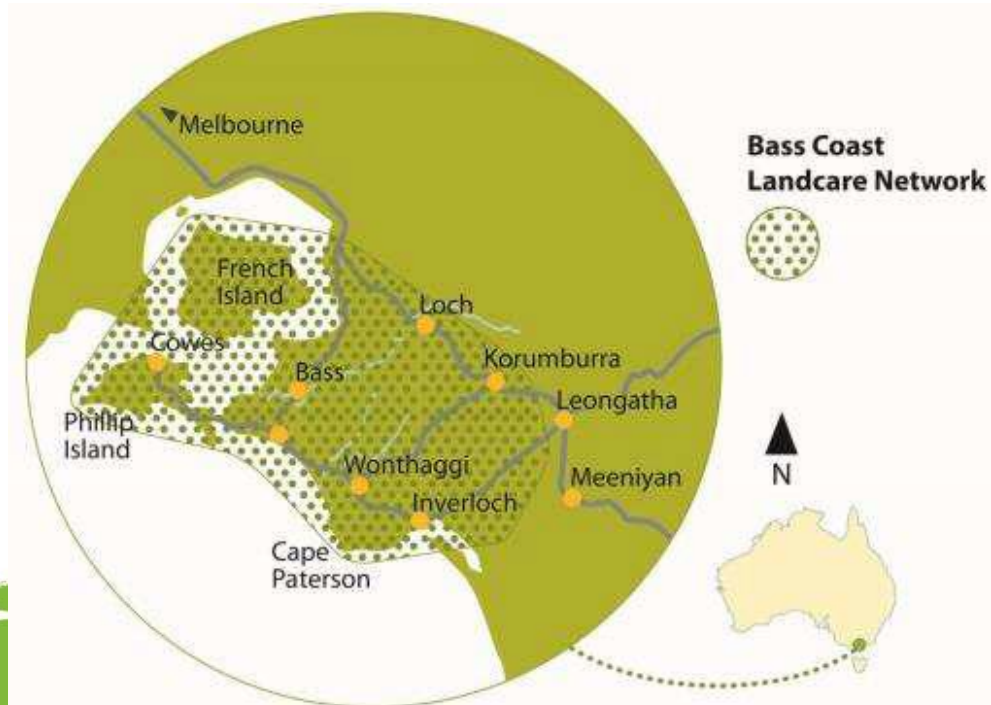


Rabbits in Bass Coast

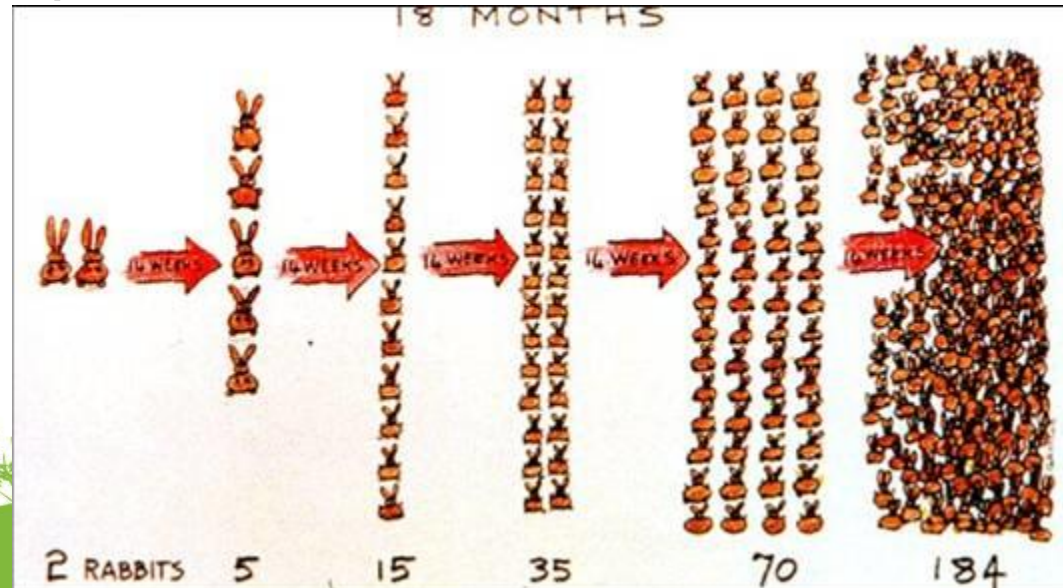


- Predominately a well known and well visited coastal municipality, including two large islands
- Major assets including highly productive agricultural hinterland, extensive coastal reserves supporting sea bird colonies, heath and bushland reserves, Western Port, and Anderson Inlet
- Very high rabbit numbers in coastal urban areas with a high proportion of absentee landholders
- High proportion of rabbit population are 'scrub bunnies' – low incidence of warrens



