



Border Track Committee (BTC)
Ngarkat Working Bee – Cox's Windmill Campground
13 and 14 August 2016



Task Status Report

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1

INTRODUCTION

Within the Ngarkat CP, Cox's Windmill campground is about 4km east along the track from the Pine Hut Soak campground to the Border Track intersection. It is directly adjacent to Cox's Windmill, a relic from the pastoral days of the area. Cox's Windmill campground has been used for many years as an ad-hoc campground for 4WD enthusiasts who are preparing to traverse the Border Track.

Recently, DEWNR and the 4WDSA Border Track committee planned an upgrade to the ad-hoc nature of the campground. This involved creating a separate entrance and exit to the campground and re-aligning the Pine Hut Soak track just away from the entrance to the campground. This work was completed by heavy equipment sourced by DEWNR with the assistance of other labour prior to this Working Bee.

Remaining to be done in this Working Bee (WB) was setting the boundaries of the campground using fencing in a similar manner to that at the Pine Hut Soak campground along with any residual clearing of vegetation. Fencing materials were funded directly by DEWNR and through grant funding obtained by the 4WDSA Border Track committee.

2

TASK STATUS

A preliminary plan of the Cox's Windmill campground layout with a number of proposed campsites was developed by Rebecca Pudney (Senior Ranger Mallee & Coorong). A marked up copy of this layout is shown in the Task Images annex in Figure 1 on page 4. An on-site review of the plan was held with several DEWNR staff on the 3rd August 2016.

The significant task activities of the WB were discussed and noted as including:

- the placement of "hundreds" of posts (typical spacing of 4 to 5 metres) and several hundred metres of interconnecting steel cabling to form track and campsite boundaries,
- the clearance of remnant vegetation, ground cover, branches and Mallee stumps and roots from the campsites and access tracks, and
- the installation of a number of track and campsite signs.

2.1

Task Activity

Saturday 13th August 2016

As volunteers became available on the morning of Saturday 13th August 2016 the 4WDSA WB coordinator for the weekend (Darryl McManus) conducted a welcome and introduction for each of the clubs attending the WB. Volunteer registration and attendance records were filled in and completed and a hazard checklist reviewed. Volunteers were then despatched to the Cox's Windmill campground where Rebecca Pudney (Senior Ranger Mallee & Coorong) assigned the volunteers to the various task activities noted above. By 9:15 am all volunteers were working on tasks within the Cox's Windmill campground in small groups of 4 to 8 volunteers.

Throughout the day the volunteers progressed quickly through the tasks available. Fence post holes were quickly dug with the aid of a petrol engine powered augur however firmer ground was sometimes met which required the assistance of

crowbars. Most posts were placed 50 cm into the ground with corner or “strainer” posts being placed as deep as possible, usually between 80 cm and 100 cm into the ground. Steel cable was run through holes that had been pre-drilled in the top of the posts to form the access track and campsite boundaries. The steel cable was spooled out from a cable drum mounted on the back of a trailer so that the drum could freely rotate.

Remnant vegetation was cleared by burning off or by the use of hand tools. Mallee stumps were removed quickly with the aid of vehicle winches and/or drag chains. Occasionally Mallee roots had to be cut from the stump to assist with removal.

Throughout the day Rebecca Pudney (Senior Ranger Mallee & Coorong) provided any necessary guidance on the work. From approximately 4:15 pm volunteers began to return to Pine Hut Soak having completed most of the available tasks. Rebecca Pudney (Senior Ranger Mallee & Coorong) returned back to Lameroo for the evening.

Sunday 14th August 2016

On the Sunday, Rebecca Pudney (Senior Ranger Mallee & Coorong) returned from Lameroo with additional steel cable that allowed the completion of the campground fencing. A few volunteers had left the previous evening or early in the morning but there were still about 20 volunteers who started work from around 8:00 am on the remaining tasks.

