

**RESERVES (NATIONAL PARKS, CONSERVATION PARKS AND NATURE RESERVES) BILL 2004**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR P.D. OMODEI** (Warren-Blackwood) [3.03 pm]: Prior to the luncheon suspension I was going through the national parks that were proposed under the Regional Forest Agreement, and I had reached the stage at which I was about to mention the last few. They were a 215 000-hectare contiguous conservation reserve system between Walpole and Denmark, with the reservation of parts of a further 17 blocks, the sealing of Mowen Road between Nannup and Margaret River at a cost of \$2 million, and a \$1 million tourist drive in Pemberton. They were just some of the projects that were to be put in place under the Regional Forest Agreement. Under the previous Government, there was a proposal in the RFA for 12 new national parks and amendments to 24 national parks.

Some of the statements made back then dealt with the tourism aspects of those national parks. One such statement was made on 4 May 1999. I urge members and the media to go back to the previous minister's statements, and they will find a comprehensive list of commitments made by the previous Government. On the tourism aspects, that media statement on 4 May 1999 states -

There will be \$2 million for a major new tourist attraction in the Donnelly River Valley, \$2 million for three eco-lodge camping and chalet sites, \$1 million for a new scenic drive in the Pemberton area, \$1 million for tourism development in the Wellington National Park, \$2 million for strategic tourist roads in the Nannup area, and \$9.5 million for the purchase of private land surrounding Wellington Dam . . .

Obviously, some of those things have not come to fruition. Certainly, the new scenic drive in the Pemberton area - the forest discovery road - for which \$1 million was allocated, has been completed, and the work on the walkways and decking in the Warren National Park is certainly very good. There was a commitment from the previous Government on national parks. We have now seen the government policy of creating 30 new national parks - upping the ante, if I can put it that way, on the previous Government. The Government has a proposal for nine new national parks and changes to several other reserves. We will get to them in a short time.

I made statements back in 1999 - it was a couple of years before the end of the previous Government. One would have expected work to have been done on some of those national parks. I know that the RFA process delivered comprehensive mapping of coupes, burning buffers and conservation areas across the whole forest estate. I would have thought that the Government could have brought forward these proposals a little earlier. It seems to me to be an act of desperation that the Government has brought its legislation on these proposed national parks into the Parliament at the eleventh hour to placate its own concerns about its environmental credentials and to try to convince the conservation movement in Western Australia that the Labor Government is keeping to its commitments. It is a big step from nine national parks to 30 national parks. We will discuss the individual reserves as the debate pans out.

I will deal with the Wellington National Park. Clause 12 of the Bill refers to the existing class A reserve No 46213, the Wellington National Park, which was created on 4 July 2000. It is about 12 kilometres west of Collie and comprises an area of 3 000-odd hectares. There is to be a 14 000-hectare increase to that national park. I remember well when we launched that national park. At that time I clearly remember Joe Northover, who was an Aboriginal police liaison officer, singing about the spirit of the Aboriginal traditional owners. It was a very moving experience.

The Wellington Discovery Forest has been around since 1991. I believe quite a bit of money went into the discovery park. It was referred to as a tourism icon - a living windows type situation to which people could go to see how the forest had evolved and so on. For many years, most of that forest was cut over for the Wellington mill. Some of it had been cut over two or three times. I know that the Institute of Foresters of Australia put a lot of time into the Wellington Discovery Forest. It is 650 hectares and is 100 years old. It was its intention, as I think the member for Vasse mentioned, to cut the area over a period of 10 years. It was going to cut those logs on a successive basis to show how the forest regrew, and at the same time conduct some trials with burning and some silvicultural measures with thinning and so on. In the first five years there was a cooperative effort by the local community. A large number of schools went through that area, and on it went. We need to question whether it should go into a new national park. It is not as though it is a pristine area. The area is under development. It is an area to which young children could go to see how the forest evolves and how silviculture affects the forest. If I were to be cynical for a moment, I would say that the Government is afraid to allow young children to find out how the forest grows and evolves. The member for Collie will recall saying that this type of

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trial can be done elsewhere. That is true to some extent. However, we had a living, working example of evolution of the forest to which schoolchildren of all ages and adults could go. I have been there twice. I have been there with the Minister for Forestry to discuss the issue with the supporters of the Wellington Discovery Forest Centre. I have walked right through that area on the walk trails. It is an outstanding example of a living window type of discovery centre. Don Spriggins, who is a well-known forester from the old forest department days, and some of his colleagues from the Institute of Foresters of Australia have been great champions of that area. It is a great shame that this area will now be placed in a national park. If that is done, people will not be able to go into that area to do the things that the Institute of Foresters of Australia wants to do. It would be self-sustaining. The timber taken out of that area would pay for the ongoing cost of running that icon. It is a shame that, to placate a small group of people - the Preston Environment Group - the Labor Party has decided to not allow the Wellington Discovery Forest to continue.

Mr M.P. Murray: The problem is that it was started but was never followed through. If it had been followed through -

Mr P.D. OMODEI: That is not true, member for Collie. It goes back to 1991. The former Minister for the Environment, the member for Kingsley, can say a little more about that. I remember when she went down there to launch it back in the 1990s.

The member for Merredin, who is the shadow Minister for the Environment, also raised the issue of dam sites and, in particular, the yield of water from catchment areas. Once an area becomes part of a national park, it will be difficult for the Government of the day, whichever party that may be, to embark on a thinning process to increase run-off in that area. It is well known that the flow of water into reservoirs in the hills area could be increased by up to 40 gigalitres. A trial is being conducted in the Wungong catchment. There have been proposals for trials in the Mundaring catchment and so on. The thinning process would not only provide increased run-off into reservoirs, but also be self-sustaining; it would pay for itself.

The Government has tried to explain that it has green credentials. It is embarking on the development of a desalination plant. It has tried to con the people of Western Australia into thinking that the desalination plant is an environmentally friendly solution, because gas will be used to run the plant. That means that oil will be used to run other forms of power generation. Either way, people can see through that process and are cynical about it. The Labor Party will be losing its green supporters at a rate of knots, which will probably cause it to lose the next election. Put very simply, if we were allowed to thin just a couple of our catchments, it would yield 22 gigalitres of water at almost no cost to the Government or State of Western Australia. The last three bores that we put down into the Yarragadee in the northern suburbs cost the State \$37 million and provided 15 gigalitres of water. The desalination plant will cost more than \$300 million, yet we can generate a yield of 40 gigalitres of water at no cost by thinning some of the catchments. I implore the Government: we need to adopt a commonsense approach to the management of these forests. They should perhaps be maintained as state forest rather than as secure national park reserves in which nothing can be done. If they were maintained as state forest, it would enable us to thin those catchments. The member for Collie has sold his people down the drain as far as the Wellington Discovery Forest goes.

The member for Albany is not here, but I am also greatly concerned about the Walpole wilderness area. A number of letters have gone backwards and forwards between the Albany City Council and the Government, particularly the Minister for the Environment. A letter of 6 July 2004 to the minister addresses the issue of access to future water supplies from the Denmark River. The Denmark, Sticks and Bow Rivers have been identified as possible long-term water sources for Albany. If those areas become part of national parks - the Walpole wilderness area is one such area - access would be limited to a water supply for Albany. The Government needs to tell the City of Albany now what are its long-term water supply options. It is a very serious matter. Albany is a major regional centre, export area and port, yet it does not have a guaranteed, long-term water supply. This is not a matter of playing politics; it is a fact. The Government is aware of this issue.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Mr P.D. OMODEI: If the Government pushes forward in the name of conservation for a political purpose - that is, to enhance its environmental credentials - we will have a serious situation in the future. In the future there may be a proposal to build a dam in the Walpole wilderness area. That may occur in 10 or 20 years, when most of us will not be in this place. What Government will be able to build a dam in a wilderness area? What Government will be able to thin a catchment in a national park to provide for greater run-off of water? Will we get yet another desalination plant? That will possibly happen.

National parks are spread across the State. The member for Merredin raised the serious problem of feral animals. Damage is being caused to the ecosystem by feral pigs in particular. It is well known that people are deliberately releasing pigs into the environment so that they can hunt them. They even cut off the ears of those

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pigs so that hunting dogs cannot grab them by the ears. They go out with their shotguns and hunting dogs. It is considered to be a sport. That is doing significant damage to our ecology. In the past four years, 800 pigs have been caught in the Lake Muir-Denbarker area. There is the risk that these pigs could cause an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, anthrax or something like that. That would decimate the domestic animal population of this State. We need to consider that matter. I do not need to remind the House that it took only one Canadian cow to decimate the beef industry in the United States. That caused huge problems. How would we control an outbreak of that kind of disease? We have a national livestock identification scheme, which is something farmers are not happy about but which they are prepared to follow so that diseased stock can be identified. Pigs are running rife in our national parks, not only in the Lake Muir and Denbarker areas but also the Scott River and Collie areas. I spoke to the member for Collie about that recently. They are everywhere.

The Government is not short of money. There has been an increase in the budget of the Department of Conservation and Land Management, which I welcome. Media reports show that the Government has a \$500 million surplus. It had a windfall gain under the financial assistance benefits scheme of \$230 million. It had a windfall of goods and services tax funds into the State of hundreds of millions of dollars. What is the Government doing about its public lands assets in this State? It is not doing enough.

Under the friendly neighbours scheme, people at Lake Muir get \$5 000 from the Department of Conservation and Land Management to assist their pig trapping efforts. Farmers want to catch the pigs because they are damaging their land and property. These are not pigs from private property or from alienated property straying onto public lands; these animals are from public land straying onto private property. The only people who are taking a real interest and making a big effort are farmers rather than government ministers. A major effort needs to be made. As the member for Merredin said, wild dogs are a problem in the wheatbelt and pastoral areas. There are cases of farmers mustering 8 000 head of sheep only to find that half have disappeared because of wild dogs. The Government is making some effort through a very small increase in the Agriculture Protection Board's budget to employ doggers, but not enough is happening.

As I have mentioned in this place, it is almost like the old days of the outlaws and the Texas Rangers. Once outlaws crossed the Rio Grande they were home free in Mexico. Similarly, as soon as wild dogs cross the border into crown land the doggers cannot chase them. It is a very serious matter. Farmers are at their wits' end. Many of them have had to change the farming practice in which they have been involved for decades, some families for more than 100 years, from running sheep to running cattle. Young calves are still being harassed by wild dogs. One day not too far away human beings will be attacked by dogs. Maybe then we will start to take a bit of notice. Must it come to that? It should not have to. It is not as if there are not the funds in this State's coffers because of the current state of the economy.

If we are to have national parks, we need to run them properly. Those very dedicated people who work in CALM must tear their hair out when trying to come to grips with these issues. Apart from all the diseases, such as *Phytophthora*, that scientists must deal with, pigs are now getting to the stage at which they are running out of control. I have met with these people. They have given me statistics reflecting devastated land. It is reported that two pigs can rip up and destroy one hectare a night. Members can imagine what kind of damage a group of a dozen pigs could do to private property. The Stock (Identification and Movement) Act provides for the prosecution of offenders. Maybe the Government should be looking at beefing up that legislation or, if necessary, bringing in new legislation to create significant penalties. After all, the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act provides for a first offence a \$5 000 fine for a person and a \$50 000 fine for a corporation. Some of its penalties are very large. It also provides for jail sentences. Maybe the damage caused by wild dogs running around is not related to human beings, but the disaster wrought on flocks of sheep, young lambs and young calves is not acceptable. We need to look at the damage that pigs have done to agricultural land. Pig traffickers need to be brought to account, to put it simply. Perhaps as a preliminary measure a circular could be sent to people in certain areas who are known to be involved in that kind of activity so that we make sure that they are aware that the authorities know who they are and that in the end they will be brought to account.

Creating national parks is a very important matter. I mentioned to the minister that I would be asking questions during consideration in detail about each of the national parks. It seems to me that the minister is trying to give the impression that the Government is creating new national parks, which would give it more kudos. One that comes readily to my mind is Greater Beedelup National Park. I thought that it would have been an addition to the former Beedelup National Park. The minister needs to convince me that it is a new national park, because I believe it is an addition to the former national park. I might be being pedantic, I do not know, but why not be honest and say that it is the first stage of the roll-out of the Government's national parks?

The Government should not pretend that it will do more than that which was proposed under the previous Government. On 4 May 1999 the then Minister for the Environment put out a series of statements on the Regional Forest Agreement, which was a comprehensive plan for forests right across the south west land

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division of Western Australia, explaining what was to happen. It explained that there would be 12 new national parks in addition to the present 24 national parks. All that information was in those statements. What has changed? This new Government, when in opposition, said that if it came into power, it would create 30 new national parks. How many national parks have been created in the first three and a half years of this Government? From the time the statements were made in 1999 to this date in 2004 no new national parks have been completed. Somebody mentioned today the 80 Bills in the Legislative Council and the fact that we have only seven weeks to the end of the session. I would be very surprised if all those Bills got through the Parliament. However, if the Government wishes to give this legislation priority, we would certainly be supportive of it.

If I may recap, it is a shame that the Wellington Discovery Centre has been placed in a national park. I believe that the Government has not thought through clearly enough the issue of the thinning of catchments for water supply. The minister would know well the work that has been done by the Water Corporation on the Wungong catchment. I think there is a six-gigalitre yield from just that very small catchment. I believe that the Wungong Dam has never filled up. There is a huge capacity there for the generation of water supply without touching grey water and stormwater and options like that. In the Carabooda-Wanneroo area some 40 bores were closed down last year because of their impact on surrounding trees and ecosystems. The water is 10 metres lower than it used to be. Farmers are having to use down-bore pumps instead of using centrifugal pumps. There is no doubt that the watertable is dropping. There is a combination of reasons for this. One is less rainfall and the second is that the Water Corporation pumps a lot of water out of the ground - as farmers do too. There is no reason that we should not recharge that aquifer with stormwater. I am sure that the Water Corporation has already thought of that. These issues are not new. Grey water recycling and retro-fitting are not new. When I was Minister for Water Resources, coming from the bush as I had, I suggested that people in the metropolitan area should have water tanks. I was told that under the Health Act they could not have tanks because the nasties on the roof of people's houses would go into the tanks and become a health hazard. The new Gallop Government has come into power. All of a sudden we have people in the metropolitan area getting a rebate for installing tanks. What happened all of a sudden? Did the environment clean up?

Mr R.C. Kucera: We obviously listened to you whereas your Cabinet did not.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I would have pursued that issue of tanks. People in country Western Australia do not get a rebate for installing rainwater tanks.

The proposal for the national parks is a good one, but the minister has not taken into consideration the issues of resources, feral animals and thinning catchments.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN** (Mandurah) [3.30 pm]: I make a few brief comments on the Reserves (National Parks, Conservation Parks and Nature Reserves) Bill. I congratulate the Minister for the Environment for the creation of nine new national parks in Western Australia's south west, for significant additions to the Wellington National Park and for a number of important land category changes that are in line with previous forest management plans. The Peel region is impacted upon by two key changes in this Bill.

Before I refer to these changes, I acknowledge the member for Dawesville's comments yesterday about the Yalgorup National Park, located south of Mandurah and the Dawesville Channel. The member for Dawesville made some good comments, although they were not directed to this Bill. His comments related to the importance of the Yalgorup National Park to the Peel region and outlined his experiences on a visit to Queensland. Ecotourism businesses have developed from good planning in national parks by ensuring that people, either those who live locally or visitors, can enjoy the national park experience. The member for Dawesville made some good comments about the Yalgorup National Park. If members have not visited the Yalgorup National Park, it is worthwhile doing so. As explained yesterday, this tremendous national park is bordered by the Indian Ocean to the west, the Peel Inlet and the Bunbury highway to the east. It is a significant national park. There are species, both flora and fauna, in the Yalgorup National Park that are very important to Western Australia. Much discussion has taken place in this House, and comments have been made by the Minister for the Environment, about tuart trees. The tuarts are very important to the coastal area from Perth to Busselton, and we in Mandurah have access to significant stands of tuarts. As discussed previously, there have been problems with tuarts and diseases, and I am pleased that the minister has acted through the establishment of a task force to address issues regarding the health and wellbeing of those tuart trees in my region. The member for Dawesville mentioned yesterday the need to open the Yalgorup National Park to visitors to create opportunities. I agree with him. If we were able to attract more visitors to the Yalgorup National Park, the area generally would benefit. It would heighten awareness, both locally and in the wider community, of the value of this national park. I place on record my support for the comments of the member for Dawesville yesterday; it was a very good speech. I am sure members of this House would join me in congratulating the member for Dawesville on the milestone birthday he celebrated with his family and friends recently.

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The Bill contains two key clauses that relate to the Peel region. One of the beauties of the wonderful Peel region, as I am sure the members for Murray-Wellington, Dawesville, Roleystone and Collie would agree, is that it is diverse in nature. Not only can one have a water-based experience in the Peel waterways and the Indian Ocean, but also people can have a fantastic historic experience in the Shire of Murray particularly, and in the shires to the east of Mandurah. People can also have a forest experience in the Dwellingup and Boddington areas.

I am pleased that clause 32 relates to Class A Reserve No 39827, which is within the shires of Collie, Boddington, Waroona and Harvey, and is known as Lane-Poole reserve. The Bill provides for the addition to the class A reserve of two areas - one an A-class crown reserve and the other is freehold land. It is important that we strengthen the protection of the Lane-Poole reserve. I indicate to members who have not been to the area that the Peel region offers a forest experience: the Lane-Poole reserve and the areas around the Nanga Bush Camp and the Dwellingup locality provide tremendous opportunities for people seeking a forest experience. Of course, people can utilise the upper reaches of the Murray River. I am pleased that the Bill strengthens the Lane-Poole reserve with the addition of the lands I mentioned.

The other part of the Bill relating to the Peel region involves some additions to the Serpentine National Park. Clause 15 relates to Class A Reserve No 39825, which falls within the shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale in the Peel region as an addition to the Serpentine National Park. The additions to the significant national park area are important to the Peel region. Members who have experienced Serpentine Falls and the other magnificent natural landmarks that make up the Serpentine National Park will agree that it is a tremendous experience.

This is an important Bill, and I am very pleased it has overwhelming support. It is important that a number of valid issues that have been raised by members of both sides of the House have been addressed.

I also take the opportunity to congratulate those people and organisations in our community - many are found within the Peel region, be it in the electorate of Mandurah, which I represent, or into the Dawesville electorate and further south - who volunteer to assist the Department of Conservation and Land Management and other government departments to ensure that our natural heritage in national parks and reserves is preserved for future generations. I will not name them all in the Mandurah and Peel region. However, I know members on both sides of the House will support an acknowledgment of people who volunteer to protect the natural environment. Unfortunately, as development continues in some parts of Western Australia, much of our fauna finds itself trapped. I know that when the Dawesville Cut was developed south of Mandurah in the early 1990s, we saw, as we still see, a lot of the territorial fauna such as kangaroos etc become trapped on the island of Halls Head through Wannanup and Falcon. There were stories that kangaroos were seen swimming the channel, which is really quite amazing. I remember a fisherman explaining to me - I assure members that he was sober - that he noticed some activity in the water very late one night and that when he got closer to the activity, he found that it was a kangaroo swimming the channel, escaping eventually into the Yalgorup National Park.

I know that there are some very hardworking people in the seats of both Mandurah and Dawesville who rescue a lot of fauna that is affected and impacted on by the increasing development. When we consider this Bill, it is important that we consider the native animals and plants that will be protected by the creation of these new national parks and the amalgamation of a number of areas of land into reserves. I regularly converse with a number of people who tell me about the raptors, kangaroos, possums and even bandicoots that they have rescued and relocated because of the development that has continued in one of the fastest growing regions in the country. I pay my great respect and admiration to all those people who take the time to care about our native flora and fauna, as well as the volunteers who help to protect and rehabilitate the current national parks and reserves. I recently met some people who have volunteered to assist the Department of Conservation and Land Management in the upkeep of a section of the Bibbulmun Track. These are all important elements to consider when not only protecting the current reserves but also seeking to establish and create new ones. I am very happy to support this Bill. It adds to a number of very critical reserves and national parks that already exist in the State of Western Australia, particularly in the south west.

Finally, I give a plug for the Peel waterways and the Peel region. I am very pleased that the Government saw through the establishment of the Peel region scheme, which set in place the Peel region park. It is very important for the Peel region, which is experiencing considerable pressures because of the growing population and the development that is occurring. We must ensure that the importance of the Peel waterways is not forgotten. I have said this before in the House, but we must ensure that we plan very carefully when the Peel deviation is constructed. As we have seen previously, as soon as major roads are extended, development pressures come on stream. I have spoken to a number of people and one of their concerns is the impact of future growth and development on the eastern side of the Peel Inlet-Harvey Estuary. Members may not be aware that the Peel deviation will be located on the eastern side of the Peel Inlet-Harvey Estuary. Grave concern is felt by many people that once that is in place, there will be development pressure, particularly to the west of the Peel deviation

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and abutting the eastern shore of the estuary. The planning for that road must be put in place very carefully. The environmental planning must be done properly so that the future impact of that road does not impinge on the Peel waterways, which are important to the area. The Peel waterways are absolutely critical to the people who live in the Peel region, as well as to the people who visit the area. If the Peel waterways suffer in the future under the impact of population growth, it will bring into question the very reason that so many people live there; people such as the members for Dawesville and Murray-Wellington and me, as well as others who live in the region and the thousands of people who have joined us in the past number of decades. The health and wellbeing of our community will suffer if we do not look after the waterways and ensure that very strict and very clear environmental guidelines are put in place. If we do not do that, the Peel waterways will be in grave danger. I appeal to both the federal Government and the State Government to make the Peel waterways the number one environmental priority. It is essential that they do. We are seeing rapid growth in the region, which other communities in Western Australia are not seeing. If those provisions are not put in place and if local government is not assisted to plan effectively and efficiently for the future, I am very concerned about what we will leave the future generations in the region. I have mentioned this issue to the Minister for the Environment, and I am pleased that she has taken on board my concerns. I stress that point to the House. There could be 200 000 people living in the Peel region in a few short decades. Already 55 000 people live in Mandurah, but that number is expected to reach 100 000 in just over a decade and a half. All that development and growth has occurred and is occurring around the most sensitive waterway in Western Australia. The health and wellbeing of the Serpentine, Murray and Harvey Rivers, which feed into the Harvey Estuary and then into the Indian Ocean, are absolutely critical.

I applaud the Minister for the Environment for introducing the Bill, and I am very pleased that we are seeing a significant addition to the heritage of our national parks in this State.

**MRS C.L. EDWARDES** (Kingsley) [3.46 pm]: I am also very pleased to support this legislation. To a great extent it resulted from the birth of the Regional Forest Agreement. The work that was done on the Regional Forest Agreement was to establish a reserve system. Although the DNA may have changed in some respects, essentially it is the same DNA. In saying that, I acknowledge the amount of work that was done by the many professional Department of Conservation and Land Management staff in the development of the Regional Forest Agreement. Although it might be regarded in some quarters as a somewhat dirty name, it established a system to identify the scientific basis for the creation of the many parks and conservation reserves identified in this Bill. I put on the record the great contribution, professionalism, expertise and knowledge that was given to me as the then minister and to the Government of the day by Keiran McNamara, the current chief executive officer of the department; Jim Sharp, the director of national parks; and Alan Walker and Paul Biggs. I also acknowledge Dr Syd Shea, who was the then chief executive officer. The hours of work, the commitment and the scientific experience that went into establishing the basis for the creation of the national parks and conservation reserves identified in this legislation took place under the previous Government. No-one can criticise the dedication and commitment to ensuring that conservation reserves and national parks were established to protect the natural environment and that the scientific values that were being identified would be protected. Although I have acknowledged those few individuals, an enormous number of staff from CALM, together with staff from the then Environment Australia, worked behind the scenes. Indeed, very strong friendships were formed between the staff, although that did not necessarily mean there was always agreement. I remember some of the debates about the sharing of data. The State and the Commonwealth did not necessarily agree on a position in the first instance. However, we were able to work through those issues in an endeavour to create a scientific basis for the protection of our natural environment, indigenous flora and fauna and the archaeological features - both historic and scientific - which included Aboriginal heritage sites. I hope all of the work carried out during those years will continue to form a strong scientific basis for the continued protection of those particular values. A strong framework was established, and none of us should decry the amount of work, time, effort and scientific experience that went into what is the basis of this legislation.

I want to debunk some of the comments made by the member for Collie about the Wellington Discovery Forest Centre. I clearly remember visiting it on a couple of occasions in 2000. In August of that year, which was the lead-up to biodiversity month, the diary was full with visits from schools and TAFE colleges in and around those areas. It was a popular place for visits by schoolchildren and tertiary students throughout the south west. Why would it not be? It was set amid native forests, pine plantations, the Wellington Dam, the Collie Valley, forest highlands and granite outcrops. It provided a great opportunity to teach our young people, and continues to do so. Some of the courses and sessions held by the Department of Conservation and Land Management staff included forest management. We should be encouraging our young people to learn about forest management. They talked about Aboriginal cultural awareness and discovering the forest, and they explored the ecosystems. It was a great environment that allowed for the interpretation of the forest area and education of the whole region. It was a very popular activity for all schools in the Bunbury-Collie region. To suggest otherwise is to

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decry the great amount of work carried out by volunteers and CALM staff, and the great experience enjoyed by the schoolchildren and young adults who attended the Wellington Discovery Forest Centre.

**DR J.M. EDWARDS** (Maylands - Minister for the Environment) [3.54 pm]: I thank all members who have contributed to this debate today. It is obvious that they put a lot of work and thought into this issue. I appreciate that, and the comments that they made. I also appreciate the support members have given the Bill. Essentially, a number of common themes have been raised, which I will now address.

First of all, as a result of the creation of the new national parks, the issue of management was raised. I point out that in the 2001-02 budget, an extra \$25 million over four years was allocated to manage the new parks in the south west forest. Importantly, members must acknowledge that \$16 million of that amount was for recurrent spending, recognising that there needed to be an added level of ongoing expenditure on the new parks, and \$9 million was for capital works. In the 2003-04 financial year, we allocated an extra \$3 million for fire works to cover these areas as well as other parks in the south west. The 2004-05 budget has seen the biggest ever increase in investment. An extra \$35.7 million has been allocated over four years for park infrastructure and roads, and \$24 million extra has been allocated over four years for fire management for parks not only in the south west, but also in CALM areas across the State. In this financial year, an extra \$1 million has gone into indigenous activities and working with our Aboriginal people. The Government recognises the importance of proper management. We have increased resources to a record level, and we are working to improve our management in regional areas, particularly looking at the issues raised by members, such as feral animals and weeds, which are recognised as serious issues.

The member for Avon wrote to me some months ago about the Avon Valley National Park. I replied addressing the issues he raised in his correspondence. I point out that the park has a daily ranger presence, plus an after-hours response. Further, there are only around 16 600 visits per annum to that park. In terms of pressure from visitor numbers, it does not experience the same pressures as do other parks in the State. Therefore, it is not a priority to increase ranger presence.

With regard to management planning, of the nine new national parks we are dealing with today, there are draft management plans for Boyndaminup, Wellington, Forest Grove and Yelverton and management planning for the other parks that comprise the list of 30 is under way, particularly for those in the Walpole wilderness area.

Each year CALM spends in the vicinity of \$4 million to control feral animals and weeds. It is working with the Agriculture Protection Board and landholders to develop a new good neighbour policy so that we achieve better interaction with neighbours and better management at the boundaries.

Other issues raised included dieback. There is no doubt that dieback is a significant threat to our environment. It is of grave concern to us all that there is no method to stop its gradual spread down slopes. In existing infestations, it is carried down slopes through the movement of water in the soil. Clearly, management practices and initiatives are in place, and phosphite is used as a treatment. A lot is being done to protect threatened flora, including research, access control, translocations and other measures. On top of that, the Conservation Commission, the Environmental Protection Authority and the Dieback Consultative Council are working together closely to make sure that they are on top of the problem, that forward-thinking research is being done and that we are doing as much as we can.

With regard to logging operations, there are detailed prescriptions in the forest management plan. An assessment will be done before any operation, which will take into account roads, track access and hygiene details.

Many comments were made about roads and facilities. It is important to point out that CALM manages 4 000 kilometres of sealed and gravelled public roads and 25 000 kilometres of management roads and tracks. CALM is looking after a lot of roads and tracks.

I will make some comments about fire, because that issue has been raised a number of times today. The Government is supportive of CALM's prescribed burning. We have put on extra staff and made sure that it has more equipment. We have also increased its aerial capacity, both in fire spotting and suppression in prescribed burning and dealing with wildfires. An extra \$3 million was put into CALM's budget in 2003-04 and an extra \$20 million was announced in the budget for this year and the forward estimates. In the last financial year, the prescribed burning program covered 192 000 hectares, which is the highest it has been. Although the spring level was quite low due to dryness and other conditions, the autumn level was the highest in many years.

I turn now to some other comments that were made regarding the register of the national estate. I have been delighted with the negotiations that have occurred with companies that have state agreement Acts that will be affected by this Bill and the Bill that will follow. For some time now the State Government has been dealing with the Commonwealth over these areas that are on the register of the national estate. Although we are now

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proceeding with this Bill, those areas will not be proclaimed until a final resolution is achieved with the Commonwealth. We will continue to talk with the Commonwealth because we are keen for this issue to be resolved and for those areas to be listed on the conservation estate.

This afternoon members raised the issue of water supplies. Three proposed national parks, the Greater Beedelup, the Boorara Gardner and Greater Dordagup, have been noted for their potential as future water sources. This has been acknowledged up-front in the second reading speech. We must remember that parks protect the water quality and quantity of catchments. It has been suggested that the water yield could be increased by thinning the number of trees, but that operation is not compatible with land that is set aside as a national park. Nevertheless, the Department of Conservation and Land Management is cooperating with the Water Corporation to help improve yield by a combination of thinning and burning regimes. We will follow up on those trials and see what are the results. It is possible that in the future dams or reservoirs may be excised; however, that will be a matter for the Parliament to consider when it arises.

The member for Collie made a number of comments about the Wellington Forest Advisory Committee. I will address some of the issues raised about the Wellington Discovery Centre. The Wellington Discovery Centre will continue to operate inside the national park. As the member for Kingsley said, it is a popular place. Some 4 000 students have visited it in the past two years. Importantly, their teachers have told us that although the students love go to the centre, and will continue to do so, they want to see a live demonstration of a logging operation. We have signalled that demonstration areas will be provided outside the national park. I reiterate that there seems to have been some confusion about the centre. It is a fine centre. I have had the pleasure of visiting it and having lunch there. It is a great place and will be available for people to continue to go to, but logging demonstrations will need to be carried on outside the national park.

Mr P.D. Omodei: It will become a greenie centre instead of a demonstration. Have you walked through the demonstration area?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I have been there. Let me explain something to the member that he has totally missed. This decision was based on the committee's recommendation. I believe that one member of the community-based committee is from the Preston Environment Group. However, a lot of other members of the committee recommended that the discovery centre should continue in the forest, but that the logging operations should not continue in the national park. The Government has accepted the recommendations of that committee.

Mr B.J. Grylls: How far away is the nearest logging area?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: It is nearby. A map shows the discovery centre and the area that is available nearby. I cannot remember how many kilometres away it is.

The member for Alfred Cove said that two of the national parks that were proposed in the Regional Forest Agreement are covered by this legislation. That is true. I point out that the previous Government signed off on the RFA in May 1999, but that it did not introduce any proposals or reserve Bills for new national parks between May 1999 and February 2001. In fact, some of the clauses in the Bill deal with reserves that were first proposed in 1987. I refer to clauses 22, 23, 25, 26, 27 and 30 as examples of areas that have been proposed as mainly A-class reserves since 1987. It has taken this long for them to get to the Parliament.

The Government has been through an exhaustive process to get to this stage. To date, it has involved a new forest management plan and a most intensive consultation process. The Conservation Commission's discussion paper started off the process of public feedback. The draft forest management plan received 5 600 submissions, which the EPA assessed and a round table discussion was held. To be better informed, a number of reviews were conducted, which we promised in our election commitments. Reviews were conducted also into the high conservation values area and the river and stream buffer reserves. We continued the Ferguson panel on the sustainable yield and a scientific panel led to the establishment of fauna habitat zones. When all that work was completed, we released fine-scale boundaries for two months at a time for community consultation so that local communities could examine what was proposed, have input into it and help us finalise the boundaries that met the appropriate requirements at a local level. All those measures take time. As the minister said, it will take time to get the necessary scientific information and to undertake other reviews that we want to conduct to be best informed about the creation of these national parks and to establish a new forest management plan, which lays out the proposed 30 national parks and their boundaries. The fine-scale work will then be undertaken and, finally, legislation will be introduced into Parliament. Another Bill will be introduced shortly for the remainder of the national parks under the old-growth forest policy.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Will that Bill include another 21 national parks?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: That is right. It will include some other areas also.



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The member for Vasse made a number of comments about the need for the Government to engage with private landowners. I could not agree more with him, but that is not what this Bill is about. I fully agree with his comments about the need for corridors and linkages. That is why we have ongoing programs such as the Land for Wildlife program, the covenanting program and the national resource management initiative. The Government recently released a booklet of biodiversity incentive programs, including the new biodiversity adjustment scheme so that people can see what is available to them to help them manage land that is off a reserve and on a private estate.

The member for Warren-Blackwood referred to Albany's water supply, which is very important. I had a meeting with members of the City of Albany and had discussions with its staff. The Government is considering the reservoirs that have been proposed in that area. Despite information that has been provided to me, I believe they will be excluded. The Government is working through the final configuration of what must be done to make sure that Albany has the water supply that it needs. Members referred also to the value of volunteers. I wholeheartedly agree with those comments. In conclusion, I thank members for their worthwhile contributions this afternoon. I appreciate the work they have done and I look forward to the progression of this Bill through Parliament.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*Consideration in Detail*

**Clause 1: Short title -**

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Will the minister take a short amount of time to explain to members the difference between a national park, a conservation park and a nature reserve?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Essentially, these are reservations under the Conservation and Land Management Act. A national park allows conservation and recreation, a nature reserve is focused on conservation, and a conservation park is focused on conservation and recreation, but its application is less stringent than that of the other two categories.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: The title of the Act is to be cited as the Reserves (National Parks, Conservation Parks and Nature Reserves) Act 2004. With other national parks legislation, I notice that normally the words "and water" are added; that is, it is a reservation for national parks and water. In the minister's second reading response, she did not respond to one of the most important issues that was raised by this side, that is, the question of water supply. If so much forest is to be locked up in a national park, and people are unable to thin it or build dams in it, I believe we will create a huge problem for ourselves in the future. Will the minister explain why there has not been that addition of "and water" after "national parks" and whether that will still be able to occur; in other words, will the provision of the future water supply for the State of Western Australia be taken into account?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I am advised by the Executive Director of the Department of Conservation and Land Management that putting in those words "and water" is not normal, although it has happened on a number of occasions; for example, with the Shannon National Park. The legal advice is that the statutory purpose of a national park should not really be coupled with other purposes. Nevertheless, water has been considered quite carefully in establishing these national parks. As I have signalled, if in future a dam was really needed in a certain area, I would not rule out that land may not be excised for that purpose.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I cannot emphasise enough how important this is. I presume that if this legislation is passed, as I believe it will be, it becomes law. To change the status of a national park would require the support of both Houses of Parliament. The current structure of the Parliament of Western Australia is one in which the Government does not control both Houses, which could cause some problems in the future. It seems to me that it would be easier to put a clause in the legislation now so that we avoid a Franklin Dam type of situation in which some time in the future a Government must make an unpopular decision to build a reservoir in a national park or to harvest water from a national park by way of bores or whatever. We all know how large the D'Entrecasteaux National Park is, and the extent of ground water in that area still has not even been explored. It may well be that in 10, 15, 20, 30 or 50 years we will need to harvest water from those areas. If the minister believes that such a clause will not be put in this legislation and that desalination plants will continue to be built, she should say so. However, from where I sit, it would be much easier to put something in the legislation that would give us the capacity to harvest water from our national parks in the future.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: With all this discussion about desalination, I would like to know what the Opposition's view is on the south west Yarragadee proposal.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Dead against it. The local member is dead against it, and so are all the shires.

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Dr J.M. EDWARDS: It is against desalination and against the south west Yarragadee. That is interesting.

Mr P.D. Omodei: All the shires in the south west and all the people in the lower south west are opposed to that.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: They are greatly in favour of water conservation, are they?

Mr P.D. Omodei: We are very concerned about the future life of the Blackwood River.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Absolutely. We are all concerned about the Blackwood River.

Mr P.D. Omodei: What is your position on it?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: We are progressing the exploration of the south west Yarragadee. In the interim, until we receive all those good studies -

Mr P.D. Omodei: It is like the second coming of Jesus Christ!

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Would the member like us to make a decision without good environmental information?

Mr P.D. Omodei: I think there is a helluva lot of information that shows that a lot of water comes out of the ground and goes into the Blackwood River.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.A. Radisich): Order, member for Warren-Blackwood!

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Governments need to be up front if they are going to build big dams. Any Government that is going to do that needs to engage the community. To undertake such a proposal, a full environmental assessment would need to be gone through. It would go through the Environmental Protection Authority. We are not afraid of that. The member talked about the Government not having control of the upper House. In all the years that we have had responsible government in Western Australia, a Labor Government has never had control of the upper House. However, we have been able to get legislation through. We have worked with the community and made progress. Therefore, we are confident that we can manage these sorts of issues both now and into the future.

It also needs to be pointed out that the processes for gaining access to all Conservation and Land Management Act land categories, including state forests and national parks, for water resource development are firmly established in existing legislation. One of CALM's key statutory functions is to promote the conservation of both the quantity and the quality of water on the land it manages, and to develop policies for water to be taken from those lands. We are treating water in a particular way in this Bill. I have flagged that, for example, the Walpole wilderness area and Albany's water supply, for which there is a greater immediacy, will be treated somewhat differently. That will be revealed when the Bill comes into this place.

I also point out that when proposed national parks overlap gazetted water catchment areas, the legislation gives the Water and Rivers Commission the right to control access to water within gazetted catchments, regardless of land tenure, and it also allows the Water and Rivers Commission to establish by-laws to control land management practices in the catchment. Although there is not a lot in the legislation about water, there is other legislation and a lot of other measures and activities outside this Bill that make sure we pay proper attention to water resources.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: While we are on that, does that mean that under the legislation before us currently, it would be possible to put a dam into those national parks without the need to come back for an excision, or is an excision needed to build a dam?

Dr J.M. Edwards: It would need an excision.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Therefore, we would have to come back for an excision for the dam as well as for the area for thinning, if it were decided that a catchment was needed for that dam.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: We would have to come back for an excision for a dam. We have also flagged that when we develop the management plans, we will need to look at the protection of water resources and activities that need to be undertaken for water quality management and water quantity management. However, I believe it is highly unlikely that there would be thinning in national parks.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: I can see no real value in establishing dams in the national parks if thinning will not be able to be carried out in order to have a catchment. There are plenty of dams in Western Australia at the moment. The problem is that there is not enough run-off into those dams. During my briefing with CALM, it was made very clear that a national park as a land use was not consistent with thinning. As the member for Warren-Blackwood pointed out, in establishing these national parks, are we virtually ruling out the possibility of dams with catchment areas that can contribute viable amounts of water?

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Dr J.M. EDWARDS: We are saying that if in the future dams need to be built in these national parks, an excision will be needed, and that will need to go through both Houses of Parliament. That is not uncommon for a number of activities like that.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Let us go back to the criteria for a national park. I seek an explanation of what the process is for a conservation area becoming a national park. What role does the Commonwealth play and what benefit is there to the State?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I am not sure what the Leader of the Opposition is getting at. Land management is a state responsibility. For state land, it is entirely a state process. Did the Leader of the Opposition mean something else?

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is the term “national park” that I am getting at.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Right; that is an anomaly. They should really be called state parks. Some sort of federal governance area should be called a national park.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Is it true that the Commonwealth plays no role in the granting of the term “national park” and provides no funding?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: That is true; it is historical.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I refer to the second reading speech, and in particular to page 4183 of *Hansard* where it states -

The boundaries of the proposed Greater Beedelup, Greater Dordagup and Boorara Gardner National Parks overlap with areas of possible future dam sites. The Department of Conservation and Land Management will ensure that the management plans for these parks acknowledge the potential future reservoir sites and that excisions from the national parks may occur in the future for public water supply and associated infrastructure, if and when the dams are required.

That again begs the question of why we are not putting in the legislation the capacity to excise national parks without going through that process. We know about the community concern that has occurred as a result of the old-growth forest policy. The conservation movement gets very upset about dams, whether it is the Franklin Dam or a range of other dams. It is unusual for this to not be covered in the legislation. I can only think that it has not been covered in the Bill because it would not be palatable to the green movement, the people who give the Labor Party preferences so that it can win elections. I put to the minister that it would be sensible and in the interests of the State for this to be provided in the legislation. The member for Merredin mentioned the thinning of catchments. The minister would know that the Shannon National Park, which covers about 53 000 hectares, includes an area formerly used as a school and town. Seventy-nine coupes were cut in this area between 1950 and 1979. It should be thinned now to make it a good national park. To suggest that silvicultural activities cannot occur in a national park and will not occur in the future is folly. We are talking about a very serious matter; that is, the supply of water in the State of Western Australia. There should be a clause in this legislation to allow us to harvest water. I ask the minister to give me some good reasons for that to not be in the Bill.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: One of the reasons is that there are a lot of things that people say they might do in the future. No evidence has been presented to me to suggest any immediacy for these dams. There is no time frame and no suggestion that in the next year or so someone has a plan to go into the three sites we have mentioned. Nevertheless, the potential for that to happen in the future was flagged in the second reading speech. That needs to be acknowledged when the management plans are developed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for Warren-Blackwood, but advise him that we are dealing with the short title.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I am talking about the absence of the words “and water” from the short title of the Bill. Those words can be found in other national parks legislation. This matter should be covered in the legislation. As quoted previously, the second reading speech states -

The Department of Conservation and Land Management will ensure that the management plans for these parks acknowledge the potential future reservoir sites and that excisions from the national parks may occur in the future . . .

What kind of management plans will be in place to manage these areas? I thought that once it was locked up, it was locked up.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I am informed that the management plans will determine the management of water quality and yield. If the Water and Rivers Commission wants to restrict certain activities in certain parts of the catchment to protect water quality, that will happen.

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Mr B.J. GRYLLES: It is clear in this early part of the consideration in detail stage that members of the coalition Opposition, especially the member for Warren-Blackwood and I, are very concerned about the possible ramifications of this legislation on future water supply options in this State. We are not raising this issue in an attempt to scuttle the legislation. We have clearly outlined that we support the legislation and the creation of the nine new national parks as outlined in the Bill. What we are putting on the record today is our belief that in 10 years we may be in the same situation and may need to develop a dam and its catchment. Albany was the example that was used. If we tried to put that item through the Western Australian Parliament at the moment, it would more than likely be passed in the lower House but scuttled in the upper House. Based on the current composition of the upper House, we would not be able to get legislation through to excise an area of national park to build a dam and its catchment, which is a critical aspect. We are not talking just about the small footprint of the dam but also the management of the catchment to enable the collection of water in the dam. Although the member for Warren-Blackwood and I will not oppose the short title, we want to put on the record our extreme concern that this legislation will lock up these areas. That means that in the future there will be little chance of going into those areas to use the water resource that may exist in them for the benefit of Western Australians. If that occurs, the member for Warren-Blackwood and I will at least be able to say that we raised this issue and said that the legislation could create serious problems for a future water supply from dams and catchments. As the member for Warren-Blackwood pointed out, it is one of the cheaper options for the provision of water in this State. I know what the minister has said and put on the record. She has made it clear that the Government has allowed for that to happen under the legislation and has outlined it in the second reading speech. However, going by the composition of the Parliament of today, the ability to do what the minister hopes to be able to do in the future would be limited.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I think members have overlooked one point; that is, that, even if we wanted to build dams in those three sites today, an excision from state forest for that purpose would have to come to Parliament. The member for Merredin hit the nail on the head; we are flagging that these three sites have the potential to provide water resources in the future. We are flagging that up-front and explaining that if that is the case, the Parliament will be able to decide on that matter, as it does now.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I cannot understate the importance of this issue. Would the minister consider, between now and the Bill going to the Legislative Council, an amendment to add the words "and water" to the short title of this Bill? At the moment, water costs about \$1.70 a kilolitre. The cost of dam water is about 50c a kilolitre. We could save in the vicinity of \$30 million a year if we embarked on the construction of dams to supply water rather than the construction of a desalination plant. I do not think that the Government has thought through the water issue. I do not know where it gets its advice. The evidence is available. The Department of Environment, the Water and Rivers Commission and the Department of Conservation and Land Management have conducted a number of studies on catchments and water supplies. Studies have been conducted on the Mundaring catchment and on another catchment that was to be logged. We got in trouble when we were in government because people did not want that to happen close to town. Sometimes Governments must make decisions with which not everybody is happy. A further 22 gegalitres of water could be collected from the Mundaring catchment. Someone who works for the Water Corporation has gone through the interest groups in Western Australia, including the conservation movement. We know that six gegalitres of water - six million cubic metres - could be saved each year in the Wungong catchment if it were thinned. If the Government embarked on that strategy, it might cop a bit of flack from its greenie coalition partners. However, in the end, it is governing the State. Water is an important component of our lives in this State. The Government would get more flak from putting a layer of salt into Cockburn Sound and burning oil to desalinate water than it would if it built a dam somewhere in the deep south where nobody ever goes.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The member overlooks one issue; that is, the previous Government spent something like \$500 million in quite a short period, on the Harvey Dam, for example.

Mr P.D. Omodei: North Dandalup?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Yes, and anyone would say that they were really good initiatives. Despite that, in 2001 we had to impose new water restrictions.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Think of the population growth.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The state of the dams in 2001 is explained not by population growth but by low rainfall. We all know there was a drought. We need a reliable supply. We can build dams everywhere. If a dam had been built just west of Albany, it would have been in the area of the State that had the lowest relative rainfall in 2001. That is the decline it experienced in that year. I will go away and think about what the member for Warren-Blackwood is saying, but I think it is unlikely that I will make any change.

**Clause put and passed.**

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**Clause 2: Commencement -**

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: My question relates to the state agreement Act for mining leases held by Alcoa World Alumina Australia and Worsley Alumina Pty Ltd. My information has been provided by the Director of CALM. Of the 97 000 hectares of new national park, 14 000 hectares come under state agreement Act mining leases. Could the minister take some time to explain to us the process of negotiations with the Commonwealth and when she believes it will be concluded? Obviously it is subject to the legislation passing through the other place. Could the minister give us some idea of the priority that this piece of legislation will be given when it goes to the upper House and in the negotiations with the Commonwealth, so that we know when the Bill will be proclaimed?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Discussions have been going on with the Commonwealth about the areas on the Register of the National Estate. At this stage the Commonwealth has not agreed. We will take it up again with the Commonwealth. Indeed, I am meeting with the head of the Department of the Environment in a fortnight when this will be one of the issues on the agenda.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: In the minister's second reading response she mentioned some sections that would not be proclaimed because of agreement Acts. What are those agreement Acts?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Basically the agreement Acts are to do with alumina production. Alcoa agreement Acts are impacted upon by this, as are Worsley state agreement Acts.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: For the benefit of the member for Warren-Blackwood, the effects of these state agreement Acts result from a 260 hectare addition to the Serpentine National Park, the Batalling Conservation Park near Collie, the new 4 300 hectare Wandering Conservation Park near Boddington, the 3 358 hectare Russell Conservation Park near Beverley, the proposed 203 hectare addition to the Falls Brook Nature Reserve, the 44 hectares of the North Dandalup Nature Reserve and the addition to the Lane-Poole Nature Reserve. Those areas need to have commonwealth assent. The Commonwealth needs to remove these areas from the Australian Heritage Commission register. I asked the minister earlier what sort of priority she believed this legislation would be given in the other place, because until it is passed through the other place, the Commonwealth will probably show little interest in progressing the issue.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: As I have explained a number of times, this will have a very high priority once it gets to the upper House.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 3 to 5 put and passed.**

**Clause 6: Native title rights and interests -**

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: I made an effort to contact the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council because it was mentioned to me in my briefing. It did not get back to me. Could the minister give some indication of what took place at meetings held with the relevant interests in native title and what effect this legislation will have on them?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: There has been extensive consultation with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council on the creation of the new national parks, including those in this Bill. We have determined that the new national parks and other reserves will not be subject to the future act procedures in the commonwealth Native Title Act. This means that the Bill will not affect native title rights and interests that may be found to exist by the federal court. Because of that there is no requirement to compulsorily acquire native title or register an indigenous land use agreement that endorses the park. Relevant clauses have been drafted in consultation with the State Solicitor's Office and with the knowledge of that Aboriginal council.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Was any other consultation carried out apart from that with that Aboriginal council; for example, were other interest groups involved?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: There has been consultation one has never seen the likes of in the events leading to the creation of these national parks. It is embedded in the forest management plan. As I said previously, we had 5 600 submissions and a travelling road show. We travelled to communities and met with all sorts of groups to explain what we were doing. We have had further feedback through those community advisory groups that we have been setting up for the proposed future national parks. We have made a point of trying to reach into the Aboriginal community and talk to them as well.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Are any Aboriginal sites of significance in this area, especially in national parks, that we might regard as iconic with tourism potential?

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Mr P.D. OMODEI: What would happen in the case of the federal court granting native title rights and interests to a group? I am thinking about the south west Nyoongah group. For example, if traditional owners' articles or items were found in a section of the forest, which has happened from time to time, what would happen? I am thinking of those areas down south. I am sure that the executive director can recall when they were excised from logging and such activities. Would the Government be able to build a dam, for example?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Only if it had the permission of both Houses of Parliament! In answer to the question from the member for Merredin, yes, undoubtedly a lot of sites of Aboriginal significance are located in these national parks. We will be looking forward to working with local communities to help determine those. We have a policy of much better engaging indigenous communities and getting them involved in park management councils, and making sure that their input is truly heard. A number of ecotourism activities are already occurring in parks in this State. They evolve around some of the Aboriginal heritage and icons. There will be more of that.

In answer to the question from the member for Warren-Blackwood, that proposition, on our advice, is really pretty unlikely, but if the federal court were to determine that, we would look at co-existence. There are a number of national parks in which native title and the national park sit happily together.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: If the Federal Court found native title existed over an area deemed to be national park, would the minister be required to bring the legislation back to the House for amendment?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: We can answer that question only when it happened really, as it would depend on the determination. The chances of that happening are fairly unlikely, but, then again, court decisions can never be predicted. In the hypothetical case, we would have to examine the matter. I cannot give an absolute answer either way.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 7: Class A reserve No. 47673 in the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River -**

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: This provision deals with the creation of a national park. In earlier debate, the minister said that four national parks had management plans already in place.

Dr J.M. Edwards: They're being developed.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: At what stage is this management plan? I propose to ask these questions for each clause that creates a park. I am also interested, if the information is available, in the incidence of jarrah dieback in these areas.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: With the national park in question, the management plan is being done in conjunction with the management plan for the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park. We have started the community consultation with the advisory group. We are dealing with groups of parks and getting common interest and getting people working together. It is not at the stage of the draft management plan being released for public comment.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: The Conservation and Land Management Act specifies that a management plan must be drawn up for each park and reserve. If the Bill quickly passes the upper House and is proclaimed, would there be a problem with the management plan not yet being completed?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The Act does not say that the management plan must be in place before a park can be created. If the member looked at the list of national parks and the list of management plans we inherited when we came to government, he would see a gap between those lists. We are working through that situation. I have had discussions with the Conservation Commission about what goes into management plans and how they are amended. We are looking to do it a little more smartly. It has been a burden for all Governments; that is, the need to actively manage, the need to have the management plan, and the formal nature of the management plans required.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: Why gazette a national park without a management plan?

Dr J.M. Edwards: Why did you do it?

Mr P.D. OMODEI: Exactly! It seems that successive Governments embark on this journey of gazetting national parks willy-nilly for the sake of green credentials, rather than adopting a commonsense approach of having the plan stitched up before gazetting the park. I presume that reserve No 46400 is the Chapman Brook park area. Is that correct?

Dr J.M. Edwards: Yes.

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Mr P.D. OMODEI: I thought so. Have all these areas been checked for mineralisation? Knowing the existence of large deposits of mineral sands close to the Blackwood River, particularly at Beenup, which is a deposit of world significance, have these areas been checked? The proposed Chapman Brook national park has had a chequered history. For members who do not know, at one stage the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River owned part of Chapman Brook and proposed a special rural development within its forest area. Julian Grill, a former minister in a Labor Government, agreed to provide government funding for a bridge across Chapman Brook. It is now called "Grill's Double-Crossing" because he later changed his mind about approving the development. I know the history of this piece of bush. I know about the white-bellied frog and all the history associated with that matter. This park was finally purchased by the State Government, with assistance from the Commonwealth Government -

Dr J.M. Edwards: Did that happen in a bit of a hurry?

Mr P.D. OMODEI: No. It took a long time. The Government bought it in the end for about \$5.6 million and it was worth \$6 million or \$7 million. Farmers could not farm the blocks, and the white-bellied frog appeared. Farmers could not use the area for grazing. It was a victory for commonsense. I have driven right throughout the area and it is one of the most degraded pieces of bush I have seen in my life. It has been cut over at least 10 times.

Dr J.M. Edwards: Were you in Cabinet then?

Mr P.D. OMODEI: Yes, I think I was. It is in my electorate and I have an intimate knowledge of things in my electorate. It is a vast area. The white-bellied frog is less than 20 millimetres in size. The only time people know it is there is when it croaks, and it croaks only when it is mating. I remember that the submission put to the Commonwealth had a glossy A4 cover picturing two frogs sitting on top of each other. I remember in our days in government some dedicated guys from CALM facing 10-metre high flames and putting out the fire to save a few frogs. The white-bellied frog has been found almost everywhere on the Scott coastal plain, by the way.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: They put them on the top of each other!

Several members interjected.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: Regarding mineralisation, we know that under the Regional Forest Agreement there was a comprehensive testing of mineralisation in the RFA area, which covered a huge area of state forest. Have the areas been tested for mineralisation? Is government policy still to allow mining in one per cent of national parks?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The Department of Industry and Resources has been fully consulted about all these areas. As pointed out, a lot of work was done to look at mineralisation and future prospectivity through the Regional Forest Agreement. The information has been carried forward. The Government has made its decision that these areas are to become national parks. Our policy is no mining in national parks.

Mr P.D. Omodei: None.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: That is right.

Mr P.D. Omodei: If we found a significant mineral sands deposit in the D'Entrecasteaux National Park, we would not mine it.

Dr J.M. Edwards: That is right. It would be like finding the frogs, which have not reproduced in the way you think.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is too much information!

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Clause 7(5) refers to the closure of portions of roads mentioned in subclauses (3) and (4). Most contributions in the second reading stage mentioned fire management and concerns about the appropriate management of fire in our national parks and reserves. Will the closure of roads pose any threat to accessing these areas should a wildfire occur?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I am informed that the answer is no. CALM has proper plans for accessing fires, because that is a very important consideration. In fact, some of the new money that was announced earlier this year is specifically for roads and fire access. Work has gone on in the south west area to improve that situation.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: It seems to me that, in reserve No 47673, there is no continuity between Bullant Drive and the other roads in the blue section of the map. Despite what the executive director has said, I do not think there can ever be too many roads through the bush for fire control. I have seen officers from his department do controlled burning in the face of a bushfire, jumping back a couple of roads and letting the fire go a little more. I

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think it is a good tool for there to be a number of roads. There is extensive mention of road closures in nearly every clause in the legislation. I have spoken to foresters and people who are concerned about fire management and I know that in wilderness areas, CALM is embarking on a program of ripping up and closing roads and, in some cases, closing access to some significant tourism attractions, such as Mt Roe and places like that. I have driven through reserve No 46400 along the extension of the road that starts at Warner Glen Road and heads south. That road used to continue right through and hook up with Bullant Drive. Now it just stops in the middle of the bush. The issue of fire safety access and egress is a significant point that needs to be considered. It seems that, in the name of conservation and to placate the concerns of the conservation movement, we are placing firefighters' lives at risk.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The last thing I want to do is place firefighters' lives at risk, and I am on record as being strongly supportive of prescribed burning and other activities. I am informed that over a decade or a bit longer there has been a decrease in the amount of money allocated to the strategic management of roads and bridges. That was rectified with the new money that was provided at the beginning of the year. Many of the roads that have been referred to are unmade. There is nothing in the legislation that will prevent CALM from putting in the roads it needs for access and proper firefighting capacity and capability.

Mr P.D. Omodei: On the map, there is a white line through Bullant Drive and that is an existing road. That road used to hook up with the one in reserve No 46400. I remember driving through there a number of times, and it comes out at the junction of Chapman Brook and the Blackwood River, just up from the bridge. Why close it? It seems silly.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: What is the member's question?

Mr P.D. Omodei: The question is: why will that extra section of Bullant Drive, which is on the map as the red section, continue to be a road, rather than the Government closing it? There is no continuity in Bullant Drive.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: It does not go down through the blue area.

Mr P.D. Omodei: It just stops there.

Mr B.J. Grylls: The question is whether the white section marked on the bottom of the blue area continues as a road. The member for Warren-Blackwood is saying that the white section looks like the area that is being ungazetted.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I am informed that that is an unmade road. I cannot answer the member's question, so I will get back to him with specific information.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: There is no continuity in Bullant Drive. I visited that block on a number of occasions when I was negotiating with the Commonwealth to buy the block called Chapman Brook and I drove down Bullant Drive. It is not a major road. It is not a six-metre wide constructed gravel road; it is a track through the bush. However, it is certainly wide enough for heavy vehicles. There is no continuity in Bullant Drive either along the bottom of that blue section, which is reserve No 47673, or in the connection with the road that comes down from Warner Glen Road in reserve No 46400. There seems to be no continuity with those roads. It seems to be a dangerous situation to have a road that finishes in the middle of the bush.

Mr B.J. GRYLLES: Obviously we will not finish the consideration in detail stage of the Bill today. It would be good if the executive director could advise the minister of the proposal for the roads that will be removed under this clause. Will CALM rip up those roads and try to revegetate the area, or will those roads be removed under this provision? As the member for Warren-Blackwood has said, and speaking as someone who has had knowledge of fighting fires, although admittedly not in forests but on farms, it is absolutely critical to have as many tracks as possible that can be used by heavy vehicles in the event of a fire. I am interested to know what is the proposal for the roads mentioned in this clause.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: In planning for the park, obviously we will not compromise our ability to fight fires. It is important to point out that some of these roads are not proper roads.

Mr B.J. Grylls: I presume that they are tracks. Once this has happened, will those tracks be ripped up and revegetated, or will they stay as they are?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: It will depend on each area. However, CALM will consider the road network required inside the park to balance biodiversity conservation and CALM's need for access to fires. It will vary depending on the state of the roads, where they are located and how they will impact on biodiversity issues.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I think the minister is being kept in the dark by the CALM people. If there is a track that goes to a good marron spot, it will be a strategic track. These guys have a history of building significant roads to make sure that they have access. CALM spends more time ripping up roads than it does building roads. It can



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say that it does not need this road or that road. I suggest to the executive director that he can close these roads if he likes, but he should not rip them up just in case they are needed in the future. They were probably built for a reason in the first place.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: I am slightly concerned by the minister's comment that many of the current national parks do not have management plans. Currently, there are 67 national parks in Western Australia and two unnamed parks, and this Bill will bring on stream nine new national parks. Will the minister explain to the House exactly how many of our national parks do not have management plans? That might clarify some of the issues that were raised during the second reading debate.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I do not have the figures with me. They are in CALM's annual report, which I am happy to provide to the member. It is done on a priority basis. When values and visitor numbers need to be managed, we work out the priorities and go from there. There is also a requirement that each management plan be renewed after a certain period. Perhaps that is more the task I was focusing on when I said that there was a lack of management plans. It is more of a backlog in management plans which need renewal but which are not at the top of our priority list because other areas are without management plans.

Mr B.J. Grylls: I know that the minister has said that it is based on priorities, but is there a particular allocation to the development of management plans? How does it work?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: There is a planning section within the national park division, and there are planning officers.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I am sure that when the member for Merredin becomes the next Minister for the Environment, he will make sure that before a national park is gazetted it has not only a management plan, but also a name.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: He is a young man. By the time he gets to 70, he might be a minister.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: Member for Nollamara, Governments come and Governments go. We all know that. I am sure that the member for Merredin will be a minister in a future Government, should it be elected.

Dr J.M. Edwards: Unless a Liberal candidate knocks him off!

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I did not say that!

It seems to me that this is a rather erratic process. The Government is charging ahead and gazetting a national park without having a management plan or a name for that national park. Why would a minister not make sure that he or she had all the ducks in a row, as the old saying goes, and come into Parliament and do a good job of the Bill? I do not care whether we are talking about this Government, the previous Government or a future Government. That is how it should be done.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 8: Class A reserve No. 47672 in the Shire of Busselton -**

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Will the minister outline the status of the management plan for that area and give an indication of the dieback problems in that area?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The management plan for the provisionally named Yelverton National Park is, as I mentioned before, one of those in progress. Fifteen per cent of the area is affected by dieback. Obviously, we drill down to get that type of information if an activity experiences disturbance because, clearly, we would need much more detailed information.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Given that the minister stated that about 15 per cent of the area is affected by dieback, will she indicate what processes are being put in place to remediate the problem? I know that plans have been put in place to stop it spreading; however, is any work being done to remediate the level of dieback?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Generally speaking, most of the action that we have taken is more along preventive lines, including control of access and greater attention to hygiene details if access is occurring. In areas where there is critical flora, we go in and apply a specific treatment. This State is very large and has a big problem with dieback.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: With regard to the map in the explanatory memorandum, I refer the minister to reserve No 26065, conservation of flora and fauna reserve on Abbey Farm Road, the reserve next to Yelverton North Road, and reserve No 20258, conservation of flora and flora, near Bussell Highway. Will the minister explain what flora and flora is? What kinds of plants are involved? I always thought it was flora and fauna.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The reserves appear incidentally. They do not relate to the Bill; rather, they appear on the map to show people what is in the general area. With respect to flora and flora, it should read "flora and fauna".

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Mr P.D. Omodei: Do you know what kind of flora?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The valuable flora - like those frogs.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Will the minister put on the record the species being protected?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I am informed that there are about 9 000 species of flowering plants in the south west, which is why it is one of the world's biodiversity hot spots. I am informed that normally these areas are conserved because of the richness of the flora groupings, and because of the mixture of flora biodiversity.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I refer to the timber reserves that have the same number, 139/25, which are off Blythe Road and Yelverton Road. Are they still available for logging, or are they normal reserves?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Again, they are not a critical part of the Bill. These are timber reserves that, under the forest management plan, are set to become forest conservation areas. Forest conservation areas are gazetted under the Conservation and Land Management Act, so they do not have to be contained in a Bill to come before Parliament. The reason they are being made forest conservation areas rather than timber reserves is that under a timber reserve they can be logged, whereas under a forest conservation area, they cannot be logged. However, under a forest conservation area, access can be gained for mineral extraction. That is consistent with the regional forest agreement.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 9: Class A reserve No. 47664 in the Shires of Nannup and Manjimup -**

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Once again, will the minister outline the status of the management plan and the prevalence of dieback in the area?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The dieback answer is the same as that given previously; it is roughly the same rate. We have not formed a management plan yet.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: This reserve is one of those national parks referred to in the minister's second reading speech as a new national park. I always understood that, prior to this extension of Charnwood, there was a Beedelup National Park. I know the Beedelup Falls area very well. Indeed, I take all my visitors there. I know the Carey Brook site. It is right near Karri Valley. Obviously, the national park has been extended over the Vasse Highway and up past Seven Day Road. It is a large national park. It certainly was one of the areas prominent in the forest debate. It seems to me that this is not a new national park. Can the minister explain to me how it will become a new national park when it is an addition to the previous national park? Does that mean that the minister's nine new national parks are not new national parks? Will she tell the public the truth?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: All that information was laid out in our incredibly detailed policy. That is unusual for policy; it is usually vague. The creation of the Greater Beedelup National Park, as the member rightly pointed out, includes the cancellation of the existing Beedelup National Park. The existing Beedelup National Park comprises 1 677 hectares. The area of the new park will be 18 042 hectares, which is a significant increase. We have added only the net new area into the totals that we have presented as a new national park.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: In the minister's second reading speech and in the statements she has made to the House she has said that the Government is creating nine new national parks. I expect a new national park to be a new national park within a defined area with new boundaries and whatever. To all intents and purposes, this is an extension of the previous Beedelup National Park. It is even to be called the Greater Beedelup National Park. I am trying to tell the minister that this is not a new national park. Does that mean the State will not have nine new national parks? Will we have six, seven, eight or nine new national parks? If that is the case, it must be made clear that the Government is not creating nine new national parks. It might sound fancy and I do not know how many votes the Government expects to get from the conservation movement for it but the Government must tell the truth. This is an extension to an existing national park.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I think the member has missed the point that 18 042 hectares of new national park has been created. That is incredibly significant. It is 10 times the size of the current national park. Let us look at the Opposition's 12 national parks in a minute. Greater Beedelup is a new national park; there are no two ways about it.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: There is no doubt that increasing the size of a national park from 1 600 hectares to more than 18 000 hectares is more than an extension; we recognise that. However, it is not accurate to describe it as a new national park when it is based on an existing national park.

Dr J.M. Edwards: Should we have created a tiny Beedelup National Park and a mammoth Greater Beedelup National Park around the edges? How silly. How silly would it be to have two management plans and two ways of using it?

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Mr C.J. BARNETT: It is not silly. It is about integrity and the way the Government has described it. In cases in which an entirely new national park is created, it is a new national park. In some cases extensions are made to a national park. In this case it is more than an extension; it is a dramatic increase in the size of the Beedelup National Park and it should be described for what it is: a dramatic and very large extension of the size of the Beedelup National Park. It is not technically or in a literal sense a new national park. It is a substantial expansion of an existing national park.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: The members for Cottesloe and Warren-Blackwood raised some important points. The minister has been espousing the values of the huge increase in the area of the national park. The area of concern for all Western Australians should be that the Government has given no consideration to drafting a management plan as yet. Although management plans are in the process of being drafted for other areas, the title of the management plan for the Greater Beedelup National Park, which will increase in size from the 1 600 hectares in the Beedelup National Park to 18 000 hectares, has not yet been written. That is a key area of concern for all Western Australians.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: If it was of great concern, the previous Government would have had a management plan for the Beedelup National Park.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: The point about the management plans cannot be overstated. Under successive Governments the D'Entrecasteaux and Shannon National Parks took years to develop. That is not a good precedent to set. If we are to make a significant change and call this a national park, the management plans should be completed and launched at the same time as the national park is gazetted. What has changed in this area? It is a significant piece of state forest and it will be called by a different name. However, a management plan has not been put in place to protect it. Maybe the executive director of the Department of Conservation and Land Management will tell me, through the minister, that it will be managed as if it were a national park. I have heard all that before. The truth is that this is a significant piece of bush -

Dr J.M. Edwards: Old-growth forest.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: It is true that a helluva lot of it is old-growth forest and a helluva lot of it is a significant stand of timber. It will be interesting when the minister reads John Meecham's book about this Government's forest management policy. John Meecham is a very well known senior forester from the 1960s. I understand that he published a book a few weeks ago that has some very good arguments about how forests should be managed. I am sure many scientists and people in CALM and the Forest Products Commission would agree with those arguments. The only thing that has changed with this piece of bush is that it will be called by a different name. It will not be managed any differently at all. A management plan should be completed and implemented before the national park is gazetted.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The member has overlooked a major point: logging of old-growth forests does not occur in this area.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Did not or does not?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: It will not occur. Even before this Government was sworn in the Labor Party said that the logging of old-growth forests would stop. As I have said, since that time all these areas have been managed as though they were national parks. What the member has said does not make sense. A major change will occur because the area will now be protected from old-growth logging. The old-growth forest is being protected for posterity. The day-to-day management has taken that into account and has treated the area as a reserve rather than as an area that is on the logging inventory.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I cannot let that statement go unchallenged for this reason: the minister knows that in excess of 100 000 hectares of cut-over forest has been set aside as national park land. The fact that this area will be called a national park and the fact that old-growth logging will not occur is neither here nor there because large areas of national park that have been logged will be or have been gazetted as national parks. I told the minister only 15 or 20 minutes ago about the Shannon National Park. A town and a school were located there for 30 years. It contained a cricket pitch and a golf course. That land is now in the middle of a national park. The minister should not tell me that a national park has to be an old-growth forest. That is a nonsense argument, and the minister knows it. The minister has said that the area will not be logged in the future; I would not expect it to be logged because national parks in Western Australia are not logged.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The member answered his own question. He asked what will be the difference in this area between now and when it becomes a national park. A major difference is that it will not be logged.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: This is an interesting part of the debate. Has this area been logged in the past four years?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Over how many years?

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Mr B.J. Grylls: During the term of this Government.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: No.

Mr B.J. Grylls: You said that it must be classified as a national park for it to not be logged. I am pretty sure that it wasn't being logged.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: I will say what I have said before. One of the first actions we took when we came to government was to stop logging in old-growth forests. From that day forward all the areas that were identified in our policy as part of the 30 new national parks were managed as though they were national parks. No logging occurred in them, and certainly no old-growth forests were logged.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: With the benefit of the executive director of CALM being present today, can the minister tell me whether there will be any change to the management strategy for the new 18 042 hectares of the Greater Beedelup National Park between today and the day of proclamation?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: As I said, since we have come to government, these areas have been managed as though they were national parks. On the day of proclamation, they will formally become national parks. However, we have in fact been managing them as though they were national parks since that time. Indeed, there are signs to let people know that it is proposed that an area will become a national park.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I go back to the issue of roads. Clause 9(4) states -

All those portions of unnamed roads as shown on Deposited Plans -

We have not seen the deposited plans -

... comprising an area of about 72.21 ha and being part of the land in Lots 13921 and 13922 as shown coloured green on Deposited Plan 36422, are closed.

This is an extremely large piece of forest. It is very heavy and undulating timber. It seems to me that apart from Seven Day Road and Waistcoat Road - Seven Day Road, of course, is a gazetted road, Waistcoat Road is a log hauling road, and both Carey and Waistcoat Roads are Department of Conservation and Land Management roads - very few other roads are depicted within the national park. With Carey Brook and the Donnelly River running through the middle of this proposed national park, it seems to me that road access for fire control will be severely limited in the future. Obviously, the only roads that appear on the map in front of us are those that I mentioned: Waistcoat Road, Seven Day Road and Carey Road, with Vasse Highway around the perimeter and a couple of logging roads to the north. However, in the vast majority of the area to be gazetted through Carey Brook and through the block known as Charnwood, no roads are depicted on this map. Does that mean that they will all be closed and ripped up, and how does that correlate with being able to effectively fire manage this area? The minister has made a number of comments about supporting controlled burning etc. I presume that this national park will be burnt from time to time on a reasonable rotation. Will the minister explain whether there are roads which will continue to exist but which do not appear on this map?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The roads marked in red on the map that the member has will certainly continue. Other roads that are not mapped will continue. I am informed that where clause 9(4) relates to those unnamed roads, it refers to areas that have been surveyed as roads, but mostly have not even been made. Therefore, CALM will look at the area and the roads, and at what roads and structures are needed for proper management within the national park to make sure that all those variables to which we have referred are covered. This provision cancels surveyed but unmade roads that are not needed.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: I note that at the bottom of reserve No 47664, near the Walk Through Tree, the national park goes on to the other side of Vasse Highway. Likewise, further up towards Nannup, a portion of the national park is on the western side of Vasse Highway. While we are talking about corridors, the other interesting point I make is that, despite that piece of national park being there - obviously, a closed road is there as well - there is no connection between the existing conservation reserve, the D'Entrecasteaux National Park, and Charnwood. From a management and fire control point of view, I would have thought that it would not be necessary to have that small thin strip near the Walk Through Tree, on the top side of the road, as part of the national park. I presume that is Karri Valley. I do not expect that that valley would ever be logged anyway, whether it be in state forest or whatever, because of the significant status of Vasse Highway as a major road and a major tourist link. I expect that the setbacks would be at least 200 metres, or perhaps they are 400 metres nowadays. Therefore, why must that thin strip be national park? Likewise, further up, it seems as though there is a bubble that does not necessarily need to exist; or is that one of those areas that has been identified by the minister's friends in the conservation movement, who will give the Government their preferences at the next election?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The bubble referred to on Vasse Highway, perhaps more to the west, is quite a clump of old-growth forest that was identified through the consultation processes, and that has been incorporated. The

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member described what appears to be a funny blue line at the bottom of the map beneath Walk Through Tree. I understand that is designated in that way because that is the boundary of the previous reserve that was cancelled to create the national park.

Mr P.D. OMODEI: The same argument could be raised about all of the bush on that side of the road. It is all old-growth forest. Is the minister saying that some of it will go into the national park, or was it just the case that the last person who came along said that he thought that was old-growth forest or high-value conservation forest, and therefore it should go into the national park? Is that the way the decisions were made, or were they based on science?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Where there were consolidated, contiguous areas of old-growth forest of a reasonable size that we could easily add into the boundary, we have done that. Naturally, there are other areas of old-growth forest outside national parks that will not be logged but will be managed; however, they will not be in a national park. Nevertheless, by far the majority of old-growth forest is in national parks.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 10: Class A reserve No. 47666 in the Shire of Manjimup -**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that clause 10 stand as printed.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Dr J.M. Edwards (Minister for the Environment).