

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 16 September 2021

Zoom meeting at 19:30

1. Welcome and apologies

President Esther Gallant welcomed about 40 attendees to the meeting, with a special welcome to participating life members and guests. She paid respects to the traditional custodians of the land and their elders past and present.

2. Announcements

Esther reminded everyone that in the present lockdown Namadgi National Park, Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (and their visitor centres), the Lower Cotter Catchment, the Cotter precinct (including Cotter Campground and Blue Range), Kambah Pool, Urriarra Crossing, Googong Foreshores, as well as the Woods Reserve and Northern Borders campgrounds are closed to the public.

NPA activities like work parties and bushwalks are on hold until at least mid-October.

Esther announced that NPA ACT will host a webinar on the major threats to Kosciuszko National Park. Cynthia Burton elaborated that the event on 29 September at 19:30 is still being fine-tuned. She will send out an email invitation with the finalised details and put a post on social media.

Esther also announced that member John Brickhill has been accepted as a community representative on the Bushfire Council.

3. Presentation

Esther welcomed David Maxwell, one of three Riverview Developments representatives on the joint venture board of the Ginninderry development, who gave an illustrated presentation titled:

Ginninderry Conservation Corridor - a new way of working together

This urban development's vision is: Ginninderry is a vibrant and sustainable community. Currently it houses 600 people, but will be home to 30,000 by 2055. The development area straddles the ACT—NSW border and has always been a controversial project. For many years there was a community campaign to create a national park around the Murrumbidgee River and Ginninderra Creek with its stunning Ginninderra Falls, but population pressures and the fact that part of the area is in NSW prevented this from being accepted by government/s. The Ginninderry Conservation Corridor is a compromise, unfortunately.

This urban development is a public (ACT Government) and private (Riverview Developments) partnership that aims to conserve and enhance existing riverine landscapes and threatened species and ecosystems. The urban area as well as the adjoining stretches of the conservation corridor will be developed in stages. The total Ginninderry area is 1600 ha, 596 ha of which will be the conservation corridor. Numerous environmental studies have been done in this area that informed the development of the conservation corridor. Present and future human inhabitants are being educated on its environmental and cultural significance and are being encouraged to help maintain and look after its values.

The Ginninderry Aboriginal Advisory Group, comprising the recognised Aboriginal Knowledge Holders for the area, supported the naming of the conservation corridor as the 'Ginninderry Conservation Corridor'. Ginninderry is derived from an Aboriginal word meaning *throwing out little rays of light or sparkling*. It is considered a very appropriate name for a community and landscape that will be bounded by the Murrumbidgee River and Ginninderra Creek. Ginninderry was first used for one of the early homesteads in the area including the creek that bordered its land. After extensive consultation, it was decided that Ginninderry with its reference to the stunning river corridor, was a name with both historical provenance and contemporary relevance.

The Ginninderry project sets out to comply with all bushfire management requirements and standards (ACT Emergency Services and NSW Rural Fire Service), and CSIRO bushfire research will be continued during the life of the project to ensure best practice bushfire management.

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The Ginninderry Joint Venture set up the Ginninderry Conservation Trust with management responsibility for the conservation corridor and coordination in both ACT (ACT Parks and Conservation) and NSW (Environmental Trust) lands. The Ginninderry Joint Venture assists the conservation trust to undertake infrastructure works to establish tracks, trails, a visitor centre and other facilities and provides funding to ensure the trust can keep operating into perpetuity. The trust has 4 staff and a board made up of 11 representatives (3 for ACT Government; 1 for NSW Government; 1 for Joint Venture; and skills-based community representatives including 2 from the Ginninderry Aboriginal Advisory Groups). NPA's Life Member Rod Griffiths is one of these community representatives. The 11 representatives appoint an Independent Chair with a casting vote.

The Ginninderry Conservation Trust looks after the following: ecological restoration and biodiversity conservation; conservation and celebration of heritage and culture; protection and enhancement of scenic landscapes; achievement of community stewardship and partnerships; and provision of enriching visitor experiences.

There is community collaboration with groups like Bush on the Boundary, People and Place Group; Ginninderry Transport and Travel Advisory Group; and the Ginninderry Aboriginal Advisory Group.

There is also a Ginninderry Research Steering Committee to inform planning and decision making; and to ensure there is adequate budget and a considered approach to ongoing research.

After questions from the audience were answered, Esther thanked David and closed the meeting at about 20:15.

Next general meeting: Thursday, 21 October 2021 at 19:30 on Zoom

Chair: Date: