

Field Officer's AGM Presentation Transcript

Slide 1 – Intro – Good morning

It is stating the obvious that BERG's many and varied activities have been impacted by COVID, as have our lives generally.

However, it has also presented us with a number of opportunities - to adapt quickly to change, reassess priorities, to learn new skills.

Who'd have thought we could or would be presenting on-line like this.

Slide 2 – However, we've still had to keep in mind who we are, what we want to achieve and why and how best to go about it...

Slide 3 – 6 months of 'freedom' allowed us to continue our Group activities with a few changes.

Lockdown required a bit of creative thinking – our daily permitted exercise could encompass walking & weeding – nature's new gym.

And it is also interesting to note, how many reports we had of people enjoying their walks and really noticing and appreciating the local bushland, beaches and so much more – birds nesting, wildflowers

- and what a year it has been for orchids!

Slide 4 – We've been lucky our bushland contractors, Naturelinks, have still been able to continue to fulfill our, and their obligations to Morn Pen Shire funded works and BERG grant programs.

Slide 5 – However, BERG has not been slack and has been working behind the scenes, off-ground. We have been applying successfully for grants, and extensions, submitting reports and planning ahead.

Slide 6 – I did mention opportunities – 1) we were able to apply for assistance for a COVID CMA crew for extra on-ground works – 8 - 10 keen and fit worked on the coast and in the reserves for 6 days. They achieved so much and made a great difference.

Slide 7 – A 2nd opportunity – was BERG's adoption of videography which can be used as a new ie for BERG, informative and educational tool. eg. for highlighting BERG and our local environmental involvement and activities.

It is also a very useful tool for training and to assist preparation for on-ground activities eg to ID a targeted weed, why and how to remove it.

Slide 8 – We have also noted changes, maybe only little ones eg – Clean Up Day – changes in the type and distribution of litter.

Slide 9 – COVID has highlighted the need generally, for caring & sharing, and Groups have been doing just this, supporting and helping each other with information, and practically eg BERG spent 3 great sessions with Hansi Wegner and his Long-necked Turtle Protection Project in Devilbend.

We also have these little Turtles in Balcombe Creek.

Slide 10 - We've had time to evaluate some of our own existing programs eg the installation of nesting boxes vs chainsaw hollows vs natural hollows. We shall keep you informed of our findings.

Slide 11 – We've enhanced our engagement with the Bunurong – recognising, learning to listen and value Cultural Heritage and Caring for Country.

Slide 12 – Also, we've realised it is important to engage people in their own particular areas of interest, areas that might raise others' interest and engagement in our local natural environment, like related artworks.

We have our own old graffitied water tank to mural – We'd love any ideas and input into this project.

Slide 13 – There have been negatives of course.

Slide 14 – But also moments to 'lift our hearts & minds', raise a smile, to keep our sense of humour. Inspirational and creative acts by others, to again, get us out enjoying our local environment and engaging the community.

Slide 15 – Relatively recently, we have welcomed Elley, Jeremy, Dan and Justine to the environmental Teams that give so much support and help to BERG.

We shall really miss Tamara who has moved on as a team Leader to the Frankston Shire. Unfortunately, our own fault – our references were too good!

She has been a great leader, teacher and friend to BERG, but all is not lost, BERG's Facebook and Instagram are still in her capable and creative hands.

Slide 16 - There are so many, too many to thank here - all those BERGers, as in the above slides., supporters and stakeholders etc. But many thanks anyway, to them all.