



# Conservation Council SA

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Dear Grant

**RE: Draft Cape Gantheaume Fire Management Plan.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the development of the Cape Gantheaume Fire Management Plan

The Conservation Council of South Australia (Conservation Council SA) is the Peak conservation body for South Australia representing over 50 of the State's environment and conservation organisations.

We take a strong interest in fire management issues throughout South Australia including on Kangaroo Island which has important areas of remnant native vegetation. These areas provide refuge for iconic wildlife (including endangered species and populations) which underpin the islands tourism and are essential for Kangaroo Island's economy.

We have reviewed the proposed Cape Gantheaume Fire Plan and do not believe that there is sufficient information contained in the plan describing how activities will be undertaken within the various fire management zones, and when burning activities are scheduled in relation to fire histories of each area.

The four week consultation period (reduced due to postage time) is insufficient time to enable Conservation Council SA to properly engage with its members and incorporate their feedback. We therefore seek a face to face meeting on the Cape Gantheaume and related Kangaroo Island fire management plans to better enable DENR to communicate its Plan and methods and enable the Conservation Council SA to provide feedback on how DENR planning and methods address our concerns.

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Our initial comments on the Plan are provided below:

### **Title**

The title is somewhat misleading and should be revised to inform individuals that the document is about *Fire Management Plans for Southern and dispersed Parks and Wilderness areas on Kangaroo Island*.

The interactive maps do not provide adequate information on the dates of previous fires or proposed burning activities. These needs to be provided to give an accurate understanding of the burning activities in the area. The Plan could also show this data in tables for the different areas of coverage.

Due to the absence of such data it is assumed that all burns will be carried out at the next opportunity.

### **Cape Gantheaume**

Due to recent extensive burns across most of the Cape Gantheaume Wilderness Area, Conservation Council SA believes the Cape Gantheaume Wilderness Area does not require the proposed conservation burns at this time and for the next decade if at all.

The area was already extensively burnt since the 1990s and has not sufficiently recovered.

The Conservation Council SA does not agree that aerial ignition should be used for prescribed burning, and does not believe that the burn areas as shown on the map for the Cape Gantheaume Wilderness Protection Area can be achieved. There is a lack of method shown in the plans as to how prescribed biodiversity burns will be confined. How will they be managed?

The buffer zones at the north east region of the Gantheaume block appear to be excessive, particularly the area adjacent to the coast near D'estrees Bay.

### **Seal Bay**

The asset zone around the Seal Bay visitors centre must be managed in a way that maintains stable vegetation cover to prevent against sand blowouts. Techniques to manage the fire risk in this zone need to be explained. Simply burning or removing vegetation in this area would be unacceptable.

It appears to be most inappropriate to designate a buffer zone in the Seal Bay conservation park (subjecting this area to additional burning and vegetation removal) where there is already clear evidence of sand blowouts and unstable dunes. Buffer zones around the Seal Bay Conservation Park appear to be excessively wide in an area that is extremely sandy and unstable. There is a real possibility of further blowouts if there is a move to reduce stable vegetation here.

Conservation Council SA appreciates that DENR would not wish to cause more Little Sahara deserts or even a big Sahara on the island, and we therefore seek to understand how this would be prevented?

There is not enough detail as to what exact methods and what the extent of burning and mechanical clearing and thinning will be used in these buffer zones

### **Beyeria Block**

Whilst there may be benefits in environmental burns in this block, it seems coarse to show burning of 50% of the block in the fire plans. More detail and method is needed to provide confidence in the planned burning activity. The plan should include the monitoring of post fire impact on flora and fauna, and the follow up actions to manage weeds and feral predators that will expand in the area post fire – e.g. cats.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and a long horizontal stroke.

Tim Kelly

Chief Executive