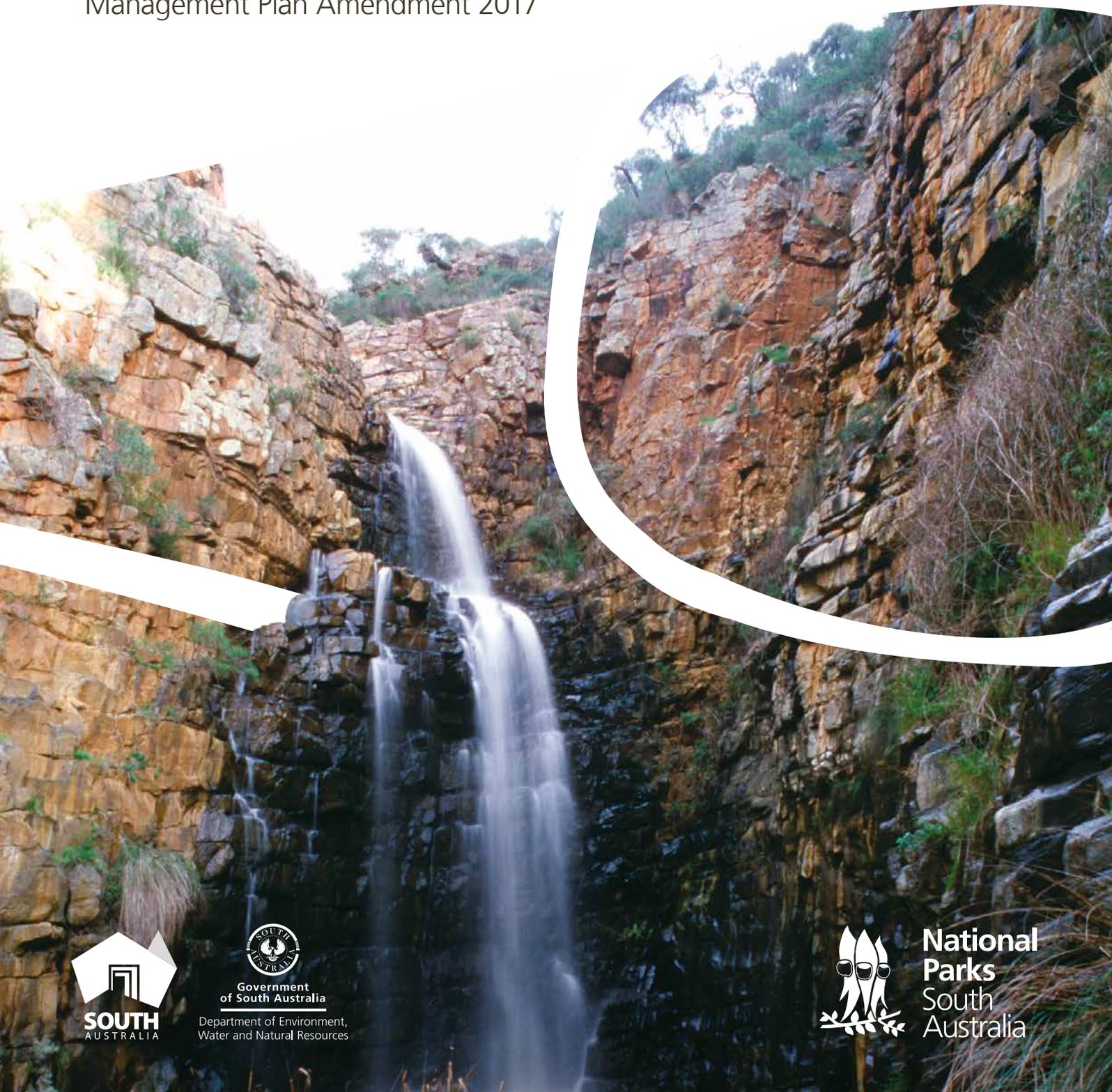


# Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks

Management Plan Amendment 2017



National  
Parks  
South  
Australia

# Minister's Foreword

South Australia has wonderful parklands and open spaces including a network of 29 parks that surround Adelaide. These areas are essential for the conservation of South Australia's unique natural environment. They are also valuable community assets, providing places for nature-based tourism, recreation, exercise, learning, relaxation and recuperation.

In 2015, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources invited people to participate in a series of community engagement events – focusing on Adelaide's national parks. During these events, South Australians identified an opportunity to increase the use, appreciation and enjoyment of Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks by enabling people to enjoy a broader range of activities including cycling and dog walking.

Park management plans may be revised and amended as our knowledge of the park grows, and to reflect the community's aspirations. In 2016, Government commenced a process to seek the community's views on these ideas by releasing a draft amendment to the Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan 2001 for public consultation. This draft amendment proposed to alter the management plan so that cycling and dog walking could occur in these parks.

After careful consideration of these submissions, Government concluded that the proposed amendments to the Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan 2001 would further the objectives of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* by providing for greater use, appreciation and enjoyment of these parks.

I thank all those that made a submission.

I am pleased to formally adopt the Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan Amendment 2017 under section 38 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*.



The Hon Ian Hunter MLC  
Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation

# Establishing the Mount Lofty Ranges as an international mountain biking destination

Mountain biking is a wonderful way to exercise and enjoy parks. South Australia is set to capitalise on a worldwide boom in the popularity of this activity by establishing the Mount Lofty Ranges as an international mountain biking destination. Enabling cycling on designated trails within Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks will contribute to the South Australian Government's vision of "a sustainable trails network to engage people in the parks of the Mount Lofty Ranges". Realising this vision requires an amendment to the Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan 2001.

A range of views about cycling in these parks were expressed in submissions received on the draft amendment. All submissions have been reviewed and considered. The two main concerns in regards to the use of bikes in parks relate to potential damage to the environment through erosion and spread of weeds, and risk of collision with walkers. Both of these concerns can be managed through smart and sustainable track design.

Since the development of the park management plan in 2001, several pilot projects were undertaken in parks across the Mount Lofty Ranges to test alternative approaches to the management of

cycling in parks. These projects showed that the spread of weeds and soil borne pathogens could be prevented by developing a carefully planned and constructed network of trails and promoting responsible behaviour. As part of the implementation process, illegal tracks with unsustainable or unsafe alignments will be closed and rehabilitated. Experience has shown that cyclists will remain on trails that provide them with the experience they seek.

Collisions between walkers and cyclists can be prevented through trail design that encompasses safe lines of sight and signage. The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources has also commenced a program called 'I Share My Trail' which promotes guidelines for safe trail use such as keeping to the left of the trail whilst walking and providing adequate warning when approaching other park users.

The Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan 2001 has now been amended (see amendments 1 & 2 below).

# Encouraging more people to walk in parks

One of the most accessible and popular forms of exercise is walking. For many people, walking with their dog is part of a daily exercise routine which has significant physical and mental health benefits.

The Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan 2001 permitted the walking of dogs on a lead around the picnic area and along Morialta falls road. The walking of dogs was prohibited elsewhere in these parks. To encourage more people to use these parks for walking, a draft amendment to the Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan 2001 was released for public consultation in 2016. The draft amendment proposed to enable Government to authorise the walking dogs on a lead on designated trails within the Black Hill and Morialta Conservation Parks.

Some people expressed support for this proposal. Others expressed concerns about the environmental impact of allowing dogs to be walked in this park, particularly in areas with abundant wildlife. These impacts can be maintained at an acceptable level, provided that visitors keep their dogs on a lead and stay on designated trails. Some areas of particularly high environmental value may not be suitable for this activity.

After the consideration of all submissions received, it has been concluded that allowing the walking of dogs on a lead on designated trails, and promoting responsible behaviour by people walking dogs, will be the most effective way to meet the needs of people while also protecting park values from the impact of dogs. Before any trails are designated as appropriate for dog walking, a planning and risk assessment process will be undertaken to assess their suitability.

The Morialta and Black Hill Conservation Parks Management Plan 2001 has now been amended (see amendment 3 below).

# Amendment 1: Recreation and Tourism, Background, Paragraph 4 (Page 22)

The following text is omitted from; Recreation and Tourism, Background, paragraph 4 (page 22)

In recent years, an increasing number of visitors are utilising the more remote walking trails within the parks for mountain bike riding. This activity often conflicts with the enjoyment and safety of walkers and can lead to accelerated track erosion. While mountain bike riding is prohibited within the park, it is difficult to monitor and a comprehensive solution may lie in making other nearby locations available to the sport.

The following text replaces the omitted text above

Off-track use has potential to cause erosion and can spread weeds and soil borne pathogens such as phytophthora. In addition, some of the illegally constructed trails in these parks are unsustainable in the long term due to the incorrect siting or inadequate construction of these illegal trails.

Pilot projects in parks elsewhere in the Mount Lofty Ranges have shown that the development of a carefully planned and constructed shared use trail network, in tandem with the education of trail users, can have positive environmental outcomes. The development of sustainable trails will reduce or eliminate illegal off-track riding by providing properly planned and constructed trail alternatives.

# Amendment 2: Zoning, Conservation Zone (page 23)

The following text is omitted from Zoning, Conservation Zone (page 23)

## **Conservation Zone**

This zone dominates both parks and preserves areas of high conservation and biodiversity value, including locations that contain species of conservation significance. European land use history in these zones is minimal and little disturbance or modification has occurred. Passive public use of approved sites, tracks and trails will continue to be permitted within the conservation zone, where that use is compatible with the protection of park conservation values.

Management in conservation zones principally addresses the need to prevent the occurrence of weed species, soil pathogens, and the processes of erosion. Bushwalking, nature study and rock climbing in approved sites are suitable activities within these zones, as impact is considered to be minimal. Detailed vegetation and habitat audits will be conducted prior to any developments, consistent with passive use, to ensure species of significance are conserved. Activities involving use of 4WD vehicles, trail bikes, mountain bikes and horse riding remain prohibited within conservation zones.

The following text replaces the omitted text above

## **Conservation Zone**

This zone dominates both parks and preserves areas of high conservation and biodiversity value, including locations that contain species of conservation significance. European land use history in these zones is minimal and little disturbance or modification has occurred. Appropriate and sustainable public use (including cycling and dog-walking) of designated sites, tracks and trails will continue to be permitted within the conservation zone. Management in conservation zones principally addresses the need to prevent the occurrence of weed species, soil pathogens, and the processes of erosion. Horse riding and the off-road use of use of four-wheel drive vehicle and motor bikes will continue to be prohibited within this zone.

# Amendment 3: Zoning, Recreation Zone (page 23)

The following text is omitted from Zoning, Recreation Zone (page 23)

## **Recreation Zone**

This zone includes the Morialta picnic ground, Morialta Falls Road and lower slopes of the Morialta Gorge Precinct, Morialta cottage area, the Addison Avenue Wildflower Garden and Black Hill Infrastructure block. It is intended primarily to provide facilities and services for visitors, with some infrastructure for park management.

Considerable, but sensitive modification of the natural environment is acceptable within this zone. The conservation and flood mitigation values of Fourth Creek remain important considerations in any management proposals.

Dogs will be permitted only within the Morialta picnic area and along Morialta Falls Road to the Morialta Falls Carpark, and then only if restrained upon a lead and directly under the control of a responsible person. Dogs are not permitted elsewhere within either park.

The following text replaces the omitted text above

## **Recreation Zone**

This zone includes the Morialta picnic ground, Morialta Falls Road and lower slopes of the Morialta Gorge Precinct, Morialta cottage area, the Addison Avenue Wildflower Garden and Black Hill Infrastructure block. It is intended primarily to provide facilities and services for visitors, with some infrastructure for park management.

Considerable, but sensitive modification of the natural environment is acceptable within this zone. The conservation and flood mitigation values of Fourth Creek remain important considerations in any management proposals.

Dog walking is compatible with park management objectives provided people pick up after their dog, stay on approved trails and keep their dog on a lead. Specific trails may be designated for the walking of dogs on a lead.

**For further information please contact**

Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources phone information line (08) 8204 1910, or see SA White Pages for your local Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resource office.



**Government of South Australia**  
Department of Environment,  
Water and Natural Resources



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