# CDMC Annual report

Presented at the AGM 30 Oct 2019

**Timeline**

**15 Aug 2018** - Ist community mtg Upper Beac.– over 80 people attended.

**6 Sep 2018** - 2nd community mtg Upper Beac.– around 25 attended.

* Decided to form working group at this mtg consisting of Bruce Carter, Sandie Czarka, Eric Dodge, Mike Hall, Carl Hirst, Glen Kostiuk, James Randall, Peter Rose, Marianne Sawyer and Caroline Spencer

**17 Sep 2018** - 1st mtg working group

* Since then we have had another 10 working group meetings
* At our second working group meeting we decided on a name, the CDMC and our mission and vision statements. These are:

Our **Mission:** Connect community to protect Cardinia Creek catchment biodiversity through humane deer reduction.

Our **Vision** is to reduce:

* Deer population
* Deer damage to local environment
* Risk to road users
* Deer waste and value add
* Since then we have continued working through the various issues relating to how we would fulfil our mission and visions. Initially this has predominately revolved around the laws and practicalities relating to culling of deer on private land, as it was thought best to start culling deer before the problem got even worse.
* This involved a lot of research in understanding these laws, discussions with other land owners in the area such as council, Parks Vic and Melbourne Water, and contacting other groups and agencies who were beginning to tackle the same problem.
* A number of protocols were and are being produced, some of which are still evolving as practical realities have dictated and documents were produced for the information of landowners.
* At the same time, a subgroup of working group members have been tasked with assessing hunters who have applied to be placed on our recommended deer controller list. Of those that have applied, less than one third have been accepted on their first attempt for a variety of reasons, including accuracy issues, equipment issues and lack of experience. The subgroup is working with some of these to rectify these issues and achieve placement on the list. One of these has subsequently been successful; hopefully more will follow soon.

**Oct 2018** – send response to Vic Govt draft Deer Management Strategy

**Nov 2018** – CDMC joined FeralScan’s DeerScan app and encourage members to join

**30 Nov 2018** – UBCC agree to auspice CDMC

**Feb 2019** – CDMC website created and published online in time for the Village Festival, just!

**17 Apr 2019** – held 3rd community mtg at Emerald - around 15 attended.

**May 2018** – engaged the voluntary services of a local solicitor to help us navigate some of the trickier areas around culling deer on private property

**9 May 2019** – mtg with Pakenham, Emerald & Narre Warren police to discuss how we can work best with them

**15 Aug 2019** Grant of $1,000 received from Cardinia Shire

**17 Sep 2019** CDMC invited to attend mtg on Community of practice on *‘Community engagement for invasive species management’* (hosted by DEDJTR, Vic Govt. dept.) and speak along with Sandie Czarka on our group’s experience in engaging the community in pest animal control

**4 Oct 2019** – CDMC invited by Yarra Ranges shire to attend & give a talk on our thoughts on deer control in the peri-urban space

**Oct 2019** – marking all cull properties on large scale map enabling more strategic targeting of property approach.

**16 Oct 2019** Grant of $500 received from PPWCMA

**Where are we now:**

* we have over 120 people on our regular mailing list
* still auspiced by the UBCC
* we communicate regularly with Cardinia, Yarra Valley & Casey council officers, Parks Vic and Melbourne Water on deer management issues
* the working group has gained the help of Frank Archer
* we have 7 controllers on our preferred controller list
* deer control is currently being undertaken on approximately 30 properties in our area, some helped by us, some done by hunters unknown to us
* there are another 7 properties currently being assessed for culling
* a rough estimate of deer numbers being controlled in the last 3 months is about 50. The number is hard to verify as not all culls are being reported and there are other hunters operating in our area
* have 26 members of our group using FeralScan and mapping sightings, damage & control activities
* Melb Water have shared with us that a study has estimate of deer population in 2017 in the Cardinia Reservoir fenced area of 139 Sambar & 23 fallow
* Current official membership – 19
* Current bank balance - $ 1,740; outstanding accounts - nil

**What next:**

* Incorporation of group and start our own bank account
* Move those on who are on our contact list on to our member list
* Ongoing assessment of hunters wishing to be placed on our controller list
* Continue assessment of properties who wish to have deer culled on their land
* Further assessment of our risk analysis as per advice from the solicitor
* Continue to fine tune and develop our strategies and protocols
* Work with scientific and educational institutions to use citizen science to help monitor deer numbers, impact and effects of culling on all of these
* Working with other land tenures, develop cross tenure culling strategies
* Develop or assimilate better mechanisms strategies for controlling deer
* Continue advocacy at local, state and federal government level for a better response to feral deer
* Establish contact with like-minded groups who are grappling with this problem to share knowledge
* Await Vic Govt Deer Management Strategy (was due June 2019)

On a personal note I would like to acknowledge the help of all the members of the working group who have put in a considerable amount of personal time and effort in our endeavours to help our local community and environment.

Also, there are a number of individuals from other organisations who have been particularly helpful in guiding, supporting and informing us in the myriad ways relating to things such as funding opportunities, government and agency contacts and knowledge and their experiences; giving us a shortcut to the future. We owe you a great debt of gratitude and will endeavour to return the favour.

I would also like to thank you all (speaking to the group members in general) for the continued support the group receives on a regular basis either face to face or by phone and email. I can honestly say, it really helps.

Finally a big thankyou to my family – this has taken a lot of my time. I appreciate your generosity and the space you have given me.

Mike Hall
President
Cardinia Deer Management Coalition