

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, 21 April 2022, 19:30 pm
Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener Street, O'Connor

1. Welcome

President Esther Gallant welcomed members and guests to the meeting. In total there were 28 participants who had not been deterred by the inhospitable weather.

Esther acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live, learn and work, and paid respects to the First Nations Peoples and their Elders, past, present and emerging.

2. Guest speakers

The President introduced the guest speakers for the meeting: ACT Opposition Leader Elizabeth Lee and Shadow Environment Minister Nicole Lawder, both from the Canberra Liberals.

Ms Lee was asked to share her experiences from the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Scotland, known as COP26, in October 2021. The UNFCCC is the peak decision-making body for the world's climate change commitments. She was the only official participant from the ACT, invited by the Coalition for Conservation and she addressed the Global Assembly in Glasgow as a local government representative and participated in a related COP26 international youth forum event in Edinburgh. Ms Lee highlighted the importance of renewable energy in meeting COP26 targets for reducing carbon emissions, and a strong message from the conference was that climate change issues should transcend politics. The ACT Opposition Leader also observed that the youth she met at the forum were positive about finding solutions for the future, including a dynamic participant from the ACT who was also an ACT Young Businesswoman of the Year.

Ms Lee also enthusiastically related her personal experience in the ACT as the owner of an electric vehicle, expressing the view that there needs to be further infrastructure development to support the growing number of EV users.

Nicole Lawder, recently appointed to her portfolio, outlined her interest in the ACT's local environment and Namadgi National Park as a place where she has spent considerable time.

An informal discussion followed, with topics ranging from water quality, protection of endangered species, the campaign against potential development of the environmentally significant Bluett's Block, the need for improved environmental checks and balances in the ACT's planning laws and processes, kangaroo fertility control issues to the land tenure system in areas adjacent to Namadgi National Park. Member Don Fletcher agreed to send Nicole Lawder some background information on the latter issue.

Esther thanked Elizabeth and Nicole for their presentations and declared the meeting closed at 20:45. She invited participants to stay on for a 'cuppa' where lively discussions continued for quite some time.

Elizabeth Lee agreed to prepare an article for a future edition of the *NPA Bulletin*, an offer that she confirmed the following day with President Esther Gallant, following a tour of road conditions in Namadgi National Park.

Chair: Date: