



## MINUTES

### PARKS AND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COUNCIL

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting

THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2005

8:30AM

Level 1, AXA Building - DARWIN

#### 1. ATTENDANCE

##### Members

Bill Goedegebuure – Chairman  
Djawa Yunupingu  
Penelope Figgis  
Peter Wellings  
Robert Fox

Paula Elmer – Executive Officer  
Matthew Ryan  
Jayne Weepers  
Gordon Duff

##### Apologies

Mick Jerram

##### Observers

David Ritchie – CEO, DNRETA  
Bill Binns – Director Park Management, DNRETA  
Dave West – Regional Parks Manager North, DNRETA  
John de Koning – Regional Parks Manager Katherine, DNRETA  
Andrew Bridges – Regional Parks Manager Southern, DNRETA

##### Presenters

Stuart Gold - Strategic Planning - Parks & Wildlife, DNRETA

Meeting opened at 8:30am. The Chairman welcomed members and congratulated Gordon Duff on his appointment as the Chair of the new NT Environment Protection Agency. The Chairman also acknowledged Djawa Yunupingu featuring in 'the Innovators' article in the NT News on 12 November (copy attached).

#### 2. PRESENTATIONS

##### 2.1 NT Parks Masterplan Update – Stuart Gold

Council received a briefing from Stuart Gold regarding the Submissions received in response of the draft NT Parks Masterplan. The consultation process included an extensive 8 week public awareness through campaign advertising and forums through the whole of the Territory. 35 formal submissions were received. Stuart is working towards having an amended Plan by the end of December 2005.

After discussions on the issues raised, Council gave particular consideration to:

1. Marine Parks
2. Mining on Parks
3. Access to Parks
4. Recreational Hunting on Parks
5. Establishment of an advisory committee to oversee the implementation of the NT Parks Masterplan

Council reviewed the key issues listed above and made the following recommendations:

**Recommendations:**

1. Marine Parks

That the Masterplan incorporate an explicit intention to develop, in consultation with stakeholders, a comprehensive adequate and representative system of marine protected areas.

The Council commends the use of the term 'marine protected areas' as an internationally standard terminology. It notes that marine protected area does not necessarily preclude commercial or recreational fishing.

2. Mining

The existing and potential contribution by mining companies to biodiversity be acknowledged in the Masterplan with the statement that "conservation is everybody's responsibility".

The Council does not support geological survey prior to the declaration of protected areas as existing arrangements are adequate.

3. Access to Parks

No amendment be made to the Masterplan in response to the concerns raised on restrictions to access following joint management.

4. Recreational Hunting on Parks

There is no need for amendment to the section on recreational hunting. Council endorses the continuing discussions on feral animal control by recreational hunters with the shooters representatives.

5. Establishment of Advisory Committees

It is the responsibility of this Council (Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council) to fulfil the overseeing and advisory role in relation to the Masterplan. Council will where necessary consult with experts and or key stakeholders. Therefore Council does not endorse any recommendation to establish additional committees to overview the implementation of the NT Parks Masterplan.

**Action: Council forward these recommendations to CEO, David Ritchie for his consideration for inclusion in the amended NT Parks Masterplan.**

## **2.2 Recreational Hunting on Reserves – Keith Saalfeld**

As Mr Saalfeld was unable to attend due to illness, this item has been deferred to next meeting.

## **2.3 Joint Management Update – Regional Parks Managers Dave West, John de Koning, Andrew Bridges**

Regional Parks Managers provided an overview on how the joint management process was working on parks in Darwin, Katherine and Southern regions. Many 'back to country' camps were held in each region and attended by key traditional owners and Park's staff introduced what was expected by Government, what were the goals and what Parks and Wildlife will be doing and how management decisions are made.

The main objective in joint management across the regions is the establishment of an equitable partnership between the traditional Aboriginal owners of a park. This outcome will only be achieved through the effective engagement of traditional owners in park planning, management and employment. A flexible employment program is being established to provide training opportunities, exposure to the Parks and Wildlife working environment and a likely opportunity to traineeships and full time employment.

## **3. GENERAL BUSINESS**

The reason for non attendance by Mick Jerram today is due to a prior commitment in chairing the Savannah Guides Meeting. Executive Officer spoke with Mr Jerram and has arranged a meeting next week for the Chairman and Executive Officer to provide an overview of today's meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the Hon Marion Scrymgour to the meeting and thanked the Minister for taking the time out of her busy schedule to attend. CEO, David Ritchie also attended for this session. The Council discussed the dingo management item in attendance of the Minister and CEO.

Penny Figgis thanked the Department for their efforts in producing the draft Masterplan and acknowledged the hard work of officers involved.

### **3.1 Minutes of Meeting 12 July 2005**

The Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council Meeting were accepted with a minor change to Item 2.1, Pastoral Overview – Dingo Management by Stuart Kenny, action amended to read "The Chairman will write a letter to Stuart Kenny expressing the Council's views".

The Council agreed:

- to making a group recommendation/resolution at the time of discussion for record keeping.
- a separate Action Sheet to record status of meeting actions.
- to a suggestion by Bill Binns to provide a brief report of Parks and Wildlife key issues prior to each meeting.
- to the minutes being the property of the Council and for a précis to be placed on website and for a copy of the précis to be forwarded to members for their information.

Council to identify themes to plan for upcoming meetings and the following themes were put forward:

- Masterplan – Council to work with implementation into the parks.
- CEO to brief the Council on the Department's priorities (budgets) for next year.
- Invasive species threat to Australia, what key targets.

### **3.2 Dingo Management**

The Chairman advised he had written to Mr Stuart Kenny, NT Cattleman's Association, advising that the Council needed more detail to review this issue and were not in a position to make a recommendation at this time.

The view of Council today was not to respond further to Mr Kenny advising him of Council's further deliberations. Council recommended a formal response to Mr Kenny should come from the Minister.

After discussions on the issues raised, the Council recommends that there be no expansion of the dingo baiting program and no extension of the program to allow landholders access to prepared baits.

**Action: The Council forward the following recommendations to the Minister.**

#### **Recommendations:**

The Council raised the following issues to be incorporated into the redrafting of the Dingo Management Plan:

- The need for the precautionary principle towards baiting while the scientific basis for decision making is improved.
- The need for the Draft Management Plan to incorporate Indigenous perspectives on dingo management issues.
- The need to improve scientific knowledge on:
  - The ecological role of dingoes in controlling feral animals and kangaroo numbers.
  - The role of intactness of dingo packs in slowing hybridisation.
  - The impact of baiting on:
    - non target species
    - cattle losses
    - increased feral animals
- The need to develop better and more accurate data on the real economic impact of dingoes on stock.

**Action: Council forward these recommendations to David Ritchie for his consideration for inclusion in the amended Dingo Management Plan.**

### **3.3 World Heritage Listing West MacDonnell National Park – Andrew Bridges**

Andrew provided an overview of the natural and cultural values recognised as significant criteria for the MacDonnell Ranges in Central Australia to meet World Heritage Listing. A Working Group has been established to advise and

oversee the preparation of the nomination. The Group includes representation from the Department of Chief Minister, various divisions within DNRETA, the Central Land Council and Desert Knowledge Australia.

**Action: Executive Officer to arrange for the Paper to be forwarded with Minutes.**

### **3.4 Garig Gunak Barlu National Park Land and Sea Management Plans – Dave West**

Dave provided an overview of the process involved in preparing the Plan of Management for Garig Gunak Barlu National Park (Cobourg Peninsula Sanctuary and Marine Park). The Plan of Management was prepared in 1987 and set the direction for establishing the Park and provided the framework for ongoing joint management for a 5 year period. The process of preparing the second Plan of Management for Gunak started in 1992, but has stalled several times. The Cobourg Board chose to focus on preparing the Marine Park Plan of Management.

Dave highlighted the following key points:

- Cobourg Peninsula Sanctuary and Marine Park Board are responsible for setting the management direction for the Marine Park.
- Parks and Wildlife Service is responsible for day to day management of the Marine Park.
- The Fisheries Group in the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries are responsible for management of fisheries consistent with a Memorandum of Understanding.
- Fisheries Management Area declared under *Fisheries Act* including Marine Park and intertidal areas.

### **3.5 Kintore Caves Nature Park Overshoot Agreement (proposed rifle range) – John de Koning**

John provided an overview on the process the Parks and Wildlife Commission has gone through to provide an Overshoot Agreement to allow NT Government to construct a firing range on the Katherine Rural College. This Agreement will provide for Parks staff to carry out normal land management practices whilst providing a safety zone for the facility.

### **3.6 Nitmiluk National Park Masterplan – Commercial Development Plan - John de Koning**

Due to lack of time this item was not discussed, however after the meeting, Bill Binns provided the following notes to be included in the Minutes.

The primary objective of the consultancy is to provide the Jawoyn Association and the NT Government with a comprehensive and detailed Commercial Development Plan for Nitmiluk National Park. Specific objectives of the consultancy are to:

- Identify an appropriate range of new visitor facilities and infrastructure and their location within the Park.
- Explore and evaluate the most appropriate land uses for different parts of the Park.

- Explore and pinpoint the possible, viable and most suitable accommodation options with the Park.
- Identify and examine other appropriate commercial investment opportunities and their location within the Park, such as a Jawoyn Cultural and Retail Centre.
- Make recommendations for the Executive Members of the Jawoyn Association about whether to engage a developer to build the accommodation facilities.
- Develop strategies and recommendations to ensure year round utilisation of accommodation facilities and tourism products.
- Identify the visitor segments of the Park (ie. “affluent adventurers”, “grey nomads”, bushwalkers, etc.)
- Ascertain the maximum carrying capacity of different sites within the Park and develop strategies to overcome the problem of overcrowding in certain areas in the peak season.
- Establish a staged approach to opening up new areas for visitation.
- Identify alternative visitor access and entry points to the Park.

**Action: Executive Officer to arrange for the Commercial Development Plan to be forwarded with Minutes.**

### **3.7 Other Business**

Peter Wellings advised there was a draft Plan of Management for Kakadu and will forward to Executive Officer to distribute for members information.

## **4. NEXT MEETING**

Proposed Meeting dates for 2006 will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the months – February, May, August, November and dates will be confirmed shortly.

The Chairman wished Members a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year  
Meeting closed at 4.15 pm.