

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 15 February 2018
Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener St, O'Connor

1.0 Welcome and apologies

President Esther Gallant welcomed members and guests to the meeting, and paid respects to the traditional custodians of the land and their elders past and present. Approximately 35 members and guests were present, with apologies received from Christine and Michael Goonrey, Kevin McCue and Sonja Lenz, Tim Walsh, and David Large.

2.0 Confirmation of minutes of the 16 November 2017 meeting

In the absence of the projector Esther read out the minutes of the general meeting of 16 November 2017. They were approved by the meeting.

3.0 Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

4.0 New Members

None.

5.0 NPA Activities

Esther reported on the following issues being addressed by the committee:

- The NPA's new website has been launched. It is the result of much work by Sabine Friedrich and Chris Emery, who were warmly thanked.
- NPA had a stall at the World Wetlands Day function at Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 4 February. It was very successful.
- The Victorian National Parks Association is now finalising its submission to the Inquiry into management of the horse populations in the Victorian High Country. ACT NPA members have been urged to contribute individual submissions, and to fill out the online questionnaire (the deadline for which is tomorrow).
- NPA member Di Thompson was awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in the Australia Day Honours List for her work with NSW NPA, NPA ACT, the Interim Namadgi Board and the Alpine Liaison Committee. Di was present at our meeting, and she received enthusiastic applause.
- The committee views with concern the possibility that new federal legislation may take away the tax deductibility of donations to organisations such as ourselves if they engage in political lobbying activities. Members are urged to write to their representatives.
- NPA's offer to sponsor ACT university students to attend the Easter ecology camp in East Gippsland has attracted only one applicant to date. This may be a reflection that our offer should have been made earlier.
- NPA's new tree book was released in early December, and the reprint of our butterfly book is currently in progress.
- Rod Griffith drew the meeting's attention to the forthcoming release of management plans for Lower Molonglo, riparian zones, and climate change, and Di Thompson noted that the Victorian Regional Forests Plan would be coming out soon.
- Chris Emery noted that the Conservation Council had taken action to challenge proposed land clearing on reserve land in North Coombs, but the developer had proceeded with the clearing anyway.

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- The meeting's attention was also drawn to the possibility of residential development of reserve land in Red Hill; John Brickhill reported on NPA's exciting new Goanna Project; and David Kelly provided news on the Ginninderra Falls campaign.

6.0 Treasurer's report

Treasurer Chris Emery reported verbally on the NPA's financial situation, which remains strong. Copies of the accounts were available on the table at the back of the room.

- In the period December to February sales of publications amounted to \$5700, of which \$2500 was from the new tree book.
- NPA got an especially good deal on the purchase of its new public address system (just over \$100), which provided excellent service at tonight's meeting.
- NPA has a need to identify and fund projects that meet the requirements of our latest large bequest (large animals, of which our goanna project is the first).
- Chris noted he is still concerned about the high cost of public liability insurance as discussed at the previous general meeting. He reported that the Conservation Council is looking at getting a single coverage for all of its constituent organisations (including NPA). They have a quote under consideration. If NPA is unable to reduce its cost of insurance we may have to look at increasing membership fees (which have remained fixed for several years).

7.0 Other Business

Adrienne Nicholson reported she is trying to organise another Art Week for Gudenby Cottage in mid May, but that the booking arrangements for the cottage have become more complicated. Watch this space.

8.0 Presentation

Esther introduced our special guest speaker **Prof. Kate Auty, ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment**. Prof. Auty's topic was **My Role**, and she informed and entertained us in fine style. The Commissioner produces the State of the Environment Report for the ACT (next due at the end of 2019) and other reports at the direction of the Minister. The other reports include the Implementation Status review on the climate change policy of the ACT government (2017), the review of the Lower Cotter restoration project (2018), and reviews of the Gungahlin (2018) and Molonglo Strategic Environmental Assessments (2018). The Commissioner is exploring the use that can be made of environmental accounting in the State of the Environment report. Prof. Auty has already served as Environmental Commissioner for Victoria, and has produced a State of the Environment Report for that State. She is a lawyer by profession, has been a magistrate in Western Australia and Queensland, and has had wide involvement with indigenous Australia.

Prof. Auty's presentation was followed by a stimulating question and answer session, at the conclusion of which she was thanked by Esther, presented with a copy of our butterfly book, and invited to join the rest of us for a light supper.

President:

Date: