

REPORT ON NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN
THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND, COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

by

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SOME BRIEF NOTES ON QUEENSLAND.

The State of Queensland is situated in the North-Eastern part of the Australian Continent.

It covers an area of approximately 667,000 square miles, being about 1/5th of the area of Australia.

The State lies across the Tropic of Capricorn and its greatest extent from North to South is some 1,300 miles and from East to West about 900 miles.

The seas that form its Eastern and Northern boundaries provide it with 3,236 miles of coastline, of which hundreds of miles are surfing beaches amongst the best in the world.

From the sub-tropical south to the tropical north there is a great variety of vegetable and Forest Products.

The population of Queensland is 1,520,000 and the capital city is Brisbane - population 623,000.

WHAT ARE NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

National Parks and Scenic Areas in the State of Queensland are areas of outstanding scenic, scientific, historic and recreational interest set aside for preservation in their primeval condition for the recreation, health, enjoyment and education of the people.

The term "National Park" is used to signify a reservation of 1,000 acres or more in extent and the term "Scenic Area" is used in respect of an area of less than 1,000 acres in size. Otherwise the purpose of the reservation is the same in both cases.

It is the aim of the administration to preserve for all time in their primitive condition, within these reservations, parts of the Australian bushland and to protect the wildlife which finds sanctuary therein.

It is easy to realise that, with the passing of time and the inevitable destruction of natural vegetation, these remnants of Australian bushland and the denizens who find sustenance and sanctuary in them will be of great and evergrowing delight to the people of this continent and the visitors thereto.

Here in Queensland we have endeavoured to follow the philosophy which first found expression in the declaration of the Yellowstone National Park and in selecting areas for reservation attempts have been made to secure, as far as possible, representation of the various types of bushland so that generations for all time may know what the country looked like before the advent of the white man.

In pursuing this policy it will be appreciated that all areas so reserved need not necessarily be "scenic" but in most cases this aspect is present.

The goal of complete representation has not yet been achieved but new areas, after thorough investigation, are being added to the National Park estate from time to time.

Those proclaimed to date cover a wide field of scenic, scientific, historic and recreational interest.

WHO ADMINISTERS NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

National Parks and Scenic Areas in Queensland are administered by the Department of Forestry, whose Permanent Head is the Conservator of Forests.

The Conservator of Forests is responsible to a Cabinet Minister of the Crown, whose portfolio is that of the Minister for ~~Agriculture and Forestry~~. *Local Government and Conservation*

The present Minister for Agriculture and Forestry is the Honourable ~~Otto O. Madsen~~, M.L.A. and the present Conservator of Forests is Mr. ~~V. Grenning~~.

A. R. Trist

LEGISLATIVE PROVISION IN RESPECT OF NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

National Parks and Scenic Areas in Queensland are administered under "The Forestry Act ~~of 1959~~" two parts being specially set aside to deal with these areas - one dealing with the classification and reservation of such areas, and the other dealing with the management of same.

RESERVATION.

Section 29 of the Act provides -

"The Governor in Council may from time to time on the recommendation of the Conservator of Forests by Order in Council set apart and declare as a National Park or as a Scenic Area any Crown land or Timber Reserve which he considers to be of Scenic, Scientific or Historic interest.

A National Park shall comprise an area of one thousand acres or more.

A Scenic Area shall comprise an area being less than one thousand acres."

Note:- Under a previous Act such reservations were all included under the term "National Park". A number of these are only very small in extent and to conform more to the world wide conception of the term, it was decided to segregate those less than 1,000 acres under the term "Scenic Area". These areas enjoy the same protection as National Parks, the distinction being in name only.

MANAGEMENT.

Section 40 of the Act provides -

"The cardinal principle to be observed in the management of National Parks and Scenic Areas shall be the permanent preservation to the greatest possible extent, of their natural condition, and the Conservator of Forests shall exercise his powers under this part of the Act in such a manner as appears to him most appropriate to achieve this objective."

Whilst Section 41 of the Act provides -

"Consistent with this Act, the Conservator of Forests may within any National Park or Scenic Area from time to time construct, carry out, improve, maintain, operate, protect, control and otherwise manage any works, or do any act or make such provisions as he considers necessary or desirable for the preservation, proper management or public enjoyment of that National Park or Scenic Area."

HOW ARE NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS RESERVED.

It is the responsibility of the Department of Forestry to examine, very thoroughly, and submit proposals for reservation of areas as National Parks or Scenic Areas.

Detailed inspections are made by Forest Officers and proposals are very carefully examined before reservations are made. Any other Government Departments interested, such as Lands Department, Mines Department, Irrigation and Water Supply Commission and any other interested authorities, must also be consulted and their consent obtained before submitting proposals for approval by the Governor in Council.

Freehold or alienated land is sometimes reacquired by purchase whilst there have been several instances where public spirited persons have donated land for such reservation to ensure its being retained for all time in its virgin state.

After an area has been reserved as a National Park or Scenic Area, any proposal for alienation of any part thereof must be submitted to Parliament for determination and 14 days' notice of any such resolution must be given.

There is provision however for the Governor in Council to exclude by proclamation from National Parks or Scenic Areas land required for the provision of accommodation and recreation facilities for the purpose of encouraging and promoting the tourist industry.

LEASES ON NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS.

Under "The Forestry Act of 1959" there is provision for leasing on National Parks and Scenic Areas as follows:-

- (a) Special Leases under the Land Act up to a term of 30 years. Special conditions for the preservation and protection of the National Park or Scenic Area, as considered desirable, may be inserted in these leases.

This tenure is used for the purpose of guest houses and like accommodation for holidaymakers, tourists, etc.

- (b) Stock Grazing Permits for a term up to 7 years.

It might be stated that grazing generally is not permitted on these areas except in special cases where there is little likelihood of damage to the Park or in remote areas which it is impossible to supervise and which would be grazed illegally.

TOURIST RESORTS ON NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS.

Queensland is favoured with a temperate climate. The winters as a whole are particularly mild, with plenty of sunshine and it is mainly during this season that southern and overseas tourists are attracted to resorts in the State.

On freehold land adjacent to the more popular mountain Parks, guest houses, conducted by private enterprise, cater for the accommodation of holidaymakers and tourists.

Excellent track systems, to serve these guest houses and for use by visitors generally to the Park, have been constructed by the Department of Forestry.

The unique feature of the Great Barrier Reef which stretches for some 1,100 miles along the Queensland coast is one of Australia's most popular tourist attractions. It is the greatest barrier reef, or series of reefs, in existence, and for the interest, variety and beauty of the life it contains, it is probably unsurpassed anywhere.

The Reef varies in distance from the coastline. In places it is quite close, whilst the furthestmost point is almost 200 miles from the mainland. Some of the inner reefs have on them islands (carps), comprised of fine (sand) or coarse (shingle) coral, algal and other material heaped up by wave action to above high-tide level. Many of these have become cemented and stabilised and covered with vegetation. In all 158 islands along the coast of Queensland have been reserved.

The Great Barrier Reef contains a variety of beautiful corals, the most common types being the delicate branching staghorn, the braincoral which may form colonies up to 12 feet in diameter, the mushroom coral, so-called from a fancied resemblance to an upturned mushroom, red organ-pipe coral and blue coral.

Associated with the coral is a marine fauna vast in numbers, of a great variety and often brilliantly coloured. Here is also found the giant clam, the world's greatest shellfish growing to several hundredweight, and an abundance of coral fishes of great beauty.

Tourists are adequately catered for by resorts which have been established on a number of these islands. Whilst the resorts are conducted by private companies, the Department has constructed a system of graded walking tracks on the more popular island resorts and this work is still being expanded.

POLICY FOLLOWED IN ADMINISTERING NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

The policy followed by the Department of Forestry in administering National Parks and Scenic Areas is to interfere, as little as possible, with the vegetation and to endeavour to retain the area in its natural condition.

There is:-

- (a) no marketing of timber.
- (b) no gathering of flora.
- (c) no hunting of wild animals.
- (d) no shooting of bird life.
- (e) no attempt to adorn nature by landscaping or such action.
- (f) no introduction of any plant, animal or bird life not indigenous to the particular locality.

Special protective regulations have been drawn up for these reservations. Where instances of vandalism are reported the Department does not hesitate to take legal action against the offenders if the circumstances warrant it.

As an added measure of protection to native fauna, these reservations are sanctuaries under the Fauna Conservation Act administered by the Department of Agriculture and Stock.

Primary Industries

Because of control by a single authority all National Parks and Scenic Areas in Queensland are administered to the same code. It is considered this method has advantages over the system of allowing Park areas to be controlled and managed by different Trusts, any one of which bodies may have different ideas of Park management from those of other such Trusts. Furthermore, local Trusts are in many cases, dependent on the Park areas themselves to furnish revenue for protection and facility provisions and this could mean exploitation of the timber and other wealth of the area to its spoilation.

TYPE OF WORK CARRIED OUT ON NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

The chief work on National Parks and Scenic Areas in Queensland has been the construction of carefully located and easy graded walking tracks which can be carried out with a minimum of interference to nature and fit unobtrusively into the landscape. Along these tracks visitors may stroll at leisure and observe the beauty of the Parks at close quarters. To date approximately ²⁵⁷~~263~~ miles of such graded tracks have been constructed.

Other improvements include -

- (a) toilets.
- (b) picnic ground facilities such as shelter sheds, tables, fireplaces, barbecues etc.
- (c) camping grounds and facilities therefore.
- (d) appropriate entrances using local materials to harmonise with the surroundings.
- (e) name plating of selected trees along the walking tracks.
- (f) feature lookouts with safety fences.
- (g) comprehensive system of distinctive timber signs and notices using standard colours of chestnut with lemon lettering.

WHO CARRIES OUT WORK ON NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

Improvement work on these reservations is carried out by resident Overseers and workmen as employees of the Department of Forestry. They are directed and supervised by National Park Rangers.

FINANCE FOR WORK ON NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

The State Government makes available each year a sum of money, out of consolidated revenue, for expenditure on these reservations.

Work on these Parks first commenced in the year 1937 and up to the present an amount of ~~£650,000~~ has been expended.

~~\$1,900,000-00~~

No charge whatsoever is made by the Government for the use of any facilities or improvements provided by it on National Parks or Scenic Areas. They are truly public domains available for use by all peoples free of charge subject, of course to respect for the ideal for which these areas were reserved.

USE OF ABORIGINAL NAMES.

In many instances in the naming of Parks or of features within the Parks, aboriginal words associated with the locality have been used. In this way aboriginal affiliations are perpetuated.

In many of these primitive reservations there remain evidences of aboriginal art and it is very appropriate that names associated with the native population of Australia should be perpetuated on such reserves.

Some examples are:-

<u>Aboriginal Names</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Tamborine	"big cliff"
Joalah	"haunt of the lyre bird"
Maiala	"quiet place"
Gwongorella	"dancing water"
Eungella	"land of cloud"

USE OF NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS FOR SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES.

In keeping with the ideal of complete protection the collection or taking of flora and fauna is prohibited.

However, an exception is made in the case of scientific bodies such as University Authorities, Government Botanists etc., who on application are issued with permits for collections for scientific purposes.

Every co-operation is extended to botanists, scientists etc. who may wish to visit the Parks in furtherance of their studies.

NATIONAL PARKS AND SCENIC AREAS IN QUEENSLAND.

As at 31.12.1961 the following areas had been reserved as National Parks and Scenic Areas.

	<u>No. of Reserves</u>	<u>Areas (acres)</u>
National Parks	60	814,102
Scenic Areas	165	33,059
	<u>225</u>	<u>847,161</u>

~~This represents .198% of the total area of the State.
Of this total area of 847,161 acres about 350,000 acres are scrub
or rain forest and the balance of about 500,000 acres open forest.~~

The first National Park in Queensland was proclaimed on 24th March, 1908 over an area of 324 acres at Tamborine Mountain.

It was proclaimed following on representations from the Tamborine Shire Council which stated at the time -

"The Council is of opinion that this area, owing to its picturesque ruggedness, together with the waterfalls and vast quantities of palms, tree ferns and other tropical growths which provide an ideal haunt for lyre birds, etc. should be preserved for the protection of the native flora and fauna of the mountain."

So originated our first National Park.

Since then selected areas typifying the original Australia have been made Parks including large areas of native jungle, both in South and North Queensland.

Lamington, the best known of Queensland's National Parks covers an area of 48,000 acres and embraces crests and tablelands of the McPherson Range. It is covered with rain forest over dense growth of palms, tree ferns and other plants. There are many fine waterfalls.

In the Bunya Mountains National Park, there are magnificent stands of Bunya Pine. It was to this area that the aborigines repaired for their periodic feasts of Bunya nuts.

The State's largest National Park of an extent of 133,000 acres is situated in rugged mountain country in the Upper Daintree region in North Queensland.

Cunningham's Gap National Park has historical significance because of its discovery by Alan Cunningham on his pioneering journey of 1828.

The unusual Glasshouse Mountains so named by the explorer Captain Cook, have the protection afforded by National Park reservation.

The inland Carnarvon Gorge National Park - 6,500 acres is an area of high scenic value, with high plateaux intersected by deep narrow clefts. Aboriginal relics in the shape of cliff paintings and burial caves are found here.

Second.
Eungella, the State's largest Park of 123,000 acres, is a region of rain forest and in places open forest, through which flows the Broken River, one of the State's most beautiful streams.

In North Queensland the rugged slopes of the Bellenden Ker range embracing the State's highest peak, Mt. Bartle Frere - 5,275 feet - have been reserved - area 80,140 acres.

On the Atherton Tableland, reservations of great beauty surround the jungle girt crater lakes of Eacham and Barrine.

Green Island near Cairns, the mecca of tourists to North Queensland, has an underwater observation chamber from which can be viewed, at first hand, colourful coral in all manner of delicate and fantastic growth, as well as fish and marine life of infinite variety.

Magnetic Island National Park covering 6,260 acres possesses much charm and picturesqueness in its rugged boulder strewn headlands and beetling crags from which splendid views are to be had.

The largest island National Park is Hinchinbrook, over 97,000 acres in extent. This island with its serrated peaks, forms the background for the glorious waterway - Hinchinbrook Channel.

VARIED VALUE OF NATIONAL PARKS IN QUEENSLAND.

Besides their scenic, scientific and historic value, National Parks in Queensland have great value, for the protection they afford to watersheds, and their influence on erosion mitigation. For this reason they may be regarded as an indispensable feature of rational land use.

As natural museums they conserve unspoiled the primeval forest and thereby afford protection to the fauna indigenous thereto.

Aboriginal affiliations are perpetuated by the preservation of paintings and relics and by the use of local native names for scenic features and for the Parks themselves.

Within these areas many species of birds are preserved from extinction, such as the Albert Lyrebird, the Brush Turkey, the Bower Bird and many kinds of rare Pigeons.

Platypus are to be found in Lamington and other waters within the Parks, whilst Burleigh Heads and other Reserves are the habitat of the Koala bear.

VISITORS.

The number of visitors to National Parks in the State of Queensland ~~exceed half a~~ million persons annually.

APPROACHES ONE

BRISBANE.

1st May, 1962.

PARKS	No	ACRES
	75	1010899
SCENIC AREAS	172	98,002
	247	1048901