By around 11:30am all remaining work on fencing, cabling, remnant vegetation removal and signage had been completed and volunteers returned to Pine Hut Soak.

After clearing camp at Pine Hut Soak, a trailer load of excess fencing posts was returned to DEWNR Lameroo along with a number of hand tools by 1:00pm.

2.2

Task Summary

All tasks available were completed during the WB.

Photographs of volunteers and their vehicles during the WB are provided at the Task Images annex starting at page 4.

2.3

Task Difficulties

No substantial difficulties were encountered during the weekend apart from one Mallee stump that stubbornly refused to leave the Cox’s Windmill campground entrance track. It was left for DEWNR staff to deal with at a later time.

There were sufficient volunteers for all of the tasks to be readily undertaken.

3

PARTICIPATION

A total of **26 volunteers from 5 4WDSA clubs** took part in the WB as detailed in the volunteer participation table below. The figures are based on the Volunteer Attendance Records completed by each club during the WB.

4WDSA Club	Volunteers Participating	Saturday 13 th August Hours	Sunday 14 th August Hours
4WD Adventurers Club	8	60.0	19.5
Gawler Districts Club	1	7.5	4.5
Mitsubishi 4WD Club	5	35.0	6.0
Mount Lofty Rangers	3	22.5	9.0
Summit Trax 4WD Club	9	72.5	38.5 ¹
Total	26	197.5	77.5

For the tasks undertaken, this was a good number of volunteers and allowed the bulk of the work to be finished on Saturday with the residual work largely completed on the Sunday morning by 11:30am.

3.1

Work Effort

A total of **275.0 volunteer hours** were provided during the weekend. The travel time for these volunteers to and from Ngarkat has been estimated as at least 100 hours.

4

CONCLUSIONS

4.1

Recommendations

1. A review of the Cox's Windmill campground prior to the March 2017 Ngarkat WB should be undertaken to allow any remedial work to be undertaken at that WB.
2. A connection trail to the Fishponds walk from the Cox's Windmill campground could be undertaken during the next Ngarkat WB.
3. A review of signage in or approaching the Cox's Windmill campground may be useful, for example, exit, entry, campground layout and historical information.

4.2

Conclusion

The WB successfully accomplished the assigned tasks. Many volunteers commented on the sense of achievement after seeing the campground and campsites take shape during the weekend.

Rebecca Pudney (Senior Ranger Mallee & Coorong) assisted in the completion of the WB tasks on both days and her enthusiastic presence, guidance and encouragement was much appreciated by the 4WDSA Clubs volunteers.

The BTC look forward to the next WB in March 2017.



