

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT
POLICY STATEMENT NO. 7 - RECREATION IN NATURE RESERVES

January 1986

RECREATION IN NATURE RESERVES

INTRODUCTION

The CALM Act does not define National Park or Nature Reserve.

Section 56 (1) (c) says that management plans for National Parks shall be designed to "fulfill so much of the demand for recreation by members of the public as is consistent with proper maintenance and restoration of the natural environment, protection of indigenous flora and fauna..."; i.e. National Parks have a dual conservation and recreation purpose.

By contrast, section 56 (1) (d) says that management plans for Nature Reserves shall be designed "to maintain and restore the natural environment, and to protect, care for and promote the study of, indigenous flora and fauna." Recreation is not mentioned.

Section 62 provides for classification of land under the Act in a variety of ways including "recreational area for specified activities", provided that the classification is in conformity with section 56.

The issue is whether the fact that recreation in Nature Reserves is not mentioned in 56 (1) (d) means that it is deliberately excluded, in which case classification of a Nature Reserve (or part) as a recreational area under section 62 would not be in conformity.

It can also be argued that, the fact that recreation is not explicitly provided for in the wording of 56 (1) (d), does not mean it is necessarily excluded.

It can also be argued that picnics in Nature Reserves "promote the study of" flora and fauna and that public access is desirable in this context.

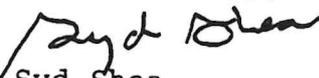
Regardless of these legal technicalities, which will be addressed in the context of our current review of reserve categories, a question of principle exists: what recreational activities may be permitted in Nature Reserves?

The fact is that many Nature Reserves are already used by local people as picnic areas, while some are even used for water-skiing. It would be unwise to now exclude them or to deny local people such access in future. The Western Australian Wildlife Authority did not adopt an extreme position in this matter but carefully scrutinised all propositions from local authorities for recreational facilities on Nature Reserves and gave limited approvals in some circumstances.

POLICY

Until such time as the matter of categories of land vested in the NPNCA is resolved the following policy will apply:

1. Any activity in Nature Reserves previously authorised by the W.A. Wildlife Authority or the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority may continue.
2. Recreation is to be interpreted in the broadest sense.
 - a) The following activities are consistent with the functions of a Nature Reserve and may be permitted:
 - nature study
 - bush walking
 - solitude and reflection
 - photography, sketching, painting
 - picnics in designated areas.
 - b) The following public activities are not consistent with the functions of a Nature Reserve and will not be permitted:
 - camping (see policy on camping)
 - hunting or fishing (except in a gazetted "game reserve")
 - off-road vehicles
 - horse riding
 - pets
 - open fires
 - collecting plant or animal specimens without a permit
 - use of power boats
 - any activity likely to spread dieback disease.
3. Picnic sites must conform to the following requirements:
 - be located on the edge of the reserve;
 - be constructed to an approved design;
 - be properly maintained and serviced.
4. Commercial tourist group visits to Nature Reserves will not be encouraged or facilitated.
5. In the absence of a Management Plan, any proposals for provision of recreational facilities (e.g. tracks and roads, parking, litter bins, picnic areas) must be referred through the General Manager to the Executive Director.


Syd Shea
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

29th January 1986

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