

## FOPS 2017

Welcome everyone to FOPS AGM 2017. Thank you to all of you for taking the time to join us today. The year has been busy as ever with time seeming to move along at a faster pace.

Despite economic uncertainty and the political soap opera we all follow daily, life in SA continues and for FOPS the year has, I believe been a good one.

As a committee we wanted to make sure we got our communication channels as well as our membership information on track and sorted this year. Stolen laptops and changing methodology had left us a bit uncertain about our data base and how current and relevant it was. Communication with members and particularly the way we welcome and process new members left room for improvement. These were focus areas for us.

The website as a primary communication tool was outdated, requests were not coming through and a total revamp was needed. A rebuild, a new look was undertaken and I am sure we can all agree the new site is working much better, membership requests are getting through and being processed and followed up. A special mention and thank you here is in order and this was a major job that took a lot of time, communication and effort...99% of this was done by Kerry Anne (with I am sure Roland being roped in as well).well done KA.

Our membership data base was also in need of some TLC. Grant was tasked with this and probably asked himself and many occasions why he volunteered for the position. An effort was made to contact all listed names and follow up on their membership status. The database was cleaned up and we now have a much better picture of where we stand. This should also enable us to ensure better communication with our membership about relevant issues at the relevant times.

A system of storage of this information "in the cloud" is also being looked at to protect the information and at the same time ensure continuity of structure and information as committees change. Thanks to Grant for all his work.

Work party attendance numbers are looking good and our value to the park grows each year as they are placed under additional financial constraints. Our relationship with other groups in the park is positive and cooperation at times adds value.

Potokwane as our home away from home has come under the spotlight recently and the reality is that the exclusive use of the camp once a month is hard to justify at board level when there are projects being looked at for implementation in the park. The PWT along with WLS are working a program to run children's camps in the park and Potokwane has been identified as suitable for this to take place. This will see some changes being made to the camp which will I believe actually improve the camp. These camps will take place during the week and will not impact our work party activities. Education of our children is vital to long term conservation objectives and these camps are a positive activity which as FOPS we fully support and welcome.

Firearm training continues and I encourage those of you that have an affinity for the smell of burnt powder to please join us on these weekends. The weekends are a lot of fun but the service provided by those that qualify is critical to our operations in the park where safety of our members is priority number 1.

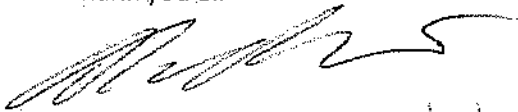
In terms of our capacity at committee level, William Jay has decided to step down mainly due to work commitments. We will be looking to replace him with someone who can manage our tax commitments, NPO compliance as well as assist Mark with our financials.

Park management has had some turbulent times with the CEO being suspended and a new acting one placed. The possible impact all this could have on FOPS is uncertain although the acting CEO seems to have been a very positive appointment.

Poaching continues and Pilanesberg has lost 12 rhino this year as the onslaught continues. FOPS continue to manage funds for the CPU.

Thank you all for your commitment and time to FOPS, to Pilanesberg and to conservation. I ask that you all stay as committed as you are and know that you are making a difference.

Thank you all



Warren Best

2017/10/21

Chairman (FOPS)

A.G.M. Work party for October 2016 to October 2017.

Hi all,

Amazing attendance records for the last year. For the past 12 months we averaged 31 people per work party. The newbies came in thick and fast, 15 new families for the year. These were only the ones that attended W/Ps. There was a bunch of them, 7 families in 2 months. More astounding was that they all wanted to do the Iron Age site. Really! But I must say they and a couple more newbies have done an amazing job. Well done.

Then Mankwe hide, we did a lot of work there. Painting, installing 3 new benches and constructing supports for the frame of the floor of the hide, from underneath the hide. This was long and hard work which took a couple of months to complete. Good job guys you managed to beat the rains.

For the rest most of the work has been maintenance. Repairing parking areas, at the hides. Elephant damage has been minimal except for Bathlako. Hopefully they are learning. A fairly big project was replacing the "G" Site information boards. We replaced about 10 which were vandalised. They look a bit different but are eye catching. Replaced the bird, posters in 4 hides. We had to update our electric fence at Potakwane which needed some new wiring, a new solar panel and a new battery. Tent 3 was purchased and installed for your convenience which turned into bit of a saga, but it is up and running.

Alien vegetation has switched from mostly Lantana to Polar, Jacaranda and Syringa trees, not forgetting Milk Weed which is rife in the E.E.Z. area. But we are making headway. Road clearing is an ongoing battle which will be here forever, so get used to it. March we decided that we needed to clean up Potakwane, very overdue. So basically the entire W/P stayed in camp. Cutting fire breaks, and cleaning up the whole area. The place looks a lot cleaner now.

Lastly remember without you guys these things which are very important to the running of the park would not have happened. So, well done to you all.

May next year be as rewarding.

Regards,

Paddy Coombe-Heath.

Work party coordinator.

