



ACT
Government



Small Memorials Policy in ACT Forests and Reserves

A policy outlining how small memorials in the ACT's forest areas, nature reserves, national park and other unleased Territory land are to be managed.

July 2017

Small Memorials Policy in Forests and Reserves

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The Small Memorials in Forests and Reserves Policy (the Policy) provides a consistent approach to responding to requests for the placement of small memorials in either forestry land, reserves or other unleased land managed by the Parks and Conservation Service that commemorate an event, organisation, group or person(s).
- 1.2 The Policy does not include roadside memorials commemorating the death of a person in a motor vehicle crash. Refer to the [ACT Roadside Memorials Policy](#).

2 Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of the Policy the following definitions apply:
 - 2.1.1 Forestry land and reserves includes all land managed by the Parks and Conservation Service regardless of whether it is identified as forestry or reserve on the Territory Plan.
 - 2.1.1 A Small Memorial means a plaque, a bench or a memorial tree, suggested by a proponent to be placed in situ in memory of an event, organisation, group or person(s).
 - 2.1.2 An applicant is any person or group applying to have a small memorial installed.
 - 2.1.3 A plaque is a metal plaque mounted flush, with a text message displayed that does not exceed the accepted plaque size.
 - 2.1.4 A memorial tree is defined as a tree or copse of trees planted in memory of an event, organisation, group or person(s).
 - 2.1.5 Examples of an outstanding contribution include a park carer of long standing who has demonstrated environmental and social benefits to the conservation estate, or a major benefactor whose contribution has had significant environmental benefits to the conservation estate.

3 Scope

- 3.1 No memorials, other than small memorials as described in this policy, will be allowed within the nature conservation estate or ACT forest areas.
- 3.2 Requests will be considered for small memorials that commemorate an outstanding contribution by a person, group or organisation to the ACT, the ACT Government or a particular area of land, or an event of historical significance to that area of land.
- 3.3 The installation of a small memorial will not be permitted in the Bimberri Wilderness, and in areas where the installation may cause interference with land management operations.
- 3.4 This policy is effective from 1 July 2017.

4 Legislative and corporate requirements

- 4.1 The installation of all small memorials in forests and reserves shall be consistent with various guidelines, codes and statutory plans in force at the time.
- 4.2 The installation of small memorials in ACT forest areas and reserves does not require development approval.
- 4.3 All small memorials in forests and reserves will be designed and located in accordance with this policy, asset management, maintenance and occupational health and safety requirements.

5 Principles

- 5.1 Aboriginal cultural values must be recognised when considering the appropriateness of a memorial and Aboriginal communities must be consulted about how Aboriginal cultural heritage is publicly represented on park.
- 5.2 Memorials will be sympathetic with the cultural landscape and have minimal impact on natural values and visual amenity.
- 5.3 Consideration of requests for installation of small memorials will ensure the memorial would:
 - 5.3.1 Add to the cultural value of parks and reserves by allowing appropriate memorialisation of an event, organisation, group or person(s) with a connection to the ACT.
 - 5.3.2 Preserve the significance of small memorials and the amenity of open spaces by avoiding proliferation.
 - 5.3.3 Ensure that small memorials deliver a benefit to the community.
 - 5.3.4 Be installed and maintained at no net cost to the ACT Government.
 - 5.3.5 Avoid risks associated with the ad hoc placement of small memorial objects including tripping, aesthetic clutter and a proliferation of footings, resulting in an increase in public risk and maintenance costs such as mowing and vandalism.

6 Criteria

- 6.1 Small memorials will only consist of:
 - 6.1.1 A tree
 - 6.1.2 A new bench (which may replace an existing bench) fitted with a plaque
 - 6.1.3 A plaque fitted to an existing bench (but only where the bench is in good working order)
 - 6.1.4 A plaque fitted at a location deemed suitable by the Parks and Conservation Service and in accordance with Clause 8.1.2
 - 6.1.4 A bench memorial and a memorial tree may be installed together so that a plaque can relate to both commemorative items.

- 6.1.5 Memorial trees in reserves must be of local provenance and planted in a location that will enhance the natural values, or be a species in sympathy with the cultural landscape of the area, as approved by the relevant Regional Manager.
- 6.1.6 A memorial bench will be of a style that complements the location of the bench and must be approved by the relevant Regional Manager.
- 6.1.7 Plaques must not exceed 200mm x 100mm in size and be affixed in situ.
- 6.1.8 Text must be kept to less than 100 characters and avoid jargon and acronyms. The text must simply identify the person(s) or event to whom the bench is dedicated, or the individual or group who is the applicant; i.e.: “In memory of John Smith 1940–2006” or “Donated by the Royal Society for the Arts during their national conference May 2006”. All text will be to the requirements of the Regional Manager.
- 6.1.9 Small objects (e.g. boulders, posts and plinths with plaques) will **not** be considered for placement as a memorial in parks and reserves due to their ad hoc nature.
- 6.1.9 Installation must be undertaken or supervised by Parks and Conservation staff and all small memorials (plaques on benches, new memorial benches and trees) become the property of the Service.
- 6.1.10 Approval for plaques on trees or other natural asset (e.g. boulders other than a boulder placed for that purpose) will **not** be granted.

7 Duration

- 7.1 Small memorials are installed for the life of the asset.
- 7.2 In the case of benches with plaques, this will be no less than 10 years.
- 7.3 In the case of trees, this will be determined by the life span of the tree, regardless if the tree fails to reach maturity though not less than three years.
- 7.4 In either case, these periods will be shortened where the small memorial is destroyed or damaged.
- 7.5 When a small memorial reaches the end of its useful life (i.e. when a bench requires replacement and/or a tree dies), reasonable effort will be made to contact the applicant and the applicant may elect to replace or remove the small memorial at the applicant’s expense. If, after reasonable effort has been made, the applicant is unable to be contacted, the plaque will be removed and disposed of.
- 7.6 If a bench or plaque has been irreparably damaged (other than by direct action of the ACT Government), every effort will be made to notify the applicant and the applicant may elect to replace the small memorial at the applicant’s expense.
- 7.7 Applicants are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of their memorial plaque.

8 Location

- 8.1 The acceptance and exact location of small memorials in ACT forest areas and reserves will be determined by decision of the Regional Manager of the relevant area observing the following principles:
 - 8.1.1 Benches etc. will be located adjacent to walking trails in previously disturbed areas and where no ecological values will adversely affected.
 - 8.1.2 Plaques can be installed on benches (either on an existing bench or a new bench installed as part of the memorial), fence posts etc at trail heads or entrances to the reserves, boulders placed at trail heads or entrances to the reserves by the Parks and Conservation Service for this purpose, but they must not be installed on boulders or other assets naturally occurring in the area.
- 8.2 The ACT Government reserves the right to relocate a bench or to move a plaque from one bench to another. In such cases, every effort will be made to notify the applicant and a new location will be negotiated.
- 8.3 No tree will be planted, or bench installed where it:
 - 8.3.1 impedes access to infrastructure and services, or will interfere with land management operations
 - 8.3.2 negatively impacts on the amenity of public spaces
 - 8.3.3 impedes the use of any area for events, active or passive recreation or
 - 8.3.4 diminishes public safety (i.e. benches will not be placed under medium to high risk trees, on vehicle access sites etc).

9 Memorials already existing prior to the start of this policy

- 9.1 Where a memorial is known to the land manager to have been in situ prior to the date of commencement of this strategy or where the proponent for an existing memorial can demonstrate that the memorial has been in situ prior to the commencement date of this strategy, then that memorial will be allowed to remain.
- 9.2 The provisions outlined at Section 7 of this policy apply.

10 Costs

- 10.1 The full cost of installing and maintaining all small memorials will be the responsibility of the applicant and will be recovered via an upfront initial payment indicated in the [fees and charges](#) register.

11 Significance

- 11.1 The applicant will provide a written account of the positive relationship between the community or person, group, organisation or event being commemorated and the ACT.
- 11.2 No new small memorial will be considered for a person, group, organisation or event already memorialised in the ACT.
- 11.3 No living person shall be commemorated by a memorial.

12 Roles and responsibilities

12.1 The Parks and Conservation Service will:

- 12.1.1 receive and assess all requests for small memorials in forests and reserves in accordance with the criteria of the Policy
- 12.1.2 ensure the request for a small memorial is consistent with the Policy
- 12.1.3 grant approval (as appropriate) for the small memorial to be installed and invoice the appropriate fee
- 12.1.4 consider requests from applicants for removal of memorial plaques.

12.2 Upon receipt of the fee and in consultation with the applicant, the Parks and Conservation Service will:

- 12.2.1 negotiate the selection and purchase of the bench or tree
- 12.2.2 negotiate an appropriate site to locate the small memorial
- 12.2.3 liaise with and instruct staff to install the small memorial in accordance with the criteria
- 12.2.4 record the location of the memorial.

12.3 The applicant will:

- 12.3.1 complete a 'Request for Small Memorial in Parks or Reserve' form for the installation of a small memorial
- 12.3.2 bear all costs associated with the purchase of the tree, plaque and/or bench including installation and planting (as applicable)
- 12.3.3 provide all trees and plaques ready to plant or install (as applicable)
- 12.3.4 provide a letter of support from the next of kin or family.

13 Monitoring and review of guidelines

13.1 Indicators of effectiveness:

13.1.1 The community has the opportunity to publicly commemorate person(s) or events.

13.1.2 Small memorials in located in forests and reserves are successfully managed.

13.2 Review:

13.2.1 The Policy will be reviewed every five years.

13.2.2 Fees and charges associated with this Policy will be reviewed annually.

14 Further information

14.1 For further information about this policy please contact: epsddcomms@act.gov.au.