

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2016

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE (CO-MANAGED PARKS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 19 October 2016.)

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, member for Colton. I want to speak to the National Parks and Wildlife (Co-managed Parks) Amendment Bill 2016. This bill amends the co-management provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife 1972 and the Wilderness Protection Act 1992 and also provides retrospective approval to two existing mining leases in the Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park, which have operated unregulated since 1972 due to an administrative error.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act and the Wilderness Protection Act exist to establish and protect parks and wilderness areas. In 2004, the National Parks and Wildlife Act was amended to allow for the co-management of parks, a move designed to recognise and include Aboriginal communities in the management process of their traditional lands. Similarly, in 2013, amendments were made to the Wilderness Protection Act 1992 to provide for co-management over the state's wilderness areas.

These co-management agreements have allowed Aboriginal communities to care for sacred places, upskill people, build land management expertise and pursue potential cultural tourism and economic benefits. I am informed that the state government has now entered into 12 co-management agreements over 35 of South Australia's parks and reserves covering 13½ million hectares or 64 per cent of the state's reserve system. These 12 agreements currently include seven boards and five advisory committees. Some of these boards advise several parks but have no legal authority to manage them.

The bill provides for administrative amendments to clarify the wording used to allow the co-management by one board over several parks. Additionally, this amendment will allow for existing co-management agreements to be updated to allow existing co-management boards to merge. This is of particular relevance where one Aboriginal community is represented across multiple boards in the same region.

Additionally, this bill includes an amendment which allows regulations to be made that fix expiation fees for alleged offences against the act in addition to the regulations. Furthermore, the bill includes discussion surrounding the two mining leases in the Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park. The bill includes an amendment to the National Parks and Wildlife Act that provides retrospective approval for the two mining leases in Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park while not allowing mining rights to be acquired over any other area of the park.

I indicate that we are supporting the bill, and it is nice to be able to tidy up administrative errors after 44 years, but better late than never. I note that we have had discussions here in the past, and I met with people from the department of environment in regard to Coorong National Park becoming co-managed. I certainly think it is, obviously, a way of getting everyone in society involved in the management of national parks and I just hope that, one day, we can get some better outcomes for shacks in national parks, which we are certainly keen on looking at. Overall, this co-management plan, as long as it is sustainable, will take us into the future.