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ANNUAL REPORT (WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA, NATIONAL PARKS AND  
NATURE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY)  
(2000) JULY 2000 - OCT 2000

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

**Parks and Nature  
Conservation Authority**

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
AND LAND MANAGEMENT  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 2000 - 31 October 2000

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## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

I welcome the opportunity of introducing this report of the activities of the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority for the period 1 July 2000 to 31 October 2000.

This brief 2000/2001 period has been one of significant change for the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority. The passage of the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill and the Forest Products Bill through State Parliament has set in place a new framework for the conservation and management of the State's natural resources. The State's national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, State forests and timber reserves will be vested in the new Conservation Commission which will replace the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority and the Lands and Forest Commission. The creation of the Conservation Commission introduces a new era for management of conservation lands, including State forests. The proposed operative dates for both Acts and the new Commissions is 1 November 2000.

The Authority has achieved a great deal over its fifteen years of operation. One outstanding feature has been the great variety of issues which has come to the Authority's attention over the years. These range from boundary changes, classification changes, purpose changes and vesting of nature reserves and national parks, fire management, mining and petroleum issues, leases and licences, interim management matters, wildlife management programs, policy development, catchment/lake interactions, saltland drainage and the listing of threatened flora and fauna. The Authority has made decisions about all of these issues. Some of the issues have been difficult to resolve but the Authority has been exemplary in carrying out its duties and in finding consensus of view from a diverse membership.

A major role of the Authority has been the implementation, monitoring, review and replacement of management plans. Many of the NPNCA's functions are fulfilled through management plans for vested lands and wildlife management programs prepared by CALM. The Authority has been responsible for authorising CALM to investigate what an area needs: conservation of plants and animals, visitor access and facilities, use by commercial operators, and so forth. The Authority's principal aim has been to ensure that an area is protected from threats to its environment, but to allow reasonable access to the community wherever that is possible.

I would like to thank NPNCA members and CALM staff for helping the Authority achieve the effective and efficient management of the conservation area vested in the NPNCA.<sup>1</sup> The Authority has endeavoured to achieve its core functions with the resources it has been allocated. (A list of the Authority's key achievements is documented within the 1999/2000 Annual Report under the Special Reports section.)

The NPNCA expresses its appreciation to the CALM staff involved in the organisation of field inspections over its fifteen years of operation and for time committed to accompanying the Authority members. The opportunity to discuss issues on-site with those staff involved in the day-to-day management of parks and reserves vested in the NPNCA is invaluable to the members of the Authority. It would also prove useful for the Conservation Commission to continue discussing issues on-site.

An *epilogue* has been added to this, the last Annual Report of the Authority. It provides an indication of the improved management resourcing that CALM and the NPNCA has been able to pass on. As have all preceding administration bodies, no doubt the new Conservation Commission will itself significantly improve upon the management asset.

In conclusion I wish to thank the CALM *ex officio* members on the Authority for their background briefings to meetings of the NPNCA as they have provided an important service over many years. I also extend our sincere appreciation to the other CALM staff for their professional and dedicated approach to the management of the conservation areas vested in the NPNCA. Finally I thank the Deputy Chair, Marion Blackwell (who has been a member of the Authority since its inception), and other fellow members past and present for their dedication to tasks that frequently take up extra time and personal resources, and to the Authority's Executive Officer for her hard work and assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> The Authority at its 13 October 2000 meeting moved a vote of appreciation for the Chairman's contribution during his appointment and thanked all those involved with the NPNCA (NPNCA members and CALM staff) over the past fifteen years.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## FUNCTIONS OF THE AUTHORITY

The National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority (NPNCA) was created as a Controlling Body under Part III, Section 21 of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*. The Authority is responsible to the Hon Minister for the Environment.

Western Australia's national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and some miscellaneous conservation reserves are vested in the NPNCA. With the exception of some nature reserves which are vested jointly in the NPNCA and another body, the Authority is the sole vestee for these reserves. Day to day management of these vested lands is carried out by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM).

In addition to being the vested authority for these conservation reserves, Section 22(1) of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* prescribes the functions of the Authority. These are:

1. Development of policies
  - (a) for the preservation of the natural environment of the State, and the provision of facilities for the enjoyment of that environment by the community;
  - (b) for promoting the appreciation of flora and fauna, and the natural environment;
  - (c) to achieve and promote the management objectives of the various types of conservation reserve vested in it, as outlined at Section 56 of the Act.
2. With the approval of the Minister, causes study or research to be undertaken to assist in policy development.
3. To consider and advise (in accordance with Section 17) any proposed cancellation, change of purpose or boundary alteration in respect of land vested, whether solely or jointly with an associated body, in the Authority.
4. To submit proposed management plans, for the conservation reserves vested in it, to the Minister for consideration and approval (Part V of the Act, and section 54 makes the Authority responsible for having management plans prepared).

5. Monitor the carrying out of the management plans, by the Department of Conservation and Land Management, relating to those conservation reserves that are vested in the Authority.
6. Advise the Minister on the development of policies for the conservation and management of the flora and fauna of the State, whether on public or private land.
7. Inquire into and advise the Minister on any matter on which the Minister has sought the Authority's advice. However, if the matter involves a specific piece of land, the Authority is required under Section 22(4), to first contact the relevant local government council to provide an opportunity for it to comment.
8. In response to requests, provide advice to any person or body on matters relating to conservation reserves vested in the Authority - if it is practical for the Authority to do so and if also in the public interest.

(Note: Except where otherwise indicated, the terms "the Minister", "the Department" and "the Act" used in this report refer to the Minister for the Environment, the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*).

## AUTHORITY MEMBERSHIP

The Authority is made up of 15 members who are appointed under the provisions of Sections 23(1) and 23(2) of the Act, comprising:

- (1) (a) Four *ex officio* members from the Department, being -
  - (i) the Executive Director;
  - (ii) the Director of Nature Conservation;
  - (iii) the Director of National Parks;
  - (iv) the Director of Forests

(b) Eleven persons appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the Minister, of whom -

- (i) two shall be representative of voluntary organisations having a special interest in conservation, being organisations that are affiliated with the Conservation Council of Western Australia Inc;
- (ii) two shall be representative of voluntary organisations having a special interest in the use of land, flora and fauna for recreation purposes;
- (iii) one shall be representative of tertiary education institutions in the State and shall be a person with special knowledge of, and experience in, a discipline relevant to nature conservation;
- (iv) one shall be representative of bodies or persons the members of which, by reason of their profession, are concerned with nature conservation;
- (v) two shall be representative of local government and shall be at the time of nomination elected members of a local authority;
- (vi) one shall be representative of fishing interests;
- (vii) one shall be a person employed in the Department, not being an *ex officio* member, whose duties relate principally to the management of land vested in the Authority; and
- (viii) one shall be representative of Aboriginal interests.

(2) One of the members appointed under subsection (1)(b) shall, on the nomination of the Minister, be appointed by the Governor as chairman and another as deputy chairman.

Membership and the category appointed under for the period July 2000 to June 2001 are recorded below.

#### **Ex officio Members**

- (1)(a)(i) Dr W J Cox, Executive Director (deputies Mr R Sneeuwjagt, Mr B Chandler and Mr A Walker)
- (1)(a)(ii) Mr G Wyre, Acting Director of Nature Conservation (deputies Mr J Blyth, Mr F Batini and Mr I Herford)
- (1)(a)(iii) Mr J Sharp, Director of National Parks (deputies Mr W Schmidt, Mr J Williamson and Mr P Sharp)
- (1)(a)(iv) Mr K McNamara, Acting Director of Forests (resigned effective from 1 September 2000) (deputies Dr P Biggs, Mr H Crawford and Mr K Wombell)

#### **Appointed Members**

- (1)(b)(i) Mrs M Blackwell (Deputy Chair)  
Mr G Rundle
- (1)(b)(ii) Mr T Day (Chairman)  
Mrs P Barblett
- (1)(b)(iii) Dr J Davis
- (1)(b)(iv) Mr K McMenemy
- (1)(b)(v) Cr H Browne  
Cr T Stroud
- (1)(b)(vi) Mr T Adams
- (1)(b)(vii) Ms T Reid
- (1)(b)(viii) Mr R Bellotti

## AUTHORITY MEETINGS

Meetings of the full Authority were held on four occasions during the period. These were:

14 July 2000  
11 August 2000  
9 September 2000  
13 October 2000

## RESOURCES

The Department provides the necessary secretarial staff to the Authority, being part of one officer's duties plus typing services. The Department's *ex officio* members on the Authority provide substantial input to the Authority, from their own resources and drawing upon various departmental officers as required.

The NPNCA has no financial functions. Costs relating to honoraria, travel costs and day to day running costs are met from the Consolidated Fund appropriation of the Department of Conservation and Land Management. Approximate expenditure for the 2000/2001 year (excluding CALM officers' salaries) was \$24,154.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 175ZE of the *Western Australian Electoral Act 1907*, the NPNCA incurred nil expenditure for the 2000/2001 year.

# THE CONSERVATION ESTATE

## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Under sections 7(2), 7(2a), 7(3), 7(4) and 22(1)(a) of the CALM Act, the NPNCA is the vested authority for terrestrial conservation reserves to which the Act applies. The Authority considers any cancellation and change of purpose or boundary for its reserves under Section 22(1)(c) and associated Section 17.

## CATEGORIES OF RESERVE AND FUNCTIONS

National parks, conservation parks and nature reserves are the three main conservation reserve categories vested in the NPNCA under Section 7 of the CALM Act. Other reserves may be vested in the Authority under the Land Act. The categories are defined as:

**National parks.** These are for the purposes of wildlife and landscape conservation, scientific study and preservation of features of archaeological, historic or scientific interest, together with recreational enjoyment by the public. The classification of national park applies to areas that have national or international significance for scenic, cultural or biological values.

**Conservation parks.** Conservation parks have the same purposes as national parks, but they do not have the same national or international significance. They also may be relatively small in size or their landscape or biota affected by past land use. The first conservation parks were gazetted in June 1992.

**Nature reserves.** Nature reserves are for the purposes of wildlife and landscape conservation, scientific study and preservation of features of archaeological, historic or scientific interest. These are areas in which nature conservation values may not be commercially exploited, and no recreation that damages natural ecosystems is allowed.

**Section 5(g) reserves.** Reserves with purposes other than those established under the CALM Act may be reserved and vested in the Authority under the Land Act. Most of these reserves have a conservation purpose.

## LAND CLASSIFICATIONS AND SECURITY OF TENURE

Under the *Land Administration Act 1997* all reserves are no longer classified as either Class A,

Class B or Class C, as provisions for classifying them as B or C have been rescinded. Previously designated Class B reserves have been retained while Class C reserves are now referred to as 'unclassified' reserves. Provisions to designate reserves as Class A have been retained in legislation. There are only reserves, some of which may be classified as Class A. Before the Minister for Lands can put any major change into effect under the *Land Administration Act 1997*, such as a change of purpose or a major excision, to national parks, conservation parks (whether classified or not) and to other reserves that are Class A, the proposal requires tabling in and the approval of both Houses of Parliament where it may be disallowed.

## CONSIDERATIONS OF PROPOSED CHANGES FOR VESTED LANDS AND WATERS

As the vested controlling body, the Authority considered a number of proposals presented to it throughout the reporting period relating to boundary changes, classification changes, vesting or other matters. These are summarised below.

The NPNCA:

- Approved the addition to North Tarin Rock Nature Reserve A29857 of land in Certificate of Title 2020/234.
- Approved the addition of Sussex Location 5205 to Sabina Nature Reserve A31188.
- Approved the addition of Reserve No. 13289 to Wansbrough Nature Reserve A32428.
- Considered and decided not to object to a Notice of Intent to drain through 'Ski Lake Nature Reserve' A42115 (part of Wakeman drainage proposal) subject to a number of conditions.
- Approved a proposal to realign a section of power line in Beekeepers Nature Reserve No. 24496, subject to a number of conditions.
- Approved the addition of a portion of reserve 42031 (Victoria Location 12520) to Lesueur National Park A42032.

# POLICY DEVELOPMENT

## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

A statutory function of the Authority under section 22(1)(b) of the CALM Act is to develop policies: for the preservation of the natural environment of the State, and the provision of facilities for the enjoyment of that environment by the community; for promoting the appreciation of flora and fauna, and the natural environment; and to achieve and promote the management objectives of the various types of vested conservation reserves as outlined at section 56 of the Act.

## CALM POLICY STATEMENTS

The Department produces policy statements on relevant matters. They serve to provide practical guidelines for CALM staff in the performance of their duties and also to provide to the public a statement about these management guidelines. Where directly relevant to the Authority they are presented to us for comment and formal endorsement. Once endorsed they are accepted as NPNCA policy. Where the policy is one of an administrative nature and does not relate to the Authority's functions these are simply noted. Table 1 lists the CALM Policy Statements now endorsed and adopted by the Authority. Table 2 lists those noted by us.

## NPNCA POLICY AND POSITION STATEMENTS

The Authority itself has also formulated a number of policy and position statements. These are listed at Table 3. Copies are available on request.

## OTHER POLICY AREAS

- The NPNCA provided comments on the draft policy statement on Aboriginal involvement in nature conservation and land management.
- Endorsed the proposal that the Buntine Marchagee catchment becomes a natural diversity recovery catchment under the Salinity Strategy.



**Table 1**

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

**POLICY STATEMENTS ENDORSED AND ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL PARKS AND NATURE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

NO.	TITLE	DATE OF ISSUE
1	Planning	January 1986
3	Phytophthora dieback (Revised)	February 1991
4	Cancelled - see 15	
7	Cancelled	
9	Conservation of threatened flora in the wild (Revised)	December 1992
10	Rehabilitation of disturbed land	November 1986
11	Protection of Aboriginal sites	Yet to be issued
13	Commercial flora harvesting	November 1993
14	Weeds on CALM lands	November 1986
15	Community involvement	May 1991
18	Recreation, Tourism and Visitor Services (Revised)	May 1991
	Section 2.8 - Equestrian Activities (Revised)	-
19	Fire management	May 1987
20	A marine and estuarine reserves system in Western Australia (Revised)	November 1990
22	Taking, keeping and display of live reptiles	November 1992
23	Conservation and management of emus	May 1990
24	Conservation and management of crocodiles	June 1993
25	Community education and interpretation	January 1988
27	CALM's role in management of native vegetation in rural areas	August 1990
28	Cancelled	
29	Translocation of Threatened Flora and Fauna (Revised)	July 1995
31	Management of reserves for the conservation of nature	March 1990
32	Cancelled - see 15	
33	Conservation of endangered and specially protected fauna in the wild (Revised)	December 1991
34	Visual resource management of lands and waters managed by CALM	November 1989
39	Cancelled – see Accounting Manual	
40	Road management	November 1991
41	Beekeeping on public lands	April 1992
44	Wildlife management programs	May 1992
45	Environmental monitoring of pesticides used by CALM	July 1992
49	Radio communications facilities – suspended June 1994	July 1993
50	Setting priorities for the conservation of WA's threatened flora and fauna	August 1994
51	Access for commercial fishing through CALM lands	November 1993
52	Management of north-west islands for conservation	June 1994

**Table 2**

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY STATEMENTS FORWARDED  
TO THE NATIONAL PARKS AND NATURE CONSERVATION  
AUTHORITY FOR INFORMATION**

NO.	TITLE	DATE OF ISSUE
2	Local Government Authority Access to Basic Raw Materials from State Forest and Timber Reserves (Revised)	February 1993
5	Research and Technical Publications (Revised)	August 1988
6	Staff Training and Career Development	January 1986
8	Cancelled – see Accounting Manual	
12	Arbor Day	August 1986
16	Computer Purchase and Use	December 1986
17	Housing	February 1987
21	Communications	August 1987
26	Equal Employment Opportunity (Revised)	February 1990
30	Harassment in the Workplace	December 1988
35	Aboriginal Employment and Training	December 1991
36	Post-graduate Studies and Study Grants (Revised)	January 1991
37	Filling Vacancies by Promotion or Transfer	December 1990
38	Cancelled – see Accounting Manual	
42	Staff Counselling	April 1992
43	Occupation Rehabilitation	March 1992
46	External Funds	August 1992
47	Control of Sirex Woodwasps in Pine Plantations	October 1992
48	Freedom of Information in CALM	September 1993

**Table 3****NATIONAL PARKS AND NATURE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY****POSITION AND POLICY STATEMENTS**

NO.	POLICY STATEMENTS	DATE
A1	Wilderness Policy	August 1989
A2	Aboriginal involvement in National Parks and Nature Conservation	December 1991
A3	Mosquito Control	April 1993
A4	Drainage Policy	April 1994
A5	Basic Raw Materials Policy	May 1994
NO.	POSITION STATEMENTS	DATE
P1	Mining in National Parks and Nature Reserves (Revised)	September 1993
P2	Petroleum Exploration and Production in National Parks and Nature Reserves (Revised)	September 1993
P3	Petroleum Exploration and Production in Marine Parks and Marine Nature Reserves *	September 1993
P4	Guidelines for Flora and Fauna Surveys on NPNCA Vested Lands	October 1994
P4	Guidelines for Flora and Fauna Surveys on NPNCA Vested Lands	Amended August 1995
P5	Seminar and Workshop Program: Guidelines for Developing and Arranging an Annual Program	October 1996

\* Specific responsibility of the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority

# MANAGEMENT PLANS, LEASES AND LICENCES

## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND AND MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Authority (under section 22(1)(d) and section 54 of the Act) is required to have prepared and to submit proposed management plans for lands vested in it to the Minister.

The CALM Act commits CALM to the preparation of management plans for all lands and waters under its control, including those vested in the NPNCA. The Authority appreciates the work done on its behalf and thanks those staff involved for their assistance and cooperation.

Management plans contain statements on the purpose and background of the plan; the resource information on which the plan is based; management issues and discussion of options where appropriate; and a summary of the operations proposed to be undertaken in respect of that land during a period not exceeding 10 years. The Authority considers all draft plans for areas vested in it. The draft plan is then released for public comment for a period not less than two months and written submissions are received from any interested person or group during that time. The Planning Team for each plan analyses and summarises all public submissions and makes changes to the plan where appropriate. A suggested final plan is then presented to the Authority for consideration and forwarding to the Minister (with any amendments) for approval for adoption. Table 4 lists the management plans approved whilst Table 5 shows those currently in preparation.

During the reporting period the Authority approved for forwarding to the Minister for her approval the final management plans for Rowles Lagoon Conservation Park and Clear and Muddy Lakes Nature Reserve and the Wedge and Grey Master Plan (ie amendment to Nambung National Park Management Plan).

The Turquoise Coast Island Nature Reserves draft management plan was approved by the Authority for public release during the reporting period.

## MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The NPNCA has a responsibility under the Conservation and Land Management Act to monitor the implementation of approved management plans (section 22(1)(e) of the CALM Act). Previous annual reports have indicated that, in consultation with the Department, a monitoring system has been evolving. Refinements to this system will continue to be made as the need arises.

Criteria for assessing each of the commitments in a management plan currently include:

- completion status
- quality of work
- ease of implementation
- relevance to remaining term of the plan
- revised priority
- primary responsibility to fulfil (eg, CALM district/region/specialist branch).

Formal monitoring should be initiated during a management plan's mid-term. This is about four to six years into a ten year term. The Authority commenced formal monitoring of management plan implementation in 1991. The plans reviewed by the Authority are:

### Management Plan and Review Date

Benger Swamp Nature Reserve - November 1991  
Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park - November 1991/March 1993  
Lane Poole Reserve - November 1992  
Shannon D'Entrecasteaux National Park - November 1992  
Nature Reserves of the Shires of York and Northam - October 1993  
Cape Range National Park - May 1994  
Fitzgerald River National Park - November 1995  
Yanchep National Park - December 1995  
Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park - May 1999  
Walpole Nornalup National Park - May 2000

The NPNCA endorsed the trial of a new approach to management plan monitoring for the Walpole Nornalup National Park Management Plan.

## MANAGEMENT ISSUES

### Interim Management

**Necessary Operations.** In the absence of an approved management plan for NPNCA vested lands certain necessary operations may be undertaken by the Department on national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves in accordance with section 33(3)(b)(i) of the Act. Such operations are defined in section 33A as "those that are necessary for the preservation or protection of persons, property, land, flora or fauna, or for the preparation of a management plan". CALM's Administrative Instruction No. 23 "Interim Guidelines for Operations" and Policy Statement No. 1 "Planning" apply to the implementation of necessary operations. It is not a requirement that necessary operations be referred to the Authority, however our advice is often sought. Table 6 lists those areas with Interim Management Guidelines produced to date.

**Compatible Operations.** In addition to necessary operations section 33(3)(b) provides that "compatible operations" may be undertaken in national parks and conservation parks where there is no approved management plan.

Compatible operations include "necessary operations" (see above) but may also include operations approved by the Minister for the Environment as being compatible with the purpose for which the park is managed. Before the Minister can approve such an operation it must be publicly notified and an opportunity for public submissions must be provided as for management plans. Advice from the Authority on compatible operations is sought as required. No advice on compatible operations was sought during the 2000/2001 reporting period.

Under section 33(3) the management of the CALM Act, section 5(1)(g) reserves are not constrained by necessary or compatible operations. The management of section 5(1)(g) reserves needs to be in accordance with the Act and for the purpose of the reserve.

**Leases and Licences.** The *Conservation and Land Management Regulations 1992* require that commercial operations on NPNCA vested lands and waters be licensed. The issuing of licences enables the Department to monitor access and use of lands and waters under its control and to ensure, through application of conditions, that the conservation values of these areas are maintained. Leases can also be issued on NPNCA vested lands. Under section 99 of the CALM Act licences and

leases require the approval of the NPNCA and the Minister for the Environment.

### Issues Considered

Issues relating to management plans and interim management matters considered during the reporting period included:

- The NPNCA was briefed by the department on the erosion occurring in the Fortescue River at Millstream.
- The NPNCA considered and discussed the Thevenard Island Annual Environmental Report 1999.
- The NPNCA resolved to support the release of bridal creeper rust fungus (*Puccinea myrsiphylli*) in Woodman Point and other conservation reserves.
- The Authority approved a proposal to increase the maximum vegetation clearing width of the Port Gregory – Kalbarri Road by a maximum of two metres outside the extent of earthworks previously approved to provide for improved drainage to ameliorate scouring and erosion within Kalbarri National Park.
- The NPNCA provided comment on the department's five-year management plan program.
- The Authority had a preliminary discussion on some issues involving the draft Wedge and Grey Masterplan prior to formally considering and approving the plan (as an amendment to Nambung National Park management plan).
- The Authority was briefed by the Department on the Burke Drive dog exercise area adjacent to the Swan Estuary Marine Park and Adjacent Nature Reserves at Alfred Cove.
- The Authority was briefed by the WA Symphony Orchestra and the University of Western Australia regarding a proposal for the development of a music access centre facility impacting on Matilda Bay Reserve.
- The Authority supported the proposal to improve and extend the memorial site adjacent to the lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin, subject to a number of conditions.
- The NPNCA approved vehicle access into the wilderness area within the Fitzgerald River National Park to carry out one survey in spring

2000 under the Western Bristlebird Research Plan.

Access was permitted only under dry soil conditions following standard dieback and hygiene requirements.

- The Authority resolved to grant permission for the Cape Leeuwin Hydroacoustic Station proposal to land the cable at the Granny Pool (Ranger site) in Flinders Bay and collocate the shore facility with the ranger's residence in the Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park.
- The Authority approved access to Serpentine National Park for an equestrian endurance event, subject to conditions.

### **Leases and Licences**

During the reporting period the Authority considered a number of leases and licences including:

- Approval of an amendment to the Matilda Bay Restaurant lease area to agree with what was originally intended and that which is occurring operationally.
- Approval of a lease back arrangement of the Leeuwin and Naturaliste lighthouses to the Australian Marine Safety Authority.
- Approval of the issue of a sub-licence for up to six months for the two existing tour operators at Leeuwin and Naturaliste lighthouses.
- Approval of an "essential works" licence for the sale of forest produce generated by road upgrades and new road construction within Beedelup National Park.

### **WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS**

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 programs are approved by the NPNC before presentation to the Minister.

The Authority did not endorse wildlife management programs during the reporting period.

**Table 4**

**APPROVED MANAGEMENT PLANS  
by plan number**

NUMBER	PLAN	DATE APPROVED BY MINISTER
1	Mooradung Nature Reserve	28 November 1985
2	NR of the Shire of Wyalkatchem	21 January 1986
3	Forrestdale Lakes NR	29 April 1987
4	NR of the Shire of York/Northam	19 May 1987
5	Lane Poole Reserve	30 October 1990
6	Shannon Park and D'Entrecasteaux National Park	2 December 1987
7	Benger Swamp NR	1 December 1987
8	Cape Range National Park	1 December 1987
9	Northern Forest Region (NPNCA and LFC)	14 December 1987
10	Central Forest Region (NPNCA and LFC)	14 December 1987
11	Southern Forest Region (NPNCA and LFC)	14 December 1987
12	Ningaloo Marine Park †	12 October 1989
13	Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park	24 February 1989
14	Yanchep National Park	2 July 1989
15	Fitzgerald River National Park	6 June 1991
16	not allocated	-
17	not allocated	-
18	Dampier Archipelago Nature Reserves	6 June 1990
19	Waroona Water Catchment Area (LFC and WAWA)	18 December 1989
20	Logue Brook Water Catchment Area (LFC and WAWA)	18 December 1989
21	Shoalwater Islands	13 July 1992
22	Walpole-Nornalup National Park	5 February 1992
23	Marmion Marine Park †	30 January 1992
24	South Coast Region (NPNCA and LFC)	23 December 1991
25	Matilda Bay Reserve	7 December 1992
26	John Forrest National Park	26 April 1994
27	Goldfields Region (NPNCA and LFC)	5 October 1994
28	West Cape Howe National Park	9 December 1994
29	Yalgorup National Park	28 December 1994
30	Dryandra Woodland	8 September 1995
31	Lesueur National Park – Coomallo Nature Reserve	25 September 1995
32	Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve	3 November 1995
33	Purnululu National Park	18 November 1995
34	Shark Bay Marine Reserves †	18 July 1996
35	Wanjarri Nature Reserve	1 May 1996
36	Canning River Regional Park	1 September 1997
37	Nambung National Park	2 September 1998
38	Leschenault Peninsula	2 September 1998
39	Esperance Lakes Nature Reserves	21 April 1999
40	Karijini National Park	11 November 1998
41	Swan Estuary Marine Park †	2 September 1998*

\* Approved by Minister for Fisheries on 19 January 1999 but not yet released. Also see table 5.

† vested in the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority

**Table 5**

**MANAGEMENT PLANS BEING PREPARED**

1. DRAFT PLANS RELEASED (and final plans being prepared)	Date of Release
Monkey Mia Reserve*	28 October 1993
Shoalwater Islands Marine Park †	26 October 1995
Swan Estuary Marine Park † and Adjacent Nature Reserves	2 March 1997
Stirling Range and Porongurup National Parks	16 April 1997
Serpentine National Park	24 September 1997
Jurabi and Bundegi Coastal Parks* and Muiron Islands Nature Reserves	3 June 1998
Perup Forest and Lake Muir/Unicup Nature Reserves	29 October 1998
Shark Bay Terrestrial Reserves	28 October 1998
Rowles Lagoon Nature Reserve	22 October 1999
Yellagonga Regional Park	17 April 2000
2. DRAFT PLANS BEING PREPARED (or about to be released)	
<p>Beeliar Regional Park</p> <p>Darling Range Regional Park</p> <p>Herdsmen Regional Park</p> <p>Jandakot Regional Park</p> <p>Jurien Marine Reserve † (indicative management plan)</p> <p>Kalbarri National Park</p> <p>Kimberley Region</p> <p>Lower Ord River and Parry Lagoons Nature Reserves</p> <p>Millstream-Chichester National Park – Mungaroona Range Nature Reserve</p> <p>Rockingham Lakes Regional Park</p> <p>Rowley Shoals Marine Park †</p> <p>Shannon-D'Entrecasteaux National Park revision</p> <p>Shark Bay World Heritage Area Strategic Plan*</p> <p>Wheatbelt Region</p> <p>Woodman Point Regional Park</p> <p>Turquoise Coast Island Nature Reserves</p>	

\* not specific responsibility of NPNCA

† responsibility of the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority



**Table 6**  
**INTERIM GUIDELINES - LISTING**

REGION	GUIDELINES	YEARS
Kimberley	Mirima National Park	93-98
	Prince Regent Nature Reserve	94-98
	Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve	94-98
	Point Spring Nature Reserve	94-98
	Drysdale River National Park	94-98
Pilbara	Millstream-Chichester National Park	1996-2001
	Barrow Islands Group	1999-2003
	Cane River Pastoral Lease*	1999-2003
Midwest	Kennedy Range National Park	94-99
	Kalbarri National Park	88
	Burma Road Nature Reserve	91-95
	Beekeepers Nature Reserve	93-97
	Badgingarra National Park	93-97
	Watheroo National Park	93-97
	Lancelin Island Nature Reserve	98-2003
	Burnerbinmah Pastoral Lease	2000-2005
Muggon Pastoral Lease	2000-2005	
Goldfields	Earaheedy Pastoral Lease	94-2000
Wheatbelt	Reserves A1931, A2079 + C2096	90-95
	Lake Chandala Nature Reserve	91 - reviewed
	Reserve No. 16904	91-95
Swan	Walyunga National Park	92
	Yule Brook Reserve	87
	Woodvale Nature Reserve	91
	Murray Shire	86-90
	Monadnocks Reserves	89-91
Central Forest	Minninup Block	93-97
	Harvey District Nature Reserves	
Southern Forest	Pemberton National Park	87-91
	Lake Barnes Nature Reserve	87
	Big Brook Nature Reserve	88-91
	Denbarker Fire Protection Area	89-93
South Coast	Waychinicup National Park (including Mt Manypeaks Nature Reserve and Arpenteur Nature Reserve)	93-98
	Torndirup National Park	89-93
	Porongurup National Park	87-91
	Stirling Range National Park	87-91
	Cape Le Grand National Park	92
	Cape Arid National Park	92
	Stokes National Park	88-93
	Lake Shaster Nature Reserve	1995-2000
	Woody Island Nature Reserve	1996-2001
	Eucla National Park	1996-2001
	Peak Charles and Frank Hann National Parks	1996-2001
Nuytsland Nature Reserve	1997-2002	

\* Cane River Pastoral Lease became a Conservation Park during reporting year.

# MINING ISSUES

## BACKGROUND

Petroleum and mineral development within WA is permitted under a variety of tenements (licences, leases, permits) which are regulated under petroleum laws and the *Mining Act 1978*. The *Mining Act 1978*, *Petroleum Act 1967*, *Petroleum Pipelines Act 1969* and *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982* prevail over the CALM Act (with some qualifications in respect of marine reserves). Environmental conditions imposed on tenements and projects vary according to the nature of the project and the tenure of the land affected. In relation to petroleum production licences details on these environmental conditions are available from the Department of Minerals and Energy (DME).<sup>1</sup>

## STATE GOVERNMENT POLICY

Current Government policy, subject to certain constraints, allows exploration, production and mining in terrestrial conservation areas in accordance with the *Mining Act*, *Petroleum Act*, *Petroleum Pipelines Act* and *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act* and *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

## NPNCA POLICY

The NPNCA is opposed in principle to mining in conservation reserves, because mining is not compatible with the purposes for which such lands are vested in the Authority. The Authority, however, acknowledges Government's prerogative to determine policy in this area and:

- (a) is involved in the process of reviewing applications for exploration, prospecting and mining;
- (b) identifies the most important biological values and natural landscape features of the conservation estate, and seeks to protect them from any detrimental impact; and
- (c) recommends appropriate conditions and restrictions so as to minimise detrimental environmental impacts.

The Authority (either directly or via delegation to CALM) scrutinises applications to mine or explore in conservation reserves vested in it and provides advice to the Minister for the Environment on such proposals.

With respect to NPNCA involvement concerning petroleum exploration and production in national parks and nature reserves, legislation in force in 2000/2001 did not contain a formal requirement for comment by the NPNCA. However, the *Petroleum Act* was amended to remove the requirement for "proclamation" of reserved land as "Crown Land"

by the Governor. Changes to Section 15 of the *Petroleum Act 1967* (Acts Amendment 17 of 1999, effective 24/7/99) now require the recommendations of the Minister for the Environment for petroleum related activities (except for production licenses) on reserved land vested in the NPNCA. This responsibility has been delegated to CALM in consultation with the NPNCA. Involvement of the NPNCA in relation to petroleum production licences relies on the Environmental Protection Act processes and on administrative arrangements.

Further information in relation to the NPNCA position on mining and hydrocarbon extraction and exploration is available from our position statements (see Table 3).

## 2000/2001 MINING ISSUES CONSIDERED

Matters relating to mining and exploration in NPNCA vested lands continued to occupy a large percentage of the Authority's time. The staff of CALM's Environmental Protection Branch provide valuable advice to the Authority on these matters and for this we extend our appreciation.

