



## CORPORATE POLICY STATEMENT NO. 18

### RECREATION, TOURISM AND VISITOR SERVICES

June 2017

#### 1. OBJECTIVE

To provide world-class recreation and tourism opportunities, services and facilities for visitors to the public conservation estate, while maintaining in perpetuity Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage.

#### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all recreation, tourism and visitor related services on lands and waters managed by the department.

#### 3. CONTEXT

The department recognises that Western Australia has a beautiful and diverse natural environment that provides recreational, aesthetic, cultural, spiritual as well as material benefits for both residents and visitors alike.

It is recognised that the lands and waters managed by the department have the capacity to satisfy an important portion of the public demand for outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism, and in so doing contribute significantly to the social, psychological, physical and economic wellbeing of the community.

This policy is to be read and applied together with *Corporate Guideline No. 32: Recreation, Tourism and Visitor Services*. These documents outline the underlying principles, administrative controls and, where appropriate, operational guidelines and procedures relating to the provision of recreation, tourism and visitor services. They provide the basis for planning and management for recreation, tourism and associated visitor activities on lands and waters managed by the department.

Terrestrial and marine reserves including national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, State forests, marine parks and other reserves are vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission of Western Australia, and may be jointly vested with Aboriginal body corporates. The department manages these lands and waters in accordance with the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act) and the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* (SCRM Act). Management may occur jointly with Aboriginal people and other parties.

This policy applies to all lands and waters managed by the department. Included are *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act) lands and waters and the former pastoral leases where the department has management responsibilities. The former pastoral leases purchased by the department for addition to the conservation reserve system are currently unallocated Crown land covered by the *Land Administration Act 1997* and managed under a memorandum of understanding between the department and the Department of Lands. The appropriate regional and district managers may exercise discretion as to the application of this policy to these areas. This policy also applies to section 8A and 8C CALM

Act land to the extent that the relevant provisions are applicable under the terms of the section 8A agreement or section 8C order.

#### **4. LEGISLATION**

The legislation administered by the department applicable to this policy is the CALM Act, the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002, the SCRM Act, the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007, the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004.

This policy refers to the management role of the department as if it were a reference to the functions of the CEO under the CALM Act.

#### **5. POLICY**

##### **Conservation of estate values**

- 5.1 The natural and cultural values of the estate as a whole should be managed on an ecologically sustainable basis.
- 5.2 The estate should be managed in a manner that protects and conserves the value of the land to Aboriginal persons.
- 5.3 The natural systems (including land and seascapes, particular sites, biota) should be able to sustain the form of recreation, or ancillary activity, which is occurring or proposed.
- 5.4 Consistent with conservation of estate values, facilities associated with recreation should be carefully controlled. Section 33 of the CALM Act limits the ability of the department to carry out other than 'necessary or compatible operations' on certain land categories unless there is an approved management plan in place.
- 5.5 The intensity of recreation and tourism activity should be managed as required to ensure that it does not damage the value and nature of the activity and the natural resource on which it is based.

##### **Consistency of recreation and tourism with the purpose of the estate**

- 5.6 Recreation and tourism activity should be compatible with the purpose of the land and water or the established land/water use priority. This includes 'lands to which this Act applies' under section 5 of the CALM Act and areas managed as regional parks (which may involve a range of tenures). It also applies to CALM Act section 8A and 8C lands and waters to the extent that the relevant provisions are applicable under the terms of the section 8A agreement or section 8C order.
- 5.7 The provision and management of nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities on lands and waters managed by the department should comply with other relevant Acts and regulations.

##### **Equity**

- 5.8 Generally the widest range of activities consistent with the reserve purpose should be allowed. Uses that impair other forms of use to an unreasonable extent or place the safety of other users in jeopardy should be managed or eliminated.

- 5.9 The requirements of different cultural and ethnic groups will be considered in planning, management and facility design, including those of Aboriginal persons.
- 5.10 Recreation opportunities for people of all levels of physical ability will be considered in planning, management and facility design.
- 5.11 In certain instances, priority use may be allocated to specialised recreation activities at sites that are uniquely suited to those activities or for safety reasons.

### **Management**

- 5.12 The department will endeavour to provide an appropriate level of management of activities on the lands and waters it manages. This is particularly important where natural and cultural values may be impaired by unmanaged activities. If this cannot be done, consideration may be given to restricting, relocating or eliminating the activity where practicable.
- 5.13 The department will develop and implement recreation and tourism programs, services and facilities that minimise the risk of accidents and injury to people enjoying themselves on lands and waters managed by the department, consistent with the department's [Corporate Policy Statement No. 53 – Visitor Risk Management](#).
- 5.14 Visitor activities, facilities and services should be managed in a cost-effective manner.
- 5.15 The department will provide and maintain nature-based recreation areas, facilities, programs and services to a consistently high standard.

### **Enriching visitor experience**

- 5.16 The department aims to enrich the experiences of visitors and develop their relationships with Western Australia's natural and cultural values through provision of interpretive material and activities in major recreation areas or where a demonstrated desire for such programs exists.
- 5.17 Appropriate opportunities will be made available through commercial operations licences and leases for the provision of services and facilities to the public to enhance their visit to areas managed by the department.
- 5.18 Relevant departmental staff will be trained, and private sector commercial operators will be required to obtain industry accreditation to ensure that communication with visitors is effective and that interpretation of parks and reserves, including the provision of scientific and other information, is of a high standard and adds value to the visitor experience.

## **6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

The department will:

- 6.1 Plan and advocate for a world-class park system that maintains or enhances WA's natural environment.
- Prepare CALM Act marine and terrestrial management plans, recreation and interpretation master plans and other visitor-related plans where appropriate.

- Incorporate into management and other plans the CALM Act objective to protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons.
- 6.2 Design and build recreation facilities and services while retaining an area's distinctive social, cultural, physical and natural attributes.
- Prepare designs and specifications for recreation sites.
  - Plan for renovation and redevelopment of existing recreation sites and park facilities.
  - Offer a spectrum of high quality visitor experiences.
- 6.3 Manage parks, recreation areas, facilities and services to a high quality in order to protect the environment and provide a quality visitor experience.
- Undertake visitor risk management assessment and protection works.
  - Maintain and renovate as required recreation assets and visitor facilities.
  - Manage and maintain high value visitor centres.
  - Undertake compliance and law enforcement activities as required.
- 6.4 Enrich visitor experiences by providing opportunities to learn, explore and interact with the natural and cultural environment.
- Provide high quality information and interpretation for visitors that promotes awareness and appreciation of the natural environment.
  - Develop and implement park sign plans in accordance with the sign design guidelines.
  - Use social media and apply updated and new technology to enrich the visitor experience.
- 6.5 Involve Aboriginal people in managing conservation lands in order to protect the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people.
- Promote the CALM Act management objective to protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons through training and other opportunities.
  - Protect Aboriginal cultural sites when undertaking works.
  - Build and strengthen working relationships with Aboriginal communities, native title representative bodies and Aboriginal working parties.
  - Develop and implement joint vesting and management arrangements with Aboriginal working parties and other organisations as appropriate.
  - Promote commercial tourism and event opportunities with Aboriginal people.
- 6.6 Develop and nurture lifelong connections between the community and parks in order to conserve and protect natural areas.
- Build and strengthen relationships, and work with volunteers, recreation user groups, partner groups and other key stakeholders.
- 6.7 This Policy will be implemented in accordance with *Corporate Guideline No. 32: Recreation, Tourism and Visitor Services*.
- 6.8 This policy does not restrict the department from carrying out its statutory functions, e.g. staff using off-road access for management roles.

**7. CUSTODIAN**

Director Parks and Visitor Services.

**8. PUBLICATION**

This policy will be made available on the department's internet and intranet.

**9. KEY WORDS**

Tourism; recreation; visitors; experience; activities; facilities; services.

**10. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed no later than June 2022.

**11. DIRECTOR GENERAL APPROVAL**

Approved by



Jim Sharp  
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Effective date: 29 June 2017