

Applying for Membership of the National Parks Advisory Council Information Kit – 2009

NATIONAL PARKS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Thank you for your interest in membership of the National Parks Advisory Council (NPAC). This information kit provides some background information on NPAC's functions and activities.

Positions vacant

Expressions of Interest are currently being sought for four people to serve on the NPAC from 1 October 2009. Applicants must satisfy one of the following criteria:

- have skills or experience relating to the preservation and protection of parks
- be a professor or teacher of ecology, biology or earth science at a university in Victoria
- be a rural resident with experience in matters affecting the interests of the community
- be a metropolitan resident with experience in matters affecting the interests of the community

How to apply?

To apply for the membership of the National Parks Advisory Council, please fill in the *Application form* and provide a current *Curriculum Vitae* with a cover letter, preferably in Word document format. Please use the *Curriculum Vitae* template provided. *Application Form* and *Curriculum Vitae* template are available on the Department of Sustainability and Environment website at www.dse.vic.gov.au under 'What's New'.

If you are also interested in membership of the Reference Areas Advisory Committee, please indicate your interest and specify your relevant qualifications where requested in the *Application Form*.

Please send application and curriculum vitae, marked 'Private and Confidential', to:
Kathleen Marcoux
Executive Officer, National Parks Advisory Council
Forests and Parks Division
Department of Sustainability and Environment
PO Box 500, East Melbourne 3002
or via e-mail to kathleen.marcoux@dse.vic.gov.au

Applications close Monday 22 June 2009 5 pm.

Applicants who are short listed for an interview will also be required to fill in the *Declaration of Private Interests Form* and the *National Police Record Check Form* and the *Curriculum Vitae* template (if this template is not used for submitting the curriculum vitae when applying). All applicants will be contacted by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and advised of the outcome of their application.

In line with the Department of Sustainability and Environment's privacy obligations, applicants' documentation will be destroyed if they are not selected for appointment.

Functions of the NPAC

The NPAC is established under the *National Parks Act 1975* (the Act) to advise the Minister for Environment and Climate Change generally on the administration of the Act and on several specific matters.

Under section 11 of the Act the functions of the NPAC are to:

- advise the Minister generally in relation to the administration of the Act and on particular matters in relation to that administration on which the Minister seeks its advice
- advise the Minister on any proposed excision from a park referred to it by the Minister
- submit to the Minister an annual report.

In addition to these functions, the Act requires the Minister to seek advice from the NPAC on certain leases and on consents for particular activities relating to earth resources in parks.

Section 13 of the Act specifies a range of administrative matters including members' terms of office, appointment of the Convenor by the Governor in Council, payment of fees and a quorum of Council.

NPAC membership

Section 10 of the Act provides that the NPAC is made up of 10 members, including the convenor as follow:

No. of members	NPAC membership category
Specific appointees	
1	Secretary of the Department of Sustainability and Environment or his or her nominee
1	Director of National Parks (who is the Chief Executive Officer of Parks Victoria)
Members with specific skills and experience appointed by the Governor in Council	
2	Persons with skills or experience relating to the preservation and the protection of parks
1	A person who is a professor or teacher of ecology, biology or earth science at a university in Victoria
1	A person with experience in local government who resides in a municipality in which there is a park
4	Persons (at least two of whom reside outside the metropolitan area) with experience in matters affecting the interests of the community

Members are appointed for a period of up to three years, and may be re-appointed.

NPAC annual program

In general, there are four to six meetings and two park inspections scheduled for the NPAC over a year. Meetings are generally half a day and held on a Friday morning at the Department of Sustainability and Environment offices, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne. Occasionally sub-committees are established to consider and report on particular matters. Members also contribute from time to time to submissions, written comments, short research papers, report and other NPAC papers out of session.

There are generally two field inspection totalling four days per year and involving overnight stays. Visits to national and other parks under the National Parks Act enable the NPAC members to see and discuss various park management issues first-hand with regional managers, chief rangers and parks staff. Members gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of park management that provides a sound basis for providing advice to the Minister.

NPAC adopts a thematic approach to its deliberations to guide both the setting of agendas for its meetings and the planning of its inspections of parks. The themes for 2009-10 have not been finalised. However, the table below shows the themes for this year and last year.

Year	NPAC current and previous themes
2008-09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous involvement in parks management (continued) VEAC recommendations on the River Red Gum Forests Investigation Greater Alpine national parks management planning The <i>Land and Biodiversity at a time of climate change</i> White Paper
2007-08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous involvement in park management Climate change and the environmental condition of parks – achieving protection of biodiversity Connectivity between parks – how parks play a role across the landscape

Dates for the NPAC 2009 program are shown below.

Year	Date	Meeting/ Inspection of park	Parks
2009	13 February	Meeting	
	3 April	Meeting	
	23-24 April	Inspection of parks and meeting	Kinglake & Yarra Ranges National Parks
	12 June	Meeting	
	14 August	Meeting	
	8 & 9 October	Inspection of parks	TBC
	11 December	Meeting	

Executive support

The Forests and Parks Division of the DSE provides executive and administrative support to the NPAC.

Sitting fees and personal expenses

NPAC members may be entitled to sitting fees, which are set by the Governor in Council. NPAC members are entitled to allowances for travel and reasonable personal expenses (vehicle mileage, train, taxi, meals, accommodation) incurred while travelling to and from meetings and inspection of parks, and during park inspections. Candidates other than public sector employees may be entitled to receive remuneration and expenses for their service on a government body. Paid sitting fees are currently \$260/day for the Convenor and \$200/day for other members. There is no payment for travelling time to and from meetings. Members who reside *outside* Victoria may be required to pay their own travelling expenses to Melbourne.

Definition of a park

A park, as defined in the *National Parks Act 1975*, generally means a national park, State park, wilderness park, marine national park, marine sanctuary and a number of other parks (including several coastal parks, historic parks and regional parks).

REFERENCE AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Some of the NPAC members are also appointed as members of the Reference Areas Advisory Committee (RAAC) under the *Reference Areas Act 1978*. This is because most of the reference areas are within national parks and there is an overlap of responsibilities between the reference areas and the parks. Applicants for membership of the NPAC are invited to indicate their interest in membership of the RAAC. Appointments start on 1 October 2009.

Applicants should have skills and experience in one or other of the scientific disciplines concerned with matters relating to the preservation or management of land and ecological communities.

To apply for membership of RAAC, please fill in the section 'Reference Areas Advisory Committee' of the National Parks Advisory Council – Expression of Interest 2009 Application form (see section 'How to apply?' above).

Functions of the RAAC

The RAAC is established under the *Reference Areas Act 1978*. The RAAC advises the Minister for Environment and Climate Change on the protection, control and management of reference areas on public land.

Its main functions are:

- to develop standards, policies and management directives for the protection of reference areas, for the consideration of the Minister
- to provide advice to management authorities on the management of particular reference areas.

RAAC membership

Section 5 of the *Reference Areas Act 1978* provides for a Committee made up of no more than six members, including the chairperson:

- 3 are nominated by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change
- the remainder are persons with qualifications in one or other of the scientific disciplines concerned with matters relating to the preservation or management of land and ecological communities.

Members are appointed for a period of up to five years, and are eligible for re-appointment.

RAAC annual program

The RAAC generally meets three to four times a year. Meetings are held in Melbourne, and usually on the same day as the NPAC meetings. Meetings usually last an hour to two hours. Each year, the RAAC program is built around issues relating to reference areas on which the Committee's advice is required under the *Reference Areas Act 1978* and also in response to requests for advice on particular management issues as they arise. Occasionally, sub-committees are established to consider and report on particular matters.

RAAC members may also be required to contribute from time to time to submissions, written comments, short research papers and other RAAC papers outside of meeting sessions.

Executive support

The NPAC Executive Officer also provides executive and administrative support to the RAAC.

Definition of a reference area

Reference areas are tracts of land containing viable samples of one or more land types which are relatively undisturbed and are reserved in perpetuity. Their purpose is to serve as a reference for comparative study of similar land types which have been modified by human impact. As such, their management is designed to minimise interference to natural processes.

Further information

Visit the Department of Sustainability and Environment website www.dse.vic.gov.au for more information and to view the NPAC annual report, or contact Kathleen Marcoux, Executive Officer, National Parks Advisory Council, on 03 9637 8027 for more information.