cellphone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graeme Farley</td>
<td>Wildlands Conservation Trust</td>
<td><a href="mailto:GraemeF@wildlands.co.za">GraemeF@wildlands.co.za</a></td>
<td>033 343 6380</td>
<td>083 573 3538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doug Burden</td>
<td>DUCT</td>
<td><a href="mailto:doug@duct.org.za">doug@duct.org.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Theron</td>
<td>Birdlife South Africa</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kzn@birdlife.org.za">kzn@birdlife.org.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosanne Clark</td>
<td>WESSA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sanichair@wessakzn.org.za">sanichair@wessakzn.org.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv Allistair McIntosh</td>
<td>Gliding fraternity</td>
<td><a href="mailto:advmac@futurenet.co.za">advmac@futurenet.co.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everard, David</td>
<td>Sappi</td>
<td><a href="mailto:David.Everard@sappi.com">David.Everard@sappi.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stefan van Zyl</td>
<td>Sappi</td>
<td><a href="mailto:David.Everard@sappi.com">David.Everard@sappi.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ndlela</td>
<td>Department of Rural Development</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cndlela@ruraldevelopment.gov.za">cndlela@ruraldevelopment.gov.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Nxumalo</td>
<td>Department of Rural Development</td>
<td><a href="mailto:PSNxumalo@ruraldevelopment.gov.za">PSNxumalo@ruraldevelopment.gov.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fikile Shabalala</td>
<td>Mondi Shanduka – Willowmere Farm</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fikilesibalala@mondishanduka.co.za">fikilesibalala@mondishanduka.co.za</a></td>
<td>033 701 2404</td>
<td>079 861 4881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burchmore Chris</td>
<td>Mondi</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Chris.Burchmore@mondigroup.co.za">Chris.Burchmore@mondigroup.co.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Ntsele</td>
<td>Ingwe Local Municipality</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nyidej@ingwe.gov.za">nyidej@ingwe.gov.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>0825747987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J Ward</td>
<td>Bulwer Biosphere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Bhidla</td>
<td>Kwa-Bhidla Tribal Authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>0836435834</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underberg Farmers Association</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ufa@futurenet.co.za">ufa@futurenet.co.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Works</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Head.Works@kznworks.gov.za">Head.Works@kznworks.gov.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Park Hotel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:holiday@mountainpark.co.za">holiday@mountainpark.co.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bongiwe Xaba</td>
<td>uMgungundlovu District Municipality</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bongiwe.xaba@umdm.gov.za">bongiwe.xaba@umdm.gov.za</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B
SCANS OF THE ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP:

[Image of a flyer or advertisement with text and logos]
CALL FOR PUBLIC REVIEW
IMPENDLE NATURE RESERVE
BULWER COMPLEX AND ERFS 179, 180 & 181
UMNGENI VLEI NATURE RESERVE
RAMSAR AND PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT PLANS

Exeneveo KZN Wildlife (Exeneveo) is the appointed Management Authority for Impendle Nature Reserve, the Bulwer complex (including Nkolweni, Ngelabaranhla, Mndzebe, Manoaga & Kothilekwe) and Erfs 179, 180 & 181) and the uMngeni Vlei Nature Reserve (named RAMSAR site). The organization is responsible for the compilation of Protected Area Management Plans for these nature reserves in accordance with the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act No. 57 of 2003 and for the RAMSAR plan for uMngeni Vlei Nature Reserve in accordance with the RAMSAR Convention (1971).

These management plans provide an overarching framework for the management of the protected area and the vision, management objectives, strategic outcomes and management activities have been developed through a public participation process. These draft documents are the result of both management and stakeholder input and have been prepared for submission to the provincial MEC and National Department of Environmental Affairs respectively. Before submission, Exeneveo would like to invite further public review and comment on these plans, which are available at the following locations:

- The Ezineveo KZN Wildlife website at www.kznwildlife.com (Pathway is “Conservation” > “Public comment” > “UKhahlamba Region” with the site name).
- Bulwer Complex and Erfs Draft Management Plan 2012

Printed copies for viewing of the draft Impendle and Bulwer plans will be available at the impendle and Inywa Local Municipalities, Sisonke and uMngungundlovu District Municipalities and Bulwer and Hilton libraries. The uMngeni Vlei draft plan will be available at the Impendle Local Municipality, uMngungundlovu District municipality and the Hilton library.

Closing date for comments: 26 November 2012.
 Written comments must be submitted to: gohenren@kznwildlife.com or Magda Godee Ezineveo KZN Wildlife, PO Box 13063, Cascades 3202.
APPENDIX C
BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT CIRCULATED PRIOR TO THE PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

BULWER NATURE RESERVES
(INDHLOVENI NATURE RESERVE (NR), MARUTSWA NR, MARWAQA NR,
XOTSHYEAYE NR, INKELABANTWANA NR PLUS EREFS 179, 180 AND 181)

PREPARATION OF A PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Purpose of this document
• Inform stakeholders of the proposed protected area management plan.
• Invite stakeholders to participate in the process.

The nature reserve
The Bulwer Nature Reserves consist of five nature reserves and three erfs in the immediate
surrounds of the town of Bulwer. The furthest reserve being Inkelabantwana Nature Reserve
which lies approximately 8 kilometers from Bulwer. These reserves fall within the Ingwe
Local Municipality and the Sisonke District Municipality.

The reserves support a number of key habitats
and contribute to the conservation of several
threatened or protected fauna and flora species.
The Marwaqa Nature Reserve differs from the
other reserves as it has an eco-tourism and
environmental education component. The
education center and boardwalk are a well-
known stop for birders who want to see Cape
Parrots and the Bulwer Mountain in the
Marwaqa Nature Reserve is used for recreation
by hang gliders and para-gliders.

The reserve protects vegetation types such as
Eastern Mistbelt Forest, Drakensberg Foothill
Moist Grassland, Southern Kloof Natal Moist
Grassland and other and facilitate the protection
of species such as Black Stinkwood.

The reserve also provides important ecosystem
services especially in terms of climate change
mitigation and water services to the Phokela and
uMkhomazi rivers.

The protected area management
plan
Protected area management plans are intended
to ensure compliance with the National
Environmental Management: Protected Areas
Act (No.57 of 2003) in managing protected
areas. Furthermore, they are designed to be
high-level documents that provide tools to assist
Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife in the strategic planning
and management of protected areas under its
control.

Key management issues
A detailed review of ecological, cultural and
social issues and management of the nature
reserve has revealed the following:
• There is a need to improve relationships and
  collaboration with communities; improve
  interaction with local and district
  municipalities and key stakeholders in
  general.
• Maintenance and erosion problems around
  the Bulwer Mountain road that allows access
  for recreation purposes.
• These reserves were proclaimed in the early
  1900's as part of the Sodwana State Forest and
  the boundaries need to be surveyed, proclaimed,
  demarcated and agreed on.
• Ecological challenges within the nature
  reserve that require management
  intervention include infestations of invasive
  plant species, uncontrolled wildfires, illegal
  activities regarding fauna and flora
  resources.
• Operational management challenges within
  the nature reserves that require
  management intervention include sufficient
  staff available on site and sufficient
  resources to effectively manage the reserves.
Stakeholder consultation process.

A principle of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife’s in preparing protected area management plans is collaboration and transparency. Efforts will be made to canvas stakeholders and obtain their inputs in the development of the plan. A stakeholder workshop has been advertised and will be held on the 18 June 2012 (10:00) at the Mountain Park Hotel to discuss the vision and any management issues that need to be addressed in the plan. Once the draft protected area management plan has been prepared, it will be made available for public review and comment prior to its finalisation and submission to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Board and MEC.

If you or your organisation would like to participate in this process or would like any further information, please contact:

Magda Geosen  
mgosem@kznwildlife.com
(033) 845 1469
APPENDIX D

COPIES OF STANDARD INVITATIONS SENT TO KNOWN STAKEHOLDERS FOR THE PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

IMPENDLE AND BULWER NATURE RESERVES

(BULWER RESERVES include INDHLOVENI NATURE RESERVE, MARUTSWA NATURE RESERVE, MARWAQA NATURE RESERVE, XOTSHEYAKe NATURE RESERVE AND INKELABANTWANA NATURE RESERVE plus Erfs 179, 180 & 181)

PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT PLANS

Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (Ezemvelo) is the designated Management Authority for the abovementioned nature reserves and is responsible for the compilation of Protected Area Management Plans for these reserves in accordance with the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, No.57 of 2003. The Protected Area Management Plans are five year planning documents (providing an overarching management framework and zonation plan) which will be compiled for these nature reserves with the assistance of stakeholders through a public consultation process.

To facilitate public input in developing these plans, you are invited to attend the two Stakeholder Workshops that will be held at:

Venue: Impendle Municipal Hall
Date: 7 June 2012 at 10:00
To discuss Impendle Nature Reserve

Venue: Mountain Park Hotel
Date: 13 June 2012 at 10:00
To discuss Bulwer Nature Reserves

A background document will be available one week prior to the meeting on the Ezemvelo website www.kznwildlife.com (Pathway is “Conservation” > “Public comment” > uKhahlamba Region). Should you be unable to attend the workshop, the document will remain available and comments will be welcomed by 12 July 2012. Should you wish to attend either or both meetings, please register through the contact details below by 31 May 2012.

Contact: Penny Chambers 033 845 1465
chamberp@kznwildlife.com

Following the above stakeholder meetings and input received draft Protected Area Management Plans will be developed and advertised for further public review and comment.
MINUTES OF THE BULWER STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP HELD AT THE MOUNTAIN PARK HOTEL ON WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2012 AT 10H00

1. OPENING AND WELCOME

Mr Dennis Mkhabela welcomed all those present and checked whether an interpreter was needed. It was decided to conduct the whole meeting in English. He advised the workshop that Mrs Magda Goosen would explain the process of writing a Management Plan. At 11h15 Nkosi Dlamini (Bidla TA) and 2 Councilors arrived and the services of the interpreter Ms Khumbu were used.

2. ATTENDANCE

Attendance as per attached Attendance Register.

3. THE PROCESS

The process of producing a management plan was then explained.

4. VALUES OF THE PROTECTED AREA : GROUP DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and agree on the values of the protected area in order to come to a common understanding of its importance and why it should be protected. It was also to identify and discuss Stakeholder’s issues, concerns and aspirations for the protected area and to determine how these should be addressed in the management plan.

The Bulwer Nature Reserves consist of five nature reserves and three erfs in the immediate surrounds of the town of Bulwer. The furthest reserve being Inkelabantwana Nature Reserve which lies approximately 8kms from Bulwer.

The reserves support a number of key habitats and contribute to the conservation of several threatened or protected fauna and flora species. The Marwaqa Nature Reserve differs from the other reserves as it has an ecotourism and environmental education component. The education centre and boardwalk are a well-known stop for birders who want to see Cape Parrots and the Bulwer Mountain in the Marutswa Nature Reserve is used for recreation by hang gliders and para-gliders.

The reserve protects vegetation types such as Eastern Mistbelt Forest, Drakensberg Foothill Moist Grassland, Southern KwaZulu Natal Moist Grassland and facilitate the protection of species such as Black Stinkwood.

The reserve also provides important ecosystem services especially in terms of water services to the Pholela and uMkhomazi Rivers.

The values of a place are those remarkable attributes that exemplify it and are largely the reason why it has been proclaimed a protected area. The values are important in planning and management, as they are the aspects of the place that must be protected. Mr Barrie Barnes gave a concise history on where the 3 Erfs fitted into the process.

By means of cards, those attending were asked to record their ideas of what they considered the values of the protected area to be.
The following questions were asked and points raised and discussed before the values were identified:

- Were there other planking pits in the area?
- Were there Bushmen paintings outside the reserves and erfs?
- Were there any other Community grave sites in the area?
- It was important to the whole process for neighbours to protect these areas.
- Plants in indigenous forests are part of the cultural process and rituals that are performed at sacred sites.
- Tap into the tourism potential.

The following values were identified at the meeting:

**NATURAL**

- Habitats for important, threatened or protected species such as the Black Stinkwood, Cape Parrot breeding sites.
- Important as interdependent components for altitudinal migrant species that move from the high berg to this area.
- IBA contributing to the conservation of various species.
- Contributes to the protection of Eastern Mistbelt Forest, Southern Drakensberg Foothill Moist Grassland, Southern KwaZulu Natal Moist Grassland and Midlands Mistbelt Grassland.

**ECO-SYSTEM SERVICES**

- Water supply and regulation and storage linked to both the uMkomazi and Pholela Rivers.
- Climate change mitigation.

**CULTURAL**

- Marutswa had historical saw pits where Yellowwood trees were planked.

**SOCIAL**

- Marutswa was an environmental education/species interest destination.
- For recreational purposes, Bulwer Mountain has a hang gliding site.

**5. VISION**

The vision describes the overall long-term goal for the operation, protection and development of the nature reserve which then equals the desired state. The organisation had identified the following:

- Adequately resourced and effectively managed.
- Effectively managed.
- Sustainable protection of ecological processes, habitats and species.
- Sustainable flow of eco-system services.
- Supported by the community.
- Hub for conservation, ecotourism and recreation.
- Managed in collaboration with stakeholders.

The discussion then went to the floor and identified the following:

- Emphasis is placed on linking the reserves. Somehow it needs to be stated explicitly – so that we get conservation over a far greater area, especially over stewardship sites.
- The Bulwer Biosphere area needs to be incorporated or include this well managed and well established biosphere.
- Ann Rennie needs to be included in these discussions as she has a vast area of land and has Oribi.
• Eco education
• Cape Parrot conservation
• Ground hornbill conservation
• Mist belt forest conservation
• Grassland conservation
• Threatened species conservation
• Community development
• Community conservation
• Catchment management
• Alien plan removal and inclusion of the community in the process
• Ecological management

6. MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS: GROUP DISCUSSION

Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife had identified the following as management issues:

• Community relationships need to be improved
• Poaching and wood theft
• Lack of formal relationship with the Bulwer Biosphere
• Liaison and interaction with the relevant Municipalities
• Erf development with clarity on the boundary issue and a formalized and updated lease agreement with a consolidated proclamation
• Lack of demarcated boundaries
• Lack of corporate signage
• Lack of financial and human resources
• Lack of management infrastructure
• Waste management with particular emphasis on Bulwer Mountain
• Expanding peri-urban and urban development
• Arson fires
• Alien plants
• Access control – thoroughfare by the public to be agreed upon and controlled

By means of cards, those present listed the following as pressing management issues:

1. Infrastructure
   • Lack of management and conservation infrastructure to secure the protected area. This included staff housing, waste management and other conservation infrastructure.
   • The current infrastructure at Marutswa needs to be maintained, specifically the boardwalk, trails and picnic sites. Currently there is no clear understanding of the various role players’ responsibilities in terms of the management and maintenance of the infrastructure at the education centre. The original documents can be sourced through SAPPI and Wildlands who are both involved in the project.

2. Tourism
   • There are various opportunities for tourism and the sustainability of various proposed activities need to be investigated through a feasibility study incorporating regional tourism opportunities.
   • There are currently limited tourists visiting these protected areas and there was a need to tap into the marketing resources of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife in order to profile the protected areas and the opportunity for special interest tourism (e.g., Cape Parrot and others).
   • As stated under infrastructure, current tourism infrastructure needs to be maintained by the responsible role players and this includes road and path maintenance.
   • The local communities would like the opportunity to sell their handcraft products to the tourists visiting the area. It was emphasized that currently the reserves do not have tourists coming through in large numbers.
   • Fee collections need to be clarified through the relevant agreements and documents from Wildlands/Sappi.
• It was emphasised that the tourists would not come if it seemed to not be safe and secure. It was imperative to have a secure central area within which to leave cars and from where walks could take place.
• There was also a need to have trained bird guides from the community to take people out to see the Cape Parrots etc.

3. **Alien and Invasive Species Control**
• Invasive plant control needs to be addressed through development and implementation of an invasive species control plan.
• We need to work collaboratively with stakeholders to facilitate alien plant control considering that we have limited resources.
• There is currently a working for water programme in the area and that programme needs to be expanded to incorporate the five protected areas and Erfs.
• Environmental education needs to address invasive plant control with communities and the resource utilisation aspect needs to be addressed. (Wattle used for firewood)

4. **Poaching**
• It was emphasised that most of the poaching that takes place is done by people from the bigger towns such as Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Greytown.
• The local community is aware of who these poachers are and they know the individuals but will not approach them as they feel unsafe and do not have the authority to do so.
• These individuals should be invited when environmental education takes place.
• Better communication was required to ensure that all stakeholders work towards the same goals and this should be facilitated through a regular liaison forum.
• Visible policing should take place and therefore staff based on site is crucial to this problem being sorted out.

5. **Fire Management**
• Ensure legal compliance
• The Park Manager must join the Fire Protection Association. It was emphasised that the reserves fall under the Ingwe Municipality and will have to form part of that PFA.
• The importance of the fire breaks was stressed in order to safeguard the communities and the town.
• It was stressed that the manager has to work collaboratively with all relevant stakeholders during the fire management operation including the stewardship site Clairemont and other neighbours.
• Due to the lack of financial, human resources and equipment, partnerships with external stakeholders such as Working on Fire must be investigated and at all possible, implemented.
• The community indicated that there was a need for them to gain knowledge on appropriate fire management of the tribal areas.
• SAPPI and all the local communities need to work with us closely and remain informed at all times. The INGWE Municipality needs to be written into the plan as being the lead agent in the area as far as a Fire Protection Association formation is concerned.

6. **Muthi-harvesting**
After a long discussion on this topic the following was agreed:
• It was indicated that the harvesting of muthi plants and specifically threatened or protected plants could not take place in protected areas. This was a legal compliance issue.
• Wildlands have a tree project that could potentially fulfill this need to a limited degree but this would be a long term project. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife is working collaboratively with Wildlands on this project.

7. **Sign Posting and Demarcation of the Reserve**
• The demarcation of the reserve boundaries is critical for law enforcement purposes. If prosecution of perpetrators takes place they should not be able to deny knowledge of the fact that they are inside a protected area.
• In terms of tourism there is also a need to have appropriate corporate signage that can direct the tourists.
8. **Boundary Demarcation**
   - The community requested that clarity be sought in terms of landownership and demarcation of the areas that fall within the protected area and that this be communicated to them and other stakeholders.
   - There is an urgent need to meet with the Municipality and the Department of Works once an approved mandate has been received from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife for these negotiations to take place.

9. **Job Creation**
   - The community indicated that they would like to utilise opportunities for small business and job creation.
   - It was stressed that the Liaison Forum could provide a platform where the communities could be informed of possible job opportunities and these benefits need to be distributed to the local neighbouring communities.
   - There was also a discussion about the opportunity to add value by having various opportunities/products or activities that would add value to the organisation’s mandate and products – such as tourism.

10. **Conflict – Municipal Plans : Arts Centre on mistbelt grassland**
    - It was indicated that currently certain developments were taking place that do not take into account the threatened landscapes and it is acknowledged that collaboration with stakeholders and specifically the Ingwe Municipality is key to preventing similar situations from taking place in the future.

11. **Grazing Management**
    - The protected areas are not fenced and therefore grazing management is a key issue that needs to be addressed in the management plan.
    - Grazing management will be a standing agenda item at the Liaison Forum.
    - Wildlands Conservation Trust should be approached as they could potentially facilitate a programme within the community addressing this issue.

12. **Environmental Education**
    - It is clear that there was a great need for environmental education in the region.
    - Environmental Education should include communicating the values of the protected area to the community.
    - The communities were eager to learn about the environment and what the protected areas were protecting.
    - It should also address key management issues such as poaching, invasive plant control, land care and many others.

13. **Introduction of game**
    - The community raised the question of introducing additional game species and more specifically the big five.
    - The management issues surrounding this point were explained and it was indicated that the biodiversity importance of the reserves is so significant that we should protect what exists in the area without introducing other species into it.
    - A suggestion was made of a potential marketing strategy to brand the Bulwer Small Five and include the special species such as the Cape Parrot.

14. **Damage Causing Animals – Bushpig**
    - The community requested Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife’s assistance in terms of dealing with the bushpig problem.
    - It was acknowledged that it was a problem and the District Conservation Officer indicated that assistance is given wherever possible with the limited resources that were available.

15. **Community Participation**
    - Better communication was required with communities and all stakeholders.
- This will be effected through an effective Liaison Forum.

16. **Security and Safety**
   - The long term goal would be to have sufficiently trained law enforcement staff on site to secure the area.
   - The short term goal would be the need to have a close relationship with a network of stakeholders including SAPS and other security stakeholders.

17. **Human and Financial Resources**
   - The plan needs to include the staff requirement as well as budget component without which effective management could not take place.

18. **Electricity and Community Hall**
   - The community indicated that these were very definite needs.

The meeting closed at 13h35
## APPENDIX F

### ATTENDANCE REGISTER STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

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### BULWER NATURE RESERVE (PLUS 5 ERFS) STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP

**MOUNTAIN PARK HOTEL, BULWER ON WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2012 AT 10H00**
## Attendance Register

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