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**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**CANBERRA NATURE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

**Circulated by the authority of  
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Minister for Urban Services**

# **CANBERRA NATURE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

## **OUTLINE**

Under the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991* the Conservator of Flora and Fauna is required to prepare a draft Plan of Management for areas designated as "Nature Reserve" in the Territory Plan. Canberra Nature Park (CNP) comprises 27 separate reserves located within the urban and rural areas of the ACT ranging from forested ridges and hilltops overlooking the suburbs to grassy plains at the rural/urban interface.

The proximity of CNP to the urban area requires a co-ordinated management effort in order to preserve the area's ecological, cultural and recreational attributes. The many demands on the Park for a variety of uses can result in reduced ecological values. However, the requirements of the community need to be met and the management of the Park is about achieving a balance between Park use and ecological integrity.

Canberra Nature Park serves important ecological and social functions. The reserves provide habitat for a number of threatened species such as the striped legless lizard and provide areas where residents can experience a variety of low key recreational activities for which there is considerable demand.

Visitor use is important, and as this depends on the natural and cultural values of the Park, it follows that protection of the primary values of the Park should be the first responsibility of management. Use of the Park needs to proceed in such a manner that the resource can be sustained for future generations.

A draft plan of management for CNP was originally released for public comment in September 1996 and 39 submissions were received in relation to the plan identifying two major issues, equestrian and cycling within the Park, and suggesting numerous minor amendments for inclusion in the final plan.

A series of public meetings were subsequently held to address the two main issues and a compromise solution was reached involving trials and monitoring and this was presented in the final draft plan. It was intended that the knowledge gained through the trials would allow long term decisions to be made based on local factual evidence.

Further comments on the Plan were received through a public hearing held by the Standing Committee on Urban Services. The Government's response to the recommendations in the Standing Committee's Report has been tabled separately.

Following the Committee's report, further amendments were made to the Plan and Environment ACT commissioned an independent review of the impact of available expert advice and information on the effect of horses in conservation areas with reference to CNP. In the light of the report horse

riding in the Park was reassessed and a new table has been inserted in the Plan providing an evaluation of horse access in the various reserve units.

The management plan for CNP addresses the management issues, objectives, management policies and procedures specific to the Park. It is consistent with the National Capital Plan and the Territory Plan. Management of the Park cannot take place in isolation and this plan defines its context within the wider system of ACT land planning, administration, management and the increasing efforts of community groups in environmental enhancement.

The management philosophy for CNP is to retain the area's generally undeveloped character, rather than permitting it to become an urban park. This will ensure that the area remains a distinctive resource for Canberrans and visitors and continues to be an important landscape element of the "Bush Capital".

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN**

The Plan comprises ten chapters each covering a specific aspect of the management of the Park.

Most chapters in the Plan follow a common format with an overview, specific management objectives and management practices, followed by the management actions that need to be undertaken to achieve the objectives of the Plan.

Chapter 1 explains the significance of the Park as part of the open space network in the ACT, sets the planning context, gives the existing statutory responsibilities and the overall management objectives for the Park.

Chapter 2 discusses zoning for the Park to identify particular management strategies including the provision of a variety of settings for multiple use, intensive recreation, infrastructure facilities and a urban buffer edge.

Chapter 3 describes the management of the natural resources of the Park including its flora, fauna, geology and landscape. This chapter includes actions for the conservation of ecological communities and threatened species.

Chapter 4 deals with the management of Aboriginal and European cultural resources within the Park.

Chapter 5 describes the management objectives to protect natural resources through soil conservation measures, control of pest plants and animals, fire management, limited grazing by stock, pollution control and waste management.

Chapter 6 looks at the management of visitor use including access

arrangements and facilities, specific issues associated with visitor use, public safety, permitted recreational activities, regulation, fees and fund raising.

Chapter 7 considers the interpretation of the Park to visitors, the promotion of the Park, education and volunteers' activities.

Chapter 8 looks at the uses requiring approval such as research, capital and other works, concessions and related activities and assessment procedures for new proposals.

Chapter 9 considers the issues related to adjoining land uses and wildlife in the urban environment.

Chapter 10 summarises the management priorities for the Park with a reference to the part of the plan to which they apply and the development of an implementation plan to further refine the actions outlined in this Plan to place them in a management context.