

# NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

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

### 1. Welcome

President Esther Gallant welcomed members and especially Life Members and guests to the meeting. In total there were 46 participants who had not been deterred by the cold 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. Activities

- The Namadgi road trip: NPA and the ACT Parks Service took MLAs Lee, Lawder and Clay as well as admin staff from the Environment portfolio (18 persons altogether) on a guided tour to show them the considerable damage to Namadgi roads through rain, storm and fire events over the last couple of years to highlight how much work and resources are needed to make the roads usable again. Esther showed the meeting a folder of photos of the tour and the road damage she will be showing to ACT politicians and administrators.
- Dunns Flat 3-day bush walk: organised by Di Thompson in honour of Professor Geoff Hope's life and work. 16 participants from NPA ACT, NPA NSW and Geoff's colleagues took part.

### 3. Announcements

- The World Environment Day dinner organised by the Conservation Council is on Saturday 4 June with tickets still available.
- NPA needs volunteers for meeting set-up and provision of supper, as well as other tasks.

### 4. Presentation

The President introduced the guest speaker for the meeting, Brett McNamara, Manager of Namadgi National Park. The topic of his presentation was:

*Namadgi National Park: fire, climate change, and the human hand*

Brett acknowledged the major role that members of the early National Parks Association of the ACT had in getting the national park declared in 1984. Brett grew up in Canberra and his first job as newly graduated park ranger was in Kakadu National Park. Since coming back to Canberra he has had thirty years of association with the mountains of the bush capital and he offered his unique perspective on Namadgi National Park past, present and future. In his career he witnessed two major fires that greatly impacted the national park.

Brett shared his experiences and insights on the influences that humans have brought upon this ancient landscape. He explained that Canberra is sited where it is because of the reliable water of the Cotter - the three dams supply about 80% of Canberra's water. We learnt about the 'life of a rain drop' and sphagnum moss's role for Canberra and the damage wreaked by the fires on the swamps where our water starts. He talked about the changes to the composition of the tree cover - after mega-fires the bush regenerates, but the regrowth is even-aged and not as resilient to fires, pests and climate change anymore, adversaries that humans have either introduced or caused. Namadgi has lost most of its mature-aged trees. He also mentioned NPA's 'road tour' for politicians with the comment that the roads and tracks in Namadgi after the sequence of fires and rain storms need far more resources to make them usable again.

After answering questions (e.g. there are 18 park rangers) from the floor Brett was thanked by Esther for his presentation and the meeting thanked him by acclamation.

The meeting adjourned to tea and coffee with freshly baked cake at 20:30.

Chair: ..... Date: .....