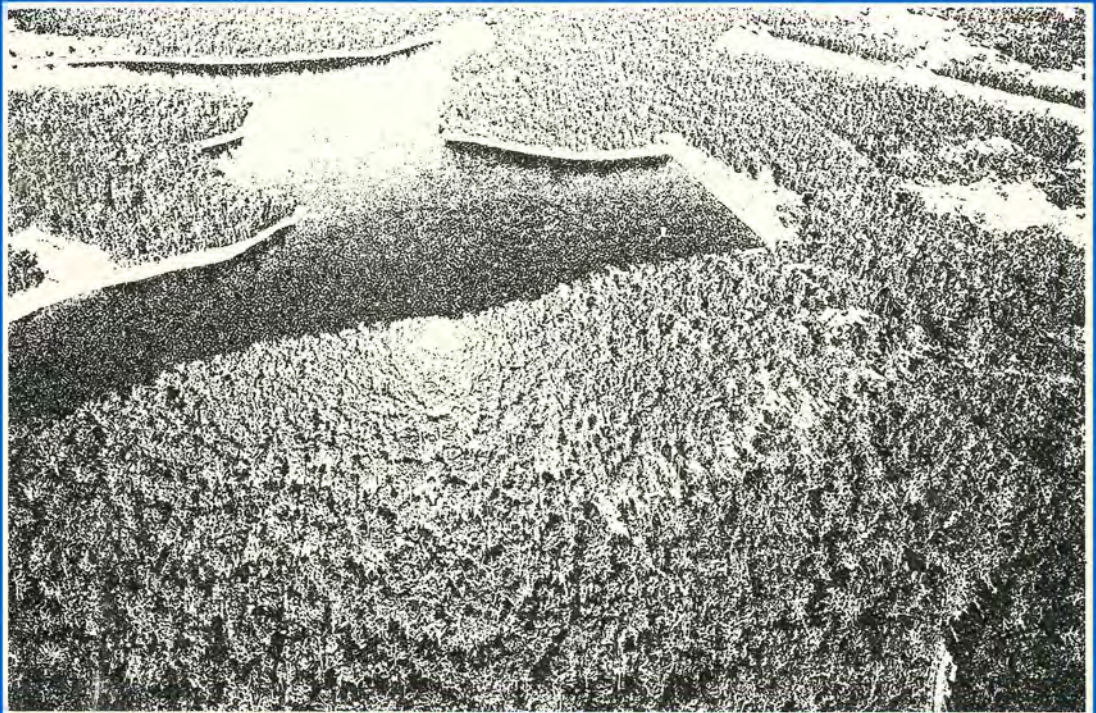


# Warroona Reservoir and Catchment Area

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## Summary of Public Submissions

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MANAGEMENT PLAN No. 19



Department of Conservation  
and Land Management



Water Authority  
of Western Australia

# **WAROONA RESERVOIR AND CATCHMENT AREA**

## **SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS**

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In March 1988, the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) released for public comment a Draft Management Plan (DMP) for the Waroona Reservoir and Catchment Area. The draft plan was jointly prepared by the Water Authority of Western Australia and CALM in accordance with the planning process established under the CALM Act 1984.

The DMP was available for public comment for a period of two months. Copies of the DMP were distributed widely in the locality of the Reservoir area, to State Government Departments, the local Government Authority, and a range of government institutions and private interest groups who had involvement in the use or management of the reservoir and catchment, and would be affected by the management proposals that had been formulated. In addition, the DMP was available for inspection at the Waroona Shire Office and local public library.

A similar draft management plan for the Logue Brook Reservoir and Catchment Area was prepared concurrently with the Waroona DMP and was also released concurrently for public review and comment.

This document summarises the submissions that were received by CALM and the nature of the comment or concerns expressed, with reference to the appropriate section(s) within the DMP. (These public submissions are in addition to contributions made by the public at a workshop held during the preparation of the draft plan and included as Appendix C of the draft plan).

The report also identifies areas where changes to the draft plan have resulted from submissions and where incorporation of requested changes has not been possible.

## **2.0 ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS**

### **2.1 Number and Origin of Submissions**

As the draft management plans for both Waroona and Logue Brook Reservoirs and Catchments were released for review concurrently, many submissions addressed both plans in their comments. Nineteen submissions containing comments regarding the Waroona



Reservoir and Catchment Area management plan were received. A list of submitters is contained in Appendix A. The origin of submissions may be categorised as below:

#### CATEGORY

State Government	9
Local Government	2
Private Individuals	3
Private Industry	2
Recreation Groups	3

## 2.2 Analysis of Submissions

In general, submissions expressed support for the concept of preparing and implementing a management plan for the reservoir and catchment. Whilst support for some specific management initiatives was expressed, strong disagreement, particularly in relation to water ski management, was also conveyed in submissions. Concerns were also expressed as to necessary implementation strategies and the administrative contingencies that would arise. A number of small errors in technical or historical background were identified.

