

# SUNSET COVE WALKING TRACK PROJECT



## MANAGEMENT PLAN 2013 – 2015

Prepared by: Paynesville Landcare/Coastcare Group

Prepared for: East Gippsland Shire Council (Committee of Management of Crown Land)  
East Gippsland Water  
Department of Sustainability & Environment

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## MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

### VISION STATEMENT

For the Sunset Cove Walking Track to be an environment for local flora and fauna to flourish that is easily accessible for residents and visitors alike to enjoy.

### SCOPE STATEMENT

This plan addresses the requirements and tasks associated with improving the section of the Walking Track from Sunset Cove through to the East Gippsland Water pumping station at Backwater Court, known as the Sunset Cove Walking Track.

It is envisaged that this Management Plan will be implemented over a three year period.

### OBJECTIVE

To protect and enhance the ecological values of the Sunset Cove Walking Track for the benefit of all residents of Paynesville and the surrounding area, by providing a native, weed free environment.

### GOALS

- Remove invasive weeds/plant species and revegetate and restore the area as closely as possible to its evolving natural environment taking into account the EVC (ecological vegetation class) and other information provided by Council, and having regard for the visual amenity of adjoining landowners
- Selectively control dodder in a mutually agreed and approved manner where it is killing the host trees
- Manage items above such that removal of non-indigenous species and weeds does not cause erosion or loss of existing habitat
- To preserve and improve the habitat for native fauna
- Protect existing bird population & encourage more birds
- To improve user access to existing track, including:
  - ✓ Widen and resurface the track where necessary to allow easy passing of pedestrians, cyclists, disabled access, etc, especially around existing structures (such as the “A” frame). In addition, this would provide access for revegetation work and ongoing maintenance
  - ✓ Install seats to allow users to rest
- Improve Sunset Cove Playground surrounds, including removal of invasive grass from beach
- Identify safety issues to Council (tree roots, falling limbs)
- To increase public awareness of the importance and fragility of remnant native vegetation through installation of interpretation boards
- Engage the Newlands Drive residents via publicity campaign
- Understand responsibilities for maintaining the area (EG Shire) & clarify restrictions on access (EG Water) & establish a consultation process.

## BUDGET SUMMARY

Works	Cost (\$)	Labour PLCG / Volunteer Hrs	Deemed Value \$30/hr
Project Coordination	\$ 0	45	\$ 1,350
Stage 1 - Public Consultation and Information Provision	\$ 1,700	35	\$ 1,050
Stage 2 - Improve access around Boat Sheds	\$ 0	0	\$ 0
Stage 3 - Improve the Ecological Values			
Section 1 – Sunset Cove to "A" frame	\$ 500	50	\$ 1,500
Section 2 – "A" Frame to Pumping Station	\$ 1,400	80	\$ 2,400
Stage 4 - Upgrade Track	\$ 0	0	\$ 0
Stage 5 - Improve Amenities			
Playground surrounds	\$ 550	40	\$ 1,200
Install bench seats	\$ 200	46	\$ 1,380
<b>Project Totals</b>	<b>\$ 4,350</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>\$ 8,880</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- The Sunset Cove Walking Track Project Management Plan is adopted as a collaborative project between the East Gippsland Shire, East Gippsland Water Authority, Department of Sustainability & Environment and the Paynesville Landcare Coastcare Group
- Paynesville Landcare Coastcare Group acts as Project Coordinator for volunteer groups and site development.

Russ Peel  
President  
Paynesville Landcare/Coastcare Group

## BACKGROUND

### LANDCARE IN PAYNESVILLE

#### THE EAST GIPPSLAND LANDCARE NETWORK

The East Gippsland Landcare Network Inc. is an umbrella organisation for Landcare Groups in the Bairnsdale and Districts and High Country region. The Network is run by a committee of Landcare members from different groups in the region. The East Gippsland Landcare Network is responsible for employing group facilitators and a project officer who support Landcare groups.

Today the East Gippsland Landcare Network supports 23 Landcare groups in the Bairnsdale, high country and surrounding areas. In total these groups cover an area of 176,879.5ha, and comprise around 700 Landcare family memberships.

#### THE PAYNESVILLE LANDCARE/COASTCARE GROUP

In 2009 a group of people from Eagle Point called a public meeting that resulted in the setting up of an Eagle Point / Paynesville Landcare Coastcare group and that group has grown and expanded its projects since then.

The first of the projects in Paynesville was along the Sunset Cove Walking Track and as the subcommittee developed that project it became apparent that the group had grown sufficiently large to support Landcare groups in both Eagle Point and Paynesville, each focussing on local issues

Hence the formation in July 2013 of the Paynesville Landcare/Coastcare Group, with the first of its many projects being the Sunset Cove Walking Track.

PLCG's aim is:

*"To protect and enhance the natural environment for all to enjoy through education and training, hands-on activities, and socialising".*

Our philosophy is:

*"Conservation and restoration of indigenous vegetation has important and long-term benefits for native fauna and the health and wellbeing of the community".*

The PLCG's area covers the Paynesville peninsula which is surrounded by water on 3 sides and lies to the south east of the City of Bairnsdale.

The PLCG currently has 20 family or individual initial memberships, who formed this group since the Sunset Cove Walking Track project was announced - indicating significant local support for this project.

