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The community's role

State governments have established a State-wide system of conservation reserves creating valuable State and national assets.

Enhancement, protection and good management of the conservation reserve system remains dependent upon continuing community interest and support.

Whilst the NPNCA is pleased to receive correspondence from individuals and interest groups on matters of interest or concern, it will always attempt to ensure that a balance of community interests is achieved.



Contacting the NPNCA

The Secretary of the NPNCA can be contacted at the Department of Conservation and Land Management, Hackett Drive, Crawley WA 6009:

☎ (09) 442 0300

Fax (09) 389 8603 or (09) 386 1578

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Chairman
National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority
C/- Department of CALM
PO Box 104
COMO WA 6152

Further information on matters addressed by the NPNCA are detailed in its Annual Report. Copies are available by contacting the Secretary.



National Parks and Nature
Conservation Authority

The National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority

*Caring for the State's
Conservation Reserves*



Approximately 6.3% of Western Australia's land area is reserved for conservation, mostly as national parks or nature reserves. These reserves are vital to preserve striking landscapes and native flora and fauna. They are managed by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and are vested in the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority (NPNCA).



National Parks and Nature
Conservation Authority



What is the NPNCA?

The NPNCA is the vesting authority (legal custodians) of Western Australia's conservation reserves.

The Authority prepares policies to preserve lands and waters of conservation value. These policies provide for the protection of the natural environment, allow visitor access, and promote public appreciation and awareness of fauna and flora. The Authority requests research, recommends changes to land boundaries and purposes, and advises the Minister for the Environment on the conservation needs of land and wildlife.

Western Australia has more than 60 national parks, a smaller number of conservation parks, and over a thousand nature reserves vested in the NPNCA. These reserves total nearly 16 million hectares. Six marine parks and one marine nature reserve¹ are also vested in the Authority.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) protects Western Australia's conservation reserves. CALM is responsible for the day-to-day management of these lands and waters. The NPNCA works closely with CALM to oversee reserve management. The community influences this management through the NPNCA.

Who are members of the NPNCA?

Membership of the NPNCA is established under the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984. There are 15 members, 11 of whom are nominated by the Minister for the Environment from sections of the community specified in the CALM Act and appointed by the Governor. The other four are *ex officio* members from CALM: the Executive Director and the Directors of Nature Conservation, National Parks, and Forests.

The community interests are:

- ❖ *Two members representative of voluntary conservation organisations affiliated with the Conservation Council of Western Australia Inc.*



- ❖ *Two members representative of voluntary recreation organisations having a special interest in the use of land flora and fauna for recreation purposes.*
- ❖ *One member representative of tertiary institutions and having knowledge and experience in a discipline relevant to nature conservation.*
- ❖ *One member representative of professional interests concerned with nature conservation.*
- ❖ *Two members representative of local government.*
- ❖ *One member representative of fishing interests.*
- ❖ *One member representative of Aboriginal interests.*
- ❖ *One member employed by CALM (not an ex officio member) whose duties relate to the management of land vested in the Authority.*

The Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed from the non-*ex officio* members.

What does the NPNCA do?

Management Plans

The National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority works closely with CALM to develop management plans for conservation reserves vested in the Authority. A formal procedure, set out in the CALM Act, involves public consultation and participation in management plan development. Plans are submitted to the Minister for approval following endorsement by the NPNCA. Twenty-four conservation reserves have approved management plans including the popular and large national parks. The preparation of plans is an ongoing task.

Regional management plans are also progressively being developed for CALM regions within the State. Reserve and region management plans are complemented by Wildlife Management Programs prepared by CALM. Wildlife Management Programs have strategies for the recovery of threatened species and ecological communities, and the management of harvested species.



These Wildlife Management Programs are approved by the NPNCA before presentation to the Minister for the Environment.

Recreation and Tourist Operations

The NPNCA examines proposals for recreational and tourism use of national parks and other reserves. This includes horse riding through scenic areas; hang-gliding from cliff-tops; water skiing in wetland areas; and helicopter flights over scenic gorges. Some proposals request the exclusive use of sites for tourist activities, such as overnight accommodation.

Provisions of the CALM Act require the Authority's endorsement of proposals to license commercial tourist operations for leases within conservation reserves. These licences enable CALM to control and monitor access and use of lands and waters under its control. Lessees and licence holders are required to follow the conditions of their contracts to protect the conservation values of the leased areas in protected reserves.

Reserve Protection

The NPNCA reviews proposals which may impinge on the natural resources of vested lands. Proposals include exploration for minerals, the use of sites for development access, for petroleum pipelines and interim storage facilities. The Authority scrutinises petroleum and mining applications affecting conservation reserves and advises the Minister on these applications. Western Australia has strong environmental protection laws, policies and procedures in place.

The Authority has also benefited from the interest shown by the community in developments which affect conservation reserves. The Authority meets for one day each month and carries out field inspections as necessary.

¹Legislation is under preparation for the transfer of vesting of marine conservation areas to a new authority — the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority.