Eyes on Eyre – Presentation to SA Coastal Councils Alliance 2023 Coastal Forum

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What is Eyes on Eyre?

It's a joint initiative that aims to 'enhance the Eyre Peninsula as a distinctive, cultural and remarkable world-class destination, underpinned by the character of its local communities and coupled with the conservation and protection of its pristine environment'.

It is a mechanism to facilitate a consistent and collaborative approach to tourism management on Eyre Peninsula that started in 2018.

Why form this group

Inadequate revenue to manage coastal assets to expected community standards.

Eyre Peninsula tourism economy is growing.

Increased visitor pressure and ageing visitor infrastructure

Region has world-class attractions but currently over promises and under-delivers

Damage to the natural resources recognised as an increasing management problem.

High level of community expectations regarding use of the coast.

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Increased Visitation = Increased Impacts

$488 million in visitor expenditure in 2021, surpassing 2025 target by $91 million.

Perlubie Beach

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Managing camping is just one of the projects Eyes on Eyre has looked at. In this space we aim to:

- upgrade camping grounds to a minimum and consistent quality standard of facilities

- tackle environmental issues surrounding campgrounds

- create better infrastructure to cater to visitors and increase their length of stay within the region

- create an online booking system that not only serves as a booking platform but also is an educational tool fostering respect for the environment

What have we done so far?

- Created concept designs for 11 sites around the region

- Secured over a million dollars so far to undertake action
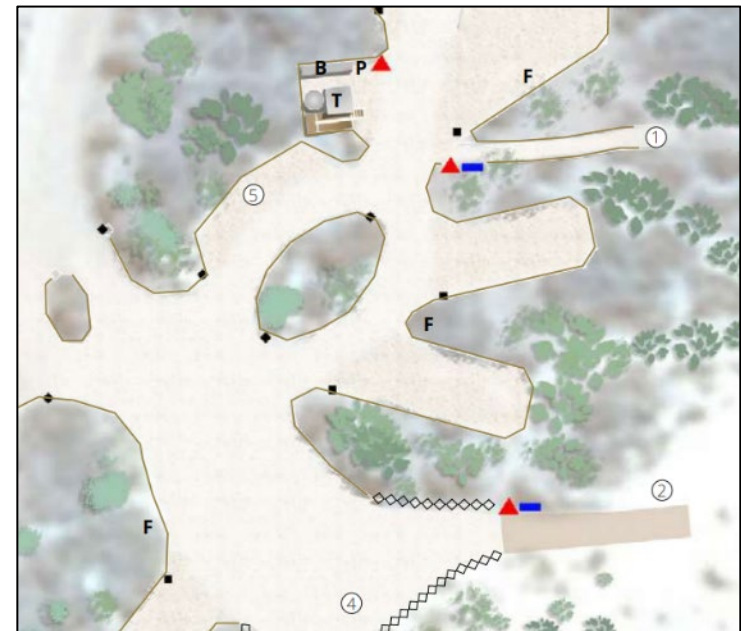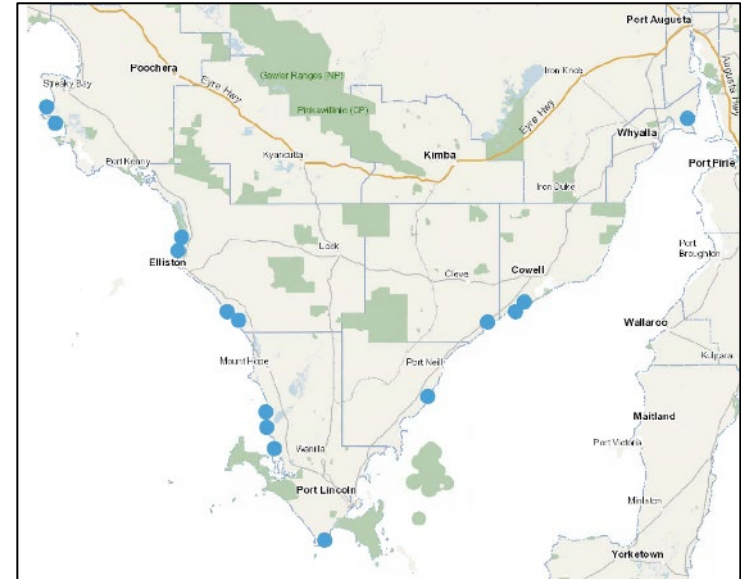
Current funding

The EP Landscape Board has secured $710,000 from the Landscape Priority Fund.

Over 3 years these funds will be granted to councils to undertake activities like:

- Erection of fencing and rock structures to limit vehicular and pedestrian access to appropriate areas.

- Revegetation of damaged areas where access has been excluded

- Installation of regionally consistent signage describing appropriate use in these coastal areas.

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Using Bookeasy platform?

Bookeasy was identified as the platform with the greatest ability to achieve the project objectives due to the following reasons:

- It facilitates individual site booking functionality which is imperative for management of visitor impacts via carrying capacity and zoning

- It is used currently by users of the Parks SA booking system and is familiar to the greatest number of visitors to SA

- It provides the flexibility to standardize processes while accommodating individual content and nuisances (images, fees, code of conduct etc)

- It provides greater opportunities for in-depth data capture and visitor insights

Current Setup

- EPLGA subscribed to Bookeasy

- www.eyrepeninsula.com/camping set up as the entry point to bookeasy.

- First pilot launched in Dec 2021 with the District Council of Elliston. DC of Franklin Harbour, Lower Eyre Council, District Council of Streaky Bay and the District Council of Tumby Bay have now all signed up as well. Most other councils on EP plan to sign up over the next 2 years.

Sheringa Beach Campground

Have you booked your campsite?
To book visit www.eyrepeninsula.com/camping

Online Camping Project Objectives

1. Reduce crowding at campgrounds

2. Reduce environmental impacts

3. Improve the visitor experience

4. Improve visitor behaviour

5. Increase compliance with campground fees

6. Develop a sustainable economic model for campground management

7. Measure and manage campground visitation and impacts

Reduce Crowding at Campgrounds

Success:

- Delineating campsites and zoning no camping areas.

- Capacity limits set in Bookeasy

Opportunities:

- Cross Promotion with Parks SA when campgrounds are full or near capacity

Reduce Environmental Impacts

Success

- Delineated campsites reduce environmental impacts more than unallocated sites.

- Improved infrastructure to create zoned areas e.g., camping vs. non-camping areas, fencing and consistent signage.

- Councils are reporting reduced environmental damage.

Opportunities

- More delineated campsites

- Continued improvement to infrastructure e.g., toilets and phone connectivity

Day parking
No camping in this area
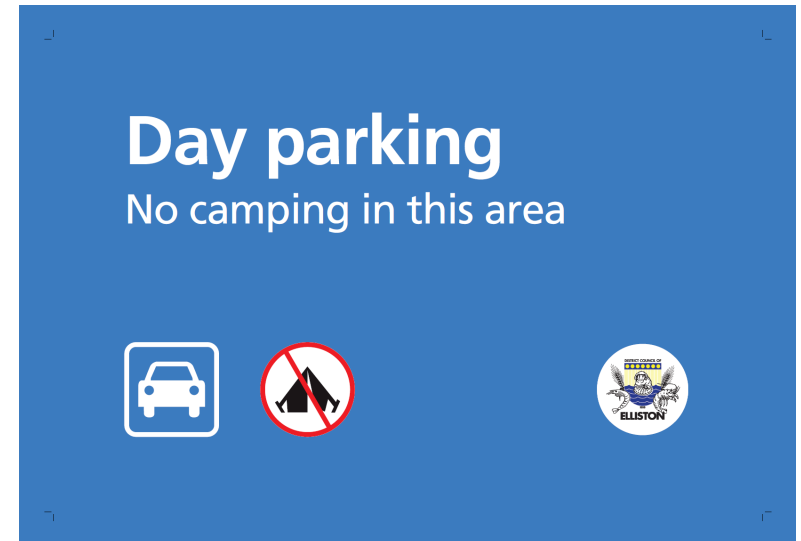
Improve the Visitor Experience

Success

- Consistent & controlled visitor experience

- Attracted higher quality visitors due to advance booking and increased length of stay.

- Photos and content on Bookeasy inform visitors, so expectations are managed.

- Visitors seem to be more satisfied.

Opportunities

- Improve content on Bookeasy e.g., distance to amenities and photos of individual campsites.

Sheringa Beach Campground

← Campground A & B
Sites 1 to 10 and unallocated sites

↑ Campground C
Unallocated sites

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Improve Visitor Behaviour

Success

- Development of a code of conduct.

- Consistent messaging across the regions campgrounds provides clear expectation of behavior.

- Code of conduct communicated via multiple touch points e.g., website, booking process and signage.

- Booking process increases accountability and compliance.

- This has all lead to an improvement in visitor behavior.

Code of Conduct

- Camp in designated areas
- Be considerate of others
- Keep noise to a minimum
- Be aware of natural risks
- Keep pets under control
- Respect wildlife
- Keep to defined vehicle tracks and walking trails
- Shared Zone – speed restriction 10km/hr

Sheringa Beach Campground A
Sites 1 to 10

Code of conduct

- Camp in designated areas
- Be considerate of others
- Keep noise to a minimum
- Be aware of natural risks
- Pets to be kept under control
- Respect wildlife

- Keep to defined vehicle tracks and walking trails
- Shared Zone 10km/hr speed restriction
- Fire restrictions apply www.cfs.sa.gov.au
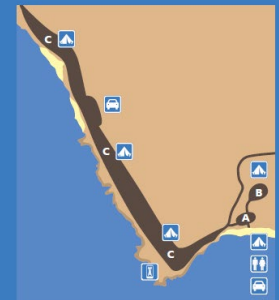
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Increase Compliance with Campground Fees

Success:

- Digital payment method significantly improved compliance from the prior honesty box system.

- Alleviated potential for mismanagement.

- Compliance monitoring using Bookeasy reports and license plates.

Develop a Sustainable Economic Model for Campground Management

Success

- Revenue increased providing more funding for council to maintain facilities.

- Effective use of digital technology and cashless payments.

Opportunities

- Boat ramps transitioned to online booking

- Current admin support may not be sustainable with continued expansion.

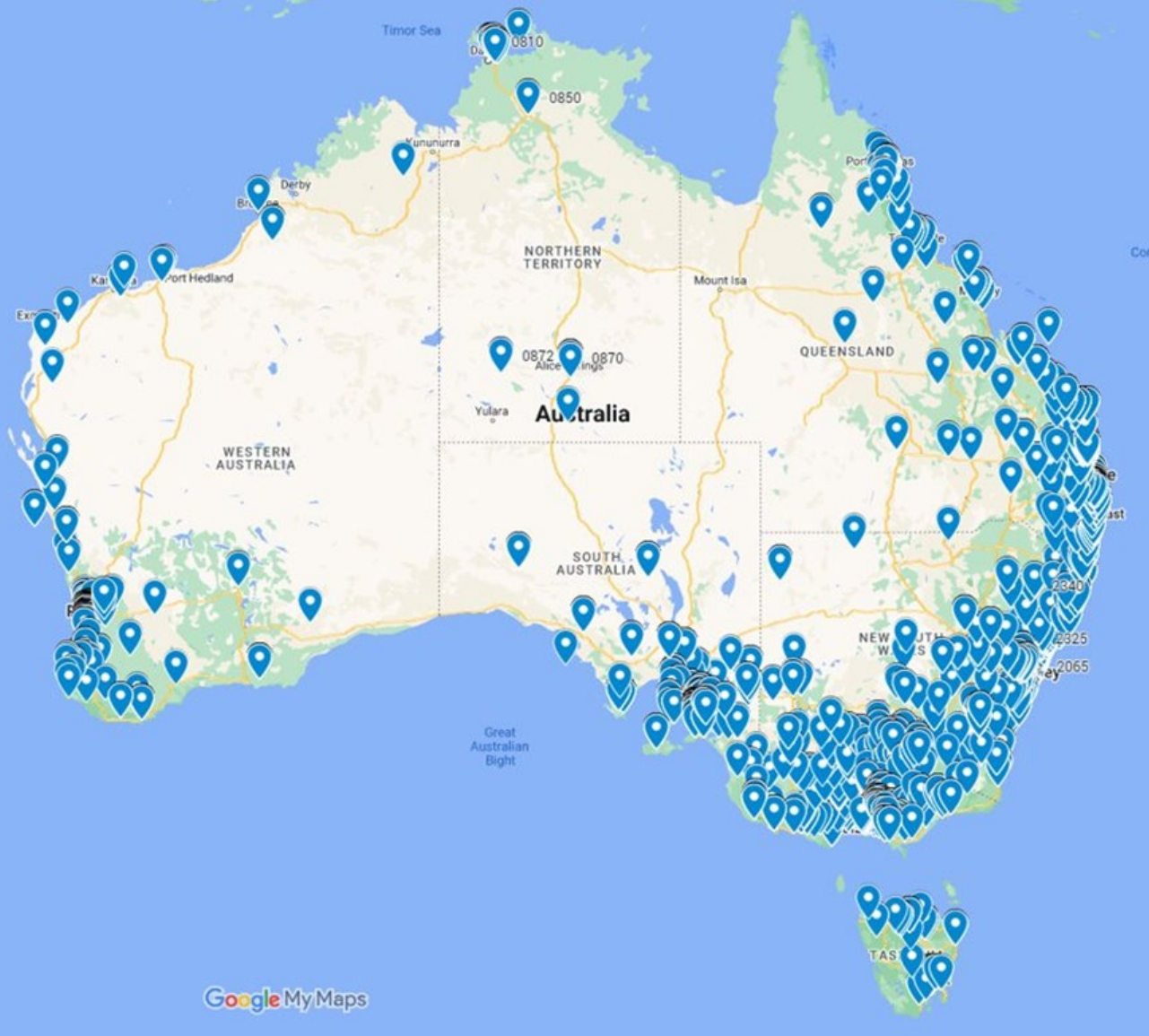- Creation of value-adding opportunities for new service businesses.
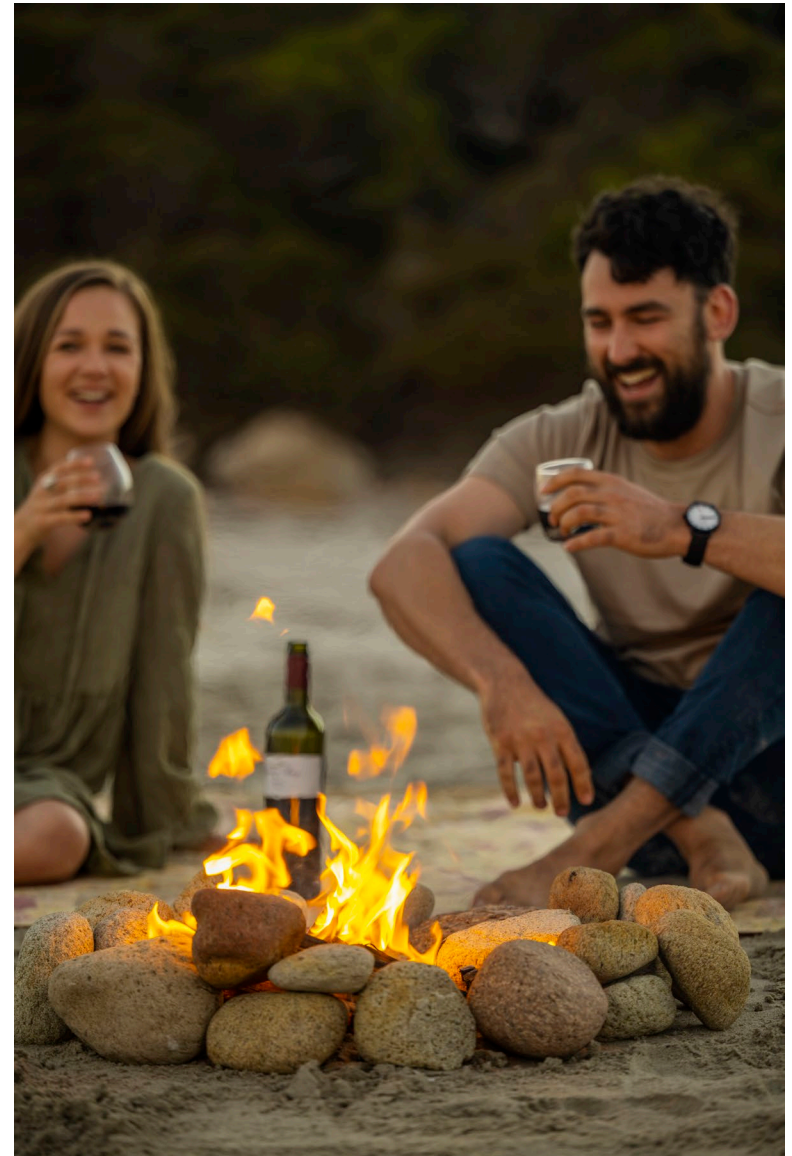
Measure & Manage Campground Visitation & Impacts

Success

- Reporting includes revenue, vehicle registration, seasonality, origin of guests, number of guests, length of stay, popularity of sites and foreword bookings.

10.1% of campers are International, 66.6% from Interstate and 23.2% from South Australia

Visitor feedback

Feedback from visitors and the community has been overwhelmingly positive.

They appreciate the ability to plan and book in advance, as well as the improved management of campgrounds.

One camper from the Gold Coast adjusted their travel plans to spend three weeks in the region after using the online system.

Digital Technology impact

In 2022-2023, the online booking system saw:
- 14,000 bookings
- 35,000 visitors
- 29,000 nights

Revenue has increased by 220%, allowing Councils to offset waste management costs and reinvest in better camping facilities.

The data collected has proven invaluable in guiding future decision-making processes.

$0.54 Million has been collected since Dec 2021 ($350 000 for 22-23 financial year).

Watch on Youtube

Roles & Responsibilities – Initially

RDAEP and **Landscapes SA** - project leads. Facilitated concept designs & worked with the councils and Bookeasy on all the infrastructure and digital support initially.

EPLGA signed the contract with Bookeasy and now manage the online booking system.

DEW provided guidance and support in relation to key learnings on their system and we worked with their team in relation to land title and sign design.

Roles & Responsibilities – Now

EPLGA and local councils are now taking the lead and incorporating new sites and improving processes.

DEW, RDAEP and **EP Landscape Board** are now less involved but still assist with project delivery.

Lessons learned

- Collaboration is key – having environmental, economic and social elements are important.

- A clear vision is important.

- Online booking platform is a game changer. A replicable camping node model that delivers best practices for councils and regional stakeholders.

Questions?