



FRIENDS
OF PARKS
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Volunteers working for conservation

**A South Australian Community
Success Story**

- The Friends of Parks organisation is over 32 years old
- It has 132 member groups located throughout the state (and growing)
- It is made up of full members and affiliated members
- Predominately have an on-park focus although affiliated members do work off-park also
- In 2018/19 the on-park contribution by volunteers amounted to 78,000 hours - @ \$43.64/hour = \$3.4 mil

There is a Friends of Parks Incorporated Board made up of group representatives who oversee the organisations constitutional objectives i.e.

The objects of the Association are:

- To provide voluntary assistance in the on ground management of national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage in South Australia, in liaison and with endorsement of DEW or its successor.
- To raise funds for the administration and social activities of the Association or any of its members, and for Endorsed Projects which benefit national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage in South Australia
- To publicise national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage in South Australia.
- To provide cultural and social opportunities and activities for members and the general public and to build on community responsibility through awareness, support and enjoyment of national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage in South Australia.
- To recognise the value and contribution that Volunteers provide to the enhancement of the national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage in South Australia by providing support in any appropriate way.
- To publicise the partnership support role of volunteers.
- To receive gifts through the Friends of Parks Gift Fund and to apply those funds to projects and/or activities concerned with the management of the State's national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage, and other Board related projects.

Friends of Parks Inc. Board

Three Year Business Plan

To be an effective, robust, community organisation, that reflects contemporary community values such as equity and inclusivity, and that supports a state-wide network of park-based volunteer groups providing policy advice and practical support to DEW, in managing and promoting the State's national parks.

- To achieve this the Board's goals are to:-

1. *Invest and re-invigorate*

- Supportive of the activities of the group membership through Board sponsored initiatives that reflect the organisation's constitutional objectives
- Able to source and administer funding from a variety of sources for projects, training and operational expenses
- Capable of developing and maintaining a financially viable and resourced member group organisation

2. *Re-connect with the community*

- Working with other environmental and associated groups to enhance the protected reserve system whilst embracing a whole of landscape approach to natural resources management

3. *Plan for Succession*

- Market and promote the Friends of Parks organisation across the wider community thereby facilitating recruitment and the long-term sustainability of member groups

4. *Increase the Friends of Parks Profile*

- Re-positioning the Friends brand in the market place so it has a higher and consistent profile in the wider community

5. *Advocate on behalf of the Friends group members*

- Friends of Parks groups (indeed any volunteer group) reflect the values, principles, morae's of the community within which they are embedded i.e. they are no different to you or I.

however.....

Friends of Parks groups are Very clear regarding their *raison d'être* including the role and value of national parks.....

...i.e.- the sustainable management and conservation of the State's biodiversity and heritage in parks...

...which doesn't necessarily mean the groups and organisation are against development per se.

Friends of Parks Engagement Charter



The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) recognises the valuable role that Friends of Parks (FoPs) have with the Department in conserving and managing South Australia's national parks, and acknowledges that effective engagement is fundamental to achieving this.

Our commitment is to foster a strong and ongoing partnership with FoPs in their role of providing assistance with the on-ground management of national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage in South Australia. This will include engaging with FoPs around new and significant initiatives.

How we will engage ;-

Adapted from *Better Together* – South Australia's approach to engaging citizens:

- We start together
- We communicate early
- We are flexible
- We are genuine and honest in our intent
- We listen to understand
- We keep you informed
- We provide appropriate opportunities to participate
- We recognise your contribution

DEW Engagement Approach

- An engagement plan will be prepared. This will be prepared early, so that engagement can start early.
- Friends – both the FoP Board and individual FoP groups, as appropriate – will be identified as primary stakeholders.
- Engagement plans will detail how FoPs will be engaged, and will specify timeframes, activities, roles and responsibilities.
- Engagement activities will provide opportunities for meaningful engagement, for example, face to face meetings, field trips or other types of information sessions that reflect how FoPs prefer to be engaged.
- We'll be clear about the decision points and who will make the final decision.
- We'll be clear about the points at which the process is commercial-in-confidence.
- We'll be clear about FoPs' level of influence in relation to each initiative, and how the views of all stakeholders will be taken into account.
- We'll close the loop to make sure FoPs know how their contribution influenced outcomes.
- At the conclusion of each engagement project, we will ask FoPs how well they felt they were engaged, and how the approach could be improved.
- We will make sure that FoPs are kept up to date with the progress of plans and proposals as they are implemented.

Summary of Key Points re Engagement with Friends

- Engage early and openly with the group(s)
- They are a great source of knowledge and expertise of parks and their management
- They are a great source of local community networks and contacts