Peter Harper
4WDSA, NRAU, BTC

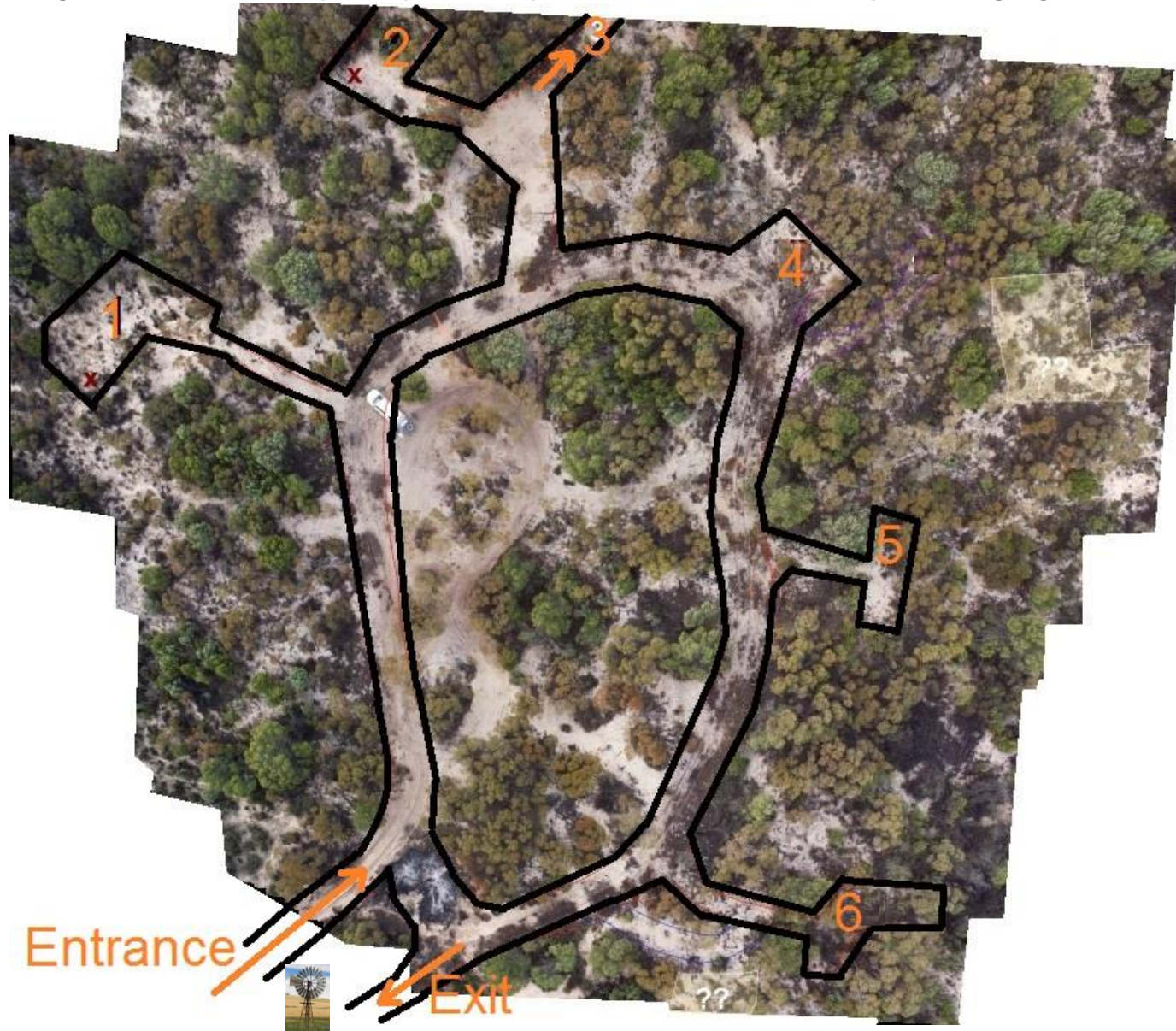


Darryl McManus
4WDSA, NRAU, BTC

¹ Probably includes travel time from the working bee.

Task Images

Figure 1 Cox's Windmill Campground Plan with Campsites (Numbered) and Entrance, Exit and Loop Track Highlighted



Task Images

Figure 2 - Cox's Windmill Campground Loop Track viewed from Campsite 4 towards Campsite 5

Unplaced fencing posts visible - Longer strainer posts on the ground and standard posts stacked ready for use.



Task Images

Figure 3 - Clearing the Entrance to Campsite 5 using a vehicle winch and drag chain

Eric controlling the winch in the vehicle, Adam setting up the drag chain, Darryl assisting with moving the vegetation.



Task Images

Figure 4 – On the Cox's Windmill Campground Loop Track looking towards Campsite 4 (now cleared)