Details on the numbers of tenements processed (including these by CALM under delegation) during the reporting period are proposed for inclusion in the new Conservation Commission annual report for the 2000/2001 and will enable comparison with previous years.

## OTHER SIGNIFICANT MINING ISSUES

The Authority considered and gave advice on a number of mining issues during the year. These included:

- The Authority noted the proposed shorelines stabilisation works on Airlie Island by Apache Petroleum.
- The Authority approved the Lancelin Cervantes Coastal Road geotechnical investigations, subject to a number of conditions.
- The Authority approved the proposal for unexploded ordnance clearance in Wanagarren Nature Reserve along the Lancelin to Cervantes Coastal Road alignment.

# ADVICE TO THE MINISTER AND OTHERS

## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The Authority provides advice to the Minister on:

- the development of policies for the conservation and management of the flora and fauna and natural environment of the State;
- any matter on which advice is sought by the Minister

and to any other body, including the Department on matters relating to conservation reserves vested in the Authority - if it is practical for the Authority to do so and if also in the public interest. (Refer Section 22(f)(g) and (h) of the CALM Act.)

## ACTION DURING 2000/2001

The NPNCA:

- Provided comments to the Minister on the progress and future focus of the Red Tingle Consultative Committee.
- Provided comments to the Department of Environmental Protection on the assessment of development proposals in the Shark Bay World Heritage Property.
- Provided comments to the Australian Marine Conservation Society regarding the management of intertidal zones of island nature reserves.
- Provided comments to the Department of Environmental Protection on guidance for the protection of tropical arid zone mangroves along the Pilbara Coastline.
- Provided comments to Agriculture WA regarding the draft State Weed Plan.
- Provided comments to the Chairman of the State Salinity Council in support of the proposal for the nomination of Buntine Marchagee Catchment as a Natural Diversity Recovery Catchment under the State Salinity Strategy.
- Provided comments to the Water and Rivers Commission on the draft policy and guidelines for recreation and general access on Crown land within Public Drinking Water Source Areas.
- Provided comments to the department on the draft CALM Corporate Plan 2000 – 2005.
- Provided comments to the Lake Mears Management Group on the proposed strategy for drainage and conservation at Lake Mears.
- Provided comments to the Minister on the proposed changes to environmental conditions for the amendments to the 1987 Forest Management Plans and Timber Strategy.

# LIAISON

In carrying out its functions the Authority visited a number of places during the year, attended meetings with other organisations and was briefed by representatives from Government and private companies. These included:

- Briefed by the department on *Phytophthora megasperma* in Fitzgerald River National Park.
- Briefed by the Department and the Walpole Nornalup National Parks Association on the Red Tingle Consultative Committee. The Authority agreed that there remains a role for the Committee. The Authority also agreed that a gap in knowledge about fire and Red Tingle exists and identified a need to continue to monitor the impacts of management actions.
- Briefed by CSIRO on the release of bridal creeper rust fungus.
- Briefed by the department on the proposal to re-flood a section of Crystal Cave, Yanchep National Park.
- Representatives from the NPNCA met with the Lake Mears Management Group.
- Briefed by the department on invertebrate biodiversity in the tingle and other forests in Walpole Nornalup National Park.
- The Authority continued to provide input via its representation on the Waroona Reserve and Catchment Area Group, Beekeepers Consultative Committee, WA Flora Industry Advisory Committee, State Gravel Supply Strategy Group, State Salinity Council, Natural Heritage Trust State Assessment Panel, Grey-Wedge Consultative Planning Group, Kalbarri National Park management plan advisory committee and Busselton Wetlands Conservation Strategy Steering Committee.

# ENDORSEMENT OF GRANTS MADE FROM THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND NATIONAL PARKS TRUST ACCOUNT

The Act provides the Department with the responsibility to disburse funds from this account, but the Executive Director has agreed to consult with the Authority on proposed disbursement.

During the year funds were allocated for the following projects:

- Declared Rare Flora database
- Wildflower industry research
- Quokka research.

Note:

Section 68 of the Act provides for the establishment of the Nature Conservation and National Parks Trust Account within the Conservation and Land Management Trust Fund. The account is credited with money derived under the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 and income from investments, gifts, devises, bequests and donations. The funds may only be applied to scientific research relating to flora and fauna, subject to compliance with any conditions imposed in connection with any gifts or bequests.

# SPECIAL REPORTS

*In the past, these reports have been prepared as overviews on some important matters considered by the NPNCA, and where a number of actions are taking place and the threads of information need drawing together to better inform the interested community.*

*In this, the final report of the outgoing Authority, it is considered appropriate to give an indication that successive communities, governments and park management bodies have progressively improved the management response for the community's conservation estate.*

## ROAD ACCESS

### *Introduction*

In the Authority's Annual Report for 1999/2000, a brief history of national park administration in Western Australia was given. The point was made that the first reserves set aside for conservation to eventually form a national park were the cave reserves of today's Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park. At the turn of the last century, they were managed by a Caves Board and visitors reached the caves and associated on-site resort accommodation initially by the State rail system to Busselton

Early rail access was also important for some 'Hills' parks, such as John Forrest National Park and Serpentine Falls. However, it was ultimately road access that was important, particularly when the era of the motor car commenced and was wholeheartedly embraced by Australians. Even before the motor car, roads were needed for travel not only to reach popular parks but also within them. In fact, today's Caves Road was specially constructed to link the public caves and Caves House at Yallingup to the railhead at Busselton. In 1920 it was described as being "the best road in the Commonwealth!"

