

# Q&A Summary: Joint Management of parks & reserves

## WHAT DOES JOINT MANAGEMENT MEAN?

Joint management means that the Traditional Owners and the State of Victoria have a shared vision for managing agreed areas of public land in partnership. The partnership gives Gunaikurnai people an equal voice in managing the 10 named parks and reserves on Country and sets goals for what can be achieved by working together with the State.

## WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?

This partnership is between the Gunaikurnai people and the State of Victoria. The key partners are the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) representing the Gunaikurnai people, and the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning (DELWP) and Parks Victoria (PV) representing the State.

Together, the partners aim to conserve, protect and enhance natural and cultural values on Country. The roles and responsibilities of each are going to be described in more detail in a Draft Joint Management Plan.

## WHO IS WORKING ON THE PLAN?

The Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB) has been established to develop the Draft Joint Management Plan with input from partners, and to guide the Joint Management process through to approval and implementation. The plan will describe how Gunaikurnai people and State agencies will work together.

The GKTOLMB is currently talking with the wider Gunaikurnai community members and individuals and agency partners to make sure everyone's views are considered. After this stage, the plan will be agreed by the GKTOLMB and Secretary of DELWP, and then made available for broader public consultation, before being presented to the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water for approval.

## WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND?

Joint Management is part of the Gunaikurnai Recognition and Settlement Agreement. On 22 October 2010, the State entered an agreement with the Gunaikurnai people under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic)*, which enabled the transfer of Aboriginal title over 10 parks and reserves to the Gunaikurnai people, to be jointly managed with the State:

- Tarra Bulga National Park (1,522 ha)
- The Knob Reserve (56 ha)
- Mitchell River National Park (12,200 ha)
- Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (17,600 ha)
- Lakes National Park (2,390 ha)
- Gippsland Lakes Reserve at Raymond Island (248 ha)
- Lake Tyers State Park (7,100 ha)
- Buchan Caves Reserve (232 ha)
- Corringale Foreshore Reserve (159 ha)
- New Guinea Cave, within the Snowy River National Park (1,194 ha).

On the same day, the Gunaikurnai people were recognised as holding Native title over much of Gippsland (under the *Native Title Act 1993*). The granting of Aboriginal title to the Gunaikurnai people under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* and joint management arrangements enhance the recognition of the Gunaikurnai people's Native title rights under the *Native Title Act*.

## WHAT ARE ITS AIMS?

The plan is informed by the goals and aspirations of the ***Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan (2015)***. Some of the main aims for the 10 parks and reserves are to:

- promote equality in all relationships and use the combined knowledge and skills of Gunaikurnai people and the State in land, coastal, forest, water and marine management of the 10 parks and reserves
- work together to conserve, protect and enhance natural and cultural values

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- recognise, respect and value Gunaikurnai culture, use, knowledge and decision-making in the management of the 10 parks and reserves
- support initiatives in the 10 parks and reserves that create jobs, education and training opportunities for Gunaikurnai people
- give parks visitors and recreational users new experiences and information that educates them in cultural and environmental awareness.

## WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT?

Parks visitors and users will recognise a positive change in the way the 10 named parks and reserves on Country are managed. A greater Gunaikurnai presence will be seen through more on-park jobs and cultural experiences and information, including signage. Gunaikurnai people will continue to exercise their native title rights to protect and celebrate culture on Country.

In most cases, the existing and recreational use of the parks and reserves will continue as before. Visitors will continue to enjoy existing park use as well as experience new activities that connect them with nature and provide an understanding of culture. Existing access and use rights (including licences, leases, or permits) are not affected by the grant of Aboriginal title.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN THEMES OF THE PLAN?

- **Caring for Country** - Using Gunaikurnai traditional knowledge combined with contemporary knowledge and science to tackle the threats from fire, climate, weeds, pests and human activity.
- **Protecting heritage** - Identifying, recording and protecting important sites, and improving cultural awareness about actions needed for protection.
- **Connecting to Country** - Supporting ways for all Gunaikurnai people to visit and stay in the parks to experience spiritual connection and undertake cultural activities.
- **Pathways to jobs** - Improving the cultural, economic and social wellbeing of Gunaikurnai people, through developing jobs on long-term projects, permanent roles and by setting up or working in park-based businesses.
- **Educating the wider community** - Displaying Gunaikurnai culture across Country and the jointly managed parks through using Gunaikurnai names and language on signage and having more Gunaikurnai Rangers more visible in parks.
- **A voice for the future** - Developing Gunaikurnai people to be leaders in the management of parks on Country through training and taking on greater responsibility. Developing new visitor experiences to promote cultural and environmental awareness

## HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

**We need your feedback.** The ideas reflect the goals and aspirations of Gunaikurnai people past and present and provide a plan for the future, guided by the principles of the *Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan (2015)*. The Joint Management Plan will be a living document and will evolve over time.

Please join in and give us your feedback and comments via: family gatherings, a face-to-face chat over a cuppa, informal catch-ups or by phone or email. Find out more information via the Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board.

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