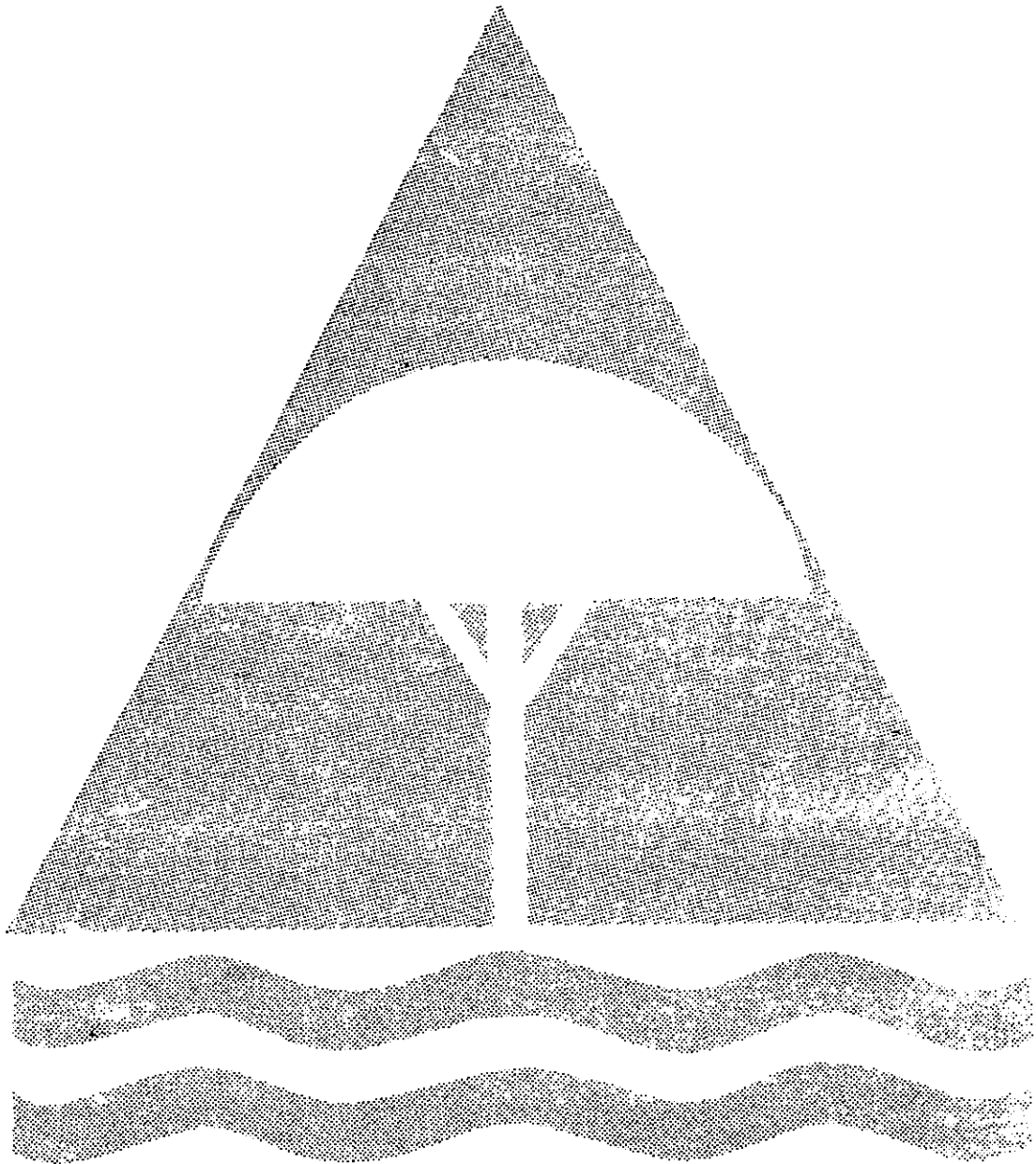


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PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

National Park management is under the critical eye of the park services, other government departments, the recreating public, concerned conservationists and the anti-park lobby. What is seen to be done in the next 1 - 2 years will greatly influence the level of future public support park services can attract. The significance of the support cannot be underestimated as without it governments are less willing to provide increased financial and manpower support to the services. The need for public enthusiasm and support of national parks is perhaps greater now than at any other time, since the numbers of parks and total areas now dedicated is significantly more than it was five years ago.

The management of national parks must be seen to have two principal objectives - conservation and recreation. These can be in conflict but needn't always be so if clear priorities are laid down and adhered to. Conservation and recreation are like chalk and cheese. Conservation in national parks is a non-resource use and is forever, i.e. for today's and future generations. Recreation is a resource use for today's people. There is a conflict exemplified by those catch-cries 'parks are for people' and 'if you want to keep it make it a national park'.

We must as an association be involved in these issues especially as the Kosciusko National Park management plan is under review and Gudgenby Nature Reserve continues to operate without any publicly available document for comment to ensure that the compromise between the two catch-cries is balanced.

A CENTURY OF WEAR

From the ridge the range dropped steeply to the Hacking River... Across the valley the scrub covered plateau extended in an almost unbroken sweep to the ocean. The River, like a compass point, led north to the distant towers of Sydney, looking like an imaginary lost city. Through the flowering heath, the track led to the walk's main attraction, the Uloola Falls. There was no need for a sign to mark the spot. The denuded ground, dotted with cans, drink cartons and sweet wrappers testified to the visiting hordes. Rubbish spilt out of an old torn hessian bag. Some of the bloodwoods had been stripped of their lower branches for the many camp fires. The charcoal remains were sprinkled with orange peel, egg shells and silver paper. After a brief glance at the falls we hurried away. The scene had appalled us.

This was how we found the Royal National Park. The memory of its considerable beauty, so close to the city, marred irreparably by popular misuse. I have no wish to return, it was a great disappointment. After three and a half days covering every major walking track, my friends and I could only come to one conclusion - 100 years have not been kind to The Royal. Problems of over-use and rubbish have reached a critical stage and must be faced squarely, by the Parks and Wildlife Service but in particularly by the thousands of visitors. 'Parks are for the people' is a glib throwaway phrase, meaningless when the people abuse their possession.

It is only slightly comforting to know that our generation is not the first to damage the park. As 'Australia's 100 Years of National Parks' describes, it has gone on ever since the park was declared. The book's chapter on the history of The Royal is the most interesting. Written by Carolyn Pettigrew and Mark Lyons, it shows the park has been always a target for many diverse threats. For private developers, the area's value lay in land for subdivision; for illegal timber millers, the untapped forest resources; for many visitors, the many wildflowers to be picked in bunches and for the armed forces, a large training ground.

The Royal's development reflected the development of attitudes towards conservation in Australia. In 1887 it seemed quite appropriate to suggest the park be used for military exercises, rifle ranges, ornamental lawns and gardens, a racecourse and zoological gardens. Ninety three years later we recoil at the thought. People saw the park in utilitarian terms: it had to be useful for something, it was of little value left as it was... So they built an aviary and holding tanks to acclimatise birds and fish. Along Lady Carrington Drive and Dundamaian on Port Hacking, a park-like appearance was achieved by clearing undergrowth and retaining ornamental native flora like waratahs and gymea lillies. Deer were introduced, the descendants still roam the park.

Like many misguided farmers today, they thought they were 'improving nature.' The Royal's modern users who leave a paper chase of Minties and Fantaes wrappers along the tracks don't think that way, they don't think at all. They would probably suggest that the rubbish would eventually disappear. There is apparently no limit to the strength of biodegradability.

The Royal is not alone as a depository of rubbish. A three-week tour of national parks near Sydney showed the extent of the litter problem. In 'A Guide to Sydney Bushland' Alan Fairley rates the walk in the Blue Mountains from Govett's Leap to Rodriguez Pass as his favorite day-walk near Sydney. Its beauty has not saved it from the rubbish plague. We found the track down Govett's Leap Brook to Junction Rock marked by a series of litter-strewn temporary campsites. Signs now prohibit their use for camping but that will not remove the rubbish. It is particularly sad that such an area should be despoiled, considering its importance in the history of national parks and bushwalking. This is the subject of the other most significant chapter of 'Australia's 100 Years of National Parks,' written by the legendary Myles Dunphy. One is struck after reading it by the extent of the achievement of the early national parks pioneers in the face of attitudes ranging from apathy to hostility. Most of the proposals of the National Parks and Primitive Areas Council, established in 1932, have now been achieved.

Other chapters in the book provide good background material on National Parks in each state and an analysis of the modern functions of the parks. Wendy Goldstein of the information, education and extension section of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, has written a chapter on Education in the Parks, with this superbly descriptive paragraph: 'Over one hundred students spill from two buses, armed with clipboards, sheets of paper and lunch. It is the annual year two field excursion in biology. The group soon snakes out across the plateau, the odd sheet, encouraged to go with the wind, flutters away; the happy student relieved of some work. Many students are perplexed by the demands for measurement, recording and drawing conclusions, so discussion soon turns to next weekend, the beach and the disco. A frazzled teacher urges completion of the worksheets and stirs a couple from activities deemed "extra curricular"! There was much to achieve, a comparison of plant communities on the plateau and in the valley, plus a "fresh water creek study" to be done after lunch. The last study was thrown in to maximise on the cost of the trip. The students weren't sure why they were at the creek - a few ended up in it....' Teachers and non-teachers alike can picture the scene!

The book then looks at all facets of our national parks with good coverage of their all-too-often ignored struggling beginnings. It will remain for a long time an important book that is both well-written and attractively designed. It encourages us to reflect on what has been achieved and the threats confronting the parks now and in decades to come. The Uloola Falls possibly symbolise the predicament: people have preserved something, parts of it they are now destroying. Isn't it time we faced the consequences of our unthinking actions a little more honestly?

In one chapter Harold Senior looks back on the years he has spent as a ranger at the Royal since he first began working for the National Park Trust in 1942. After describing his own experiences of the park's misuse, he concludes with one of the most beautifully moving pieces of writing I have come across:

'Boys no longer spend hours looking for a Y-shaped fork of a Christmas bush tree to cut, skin and make into an efficient catapult handle. They no longer climb trees to steal birds' eggs. Even the forces of passion seem

to be spent and lovers' tracks, now closed to the public, are used by countless boys on trail bikes. The changing pattern of the park, from a country park to a city park, could well be traced by studying the behaviour of boys over the last thirty years. The barefooted, sometimes ragged boy who frequented the swimming holes in the park has been well and truly replaced by a boy not nearly so close to nature.

'I dabble in the German, Swiss German and Yiddish languages, old English and old Scottish, but none have benefited me so much as my schooling in the universal languages of Happiness, Grief and Sadness.

'Many a time I have seen laughter change to tears. I have attended the scenes of two triple drownings and on two early mornings the scenes of two triple fatal on the roadway. In my earlier days I was usually the first on the scene of tragedy and I have seen numerous lives squandered; squandered on the roadways, in the creeks, in the surf, on the ocean's rocks and in gas-filled vehicles. Many people, I couldn't make an estimate, have chosen to leave this material world in the quiet corners of the park. Some have had their ashes returned to the soil. I have never felt alone on my countless night patrols.

'Today I look into the faces of people of different creeds and colours. Some seem to fit the scene, usually the younger ones. I often observe older people when the sun has warmed them and I wonder what their thoughts are and I wonder if their spirits will remain here.

'On many a clear still morning I sometimes used to pause on a high point in the park and look upon Sydney. It presented a pleasing sight, separated from me by a circle of green and dominated by the graceful arch of the Harbour Bridge, and the wind sang a pleasing song.

'Now the green has gone, the Harbour Bridge has been humbled ... and the wind sings a different song.'

Stephen Johnson

THE YOSEMITE WORK BOOK - AN AMERICAN NATIONAL PARK PLANNING TOOL

The remarkable lengths to which the National Parks Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior will go in seeking to ascertain public opinion is well illustrated in material recently forwarded to one of our members by a mutual friend in the USA. The material concerns the magnificent Yosemite National Park which covers some 300,000 hectares of spectacular mountain and forest in western California. The history of the park goes back to 1864 when the U.S. Congress made over the area to the State of California for 'public use, resort and recreation'. It was to be inalienable for all time. Eventually in 1919 California ceded jurisdiction over the park to the Federal Government subject to some minor legal and fiscal provisos. The NPS of the Department of the Interior has remained in charge ever since.

The planning and management of the park has not remained static. There has been a need for revision because of the tremendous growth of interest in the park and the increased use of the park by the public. More than two and a half million people visit Yosemite every year. A comprehensive new draft plan of management was commenced in 1968 and issued for public consideration in 1971. It did not, however, meet with public acceptance and was withdrawn. A revised plan was found unacceptable and was withdrawn in 1974. This was largely due to criticism by conservation groups concerning proposals to benefit the

concessionaires of accommodation and other facilities in the park. The Department of the Interior then directed the NPS to develop a new general management plan for Yosemite with public participation throughout the process. Forth-eight public workshops were held, 34 in California and 14 in seven major cities throughout the country. The plans for public discussion were based on the proceedings and views expressed at those workshops.

The material sent is the resultant Master Plan (now referred to as a General Management Plan) issued as a 33 page explanatory booklet in October 1975 together with four large worksheets setting out in great detail a wide range of alternative options. These range across the whole spectrum between returning the park to its natural state and vastly increased developments for recreational use.

The Master Plan was sent to 59,000 interested individuals. They were asked to study the alternatives and to commit their views to an answer sheet to be returned to the NPS. 20,700 individuals and groups replied.

The Master Plan set out the objectives for determination as follows:

- * To assist people in understanding, enjoying, and contributing to the preservation of the park's natural, cultural and scenic resources.
- * To maintain a safe, functional and orderly environment that provides compatible opportunities for resource preservation and enjoyment by visitors and employees.
- * To support an integrated system of compatible regional land uses providing opportunities for recreation, community development, preservation and economic utilisation of resources.

The four beautifully prepared worksheets cover 10 areas of the park. There is a map of each area plus an outline of present conditions in that area and four sets of options. Each set of options is subdivided into numerous detailed options. The person replying to the worksheet could select one detailed option from each category and combine these into his own preferred set of options. Every person replying could, therefore, set out his own individual ideas of what the park should be. In addition to the option procedure, written submissions and comments were also considered.

To give an example one of the group of alternatives under Transportation reads as follows:

- * Entry to and circulation within Yosemite will be entirely on foot.
- * Entry to and circulation within Yosemite will be by transportation system, foot, bike or horse.
- * Entry to and circulation within Yosemite will be by private vehicle, transportation system, foot, bike or horse.

The immediately following options are:

- * All private vehicles and mechanised access into Yosemite will be eliminated.
- * No private vehicles will be allowed to circulate within the park except to Hetch Hetchy.

- * Private vehicle use in the park will be discouraged by expansion of the shuttle bus system.
- * Overnight visitors will be allowed to drive private vehicles to overnight accommodations or campgrounds only. They must then circulate within the park by shuttle bus.

A vast amount of detail was contained in the replies to the worksheets. Many of the alternatives also called for detailed local knowledge not possessed by everyone to whom the Master Plan was sent. Nevertheless the fact that more than one third of those sent the plan did reply showed how much public interest had been aroused. The results could only be analysed by computer and to keep this task manageable analysis had to be limited to 5,000 of the returns received. Statistically this was apparently enough to produce results which were 99% accurate.

In a preliminary analysis dated June 1976 a limited selection of sample results were set out to show how they were being dealt with. These showed percentage comparisons between the views expressed by people living in and outside California; and between those who asked for workbooks on their own initiative or who had attended workshops and those who asked for forms as a result of a drive to get returns sent in initiated by the park concessionaires. They also gave a figure to show the average of those replying who selected a particular option. The returns from California were coded to enable the service to ascertain what regional differences existed within the State. And the returns stimulated by the concessionaires were also coded so that these views too could be differentiated for comparative study.

Obviously this is a very elaborate, expensive and lengthy process of public consultation. The cynic might, perhaps, be forgiven for wondering whether those in high places who ordered the detail did not reflect that the results would trouble not themselves but their successors! At the time of writing this short review - October 1979 - the NPS has not yet completed its studies of the information obtained and drawn conclusions to be put forward as firm proposals. Even when this has been done there is certain to be more public discussion before the U.S. Federal Government proceeds to enshrine the proposals in new legislation.

Nevertheless the example of Yosemite must be of very special interest to us here in Australia. One wonders whether the New South Wales Government will consider similar procedures for deciding on our own Australian Yosemite - Kosciusko National Park - the future of which is now in the melting pot.

It would, however, probably be unwise to assume automatically that a similar planning tool would be suitable or desirable for Australia. In the case of the Kosciusko National Park there would be a danger of the enquiry being swamped by a lavishly funded campaign of the commercial interests through mass solicitation of the views of those whose only use for the Snowies is for downhill skiing. Such a campaign by commercial interests might produce numerical results to show that the public demand is for the destruction and not for the preservation of the environment. The Yosemite exercise was not a ballot. It was primarily intended to canvas patterns of alternatives. Nevertheless such a system is bound to invite numerical comparisons as indicating what the public wants. And the NSW Government is far more pressure prone in regard to the Kosciusko National Park than is the U.S. Federal Government in regard to Yosemite.

Since the above was written we have received a copy of the Summary of the Draft General Management Plan issued in August 1978 for further public study.

The U.S. authorities have been successful in compressing a mass of material into a concise and, once again, beautifully produced document.

The Draft Plan steers a cautious line between the views of those who want more commercialisation and those who want a substantial return to the wilderness concept. Nevertheless the Draft does call for a moderate reduction in the amount of overnight accommodation and commercial facilities and lays considerable emphasis on developments at centres outside the park boundaries.

In regard to transport the draft has the following to say:

'Increasing automobile traffic is the greatest threat to the natural and scenic qualities of Yosemite, pervading some of its most beautiful and fragile areas. For this reason, people's use of their cars will be strictly controlled in the most popular and environmentally sensitive areas of the park, and we propose to eventually exclude automobiles from Yosemite Valley when it is economically feasible and when alternative methods of public transportation are acceptable. Until that time the plan calls for further restrictions in Yosemite Valley, with accompanying increases in bus and shuttle bus services.'

Further comments have been sought on the Draft Plan. Those interested have also been able to comment on the complete and detailed Draft Management Plan. This is in three parts:

Visitor Use, Park Operations and Development Plan
Cultural Resources Management Plan
Natural Resources Management Plan.

There is, in addition, a Draft Environmental Statement.

When the comments received from the public on the Draft Plan have been studied, the National Parks Service Regional Director can approve a Plan. This would, apparently, still be subject to confirmation and finalisation by the Federal Government.

One can feel nothing but admiration for the quality of the work done as demonstrated by the documents sent us and for the underlying dedication by high authority to concepts that are dear to all of us. A quotation from the Draft Plan aptly summarises this:

'As advancing urbanization presses our tolerance of asphalt and concrete and noise and pollution, we are becoming aware that what is truly valuable about places like Yosemite is their scenery, their quietness, and the opportunity they provide to escape from city life. Accompanying this awareness is a recognition that we have been destroying these qualities by trying to transport our city lifestyles into the parks. Fifty years ago we were busy building roads and parking areas to "open up" Yosemite Valley and make it accessible to the new generation of mobile Americans; today we look with irony on the acres of pavement, the traffic congestion, and the noise we have created.

'This is a plan for the beginning of a new era at Yosemite. The goal is not to change the kinds of activities people have been enjoying there, but rather to improve the quality of their experiences by

rectifying the overzealous attempt to civilize the park. The major concepts of the plan are to reduce automobile traffic and eventually eliminate it from Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove, alleviate overcrowding, remove nonessential facilities from developed areas, restore the natural scene wherever possible, and enhance enjoyment of the park's outstanding natural and cultural features through strengthened information and interpretive programmes.'

These documents should be compulsory reading for everyone involved in planning the National Parks of Australia. The situation in Yosemite is not, of course, directly comparable to that in every Australian National Park but the standards set by the documents in explaining problems and alternatives and in consulting members of the public are what we in Australia should be trying to emulate.

Alastair Morrison

(Additional information coming to hand makes it difficult to conclude this article since at the end of November 1979 a recommendation for yet another study has been made. So far three full scale studies over the past ten years have cost well over \$1.5 million and have come no nearer to a real solution than when they began.

The main problem is to find an economical way to reduce the vast numbers of vehicles that throng to the park on most summer days. A 700 car parking lot and bus shuttle service idea has had to be abandoned because it would cost too much (about \$100 million) and the effect it would have on the landscape. A two year study is now proposed to find a better and possibly cheaper people moving system, preferably electric powered to reduce smog.

In the meantime there is to be an extensive relocation of the Park Service and concessionaire employees together with other services and non-essential facilities. This would move about 2,000 people and unnecessary buildings away from the valley floor. But any plan that ignores traffic ignores the heart of the park's problem for the ultimate idea is to get cars out of Yosemite. There is a fear that employee buses could make congestion and pollution even worse than it is now.

Obviously carrying out studies is not the end to a difficult problem unless they are given a high priority and some workable solution is derived from them. And just a final thought - perhaps the solution is already at hand in the discarded answers to the questionnaire provided by the public when only a small sample was considered by the study group. - Editor)

P.P.S. Some final decisions have now been made on the Yosemite General Management Plan and with its approval ends the most comprehensive public-involvement process of the National Park Service of the United States. Even so a final 30 day public review and comment period is being allowed for consideration of the revised documents and this will complete public involvement after which the action phases of implementation will begin.

The highlights of the final plan are:

1. To protect 90% of the Park as wilderness (Yosemite has half the total area of Kosciusko).
2. Remove all Park and concessioner administrative functions from the Park.

3. Reduce and eventually eliminate automobile use in the Yosemite Valley by reducing day use parking, providing peripheral staging areas and developing an integrated public transport system.
4. Removal of most administrative facilities and employee housing to the edge of the Park.
5. Maintain visitor level by an expanded reservation system, controlled parking and public education services.

FORUM ON NATIONAL PARKS

Contrasting views on National Parks were aired at Goulburn on 14 March. Welcoming the NSW Minister of Environment, Mr Eric Bedford, and over 150 other people to a Forum on National Parks, the Mayor, Alderman Elliott, introduced a note of historical stability by comparing the age of his City with the age of the National Park movement in Australia - both being 100 years old. The local MLA, Mr R.A. Brewer, who had initiated the forum, then pointed out that the last fifteen years of the National Park Centenary period had seen increasing conflict between landholders and park administrators.

The Minister, Mr Bedford, took up these comments by encouraging rational, informed debate on the contentious issues and calling for community participation to avoid seemingly heavy-handed Government solutions. He feels that any resulting delay in getting proposals implemented may be in the best interests of administration later. The required principles for such debate are that it be factual, detailed and relevant and that it be conducted in a responsible manner, not being a play on unfounded fears. Mr Bedford said that State Government must be seen to be meeting international obligations for conservation or lose its initiatives to the Federal Government.

In defining the setting for debate the Minister advised the meeting that in the last eight years the area of freehold land (including perpetual leases) in New South Wales had remained almost unchanged. In ten years land acquired for National Parks had been in proportions of over 90% unoccupied Crown Lands to under 5% leased Crown Lands and under 2% Freehold Lands. Of all freehold acquisitions those for National Parks have been less than half those for Forestry and less than one tenth those for Water-Conservation purposes. Present policy is that applications to convert Crown Leases to freehold will not be approved if Timber, Water or Conservation use of the land is warranted - in this respect Government is rarely acting in the way any prudent landholder would act. Among the benefits of reserving land for National Parks are contributions to the survival of native animals and provision of an outdoor laboratory for Scientific Research - currently (1978) comprising 128 projects.

The visitors to areas administered by the NPWS do cause problems for management but provide benefits to nearby communities. For example, the 85,000 visitor days per year at Warrumbungle (significantly not a 'day tripper' area) mean extra jobs in Coonabarabran.

The Minister stressed that the State Government must accept responsibility for decisions on boundaries and must resolve conflicts of interest. He appealed for advice from local people by service on Park Advisory Committees and by expert local input when comment is called for on Management Plans. The Service hoped to get more public participation in workshop meetings and is now drafting discussion papers on Conservation Policy. The latter is a contribution to conservation strategy planned as recommended by IUCN (supported by UNESCO and UNFAO) to help governments, at all levels, come to terms with resource limitations and the concept of the carrying capacity of ecosystems.

The Chairman, Mr W.G. Peter Davies (President of Mulwaree Shire) formally welcomed the Minister and the Director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Mr on Johnstone. Mr Davies stressed that National Parks must not be isolated from broad communal needs. Two staff officers of the NPWS then presented opening papers and copies of these are held in our library.

Mr Peter Hitchcock dealt with the acquisition of land for National Parks, stressing the aim of rational use of a finite resource. He considers it important to investigate all suitable land, regardless of tenure, but stressed that practicalities determine that most park proposals in S.E. Australia relate to Crown Lands. Investigation cannot be a haphazard affair and proper criteria are defined and followed.

There is a need to protect natural resources from total subordination to the activities of 'technological man'.

Mr Bruce Leaver, Director of S.E. Region, defined management aims as meeting the pressure of public recreation and wildlife conservation. Visitor usage is high. The Kosciusko Park has two million visitors yearly. The established parks have certainly benefited local economies. However, Mr Leaver frankly admitted that some problems are far from solution. Wild dogs are one serious problem and he promised to try and meet admitted responsibility by an increased programme of poisoning on Park boundaries. In acknowledging the duties of the Service in respect to noxious weed control he gave examples of native plant regeneration at Blowering, an area of severe weed and rabbit infestation. The other statutory responsibility is fire control. Here Mr Leaver, a forester, considers that we must accept the natural occurrence of fire in rugged wilderness areas. He contrasted such an attitude to the requirement to protect neighbouring suburban property in the modified arid vegetation of the Sydney sandstone country - the latter is a special problem needing special solutions.

The discussion then moved towards other uses of land and Mr Don Nicholson, of the Department of Mineral Resources and Development, instanced mining. He said that the case of actual mining is clear-cut. Obviously mining is not compatible with strict preservation. A social and economic assessment must be made and Parliament, in the case of a National Park, has this responsibility. He sees exploration in a different light - it is the need to know the facts - and feels that the geologist determining the facts under a National Park should be on a similar footing to the biologist determining the above ground facts. However, as no permit to enter a National Park for exploration can be anticipated the Departmental policy is that exploration is, like mining, prohibited.

In lumping mining, prospecting and exploration as 'not permitted' the community has to accept the repercussions. It is at present not possible to determine available resources and capacity to meet demands and needs. The importance of these demands and needs can vary considerably with time and with the depletion of high grade mineral reserves. Mr Nicholson feels that his Department (indeed his profession?) is thus precluded from defining and taking up resource options. Resources are thus lost for all time and the geologist is prevented from making his proper contribution to knowledge of the total environment.

Mr Keith Jordan then brought the meeting to consideration of matters above ground - particularly designated forests.

As Manager of the Associated Country Sawmillers of NSW he regards National Parks as essential parts of forested areas. Sixteen million hectares of NSW are forested and this total is made up roughly 6:5 proportions of State Forest and National Park.

With nearly half the trees in National Parks Mr Jordan feels we must look closely at the relative benefits given by State Forest and the Parks. National Parks allow only two uses, preservation and recreation, as against the multiple uses of the State Forest for 'conservation', by providing a continuous supply of timber, and some preservation and recreation areas as well. Therefore he considers that any increase in National Park reservations should only be on the basis that the specific area of forest concerned is the only area available to meet the specific limited use demand for conservation and recreation. Such a strict value criterion is supported by the relative costs of the two types of land use. Mr Jordan gave figures for costs of National Parks (in NSW) of \$8.66/ha. with revenues of \$4.27/ha. He said that our national Parks therefore cost about \$7.50/ha. per year against about \$5/ha. per year for State Forests.

Mr Neil Clydsdale, a Councillor of Tumbarumba Shire, then analysed the effect of the Kosciusko National Park on his Shire. He feels that the loss of rateable values is not very significant compared with the greater loss represented by the denial of timber and mining activity. Traffic generated by the Park imposes strains on Councils road work and

there is also some local complaint when tourist influx imposes strain on local facilities feared for smaller resident populations.

The growth of the Park, with the surrounding community, now imposes a need for flexible Management Planning having generally agreed objectives. In particular closer liaison is needed in such areas as weeds and vermin, roading and bushfire control.

Moving to the specific impact of National Parks on the farming community Mr Bruce Brown, Meat and Livestock Secretary of the Livestock and Grain Producers Association of NSW, pointed out that there had been little research on the economic aspects of National Parks in the State. Increased public concern had resulted in the provision of capital to acquire land for National Parks, but management expenditures had not kept pace. The Parks affected his members' industry from the moment acquisition was considered. Procedures were not public and debate was thus stifled and suspicion and rumours of 'secret' future intentions inhibited farm planning for the future. In the case of leaseholds approaching expiry NPWS proposals might result in the landholder only being able to obtain continuing permissive occupancy, with three months notice to vacate, thus adding to uncertainty. Often landholders found it difficult to understand such interference in a lease and, if the lease is terminated, there is no right of appeal.

Asking why cost benefit studies were not made to support National Park proposals Mr Brown suggested that they might be too difficult. Such studies would highlight costs of proposals and would encourage research on the externalities imposed on neighbouring agricultural enterprise by a National Park. He instanced restriction of land use, feral animal and noxious weed problems, and undesirable change in the local enterprise mix as quantifiable factors to be considered in making acquisition decisions.

However, in conclusion, Mr Brown stressed that the 25,000 farmers on whose behalf he appeared were not against the creation of National Parks per se.

The following plenary session enabled the previous six speakers to answer comments from the meeting. Fortunately the Chairman exercised firm and generally fair control. This enabled those present to gain the most benefit from the many opinions expressed, some more notable for heat than light.

Mr Moriarty said that a different system of Parks should replace the present unrealistic system and asked for support for this view from the land use organisations. Messrs Jordan and Clydesdale felt that they were not opposed to National Parks but wanted a more thorough investigation before commitment. Mr Brown considered a too radical viewpoint to be itself unrealistic and wished to meet with those in the middle ground. He felt his organisation to be quite capable of representing its members interests.

Mr Jensen referred to recommendations from the Second South Pacific Conference on National Parks, supporting multi-purpose areas with provision for existing freeholds and traditional land practices. Mr Hitchcock pointed out that the Conference quoted was in the context of 3rd World Pacific Island Nations with complex community land ownership.

Mrs Jensen said that the totalitarian powers of the NPWS must go and that National Parks are unnecessary - Crown Lands provide a sufficient means of ensuring conservation. Such land was described by Mr Hitchcock as often being unattractive for development but, even in difficult terrain, as having a mosaic of tenures. This led to the situation of 'inholdings', when Crown Land was acquired for conservation, and hence a policy of acquiring such tenures.

Listening to a quiet exchange of questions between one landholder and the NPWS staff, members revealed that the gentleman concerned had missed the sale of his 3,000 acre property probably because of interest by the National Park Service and another government department. Then, for a period

of over three years, investigation had continued with no firm decision. Finally the Service decided it was not going to take the land. The bureaucratic delays and possibly loss of other sale prospects were not denied. This exchange supported previous accusations of unreasonable delay on the part of Government.

Mr Ray Hammond of the South East Conservation Association queried the loss of 100,000Ha. of sawn timber production from the Eden area in order to produce half a million tonnes of chips a year on a forty year clear fell rotation. In answer Mr Jordan said that this operation represented a better return to the Forestry Commission, and he understood that the forest areas concerned were de-generate and that the rotation would improve the forest. Mr Hammond also challenged the cost figures Mr Jordan had quoted. If the total loss sustained by the Forestry Commission is discounted it represents a 'notional' interest bill of over twenty-five million dollars a year and, as forest stock is rotated by cutting annual growth, there is no compensating credit for increased timber stocks. These capital losses should be included in the State Forest cost to the community.

Mr Cox felt that with the overpopulation of National Parks and the opposition to loss of agricultural land it is appropriate to require the production of an Environmental Impact Statement and a Social and Economic study to justify reserving land for National Parks.

Mr Johnson suggested that neighbours of National Parks would be willing to provide a volunteer pool of advice, and possibly some work capacity, to tackle common problems and this idea was welcomed by Mr Leaver.

By 5 o'clock the chairman was still ready and willing but about a third of his meeting had left. The ninety or so people remaining moved on to resolutions. The following notes do not strictly report the exact wording of the formal resolutions but give the general sense of the proposals, or discussions, and summarise decisions made.

Mr Cox, a grazier from the Braidwood area, proposed that a moratorium be declared on new and extended National Parks proposals pending economic and social studies and Environmental Impact Statements by the NPWS. Discussion was mainly directed to the question of a moratorium, perhaps because some speakers felt this to be too severe a restriction. However no-one argued against the need for more comprehensive and complete Park proposals. Finally the debate was ended, by majority decision, and the motion was then carried by 44 votes for the motion and 35 against.

Mr Pratten, a grazier from the Orange district, had previously commented that the onus was on the NPWS to deal with the horrific noxious weed and feral animal problems. He now proposed that the funding and staffing of the Service be increased to enable management of Parks to be improved. Following discussion this motion was carried on the voices, without formal division.

Mr Fraser of the Canberra and Wouth East Region Environment Centre commented on the differences brought to light at the meeting and proposed that the NPWS formally take responsibility for liaison with landholders. This motion was passed without further discussion.

At this point our NPA party left the meeting. Mr Davies remained indefatigable and over fifty people were still present. It had been an instructive day and all present owed a debt to the Chairman for ensuring that the broadest possible range of opinion had been heard; and to the main speakers for their contributions and willingness to take part in the open session. In general the debate had fulfilled Mr Bedford's principles and had, hopefully, shown that there is more common ground among the various opinions about National Parks than sometimes appears from media reports.

Brian Hammond

WALKING BY STEREO

It might well be asked what new fad of the electronic age this was, but in fact it was only a simple extension of a popular pastime of the Victorian era put to a practical use. It all started because of a weekend pack walk into an area of the south east corner of our new Gudgenby Nature Reserve which was unknown to the party, and about one third of the walk and the campsite were to have been a bit of a mystery as to what might be found.

Some of this mystery disappeared however through the consultation of aerial stereoscopic photographs of the area which gave a remarkably clear indication of potential campsites and the nature of the country along the ridges and creeks. The two campsites provisionally selected turned out to be quite level, and one nearby that was discarded because of its slope under stereo would have been too steep even though it was beautifully grassed. The photographs were also used to determine a cross country traverse of ridges which gave us a very pleasant open forest walk.

The party was a full thirteen strong, a mixture of the very young, the mature, the aged, the new and the experienced. As may be expected thirteen lived up to its name and there was a late start because of some confusion between Currong and Currawong flats as a pick up point. This was finally sorted out and all the party rejoined to meet up with a small group out for a day walk down the Naas, likewise partially exploratory, for a future beginners' pack walk.

At the Mount Clear homestead the woolshed has been demolished, the old homestead given half a coat of paint, and new fences put up around it. The area has a notice saying that camping is permitted with a three day limit, one of the first major tangible instances of a policy for the use of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve.

The route was from Mount Clear homestead by way of a track along Naas Creek, with a deviation from the track to avoid two creek crossings. The track afterwards leaves the creek and rises to a saddle with a low knoll on the left. Here we headed east on a bearing of 78° magnetic, towards Left Hand Creek. A rocky scramble about two thirds of the way up was the only real obstacle and the country opened out into pleasant forest as we made the descent. The first choice of campsite was selected to give a more even break for the next day's walk, and it subsequently proved to be the better choice since the other was heavily infested with tussock grass and would have made a very lumpy bed. The second best campsite was near where we climbed from Left Hand Creek to join the Mount Clear firetrail. There was sufficient water, just flowing, at the first campsite, and it was about a kilometre from Left Hand Creek which in turn was flowing steadily with pools just large enough for an immersion swim.

The climb up to Mount Clear was almost seven hundred metres with an almost unbroken ascent except for a slight flattening out near the top. The summit is a wonderful place for picking out all the adjoining peaks in the reserve and beyond. Coming down to rejoin Naas Creek it is best to keep slightly to the left to avoid getting in to a creek bed on your right hand side. There is no definite ridge, only a confusion of gullies, minor ridges and flats. A zig-zag course is maintained to avoid the obvious scratchy bushes, fallen rocks and rocky outcrops.

Maybe the stereo photographs took some of the speculation out of the walk, but they did demonstrate how accurately they can depict gradients and show the nature of the country. Some might decry their use as taking the exploratory nature away from the walk, but then so does the map, and with a fairly large party some responsibilities are involved and their use can be justified.

Reg Alder

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The previous issue had a section printed in two columns and in small sized type. It was realised before printing that although the section would be readable by the majority some would have difficulty in reading the small type, and to those readers an apology is made. An explanation was however given that it would not be repeated and cognizance of this does not appear to have been taken by some readers.

There was a substantial saving in costs because of the reduction and it also allowed the Bulletin to be posted at the minimum postal rate.

This issue contains a further experiment in reduction to a print size normally used in many publications and, by taking advantage of the different scales of reduction available, the letter size of the two typewriters used has been brought to a common size. If this type size is considered satisfactory future issues will have a layout using full and reduced scale type until the supply of already-typed articles is exhausted. The President's Foreword, Outings and Social Programmes will continue to be in large-scale type.

Content of the Bulletin, subject of course to the availability of articles, will be maintained at the previous level.

KOSCIUSKO NATIONAL PARK - PLAN OF MANAGEMENT REVISION

The Plan of Management for Kosciusko National Park is in the process of revision and you are invited to be involved in the planning process.

In its 36 years of existence, Kosciusko National Park has been subjected to a number of pressures which have endangered its national and international status as a conservation area. It inherited considerable problems, established as it was after a long history of other forms of land use.

As we enter the '80s, the major cause for concern is the sheer pressure of numbers of people wanting to use the area. The carrying capacity of existing facilities such as roads and resort accommodation is one consideration. So is the carrying capacity of the less resilient natural features of the high mountains.

The management of any national park calls for a balance between the conservation of the park environment and its use for recreation, research and education. The National Parks and Wildlife Service has a responsibility to provide and maintain for the future opportunities for recreation for all kinds of people, regardless of age, social or economic status and ethnic background. It does not necessarily follow, however, that all parts of the park should be made available to all people for indiscriminate uses. The emphasis must be on appropriate forms and levels of recreation in appropriate places.

Forward planning is an essential part of park management. By coming to grips with issues which could affect park values, the Service is providing future Australians with a very important asset. That asset is freedom of choice in the way they can experience Kosciusko National Park. The alternative is a gradual decline in the quality and quantity of options available.

If you really care about the future of Kosciusko National Park it is hoped that you will take this opportunity to be involved in its future by contributing to the revision of the plan of management.

Kosciusko National Park sits close to the hearts of many Australians. For some, it has a lot to do with the snow and a love of skiing. For others, it's the element of surprise. Snow blanketed mountains soundly contradict the stereotype of Australia - the sunburnt country, the land of deserts and fringing sandy beaches.

Thousands of people make their initial pilgrimage to pay their respects to the highest mountain in Australia. Once there, they discover that Kosciusko National Park is more than just an interesting alpine landscape featuring unusual clusters of granite boulders and lavish displays of summer wildflowers.

The diversity of landscapes contained within the park range from the not-so-dizzy heights of Mt. Kosciusko down to the limestone underworld of Yarrangobilly Caves. Well known for its sudden shifts of mood, the climate echoes this diversity. For all forms of life in the mountains, an ability to cope with extreme seasonal fluctuations is essential. The tiny mountain pygmy possum lives beneath thick drifts of snow for months on end. So do the fragile-looking alpine marsh marigolds. Even before blanketing snow drifts start to melt, these delicate flowers start to bloom, sensing the sun at work overhead. Research into the habits of life forms in the park is an on-going process. There are questions to be asked and answers to be formulated about the high mountain environment, sufficient to keep biologists, botanists, geologists and other researchers busy for many years to come.

There is much to conserve in Kosciusko which is precious. There is also much to do. Perhaps the strongest bonds to the mountain area have been formed through experiences. Those individuals who have walked the park from end to end, explored every minor creek, camped in the windbreak of a stand of snow gums, skied down her mountains by moonlight or weathered the sudden blizzard for a week in a tiny tent feel a closeness that is rarely generated by a leisurely drive around the park. Bushwalking, camping, skiing, both downhill and cross country, canoeing, rock climbing, caving, fishing, hang gliding and horse riding are all legitimate ways of enjoying the mountains for those who need an active sense of involvement. Taking part in ranger-guided holiday programs, taking photos or simply enjoying the fresh mountain air and the scent of wild flowers are more passive ways to experience the park.

The fact that Kosciusko encloses the major alpine area on the mainland makes its conservation all the more important. It's natural enough that Australians should feel some measure of affection for our high mountains. Such sentiments, however, should not be interpreted as outright bias, for Kosciusko National Park was one of 11 natural areas in Australia to be selected as Biosphere Reserves in 1977 under UNESCO's international scheme of classification; 173 such areas in 35 countries have been likewise selected.

Kosciusko was chosen for good reason. The very size of the park makes it possible to conserve viable examples of a complete range of natural ecosystems. Scientific research with ramifications at the international level has been carried out in the Kosciusko region for many years now. In particular, studies have centered on the processes which influence the landforms, drainage patterns, adaptations, and idiosyncrasies of natural communities in alpine, subalpine and limestone areas. The boundaries of the park encompass many subtle and vulnerable features which give vital clues to our understanding of climatic changes in Australia over recent millennia. Our increasing knowledge of the workings of the Kosciusko environment raises important implications for the management of natural and human-modified environments. Our responsibilities toward Kosciusko then have broadened to encompass its international as well as national significance.

In 1944 Kosciusko State Park was declared. 23 years later it became a national park. National park status, however, is not enough to protect a natural area from accelerated change. For national parks are jointly dedicated to conservation orientated and recreation activities. Herein lies the conflict of interests capable of greying any dedicated ranger's beard. Weight the scales towards recreation pursuits, and the naturalness of

the park suffers. While trail bike riding and the use of off-road vehicles are valid and enjoyable forms of transport in appropriate places, the uncontrolled use of these kinds of vehicles in a national park threatens more than just the peace and quiet of walkers and campers. On the other hand, closing off the park to the public in the name of conservation and research ignores people's rights to appreciate the area. But it's not only inappropriate forms of recreation which jeopardize natural areas. The mere pressure of footsteps on a walking track, repeated often enough, can create erosion problems.

In the days when the park was still young, a trip to Kosciusko was quite an undertaking, an adventure relegated to one or two weeks of the year. Today, hundreds of skiers are prepared to drive from as far afield as Sydney or Melbourne for a weekend's skiing in the park throughout the season. And the warmer months of the year are starting to attract similar instances of devotion. It's not likely that the pressures on Kosciusko are going to decrease. Present trends suggest quite the opposite.

Faced with increasing pressure of all kinds, the National Parks and Wildlife Service released a Plan of Management for Kosciusko National Park in 1974. The time has now come for a major revision of the plan.

What is a plan of management? Essentially it's a set of guidelines, aimed at the field manager, which give a clear direction to future management of the park. It provides both a statement of objectives and a framework for devising management programs which are consistent with those objectives. The alternative - that of managing the park on a day-to-day basis, coping with each crisis without reference to the context of overall park aims - can, and often does, lead to serious conflict in the use and management of a park.

The process of preparing a plan of management gives an opportunity for identifying and resolving conflicting demands. Reaching a consensus on the range of management objectives appropriate to a particular place and situation is the object. As far as Kosciusko National Park is concerned conservation of wildlife and the environments they depend on is one of the most crucial management objectives, especially if our international obligations are to be met. Equally important is the provision of opportunities for scientific research. The objectives of management, however, must not overlook the value that many people in the community attach to Kosciusko National Park for recreation - be it for a bushwalk in a wilderness area, skiing on a prepared downhill run, and so on.

Inevitably, the plan of management must accommodate objectives which are to some extent in conflict. This calls for a systematic definition of priorities, and the separation in time and space of the conflicting activities. That is why the major recreation developments in the park are concentrated into relatively small facilities zones, and why most of the park is left as undisturbed as possible. There is a better chance that way that the management objectives can be met with a minimum of compromise.

The planning process requires detailed consideration of a number of basic questions. These are concerned with the style and extent of provision of facilities and access in the park. For example:

- What kinds of facilities should there be at local points in the park?
- Should further resort development be allowed within the park?
- How much of the road and track system should be open to vehicle use keeping other objectives such as wildlife conservation in mind?
- Should overnight camping be restricted at sites susceptible to damage from over use?
- Should stockmen's huts and other forms of back country shelter be removed or relocated to fit in with zoning requirements?

And so on

Related to these questions are a further set of operational issues which demand attention. They are the down-to-earth realities of park management and their practical resolution is often more difficult than people generally appreciate. They include such things as:

- The protection of vulnerable alpine plant communities from the effects of trampling and other disturbances brought on by the growing numbers of people visiting the roof of Australia.
 - The management of soil erosion which can result from even slight disturbances of alpine plant communities by ski tow or road and track construction.
 - Rehabilitation of damaged sites.
 - The provision of efficient and safe transport systems to and from skiing areas where the major constraints are snow, ice and the severe and often unpredictable weather conditions.
 - The disposal of substantial quantities of garbage and sewage generated by ski resorts.
 - The drawing up of a fire management policy.
 - The development of a specialized search and rescue capability.
- And so on

The planning process is a long one. Before any decisions can be made on the long list of crucial issues, background research must be carried out into the options and their outcomes. The revision of the 1974 Kosciusko National Park Plan of Management is to be undertaken during 1980. Because the plan will affect future management, and hence your use of the park, we welcome your comments and suggestions. If you are interested in contributing to the review, and would like to receive further publications on key issues, please contact the planning team at the Sawpit Creek park headquarters and register your areas of interest. We will be happy to send you information on the issues at hand or to discuss them with you in person. Your suggestions will be reviewed carefully, though there can be no guarantee that each and every one will be incorporated into the final plan.

As the planning proceeds we will keep the public in touch with progress, and interested persons will be encouraged to provide comment on specific management policies and planning options. The culmination of this planning process will be the publication and public exhibition of a DRAFT PLAN OF MANAGEMENT. At that time a formal invitation will be issued to the public at large to provide detailed comment on the draft plan. Only after the careful consideration of all representations on the draft will the new plan of management be adopted.

We are looking forward to your involvement. Please contact:

The Planning Officer,
Kosciusko National Park,
Private Mail Bag,
Via COOMA, N.S.W. 2630.
Phone (0648) 62102 or 62103

(NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE (NSW) BROCHURE
FEBRUARY 1980)

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AT THE GINNINDERRA FALLS

NPA members who have visited the Ginninderra Falls in the past may have wondered how the falls have fared now that they have been opened to the public on an entrance fee basis. I think it is fair to say that they have fared very well - so far. The gorge has been developed with discrimination and good taste. The area has been made safe for visitors - in the past the steep gravelly slopes made viewing the falls quite hazardous - and the development has been done with minimum disturbance to the environment.

To get there you go along Southern Cross Drive and continue on past the rubbish tip. The route is quite well signposted. A stretch of gravel road at the end and you come to the parking area near the upper falls. There are a few

small picnic shelters and a toilet here, roofed rather unfortunately with ugly plastic panels which look like shallow upturned laundry basins. From there tracks lead to several vantage points for viewing the upper falls and the deep pools below them. A ranger told me that platypi are often to be seen in the latter. Another track runs down into the gorge and takes you to the lower falls and the long placid reach of the Murrumbidgee where the Ginninderra debouches on that river. Here there are a few canoes for hire. Access to the north side of the gorge is not allowed.

From the mouth of the creek you walk a little way upstream to Cusack's Crossing. A private road through the property comes down to the crossing but the track for visitors runs up the southern side of the gorge. It affords several charming views over the Murrumbidgee Valley and the Lower Falls before returning to the starting point. The proprietors have prepared an excellent small guide and various trees and plants are marked and listed in it. The entrance fee is \$1.30 with special rates for children and pensioners and visitors to Canberra.

I thought the development very well done though the picture could change if wholesale car access to the Murrumbidgee is allowed via Cusack's Crossing. I recommend a visit. The falls are open 7 a week from 10 to 6.

Alastair Morrison

WILDLIFE AND PARK MANAGEMENT

The title of our lecture for the General Meeting on Thursday 20th March seemed to indicate that it would have been on the broad scale of wildlife, but instead we were treated to one of a particular aspect and that was about the life of an Australian wild dog, the dingo. The lecture reinforced many ideas vaguely held about the dingo and introduced many more that came as the result of many years of research by our lecturer Mr. Lindsay Best and the team of which he was part.

The dingo, which until recently was distributed throughout the whole of mainland Australia from deserts to sub-alpine snowfields, is a primitive canine related to wolves and coyotes and is regarded as a sub-species of the domestic dog. Research has shown that the dingo was not part of the ancestral fauna of Australia and its absence from Tasmania suggests that it arrived in Australia some time since 12,000 years ago when the last land bridge disappeared under Bass Strait. It is believed to have originated in Asia and to have probably come over with the aborigines.

The Tasmanian tiger and devil are no longer present in Australia and it is possible that they could not compete with the dingoes which results in the dingo being the largest extant mammalian carnivore in Australia, weighing according to sex between 12-15 kg. As such it fills an important ecological niche when its predation upon carnivores that compete with livestock is considered.

Since the first settlement attacks by dingoes on livestock has created a problem and the resulting antagonism has persisted until this time. The CSIRO commenced a study of the biology of the dingo in 1967 and information of this type is necessary to develop rational attitudes towards the dingo.

Dingoes were trapped or shot on a regular basis and organ samples collected to provide information on breeding, diet, age, health, etc., others were marked and released for later capture for information on movements, social behaviour and physiology in the field. A further group was maintained in captivity to enable detailed studies on genetics, growth, ageing, reproduction, behaviour, physiology, etc. Areas of study were around Alice Springs, Canberra, Kosciusko and Nadgee.

A typical dingo is visually characterised by its pricked ears and bushy tail. The genetically dominant

form is ginger with white points and less usually black with tan points. The hybrids of dingoes and domestic dogs are difficult to distinguish by their coats alone but they are usually dingo like in appearance, although the coat may be patchy or brindled with ticking on the extremities. The dingo skull and teeth are generally larger than the domestic dog and trappings in S.E. Australia show that many of the 'dingoes' are either feral domestic dogs or dingo/domestic hybrids. There is no simple biochemical test that can distinguish dingoes from the hybrids and dingo-like domestic dogs. One main difference is that dingoes breed only once a year and have a well defined breeding season. Domestic dogs do not have seasonal breeding and have two breeding cycles a year.

The diet of dingoes consists of prey species that is most abundant and accessible, mammals comprise 60% of the diet and reptile and birds make up the rest. The most common mammals in their diet are plague rats on the Barkly Tablelands and Central Australia, rabbits in Central Australia and macropods in S.E. Australia. In extreme drought carrion is eaten and livestock tend to be attacked more. However, in normal times game species comprise 90% of the diet and is preferred to livestock even though accessible and abundant. There are occasions when sheep are attacked sporadically and in small areas by wild dog and although many may be killed few are eaten. Free living dingoes consume about 1 kg. of prey each day.

About 85% of the weight of vertebrate prey represents a source of water to a predator and when prey is abundant little energy is expended and hence the need for minimal water. Water holes are visited more frequently in summer than in winter, but in areas such as the Simpson desert where there is no water, clearly enough water must be obtained from prey. During lactation a mother consumes excreta of the pups and recovers 30% of the water delivered to the pups in milk.

Dingoes howl most during the breeding season of late autumn through winter, with gestation being similar of that of a domestic dog, whelping taking place in a cave, hollow log or burrow. The average litter is five and pups are independent at 3-4 months. Male dingoes in Central Australia are infertile during October and November, however, males in S.E. Australia can breed all through the year. Few young dingoes breed in their first year because of social inhibitions placed on them.

Dingoes usually occupy a well defined home range, the size depending upon the abundance of prey. In Central Australia 75% of the marked dingoes were recaptured within 8 kms. and 95% within 20 kms. Most observed dingoes are solitary, 73% being alone, 16.2% in pairs, 5.1% in trios, 2.8% in quartets and isolated groups up to seven animals in the last quarter of the year after the breeding season. Groups have been seen attacking large prey such as kangaroos and cattle. Some short term and loose associations are formed between apparently solitary animals.

Each pack normally contains a dominant male and female with male and female subordinates, probably from past litters. The body postures and positions of lips, ears, hackles and tail indicate dominant and submissive individuals, fighting is rare and apparently appeased by subordinate postures. When small game is available they hunt as individuals, but when only larger species are available they co-operate to hunt as a pack.

During the course of the lecture, slides were shown to demonstrate features of the dingo and the range of its habitat.

Reg Alder

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF A.C.T. LETTERS

The Water Resources Commission of N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

MACQUARIE MARSHES

Earlier this year we appreciated being sent the Consultant's report and summary on the management of the Macquarie Marshes.

My Association offers the following brief comments which we feel affect several important matters that the scheme will involve.

The Macquarie Marshes are among the biggest wetlands in eastern Australia. At present the supply of water is sufficient to keep some parts of the marshes permanently wet, and this has been brought about by the dam, for the marshes used to dry out in bad years before the dam was built. The whole system has changed, possibly for the better, but this is open to question.

The proposed channels will give rise to a quicker flow of water for irrigation downstream, and more of it, since a sluggish flow brings about more loss from evapo-transpiration and seepage. Opinions on the ecological effects of this vary even among the NPWS people; the matter is not clear-cut. Moreover the effects will largely depend on the priorities given in respect of cash and conservation. The main threat to the environment is accordingly and as usual from pressure groups and politicians, for there is never enough water to cope with the demands of irrigation.

Our main concern is that crops may be planted on the drained areas. This could include cotton which requires fertilizers and pesticides, including DDT, which will wash into the channels and may devastate the plant and animal life. We feel that this would bring about as great a change to the environment as the drainage would, and be even more disastrous.

Dr B.H. Pratt,
Director - Conservation & Agriculture Branch,
Department of the Capital Territory.

Dear Sir,

GUDGENBY NATURE RESERVE

I would like to thank you on behalf of the Association for delegating one of your officers, Mr Dave Kerr, to discuss any day to day management enquiries that members may have in conjunction with the Gudgenby Nature Reserve. We will contact Mr Kerr by phone as the need arises.

It is now almost twelve months since the declaration of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve and to date there has been no evidence of a Management Plan for the Reserve. Members of the Association have recorded a number of changes in the Reserve since its declaration and some are -

- Preparations to seal part of the Gudgenby road;
- Closure of the old Boboyan road to the old Boboyan homestead;
- Demolition of the shearing shed at Mount Clear homestead;
- Construction of a walking track to Mount Shanahan;
- Closure of the Brandy Flat firetrail;
- Evidence of large feral pig populations;
- Evidence of cattle straying into the Reserve from areas not yet in the Reserve.

The apparent ad-hoc management indicated by the listing above is questioned by this Association. There is no doubt that the action taken was appropriate and necessary at the time. However it is difficult, if not impossible to relate these changes to management objectives of the reserve in the absence of any publicly available management guidelines or management plan.

It has been mooted that the Reserve is to be a multi-use area, which will require a form of zoning to control the various types of usage and management that should be carried out in accordance with the requirements of each zone. Management policies such as construction and closure of roads,

tracks, etc. construction or demolition of buildings, provision of camping and picnic areas, management of wildlife and the instigation of a bushfire control system, to name only a few, require long term planning for their implementation to be effective within each zone. Without a management plan any development in the Reserve cannot be considered satisfactory.

As an Association we greatly appreciate all your Department has done in establishing this reserve. It is because of the value we attach to it and our continuing interest in its welfare that we approach you with our request - may we know what policies or objectives the Department is implementing at present and for the future for the management of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve?

The Hon. E.J. Ellicott, G.C., M.P.,
Minister for the Capital Territory.

Dear Mr Ellicott,

I refer to correspondence concerning the upgrading of the Boboyan Road through the Gudgenby Nature Reserve: NPA's letter to you dated 14 December 1979 and Mr Staley's reply on your behalf dated 5 February 1980. The National Parks Association feels that it must respond to some of the points raised in Mr Staley's letter.

(1) It is difficult to accept that substantial demand for improved road access between Canberra and rural and recreational areas around Adaminaby and Kiandra exists. The number of primary producers served by the Boboyan Road is small and adequate access to Cooma and Queanbeyan already exists, and it must be noted that Canberra is not a centre for the marketing or transshipment of primary products. Recreational traffic already has all-weather access via Cooma and the Snowy Mountains Highway. This existing road access is not likely to be overloaded, now or in the foreseeable future, by the volume of recreational traffic; the number of recreational car journeys must decrease as petrol costs rise.

(2) We cannot agree that the upgrading of the Boboyan Road to a "safer all-weather road" is not environmentally significant. As stated in our letter of 14 December, the nature of the terrain traversed by the existing road within the Gudgenby Nature Reserve means that changes to the road alignment could have major and long-lasting environmental effects. Through traffic on an upgraded road will generate vandalism, whether intended or unintended. The problems of abandoned animals, fires, destruction of flora, signs, etc., and the depositing of rubbish, will increase substantially if through traffic is encouraged. These latter problems can only increase the management difficulties at the Gudgenby Nature Reserve and degrade, possibly permanently, the natural values of the Reserve.

(3) As stated in our letter of 14 December, there is a complete lack of information available from both the Department of the Capital Territory and the H.C.D.C. on future planning for the Gudgenby Nature Reserve; no management plan has been published or is known to be in preparation. There are no formal avenues by which the National Parks Association or other interested groups or individuals, can have an input to any proposal for change within the Reserve at the planning stage. Mr Staley's letter of 5 February makes no promises regarding the release of planning information.

We urge you, therefore, to delay any further implementation of roadworks within the Gudgenby Nature Reserve until an environmental impact statement for Stages 2 and 3 has been prepared and published, and until all subsequent relevant requirements of the Impact of Proposals Act have been met.

Hon. Secretary,
National Parks Association of the
Australian Capital Territory Inc.

13/12/79

Dear Ms. Kruse,

Reference is made to your letter dated 26 October 1979 concerning developments within the Kosciusko National Park.

As I have indicated publicly on several occasions, no decisions will be made on major developments contrary to the 1974 plan of management before the present review is finalised. The review of the 1974 plan presently underway will take into account a number of reports and studies, including the Sub-regional Planning Study commissioned by the New South Wales Planning and Environment Commission; the Snowy River Planning Study; the Perisher Range Planning Study; and a number of special reports prepared by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, e.g., the recent report on the outstanding natural features of the Summit area.

The sub-regional study presently underway will investigate the requirements for the development of tourist facilities outside the park.

I favour the development of accommodation in adjoining townships to relieve pressures on the natural systems of the park, and to boost the economies of surrounding shires.

On my instructions the Service is actively encouraging public involvement in the plan of management review process and will be preparing situation papers on various aspects of management inviting public comment, e.g., the recent huts policy. Any comments or submissions presented to the Service on any matters covered by the plan of management review will be given careful consideration.

Yours sincerely,
Paul Landa

The Hon. Neville K. Wran, M.P.,
Premier of New South Wales.

25/2/80

Dear Mr Wran,

Forestry Act 1916 - Regulations

The Committee of the National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory has recently studied the new Regulations (7.9.79) under the NSW Forestry Act. I should perhaps mention, as a reason for our commenting on a NSW Government Act, that members of NPA ACT are constant users of the parks, reserves and recreational areas in your State.

We assume that the new Regulations were intended to control protestors against logging, as at Terania Creek, but we believe they could have serious consequences for members of the community interested in the recreational value and the efficient management of your State Forests. It is apparent that a person authorised by the Forestry Commission will now have the power to deny access to State Forests and to order people out of certain signposted areas, failure to obey attracting the liability of a \$500 fine. Even where there are no signposts prohibiting entry, a person may incur a \$500 fine if within a State Forest, or a Flora Reserve, he or she is considered by an "authorised person" to "cause annoyance or inconvenience" and fails to leave when directed.

If the Forestry Commission may now prevent genuinely concerned members of the community from examining controversial operations within the State forests, and may exclude them from areas in which logging is being conducted, it would seem that the community's civil liberties must as a result be significantly eroded.

As concerned users of NSW reserves and recreational areas, we urge a thorough reappraisal and a withdrawal of the present Regulations.

The Hon. Paul Landa, M.P.,
Minister for Planning and the Environment
(also to the Minister for Conservation) 18/2/80

Dear Mr Landa,

Southern Macquarie Marshes - Water Management Works

The National Parks Association of the A.C.T. was pleased to receive from the NSW Water Resources Commission a copy of the EIS for the above proposal, together with a copy of the State Pollution Control Commission's advertisement calling for submission to be lodged by 21 January.

We received the lengthy and highly technical EIS a few days before our December Committee meeting - our last for 1979. It was out of the question for us to attempt to prepare a submission by 21 January - and I am sure that other voluntary societies must have found themselves in a similar situation.

The NPA Committee expressed its strong objection to being offered a seven-week period, encompassing Christmas, New Year and summer holidays, to prepare informed comments on an Environmental Impact Statement of such significance. We cannot believe that under these circumstances the submissions received would adequately represent the community's reaction to the EIS proposals, and if not too late would urge an extension of time for public submission.

Important though we consider an extension of time to be for those equipped to make formal submissions, we consider it still more urgent that a full open inquiry, with opportunities for cross-examining, be held. We now urge that such an inquiry be held at an early date.

NANCY BURBIDGE MEMORIAL

A proposal is before the Canberra Memorials Committee for an outdoor classroom, or amphitheatre, to be used by students and art groups, to be formed in the National Botanic Gardens in memory of the late Nancy Burbidge - foundation member, Secretary, twice President, and first Life Member of NPA.

The proposal that societies with which Nancy had been associated should combine to provide funds for an amphitheatre was put to NPA by the Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association and has the support of the Director of the Botanic Gardens, Dr Robert Boden. The November 1979 General Meeting of NPA agreed that the Association should support the memorial. Other contributing societies are the Australian Federation of University Women and the Royal Society of Canberra.

In December 1979 the estimated cost that the societies would be asked to bear was \$1000 for the amphitheatre and \$400 for a commemorative plaque. NPA has undertaken to contribute up to \$500.

A contribution will be made in the name of the Association but it is thought that many members who knew Nancy will wish to make a personal contribution. Cheques should be made payable to National Parks Association, ACT, and endorsed 'for Nancy Burbidge Memorial'. A box for donations will be provided at General Meetings.

LOCAL NEWS

Donations. The NPA has given \$100 to the National Parks and Wildlife Foundation, NSW for its 1980 door knock appeal. This year's project is the preservation of the thirty or so species of birds and animals classified as 'endangered' in NSW by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. An additional \$100 has also been given to the Australian Conservation Foundation for their Wildlife Fighting Fund.

'Beyond the Cotter'. If there are any difficulties in obtaining this new publication (NPA Bulletin March 1980) copies may be secured direct from Klaus Hueneke (one of the co-authors) of 3 Banner St., O'Connor, ACT 2601 for \$3.00 (postage included).

Kosciusko National Park: Review of 1974 Plan of Management. The text of a brochure 'The Pressure Is On - K.N.P.' has been included in this bulletin. Members are requested to make contributions towards the formulation of a new plan of management either as individuals or to the Committee for inclusion in the Association submission.

Petrol Costs. Please note revised suggested contribution under the heading of the outings programme. The NRMA calculation of the cost of running an average car is about 22 cents/km. It will be seen that the suggested contribution of 4 cents/km is not unreasonable and is considerably less than comparable public bus travel.

ECOFEET. A programme of environmental studies conducted by the NSW Department of Continuing Education is now available for 1980. Schools to be held are:

Bird School - Port Macquarie	14-16 June
Identification of Rain Forest Plants - Lismore	4-6 July
Plant Identification - Gilgandra	16-17 August
Rocky Shore Ecology - Ararawarra	28-31 August
Lower Manning River	1-5 September
Warrumbungles - Pilliga	21-26 September
Nature Photography - Burrendong	3-8 October
Insect Identification - Armidale	4-6 October
Upper Namoi - Warrabah/Watson's Creek	31 Oct.-3 Nov.
Darrington Tops National Park	21-24 November

Further details are available from the Secretary.

New Members enrolled after 1 April in each year will now be given the concession of one year's subscription entitlement to the 15 months membership.

John Archer, Downer; Tony Bayes, Cook; Leslie Brown, Reid; Josette Duffie, Watson; Pam & Phillip Gatenby, Garran; Lyn Harasyman, Cook; Paul van Haven, Campbell; David Rowlands, Kambah; Pat & George Smekel, Macquarie; Paul Stell, Canberra; Mr & Mrs R. Tomkins, Weston; Terry Vaughan & family, Flynn; Joan Walsh, Woden; Pat Wardle, Forrest.

Membership Renewals: Laurie Adams, W. Blandford, Jan & Betty Campbell, Margaret Cashmore, B. & M. Daniel, Barbara Graham, Bridgit Hodgken, Vic and Elizabeth King, Phillip & Francis Marsh, Del Price, Jack Smart & family, Loretta Stirling, John Whitford.

LAKE TARLI KARNG

The ten of us were standing on the shore of Lake Tarli Karng when, without any warning, a thirty metre gum tree toppled and crashed to the edge of the opposite shore in a thundering shower of broken limbs. It was a dramatic welcome to a beautiful Lake tucked away in the Victorian high plains, 90 km north of Heyfield in the Gippsland area.

We spent six days over the last Christmas/New Year period driving from Canberra to Gippsland and walking into the Lake. Like all of nature's beauty it must be seen to be truly enjoyed. It was beautiful and we found it difficult to leave after staying just one full day.

Our first sighting of the Lake was from the Sentinels, a 1,550 metre high rocky escarpment to the West. Several hours walk and 700 metres lower took us to the shores of the Lake where we camped overnight, swam frequently, explored the waterfalls on the Nigothoruk Creek which feeds the Lake and then left reluctantly. The Lake was the climax but other highlights were:

- the wildflowers and breathtaking views from Trapyard Hill,
- the fern gully on the Wellington River below the Lake,
- those welcome swims at every opportunity (with togs always at the bottom of the pack and too difficult to find!)
- the supremely happy evenings around the camp fire, especially the third night when we celebrated Jo's birthday with a bottle of champagne chilled in the icy waters of the Wellington River.

To end a happy walk we camped at Glenmaggie Weir on New Year's eve and had a memorable and very hospitable evening at the local Heyfield Hotel. Who will ever forget Blue, Nellie, Meg, Norma and the many other wonderful Heyfield people we met. A fitting ending to a wonderful walk - with a wonderful group of walkers. Anyone for the next walk into Lake Tarli Karng?

Lyle Mark

AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- * Promotion of National Parks and of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery and natural features in the Australian Capital Territory and elsewhere, and the reservation of specific areas.
- * Interest in the provision of appropriate outdoor recreation areas.
- * Stimulation of interest in, and appreciation and enjoyment of, such natural phenomena by organized field outings, meetings or any other means.
- * Co-operation with organizations and persons having similar interests and objectives.
- * Promotion of and education for nature conservation and the planning of land-use to achieve conservation.

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OUTINGS

Please notify leader of intention to come on all weekend outings.

All persons joining an outing of the National Parks Association of the A.C.T. do so as volunteers in all respects and as such accept sole responsibility for any injury howsoever incurred and the National Parks Association of the A.C.T., its office bearers and appointed leaders are absolved from any liability in respect of any injury or damage suffered whilst engaged on any such outing.

Petrol costs. The suggestion by the Committee that a voluntary contribution of 2 cents per kilometre towards the expenses of being transported to an outing meeting place has been overcome by inflation and increased costs. It is now suggested that 4 cents per kilometre (calculated to nearest dollar) be offered to the driver. This amount is the same as now suggested by a kindred association.

June 1 Sunday

Leader: Les Pyke 812982

Meet: Mugga Rd & Monaro Hwy 8 a.m.

Connolly's Gap: Exploratory Walk

Ref. ACT 1:100,000

An exploratory walk in the Bredbo River area.

June 8 Sunday

Leader: John Webster 476769

Meet: Mugga Rd & Monaro Hwy 8.30 a.m.

North Tinderry: Walk

Ref. ACT 1:100,000

Yet another attempt to brave the bad weather and scale one of the Tinderry peaks.

June 14/16 Sat-Mon

Leader: Neville Esau 864176

Meet: Contact leader

South Durras: Car camp

Ref. Batemans Bay 1:100,000

A weekend on the coast - walks along the foreshore and in Murramanby National Park.

June 21/22 Sat-Sun

Leader: Frank Clements 317005

Meet: Contact leader

Bendethra: Pack Walk

Ref. Snowball & Krawarree 1:25,000

A weekend in the Bendethra-Duea area.

June 22 Sunday

Leader: Cla Allen 953824

Meet: Tidbinbilla Visitors Centre 12 noon

Tidbinbilla-Gibraltar Rocks: Walk

Ref. ACT 1:100,000

June 29 Sunday

Leader: John Banks 816641

Meet: Blue Range Hut 9 a.m.

President's Barbeque: Blue Range

Ref. ACT 1:100,000

An interesting walk to an Arboretum followed by a mid-day barbeque. Bring your own food etc.

July 6 Sunday

Leader: Nick Blandford 821696

Meet: Canberra Railway Station 9 a.m.

Mt Fairy Caves: Caves exploration

Ref. Lake Bathurst 1:50,000

A visit to some limestone caves off the Bungendore-Goulburn road. Bring torches and boots.

July 13 Sunday

Leader: Reg Alder 542240

Meet: Eucumbene Drive & Cotter Rd 8.30 a.m. or 9 a.m. at Tidbinbilla Visitors Centre

Tidbinbilla Peak: Walk

Ref. ACT 1:100,000

A medium walk to Tidbinbilla Peak from the Nature Reserve.

July 19/20 Sat-Sun

Leader: Pat Michell 473264

Meet: Contact leader

Ettrema Gorge: Pack Walk

Ref. Nerriga 1:25,000

A weekend pack walk with some climbing involved. Limited numbers - contact leader by the Wednesday at the latest.

July 20 Sunday Mt Lowden Forest Park: Walk
Leader: Cla Allen 953824 Ref. Bendoura 1:50,000
Meet: Canberra Railway Station 11 a.m.

An afternoon ramble in a park with some historical interest.

July 27 Sunday Blue Gum Creek: Walk
Leader: Hela Lindemann 864926 Ref. ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Monaro Hwy and Mugga Rd 8.30 a.m.

A walk from the Honeysuckle Creek area over to Blue Gum Creek.

August 3 Sunday Orroral Valley/Cotter Gap: Walk
Leader: Bernice Anderson 812082 Ref. ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Monaro Hwy and Mugga Rd 8.30 a.m.

A medium walk along Orroral Valley to Cotter Gap and maybe a visit to Split Rock.

August 9 Saturday Mt. Stromlo: Picnic
Leader: Cla Allen 953824 Ref. ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Picnic Area, Mt Stromlo forest, 12.30 p.m.

A lunch-time picnic and visit to the Observatory.

August 10 Sunday Billy Billy Rocks: Walk
Leader: Neville Esau 864176 Ref. ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Tidbinbilla Information Centre 9 a.m.

A frontal assault on the Rocks from the Nature Reserve.

August 16/17 Sat-Sun Deua River: Pack Walk
Leader: Bob Story 812174 Ref. Araluen 1:100,000
Meet: Araluen Hotel 9.30 a.m.

A walk along the Deua River with many river crossings. Party limit of 10.

August 17 Sunday Murrays Corner from Tidbinbilla: Walk
Leader: Hela Lindemann 864926 Ref. ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Eucumbene Drive & Cotter Rd 9 a.m.

An easy walk from Tidbinbilla Tracking Station.

August 24 Sunday Hospital Hill/Mt Boboyan: Walk
Leader: Frank Clements 317005 Ref. ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Monary Hwy/Mugga Lane 8.30 a.m.

A medium walk in the Gudgenby Nature Reserve.

August 31 Sunday Old Fitz's Hill Rd.: Walk
Leader: Cla Allen 953824 Ref. ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Bridge over Gudgenby River at Naas, 12 noon

A walk along the old road over Fitz's Hill.

August 30/31 Sat-Sun Araluen: Car Camp
Leader: Ian Currie 958112 Ref. Araluen 1:25,000
Meet: Araluen Pub, 10 a.m. - contact leader by Wednesday if going.

A family camp in the Araluen Valley. Bring your gold pans and detectors.

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE A.C.T. INC.

Inaugurated 1961

'A National Park for the National Capital'

President:	John Banks, 9 Furphy Pl., Garran, 2605	816641(H)	493632(W)
Vice-President:	Neville Esau, 11 Rymill Pl., Mawson, 2605	864176(H)	494554(W)
Secretary:	Sheila Kruse, 50/C Currong Flats, Braddon, 2601	486104(H)	
Treasurer:	Lyle Mark, 6/45 Hampton Circ., Yarralumla, 2600	816985(H)	497488(W)
Asst. Secretary:	Sybil Story, 104 Buxton St., Deakin, 2600	812174(H)	
Publicity Officer:	Bernice Anderson, 34 Bamford St., Hughes, 2605	812082(H)	492669(W)
Committee Members:	Reg Alder, Fiona Brand, Ian Currie, Cynthia Hook, John Schunke, John Webster		
Immediate Past President:	Darryl Hawk, 8 Emery St., Chapman, 2611	883763(H)	897098(W)

Bulletin Editor:	Reg Alder, 45 Starke St., Higgins, 2615	542240(H)	
Membership Sec.:	Fiona Brand, 11 Dyson St., Lyneham, 2602	479538(H)	
Outings Convener:	John Webster, 46 Dumaresq St., Dickson, 2602	476769(H)	

All correspondence to Box 457, P.O., Canberra City, 2601

National Parks Association Phone Number: 486104 or 956037

Subscription rates: Family - \$10 Corporate - \$5
Single - \$8 Student - \$3

GENERAL MEETINGS

at 8.00 p.m. in Room 1, Griffin Centre,
Bunda St. Civic

Thursday 19 June 1980

Mr Andy Spate - 'Western Australian Parks and Caves'

Thursday 17 July 1980

Dr David Shorthouse, CCAE - 'A new look at the ecological
resources of the A.C.T.'

Thursday 21 August 1980

Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers
Slides of Lake Tarli Karng walk- see page 16.

NOTE: Annual subscriptions are due on 1st July.

September 7 Sunday
Leader: John Webster 476769
Meet: Monary Hwy/Mugga Rd 8 a.m.

Nursery Hill: Walk
Ref. ACT 1:100,000

A medium walk from Glendale Crossing along Nursery Creek and to Nursery Hill.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Incorporated will be held on Thursday, 21 August 1980, at 8 p.m. in Room 1, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Canberra City.

Business

To receive from the Committee a report on the affairs of the Association, together with the audited Statement of Accounts for the year ended 30 June 1980

To elect:

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Secretary, Publicity Officer, and six Members of Committee

To appoint an Auditor

To transact any business that may properly be brought before the meeting

Nominations are called for the twelve positions listed above. Nominations in writing should be signed by the nominee, the proposer and the seconder, and should be in the hands of the Secretary before the commencement of the Annual General Meeting.

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NOMINATION FORM

Position	1980/81
Nominee: (name)	
(signature)	(date).....
Proposer (signature)	(date).....
Seconder (signature)	(date).....

National Parks Association outings summary

JUNE

1 Sunday	Connolly's Gap	Walk
8 Sunday	North Tinderry	Walk
14/16 Sat-Mon	South Durras	Camp
21/22 Sat-Sun	Bendethra	Pack Walk
22 Sunday	Gibraltar Rocks	Walk
29 Sunday	Blue Range	Barbeque

JULY

6 Sunday	Mt Fairy	Caves Exploration
13 Sunday	Tidbinbilla Pk	Walk
19/20 Sat-Sun	Ettrema Gorge	Pack Walk
20 Sunday	Mt Lowden	Walk
27 Sunday	Blue Gum Creek	Walk

AUGUST

3 Sunday	Orroral Valley	Walk
9 Saturday	Mt Stromlo	Picnic
10 Sunday	Billy Billy Rocks	Walk
16/17 Sat-Sun	Deua River	Pack Walk
17 Sunday	Murray's Corner	Walk
24 Sunday	Hospital Hill	Walk
31 Sunday	Old Fitz's Hill Rd	Walk
30/31 Sat-Sun	Arwaluen	Camp

SEPTEMBER

7 Sunday	Nursery Hill	Walk
14 Sunday	Mt Clear	Walk
14 Sunday	Lanyon	Visit
20/21 Sat-Sun	Hidden Valley	Pack Walk
28 Sunday	Orroral River	Walk

OCTOBER

4/6 Sat-Mon	Upper Abercrombie River	Camp
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