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# Baboon Update

## Baboon Management Plan Progress Report 2

This is the second progress report on the implementation of the Natures Valley Baboon Management Plan.

The first BMP progress report issued on the 8<sup>th</sup> September confirmed the amount of pledges in support of the BMP of R235,500 from 116 donors. Our requests for a “for/against” indication of support for the BMP received 203 replies from 390 property owners. 90% of the 203 replies were for the BMP and 10% were against.

Against this background, and after circulating version 3 of the BMP, the plan was initiated on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August 2021 with the employment of the first 4 monitors from the Covie community.

### Financial Status and forecast (as at the end of October 2021)

Contributions and Expenditure	at 30th October
Contributions pledged and still due	26 400,00
Sundry monthly contributions	4 550,00
Contributions received to date	253 286,00
Interest	835,46
<b>Total of all contributions</b>	<b>285 071,46</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Monitors wages	(47 813,48)
Transport	(10 990,00)
Equipment	(34 074,00)
Radio hire	(1 092,00)
Training	(5 383,26)
Bank charges	(122,10)
WTS baboon proofing	0,00
Contingency	0,00
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>(99 474,84)</b>
<b>Remaining Contributions</b>	<b>185 596,62</b>

Forecast monthly expenditure and utilisation of contributions	
<b>Monthly recurring expenses</b>	
Monitors wages	(20 960,00)
Transport	(9 000,00)
Radio hire	(1 092,00)
Contingency	(2 500,00)
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>(33 552,00)</b>
<b>Forecast from Nov 1st 2021</b>	
Remaining contributions	185 596,62
WTS baboon proofing	(25 000,00)
Available contributions net of baboon proofing	160 596,62
Expenses per month	(33 552,50)
<b>No of remaining months until contributions are fully utilised</b>	<b>(4,8)</b>
<b>Contributions fully utilised by end March 2022</b>	

### Progress since the last update

- We have now received **222** replies to our request for indications of support. **201** replies supported the BMP which included a baboon monitor programme. **21** were against the use of baboon monitors. The current level of support for the baboon monitor programme is 52% of all property owners.
- We have received pledges of donations from 139 property owners totaling R279,7688. R253,286 has currently been collected. Outstanding pledges still to be collected are R26,400.

#### **Our thanks to those property owners who have supported the BMP and for their generous contributions.**

- Equipment purchased for the monitoring programme included uniforms (8 No) and paintball markers (4 No)
- Transportation includes the costs of transporting monitors from both Kurland (EPWP monitors) and Covie (NVRA employed monitors)
- The baboon proofing of the WTS is in progress (R25,000) and will be expensed in November 2021.
- As at the end of October, remaining contributions of R185,596 (subject to collection of the outstanding pledges) are sufficient to fund approximately 5 months of the BMP under the present rate of expenditure. This will fund the programme to the end of February 2022.

### **The 3-month trial period finishes at the end of November – what now?**

- While the BMP included provision for a 3-month trial period, it also recommended that if we were to proceed with a long-term monitoring plan then it would be essential for there to be continuity between the short term (3 months) pilot and the longer-term plan.
- As we are rapidly approaching the peak holiday season, we recommend that the monitoring programme continue until February 2022 which provides opportunities to;
  - i. Review baboon monitor performance when most of the Natures Valley properties are fully occupied over the peak holiday season
  - ii. Allow further time to approach property owners from mid Jan to end Feb to obtain property owner's feedback on the monitoring programme based upon a broader spread of resident property owners during this period
  - iii. Allow further time to ascertain the Municipalities plan and timeline for the enactment of an SRA bylaw and review and approval of an SRA for Natures Valley.
- **The monitoring plan will therefore proceed until the end of February and will use available funds from contributions received as well as those pledges that are still to be collected.**
- A survey of property owners will take place between **mid-January and mid-February** to gauge the support for an ongoing monitoring programme considering feedback from Bitou Municipality regarding the plan and timeline for forming an SRA.
- The main reason for considering an SRA is that it is the only way to ensure equitable ongoing funding as all owners would be required to pay an amount included in their municipal rates account. If an SRA is not established the BMP would, in all likelihood, not continue.

- Positive support for an SRA incorporating a baboon management plan will result in a request for further intermediate funding until such time as an SRA is constituted and operational. The indicative timeline to establish an SRA as well as an overview of the steps in the process is shown below. **Support from less than 50% of property owners will result in terminating the BMP.**
- Property owners should note that the application for an **SRA for Natures Valley** will, in all probability include **baboon management, NV security improvements and verge maintenance.**

### Special Rates Area (SRA) Update

- A request to proceed with the development of a Bitou SRA bylaw has been completed by Bitou management and awaits formation of the newly constituted council for approval (expected end November 2021 if there is a resolution to the currently hung council)
- The Bitou SRA bylaw will be similar to that passed by Overstrand Municipality. An NV SRA application will require consent from 50% plus 1 property owners
- Current indications indicate good support for an SRA. The inclusion of security improvements in the SRA is likely to result in further community support

A likely scenario for an SRA application, approval and activation is shown below (modelled on the time frames achieved for the Hermanus SRA which is substantially larger than NV;

- Council approval to draft bylaw – **November 2021 (if we have an effective sitting Council)**
- Bylaw draft – Council approval – Jan 2022
- Conduct perception survey with property owners – Jan/Feb 2022
- **NV property owners agree in principle to apply for an SRA – March 2022**
- Form an NV SRA steering committee – March 2022
- Draft an NV SRA 5-year business plan (primarily baboon monitoring and security) – March/April 2022
- NV 1<sup>st</sup> Public participation meeting for 50% plus 1 for support – April/May 2022
- If supported by 50% plus 1, submit an SRA application – May/June 2022
- NV 2<sup>nd</sup> public participation July 2022
- NV SRA application approval – July 2022
- Establish Board for NV SRA Co August 2022
- NV SRA begins service delivery **September/October 2022**

If the above timeline is achieved, additional support by way of a further contribution from at least the current 52% of the community (200 BMP supporters) would be as follows;

Funding for a further 6 months to enable the establishment of an SRA	201 315,00
Indicative cost per person assuming 200 supporters	1 006,58

(Contributions would be requested in March 2022)

## **Baboon Monitoring Progress to date**

The BMP has now been operating for 3 months.

During this time;

- We have employed 4 NVRA monitors from Covie. Two of the monitors have left and were replaced during the 3-month period. The employment contract with the Covie monitors expires at the end of November 2021 and will be renewed until end February 2022.
- Bitou has provided, at its own cost, 4 Kurland based EPWP employees as promised. One of the EPWP employees will be assigned to supervise the WTS during the December-April period to ensure effective waste management at the WTS. The EPWP employees are allocated to NVRA for 6 months until the end of March 2022 (contracts then need to be renewed)
- All monitors have been provided with uniforms (boots, overalls, wet suits, vests and yellow jackets.
- 4 paint ball markers have been purchased (they were planned to be purchased as part of the long-term plan therefore an unplanned short-term expense). Permits have been obtained and are to be renewed in December 2021
- We have started installing a lockable and baboon proof enclosure of the WTS recycle bins and access hatch. This will be complete within the next 2 weeks and a WTS attendant will be present during holiday periods
- Monitors have been equipped with mobile radios which a range covering the entire village (rented from Viscomm).
- Break-ins by troop members have declined significantly as have the number of invasions, largely due to early monitor interventions and to the lengthy periods of time when the troop can be contained to the eastern pass or the Kalander kloof side of the west pass

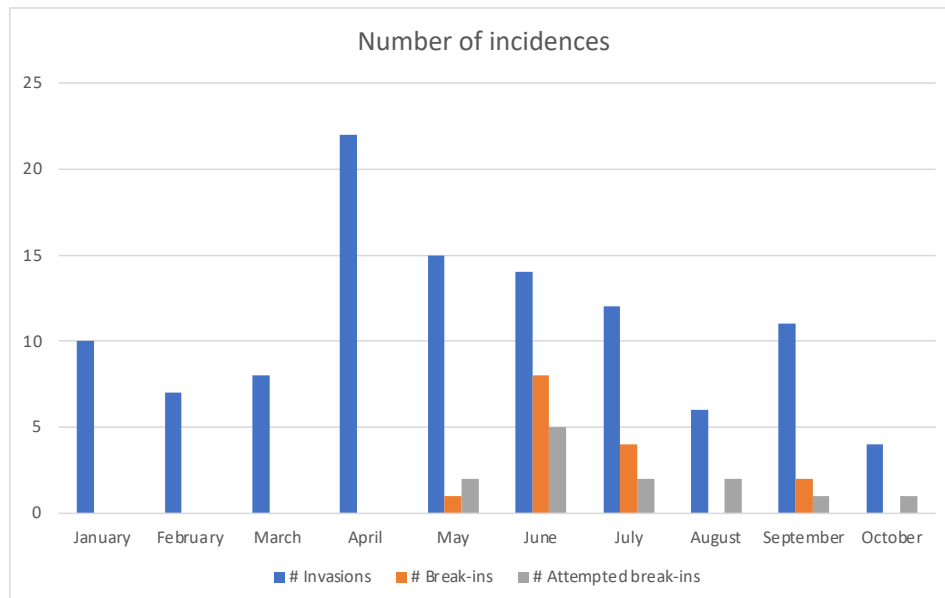
## **Some issues requiring attention**

- The reporting of baboon information (troop characteristics, time in the village, roosting sites etc) is poor and needs daily supervision. Troop size – 16.
- Transport of monitors from Covie and Kurland requires constant administration in order to optimize costs and ensure safe and timely transportation of monitors to the village.
- Monitors have been using paintball markers unnecessarily – retraining and regular review has been carried out (further feedback from residents welcomed)
- A Number of residents on the forest side of Forest Drive have complained about the increase in both baboon and monitor activity due to the monitors driving the baboons back through their properties into the forest. Monitors have again been asked to avoid those properties where residents have not permitted access.
- Monitors frequently patrol in a group – monitors have been told that one monitor will patrol on a bike with a portable radio and 2 monitors will monitor the troop once the troop's location has been identified.
- The monitors require ongoing support when cellphone data runs out, paintball marker gas and/or paintballs are depleted, mobile radios malfunction, bikes require maintenance, residents complain (sometimes rightly so), etc etc. Part time supervision to contain costs is necessary but not ideal during this initial phase of the project.
- A meeting to resolve inconsistencies in the CapeNature permitting protocols and to align them with areas outside of the Cape Peninsula has been arranged for the 15<sup>th</sup> November.

## Baboon Activity

- During the 3-month period from August to October, the number of invasions, break-ins and attempted break-ins has declined as shown in the charts below

Month	# Invasions	# Break-ins	# Attempted break-ins
January	10	0	0
February	7	0	0
March	8	0	0
April	22	0	0
May	15	1	2
June	14	8	5
July	12	4	2
August	6	0	2
September	11	2	1
October	4	0	1



- Monitors have frequently succeeded in keeping the troop on the eastern side of the Groot River and to a lesser extent in the Kalander kloof which has reduced the amount of time the troop has spent in the village. Raiding by splinter groups continues with the monitors relying on early alerts from residents on the Baboon Alert WhatsApp group. The introduction of a troop tracking system will only be considered as part of a long-term programme.
- One roosting site has been located in a large tree in the Kalander kloof
- We expect baboon activity to increase in the December-February period evidenced by the number of invasions experienced in previous years.

## Hotspot areas

- Frequency of invasions experienced in erven during this year are shown in the hotspot map below. Hotspots display no real pattern and more as a result of repeat raiding after a successful invasion.

- Properties around the junction of Forest Drive and Cineraria, the Natures Valley Trading Store and neighboring properties and on St Michaels between Arum and Heather are receiving more than

## Baboon Invasions 2021



their fair share of attention. Property owners should remain extra vigilant. The Cineraria/Forest Drive junction is the closes entry point to the Valley from the troops roosting site in the Kalandar kloof once the baboons have traversed the road and the ridge above the valley

### Baboon proof wheely Bins

- Spot surveys of wheely bins are undertaken on Friday mornings and the response from residents to secure their bins and not to place refuse bags outside of bins is disappointing. We will be asking for help from residents in each street to act as bin monitors for a short time on a Friday morning during the holiday season to encourage residents and holiday makers to comply.

Survey Date	Bins surveyed	Unsecured	Bags not in bins
13th August	10	3	1
20th August	35	4	3
27th August	27	8	3
Sept 3rd	22	5	2
Sept 10th	15	3	1
October	49	11	8

**FINALLY.**

**The holiday season is rapidly approaching**

**Please, please make sure that when you and/or your family, friends, visitors or tenants arrive you remain very aware of the baboons – the monitors are not a solution as long as you ignore the following basic requirements;**

- **When you leave the house – lock all windows and doors**
- **Don't leave food out In your house in sight of baboons**
- **Don't leave bird seed outside – feed small quantities while you are there**
- **Don't leave plastic bags on the curbside on refuse collection days – if you don't have a bin or your bin is full, take the bag(s) to the WTS.**
- **Please be polite to monitors – they work a long day in all weather. If you wish to complain then contact Marco or Dave Owen**
- **Join the baboon alert WhatsApp to provide alerts to monitors and follow the alert guidelines .....erf number, and state whether it's a sighting, invasion, break-in or attempted break-in**