



PO Box 3276  
Victoria Gardens  
Richmond, Vic 3121

Phone : (03) 9428 4709

[info@australianbrumbyalliance.org.au](mailto:info@australianbrumbyalliance.org.au)  
[www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au](http://www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au)

ABN : 90784718191

## Australian Brumby Alliance submission to the Parliament of Victoria Community access to parks and open space to be explored

BY 28 September 2020 to [eii@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:eii@parliament.vic.gov.au) or use [eSubmissions form](#)

The Victorian Parliament is to inquiry into the current and future arrangements to secure environmental infrastructure, particularly parks and open space, for a growing population in Melbourne and across regional centres to the Environment and Planning Committee for consideration and report no later than 31 December 2020.

The Australian Brumby Alliance Inc. (**ABA**) advocates for the recognition, management, preservation and welfare of sustainable Australian Wild Horse populations

The ABA submission will highlight the concerns we have experienced with Parks Victoria's (**PV**) as they increasing restrict access Parks for non-Aboriginal Australian Communities.

The National Parks Act 1975 Preamble highlights the main purpose for having parks is 'for the benefit of the public'. For example;

- "it is in the public interest .... characterised by its predominantly unspoilt landscape, and its flora, fauna and other features, should be preserved and protected *for the benefit of the public*."
- "it is in the public interest ... landscapes or other features of particular interest or suitability for the enjoyment, recreation and public education of the public of or in matters pertaining to the countryside should be preserved permanently and made available *for the benefit of the public* and in particular that there should be so reserved and made available:"
  - "areas that demonstrate man's effect on his environment whether through agriculture or pastoral pursuits or otherwise" (preamble (b));
  - "areas of natural beauty or interest primarily for recreation and educational use but parts of which may be used for primary industry, hunting, shooting, fishing or other uses appropriate to the areas" (preamble (d)).

The Parks Victoria Act 2018 **Statement of Obligations** Gazetted 30 October 2018 states;

#### **4.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES, relevant sections include;**

- Healthy Parks Healthy People, which recognises the fundamental connections between human health and environmental health, is an underlying philosophy of Parks Victoria
- The community should be placed at the centre of park planning & management evidence-based decision
- Evidence-based decision making contributes to better decisions and management
- Outcomes, and **in 9.1 Management priorities,**
- Parks Victoria must work to enhance visitor access to the parks and other areas it manages while protecting the natural and cultural values of these areas.

#### **Native versus non-native inconsistent policies;**

Parks often use the claim that non-native flora and fauna are bad for the environment simple because they have been introduced to park areas since 1877. In practice, there are many inconsistencies in which non-native animals must be exterminated, controlled or bred and actively re-introduced to keep their populations high. Examples of illogical, inconsistent in park access decisions that we have experienced across Victoria include;

- **Non-native Deer** will be controlled but NOT exterminated,
- **Non-native Brumbies** will be exterminated where ever possible, and
- **Non-native Trout** are bred in hatcheries to re-introduce to sustain trout fishing.

#### **Access to Recreation activities**

There appears to be no consistent policy for the types of recreation Parks Victoria permits or prohibits across the parks they are responsible to manage in accordance with the Act.

- Victoria will soon be denied the opportunities to visit, paint, photograph and value the 150 **Brumbies living wild** in Bogong High Plains and Barmah national park.
- While **deer, pigs, rabbits** etc. can continue to shoot by sporting shooters.
- The **trout** fishing industry is assured of the constant supply of trout being bred and re-introduced to park areas by Parks Victoria.
- **Horse riding** is banned in Barmah national park, to stop weed introduction,
- While **motor bikes, trail bikes** and **4WD** vehicles can continue to be used, yet studies have shown that many seeds (weeds) from outside the park are brought into the parks on the wheels of vehicles and hiker clothing.

#### **Parks Victoria Land Management Strategy (LMS) 2019**

National parks in Victoria previously “owned by ALL Australians” or as the Act regulated “be preserved permanently and made available *for the benefit of the public* is increasingly being represented by just one section of the Australian public.

Parks Victoria LMS 2019 (<https://engage.vic.gov.au/lms>) states that “parks and reserves have been **returned to Aboriginal ownership** under Aboriginal Title” and the Government is

“expected to apply to **more** of the **parks estate** in the **future as further formal agreements with Traditional Owners are implemented.**”

NOTE: The ABA fully supports the integration of all Australian multicultural values, which must be inclusive of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal values since each community values its culture from its own unique historical perspective. This is not the time to argue one culture above another; we need to work towards respectful balance and mutual respect. Surely we need to move forward with inclusive, not divisive actions from Parks Victoria, our comments are ignored by Parks Victoria and the Victorian Environment Minister.

Previous Park management plans listed the **Burra Charter** as one of several documents to be **adhered** to. PV stopped listing the Burra Chartered after the “Greater Alpine National Park (Vic) management plan draft was released in 2014. Extracts from The Burra Charter’s focus on cultural values, include;

- that co-existing cultural values “should always be recognised, respected and encouraged”,
- “This is especially important in cases where they conflict”,
- each of our cultural values reflects “the diversity of our communities, telling us about who we are and the past that has formed us and the Australian landscape” ... “must be conserved” ... ” in accordance with the principle of inter-generational equity”.

#### **Examples where parks have not met community expectations**

- Selling local parks to allow for increased buildings while COVID-19 has shown the need to keep our local parks for community activities
- Many of the Australian public are obese, and as sedentary jobs increase in proportion to mechanism of manual activities, we need to encourage interaction and values of visiting park open spaces.

Yours sincerely



President, Australian Brumby Alliance Inc.

#### **Weeds introduced to national park 3 examples referenced below**

- a) The Snowy Hydro-Electric and Irrigation Scheme – A situation and critical analysis by D. Cousineau & N. Cammerman  
<http://www.watercentre.org/education/programs/attachments/case-study2.pdf>
- b) In the 50s and 60s Scotch/Spanish Broom, Lupins, willows and other exotic trees were introduced during the building of the Snowy Scheme. [NPWS Admin reply to queries raised in the “Protect the Snowies” Chat room process].  
[https://engage.environment.nsw.gov.au/protectsnowies/forum\\_topics/what-is-more-important-toconsider-the-estimated-population-of-wild-horses-or-the-impact-of-wild-horses-on-the-national-parkor-both](https://engage.environment.nsw.gov.au/protectsnowies/forum_topics/what-is-more-important-toconsider-the-estimated-population-of-wild-horses-or-the-impact-of-wild-horses-on-the-national-parkor-both)
- c) Hikers spread invasive plant seeds (2011)  
<http://weedsnetwork.com/traction/permalink/WeedsNews1938>