

TUART FOREST NATIONAL PARK

Summary of public submissions

to the

Draft Management Plan 2011

Department of Parks and Wildlife

for the

Conservation Commission of Western Australia

1. OVERVIEW

This document is a summary of the analysis of public submissions (APS) to the *Tuart Forest National Park Draft Management Plan 2011* (the plan) (DEC 2011). It presents key issues and themes within the Tuart Forest National Park as depicted by submissions received on the draft plan. This summary APS informs the final management plan, where the draft plan has been amended to reflect submissions received as assessed by the criteria below.

The plan was released for public comment by the Conservation Commission of Western Australia from 18 October 2011 to 23 December 2011. A notice of the plan's release was published in the *Government Gazette* on 18 October 2011.

Advertisements that the plan was available for comment were placed in two issues of the local newspaper, *Busselton-Dunsborough Times* and *South Western Times* and two issues of *The West Australian*. The plan was distributed to key stakeholders including relevant State Government departments, recreation and conservation groups, local government authorities, libraries and other community groups and individuals who expressed interest during the preparation of the draft management plan. The plan was available from the Department of Parks and Wildlife's (the department) website and submissions could also be made online. Printed copies of the plan were made available at department offices at Kensington, Bunbury and Busselton. The plan could be inspected at department metropolitan libraries and local libraries.

All submissions were collated into a table for analysis. The comments made in each submission were collated according to the major headings of the draft plan they addressed. Comments were summarised based on the main point of the comment.

2. METHODOLOGY

All submissions were summarised according to topics discussed. The management plan was then reviewed in the light of submissions, according to the criteria in the draft management plan (DEC 2011) below.

1. The draft management plan *will be* amended if a submission:
 - a) provides additional information of direct relevance to management
 - b) provides additional information on affected user groups of direct relevance to management
 - c) indicates a change in (or clarifies) Government legislation, management commitment or management policy
 - d) proposes strategies that would better achieve management objectives; or
 - e) indicates omissions, inaccuracies or a lack of clarity.
2. The draft management plan *will not* be amended if a submission:
 - a) clearly supports proposals in the plan
 - b) makes general statements and no change is sought
 - c) makes statements already in the plan or were considered during the plan preparation;
 - d) addresses issues beyond the scope of the plan
 - e) is one amongst several widely divergent viewpoints received on the topic but the text/strategies in the plan are still considered the preferred option
 - f) contributes options that are not feasible (generally due to conflict with existing legislation, Government policy, lack of resource capacity or lack of research knowledge to make decisions)
 - g) is based on unclear, factually incorrect information; or
 - h) provides details that are not appropriate or necessary for inclusion in a document aimed at providing management direction over the long term.

Comments made in submissions were assessed entirely on the cogency of points raised. No subjective weighting has been given to any submission for reasons of its origin or any other factor that would give cause to elevate the importance of any submission above another.

3. ABOUT THE SUBMITTERS

Thirty-eight submissions were received on the draft plan. Figures 1 and 2 show the breakdown of submitters by category and location.

The majority of submissions were from individuals, although there were submissions from key State Government agencies such as the departments of Mines and Petroleum, Water and Aboriginal Affairs, Tourism Western Australia and Forest Products Commission, as well as environment, horseriding and mining organisations (Figure 1).

Over 60 per cent of all submissions were from local Capel, Busselton and Bunbury communities (Figure 2).