Need for a strategy

- Constraints (large number of landowners in urban areas with high absentee rates, low resourcing)
- Need for strategy (organisations and agencies previously largely working in isolation, lack of asset prioritisation)
- Existing relationships / partnerships
- Formation of working group PINP, BCSC, ParksVic, WW, SGW, MW



BCLN Rabbit Strategy



- “Community, agencies and organisations collaborating to strategically reduce rabbit numbers to protect biodiversity, agricultural and social amenity assets in the Bass Coast Landcare Network area.”

Agency and organisation level

- Coordinate monitoring and control, standardise monitoring
- Prioritise assets; focus limited resources to have a long term impact
- Commit to undertake detailed actions – not just a general expression of intent
- Create a dedicated Rabbit Officer position

Community level

- Increase community action, create effective urban rabbit control programs
- Identify ‘local champions’ and create a learning network

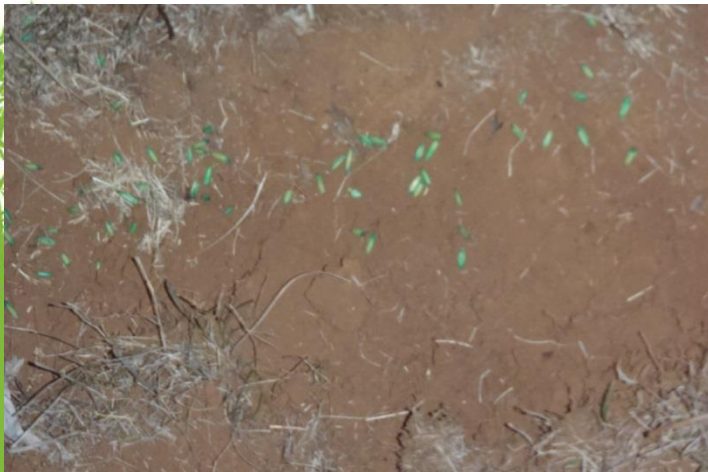
Educate

- Basic info on biology, effective integrated control, and relevant regulations

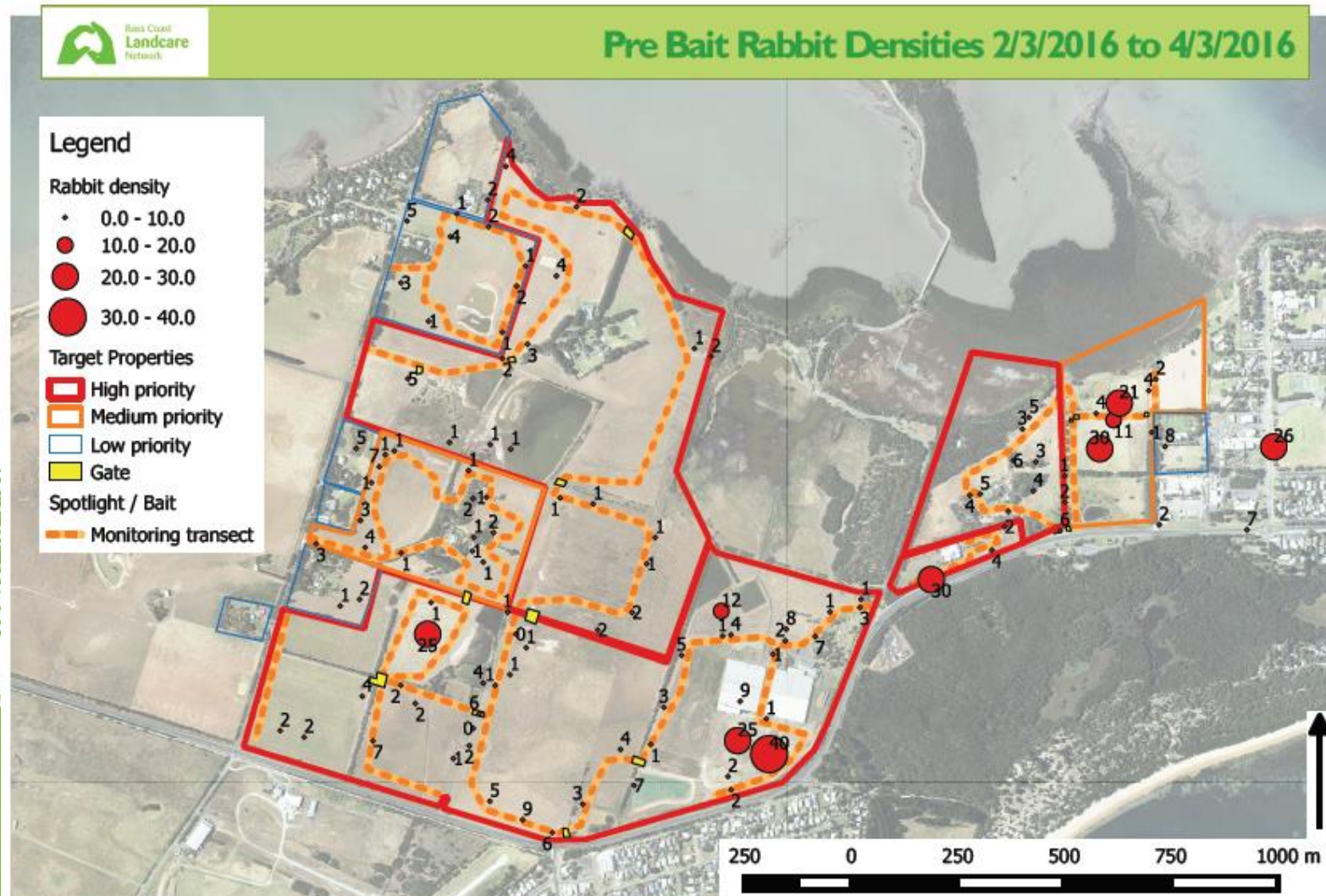
Early outcomes

PINP Newhaven rabbit control

- Buffer area of 150Ha, 12 properties, around the entrance to Churchill island (rabbit free)
- Monitoring (pre and post), baiting, shooting, and warren harbour mapping.
- Reduce the risk of reinvasion to protect Eastern Barred Bandicoot habitat
- Coordinated with; BCSC roadside harbour removal, rabbit proof fence upgrade, and baiting at Newhaven foreshore. PINP control in Fishers wetland



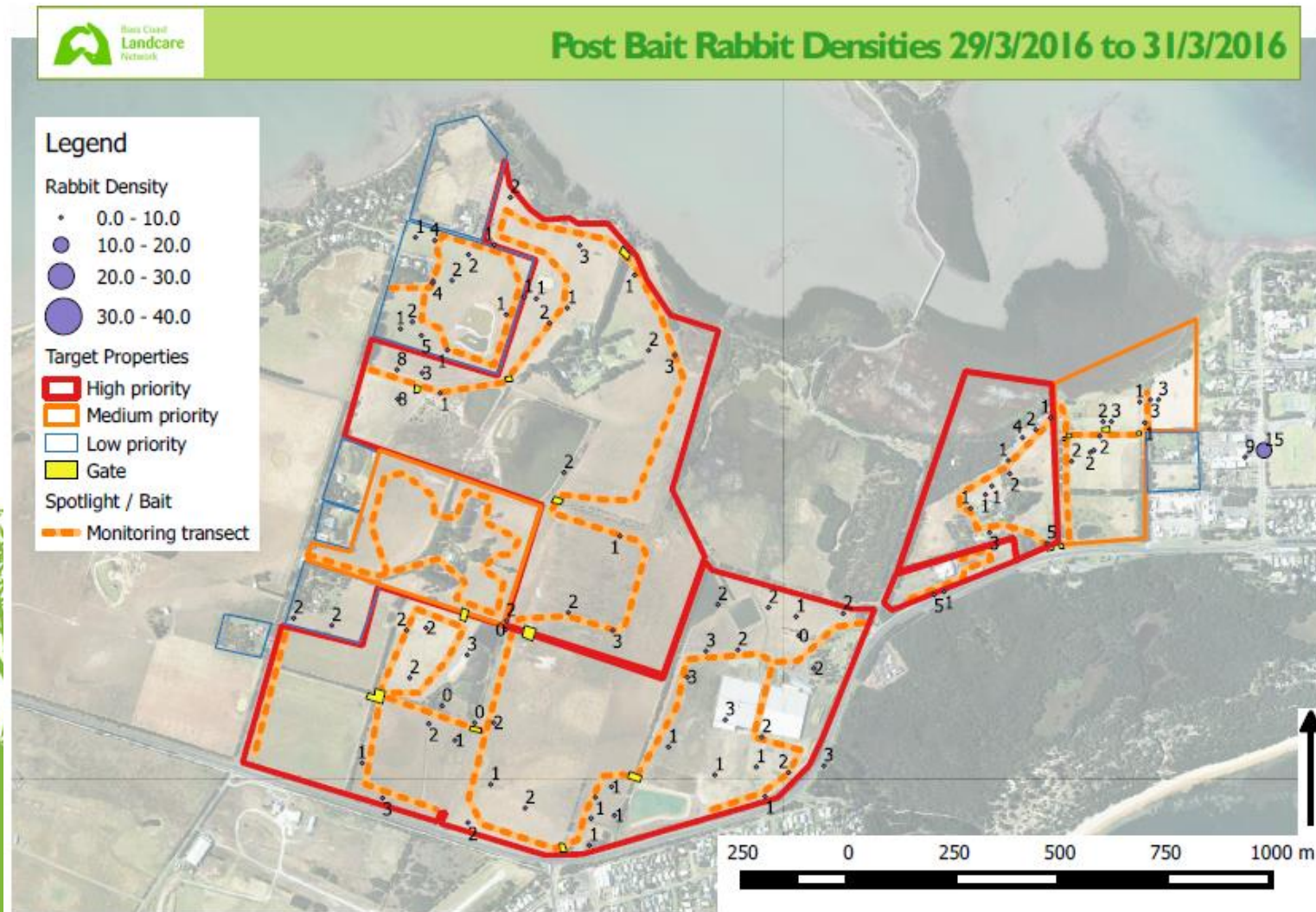
Pre control count



Post control count



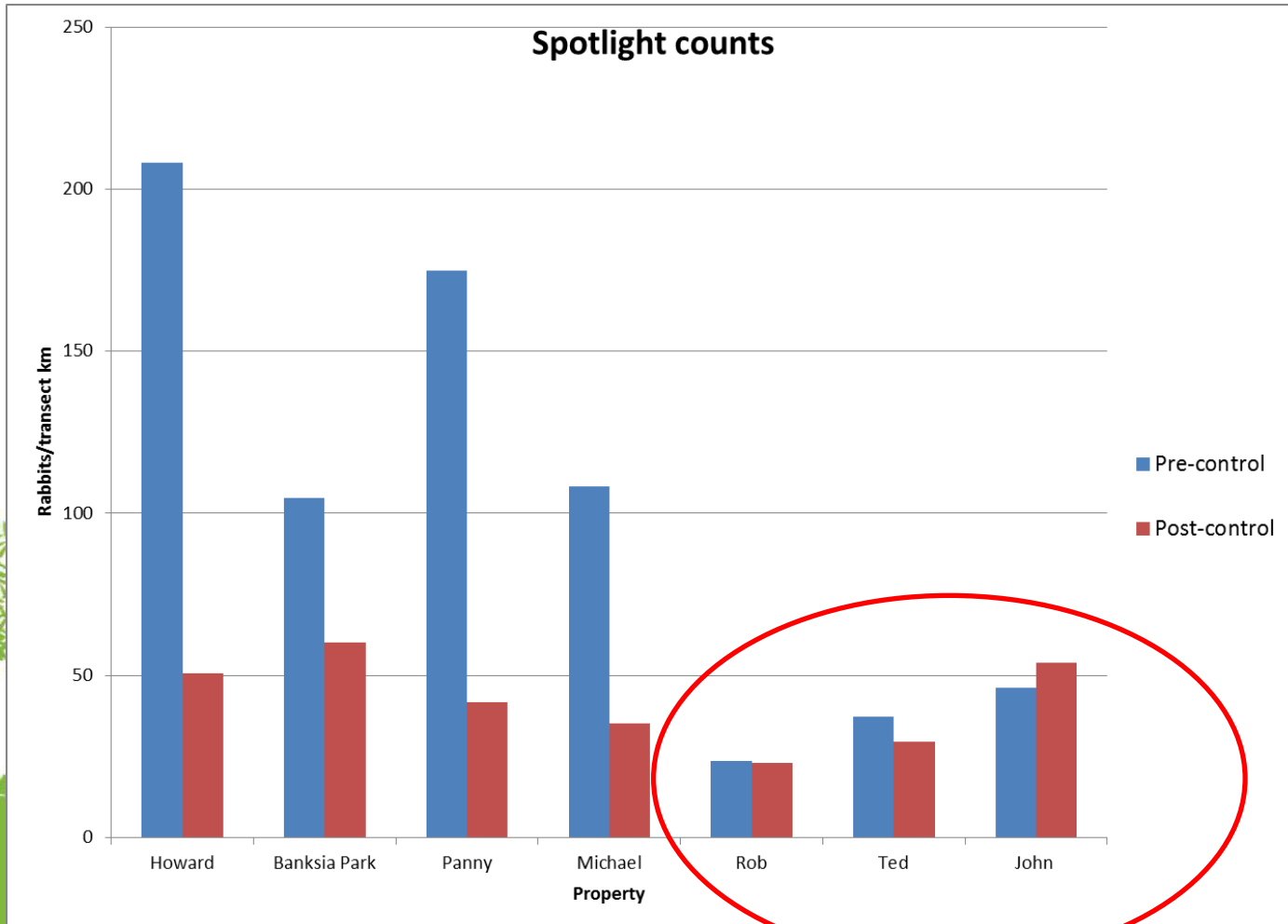
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Newhaven control results



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Early outcomes

Grant through Victorian Rabbit Network

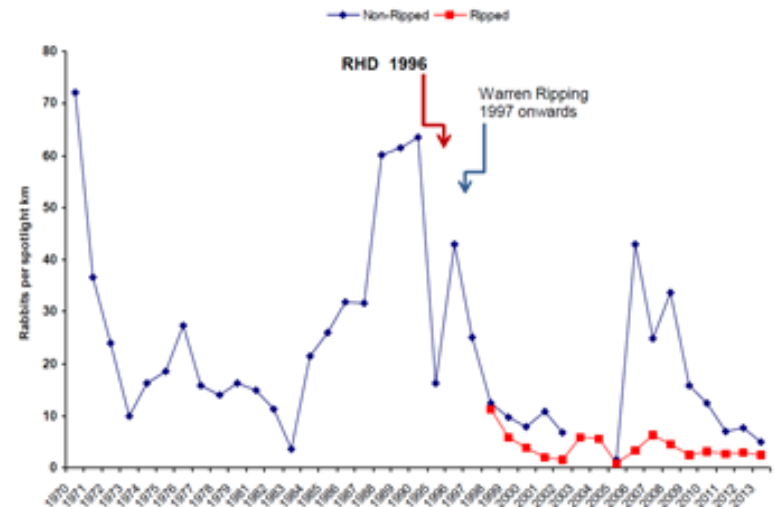
- Facilitate community group rabbit control (Landcare, Coastcare, CoM's, Community Assoc. etc)
- Identify community champions to offer guidance and help coordinate monitoring and control. Beau Fahnle (PINP) member of Leaps and Bounds learning network to share and disseminate findings from other groups.
- Foster the use of Feralscan, targeting warren and harbour mapping
- Rabbit porthole on BCLN webpage – a place to refer people for information on rabbits and control



Future directions

- Meet quarterly following coordinated pre control monitoring, discuss upcoming work, look at funding opportunities
- As a group analyse monitoring and coordinate strategic control programs
- Annually; set detailed action plans
- Develop and implement a strategy for effective Urban Rabbit control, utilising community participation via champions
- Create momentum leading up to the release of the RHD Boost

Long-term impact of warren ripping



Contact details



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Bass Coast Landcare Network
Rabbit Strategy

2015 – 2020