

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 15 March 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 30 members and guests were present, with apologies received from Christine and Michael Goonrey, Chris Emery and Sabine Friedrich, Beverley Hammond, Rod Griffiths, Tim Walsh, David Large, Judy and Dave Kelly.

2.0 Confirmation of minutes of the 15 February 2018 meeting

Esther put the minutes of the general meeting of 15 February 2018 on the screen. They were approved by the meeting.

3.0 Matters arising from the minutes

Graham Scully asked how much was the large bequest received by NPA, and what was it to be used for. Esther replied that the amount was \$280 000, and that it was to be used for research relating to large animals. The Rosenberg's Monitor project is the first such project. Kevin McCue mentioned that a study of rakali (water rat) in the ACT is the next project NPA will be funding. Esther also noted that an additional six UC students will now be going to the Easter outing in East Gippsland, and that NPA will sponsor them.

4.0 **New members** None.

5.0 NPA activities

Esther reported that Christine Goonrey has resigned from the Committee after fourteen year's service, including five as President, and at least a further five as Vice President. Christine and Michael will be moving to their new house at Bega, where Christine will have a well earned rest after organising NPA's recent very successful Bushfire Forum.

6.0 Other Business

- Mary Hoffmann reported on her recent solo effort along the Alpine Walking Track. Mary was particularly saddened by the numbers of feral horses she encountered, especially on the Bogong High Plains. Numbers were less intense in northern Kosciuszko National Park, but nevertheless there were frequent sightings. Evidence of measures to control feral pigs and deer were to be seen, but there was no evidence at all of any measures being taken to control wild horse populations.
- Esther called for volunteers to man our stall at the forthcoming CAP Expo at the Old Bus Depot Markets. Over 6000 people attended last year's expo.
- Preparations are commencing for NPA ACT's sixtieth birthday in 2020. Next month's General Meeting will feature an ideas forum to consider appropriate ways for us to celebrate the occasion.
- Esther noted that we will need to book a venue soon for our next Christmas party, and invited suggestions. The Namadgi Visitor Centre and Gudgenby Cottage got good support, but a suggestion that it be held at Uriarra Crossing did not find favour.

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- Comments are due on the Molonglo Plan of Management by 23 March. Rod did ask for an extension, but this was refused. A point of contention is the apparent lack of a buffer zone surrounding the Kama Nature Reserve.
- Adrienne Nicholson reminded members that the next Gudgenby Art Week will be held 18 – 25 May. Only two beds remain unbooked.
- Secretary Sonja mentioned that reprints of the high selling butterfly book would be available soon, and the bird book was also being reprinted.
- Brian Slee mentioned he was having trouble with the new NPA webpage on his computer and asked if anyone else had similar problems – answer no. Quentin suggested Brian discuss with webmaster Chris on his return.

7.0 Presentation

Esther introduced our guest speaker and fellow NPA member Di Thompson OAM. Di's topic was **Hammered by Hooves**. The Alpine (Victoria) and Kosciuszko National Parks continue to be beaten by the impacts of the hooves and eating habits of introduced animals – horses, deer, pigs, etc. Some five years ago Di led a group of NPA members ('The Magnificent Nine') to Cowombat Flat and the source of the Murray River, where they were shocked by the damage being done by wild horses to the fragile subalpine environment. Subsequently Di described the extent of this carnage to one of our monthly General Meetings.

More recently Di and several other NPA members revisited these places, and found that in the intervening five years things have gotten even worse, if that is possible. Di was able to show this in a series of comparative photos of specific sites that showed the appalling extent of the erosion and environmental degradation that is taking place unchecked.

Di was supported by a short presentation by Annette Smith, who described her statistical analysis of the demographics of the feral horse population, which is increasing exponentially. Annette also produced some maps, which showed that the geographic extent of the horse population has been expanding. Indeed, they are coming our way, and may already be in some parts of south-western Namadgi bordering KNP.

After the presentations there was a very spirited question and answer session, at the conclusion of which Esther invited members and guests to a light supper.

President:

Date: