



ACT NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

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INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the activities of the ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee (NRMAC) for the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

Established in 2002, the NRMAC is a non-statutory expert advisory committee that provides advice to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage (the Minister) on the sustainable management of natural resources in the ACT. The NRMAC consists of six members appointed in an individual capacity to a three year term from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019. Membership changed during the year to fill a vacancy that occurred during the reporting period.

The NRMAC met six times during the reporting period. A table of meeting dates and attendance is at **Attachment A**.

1.1 FUNCTIONS

The NRMAC is responsible for the provision of high-level advice to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage. As part of this role, the NRMAC also provides advice to the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD). Advice is typically relevant to the following topics, as outlined in the Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee Terms of Reference:

- Sustainable management of the Territory's natural resources; and
- ACT's nature conservation governance framework, including, but not limited to:
 - > urban development
 - > biodiversity monitoring
 - > landscape scale threats and management priorities
 - > cross-border issues of relevance.

Additionally, the NRMAC is expected to provide advice on matters referred directly to it by the Minister, or by the EPSDD.

1.2 MEMBERSHIP

A range of disciplines and expertise is represented within the NRMAC membership which provides coverage over a variety of issues and topics with in-depth knowledge a high degree of competence. Members are appointed on a part-time basis and hold office for a period not exceeding three years. Subsequent to their three-year appointment, members are able to be re-appointed for further periods subject to an appointment process, undertaken in the year prior to appointments expiring.

Table 1 outlines the expertise represented by each NRMAC member. A short curriculum vitae for each member is provided at **Attachment B**.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH NRMAC MEMBER'S EXPERTISE.

ROLE	DESCRIPTION
Dr David Freudenberger <i>Chair</i>	Effectiveness of revegetation technologies, landscape function analysis, assessment of ecosystem services, sustainable agriculture and forestry. <i>Note: David was appointed as chair on 13 April 2018.</i>
Mr Paul Davies <i>Deputy Chair</i>	Former senior protected-area manager and environmental policy officer. <i>Note: Paul acted as Chair for the period of 7 July 2017 – 12 April 2018.</i>
Dr Lyn Hinds <i>Member</i>	Honorary Research Fellow, CSIRO, reproductive and wildlife biologist; management of introduced vertebrate pests and overabundant native mammals.
Dr Fiona Dyer <i>Member</i>	Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Applied Ecology with expertise in freshwater systems, flow ecology, river restoration, resource management, condition assessment and sediment and nutrient processes.
Dr Erik Doerr <i>Member</i>	Research ecologist on Australian ecosystems (particularly woodland birds) for 20 years.
Dr David Ugalde <i>Member</i>	Science and policy in natural resource management, land systems, agriculture, regional development, and climate change. <i>Note: David was appointed as member on 13 April 2018.</i>
Ms Anne Duncan <i>Chair</i>	Consultant with expertise in natural resource management, community and business engagement and biodiversity strategy development. <i>Note: Anne resigned from the NRMAC July 2017.</i>

RECRUITMENT

Following the resignation of Ms Anne Duncan on 7 July 2017, a recruitment process was undertaken to fill the roles of the Chair and new member.

On 13 April 2018 Mick Gentleman, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, appointed Dr David Freudenberger as Chair of the NRMAC and Dr David Ugalde as the new member of the NRMAC. Both appointments are until 30 June 2019.

Mr Paul Davies acted as the NRMAC Chair during the recruitment process.

1.3 GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

The Manager of the Natural Environment section within the EPSDD, Ms Kathryn Tracy, was the ACT Government observer on the NRMAC during the reporting period.

The Secretariat function for the NRMAC was provided by Ms Kelly Dobson (Policy officer, Natural Environment, EPSDD).

HIGHLIGHTS OF COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2.1 ASSESSMENT AND ADVICE ON LOCAL NATURE CONSERVATION ISSUES

This section of the report identifies the main issues on which the NRMAC provided advice or engaged in related activities. It is set out in accordance with the priority themes for NRMAC business.

During the reporting period, the issues and documents on which the NRMAC were engaged or provided advice or feedback included:

ACT's Nature Conservation Governance Framework

- The Molonglo River Reserve Draft Management Plan
- Lower Cotter Catchment Reserve Management Plan
- Canberra Nature Park Reserve Management Plan
- Northern National Park Feasibility Study
- Review of the *Fisheries Act 2000* - Discussion Paper

Biodiversity Monitoring

- The Grassland Restoration Project
- Identifying Biodiversity Refugia
- Barrer Hill Restoration: recreating vertical habitat structures for wildlife

Landscape scale threats and management priorities

- NRM ACT Investment Plan
- Protecting and Connecting Paddock Trees
- Comparison of Mature Tree Cover Change (dieback) across the ACT, 2004–2015
- The EIS Exemption Application on Molonglo Stage Three
- Loss of Mature Trees as a Key Threatening Process

Cross border issues of relevance

- Australia's Strategy for Nature 2018 – 2030
- National Carp Control Plan

2.2 OUT-OF-SESSION CONSULTATIONS

Between meetings, the NRMAC provided advice on the following matters:

- Molonglo Stage 3 Development Application
- Molonglo River Reserve Draft Management Plan.

2.3 LIAISON WITH EXTERNAL COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS

During the reporting period:

- Mr Paul Davies provided regular updates from his role as Chair of the ACT Natural Resource Management Council.
- Dr David Freudenberger attended the ACT Scientific Committee meeting in December 2017, and is also the NRMAC representative on the Grassy Woodland Stakeholder Group. He provided updates to the NRMAC from those meetings.
- Dr Erik Doerr likewise attended the ACT Scientific Committee meeting in March 2018, and provided an update to the NRMAC.

ATTACHMENT A

MEETINGS AND MEMBER ATTENDANCE

	MEETING 84 23 AUGUST 2017	MEETING 85 04 OCTOBER 2017	MEETING 86 27 NOVEMBER 2017	MEETING 87 28 FEBRUARY 2018	MEETING 88 02 MAY 2018	MEETING 89 13 JUNE 2018
NRMAC Members						
David Freudenberger	X	X	X	-	X	X
Paul Davies	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lyn Hinds	X	X	X	X	X	X
Erik Doerr	X	X	-	X	X	X
Fiona Dyer	X	X	X	X		X
David Ugalde	-	-	-	-	X	X
EPSDD Representatives						
Kathryn Tracy	X	X	X	X	X	X
Heather Tomlinson	X	X	X	X	X	X
Amanda Slade	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kelly Dobson	-	X	X	X	X	X
Annie Lane	-	-	X	-	-	-
Ian Walker	-	-	-	-	-	X
Speakers and Presenters						
Brett Howland (EPSDD)	X	-	-	-	-	-
Stephen Hughes (EPSDD)	X	-	-	-	-	-
Jason MacKenzie (EPSDD)	X	-	-	-	X	-
Tim Wong (EPSDD)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Darren Le Roux (EPSDD)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Trish Bootes (EPSDD)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Debbie Worner (EPSDD)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Stu Jeffress (EPSDD)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Alie Cowood (Uni of Canberra)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Lisa Evans (EPSDD)	-	-	X	-	-	-
Becky Smith (State of the Environment Manager, Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment)	-	-	X	-	-	-
Alison McInnes (EPSDD)	-	-	X	-	-	-
Kate Auty (Commission for Sustainability and the Environment)	-	-	X	-		-
Johannes Botha (EPSDD)	-	-	-	-	X	-
Anna Van Dugteren (EPSDD)	-	-	-	-	X	X
Tony Scherl (EPSDD)	-	-	-	-	-	X
Ian Baird (EPSDD)	-	-	-	-	-	X

ATTACHMENT B

SUMMARY CURRICULUM VITAE FOR NRMAC MEMBERS

CHAIRPERSON

Name: Dr David Freudenberger

Expertise: Effectiveness revegetation technologies, assessment of ecosystem services and landscape function analysis, sustainable agriculture and forestry.

Position: Honorary Fellow, Fenner School of Environment and Society, ANU.

Dr Freudenberger has a diverse research career commencing in 1980 conducting an Honours project on long term grassland and shrubland dynamics across the coastal hills of Southern California. This led to an interest in herbivory and digestion applied to MSc research on nutrition in farmed red deer (Lincoln University, NZ), and a PhD on the digestive physiology of kangaroos and goats (University New England, Armidale, NSW), followed by a post-doc back in NZ on the seasonality of gut function and metabolism in red deer (Massey University). He joined CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology in 1991 to conduct grazing management research in the rangelands of eastern Australia which built on his expertise in kangaroos and goats. By 2000, CSIRO shifted research focus from eastern rangelands to agricultural landscapes dominated by woodlands. This led to research on the impact of landscape fragmentation on woodland bird assemblages and other taxa. In such highly cleared landscapes restoration is a priority, so Dr Freudenberger led a number of research projects on the ecosystem services derived from government supported native plantings in southern NSW. This research put him in contact with the NGO, Greening Australia, which he joined in 2007 as Chief Scientist. There his collaborative research projects included effectiveness and cost of revegetation technologies, carbon sequestration measurement and modelling, biofuels from native species, and the benefits of biochar application for improving restoration effectiveness. He joined the ANU Fenner School in 2012 to continue his current research in applied restoration practice and to lecture in the management of forested landscapes. He became an Honorary Fellow of the Fenner School, December 2017.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

Name: Mr Paul Davies

Expertise: Natural resource management and protected area management.

Position: Retired.

Mr Davies has over thirty-five years experience in land management and conservation policy development at national, state, regional and community levels. He has experience at the senior management level in protected area management, policy development, program development including extensive experience with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and Commonwealth Government. He is the chair of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Southern Ranges Region Advisory Committee and the ACT Natural Resource Management Council. Through his extensive experience, Mr Davies can contribute meaningfully through his understanding of public policy and the complexities of competing demands in natural resource management from various community interests, urban expansion and indigenous engagement.

OTHER MEMBERS

Name: Dr Erik Doerr

Expertise: Ecology and evolution of native species, particularly woodland birds

Position: Research ecologist – Australian Ecosystems

Dr Doerr is an Ecologist who has been conducting research in Australian ecosystems for 20 years. Much of that research has focused on the ecology and evolution of native species (particularly woodland birds), with a focus on processes and functions, to build a functional understanding of complex systems. His approach thus aims to elucidate the relationship between ecological processes and resulting ecological and evolutionary patterns to identify the underlying causes of natural resource management problems and find novel ways to manage them. His specific research interests include individual-based approaches to the study of dispersal and other large-scale movements in vertebrates, including the development of new techniques for characterizing individual variation in search behaviour and new models and metrics to apply this information to natural resource management particularly under climate change. He also concentrates on understanding the nature of complex spatial and temporal mosaic landscapes with the ultimate goal of preserving and restoring dynamic processes at appropriate scales on managed lands.

Name: Dr Fiona Dyer

Expertise: Freshwater systems: flow ecology relationships, river restoration, water resource management, condition assessment, and sediment and nutrient processes.

Position: Associate Professor in Water Science, Institute for Applied Ecology, University of Canberra

Dr Dyer is a freshwater scientist who is interested in understanding how freshwater systems respond to natural and anthropogenic variations in flow, with a view to informing decision making in water resource management. She has informed the provision of environmental water regimes in river systems across south eastern Australia and has lead the development and implementation of monitoring programs to assess the efficacy of the regimes. Her current research projects investigate the consequences of changes in flow regimes (associated with climate change and water resource management decisions) for water quality and ecological responses. Fiona has also been extensively involved in the development and implementation of condition assessment approaches for freshwater systems, having been involved in the development of most major national and regional river condition approaches. Fiona's research is complemented by working closely with Catchment Management Authorities, community organisations, indigenous groups and water resource management agencies. Fiona is also the Treasurer of the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network, a community based, cross border network of agencies, groups and individuals involved in natural resource management in the upper Murrumbidgee catchment.

Name: Dr Lyn Hinds

Expertise: Vertebrate pest management and Australian marsupial biology.

Position: Honorary Research Fellow, CSIRO Health and Biosecurity.

Dr Hinds has extensive experience in the management of vertebrate pests, including the development of benign, novel biotechnological approaches for fertility control and containment, both nationally and internationally. Dr Hinds also has a strong research interest in the reproductive physiology of Australian marsupials. In addition to her extensive research experience, Dr Hinds has held several positions on various scientific and advisory committees and has well established industrial and international connections in her field of research.

Name: Dr David Ugalde

Expertise: Science and policy in natural resource management, land systems, agriculture, regional development, and climate change.

Position: Consultant providing science and policy advice to a range of agriculture, natural resource management, and industry groups, including:

The Grains Research and Development Corporation

Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences, University of Melbourne

National Landcare Smart Farms Program

BASF International

Dr Ugalde has formal qualifications, broad-based skills, and long experience in NRM, land systems, and landscape ecology.

Dr Ugalde has formal qualifications, broad-based skills, and long experience in NRM, land systems, agriculture, landscape ecology, regional development, and climate change. He has published widely in national and international science journals. He has been in senior leadership roles in the Australian and Victorian governments being responsible for developing and delivering a wide range of strategic policy and program initiatives. .

