

# NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 17 October 2019

Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener St, O'Connor

### 1. Welcome and apologies

President Esther Gallant welcomed members, especially Life Members and NPAC delegates, and other guests to the meeting. Esther paid respects to the traditional custodians of the land and their elders past and present. New members Lisa Jokinen (student complimentary membership) and Brian Butler-Kemp were also welcomed to the association.

Approximately 35 members and guests were present, with apologies received from Cynthia Burton, Bernard Morvell, Rod Griffiths, Allan Sharp, Jacqui Cole, Maria Boreham, Chris Emery and Sabine Friedrich.

### 2. Confirmation of the minutes of the 19 September 2019 meeting

The minutes are available online through the web link provided in the latest *Burning Issues* and a printed copy could be perused before the meeting. They were approved as written.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### 3. NPA activities

Esther reported on the following activities:

- Members Allan Sharp and Bernard Morvell have joined the Management Committee, Allan as Convener of the Promotion and Outreach Subcommittee, and Bernard has re-joined the committee and will take on the Treasurer's position after thorough induction into the role.

- 60th anniversary plans: Catering arrangements for the celebratory event planned for Monday 2 March 2020 from 17:30 to 19:30 at Wesley Uniting Church in Forrest are underway. Professor David Lindenmayer from the ANU Fenner School, an engaging speaker and expert on landscape ecology, conservation and biodiversity, has agreed to be the introductory speaker. A special anniversary *Bulletin* issue is being planned for March 2020. The photo competition plans are being refined - suggestions for sponsors, judges and exhibition venues are still being sought. There will be other events throughout the year.

- Modernising our communications with the goal of raising NPA's profile among a wider range of audiences: NPA's website is being updated by Allan Sharp, Chris Emery and Sabine Friedrich; NPA's Facebook page is now being updated by Cynthia Burton and a post on the goanna project just two days ago had the largest engagement ever; Cynthia has also set up an NPA presence on Twitter and Mike Bremers facilitated the setup of an Instagram account; members are encouraged to send photos of events like bushwalks and work parties to Cynthia.

- Print and electronic versions of the *Bulletin* as well as materials and equipment used at our publicity stalls will also undergo changes; the most recent stall was at the Tidbinbilla Open Day, the next one will be held at the Tuggeranong South Fest on 16 November from 10-15:00 - volunteers are needed; the *Enjoy the Bush* pamphlet will be updated and more nature walks are being considered.

- Feral horses: The date for the VIP day trip for politicians to Tantangara had to be rescheduled again; the ACT updated plan of management for feral horses is

## **NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.**

progressing; members are encouraged to join the Long Plain car camp from 29 Oct - 2 Nov in Kosciuszko National Park.

- In a recent press release and a local radio interview NSW Minister Barilaro mentioned Snowy 2.0 construction traffic and an upgrade of the NSW Boboyan Road, but Minister Mick Gentleman's office has informed NPA that there are no plans to upgrade the ACT part of that road.

### **4.0 Other business**

- Don Fletcher gave an update on the Rosenberg's Monitor project and thanked NPA members who have already helped with the project.

- Esther reminded members that Rod Griffiths and co-walkers are continuing the Border ACT walk - and encouraged them to support the aim of the walk with donations to the Conservation Council.

### **5. Presentation**

This year's AGM of the National Parks Australia Council is being hosted by NPA ACT at the Namadgi Visitor Centre from tomorrow and over the weekend. Four of the State delegates were at tonight's meeting, two of them gave an overview of current challenges to their State's national parks.

Matt Ruchel from VNPA mentioned that they have been running big, very popular and successful citizen-science programs called Marinewatch and Naturewatch for many years. Victoria is the most cleared Australian state, but there is still logging going on in the east which is a big challenge. Seventeen per cent of the state is protected, mainly in small areas. Apart from ever-increasing demands for more tourism infrastructure in the parks, there are shortfalls in funding for weed and feral animal control. Matt mentioned the feral horse problem, especially in the Alps and in Barmah National Park. He alerted us to the fact that they also have approximately 1 million deer (Sambar, Hog, Fallow and Red) in Victoria and that the deer are moving rapidly northward and threatening to cover the Australian continent if concerted efforts are not put in place to stop that movement.

Graeme Wiffen from NPA NSW explained that their association is set up as a federation of branches and they are in the process of changing that setup. In addition to the threats already mentioned by Matt there are some state-specific problems: 'heritage' horse legislation, talk of de-gazetting the Murray River National Park established only 10 years ago and how Snowy 2.0 will affect Kosciuszko National Park. There is hope that the new Minister for the Environment might be more amenable to creating new national parks.

The presentations were followed by questions and comments from the audience at their 9:10 pm conclusion. Matt and Graeme were thanked by acclamation and Esther invited everyone to join members for a light supper.

President:

Date: