



A Regional Approach to Flying Fox Management

and-white-gifs

Hunter Region Case Study

59 Flying-fox Camps

300,000 Animals

Numerous outraged
communities

11 Local Councils

1 Joint Organisation
of Councils

Limited resources
(staff and money)



An origin story



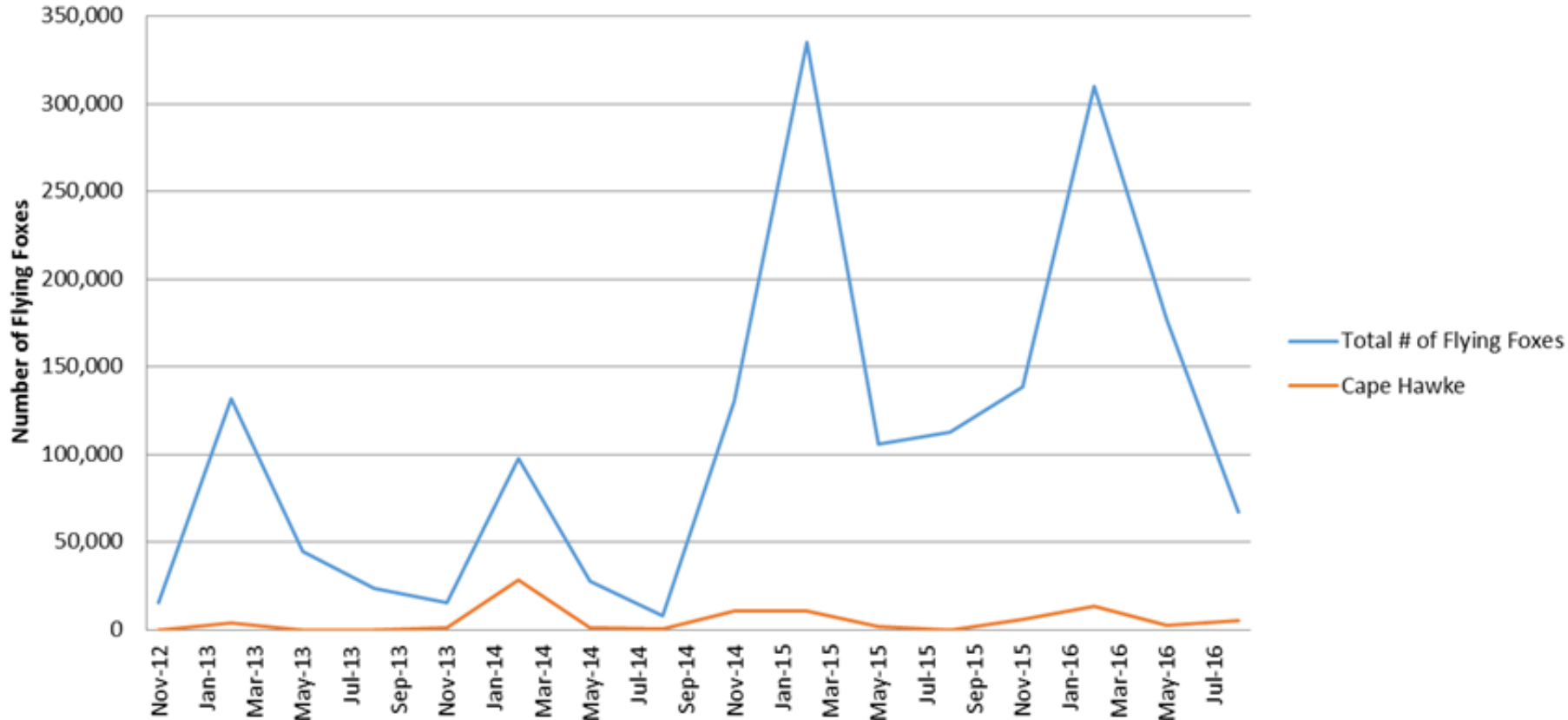
Regional Context

- 🦇 59 Camps across the Hunter, Central & Lower North Coast region
 - 54 have been included in at least one Flying Fox Census Count since 2012
 - 16 Camps are Covered by Camp Management Plans or Local Flying-fox Management Strategy
- 🦇 Media stories
 - 320 stories in 2016 for NSW
 - 229 stories in 2015 for NSW
- 🦇 2015/16 and 16/17 season
 - Increased animal numbers due to climatic conditions and food resources.
 - Community concern grew from background levels.
 - Incidents of large numbers in Camps, restricted use of Community land for residents, increased impacts on amenity



Regional Flying-Fox numbers

Flying Fox Census Results Across the Hunter, Central & Lower North Coast



Complex Issue

Legislative

- Responsibility?
- Threatened Species
- Habitat is also protected
- NSW Camp Management Policy
- Lower Hunter Grey Headed Flying-Fox Strategy

Social

- Noise
- Smell
- Mess
- Community and animal health

Environmental

- Nomadic pollinators
- Highly exposed to risks
- Roam +20km for food
- Annual migration

Political

- Resources
- Community Concern
- Land Management Responsibilities



Hunter Region's Experience

- Flying-foxes have always been in region
- Councils manage the impacts
- 2015 saw increased impacts and awareness
- Massive number of flying foxes in Region
- Political intervention (Batemans Bay)
- Local Political request for HJOC project
- Local engagement with Councils and OEH
- Successful funding applications

No Simple Solutions to Complex Problems



Thinking simplistically, there are two ways to legally manage conflict between Humans and Flying-foxes

1. Preserve or restore habitat in areas of no (or low) conflict (long-term solution)
 - Required to protect habitat in current locations
2. Support residents to reduce impact of camps (short term solutions)

Hunter Region's Approach

- ↪ Collaboration
 - Staff / Officer level
 - Director level
 - General Manager / Mayoral level
 - State Agency Officers
 - Volunteer Organisations / Rehabilitators



- ↪ Data collation
- ↪ Grant application development

** The first phase was unfunded, but vitally important*

Regional Flying Fox Grant Projects



Councils of the Region and the Hunter JO are party to a number of Flying Fox projects:

- 🦇 Regional Flying Fox Strategy (Unfunded but resourced)
- 🦇 ARC
 - Linkage project (project partner) (Grant Funded)
- 🦇 NSW Environmental Trust
 - Community Education (Grant Funded)
- 🦇 LGNSW
 - Camp Management Plans (Grant Funded)
- 🦇 National Science Foundation
 - Hendra research (supported project) (Grant Funded)

Outputs

DRAFT 2017
Blackalls Park
Flying-fox Camp
Management Plan



FLYING-FOX CAMP MANAGE
East Cessnock
Camp Management
August 2017 | Cessnock City Council
Industry - Lands & Forestry

FLYING-FOX CAMP MANAGEMENT PLAN
MURRURUNDI
Camp Management Plan
June 2017 | Upper Hunter Shire Council



Ranking flying-fox feeding habitat
for the Hunter Councils Camp
Management Plan
Technical report for Hunter Councils



