

Discussion Paper

Lawari Conservation Park Draft Management Plan



Background

In 2001 and 2008 the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) purchased with the assistance of The Nature Conservancy two former grazing properties referred to as 'Wyndgate' for the purposes of restoring and enhancing the areas ecological values for future protection.

The land is located at the eastern end of Hindmarsh Island, approximately 10 kilometres east of Goolwa, and is situated within an area of internationally important wetlands formally recognised as the Coorong and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert Ramsar Reserve. These wetlands contain a diverse array of habitats that support a high number of threatened fish and water bird species.

The Ngarrindjeri people are the traditional owners of the land. The Murray Mouth and surrounding Lower Lakes and Coorong region have significant cultural, spiritual, social and economic value to the Ngarrindjeri.

Developing the Wyndgate plan

In 2015, as part of the state and federally funded Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) Restoration Program, a community-based volunteer working group was established to advise and assist DEWNR with the development of a management plan for the Wyndgate property. The plan was designed to complement the existing plan for wetlands on the property, the *Hindmarsh Islands Wetlands Management Plan*.

The working group met for six one-day workshops and site visits between August and December 2015. The group discussed cultural heritage protection, biodiversity management, public access, enjoyment and learning, farming operations, community engagement and involvement, monitoring and research. A Wyndgate Plan Community Recommendations Paper was produced, which was then used to develop a draft Wyndgate Property Plan containing defined Objectives and prioritised Actions. The draft Wyndgate Plan will remain a living document to help guide operational activities within the park.



Lawari Conservation Park

The first stage of Lawari Conservation Park (1058 hectares) was proclaimed in early 2017, with the full extent of the park expected to be proclaimed in 2018.

As a conservation park proclaimed under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* (the Act) the park secures long-term legislative protection for the restored wetland habitats and the flora and fauna they support.

Lawari Conservation Park is also helping to keep Aboriginal language strong through its name – Lawari is the Ngarrindjeri word for Cape Barren Goose, and important bird species for the area.

Under Section 38 of the Act, the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation must prepare a management plan for a park as soon as practicable after proclamation. Park management plans are intended to set high-level directions for management, objectives and strategies for a park, and are complemented by other, more detailed natural resource management plans.

Park Management Plans

Over the next six months, a draft management plan will be developed for Lawari Conservation Park.

The park management plan will draw on the objectives of the draft Wyndgate plan to:

- Provide high level direction for the park;
- Outline the role of the community in supporting the delivery of park outcomes;
- Set guidelines for managing areas used for cropping and cattle grazing;
- Retain the strategic focus and reader friendly style which is now adopted as a standard practice in all park management plans.

This paper has been developed to generate discussion about the use, appreciation and enjoyment of the Lawari Conservation Park, and to invite interested stakeholders to a planning workshop. Feedback received on this discussion paper and at the stakeholder workshop will assist DEWNR in the development of a draft management plan for the park.

Once developed, the draft plan will be released for public consultation for three months. Submissions received on the draft plan will be carefully analysed and used to develop a final plan. The final plan will then be submitted to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation for formal adoption under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*. Once adopted, the plan will become a statutory document that will guide the management of the park.

The *National Parks and Wildlife (National Parks) Regulations 2001* provide the legal basis for the management of recreational activities in parks. These regulations apply to the use of vehicles, aircraft, chainsaws, generators, metal detectors, firearms and boats. They also apply to activities including fishing, camping, swimming, and lighting camp fires.

Park management plans work in conjunction with these regulations by setting objectives and strategies for visitor use, appreciation and enjoyment. If necessary, park management plans may also identify zones where specific activities may be allowed (e.g camping areas) or areas where conditions apply (e.g environmentally sensitive areas which may be accessed for scientific research purposes via a permit).

In conjunction with the *National Parks and Wildlife (National Parks) Regulations 2001*, the Lawari Conservation Park Management Plan could prohibit certain activities from the park, or introduce conditions that apply to people accessing the park. The plan could also introduce protocols for decision making, guidelines for visitors, and strategies for communicating appropriate behaviours through signs or web based information.

Some questions to think about...

Why is Lawari Conservation Park a special place?

What types of activities do you think are appropriate in Lawari Conservation Park?

What are the most significant challenges faced by the park?

What could be done to improve the experience offered to visitors at Lawari Conservation Park?

Invitation to contribute

You are invited to have your say on the use, appreciation and enjoyment of Lawari Conservation Park. A stakeholder workshop will be held at **Goolwa Council chambers, Cadell St, 12:00 -5:00pm on Thursday 8th Feb.**

For more information please contact Sarah Lance, District Manager SAMDB Ranges to River on 8532 9115 or email: DEWNRProtectedAreaManagement@sa.gov.au

Further Reading

Background information on park management planning - http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/Park_management/Management_plans

National Parks and Wildlife (National Parks) Regulations 2001 <http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/index.aspx>

