

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT Inc

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 18 October, 2018

Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener St, O'Connor

1. Welcome and apologies

President Esther Gallant welcomed members, especially life members, and visitors to the meeting. She acknowledged and paid respects to the traditional custodians of the land and their elders past and present.

Apologies came from Hannah Conway, Cynthia Burton, Hazel Rath, Chris Emery, Sabine Friedrich, Judy & Dave Kelly, Bruce & Maria Boreham.

2. Confirmation of minutes of the 20 September 2018 meeting

The minutes of the general meeting of 20 September were displayed at the door and confirmed by the meeting.

3. **Matters arising from the minutes:** no matters arising.

4. **New member** Jan Morgan was welcomed to the association.

5. NPA activities

The issue of NSW legislation conferring heritage status on **feral horses** in Kosciuszko National Park, and the consequent threat to the nature conservation qualities of not only KNP, but also ACT's Namadgi National Park and the ACT water catchment has kept the committee and members very busy over the last month. Esther reported:

- Potential campaign staff were interviewed by Andrew Cox, CEO Invasive Species Council and chair of the steering committee of the 'Grand Coalition' of environmental organisations, Alix Goodwin, NPA NSW CEO, and Esther (NPA ACT). Richard and Alison Swain from Nimmitabel were chosen because of their experience and commitment to this cause. There has already been media coverage on ABC Rural and 10 TV.
- \$10,000 of member donations were matched by NPA ACT for a total of \$30,000 in support of the feral horse campaign.
- The Namadgi field trip to the Ramsar site Ginini Wetlands for key environmental representatives and politicians was very successful – despite the change of weather and heavy rain on the day. MLAs and staff from Labour, the Liberals and the Greens were transported by bus together with Commissioner for the Environment Kate Auty, NPA ACT President Esther, the President of CBC and the President of the Conservation Council ACT Region. Two representatives from Icon Water also participated. Daniel Iglesias, Brett McNamara and other staff from Parks and Conservation Services organised transport, escorted the outing and made several relevant presentations.
- NPA member and environmental scientist Geoff Hope gave a talk about sphagnum moss bogs. Other NPA members gave support and provided refreshments (home baked cakes and hot tea) as well as a fire for participants to warm up and dry off at morning tea and lunch.
- Esther thanked all members who had helped with the outing and gave special thanks to Di Thompson who had conceived and tirelessly organised this event.

The meeting showed their appreciation to all involved by acclamation.

Di then read out some of the letters of thanks she had received from the participants. She is now organising a similar trip to KNP to show the devastation wreaked by horses there.

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- Invitations to the KNP Science Forum organised by Graeme Worboys for Thursday 8 November have gone out. NPA ACT is contributing to the publication of the conference abstracts.
- Organisation of the protest walk from Sydney to the summit of Mount Kosiuszko is well underway. Esther drew attention to the local segments including a demonstration and lunch with NSW politicians in Queanbeyan on 21 November.
- Esther reminded members that this year's Christmas party is on Saturday 2 December (a week earlier than usual) at the Namadgi Visitor Centre.
- Kevin reported that the Rosenberg's Monitor project group was successful in receiving an ACT Environment grant as well as some more money from the NPA ACT Bubb funds. That means that the project can continue for the next year or two.

6. Other business There was no other business.

7. Presentation

Rod Griffiths, Immediate Past President of NPA ACT and President of the Conservation Council of the ACT Region, gave an animated talk and slideshow of his walk around the ACT border in a 21-day fund-raising effort a year ago. Rod and his changing band of co-walkers (in all 50 people joined him for part or parts of the walk) and sponsors raised more than \$20,000 for the Conservation Council.

The border that defines the ACT passes through some very accessible, but also some of the most challenging, country. Surveyors started determining the border along the watershed for the new territory in 1910, marking trees and creating so-called lock-spits where the direction of the border changes. These border markers are an important part of the ACT's heritage.

On the anniversary of his fund-raising 306 km walk around the ACT Rod entertained his audience with tales of feral horses and deer, endangered species as well as some great views. It was a hard walk, but Rod is determined to do it again, this time in an anti-clockwise direction.

Rod responded to several questions from the floor and Esther thanked him for his presentation. Esther then invited the meeting to partake of supper and continue the conversations.

The meeting closed around 9.30pm.

Chair:

Date: