



Aboriginal Community Directions for Heritage Management in the Australian Alps

A Report Arising from the Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage
Liaison and Directions Study

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in association with Context Pty Ltd

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goulding heritage consulting pty ltd

A Report to the Australian Alps Liaison Committee



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Abbreviations/Acronyms

AALC	Australian Alps Liaison Committee
AHC	Australian Heritage Commission
BP	Before Present
CHWG	Cultural Heritage Working Group
DNRE	Department of Natural Resources and Environment
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NNTT	National Native Title Tribunal
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
PV	Parks Victoria
RFA	Regional Forests Agreement

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Executive Summary

Aboriginal people across NSW, the ACT and Victoria maintain complex attachments to the Australian alps country. For some, the alps constitutes the country of their ancestors, the responsibility for which they have inherited. For others whose ties do not go back so far, it represents a highly significant landscape with important connections to Aboriginal culture.

Although Aboriginal people have maintained strong links to the high country, little systematic research has been undertaken into the nature of these attachments. For the land management agencies responsible for the conservation and management of Aboriginal heritage in the alps, this remains a significant gap in knowledge.

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Liaison and Directions Study, initiated by the Cultural Heritage Working Group of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee, marks the beginning of a program aimed at better understanding Aboriginal heritage values in the alps region. The study has provided Aboriginal people with ties to the region an opportunity to express the range and depth of their attachments to the alps and to articulate their views on the way that these values should be researched and managed. It has also raised the profile of the AALC and the major programs currently underway across the alps region

Twelve meeting forums were held across NSW, the ACT and Victoria during which over 75 Aboriginal people were consulted about the nature of their cultural attachments to the alps region and their aspirations for future research into those values. This resulted in the identification of a diverse range of tangible and non-tangible community connections to the alps that included traveling routes, dreaming sites, archaeological sites, ceremonial sites, historic camps and resource gathering areas. Key themes raised during the consultation program included views on management and protection of cultural values, access to country, who speaks for country, interpretation of Aboriginal culture, ownership of cultural knowledge, renaming landmarks, tourism, employment opportunities and the need for improved consultation between land managers and Aboriginal communities with connections to the high country.

Broad directions were also outlined by communities that called for increased research into Aboriginal peoples' connections to the alps including investigations into family histories, oral histories, historical research and archaeology. For many Aboriginal people who participated in the meetings, the loss of cultural information in relation to the Australian alps is a source of great regret and research that synthesises information that exists in oral testimony and archival and archaeological sources was seen as one way of redressing that loss.

The contact made during this project with Aboriginal people has made a good start in building sustained relationships between the AALC and Aboriginal communities. The different views expressed by the Aboriginal people consulted as part of this project have formed the basis for recommended actions to improve our understanding of Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary connections with the alps, management of those values and better communication strategies that can meaningfully involve Aboriginal people in the future management of their cultural values across the Australian alps.

1 Project Background

Introduction

The Australian alps is a region of outstanding natural values. It also forms the backdrop of a unique cultural landscape that has evolved over many thousands of years. The distinctive topography of this landscape, comprising dramatic mountain ranges, plateaus and valleys some 600 kilometres long, has influenced the way that Aboriginal people have interacted with their environs. At the same time, Aboriginal people have made their own impressions on this landscape – through fire management practices, pathways and the material traces of occupation, ceremony and art.

In contrast to the detailed research that has been undertaken into the natural values of the Australian alps, Aboriginal heritage values in the Alpine region have gone largely unrecorded. The Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC), which is responsible for co-ordinating the management of the Australian alps, recognises that this lack of awareness of Aboriginal peoples' past and present attachments to the alps country represents a significant gap in current knowledge of the Australian alps which needs to be addressed.

The AALC is seeking to establish a greater understanding of Aboriginal heritage in the Australian alps through a staged process that involves direct consultation with Aboriginal people. Goulding Heritage Consulting Pty Ltd has been engaged by the AALC Cultural Heritage Working Group (CHWG) to undertake a consultation process with Aboriginal people with connections to the Australian alps that will contribute to a heightened awareness of the nature of these values and set directions for ongoing research into Aboriginal heritage values.¹

Project Aims

This project aims to broaden the awareness of the Aboriginal heritage values of the Australian alps by consulting directly with relevant Aboriginal people/groups in NSW, ACT and Victoria.² A key aim of the study is to provide an opportunity for Aboriginal people with ties to the region to express the depth of their attachments to the Alpine landscape and to communicate these attachments to the AALC. At the same time, it is acknowledged that as many Aboriginal people may not be aware of the work of the AALC, the consultation process should aim to inform people of the history of the AALC, its structure and work programs.

The project brief outlines the following aims:

- develop a greater understanding of Aboriginal heritage values related to Australian alps.
- engender a sense of value and appreciation within the agencies and community for Aboriginal heritage of the Australian alps national parks.

¹ The Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) has provided substantial funding to the AALC in order to assist participants to attend the meetings and use the meetings to seek knowledge and understanding of the Aboriginal heritage values of the alps and to provide information for an AHC study of the heritage significance of the alps region. The interests of the AHC complement the desire of the CHWG to extend the understanding of contemporary Aboriginal heritage values of the alps area, and the ways in which the CHWG can assist agencies to work with Aboriginal communities in caring for their heritage. Given the overlapping interests of the AHC and CHWG, a partnership has been established to carry out this project.

² See Appendix 1 for the Project Brief.

- directly involve Aboriginal communities associated with and with ties to the alps, in developing a process that will improve the understanding, appreciation and protection of Aboriginal values.
- provide direction from the Aboriginal people for the gap filling projects for the alps' parks along with the proposals identified by the CHWG *Cultural Heritage Research and Implementation Report*.
- provide liaison and organisation for an Aboriginal Gathering to be held in late 2002 to celebrate International Year of Mountains (IYM).

In light of these objectives, the project aimed to produce the following outcomes:

- a comprehensive contact list of Aboriginal groups and individuals with ties to the Australian alps
- an overview of the nature of Aboriginal peoples' attachments to the alps
- identification of the views of Aboriginal people about strategies for managing those values
- identification of community aspirations for future research into Aboriginal heritage values in the Australian alps
- suggested strategies for ongoing identification of Aboriginal values and cultural associations in the Australian alps
- a heightened awareness of Aboriginal heritage values amongst agencies with heritage management responsibilities in the Australian alps
- the views of Aboriginal people on the proposed gathering to mark International Year of the Mountain in 2002 and the Kosciuszko National Park Management Planning process.

Two reports have been submitted to the AALC as part of the project reporting requirements. The first outlined the project consultation strategy (*Australian Alps Heritage Directions Study: Report on Consultation Strategy*, February 2002) and the second presented preliminary findings from the community consultation process, (*Australian Alps Heritage Directions Study: Preliminary Report on Outcomes of Community Consultation*, July 2002). Four subsidiary reports presenting notes from community meetings have also been circulated.³ These reports have been compiled in Appendix 2 of this main report. This report presents detailed outcomes of community workshops held across NSW, the ACT and Victoria.

Study Area

The parks and conservation reserves which make up the Australian alps form a chain of protected alpine and sub-alpine areas covering 1.6 million ha across state and territory borders. The study area includes the following Alpine parks (Figure 1):

- Namadgi National Park (ACT)
- Brindabella National Park (NSW)
- Kosciuszko National Park (NSW)

³ Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting summaries – Wodonga, Brungle, Orbost & Bairnsdale meetings, July 2002; Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting Summaries – Bega, Eden, Umbarra & Nowra meetings, July 2002; Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting summaries – Canberra & Queanbeyan meetings, July 2002; Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting summaries – Marysville & Cooma meetings, August 2002.

- Bimberi Nature Reserve (NSW)
- Scabby Range Nature Reserve (NSW)
- Alpine National Park (Victoria)
- Mount Buffalo National Park (Victoria)
- Snowy River National Park (Victoria)
- Avon Wilderness Park (Victoria)

The Australian alps constitutes a unique biosphere. The area hosts plant and animal species found nowhere else in the world and contains catchment areas for some of Australia's most important rivers. Although the alps make up less than 0.3% of Australia's land mass, the region is home to a highly diverse and internationally significant natural environment.⁴ Mt Kosciuszko, the highest point in Australia, dominates the alps landscape.

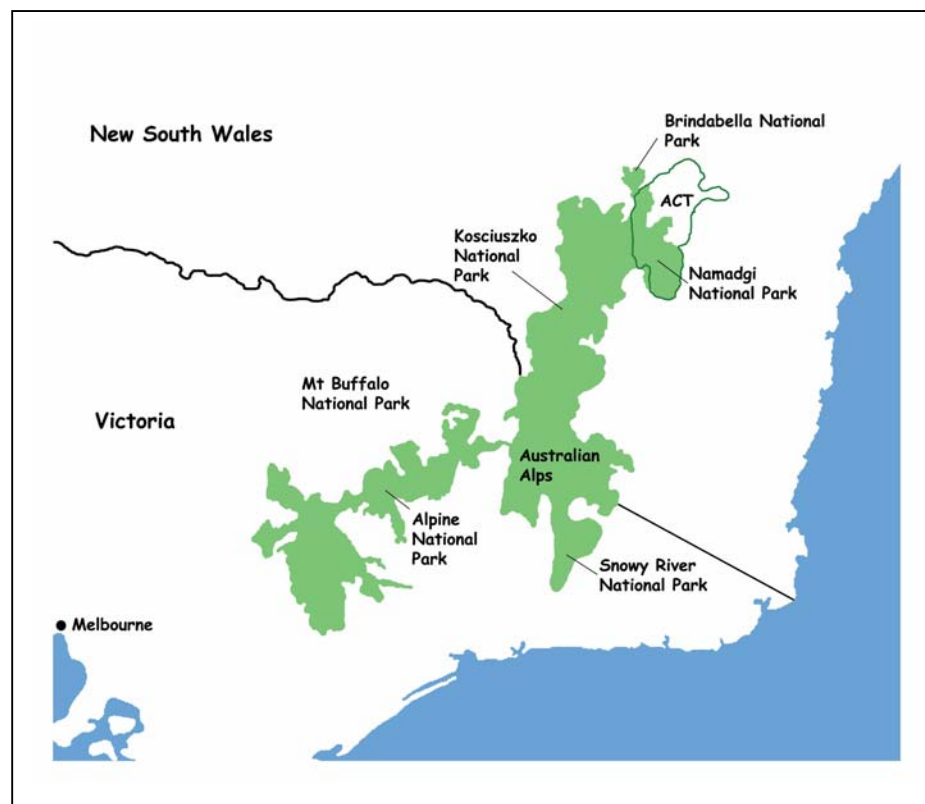


Figure 1: Map showing the location of the Australian Alps

Current Management Framework

The Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC) was established in 1986 following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Co-operative Management of the Australian Alps National Parks (hereafter referred to as the MOU) by the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Victorian governments.⁵ The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of New South Wales, Parks Victoria (PV) and Environment ACT are the agencies

⁴ Mulvaney, J. 1992. The alpine cultural heritage in perspective. In B. Scougall (ed) *Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps: proceedings of the 1991 Symposium in Jindabyne*. Australian Alps Liaison Committee, Canberra, p. 9.

⁵ The MOU was last revised in November 1998 and is currently being reviewed.

responsible for the care, control and management of the National Parks and conservation areas within their respective state or territory. The vision of the alps co-operative program is to have participating agencies working in partnership to achieve excellence in conservation management and sustainable use through active cross border co-operation. This MOU is the only agreement of its kind in Australia and is respected internationally by the World Conservation Union as one of the best example of its kind in the world.

There are a number of policy initiatives operating at State and Commonwealth agency level that are progressing strategic approaches to involvement of Aboriginal people in land management processes. These include the development of Aboriginal community consultation protocols, involvement of Aboriginal people in decisions about heritage management on public land and joint management of National Parks (such as Namadgi National Park which is subject to an interim co-management agreement between the ACT government and local native title claimants). State and Territory land management agencies are also currently involved in many large and smaller-scale management planning processes involving research into Aboriginal cultural connections and consultation with Aboriginal people with an interest in the parks (eg. Kosciuszko National Park Management Plan).

Australian Alps Liaison Committee

The AALC comprises representatives from each of the state and territory government agencies. The function of the AALC is to co-ordinate the development and implementation of co-operative work programs, develop and implement the strategic plan and prepare the annual report to the relevant Ministers.⁶

The Strategic Plan is implemented through an Annual Works Plan. The Annual Works plan establishes six key result areas; Natural Heritage Conservation; Recreation and Tourism Management; Community Awareness, Cultural Heritage Conservation, Program Development and Management Expertise.

Working Groups

Four working groups covering natural heritage, cultural heritage, tourism and recreation and community relations operationalise the work of the AALC. The working groups comprise staff each of the state/territory agencies. The Cultural Heritage Working Group (CHWG) is responsible for the co-ordination of the cultural heritage component of the work program including developing projects for the Key Result Areas in the Annual Works Plan and managing projects. The Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study is a CHWG initiative aimed at expanding current agency knowledge of Aboriginal heritage values of the alps area and involving Aboriginal people in setting directions for future research into Aboriginal heritage in the alps.

⁶ The AALC has an annual budget of around \$280,000 made up of contributions of \$120,000 by NSW and Victoria and \$40,000 from the ACT and Commonwealth governments.

2 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps

Aboriginal Peoples' Attachments to country

Cultural landscapes can hold a myriad of dimensions for Aboriginal people that relate both to the pre-contact and post-contact time periods. When Europeans first settled Australia in the late 1700s they encountered a society with complex attachments to the natural world. This interconnectedness with country arose from the individual being born into a cultural world that did not perceive of a clear disjunction between the cultural and the natural. Landscapes were invested with meaning that intimately connected the natural world – its geographical features, the cosmos, flora and fauna - with ancestors, spirit beings and group totemic structures. People belonged to the landscape and creation stories, ceremonies, rituals and day-to-day interactions with the natural world anchored peoples' sense of identity. Identity, culture and land were ostensibly as one.

Aboriginal people today, along with generations before them, have experienced the effects of over 200 years of colonisation. The impact of white settlement on Aboriginal culture has been devastating and yet despite the enormous upheaval to Aboriginal society, there remain many strong cultural connections between contemporary Aboriginal people and the world around them. These connections to country may have their antecedents in the pre-colonisation period or they may have been acquired since that time. Cultural information that has its roots in the pre-contact period, whether passed down from generation to generation or newly discerned through research is highly valued by Aboriginal people. Places that reflect Aboriginal peoples' history in the post-colonisation period can also hold a great deal of importance to communities. Whether as symbols of the struggle in the face of colonisation, or simply as places where people lived, worked and had fun, these places are part of the continuum of Aboriginal history that connects contemporary Aboriginal people to their pre-contact past - connecting that past with the present.

Overview of Research into Aboriginal Occupation of the Alps

The nature of Aboriginal peoples' attachments to the alps country has not been systematically researched. Debbie Argue's report to the AALC, *Cultural Heritage Research and Implementation Strategy, Australian Alps National Parks*, synthesised the work that has been conducted to date into Aboriginal heritage in the alps.⁷ Her review demonstrated that the most common method used for researching Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Australian alps has been archaeological investigations.

Whilst a number of archaeological investigations have been carried out across the alps over the past 30 years, archaeological research into the nature of the pre-contact Aboriginal occupation of the alps is still in its infancy and there are substantial gaps in knowledge.⁸ Despite this, current

⁷ For a comprehensive bibliography of work undertaken into cultural heritage in the alps, see the AHC *Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps* annotated bibliography found on the AHC website at www.ahc.gov.au/heritage/infores/HERA/alps/Indigenous.html and *The Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps* (1993) compiled by M. Fletcher, M. Higgins, J. Kamminga and L. Kennett for the Australian Alps Liaison Committee.

⁸ This summary is based on the following sources: Bowdler, S. Hunters in the Highlands: Aboriginal Adaptations in the Eastern Australian Uplands. *Archaeology in Oceania* 16:94-8; Kamminga, J. 1992. Aboriginal settlement and prehistory of the Snowy Mountains. In B. Scougall (ed) *Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps: proceedings of the 1991 symposium*. Australian Alps Aboriginal Liaison Committee, Canberra: 101-124; Hall, R. 1992. Artefact density patterns in areas of high relief: a case study from Far East Gippsland. In B. Scougall (ed) *Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps: proceedings of the 1991 symposium*. Australian Alps Liaison Committee, Canberra: 125-140; Chapman, V. 1977. The

evidence suggests that Aboriginal people occupied the low, montane areas surrounding the alps during the Pleistocene (around 21,000 years before present) when glacial conditions were predominant and temperatures were between 6 and 10 degrees cooler than present. Areas of high relief appear to have been occupied much later, around 1500 years before present, after climatic conditions stabilised and temperatures had become warmer. This provides evidence for highest altitude human occupation on the Australian mainland and most likely represents the oldest highland occupation of any extreme climate in the world. Archaeological research in the alps region therefore has the potential to shed considerable light on issues such as human adaptations to climate change and the nature of social and technological innovations in mountainous terrains.

Due to the long occupation history and extreme nature of the alps climate, research into the prehistoric occupation of this region has traditionally focused on questions concerning the antiquity of occupation and the influence of climate change on Aboriginal subsistence-settlement strategies. Based on the limited data available, it has been argued that the occupation of high relief areas was most likely to have been seasonal (exploited only during summer) and was restricted to the late Holocene period (beginning around 2000 years BP). It has been estimated that population levels were relatively low in the high altitude areas and the region was never a focus of intensive occupation, except during the summer months when people gathered to exploit the protein rich Bogong Moths, a practice that is thought to have prompted initial occupation of high altitude regions.

Whilst the model presented above has dominated popular characterisations of the pre-contact occupation of the alps, it is extrapolated largely from ethno-historic evidence. Some archaeologists have argued that the importance of moth harvesting has been over-emphasised in the ethno-historic literature and that research should consider year-round exploitation strategies, rather than just seasonal ones. It is on this basis that others have argued against this model, suggesting instead that in high altitude areas resources would have been available all year round and there is no reason to assume that occupation was restricted to the late Holocene. Josephine Flood's work, which unlike much of the research conducted into Aboriginal prehistory in the region has focused on the alps region as a whole, has been the most influential in shaping perceptions about the nature of Aboriginal peoples' occupation of the alps. In her widely accessible publication *The Moth Hunters*, Flood posits moth harvesting as a central factor in Aboriginal peoples' forays into the alps.⁹

It is clear that gaps in knowledge about the way Aboriginal people interacted with the alps landscape are not only the result of lack of research, but also the effects of site visibility, site preservation and post-depositional processes impacting on the archaeological record. These factors may prevent research questions such as the antiquity of occupation from being thoroughly tested. Alternative research questions which take the limitations of the archaeological record into consideration may need to be designed to enable a more accurate interpretation of the Aboriginal past in the alps region.

Jindabyne Valley in Southern Uplands Prehistory: An Archaeological Investigation, unpublished thesis, ANU; Grinbergs, A. 1992. *The Myth Hunters: investigations towards a revised prehistory of the South Eastern Highlands of Australia* – unpublished thesis, ANU.

⁹ Flood, J. 1980. *The Moth Hunters: Aboriginal Prehistory of the Australian Alps*. AIATSIS, Canberra. The results of Flood's and other significant research were presented at the 1991 Jindabyne Symposium on Cultural Heritage held by the AALC.

Tribal/Clan Boundaries

There are a variety of interpretations of the location of traditional tribal and clan associations and relationships between groups in the alps region.¹⁰ This is not only a consequence of the loss of cultural information effected by colonisation, but also because of problems associated with the use of early ethno-historic accounts in reconstructions of territory which are often highly selective and Eurocentric. Reconstructions also do not necessarily account for radical changes in social structure and distribution of populations resulting from the colonisation process. Nevertheless, a number of researchers have attempted to reconstruct group territory across different parts of the alps.¹¹ The combined evidence, though often contradictory, suggests that the following groups accessed or had traditional connections to country that is now defined as the Australian alps:

- Ngarigo [Monero-Ngarigo; Ngarego; Ngarrugu]
- Wiradjuri
- Ngunawal [Ngunnawal]
- Wolgal [Walgalu]
- Krautatungalung
- Brabiralung
- Braiakaulung
- Gunai/Kurnai
- Minjambuta
- Djilamatang
- Jaimathang [Yaitmathang]
- Duduora
- Biduelli [Maap; Bidawal; Birdhawal]
- Woiworung
- Wurundjeri
- Taungurung

Post-Contact Occupation

The post-contact Aboriginal history of the alps region is highly significant to Aboriginal people. European settlement in and around the alps had profound impacts on Aboriginal culture and society. This history is extremely complex and in contrast to the non-Aboriginal settlement of the region, is not well documented. In addition very little research has been undertaken into the types of contemporary attachments that Aboriginal people may have with the Australian alps region. Preliminary historical research has been undertaken into the Aboriginal pathways in East Gippsland.¹² The AALC funded oral history project undertaken in 1994 by Sue Wesson demonstrated the importance of oral history testimonies in the identification of the types of

¹⁰ The word “traditional” is used here to refer to pre-contact associations/attachment/stories that continued into the post contact period. It is acknowledged, however, that these associations and stories can and do evolve and will no doubt continue to do so.

¹¹ Howitt, A. 2001 [1904]. *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*. Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra; Wesson, S. 2000. *An Historical Atlas of the Aborigines of Eastern Victorian and Far South-eastern New South Wales*. Monash Publications in Geography and Environmental Science No. 53; Tindale, N.B. 1974. *Aboriginal tribes of Australia: their terrain, environmental controls, distribution, limits and proper names*. ANU press, Canberra; Clark, I.D. 1990. *Aboriginal Languages and Clans: An Historical Atlas of Western and Central Victoria, 1800-1900*. Monash Publications in Geography No. 37; and Barwick, D. E. 1984. ‘Mapping the Past: an atlas of Victorian clans 1835-1904’. *Aboriginal History* 8: 100-132.

¹² Grinbergs, 1993. *A Study of Land Routes of Human Movement in East Gippsland*. Unpublished report for the Australian Heritage Commission.

attachments that Aboriginal people have with this region.¹³ The recently published research into the Monaro People also demonstrated the range of information available in archival sources and in local knowledge on Aboriginal peoples' history within and around the alps.¹⁴

This research reveals how a complex pattern of Aboriginal associations and connections to the alps region has emerged as a consequence of colonisation. Government reserves such as Brungle near Tumut and Delegate to the east have enabled people to maintain strong ties to the alps region. For example, a number of Aboriginal people trace their family history to the missions and reserves such as Brungle or Delegate. These places still hold a great deal of importance for Aboriginal people.

Significance of the Australian Alps

The national estate significance of the Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the Australian alps has been recognised through various listings on the Register of the National Estate (RNE).¹⁵ However, these listings do not consider the alps as a single entity and registration on the National Estate relates only to the National Parks and Nature Conservation Reserves which make up the Australian alps, rather than specific cultural heritage values.

A report prepared for the AALC in May 1999 by Jane Lennon and Associates investigating the international significance of the cultural values of the alps has found that the region's Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage is potentially of international significance.¹⁶ Argue's report on the cultural heritage of the alps proposes that whilst more research needs to be undertaken, the Aboriginal human response to climate change as represented in the archaeological record in the alps may provide the link between natural and cultural values needed to demonstrate its international significance.

Concluding Comment

Current knowledge of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the high country demonstrates a long history of connections between Aboriginal people and the alpine region. While oral history investigations over recent years have indicated that contemporary Aboriginal people have an interest in the alps, these interests have yet to be systematically recorded. This project aims to contribute to a better understanding of those interests.

¹³ Wesson, S. 1994. *Australian Alps Oral History Project 1994: Aboriginal Histories*. Unpublished report for the Australian Alps Liaison Committee.

¹⁴ Young, M., E. & D. Mundy. 2000. *The Aboriginal people of the Monaro: A documentary history compiled by Michael Young with Ellen and Debbie Mundy*. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

¹⁵ For example Scabby Range Nature Reserve (Register of the National Estate Database no. 013624).

¹⁶ Lennon, J. & Associates. 1999. *The International Significance of the Cultural Values of the Australian Alps*. Unpublished report for the Australian Heritage Commission. This report compliments the assessment of international significance of the Alps natural values prepared by Jamie Kirkpatrick in 1994.

3 Consulting Aboriginal People With An Interest In The Australian Alps

Strategy for Identification of Indigenous Stakeholders

Given the size of the geographic area covered by the Australian alps, it was recognised at the outset of this project that potentially large numbers of Aboriginal people would have an interest in participating in the community meetings. The development of a well thought out consultation strategy was seen as crucial to maximising peoples' involvement in the project and producing successful outcomes.

One of the guiding principles of our consultation strategy was to be as inclusive as possible in approaching Aboriginal people with a likely interest in the alps. For this strategy to succeed contact needed to be made with the more organised parts of the Aboriginal community organisations such as Land Councils, Aboriginal Co-operatives and Elders Groups as well as less structured parts of the Aboriginal community such as family groups and individuals. Given the nature of Aboriginal history since colonisation and the way this had profound impacts on the movement of Aboriginal people across the landscape, the consultation strategy needed to be aware that people may have traditional, historical and contemporary attachments to the alps (none of which are mutually exclusive).

Aboriginal Stakeholders Identified

In the early stages of the project over 50 different Aboriginal organisations and families were identified as having, or likely to have, connections with the Australian alps.¹⁷ Contacts were established through discussions with personnel in key government agencies in each state/territory and through collation of information from the Register of the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT), Aboriginal organisations recognised under the NSW *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* 1983 and Part IIA of the Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act* 1984 and discussions with Aboriginal people as they were contacted.¹⁸ A full list of Aboriginal stakeholders and their contact details is found in Appendix 3 and summarised in Table 1.¹⁹

Preliminary Consultation with Aboriginal Stakeholders

Initial contact was made with most of the stakeholders via telephone. These phone conversations provided an opportunity to outline the aims of the project and to seek feedback on likely community interest in the project and the proposed meeting strategy. These phone consultation provided important information about community preferences for meeting locations and venues and was used to shape the final consultation strategy. Information was also sought on the nature of links that exist between groups in local geographical areas to assist in decisions about the number of meetings required in particular areas. These phone conversations were followed up with a letter introducing the project and inviting local Aboriginal people to regional meetings (Appendix 4). A double sided consultation flier describing the project and advertising the different

¹⁷ The proposed consultation strategy was outlined in *Australian Alps Heritage Directions Study: Report on Consultation Strategy*, February 2002

¹⁸ Revised versions of the contact list were regularly circulated to Aboriginal Heritage Officers and other agency staff.

¹⁹ The specific contact details for stakeholders have not been included here as the public circulation of private contact details is not appropriate. Permission has been granted by Aboriginal people for those details to be made available to the AALC and they have been provided separately.

community meetings was also sent to stakeholders on the contact list (Appendix 5). Multiple copies of the flier were sent to encourage its circulation within family and community groups.

Consultation Program

The following consultation strategy was developed in light of discussions with Aboriginal stakeholders and government representatives and with due consideration to the challenges posed by the project budget and time constraints.

The addresses of stakeholders on the contact list revealed that Aboriginal people with a likely interest in the alps were spread across a large area of south-eastern Australia. As consultation meetings would be limited to 12, each meeting would likely involve several groups at once. Meetings therefore needed to be organised at strategic locations across NSW, the ACT and Victoria with a special emphasis on central locations that would maximise community attendance. Stakeholder populations were found to cluster in a number of different areas (viz):

- Western side of Kosciuszko (Tumut/Brungle)
- Monero District (Cooma)
- Canberra/Queanbeyan
- Albury/Wodonga
- NSW Coast (from Eden to Nowra)
- East Gippsland (Orbost and Bairnsdale)
- Central Highlands (Marysville)

Based on this information and advice provided by Aboriginal people contacted, 12 key locations were chosen across the study area (4 in Victoria and 8 in NSW/ACT) that would maximise opportunities for interested stakeholders to attend at least one meeting.²⁰ Meetings were held in the following locations:

- Wodonga
- Brungle
- Bairnsdale
- Bega
- Canberra
- Cooma
- Wallaga Lake
- Queanbeyan
- Eden
- Marysville
- Nowra
- Orbost

Invitations

In addition to receiving a letter of introduction, stakeholders received meeting fliers outlining the aims of the project and inviting them to a local meeting. Those unable to attend a meeting were encouraged to contact us via phone, fax, email or in writing. Aboriginal people and organisations were contacted by phone closer to meeting times to encourage their participation, and colourful

²⁰ For example, the Taungurung Elders Council and the Monero Ngarigo Cheripurn Council of Elders indicated that they did not wish to meet outside their country.

meeting fliers sent out approximately 10 days in advance for distribution to community members (see Appendix 6 for an example of a flier sent).

Meeting Format

The following format was broadly adhered to during each community meeting:

Aims

The aims of the local meetings were to:

- make contact with Aboriginal people and organisations with ancestral, historical and contemporary associations with the alps
- introduce the project and outline the role and interests of the AALC
- start to identify the heritage interests with regards to values and associations of Aboriginal groups and individuals, including current and future research, interpretation and management
- commence the longer-term process of identifying the community issues, concerns and priorities for the future management of Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the alps
- generate an interest in longer-term community involvement in the work of the AALC
- provide background information on the Australian Heritage Commission alps values study
- explain the proposed International Year of Mountains 2002 conference planned for Jindabyne in November and seek Aboriginal community views about their participation (see Appendix 7)
- introduce the Kosciuszko Management Plan project and the AHC alps values study (see Appendix 7).

Meeting Structure

The meetings were designed to last for up to 3 hours although this was flexible according to community preferences. The venue and format of each meeting was guided by our initial discussions with people on our contact list and arrangements made to accommodate their views. Each meeting was largely informal and capable of adapting to the pace and directions set by community members at each meeting.

The meetings were facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.²¹ With the exception of the Canberra and Marysville meetings, staff from NSW NPWS, Environment ACT, Environment Australia, AHC and Parks Victoria variously attended meetings and in most instances, gave brief presentations about the Kosciuszko Management Plan, the work of the AHC and in particular the alps values study and the International Year of the Mountain celebration and conference. Staff were also encouraged to participate in the meeting discussions.

²¹ With the exception of the Cooma meeting where Juliet Ramsay, Environment Australia assisted Megan Goulding.

ACT Groups	Principle Contact/s
Ngunawal ACT & District Aboriginal Council of Elders Association Inc.	Tyrone Bell, Don Bell, Ruth Bell
Interim Namadgi Advisory Board	Terence Uren (Convenor)
Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council	Philip McLeod
NSW Groups	
Ngunnawal Act & District Indigenous Peoples Association	Bruce & Jean Merritt
Ngunawal Local Aboriginal Council	Arnold Williams
Ngunnawal Elders Council Inc.	Matilda House
Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council	Ben Cruse
Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council	David Dixon
Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council	Noelene Leha
Wagonga Local Aboriginal Land Council	Administrator
Bodalla Local Aboriginal Land Council	Janelle Rotumuh
Cobowra (Moruya) Local Aboriginal Land Council	Norman Parsons
Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council	Fred Nye, Ron Nye
Batemans Bay Local Aboriginal Land Council	Lana Callagan
Onerwal Local Aboriginal Land Council	Helen Wallace
Tumut-Brungle Local Aboriginal Land Council	Lindsay Connelly ²²
Albury & District Local Aboriginal Land Council	Justine Clark
Pejar Local Aboriginal Land Council	Delise Freeman
Nowra Coast Local Aboriginal Land Council	Sonny Sims
Jerringa Local Aboriginal Land Council	Ronald Carberry
Ulludulla Local Aboriginal Land Council	Shane Carridge
Wandoo Aboriginal Corporation	Richard Kennedy
Woomera Aboriginal Corporation	Ted Ots
Shoalhaven Aboriginal Elders Advisory Council	Sonny Sims
Wiradjuri Elders Council	Ramsay Freeman
Snowy Mountains Indigenous Elders	Ramsay Freeman
Bidawal (Maap) Elders Group	Edith Terrick
Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn Council of Elders	Sharon Anderson
Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn – Mundy Dixons	Ellen Mundy
Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Tours	Laureen Naylor
South Coast Aboriginal Cultural Centre	Carol Dalton
NSW Victoria Snowy River Aboriginal Working Group	Graham Enders
Victorian Groups	
Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd	Ricky Mullett
Moogji Aboriginal Council Inc	Chris Allen
Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health & Housing Co-operative Ltd	Mick Harding
Far East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative	Alex Mongta
Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation & Cultural Heritage Council Inc	Harry Terrick
Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust	Peter Ryan
Coranderk Koorie Co-operative Ltd	Administrator
Shepparton Aboriginal Arts Council Co-operative Ltd	Kevin Atkinson
Gunai-Kurnai Council of Elders	Ricky Mullett
Taungurong Elders Council	Glenys Merry
Durdiwarrah Elders Council	Andom Rendell
Mungabareena Aboriginal Co-operative	Richard Kennedy
Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit	Mick Harding
Kulin Nations Cultural Heritage Unit	Annette Xiberras
North East Cultural Heritage Unit	Des Morgan
Yeerung Kurnai	Pauline Mullett
Ramahyuck Aboriginal Co-operative	Beth Yarram

Table 1: Aboriginal Stakeholders Identified

²² Note that since this consultation was conducted, Margaret Berg has taken on the position of Chairperson, Tumut-Brungle Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Each meeting generally involved the following:

- introductions, including welcomes from community²³ and identification of the country of those present
- brief background explanation of the project
- discussion of peoples' ties with the alps and recording of cultural values, attachments, issues, concerns and priorities
- discussion of future research directions
- discussion of the proposed International Year of the Mountain activities
- discussion of the Australian Heritage Commission interest in the Australian alps
- discussion of the Kosciuszko Management planning process
- identification of additional Aboriginal groups and individuals with interests in the alps country (to be added to the contact list)
- discussion of the process for inclusion of meeting outcomes into the final project report, including the preparation and distribution of community meeting reports for possible corrections (see discussion below).

Meetings were catered for with either morning tea, lunch or afternoon tea depending on the time of day.²⁴

A range of materials were used to facilitate each meeting. These included:

- handouts showing the location of the Australian alps and names of parks that fall within the alps
- topographic maps covering the Australian alps that were used to assist discussions of place values and management issues
- a laminated copy of the AALC Touring map that was used to clarify the boundaries of the alps and the identification of place values
- information about the Australian Alps Liaison Committee
- information about the Kosciuszko Management planning process
- information about the work of the Australian Heritage Commission, including the alps values study
- information about the International Year of Mountains 2002 celebration.

Creating a Record of Meetings

Detailed notes were taken at each meeting and where possible, community input was summarised on butcher's paper displayed during the course of the meeting. These notes were subsequently typed up to provide a consultation archive and to assist with the compilation of meeting reports and the development of the final project report. An undertaking was given to meeting participants that they would receive a report on their meeting outcomes for checking before finalisation of the project report.²⁵

²³ Note that not all Aboriginal groups wished to follow this format.

²⁴ The Cooma meeting was supported by additional funds made available from NPWS Southern Aboriginal Heritage Unit, Cultural Heritage Division.

²⁵ Each meeting participant has received a copy of a community meeting report. A "Corrections Sheet" and a reply paid envelope accompanied this report so that participants could correct inaccurate information such as spelling etc. Comments were received from 3 meeting participants.

Outcomes of Consultation

A total of 75 Aboriginal people attended the 12 meetings held across NSW, the ACT and Victoria (see Appendix 8 for a list of meeting participants).²⁶ The meetings were conducted over a 3 month period from mid March to mid June. The meeting program is summarised in the following table:

Location	Date	Time
Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation (Wodonga)	Friday, 15 March	12pm-3pm
Brungle CWA Hall (near Tumut)	Saturday, 16 March	11am-3pm
Moogji Aboriginal Corporation (Orbost)	Thursday, 18 April	1pm-4pm
Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative Elders Hostel (Bairnsdale)	Friday, 19 April	10am-1pm
Bega LALC Office (Bega)	Monday, 6 May	11am-2pm
Eden TAFE (Eden)	Tuesday, 7 May	12pm-3pm
Umbarra Cultural Centre (Wallaga Lake)	Wednesday, 8 May	11am-2pm
Nowra Cultural Centre (Nowra)	Thursday, 9 May	11am-2pm
Ngunnawal Elders Council (Queanbeyan)	Friday, 24 May	9am-12pm
Ngunawal ACT and District Aboriginal Council of Elders Association Inc (Canberra)	Friday, 24 May	3pm-6pm
Taungurung Elders Council (Marysville)	Saturday, 1 June	11am-2pm
Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn Council of Elders (Cooma)	Saturday, 15 June	1pm-4pm

Table 2: Program of Meetings held in Victoria, NSW and the ACT

Each meeting provided an excellent forum within which to engage with participants about their attachments to the alps landscape and ideas for future research into, and management of, those values.²⁷

Meetings participants consistently revealed a genuine interest in finding out about the current management framework for the alps including the structure and function of the AALC and the rationale behind funding allocations made by different signatories to the MOU. A diverse range of connections, experiences and issues relating to Aboriginal heritage values in the alpine country were identified as an outcome of these discussions. The hospitality of communities and their willingness to engage with the project greatly assisted the consultation process and the successful outcomes of the meetings.

Who Are Aboriginal People with Attachments to the Alps?

As was anticipated during the development of the consultation strategy, meeting participants included traditional custodians of the high country, people with strong historical attachments to parts of the alps and others who are in the process of learning about those connections. This representative sample of Aboriginal people - individuals, families, Elders groups, organisations and native title claimants - provided a useful baseline from which to canvass different attachments to the alps.

²⁶ This amounts to an average of 6 people per meeting. The largest meeting was 16 people at Cooma and the smallest was 1 person who attended the Nowra meeting.

²⁷ See Appendices 9 and 10 for feedback on the International Year of Mountains event and the Kosciuszko Management Plan process.

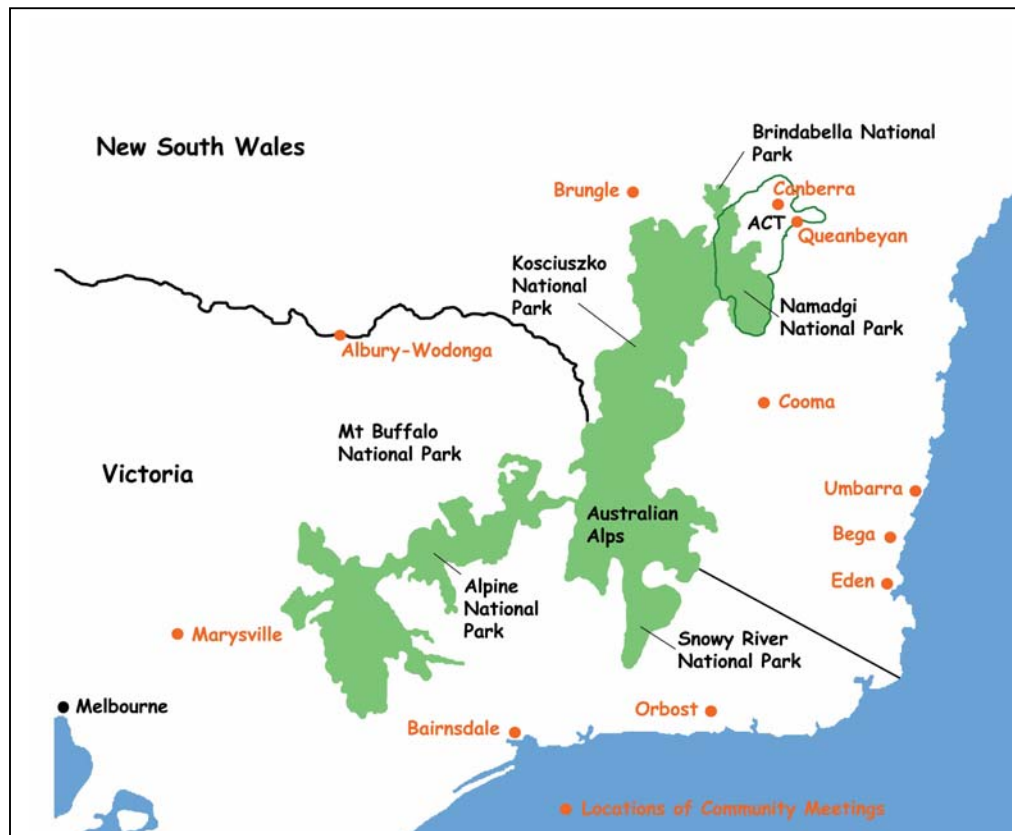


Figure 2: Map showing location of community meetings held in Victoria, NSW and the ACT

How Comprehensive Was Our Consultation?

Contacts Made

As an initial attempt to engage with Aboriginal people who may have a cultural interest in the Australian alps this consultation process was largely successful. Contact was made with all Aboriginal organisations with cultural heritage management responsibilities under State, Commonwealth and territory regimes that include, or exist in close proximity to, the alps. Native title claimant groups with a direct claim within the alps were contacted as were most Elders groups. Former missions/stations that are now community owned properties with resident populations of Aboriginal people such as Lake Tyers, Wallaga Lake, Roseby Park and Brungle were contacted as part of the consultation process. The main community cultural centres were also included in the consultation process and received fliers advertising the project. A number of different families and individuals with no particular affiliation with a community organisation were included on the consultation list when they came to our attention. Meetings included representation from the following traditional owner groups: Gunai-Kurnai, Monero-Ngarigo, Wiradjeri, Ngunawal/Ngunnawal and Taungurong groups.

Low rates of attendance occurred at Wodonga (2 people), Umbarra (3 people) and Nowra (1 person) meetings. There are several explanations for this. The meeting at Wodonga coincided

with a funeral of a community member. The Umbarra/Wallaga Lake meeting fell on pension day which can result in low community attendance at meetings. The low numbers at the meeting at Nowra was possibly a consequence of two factors. Firstly, we were unable to make contact with the Nowra LALC in the weeks leading up to the meeting (community organisations such as Local Aboriginal Land Councils tended to function as important catalysts for raising awareness of the project amongst the local community). Secondly, we had not made direct contact with the Wreck Bay community in our initial consultations as mail sent to that community was returned unopened.

Consultation Constraints Identified

A number of project constraints have been identified. The extent to which Aboriginal people have been involved in the project has undoubtedly been constrained by the limited number of meetings that were held. A project of this scale, both geographically but also in terms of the number of Aboriginal people with a likely interest in the alps, would benefit from more flexibility in the number of meetings held with communities and the locations of those meetings.

Successful consultation with Aboriginal people relies heavily on having the time to establish relationships of trust. This is usually achieved through extended consultation processes that include follow-up meetings. As more intensive consultation beyond a single meeting was not possible during this project, the meetings were not able to explore points raised at meetings in any great depth.

It is important to emphasise that it has not been possible within the constraints of the consultation process to thoroughly investigate attachments that Aboriginal people have to the Australian alps or their views on future research directions. The length of meetings – which averaged 3 hours – only enabled us to establish in a very broad way, the types of interests community members have in the high country and their aspirations for future research into heritage values and places.

Concluding Comments

Despite the constraints identified in the consultation process, the meetings produced a large amount of information from which to start building up a sense of the types of Aboriginal attachments and interests in the alps, the different ways that Aboriginal people relate to the high country and the types of research that Aboriginal people would like to see undertaken into the Australian alps. We also succeeded in communicating with many Aboriginal people information on the workings of the AALC and raising awareness of key initiatives such as the International Year of the Mountain celebration and conference, the Kosciuszko Management planning process and the AHC alps heritage values project.

4 Understanding Aboriginal Peoples' Attachments To The Australian Alps

Introduction

In order to develop an appreciation of the ways in which Aboriginal people relate to the Australian alps and the types of attachments held by individuals for specific locations and places, it is important to be aware of the historical context within which these interests and attachments occur. It is a given that contemporary Aboriginal peoples' relationship to land exists within a paradigm of attachment and loss: attachment in the sense of an inherited cultural tradition of interconnectedness with land that many Aboriginal people describe as being fundamental to their identity as Indigenous Australians, and loss in terms of the effects of colonisation which have intervened to severely disrupt and in many instances sever peoples' connections to their country.

The way that people relate to land within the context of the alps landscape is influenced to a considerable extent by this experience of disruption. Some participants asserted their inherited traditional rights to areas of the alps country, including cultural knowledge, language, places of cultural importance and respect for elders. Others know that they belong to that country but have minimal direct knowledge of cultural connections. Others still may have no traditional cultural links with the alps but instead have historical ties with the landscape or administrative roles through involvement in Local Aboriginal Land Councils or Aboriginal Co-operatives. This complexity of attachment that Aboriginal people experience in relation to the alps is an artefact of history that clearly impacts on present-day relationships between Aboriginal people and the alps.

Irrespective of the different ways people who attended consultation meetings are connected with the alps, participants consistently demonstrated a keen interest in the alps landscape and in the proper protection and management of its Aboriginal heritage values.

Culture Means Many Things

"The creator created Aboriginal people and created the environment. The creator gave Aboriginal people the technology to survive in the environment. When Aboriginal people applied that technology to the environment that gave us our culture. That's the link between natural and cultural values for us".
Eden Meeting

A prominent theme to have emerged from our meetings was that current received notions of what is meant by "culture" and "heritage values" do not adequately account for Aboriginal peoples' perceptions of their heritage. Meetings revealed that developing an agreed understanding between agencies and Aboriginal people of the types of interests and attachments that underpin definitions of culture and heritage is fundamental to developing strategies that acknowledge, document, protect and manage those values.

Natural is Cultural

There was a prevailing view that cultural heritage is not confined to material traces of past human activity but is synonymous with the natural world. In other words, people relate to natural values of the Australian alps as cultural values.

Cultural interests include flora and fauna, natural features such as waterways and environmental health. This breadth of interest reflects an holistic approach to heritage that promotes an interconnectedness between the natural world and the cultural world. It follows then, that land management is part of the cultural heritage management process.

Although a lot of knowledge has been lost, there are strong attachments to the mountains – the tops of the mountains, foothills and the land to the west. “We sat down with our grandfathers who told us about the mountains, so it is extremely important to us”.

Brungle Meeting

Cultural Landscapes

A strong message that emerged during consultation was that successful heritage management encompasses management of cultural landscapes rather than individual ‘sites’. Archaeological sites are an important part of cultural heritage but they are part of the wider cultural landscape that includes natural elements. Management of individual sites fails to recognise the links between Aboriginal heritage values across the landscape.

Living Landscapes

Some participants emphasised that cultural landscapes are living landscapes. They felt that land managers need to recognise that Aboriginal heritage values can live on in Aboriginal people rather than seeing them as static “artefacts” of the past. It was also remarked that the views of archaeologists – fostered by heritage law – have encouraged the perception that artefacts left by ancestors are more important than the knowledge of living Aboriginal people: “These aspects of culture should not be separated”.

Culture Includes Aboriginal Post-Contact Heritage

“Culture is complex. Old people are still collecting food. We are still learning stories and activities from our Elders, so who is to say that we don’t live our traditional ways?”

Bega Meeting

It is clear that places relating to the post-contact period of Aboriginal history in the alps are valued by Aboriginal people. The point that was made frequently in meetings is that Aboriginal history is a continuum that started thousands of years ago and continues right up to the present. Cultural attachments to the alps that fall within the post-contact period can be just as significant as attachments that were formed in pre-contact times.

Diversity of Cultural Values in the Alps

It became very clear by the end of the consultation program that whilst a great deal of cultural knowledge directly relating to the alps has been lost, many Aboriginal people maintain strong attachments to the alps country. This consultation program has recorded a wide variety of community attachments to the alps country. These include tangible and non-tangible values and in many instances point to specific knowledge about cultural places in the alps.²⁸ Values and places referred to included traditional associations with the high country as well as attachments that have developed in the post-contact period.

²⁸ Many Aboriginal groups are wary of providing information about specific places of cultural value, and expressed concerns about the value of listing these places on government registers. While some information about specific places was recorded at the meetings, it should be assumed that there are many more places of cultural heritage value in the alps that were not mentioned in the meetings.

Types of Cultural Places and Attachments Recorded

The types of places and values in the alps that meeting participants referred to included:

- travelling routes/tracks/pathways/trade routes
- dreaming trails
- burials
- spiritual places/attachments
- ceremonial places
- story places
- camps/meeting places/social places/trading camps
- named places
- massacre sites
- food and medicine collection localities
- raw material collection localities
- birthing places
- men's and women's sites
- recreational places
- archaeological sites
- rock art sites
- stone arrangements
- artefact scatters
- scarred trees
- historic camps
- places where people worked
- missions and reserves (adjacent to the high country)
- views of the mountains (from the coast)
- ancestor's country

Places of Importance

Meeting participants flagged a number of specific localities in and around the alps that have particular importance to them.²⁹ These included the following:

- Namadgi
- Yankee Hat
- Mt Kosciuszko
- Red Hill
- Brungle Mission
- Delegate
- Blue Water Holes
- Bogong Peaks
- Goobarragandra National Park
- Jindabyne
- Craigie Range Birthing Place
- Wollondibby
- Corrowong
- Mt Pilot
- Mudgeegonga
- The Pinnacles
- Snowy River
- Royals Creek
- Willis
- Camp Jungai
- Acheron and Mohican missions
- Cathedral Ranges
- Alpine Way

²⁹ It should be noted that this is not a comprehensive list of places of community interest.

Themes, Issues and Values Recorded

The range of issues that arose during each of the meetings varied greatly between each meeting. However, despite the differences between the groups and individuals who attended and the fact that specific interests and concerns did vary considerably between groups, there were still highly consistent themes underlying discussions. These reflect Aboriginal peoples' genuine interest in, and aspirations for, their heritage values in the Australian alps.

The principle themes, issues and values that were raised include the following:

Principal Themes & Issues Raised by Aboriginal People

A. Issues Identified

- A1** Who Speaks for Country
- A2** Access to Country
- A3** Representation of Aboriginal Culture in Alps Interpretative Material
- A4** Renaming Landmarks
- A5** Community Control Over Cultural Information
- A6** Tourism

B. Management Processes

- B1** An Active Role for Aboriginal People in Management of the Alps
- B2** Developing Partnerships with Land Management Agencies
- B3** Employment of Aboriginal People in Land Management
- B4** Protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values
- B5** Environmental Protection and Management Issues

C. Improving Processes

- C1** Fostering Connections Between Groups
- C2** Aboriginal Representation on the AALC and the CHWG
- C3** Improving Consultation with Aboriginal People

D. Research Directions Identified

- D1** Future Research into Aboriginal Heritage in the Alps

These themes are discussed at length below.³⁰ Recommendations arising from each theme/issue can be found in summarised form in Table 3.

³⁰ The information provided in this discussion comes directly from information provided by participants at the community meetings. Notes from each meeting can be found in Volume 2.

A. Issues Identified

A1 Who Speaks for Country

“This is the first point – it must start with respect for traditional owners and their rights”.
Bairnsdale Meeting

Who has the right to speak for country is seen as a major issue facing Aboriginal communities and land management agencies alike. Decisions about who should be consulted and who can make decisions affecting Aboriginal values has the potential to create divisions within communities and between groups/families and can impede effective management of cultural heritage in the alps.

The issue of who has the right to speak for country arose in a number of meeting forums. Participants with a traditional connection to the alps country argued that they have a primary right to speak about the management of Aboriginal values in the high country. Local Aboriginal Land Councils (NSW) and Aboriginal organisations in Victoria felt that their long history of dealing with heritage management issues in the alps along with their legislative responsibilities needed to be considered in future management processes.

Traditional Custodian Views

“A lot of people think they have cultural associations, but they aren’t the same as the inherited rights of the traditional owners”.
Bairnsdale Meeting

For Aboriginal people with traditional ties to the alps landscape, there is a need to identify and recognise the prior ownership of the land. Some participants stated that the issue of who can speak for country boiled down to a question of “inherited rights” and that these rights should not have to be proved. For example, the point was made that these rights should not have to be adjudicated through native title processes because “traditional owners know which country they speak for” (Cooma Meeting). Native title is a complex issue for Aboriginal people with an interest in the alps. While on the one hand it promises recognition of rights to country, there is the view that Aboriginal people should not have to ‘prove’ their rights: “I’m born with my rights, I don’t need a certificate to have them” (Bega Meeting).

Traditional custodians feel that the final say about management of land should come back to traditional owners. There was consensus of opinion that traditional owners are frequently excluded from decision-making processes or from being involved in relevant processes because government land management agencies only deal with organisations with legislative responsibilities who do not always include traditional custodians. Some participants stated that they find it a source of great offence that people who do not have the right to speak for country frequently make decisions that affect their land and their cultural heritage places.

