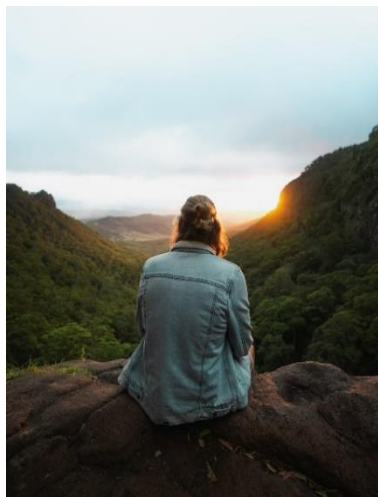


Connecting Community with Nature: Activity Days in National Parks



National Parks Association of Queensland (NPAQ)

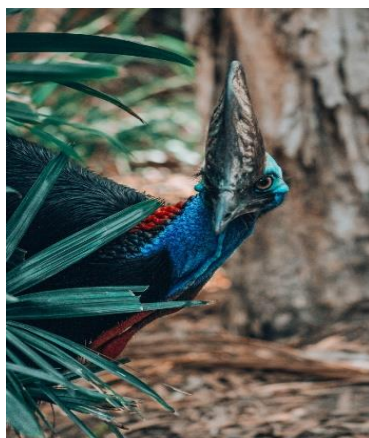
1. The Need



National Parks are the primary Protected Areas for nature conservation. In Queensland, protected areas are undersized, underfunded and under threat. They require expansion, protection and better management. Community awareness and support is needed to drive this agenda to the Government. Connecting the community to these issues by a series of Activity Days in National Parks is a practical and effective way to build support for more action from Government.

The situation regarding National Parks in Queensland is woeful:

- Queensland has the lowest percentage of land in protected areas in Australia (8.4%) – less than half the national average (19%) and well below the Queensland Government's own commitment of 17% by 2020;
- Queensland government funding for NP acquisition has declined by 65% since 2015;
- Since 2015, opportunities to purchase 175 properties with very high biodiversity values and protect them as NPs have been disregarded.



And our unique biodiversity is feeling the effects:

- The koala population in Queensland has declined by 53% since 2001, with an 80% decline in some regions.
- Cassowaries have survived for over 80 million years – but estimates are that fewer than 1,000 now remain in the wild due to loss of habitat.
- Around 80% of Main Range NP was burnt in the recent fires, severely damaging habitat for the Endangered Hastings River Mouse and the Vulnerable Glossy Black Cockatoo.

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the importance of nature and natural areas to the community's physical health, mental health and overall well-being, with unprecedented numbers visiting National Parks and nature reserves. However, many people are not familiar with the critical role that National Parks serve in preserving our unique biodiversity and the role that the government should play in nature protection. We now have a significant opportunity to build a stronger connection in the community to these natural areas, and to galvanise their support in advocating for more resources for parks.

Connecting Community with Nature: Activity Days in National Parks



National Parks Association of Queensland (NPAQ)

2. Our Proposal



NPAQ propose a series of nine Activity Days over eight months in a variety of South East Queensland's National Parks. They will connect the community to these natural areas, and highlight their crucial role in protecting our biodiversity.

These events will feature: practical activities with a nature focus; stories around various themes including the park's natural and social history; explaining its unique features and their national /international significance; how we need to manage significant impacts, and guided walks to highlight its values. These activities will be fun, informative, and develop a strong appreciation and deeper understanding of the natural area's significance and value. Material and information to motivate participants in advocating for parks will

be part of the program. An important element will be the involvement of First Nations guide(s) to highlight the traditional values and uses of the National Park, and identify practical examples still present in the Park.

Although the whole community will be welcome, families and youth will be targeted participants. The Activity Days will highlight the important role of these protected natural areas, and the enjoyable experiences and discoveries they offer. They will be easily accessible, with the first being designed and run in a National Park close to Brisbane.

NPAQ currently does not have the staff or resources to undertake such a project. Funding is required for a Project Officer to design and manage the delivery. They will need to trigger the interest and support of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) as an important partner. This has additional benefits in building stronger relationships to improve future NPAQ advocacy work.

3. Project Objectives

- Connecting people to their National Parks;
- Sell the crucial role of National Parks;
- Build community support for well-managed natural areas;
- Empower people to advocate for additional government resources;
- Promote the profile and role of NPAQ in the community;
- Provide opportunities for First Nations guides to further develop skills in a paid role.

4. Project Budget

Stage 1: \$18,020 to design and deliver the first 2 x Activity Days before the end of 2020.

The bulk of the work in forging partnerships, designing the activities, materials and marketing will be completed in this first stage, and establish an effective project for further delivery in 2021.

Stage 2: \$29,400 to deliver a further 7 x Activity Days over the following 5 months in 2021.

TOTAL = \$47,420

Connecting Community with Nature: Activity Days in National Parks

National Parks Association of Queensland (NPAQ)



Item	\$
STAGE 1:	
Project Officer @ \$40/hr x 3 days per week for 3 months	11,520
Travel	500
Marketing materials: design, printing	2,500
Indigenous guide	2,000
Activities materials	1,500
Total	\$18,020
STAGE 2:	
Project Officer @ \$40/hr x 3 days per week for 5 months	19,200
Travel	700
Marketing materials: design, printing	1,500
Indigenous guide	5,000
Activities materials	3,000
Total	\$29,400

5. Project Execution

We hope to appoint a Project Officer by mid-late September 2020. They will co-ordinate and manage all tasks associated with the Activity Days. The Project Officer will report to NPAQ Councillor Susanne Cooper, and be supported by other Councillors and staff on an as-required basis. We aim to hold the first two Activity Days by mid December 2020. Feedback and a review of these events will inform the design and delivery of the rest of the Activity Days in 2021.

6. NPAQ: Admin details

NPAQ is a registered charity with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. ABN 60 206 792 095. Bank account details:

National Parks Association of Qld Inc.
BSB: 124-001
Account: 1001 8942

7. Further Information

NPAQ project contact: Susanne Cooper (NPAQ Councillor): 0423 783 022;
susanne.cooper@outlook.com



National Parks Association of Queensland Inc.

Celebrating 90 continuous years of advocacy for Queensland's protected areas.

The National Parks Association of Queensland (NPAQ) promotes the preservation, expansion and good management of national parks and other forms of protected areas in Queensland.

Established in 1930, NPAQ has played a pivotal role in the creation of many national parks in Queensland, including iconic parks such as Girraween National Park.

NPAQ brings together people

who share an appreciation for protected areas and the vital role they play in conserving our unique and splendid natural environment.

NPAQ's core functions include advocacy, outdoor recreation activities, conservation activities, education and research.

NPAQ is an independent, not-for-profit, membership-based organization. We were the first conservation organisation

in Queensland, and the longest running National Park Association in Australia.

As the only environmental NGO in Queensland that focuses specifically on protected areas, and at a time when conservation lands are increasingly vulnerable to contestation from competing land uses, your support is vital to help ensure our long history of successful and tangible outcomes continues into the future.

Since our foundation, about 70% of all national parks in Queensland were either gazetted or extended following recommendations made to the State Government by NPAQ. The list includes iconic parks such as Girraween, Springbrook, Glass House Mountains, Hinchinbrook, Eungella, Munga-Thirri (Simpson Desert) and World Heritage Areas such as the upper sections of the Daintree. Many national parks in existence today, which are enjoyed by Queenslanders and visitors to the state, are a result of the persistence and tenacity of NPAQ and its members.



Above: In 2018 NPAQ helped stop a proposed revocation of part of Lindeman Islands National Park (Photo: Mackay Conservation Group).



Just a few highlights from the first 90 years of NPAQ include:

- 1930 NPAQ established; Queensland Governor was patron
- 1930 NPAQ proposed a NP to include Glasshouse Mountain Peaks
- 1932 Romeo Lahey and Arthur Groom established Binna Burra Lodge to connect people with nature
- 1957 At age of 70, Romeo Lahey commenced campaign which resulted in the declaration of Daintree National Park
- 1975 Cooloolo National Park gazetted at 23,030 ha, 16 years after NPAQ recommendation
- 1978 First Interpretive Centre in a national park (suggested by NPAQ in 1972)
- 1986 Lindeman Islands National Park – successfully fought revocation but unsuccessful in preventing golf course lease
- 1988 North Qld Wet Tropics rainforest listed as World Heritage area
- 2016 NPAQ helped restore the cardinal principle for parks, mandatory management planning and consultation into State legislation
- 2017-2018 NPAQ Kids in National Parks booklets for South East Queensland and Tropical North Queensland were published
- 2018 NPAQ successful campaign against revocation of part of Lindeman Islands National Park
- 2019 Yabba Links National Park Proposal

Our current work includes the following priorities:

- Seeking adequate funding for the upcoming Queensland Protected Area Strategy
- Influencing in government's position on ecotourism
- Developing and hosting new programs to connect people with nature
- Listing of national parks as a Matter of National Environmental Significance, under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth)
- Declaration of Yabba Links National Park by 2021 (~20,000 ha)
- Recovery resourcing for post-fire weed and pest management
- Transitioning of native state forests to national park in accordance with the South East Queensland Forestry Agreement of 2000



Above: A cliff view in Cooloolo, Great Sandy National Park, one of the areas NPAQ recommended to the Government for gazettel. (Photo: Pru Hansen).