

1997

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

MURUMBIDGEE RIVER CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

INSTRUMENT NO. 268 OF 1997

Circulated by the authority of the Minister for the
Environment, Land and Planning

Mr Gary Humphries

MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

OUTLINE

Under the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991* where an area of land is shown as "public land" the Conservator of Flora and Fauna is required to prepare a draft Plan of Management for the area as soon as practicable after the area is identified in the Territory Plan. The Murrumbidgee River Corridor (MRC) is an area of public land along both sides of the Murrumbidgee River.

The Corridor comprises a strip of land and water up to 4 km wide for the full 66 km length of the Murrumbidgee River in the ACT. Land uses range from pastoral operations, community centres and museums to low-key recreation areas and nature reserves.

The Corridor serves important hydrological, ecological and social functions. It contains important aquatic systems and many significant natural and cultural features. It provides outstanding opportunities for river recreation close to the urban area of Canberra and Queanbeyan, for which there is considerable demand.

The proximity of the Corridor to urban development requires a co-ordinated management effort in order to preserve the area's ecological, cultural and recreational attributes. Treated wastewater and stormwater discharges are potential sources of sediment and nutrients, whilst rural activities along the river and recreational pursuits may similarly pose a threat to riverine water quality.

There is an unresolved native title claim over a small area near the Murrumbidgee River. It is unknown when this or other claims will be resolved. This management plan will be reviewed, if necessary, when there is a resolution to determine if there will be any impact on land management.

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

The management philosophy for the Corridor strives 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 the people of the region and an integral part of one of Australia's major river systems.

Visitor use is important and as this depends on the natural and cultural values of the area, it follows that protection of the primary values of the Corridor should be the first responsibility of management. It is essential for the protection of the Corridor that the area's natural and cultural values are available to visitors in such a manner that the resource can be sustained for future generations and high water quality for downstream users is maintained.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

Part 1 - Background

Part 1 explains the role of the Corridor as part of the open space in the ACT. It identifies the function of the Corridor, and discusses management strategies in the context of contemporary planning and legislative guidelines and preferred longer term management

Section 1 discusses the management plan in terms of its purpose, the scope of the plan and the development of a management model for the corridor.

Section 2 outlines the planning and management context for the Corridor by considering the regional aspects, its functions, land tenure, the ACT planning context and existing statutory responsibilities

Part 2 - Management Strategies and Programs

Part 2 contains the proposed management objectives, strategies and guidelines for management. It also includes proposals for further investigations, and follow-up management planning for specific areas or topics. Important elements of this part of the plan include:

- the maintenance of water quality and the integrity of aquatic systems,
- the protection of discrete nature conservation areas within the Corridor;
- the management of Lanyon homestead as a 'place museum', involving presentation of each of the important periods in its history in their landscape context, and in a way which promotes visitor participation and appreciation, and
- further investigations and conservation programs are outlined for other important cultural resources

Most sections in this part follow a common format with an overview, specific management objectives and management practices

Section 3 describes the underlying management philosophy, the overall management objectives and factors to take into account when the need arises to make management decisions. A procedure to follow to resolve conflicts in land use is presented

Section 4 deals with the management of heritage values of the Corridor including water and channel management values, terrestrial natural resource values, cultural heritage and landscape values

Section 5 looks at the management of visitor use including permitted activities, access arrangements and a list of facilities and services that the Territory Plan allows within the Corridor.

Section 6 considers the interpretation, education and volunteer activities.

Section 7 describes the protection of the natural resources through soil conservation measures, control of pest plants and animals and fire management.

Section 8 looks at the management of authorised activities including land occupancy and use agreements, utilities and services and the management policies for non-park uses and activities

Section 9 considers management systems such as environmental planning and protection, research, management access and facilities, waste management, public safety and the development of an implementation plan

Section 10 outlines the land management and planning co-ordination that will occur with NSW, Commonwealth and ACT authorities, advisory committees and the co-ordination of management of adjoining lands.

Section 11 describes the management of the Lanyon Landscape Conservation Reserve and covers aspects such as landscape preservation and interpretation of the site. The Lambrigg Historic Precinct is included in this Section

Section 12 outlines the basis for management and the management objectives and practices for the five nature reserves contained within the Corridor

Section 13 discusses the issue of a review of boundaries to achieve a consistency between registered boundaries for heritage sites the management boundary for the Corridor and the establishment of new nature reserves

Section 14 summarises in table form the management priorities for the Corridor with a reference to the part of plan to which they apply