



Friends of Ferguson Park



Newsletter No. 133 – April 2022

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Park Working Bees
First Sunday of
month 10am, Main
Gate, Hallett Road
Stonyfell

Park Working Bee
Dates 2022

2 January
6 February
6 March
3 April
1 May
5 June
3 July
7 August
4 September
2 October
6 November
4 December

Working Bees Update

November 2021 – April 2022

Weed control at the **November** working bee included Pentaschistis and also Monadenia in the vicinity of Ferguson Creek. Most bulbaceous weeds have started to die back and disappear for the summer.

The group learnt in **December** about the grant which has been secured for upgrade of a section of walking trail (to be undertaken in 2022). Geoffrey reported that St Peters Girls' School has contributed \$2,000 towards the new front gate plaque (or other park maintenance activities).

Working bee activities included follow-up Pentaschistis control, Kikuyu control towards the western Park boundary and collection of native grass seed for future revegetation.

January 2022 saw only 2 members attend the working bee. The Ash have germinated with a vengeance in Stonyfell Creek but were easy enough to hand-pull due to the permanent presence of water/moist conditions thanks to the SA Water discharge pipe. A single Dog Rose was cut and swabbed near the Park entrance on Stonyfell Road and an African Feather Grass was grubbed from the same vicinity.

Hot and dry conditions for the **February** working bee meant that today's activities were limited to rubbish collection, a general weed patrol and the ongoing hand-weeding of Ash seedlings in Stonyfell Creek. A good rain event in mid-January has meant that there is even more water being discharged from the pipe and contributing significantly to weed loads (notably Couch, Umbrella Sedge, Rice Millett, Arum Lily).

New Ranger, Jesse Evans, attended the **March** working bee. James asked whether there had been any progress on the 'dogs on leash' regulation – the gazetting of this regulation was promised some time ago however it has not happened as yet. The group asked Jesse to follow this up with the District Ranger (again). Today's activities included Pentaschistis patrol, hand-pulling of young Ash in Stonyfell Creek (where water continues to flow from the SA Water pipe), sign maintenance and rubbish collection.

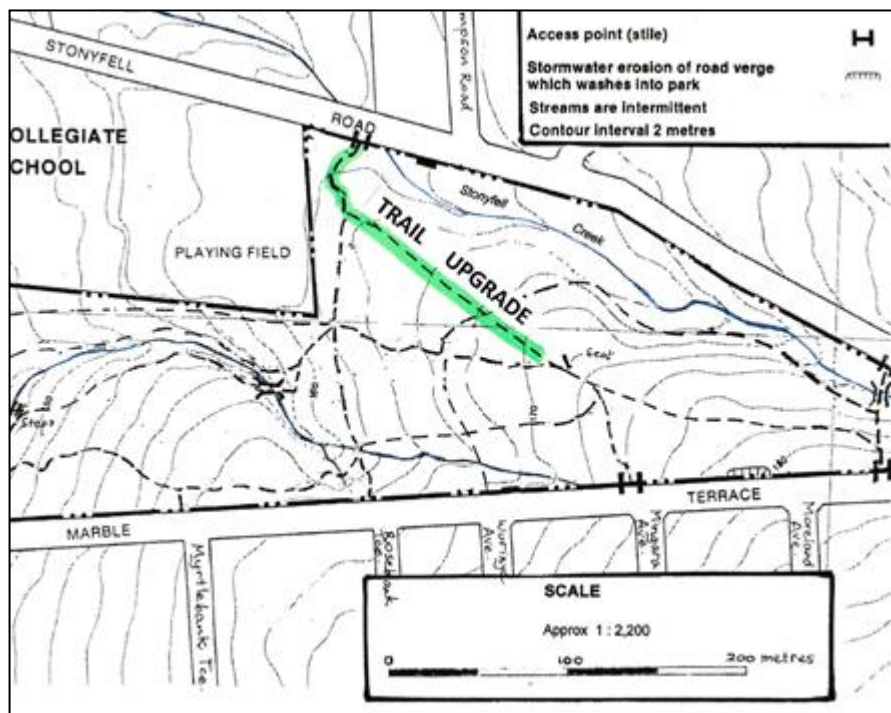
At the **April** working bee Bill completed the sweeping out of all the water diverters along tracks, and reinstated the bottom step in the Ferguson Creek ford. He took the step home, hammered the old rusted 400mm x 9mm pins out, and replaced them with new ones, then reinstated the step and tidied it up.

Our ranger, Jesse, talked to the group about the potential for undertaking a small cultural burn at Ferguson (possibly in The Triangle). Also known as fire-stick farming, cultural burning is a method that has been used by Aboriginal people to manage land over tens of thousands of years. A cultural burn is seen as a means to 'reinvigorate' the land and is conducted in a very controlled and measured way.

Trail upgrade

James and Sally met with Nick Bowman from Destination Trails on 30 March re the upgrade of a section of walking trail in Ferguson, thanks to the recently acquired grant. This work will be done during the week before Easter (11 - 14 April 2022) and James has provided the following information about this project:

- Nick will spend the first day setting up and the actual work will take a further two days.
- The section of trail to be worked on is the old “Quarryman’s Track” extending in a north-west direction from the seat. Nick may be able, within budget, to continue on as far as the entrance on Stonyfell Road. (This is further than the 100 metres we had initially thought possible.)
- Some shallow curves will be incorporated into the trail, with provision for water drainage on the curves. Some of this drainage will occur at specially constructed low points and some of it by means of swales similar to those put in by Bill over the last few years.
- The trail will be surfaced with Stonyfell gravel.
- To delineate the trail better (and encourage walkers to stick to the trail), Nick recommended the placement of rocks at various points.
- The materials and equipment needed for the job will be brought into the Park at two access points – through the fence near the junction of Mingara Avenue and Marble Terrace (Nick has the equipment to release the wire strands and then to re-tension them); and through the gate on Hallett Road (Nick has the key) and then along the school boundary.
- Temporary fencing and bunting will be erected to mark off the area being worked on each day. Walkers should be discouraged from walking on the trail after hours. The work site will be left in a safe state at the end of each working day.
- The Friends group will assist by putting up signs in the Park explaining the project, as well as a leaflet drop to houses around the Park to advise of the trail work, as well as strategically placed signs around the Park. This would also be good publicity for FFCP. (About 70 leaflets were distributed in the lead up to the upgrade works – thanks Sally, James, Martin and Bill for compilation and distribution of the leaflet!.)
- Sally has liaised with our ranger regarding the provision of water on-site when the work commences, to keep the dust down and settle the disturbed soil.
- Sally has also approached Burnside Council about the supply of local provenance native seedlings for revegetating the verges of the trail after the upgrade is completed, ie. later in the year.



Location of proposed trail upgrade – April 2022

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held after the March working bee. Geoffrey reported that there was a total of 470 volunteer hours during 2021 – this included work undertaken by the St Peters Girls’ Environment Group. Geoffrey also provided a financial report and a summary of the tasks undertaken by the FFCP during 2021. The 40th anniversary of the group is coming up in the middle of this year (2022) and there was some discussion as to how we celebrate this.

To streamline communications between group members and more efficiently run various projects, a review of the existing sub-committees/working groups was undertaken. These sub-groups currently include:

- Track/trail upgrade and maintenance
- Stonyfell Creek water discharge issue
- 40th anniversary celebrations
- Community interest
- Update of plant species lists for the Park (both native and introduced)

After the official business the group enjoyed a very pleasant shared lunch and Sally gave us a summary of her climate change studies.