

1994

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**JERRABOMBERRA WETLANDS NATURE RESERVE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

No. 117 of 1994.

**Circulated by Authority of Bill Wood MLA**

**Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning**

## **JERRABOMBERRA WETLANDS NATURE RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **Outline**

Under the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*, where an area of land is identified as "public land", the Conservator 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.

Jerrabomberra Wetlands lie at the eastern end of Lake Burley Griffin and is an area with high conservation values which has great potential as a resource for education and tourism. These characteristics have been recognised by the ACT Government, and Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve has been identified as Public Land (Nature Reserve) under the Territory Plan.

This management plan for the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve provides for the management of the area identified as Public Land (Nature Reserve) in the Territory Plan (Map 2) and adjacent lands, and their development and management as a wetlands education resource.

The management plan:

- \* recognises and protects the high conservation value of Jerrabomberra Wetlands, including its status as one of the most important areas of wetland habitat in the ACT, and its role in the conservation of Latham's snipe, a migratory wader subject to treaties between Australia and both Japan and China;
- \* provides guidelines for the provision of public facilities including a visitor centre, pedestrian and cycle paths, bird observation hides and resources for study and education about aspects of wetlands ecology and management;
- \* establishes a Refuge Area to protect Latham's snipe, and other sensitive species, from human disturbance;
- \* retains a significant area for cattle grazing to maintain the open rural character of Dairy Flat; and
- \* incorporates planning and land-use objectives for Jerrabomberra Wetlands as a significant landscape component of the National Capital.

As a number of urban utilities cross the reserved area, provisions for access and maintenance are addressed in this plan to ensure that the needs of other authorities are not unreasonably affected.

### **Financial implications**

All works will be funded from existing budget allocations.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN**

### **Part 1 - Purpose of the plan**

Part 1 of the plan describes the purpose of the plan, and the significance and value of Jerrabomberra Wetlands (the Wetlands).

- Part 1.1 describes the legislative context of the plan, and the community consultation process involved in its preparation.
- Part 1.2 describes the nature conservation significance of the Wetlands particularly in terms of providing habitat for waterbirds both from the Southern Highlands and to Latham's Snipe, a migratory species covered by international treaties between Australia, and China and Japan. The importance of the Wetlands as an educational and tourist resource close to the city is also considered.

### **Part 2 - Planning and management context**

Part 2 of the plan describes the planning and management context within which the plan was developed.

- Part 2.1 sets the international, national, and regional context for the Wetlands, emphasising the fulfilment of Australia's international treaty obligations with China and Japan regarding Latham's Snipe, and the importance of the Wetlands regionally to the waterbirds of the Southern Highlands. This part also describes the relationship of the Wetlands to other parks and reserves managed by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service (the Service), and to the National Capital Open Space System as a whole.
- Part 2.2 describes how the Wetlands are classified as Designated Land, and consequently how their planning and management must conform to the National Capital Plan.

- Part 2.3 chronicles the history of planning and management for the Wetlands, describing the origin of the Wetlands themselves, and the various studies and plans associated with the management of the area.
- Part 2.4 lists the statutory responsibilities the Service has in managing the Wetlands, in terms of both ACT and Commonwealth legislation.
- Part 2.5 describes those land uses other than nature conservation, tourism and education that are permitted or planned for the Wetlands, and the area immediately bordering it, including East Basin, Kingston foreshores, the Goldenholme lease and major transport links.

### **Part 3 - Management strategies and programs**

Part 3 of the plan describes the management strategies and programs devised for the Wetlands by the Service in consultation with the community.

- Part 3.1 describes the management philosophy and objectives for the Wetlands. The philosophy is to protect the nature conservation values of the Wetlands and to encourage education and tourism sympathetic to these values. The associated objectives set the parameters within which this should be done.
- Part 3.2 concerns the management of habitat and wildlife at the Wetlands, and describes the variety of ecosystems and the issues pertaining to their management, including:
  - the establishment of a refuge area for Latham's snipe;
  - minimising the risk of bird strike to aircraft using Canberra airport;
  - only permitting sand and gravel mining in accordance with the conditions set down in the National Capital Plan;
  - the control of pedestrian access to the Wetlands;
  - the management of grazing;
  - the management of invasive aquatic plants;
  - protecting cormorant breeding sites;
  - the management of existing exotic trees; and

the use of captive waterbirds.

- Part 3.3 describes the provision and management of education and interpretation opportunities at the Wetlands, and discusses the type of programs that might be offered, and the resources needed to service them. This includes the preparation of an interpretation plan for the Wetlands, which will include consideration of a visitor centre.
- Part 3.4 considers the management of visitor use at the Wetlands in terms of permitted uses, and clarifies the situation for uses such as picnicking and lighting fires, fishing, canoeing and boating, the feeding of birds, special events and group activities, and observing wildlife. The provision of access and visitor facilities is also discussed.
- Part 3.5 describes the management of research at the Wetlands. Those studies which usefully add to the knowledge base for the Wetlands will be considered sympathetically, provided they meet statutory requirements in respect of the *Nature Conservation Act 1980*.
- Part 3.6 describes how the Wetlands will be managed to minimise the impact from various environmental threats, including pest animals and plants, bushfire, water and air pollution, chemical spills and dredging.
- Part 3.7 describes the landscape management objectives for the Wetlands, which concentrate on maintaining the rural flood plain character of the area, and ensuring it continues to complement the wider landscape setting of Lake Burley Griffin.
- Part 3.8 discusses the cultural heritage values of the Wetlands, the legislative context for their management, and raises the need for a cultural resource survey.
- Part 3.9 describes the geomorphological significance of the Wetlands, including the existence of paleochannels and the need for their preservation.
- Part 3.10 raises the need for formal management agreements with utilities, such as ACTEW, that have facilities on the Wetlands to which they require access for maintenance purposes.
- Part 3.11 discusses options for developing management infrastructure for the Wetlands.

#### **Part 4 - Management priorities summary**

Part 4 is a summary of management priorities for the Wetlands presented as a table of actions with associated priorities and a reference to the part of the plan to which they apply.