Central Coast
Flying-fox
June 2017 | Central

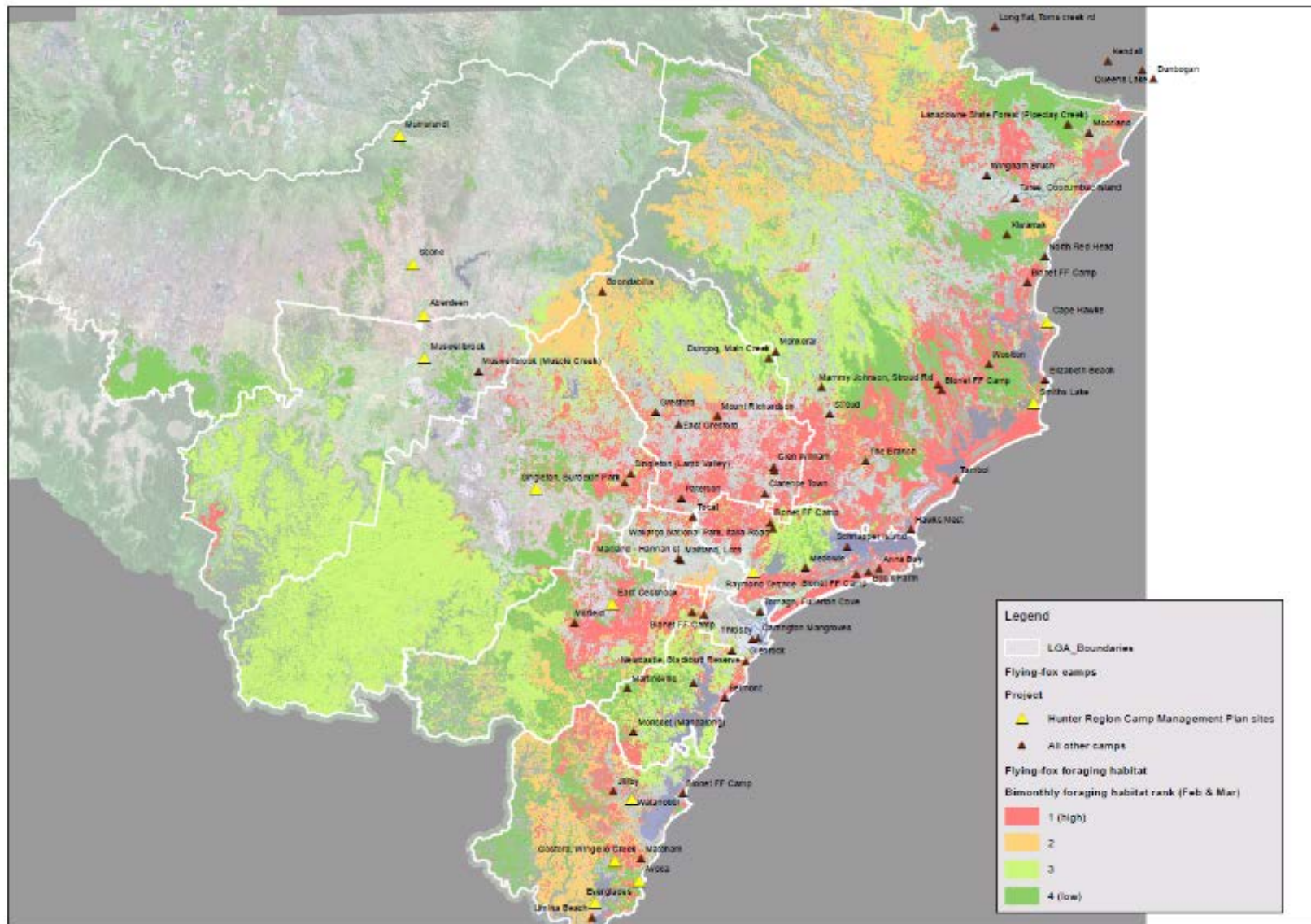


FLYING-FOX CAMP MANAGEMENT PLAN
MUSWELLBROOK