### *CALM's Road System Responsibility*

Today, the most densely roaded parts of Western Australia are:

- urban areas of our cities and towns;
- followed by State forest; and
- the Wheatbelt and other agricultural areas.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management is a road authority in its own right, and has care, control and management responsibility for a road network that is longer than that of any other single authority in the State including Main Roads WA.

## LENGTH OF WA ROAD NETWORK MANAGEMENT BY PRINCIPAL GROUPS

Road Manager	Network Length
Combined Local Governments (District Road System)	125,000 km approx
CALM (mainly forest estate roads, internal national park roads, etc)	30,000 km approx
Main Roads WA (State's principal urban and regional arterial roads)	18,000 km approx
Total	173,000 km approx

While the majority of roads in State forest areas are essential to facilitate management (eg fire fighting access) and timber harvesting, much of the system is available to or specifically for public recreation and nature appreciation access. Similarly, while many roads passing through national parks are part of the public road network managed by local governments (eg scenic drives in John Forrest National Park) or Main Roads WA (eg Chester Pass Road in the Stirling Range National Park) much of the internal road system of parks and reserves are CALM's responsibility. For their upkeep and improvement, the park manager has an annual budget of only around \$2 million per year.

This is never enough in even ordinary circumstances, but when extensive regional rain events, as recently occurred in the Kimberley and Pilbara, wreak havoc with roads and other park infrastructure, contingency funds have to be withdrawn from other planned projects. Bearing in mind that the State's parks, reserves and forest attractions are an important economic asset (being a significant resource component for the tourism industry), it is arguable that CALM should be considered realistically as a road authority when the annual disbursement of road funds is considered. The size of road funds granted should reflect the true size of CALM's road network responsibility.

### *Things have improved ...*

There is, however, a degree of relativity to most issues. Consider the effort involved a couple of generations ago of motoring to one of today's most popular national parks in the State – Yanchep National Park. This Park was also set aside in Western Australia's early history of European settlement to protect limestone caves found there. Initially the former Caves Board arranged for tent hire on the site because early travel by horse and horsedrawn conveyance was slow and invariably involved an overnight stay. The advent of the motor car changed that – but not by much in the

beginning, as indicated in the following tourist guide account of 1930:

"The Caves surround Lake Yanchep, an extensive and beautiful sheet of water, while only four miles away is the ocean beach, where fishing and swimming may be enjoyed. The caves are not so fully developed as those at Yallingup, but are nevertheless interesting and attractive while the reserve is set in virgin bush.

To reach the caves, Perth is left along Charles Street and the Wanneroo Road. For the first ten miles this road will be found to be very bumpy, being built on a foundation of wooden blocks with little or no resiliency. At sixteen miles the road forks, the left branch - Yanchep Road - being the shorter and more direct road to the Caves. This road, however, is sand for almost the whole of its length. The right turning - Pindar Road - is the one which should be followed by those seeking the Caves. This is a limestone road in good repair, upon which good speeds may be attained and maintained. Five miles along this road brings Pinjar Lake into view. The road turns sharply to the left just before the lake is reached, and skirts the shore for some three miles. With 21 miles covered a well of good water is reached, this being the last before reaching Yanchep, 13 miles further on. There is also another well at 20 miles, but the water it produces is hardly potable. At 24 miles the limestone road, which it is no exaggeration to call really splendid, gives out at a point where the motorist has a choice of two tracks. The right, known as the "summer track" leads through the lake, or at least across its bed and the other, the "winter track" passes around the margin through sand. It is of advantage, therefore, to take to the summer track whenever possible as the going is almost as good as on a made road. Those who follow the winter track are advised to make no deviations from the route, as a track branches out westward about a mile from the

junction. It is quite easy for the motorist to take this track by mistake. It leads out to a dead end, terminating at a lime burning place. The two main tracks meet again at 26½ miles, when the lake is left. Although it is known as a lake, Pinjar is merely a flat depression, containing water only in extremely wet winters. This surface is hard although there are unexpected sand drifts.

The last stage of the journey is a stretch of sand seven or more miles in length, the dread of visitors to the Caves. It is in late summer that the sand is really to be feared, as the track is fairly easily negotiated during the rest of the year.

After 34 miles have been covered the road crosses a depression which becomes a pool in winter, and which must then be avoided by a detour to the right. Just after passing this point a track leads off to the left which has the appearance of being very much used. The tourist must not be misled by this, because the track leads merely to the caretaker's residence. If the main track is adhered to a few yards more will bring the iron gate to the reserve into sight.

The keys of the Cave House may be obtained from the guide, Mr Harry White. Lately however, he has been unable to live at Yanchep continuously, and it is advisable to call at 823 Wellington Street, Perth before starting on the trip. The Caves are locked and barred and without the keys no subterranean exploration can be indulged in."

**Before they set out on such an adventurous trek, we can only hope that most visitors of the era had read the last paragraph of those directions. It demonstrates that how one starts out on a venture can be crucial to the enterprise's smooth ride and eventual success.**

# EPILOGUE

Out of historical interest, the first Annual Report of the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority (for part of the 1984/85 year) is reproduced at Appendix A.

Like the National Parks Authority before it, the NPNCA is also completing its business in mid year. Our predecessor produced a similar end of business Annual Report to this one in 1985. Below is a page of statistics from that publication, and opposite is a comparison as we finish up *our* business and hand over to our successor, the State Conservation Commission. While the size of the conservation estate has not expanded greatly over the past 15 years, it is obvious that management resources have, since the creation of the Department of Conservation and Land Management in 1985.

We hope that the new Conservation Commission, and a restructured Department of Conservation and Land Management, are successful in securing even more management resources, and gain the deserved public support for this need. We wish the Commission well in its endeavours and look forward to reading *its* Annual Reports.