As a result of the opposing views contained in the submissions, and the need to carefully resolve opposition to specific management recommendations or prescriptions, the following process of review and amendment was necessary:

- 1) Review and categorisation of comment or areas of concern expressed in the submissions, and preparation of a summary as detailed in Section 3.0.
- 2) Evaluation by the Project Team of the requests for changes to management prescriptions and formulation of appropriate responses or amendments.
- 3) Discussion of proposed amendments with affected parties.
- 4) Preparation of the Final Management Plan.

Evaluation of the submissions utilised the following criteria in determining whether amendments to the DMP was appropriate:

- i) Additional relevant background information was incorporated, and any errors in

technical or administrative detail that were noted by submissions, were corrected.

- ii) Inadequacies in topics covered by the prescriptions were remedied where appropriate.
- iii) Where dissatisfaction with management proposals was expressed, this was remedied to the greatest possible extent as determined by the need to maintain both equity in the allocation of resources and a level of environmental quality necessary to sustain the priority uses of the catchment area and reservoir.

### **3.0 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS**

The substance of comment that was conveyed in submissions regarding the DMP is summarised in this section. Both general comment and references to specific components of the DMP are included. Listing of the comments is made on the basis of the section of the DMP to which comment refers.

#### **Preface** (One submission refers)

This submission indicated that winter overflow from the Reservoir should not be viewed as excess, as it performed the necessary function of flushing the local streams.

A number of other submissions confirmed the recognition of water and timber production as the priority land uses, prior to making further comments in relation to recreation management.

#### **Introduction** (No specific submissions)

The submissions generally reflected agreement in the need for management as identified in the introduction.

#### **Section 2.0 Description of Resources and Present Land Use** (Four submissions)

The absence of reference to Aboriginal sites in the description of resources was noted by a submission from the W.A. Museum. The provisions of the Aboriginal Heritage Act in relation to ethnographic and archaeological sites were also reiterated.

The lack of information describing the catchment's fauna was noted by the W.A. Museum. However the opinion was also expressed that subsequent research and monitoring programmes could adequately compile the necessary data.

One submission from the Waroona area suggested that the prevailing summer winds were easterlies, not south-westerly and south-easterly winds as stated in the DMP.

In their submission to the DMP, Alcoa of Australia Ltd. noted that the Waroona Reservoir catchment was likely to contain substantial bauxite reserves and therefore the importance of bauxite mining in the catchment should be more clearly recognised by the management plans. Whilst the catchment area lies outside the current 25 year mining plan, changes to economic circumstances could result in the approach of mining to the close vicinity of the catchment within ten years.

The Mines Department suggested that for completeness, reference be included to dolerite dykes that occur within the granite and gneissic rocks that predominate in the catchment.

### **Section 3.0 Role of Management Authorities (Three submissions)**

A submission from a user group advised that the DMP does not mention that the Department of Fisheries has considerable knowledge of the biology of the marron, redfin perch, rainbow and brown trout fisheries within the reservoir.

Two submissions gave opposing views as to the jurisdiction of the Health Act regarding the control of "illegal" camping on Crown Land. One suggested that jurisdiction extended to an area of radius 16km around the Caravan Park, whilst the second disputed its applicability on "Crown Land" and stressed that need for resolution of the current uncertainty.

### **Section 4.0 Evaluation of Recreational and Environmental Compatibility**

A submission from a user group sought recognition of the distinction between general off-road vehicle activity and those activities conducted by the W.A. Four Wheel Drive Association in accordance with their Code of Ethics, a copy of which was supplied. The Association submitted that it should not be presumed that all off-road vehicle operators were unaware of the environmental effects of off-road vehicle usage. For example, the Australian National Four Wheel Drive Council's Code of Ethics expressly contains recommendations to "keep to constructed vehicle tracks and not to drive off-road".

The Association also expressed their philosophy of viewing four wheel driving as a means to an end (such as nature study, bushwalking, photography, etc) rather than an “end” in itself.

#### **Section 5.0 Management Objectives (One submission)**

This submission contended that the concept of utilising water from the reservoir for metropolitan scheme supply was inappropriate and supported ongoing utilisation of water for irrigation.

#### **Section 6.0 Summary of Recreation Issues and Strategies (Six submissions)**

A user group contended that skiing and sailing/canoeing were mutually exclusive due to the nature of the conditions they sought (ie. calm vs windy conditions). It was suggested that the orientation of the “arms” of the reservoir in relation to the typical prevailing winds usually created spatially separated areas of both calm water and windy water, thus attracting skiers and sail boats to different areas of the reservoir.

Further submissions from ski enthusiasts conveyed the view that regulation of ski activity in favour of fishing was inequitable as there was ample opportunity for fishing at night and at other nearby reservoir locations. Time constraints such as prohibition of skiing on certain weekends, or rotation on a roster with Logue Brook Dam were seen to have great potential for the creation of confusion amongst users.

A submission from an individual member of the public expressed the view that power boats have a number of negative effects on the reservoir, including alienation of animal and plant life from the reservoir shores, turbidity and fuel/oil pollution and crowding and congestion resulting in safety risk. It was suggested that power boats are barred from the reservoir in favour of an emphasis on passive recreation.

The view that active recreation is inappropriately favoured compared to passive recreation was supported by a further private submission.

A submission from a small social group agreed controls on power boat activity were appropriate but disagreed with most of the alternative strategies suggested in the DMP and suggested a number of alternatives. The submission also requested that improvements to facilities be minimised as a way of discouraging increases in the number of users.

Maintenance of the Caravan Park in its present condition was also requested by the signatories.

The same submission suggested a firewood collection area should be made available and indicated that establishment of “wild camping” areas was not desired.

One submission noted that the popularity of wild camping should be interpreted as demand for camping within a natural setting and therefore on this basis, sending overflow or “wild campers” outside the catchment was not a viable option.

A user group disagreed that all off-road vehicles would necessarily damage vegetation, and made reference to the W.A. Four Wheel Drive Association’s Code of Ethics, which specifically recommends use of formed roads in preference to off-road.

A submission from a local resident suggested that trail bikes should be banned from the catchment to alleviate problems of noise and socially unacceptable behaviour.

## **Section 7.0 Options for Improving Management (Three submissions)**

A user group felt that club management may also be appropriate for land based recreational activities.

A submission from a small user group strongly disagreed with club management of boating and skiing. A preference for management to new guidelines controlling ski and boat activity that should be policed by the present Shire Ranger was expressed. Registration of boats was also favoured.

CALM’s Regional and District Offices, at Bunbury and Harvey respectively, considered that recreation on the reservoir and immediate vicinity would best be managed by the Water Authority, as they had direct interest and responsibility for water quality. CALM should continue to manage the catchment for multiple-use.

The establishment of a Consultative Committee co-ordinated by the Water Authority was supported in principle by all direct references made in the submissions, however difficulties in implementation and funding arrangements were felt to be probable, due to the difficulty in co-ordination of the multiple interests, and limited financial resources and manpower.



CALM's Harvey District Office submission contained a detailed appraisal of Section 7.0 and offered the following views.

It was agreed that the Water Authority should co-ordinate recreation management through the Consultative Committee. However, a separate member agency represented on the Committee should be responsible for budget and plan implementation. The Committee should have only an advisory role.

As CALM has no control of Shire staff, it was felt that management powers on CALM land should not be assigned to them except within leased land. The Shire was perceived to be better suited to the supply and maintenance of facilities at the reservoir's edge. Indirect remuneration via the waiving of lease fees for the Caravan Park was also suggested.

The extension of the Caravan Park caretaker's policing powers to other parts of the catchment was considered inappropriate as the caretaker should not have a mechanism to "force" visitors to utilise the caravan park.

#### **Section 8.0 Identification of the Preferred Development Option (One submission)**

CALM's Regional Office agreed that there were no obstacles to adoption of Alternative C as the preferred option. Option C was expressed in the DMP as follows:

"Maintain and cater for the present demand for recreational and environmental use. Provide recreational and environmental management prescriptions that resolve the identified problem areas."

However the implementation and policing of management prescriptions would need to remain discretionary.

The submission also noted that the degree of possible flexibility in the management prescriptions would be limited by the management objectives and provisions of the published Regional Management Plan.

#### **Section 9.0 Outline of Management Recommendations (Eleven submissions)**

The management recommendations provided in the DMP attracted most of the comment contained in the submissions, a number of which expressed disagreement with the proposals

that were identified. However, several submissions considered that the management proposals were comprehensive, adequate and appropriate to the future management requirements of the area.

### Power Boats and Water Skiing

A user group submitted that boat launch and recovery should not be restricted to only two or three sites as this would cause congestion and safety risk. A larger ski area than that proposed was also suggested, with a shoreline exclusion zone of 50m width. Suggested amendment to the proposed water ski area was supported by a plan and a method of delineating the ski area using buoys that could be relocated in sympathy with water level changes.

Both support, and opposition was expressed regarding the concept of water ski management by a club. It was contended that the water ski/boating community were largely self regulatory and to date had capably managed their activities without mishap. However more regular patrol of the reservoir during peak periods by Department of Marine and Harbour's Officers was required, as they have policing powers in relation to boating activity.

### Camping and Caravans

The submission from the Shire of Waroona agreed that expansion of the Waroona Caravan Park up to a maximum of sixty serviced bays would be appropriate in the short term. It was suggested that provision of sites for wild camping should be achieved by extending the present area of the Caravan Park and utilisation of areas within the park for this purpose. "Wild camping" in areas other than the Caravan Park was opposed by several submitters. However, the provision of a camping site served with toilet and barbecue facilities for the exclusive use of youth and community groups such as Scouts, Guides, Cubs, Brownies or Church youth groups was recommended.

A further submission suggested that the Caravan Park should be retained in its present format so that limitation to available accommodation could assist the control of boat numbers utilising the reservoir.

### Effluent Disposal

The ability of sealed vault or composting toilets to operate safely within the catchment was

noted by one submission in suggesting that effluent disposal outside the catchment could be achieved by placing sealed pump-out facilities in the most appropriate position for users within the catchment.

The Waroona Shire Council agreed that appropriately designed toilet facilities should be placed at boat launching and picnic sites. However as it was opposed to “wild camping” in the catchment it was similarly considered inappropriate to provide facilities additional to those at launching and picnic sites.

#### Picnic and Barbecue Sites

Wood fired barbecues were suggested to be the preferable choice of facility. Wood supplies could either be provided by CALM, as is the case at Lane Poole Reserve or supplied by a contractor.

#### Information

One submission recommended that all signs within the reservoir and catchment area should be constructed to existing CALM specifications. A further submission recommended consistency in sign design but suggested formats other than those utilised by CALM.

In noting that natural history studies should be promoted as a passive recreational activity, one submission indicated that appropriate information to support this activity should be available within the catchment.

#### Water Supply

The Waroona Shire Council agreed with the objectives stated in the DMP but opposed the concept of using Waroona Reservoir for domestic supply. The Council requested that consideration be given to deletion of reference to this concept in the report.

#### Firewood

Submissions regarding this matter varied in opinion, with support extended for supply of firewood by CALM or a contractor, or for nomination of a firewood collection area, as well as support for the installation of coin operated gas barbecues.

## Beekkeeping

Two submissions supported the maintenance of access to the forest areas for apiarists. Each noted that dieback quarantine and bauxite mining have already reduced the areas available for placement of hives and therefore it was important that the Waroona Reservoir catchment continued to be available.

## Administration

All submissions that made reference to the concept of a Consultative Committee agreed in principle with the need for its establishment. One submission proposed that the Water Authority delegate to the Committee should be from the Waroona Water Authority office. Each user group submission offered to provide a representative to the Committee, whilst a local resident suggested that a representative of the W.A. Police Force should be appointed to the Committee.

The Water Authority was generally agreed to be best suited to providing a Chairman for the Committee.

Three submissions noted that the limited funds would be a problem in the implementation of management proposals.

Whilst the “user pays” principle was supported as a means of collecting necessary funds for management, difficulties in the equitable assignment to the various categories of users of a charge for use of the reservoir, was recognised as a probable problem area. Other submissions, notably those from users, opposed the concept of “user pays”.

## Finance (Five submissions)

Both support and opposition for the introduction of a “user pays” system was expressed.

One submission indicated that there would be a number of difficulties in implementing a fee system, therefore it was considered unsuitable at this time. A further submission noted that the penalty of inadequate funding for management would necessitate the levying of fees for use of the reservoir. Another submission suggested that a registration fee for boats of a nominal \$100/annum would contribute to management and the employment of a caretaker at the reservoir.



A submission from a landowner whose property adjoined the catchment requested that use of the reservoir by adjacent landowners should be given special consideration in respect of an equitable fee structure for users.

#### **4.0 AMENDMENTS TO THE DMP**

Consideration of the submissions received has given rise to the following amendments to the DMP, prior to release as the final Management Plan.

##### **Preface**

The preface was amended to exclude the view that overflow from the reservoir is excess water.

The correct title “Timber Production in W.A.” was inserted in place of the former erroneous reference.

##### **Section 1.0 Introduction**

No changes were necessary.

##### **Section 2.0 Description of Resources and Present Land use**

A management prescription dealing with Aboriginal Sites was included in the final management plan.

A management prescription dealing with bauxite mining was included in the final plan.

Reference was made to the dolerite dykes that occur within the granite and gneissic rocks of the catchment.

##### **Section 3.0 Role of Management Authorities**

Whilst comments in relation to Section 3.0 were noted by the Working Group for the final management plan, the entire section was condensed so that the final plan did not repeat background materials already available in the draft management plan.

## **Section 4.0 Evaluation of Recreational and Environmental Compatibility**

In similar fashion to Section 3.0, submissions regarding matters discussed in Section 4.0 were noted by the Working Group, however for the final management plan the entire section was condensed to delete background discussion from the final management plan.

## **Section 5.0 Management Objectives**

No changes to this section resulted from the public submissions.

## **Section 6.0 Summary of Recreation Issues and Strategies**

Submissions regarding proposed regulations for water skiing activity were considered in great detail as a result of the concerns expressed in the public submissions.

The project team convened a meeting with appropriate representatives of the water ski and fishing enthusiasts to refine a scheme of designated uses of the water body that was both equitable and acceptable to all competing users. The meeting was notable for the firm but polite statement of positions by both interest groups, finishing with an excellent spirit of co-operation. The following points were agreed to:

- i) two fixed ski area boundary positions and one boundary position that would change in sympathy with water level were agreed to;
- ii) two boat launching sites and four pickup/dropoff areas were agreed to;
- iii) except for ski takeoff and dropoff areas no skiing will be allowed closer than 60m to the shoreline.

It was also agreed that all of the above arrangements should be considered flexible so that where appropriate, remedial modifications to improve the utility of the scheme could be made in future by the Consultative Committee.

New Concept maps showing the location of the ski area, launch sites and takeoff-dropoff areas were prepared for inclusion in the final management plan.

Whilst opposition to the concept of deregulated camping was expressed, the strong demand

for the opportunity to camp in a natural setting that was identified during the investigations phase, required the proposal to be incorporated in the final management plan.

The Project Team acknowledged the value of an area reserved for the exclusive use of swimmers as described in public submissions regarding the Logue Brook Reservoir DMP and accordingly prepared an appropriate amendment to the management prescription concerning swimming.

Whilst suggestions that a firewood collection area be made available were considered inappropriate, it has been concluded that firewood should be supplied to picnic and barbecue sites at the reservoir by CALM.

In relation to the banning of trail bikes from the catchment, the Working Group was advised that unlicensed off-road vehicle activity is prohibited by existing regulations and licensed vehicles and motor bikes are permitted to traverse any public roadways subject to normal road traffic regulations. Policing of illegal off-road activity is the only way in which nuisance activity can be controlled.

Following detailed discussion of suggestions made in relation to options for improving management, it was determined that few changes to the philosophy adopted in the draft management plan could be practicably incorporated.

The efficacy of the proposed Consultative Committee, chaired by the Water Authority, was reaffirmed by a number of submissions. The management concept was further developed by the identification in the final management plan of CALM as the best available source of day to day management for recreation activity. Works programmes undertaken by CALM will be subject to available finance which in turn would be determined by ratification of the Consultative Committee's decisions and advice.

## **Section 8.0 Identification of the Preferred Development Option**

No changes to the final management plan were suggested in the submissions. Therefore in the final management plan no changes were made except that reference to and discussion of alternatives was deleted.

## **Section 9.0 Outline of Management Recommendations**

A number of amendments to the management recommendations were incorporated in the prescriptions included in the final management plan.

These were as follows:

- i) The preference for the use of sealed vault toilets was incorporated.
- ii) It was determined that gas barbecues would not be utilised at the Reservoir.
- iii) Management prescriptions concerning fishing and marroning were incorporated.
- iv) The objective of creating an exclusive swimming area was incorporated.
- v) A management prescription concerning bauxite mining in the catchment was incorporated.
- vi) A management prescription concerning Aboriginal sites was incorporated.
- vii) The requirement for decision making regarding funding of management to be ratified by each of the member agencies of the Consultative Committee was incorporated.
- viii) The preference for recreation management to be conducted by CALM, subject to available finance, was included.
- ix) The need for rangers to be fully familiarised with all of the regulations concerning recreation, was incorporated.
- x) The need to investigate means by which the broad enforcement authority of the relevant individual management agencies would be conferred upon individual rangers was incorporated.



## **APPENDICES**

None of the appendices included in the DMP were carried into the final management plan. However a new appendix detailing the technical nature of the water quality monitoring that had been initiated by the Water Authority following preparation of the DMP, was included in the final plan.

## APPENDIX A

### LIST OF SUBMITTERS - WAROONA DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

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