Camp Management Plan

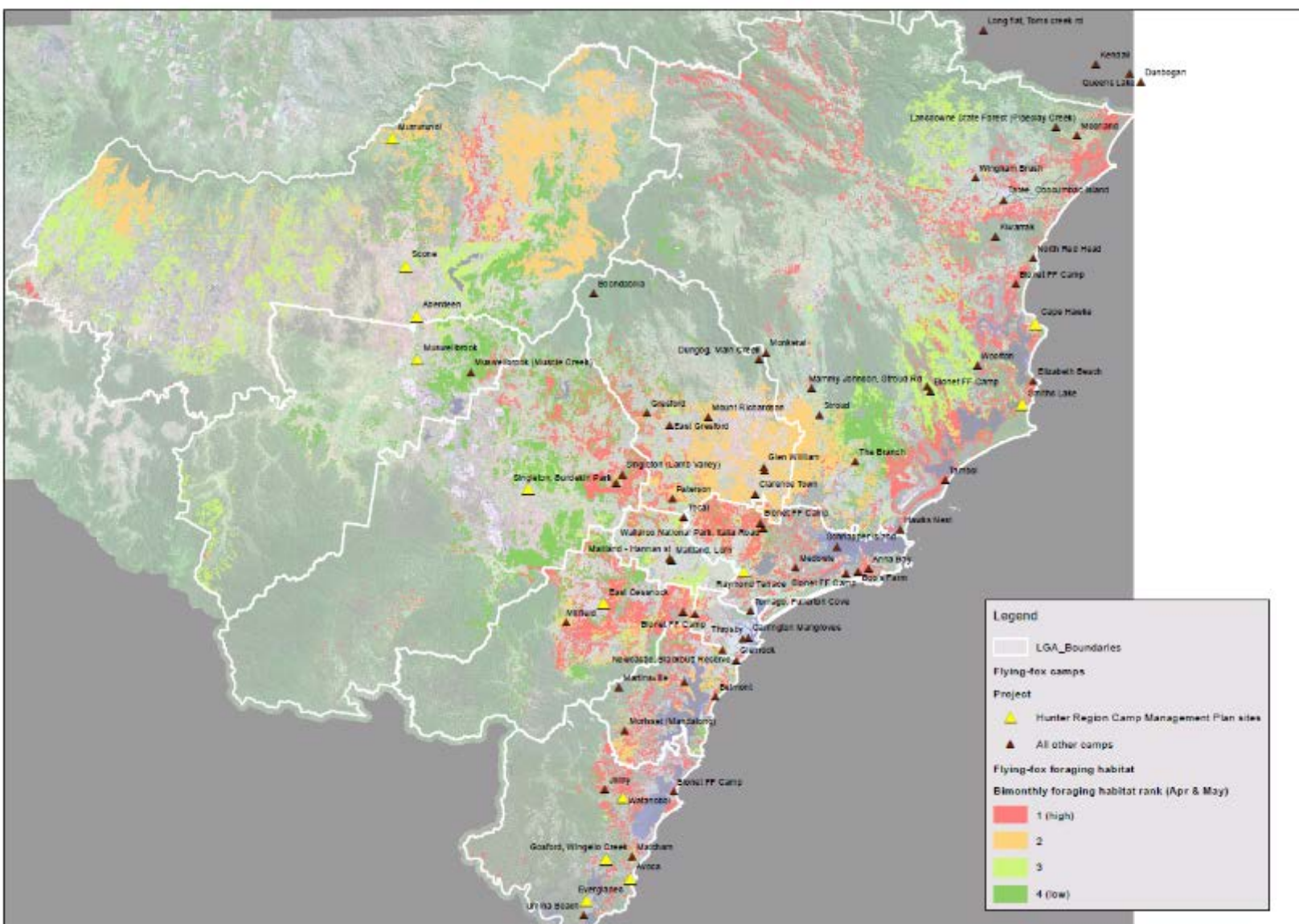
**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGY OUTLINE**

Flying Fox Management Plans

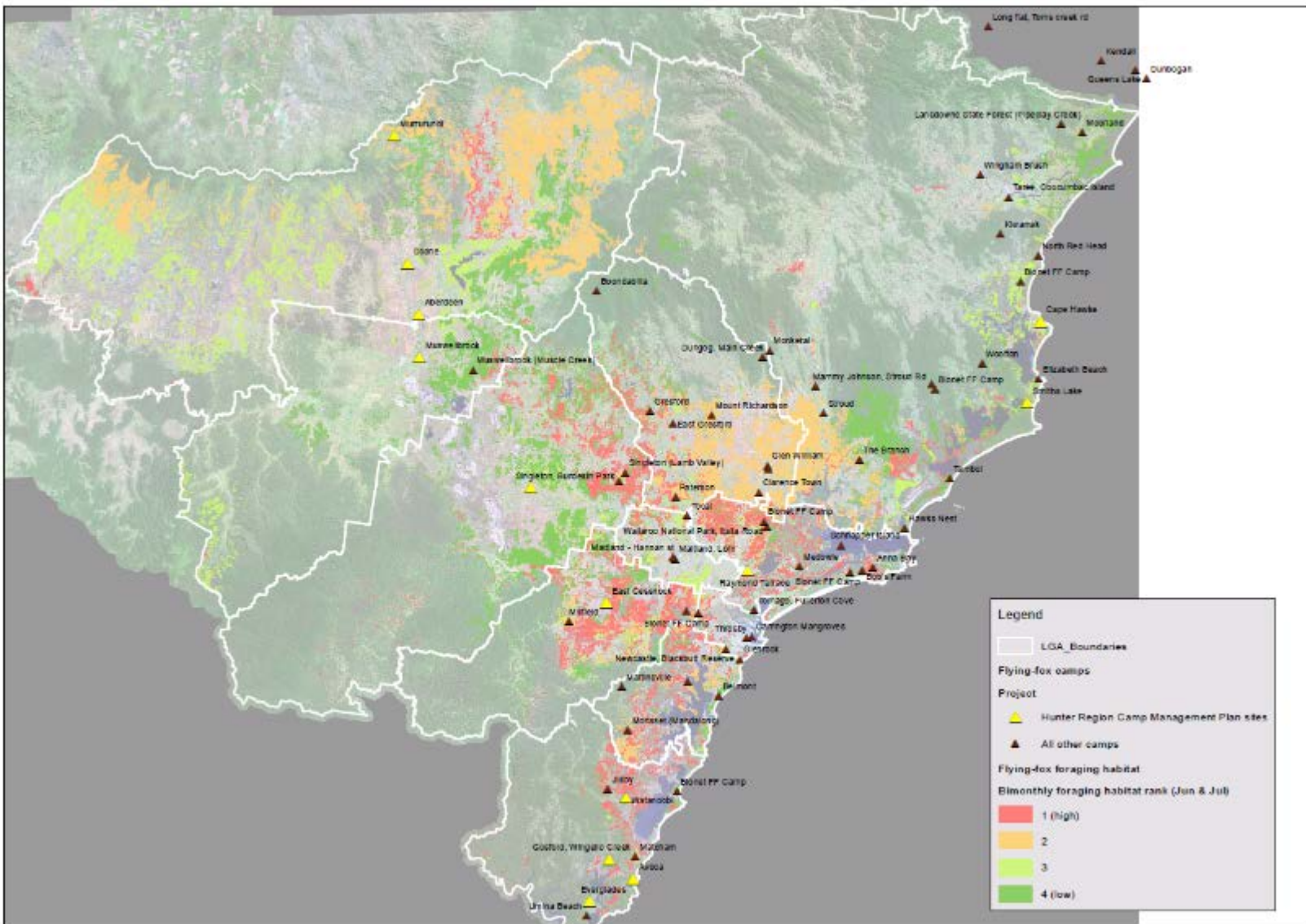
Maps and Models



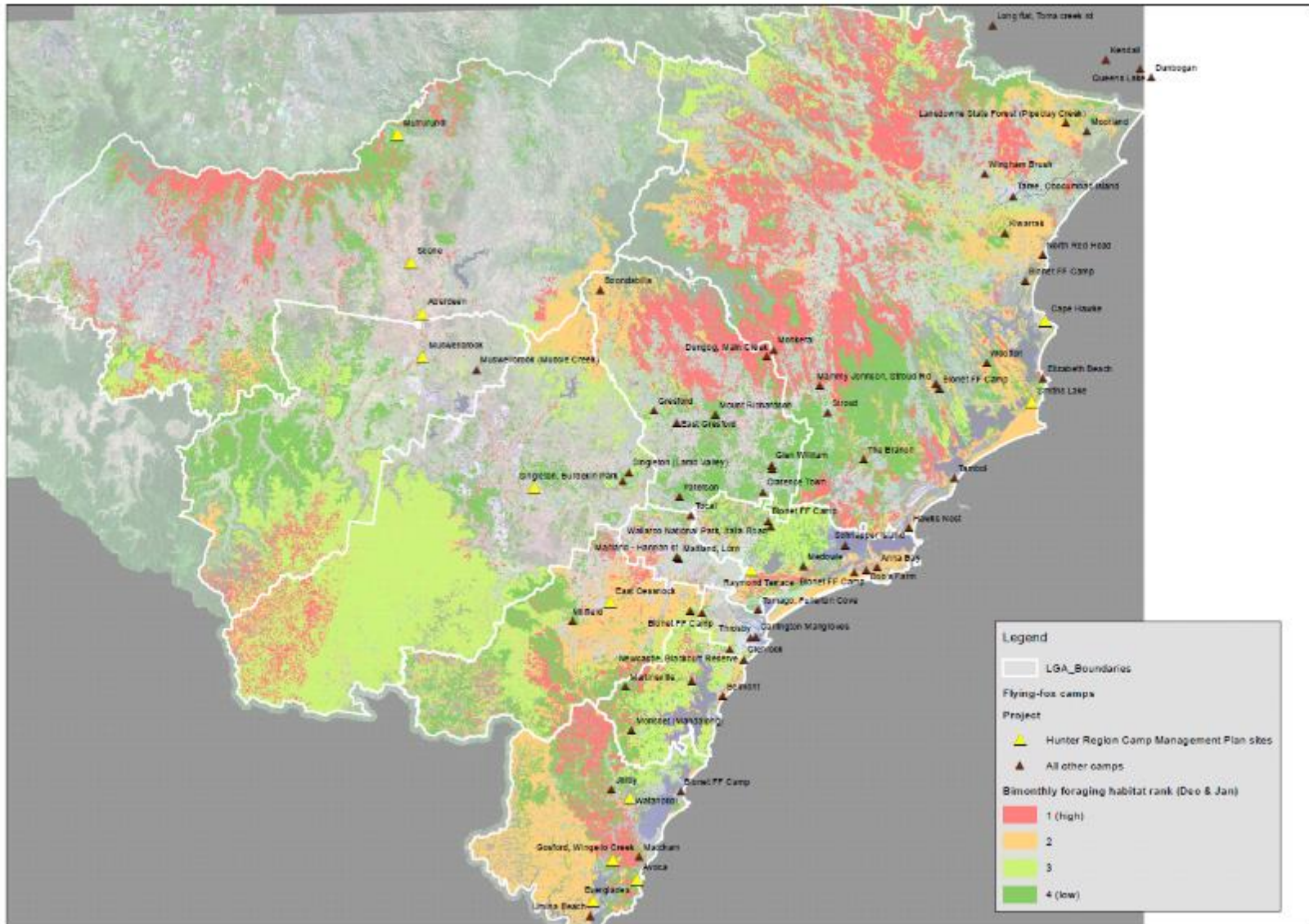
Maps and Models



Maps and Models



Maps and Models



The Honest Truth

- Meaningful Drivers for action
 - Increased community concern
 - Initial political and GM support
 - Availability of funding (although limited)
 - Willingness of Agency staff to participate and assist
 - HJOC history of delivery and ability to respond quickly to political need



The Honest Truth

- ☞ Barriers or issues
 - 11 Councils all participating at different levels of interest and resource availability
 - Grant reporting requirements
 - Grants do not fully cover work required
 - Individual actions not driven by Strategic requirements, but political response and funding availability
 - Local politics!



The Honest Truth



🦇 Important Outcomes

- General Managers hear about Flying-fox projects each month (Mayors bi-monthly)
- Directors receive bi-monthly reports (more detailed)
- 10 of the 11 Councils in the region have at least 1 camp managed by a CMP
- Local Office of OEH is committed to working with Councils and HJOC to develop an umbrella Strategy that builds on existing work

Where to next?

- ↪ Continued support to Councils on Flying Fox matters through
 - Facilitation of Flying Fox Managers Group and liaison with State and Local OEH office
 - Partnering with neighbouring regions to expand work and link outcomes which build intelligence on species movements and impacts
 - Develop Community Engagement materials to provide regionally consistent response to residents
 - Develop materials and resources for Council staff to incorporate Flying Fox management into Strategic and Land Use Plans

What is our Ultimate Goal?

- ↪ Effectively manage the Bat / Human interaction to reduce conflict:
 - Increased community acceptance
 - Effective land use planning protecting important foraging and roosting areas
 - Integrated management across jurisdictions to ensure pressures in one region do not cause impacts in another
 - Continued persistence of the species, and delivery of the Ecosystem Services they provide



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