

KLIPRIVIERSBERG CONSERVANCY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 4

JULY 2009

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HAVE YOUR SAY IN THE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CONSERVANCY

Considerable progress has been made since the establishment of the Klipriviersberg Conservancy at the end of 2008. This has entailed the formation of management and portfolio committees representing education, business, landowners, and social and cultural groups, administration, budgetary and financial procedures and a computerized member database, as well as interim registration with the Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment (GCA062) whilst full registration as a Non-Profit and Public Benefit Organisation is awaited.

The Klipriviersberg Conservancy covers 150 square kilometers, between the N12 Highway (Southern Bypass) to the north, the R59 highway (Vereeniging Highway), to the east the R550 and R554 south of the Klip River and the N1 Highway (Vanderbiljpark Highway) to the west. Included in this area is a rich, largely unspoilt diversity of ridges, grasslands, wetlands and rivers, including the 680 hectares of the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve which is the largest proclaimed nature reserve in Johannesburg.

Enthusiastic Conservancy committee members serve on an entirely voluntary basis, but overall success will be dependent on the wholehearted support of the communities within the Conservancy's boundaries. Many of you have expressed great concern with regard to the controversial and environmentally unfriendly development of our previously pristine areas. The Conservancy has interesting and specific goals on development and we would like to hear your ideas, concerns and suggestions on ways to avoid further degradation of your suburbs and protecting, promoting and enhancing the wonderful natural assets which we enjoy.

To do this, the Conservancy requires a management plan which will set out projects and activities for the Conservancy to be able to deliver what you want us to achieve.

We therefore have great pleasure in inviting you to a public presentation and questions and answers session at Mondeor High School Auditorium, Beauval Avenue, on Wednesday, 22 July 2009 at 18h30.

MEMBERSHIP

SPONSORSHIP

Two critically important methods of communication have been identified being the establishment and running of a website and this newsletter.

We would welcome anyone who wishes to sponsor either one or both of these. Your logo and recognition for such sponsorship will be prominently displayed.

As at the end of June 2009 there were 249 members. It is important to increase the number of members. It is also important that we reach as many people as possible within the area of the Conservancy. For this reason we would ask you to forward this newsletter to anyone who you feel should be informed and become part of the Conservancy. Contact details for people to become registered with the Conservancy are provided at the end of the newsletter.

We would also ask those who are already receiving this newsletter and wish to be recognised as members of the Conservancy to contact Clem Kourie and request an application form to be sent to them. We want to establish a database of members and require certain information to be provided. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL AGMs

At the beginning of the month the National Association of Conservancies/Stewardship of South Africa (NACSSA) held its annual general meeting and discussions at the WESSA head office at the Umgeni Nature Reserve in Howick. The event was hosted by the KwaZulu Natal Conservancy Association with a program covering many interesting topics and issues.

A focus of the presentations and discussions was the role of conservancies and their contribution in the future. This was founded in the legislative framework that exists and is changing to accommodate new trends particularly with respect to biodiversity and stewardship. The examples of interventions to address invasive alien species program called "Stop the Spread", and the Duzi-Umgeni Conservation Trust with its very successful program to clean up these rivers showed how important conservancies and their activities are in protecting, promoting and enhancing our natural assets and biodiversity.

The importance of education and the building of relationships based on trust were also stressed. With the support of the existing legislative frameworks it will be important that conservancies initiate partnerships with communities, business and government sectors for creative conservancy programs and work in rural and urban areas. Environmental programs and interventions need to focus on implementation, compliance and enforcement to address widespread ignorance, apathy and action paralysis resulting from fear and doubt. The focus needs to be building on positive and confident attitudes and trustworthy relationships to encourage and promote enthusiasm and participation.

In a brief strategic discussion delegates established that NACSSA needs to be recognised as an active agent of environmental protection and promotion through conservancies. This will be achieved through a number of strategic priorities including establishing identity, building the provincial associations, building relationships, promoting NACSSA, becoming more representative, gathering

resources and informing policy. Provincial and local conservancies will be required to use this framework to develop ideas and actions for implementation in their own areas of interest.

At the Gauteng meeting, the name change to the Gauteng Conservancy and Stewardship Association (GC&SA) was accepted. The importance of shifting the approach to development from an attitude of resistance and fighting to one of building credible relationships and becoming involved was stressed. In addition, the importance of working closely with municipalities and ward committees was recognised as being critical in raising the profile of Conservancies and their contribution to protecting and promoting biodiversity in urban and rural areas.

At both of the meetings the current status of the Klipriviersberg Conservancy and its programme were presented and discussed. The intended focus on the implementation of the biodiversity stewardship program was particularly welcomed by the national and provincial government representatives.

MANAGEMENT PLAN - PRESENTATION TO THE BUSINESS SECTOR

The first presentations and workshops for the preparation of the Management Plan have been held. The management plan is a critical document which has to be prepared to guide and manage the activities of the Conservancy.

The last presentation and discussion on the Management Plan to the business sector was successfully held on Wednesday 27 May 2009. It was attended by about 40 people who were introduced to the Conservancy and made valuable contributions, suggestions and ideas for inclusion in the Management Plan.

**Our thanks to SOJO Business & Tourism (www.sojo.co.za)
and Thaba Ya Batswana (www.tyb.co.za)
for their organisation and sponsorship of this very successful evening.**

As we want to raise awareness regarding the existence of the Conservancy and what it is striving to achieve we would welcome the opportunity to make a presentation regarding the Conservancy to any organisation who wishes to invite us. Please contact Andrew Barker or Sue Edwards to make the necessary arrangements.

KLIPRIVIERSBERG NATURE RESERVE EVENTS

The Kliprivier Nature Reserve Association organises a number of events at the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve. This includes guided walks through the reserve as well as special birding walks and taking in sunsets from the tops of the hills. These are held on Saturdays and Sundays and details regarding the different events and when they will be taking place as well as the organisers can be found at www.knra.co.za.

These events are extremely well organised and provide a wonderful opportunity to venture into the Klipriviersberg hills and experience some of the beauty and surprises that the Reserve has to offer.

UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A 3 day Course in Understanding Environmental Impact Assessment: Contributing to Sustainable Development and Decision Making

The Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), in partnership with the Southern African Institute for Environmental Assessment (SAIEA), WWF-SA, the Mazda Wildlife Fund and International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIAsa); and in association with Deneys Reitz Attorneys, is offering a 3 day short course on understanding Environmental Impact Assessment.

Why should you attend?

- Learn about your environmental rights and the role you can play in preserving the environment
- Gain an appreciation of the role and value of Environmental Assessment (EA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in assisting South Africa to meet its strategic objectives (e.g. poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability)
- Enhance understanding of the need for improved governance in development planning
- Learn how to critically review and comment on scoping, EIA reports and Environmental Management Plans (EMP)

The course will be held from the 28-30 July 2009, and will cost only R899 per person! Please book early because seats are limited. If you need more information, please email info@wessanorth.co.za or contact Miss Hlengiwe Kheswa on Tel: 011 462 5663 or Fax: 011 462 8364

**Can
You
Help?**

TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE PLEASE

In preparing the management plan for the Conservancy we obviously have to compile background data and information regarding the area relating to its history, cultural aspects, biodiversity -that is the people, birds, bugs, beasties and anything else that lives, crawls, walks and flies in the hills, grassy areas and rivers in the area. After all this is what we need to understand in fulfilling our purpose of protecting, promoting and enhancing what we have that makes us so special. Set out below are some of the issues and information that we would be looking for from existing and known reports, research documents, studies and any other sources or resources that can be used.

We would be grateful if you or anyone that you know is able to assist us in preparing and contributing reports, information, maps or plans which can be compiled into the Management Plan. Set out below are some of the topics and issues which we are looking for information on:

- *Current Legislation & Policies - National, Provincial, Local*
- *Physical - Geology & Geomorphology, Hydrology, Soils*
- *Ecological - Veld types and Vegetation, Wildlife (Vertebrates, Invertebrates, Bird lists), Indigenous and Alien vegetation lists, Wetlands, Red Data Species, Biodiversity habitats*
- *Social - Communities, Activities*
- *Cultural - Cultural features, History*
- *Economic - Land Uses, Infrastructure, Economic activities*

If you are able to assist and provide some of the information please contact Andrew Barker.

FUNDING AND SPONSORSHIP

The Klipriviersberg Conservancy does not raise funds through membership fees and requests sponsors and donors to make contributions.

The bank account details are as follows:

***Klipriviersberg Conservancy (Account: 086608584)
Standard Bank The Glen (Code: 00 60 05)***

Please remember that the Conservancy is to be registered as a Public Benefit Organisation and Non-Profit Organisation as soon as possible to enable sponsors and donors to receive tax advantages. As this will take some time to achieve it is suggested that any donors and sponsors who wish to assist should do so by means of a loan to the Conservancy which would later be converted to a donation for tax purposes once the registrations have been achieved.

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION AND CONTACT DETAILS

The following people can be contacted to provide you with any additional information or to assist you regarding the Conservancy:

Chairman: Andrew Barker - 083 274 4424 or abarker@icon.co.za

Vice-Chairman: Clem Kourie - 082 458 2816 or clemkourie@gmail.com

Hon Secretary/Treasurer: Sue Edwards - 011 680 7367 or edwards@futurejhb.co.za

Should you wish to become a member of the Conservancy please e-mail: clemkourie@gmail.com

Apologies for any cross-posting.

Please forward to your family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and networks.

If you wish to be deleted from our distribution list, please contact us.