



Mr Stephen Alegria
Expenditure Review Division
Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate
GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Alegria

Thank you for the opportunity to input to the Review of services and expenditure within the Parks and Conservation Service and City Services branches, Parks and City Service Division (PACS). The [Friends of the Pinnacle](#) (fotpin) understand this Review is in response to significant cost pressures delivering related services to the ACT community.

By way of background, fotpin is an unincorporated association of volunteers undertaking conservation activities in the Pinnacle Nature Reserve and the adjacent paddocks referred to as 'North Kama' and 'Bottom Pinnacle'. During 2012-13 fotpin members:

- committed at least 1225hrs to weed control;
- partnered with the Parks and Conservation Service to count kangaroos across the Pinnacle Kangaroo Management Unit;
- worked with Greening Australia to conduct two community planting events;
- conducted guided walks and other community engagement activities; and
- undertook erosion control activities in actively eroding gullies in Bottom Pinnacle.

Fotpin has enjoyed a positive and productive working relationship with Parks and Conservation Service officers, delivering conservation outcomes across these three land parcels and on adjacent road easements managed by Parks and City Services. It is in this context that fotpin offers input to this Review.

What services do you believe are most important for the Territory and to what standard should they be provided?

The Canberra Nature Park (CNP) is a valued community asset, providing environmental and conservation benefits as well as nature-based experiences for many Canberra residents and visitors. It surrounds us and makes Canberra the special city that it is. We therefore believe that protecting and conserving the CNP is a service the community expects of PACS.

The Pinnacle Nature Reserve is a component of the CNP. We believe effective protection of the reserve requires that PACS deliver the following services in respect of the Pinnacle Nature Reserve:

- **protecting its soils.** We believe this requires stabilising gully and track erosion and prioritising soil conservation as part of track retention and/or maintenance for fire hazard management;
- **preventing seed set and dispersal of highly invasive weed species.** We believe this involves providing sufficient and timely weed control activities for prescribed high priority weeds such as African Lovegrass and St Johns Wort, within and on the boundary of the reserve, taking into consideration possible non-target impacts;



- **enforcing proper weed hygiene by all staff and contractors taking vehicles onto the Reserve.** We see this as an essential step in preventing the introduction of new invasive weed species into Canberra Nature Park reserves, and the further spread of existing weed threats;
- **enforcing control of invasive weeds on paddocks adjoining the Canberra Nature Park, whether they are managed by government agencies or privately.** Any long-term weed control strategy must address issues of re-invasion by weed species from outside the reserve boundaries;
- **controlling grazing.** This involves maintaining resourcing of rabbit control efforts to prevent re-colonisation of treated warrens, as well as monitoring and controlling the kangaroo population to within sustainable limits;
- **ensuring fire hazard reduction regimes are ecologically beneficial.** This requires setting fire regimes that, consistent with best available science, mimic pre-European fire regimes;
- **enforcement of use rules associated with the reserve.** The ACT Government has a unique role/responsibility for enforcing appropriate behaviours, access and use of the reserve. The ACT Government is the entity with legal capacity/responsibility to provide this enforcement service, and so fotpin expect an enforcement role to be sufficient to prevent unacceptable impacts on the reserve; and
- **developing and implementing strategic and operational plans.** The Parks and Conservation Service should prepare timely, evidence-based strategic and operational plans, and implement those plans for erosion, weed, grazing and fire hazard control, and set out how use rules will be enforced.

How can the Government deliver current services more efficiently and productively?

In respect to the Pinnacle Nature Reserve and adjacent lands, PACS should maintain and where possible enhance its current working relations with fotpin. Effective communication of conservation management needs and opportunities and continued close collaboration with us in the control of weeds, grazing and erosion, and in management planning will deliver more effective and efficient conservation outcomes.

Are there any services you consider that the community should make a direct contribution to (a fee for service)?

Fotpin believes that there are no services provided by ACT Parks at the Pinnacle Nature Reserve for which the community should pay a specific service fee. Fotpin would however consider supporting a rate-based levee for the specific purpose of protecting and enhancing the Canberra Nature Park. The use of this levee would need to be comprehensively demonstrated to the ACT community, in particular by performance reporting against conservation priorities and outcomes.

Yours sincerely,

John Brannan
Convenor, Friends of the Pinnacle