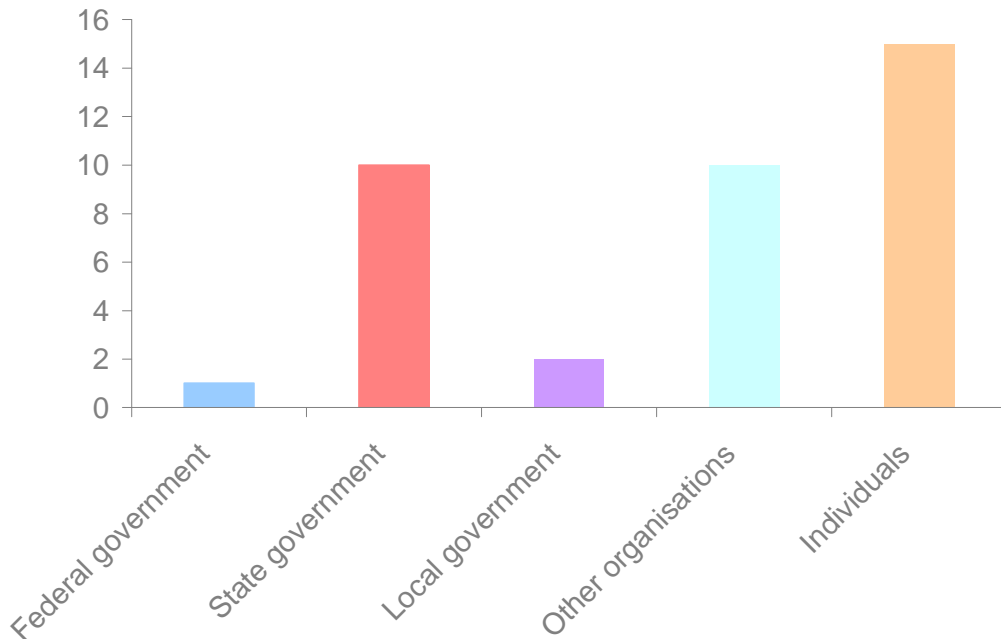


Figure 1. Category of Submitters

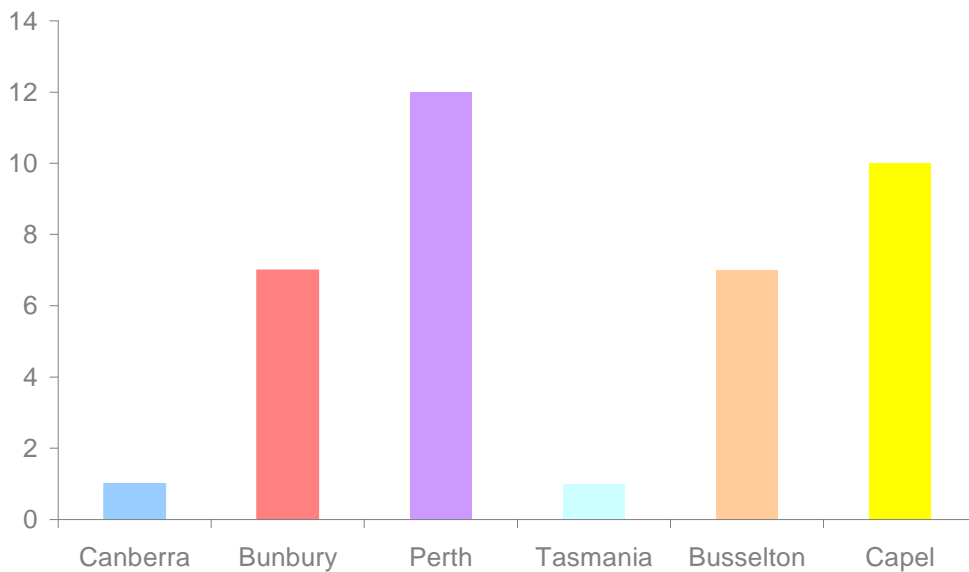


Figure 2. Location of Submitters

4. KEY ISSUES AND THEMES

COMMENTS

From the 38 submissions received on the draft plan, 376 different comments were made. Many individual submissions raised a number of comments. Most of the comments on the plan related to the natural environment, but there were also many comments about visitor use of the national park (Figure 3).

Twenty-one per cent of comments were supportive of the plan, and only nine per cent of the comments resulted in a change to the plan (Figure 4). The latter point is due to submission comments mainly being general statements, with some comments not being feasible or outside the scope of the plan (see *Methodology* above).

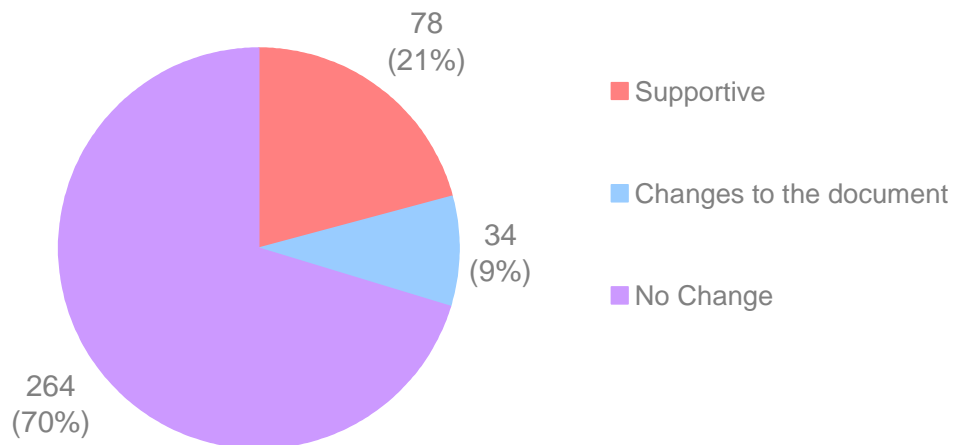
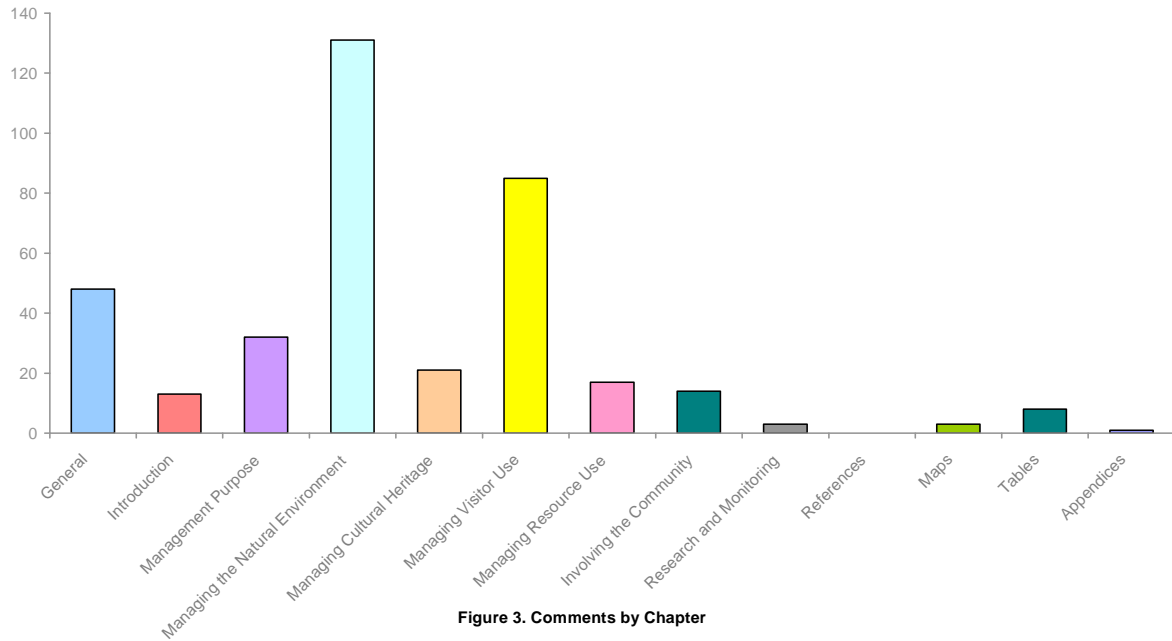


Figure 4. Comments of Support and Change

KEY ISSUES AND THEMES

A description of the key issues and themes that have been raised by submitters follows, including how the submissions were considered when amending the plan.

Motorbikes

Some comments received by various submitters were concerned about motor cycle use within Tuart Forest National Park. There were claims that they use excessive speed, noise, make new tracks, upset and sometimes injure/kill native animals, and churn up the firebreaks. Licensed vehicles travelling at the speed limit on publicly accessible tracks are permitted in the Tuart Forest National Park. As such, the plan has not been changed regarding this issue.

Name change

There were various comments regarding the name of the national park. On further investigation, the Tuart Forest National Park name has been State-approved by the Geographic Names Committee (see www.landgate.wa.gov.au), and the plan has been amended to reflect this.

Due to community sentiment about this and other names in the area, the plan has also been amended to consider any naming proposals put forward during the life of the plan, in consultation with traditional owners and the wider community and in accordance with the department's nomenclature guidelines.

Fencing

There were many comments about the fencing around the national park being in poor condition and a lot of it having fallen down. Both the draft management plan and the final management plan include a strategy to 'Retain and maintain existing fences that are required for management purposes' (Section 17 – *Access*, strategy 5). Therefore, the plan has not been changed.

Kangaroos

There was a substantial amount of comments from submissions about kangaroo control in the national park. Many suggestions included a Key Performance Indicator, monitoring programs and strategies to control kangaroo numbers. Information presented in the plan is considered appropriate for a strategic document that will guide management direction over 10 years. As such, the plan has not been changed on this issue. Further information on kangaroo management in Western Australia can be found at www.dpaw.wa.gov.au.

Horseriding

Many submissions on this issue included reference to phasing out the commercial horseriding activities and the restriction of recreational horseriding within the national park. The department has been in consultation with the horseriding community throughout much of the development of the final plan. The main change to the plan will be that horseriding will be directed away from sites of importance to traditional owners.

Ludlow Settlement

There were many varied submissions for and against the development of the Ludlow Settlement. As this area is still under consideration by the department as to whether or not it will be upgraded for overnight accommodation, pulled down altogether and/or given to the local government authority for management, no changes have been made to the plan. The issue of the future use of Ludlow Settlement will be considered during the life of the plan.

5. REFERENCES

References are either available on the internet (where indicated), are publicly available or can be requested through the department's Conservation Library in the Kieran McNamara Conservation Science Centre at Kensington (see www.dpaw.wa.gov.au for more information on how to search the department's catalogue, the location of the library and how to make loan requests).

DEC (2011) *Tuart Forest National Park Draft Management Plan 2011*. Department of Environment and Conservation, Perth.