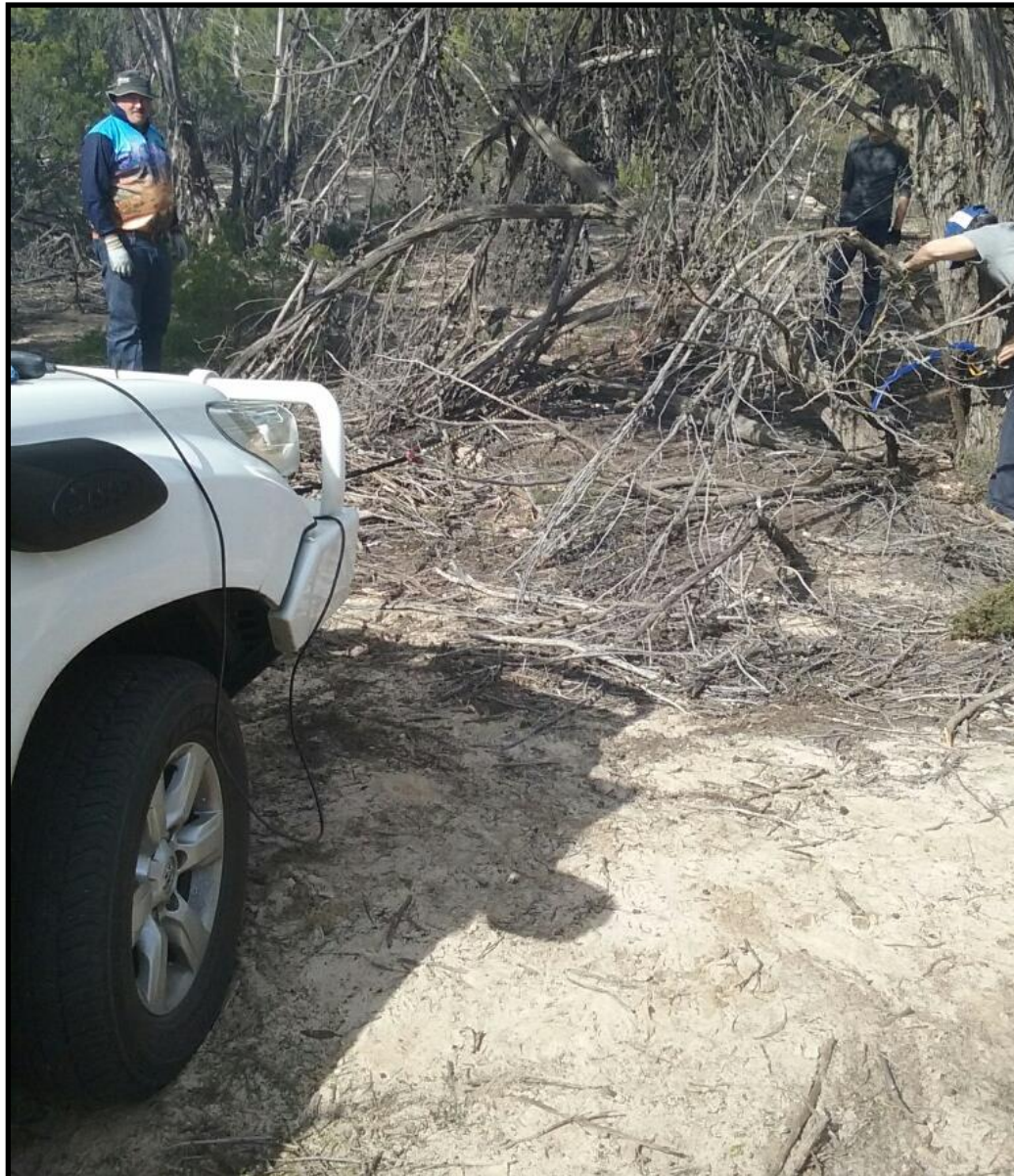
Eric talking with Rebecca after clearing Campsite 4 while Darryl and Adam look on.



Task Images

Figure 5 - Clearing the Entrance to Campsite 5 using a vehicle winch and drag chain

Darryl clearing branches prior to winching out a Mallee stump, Roger looks on with Adam in the background.



Task Images

Figure 6 – 4WDSA WB Volunteer Group on the Cox's Windmill Campground Entrance Track

(Note: Not all volunteers are present in this photo).