## THE PAYNESVILLE FORESHORE WALK

There is an existing track from the Paynesville Craft Centre through to the Pumping Station at the end of Backwater Court that is used constantly by residents and visitors alike for recreational purposes. This track is promoted as the “Paynesville Foreshore Walk” as featured in the “East Gippsland Great Walks” brochure published by the East Gippsland Shire Council (see Appendix C - Extract from East Gippsland Great Walks).

## THE SUNSET COVE WALKING TRACK

For the purposes of this plan, the section of the Paynesville Foreshore Walk from the end of Sunset Drive, near the Sunset Cove Playground, through to the East Gippsland Water Pumping Station at the bottom of Backwater Court is named the **Sunset Cove Walking Track**. The track extends for some 1.5km along the foreshore.



FIGURE 1 - SUNSET COVE WALKING TRACK

The Sunset Cove Walking Track is on Crown land and is managed by the East Gippsland Shire Council. The flora along the track varies considerably from native bush area overgrown with environmental weeds in small patches, through to cleared areas of grassland maintained by the adjoining landowners.



## CURRENT STATUS

### COMMON ISSUES

Strong westerly winds and boat wakes historically cause foreshore erosion. Recent rock walling has reduced this problem, however further planting of suitable species would assist in stabilising the foreshore.

### SECTIONAL ISSUES

The Sunset Cove Walking Track can be divided into two sections, as shown in Figure 2 below, each of which has its own issues.

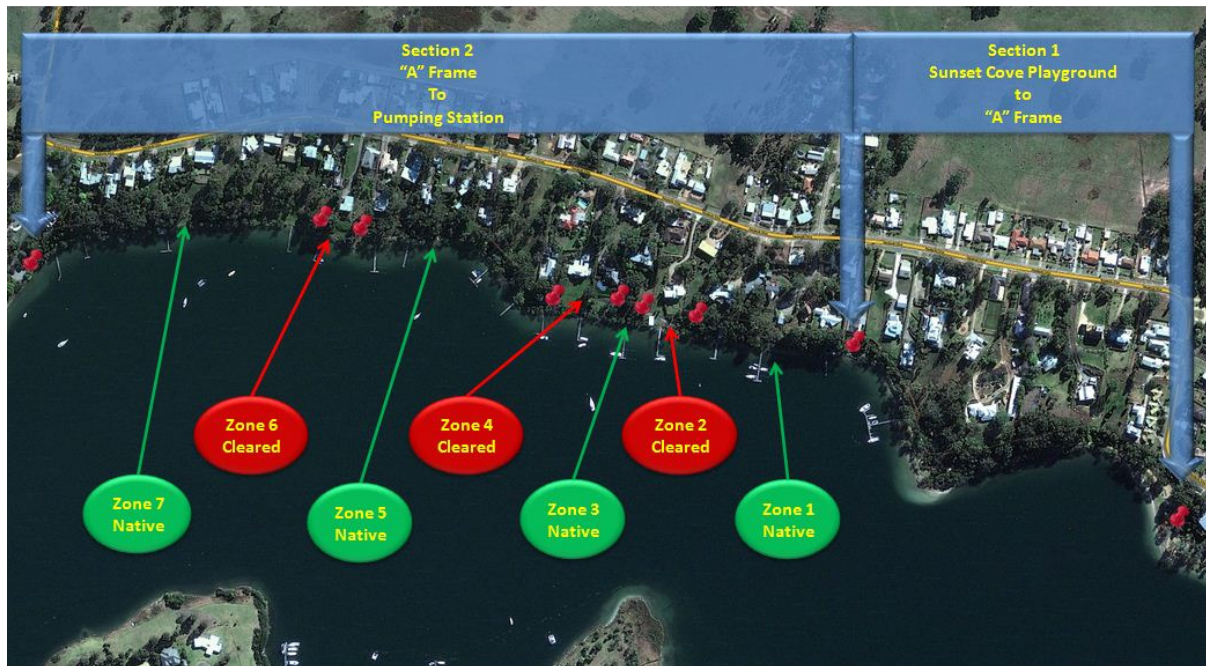


FIGURE 2 - SUNSET COVE WALKING TRACK SECTIONS

For the purposes of this plan, Section 2 is further divided into 7 zones to highlight the 3 areas that have been cleared by adjoining landowners. This matter is discussed later in this document.



## SECTION 1 - SUNSET COVE TO THE "A" FRAME

This section has a formed gravel track following the shore line, which is in reasonable repair and allows ready access by service vehicles, etc. The environment sustains native flora and fauna; however invasive weeds are present, along with long grass.



**FIGURE 4 - SECTION 1 TRACKSIDE EROSION**

The Sunset Cove Playground is in reasonable repair, however the area is generally lacking in native flora, especially the bank leading up to Newlands Drive which is in a state of disrepair since the new access path was installed.

In addition, the Sunset Cove beach is being invaded by Kikuyu grasses at the western end which reduces the amount of sandy beach available for use by visitors. The Barbecue installed here is in excellent condition.



**FIGURE 3 - TYPICAL SECTION 1 TRACK**

Some erosion to the trackside is evident past the west point of Sunset Cove, as shown in figure 4.



**FIGURE 5 - SUNSET COVE PLAYGROUND SURROUND**



**FIGURE 6 - EXAMPLE OF LOCATION FOR BENCH SEATING**

As there are no official rest areas along the track, users would benefit from the installation of a number of bench seats. Figure 6 shows an example of a location for such a bench seat.