**NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1978**

**Legislative Assembly, 14 March 1978, pages 2164-6**

Second reading

**The Hon. J.D. CORCORAN (Minister for the Environment)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972- 1974. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.D. CORCORAN: I move: That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill, which amends the principal Act, the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972-1974, provides for the creation of corporate bodies to be known as development trusts to assist in the development of reserves as defined in the principal Act. Reserves are national parks, conservation parks, game reserves and recreation parks.

At June 30, 1977, there were eight national parks, 158 conservation parks, eight game reserves, and 15 recreation parks. Certain of these reserves, and particularly those intended for recreation purposes, require very considerable amounts of capital for development that is impossible to provide under existing circumstances. With this in mind, I have considered the opportunities available to the State Government to provide funds for the development of selected reserves so that they may be provided with facilities that are appropriate to the heavy visitor usage that is now apparent in a number of our parks, particularly those close to the metropolitan area.

The Government is currently spending well over $1 000 000 annually from Loan Account on the development of this State’s park system, but this does little more than provide some upgrading of facilities in existing parks. Very little impact has been made on the development of the more recently acquired parks and, although it is certainly not intended that parks of prime conservation interest will be developed under the provisions of this Bill, diversion of funds from the highly developed parks that would be possible will in turn enable important protective features required for conservation parks, for example, fencing, fire tracks, and so on, to be given higher priority than has been the case in the past.

It is not intended that there will be any proliferation of these development trusts. The formation of each trust for each individual part will have to be the subject of a separate Bill to come before the House. It is intended to include under the provisions of this Bill the Black Hill native flora park in which immediate action is required to develop a unique recreational and educational facility.

In 1973, the State Government gave an undertaking to provide a major conservation park in the Black Hill area with the following aim:

To create a major native Australian flora park and bird sanctuary for the people of, and the visitors to, South Australia.

In January, 1974, the State Cabinet commissioned a feasibility study into the establishment of the Black Hill conservation park. The results of that feasibility study were presented in a report to the State Government in 1974, the recommendations were substantially accepted by the State Government, and the area was purchased in late 1974. Since January, 1975, interim management of the area has been carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Division of the Environment Department until the appointment of a Director in March, 1977. Since the appointment of the Director, a draft report and development proposal has been prepared and released for public comment outlining the basic aims and concepts for the Black Hill native flora park.

This report was made freely available for inspection within the area, and a letter from the Minister for the Environment was circulated personally by staff of the Black Hill native flora park to householders in the immediate vicinity. The Director of the Black Hill native flora park also met various individuals and discussed the draft report with them. The reception was overwhelmingly in favour of the adoption of the draft plan. The proposal envisaged:

1. A native flora park with informal recreation areas: The native plant nursery will be resited and amenities such as walking trails, benches, landscape constructions, picnic and barbecue facilities and car parks will be planned and built.

2. An information and administration centre: The centre will provide display and information facilities for visitors and special education facilities for groups such as schools or university classes. Lecture rooms, storage and preparation rooms will be included as well as library facilities. The administration of the park will be from this building, which will be designed and built to blend in with the surrounding environment.

3. Wilderness area: This area, which will include Black Hill itself, will be kept undisturbed and in its natural condition.

4. Woodland recreation area: A separate area with signposted walking tracks and educational nature trails to the more inaccessible northern areas of the park, but with informal recreation facilities such as barbecues and picnic areas, which will not be permitted in the wilderness area.

5. Expansion of the wildflower garden: The present garden size will be increased by about a hectare, with the possibility of future expansion towards the quarry. The plantings will be rarer species which have potential for landscape uses. These new plantings will give the garden a very comprehensive and clearly labelled range of wildflowers, which will have both educational and recreational aspects.

To enable initial work to proceed, $660 000 was allocated from the planning and development fund and grants were also made available from the State Unemployment Relief Scheme. To date, the enlarged wildflower garden has been fenced and landscaping of the creek areas has commenced. General clearing of rubbish from the area to be developed has been completed, principal access tracks between the existing wildflower garden and the proposed nursery have been created, and a substantial planting of trees in the buffer area between the park and adjacent householders is under way. Excavation of the proposed nursery site has been commenced, and it is anticipated that this facility will be available by mid-1978.

It is apparent that to provide facilities appropriate to this unique and important project additional funds will be required, and it is for this requirement and similar projects in the future that I propose the amendment to the National Parks and Wildlife Act which is now before the House.

Proposed Section 45d deals with the appointment of members of a trust and provides for their remuneration and, in addition, has a provision relating to “interests” of any employee members of the trust. It is my intention that a member of the National Parks and Wildlife Service will be ex officio a member of the trust, so that proper coordination and communication will exist between the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Some members might ask why the National Parks Act itself has been amended to provide for this trust. The answer is that a fairly substantial part of Black Hill is a national park. The only way in which the trust could operate in its own right outside the National Parks Act would be for a resolution to be put before both Houses of Parliament in one session to have this area excised as a national park. It was not my intention, nor my desire, to create a precedent whereby that would happen. Doing it in this way means that any additions to Black Hill that may occur in the future, whether they be from the State Planning Authority or from land purchased by the development trust, will become national park, and security of tenure will be assured.

I seek leave to have the remainder of the explanation of the clauses of the Bill inserted in Hansard without my reading them. Leave granted.

Remainder of Explanation of Clauses of Bill

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 are formal. Clause 4 amends section 35 of the principal Act which deals with the functions of the Minister under the Act to recognise the existence of the proposed trusts. Clause 5 performs a similar function in relation to the powers of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife.

Clause 6 is the main operative provision of the Bill and inserts a new part IIIa in the principal Act, and for convenience the provisions proposed to be inserted will be dealt with seriatim. Proposed section 45a sets out the definitions necessary for the purposes of the new part. Proposed section 45b formally provides for the establishment of the trusts. Proposed section 45c provides for the incorporation of a trust established under proposed section 45b.

Proposed section 45e makes the usual provision for meetings of the trust. Proposed section 45f sets out with as much particularity as is possible in the circumstances, the functions of the trust, and also provides for the general control and direction of the Minister. The activities of the trust will remain subject to the provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

Proposed section 45h provides for a trust to employ its own staff, if the circumstances warrant it. Proposed section 45i provides for a power of land acquisition subject of course to the Land Acquisition Act. Proposed section 45j provides for borrowing of moneys by the trust and for the giving of a Treasury guarantee for the repayment of moneys borrowed, and proposed section 451 provides for the audit of trusts’ account. Proposed section 451 provides for the dissolution of a trust where this is necessary.

Mr. WOTTON secured the adjournment of the debate.