Often no government resources are provided for traditional owners to meet and discuss issues about management of cultural heritage in the alps. This is particularly problematic for people who live long distances from the alps.

Non-Traditional Community Views

“There is a need to respect the legitimate legal structures which are already in place”.
Eden Meeting

Many Aboriginal people involved in organisations such as Land Councils (NSW) and co-operatives (Vic), have cultural heritage responsibilities under legislation. Frequently members of these organisations have long historical ties to the local area and believe that they have a legitimate role to play in heritage management decision-making: “We see people with historical and cultural rights as equal. All have

associations that require respect... This follows traditional practice – new people were accepted into the tribe” (Eden Meeting).

The Way Forward

Some of the participants suggested that the AALC needs to engage with the thorny issue of who should be consulted over heritage issues in the alps. It was suggested that the development of an MOU between groups with a legislative function (Aboriginal Land Councils in NSW and Aboriginal communities in Victoria) and the traditional owner groups may help resolve this issue. In a similar vein, it was also suggested, in the context of NSW, that NPWS should fund a conference to bring together all the Land Councils and native title holders. The conference would enable everyone to come together to develop a way forward. Several different traditional custodian groups suggested that there should be regular meetings between elders from different sides of the mountains. This could assist with seeking internal agreement on traditional boundaries and provide a coherent position from which to deal with land management agencies.

For Further Consideration:

1. As a matter of priority, explore ways in which protocols can be developed to involve traditional owner groups and organisations with heritage legislative responsibilities in the alps.
 - Consult extensively with relevant groups
 - Consider funding a conference/workshop in the alps to work through issues of responsibility and facilitate cohesion amongst different groups to assist dealings with land management agencies.

A2 Access to Country

People from Wallaga still travel into the mountains sometimes – especially in the spring when the mountains are cooler than the coast. Ceremonies are still being held in Kosciuszko National Park.
Umbarra Meeting

During consultation a number of people related that they regularly travel to the high country. The purpose of this access falls broadly within the following:

- Accessing specific places of cultural/historical importance
- Travelling to country that is an inherited birthright – not necessarily a specific place (eg. returning to “my mother’s country”)
- Accessing land as an Aboriginal person.

This access is very important to Aboriginal people. Others who do not have the means to access country spoke of a desire to do so.

Access to cultural places is an important issue. For example, Goobarragandra is in a national park but is only accessed through private land. The Brungle women would like to establish easy access to this important site.
Brungle Meeting

Opportunities for Maintaining Ongoing Connections with Country

As discussed above, the high country is an important landscape to many Aboriginal people who attended community meetings. Meeting participants expressed the importance of the continued use of, and access to, the alps and in particular, specific cultural places. Access to these places is considered to be of vital importance to ensure associations and links to country are maintained and strengthened. It is also very important for community well being and a matter of respect to visit the country of ancestors.

Wollondibby is a very special place. “No one is consulting us about that place. Other Aboriginal people can go there, but we can’t go there. You need a key. It’s locked up. NPWS needs to let us have access, but NPWS has put up barriers that keep us out.”
Bega Meeting

Access to Country is a Community Right

Many participants were concerned about not being able to freely visit some cultural places because access was denied by the government land manager or because the public land could only be accessed via private land.

Some traditional custodians also take offence at being required to pay an entry fee or apply for a permit to access places of cultural importance. It was suggested that the establishment of ‘designated areas’ within the Parks for Aboriginal people may be one strategy to ensure the continued use and access to cultural areas.

“Before invasion our people had full access to all the resources of the land. The Alps were a big part of that – including the Bogong moths and the ceremonies that went on in the mountains.”
Bega Meeting

Access to Bush Foods

Access to bush foods is seen by many Aboriginal people as an important cultural practice that is central to community health and well being. Aboriginal people consulted believe that their access to bush foods (both animal and plant) on public land is a basic cultural right that should not be regulated by permits and licensing processes.

“The rights of Aboriginal people to have access to National Parks land within their country, and to camp, hunt and collect plants should not be questioned or subject to permit requirements.”
Cooma Meeting

Participants pointed out that they know how to manage harvesting and would not allow plants and animals to be over hunted or over collected. Having the right to hunt and collect bush foods acknowledges the importance of peoples’ connection to country and is a matter of social justice.

Opportunities for Renewing Connections with the Alps Country

Some young members of the community don't know Delegate and would welcome support to visit Delegate with the Elders to keep that knowledge.
Nowra Meeting

For some people there have been few opportunities to spend time in the alps. It was suggested that 1-2 day fieldtrips in country with the relevant land manager to identify and re-connect with special places would be beneficial.

Some people noted that it was important to take their children into the high country to experience being in the bush and to learn about plants and animals and places of cultural importance.

For Further Consideration:

1. Respond to requests by Aboriginal communities for assistance in accessing areas of the High Country to enable them to re-connect with their country (eg. through the provision of equipment and transportation).
 - Several places that people would like to be assisted to visit were identified in the consultation, and it is likely that additional consultation will identify further places.
2. Develop a common approach to enabling Aboriginal people to access cultural places within National Parks, with minimal requirements for permits and/or fees.
3. Develop a common approach to enabling Aboriginal people to access traditional animal and plant resources (for food and/or medicinal purposes) within National Parks, with minimal requirements for permits and/or fees.
4. In consultation with Aboriginal communities, identify 'designated areas' within National Parks for the conduct of cultural activities (including both women's and men's places, where needed). Negotiate clear management arrangements for these areas.
5. Where needed, assist Aboriginal communities to negotiate access arrangements through private land to access important cultural places and areas within National Parks and Reserves.
6. In partnership with Aboriginal communities, further explore the concept of 'cultural camps' within National Parks. This will require consideration of the identification of appropriate areas for the camps, agreed management arrangements, and resourcing to enable the culture camps to be used (eg. assistance with equipment and transportation).

A3 Representation of Aboriginal Culture in Alps Interpretative Material

Suggested locations for Interpretation:

- Alpine Walking Track
- Alpine Driving Route
- Bicentennial Trail
- General walking routes throughout the alps

Marysville Meeting

Meeting participants view interpretive material as a great opportunity to highlight Aboriginal peoples' connections with the alps country. Conversely interpretive material that fails to acknowledge an Aboriginal presence in the high country can reinforce the effects of colonisation through rendering Aboriginal people invisible and Aboriginal culture insignificant.

Raising the Profile of an Indigenous Presence in the Alps

There was a sense amongst meeting participants that more could be done to develop interpretive materials that would raise awareness of an Indigenous presence in the Australian alps. Good quality accurate signage, for example, can function as a tangible reminder to the public and land managers that the alps country is Aboriginal country. At the same time, participants would welcome the opportunity to share their culture with others – to share their passion for their country, and to show others that they are 'still here'.

Avoiding Stereotyping

Signs should acknowledge that people are entering traditional country.

All signage should acknowledge the existence of "First Nations".

Marysville Meeting

A common issue raised during the meetings was the need for more culturally sensitive and accurate representation of Aboriginal people and culture in interpretive material relating to the alps. For example, some participants expressed wariness about the use of stereotyped images such as the image of Aboriginal people using the alps almost exclusively as 'moth hunters'. They pointed out that there is much more to the way that Aboriginal people related to the alps in pre-colonisation times than moth hunting.

There is also a need to represent how Aboriginal peoples' attachments with the alps environment have changed over time. It was suggested that if interpretive material were to present an accurate portrayal of Aboriginal cultural connections with the alps, it should consider traditional, historical and contemporary links.

Involvement of Aboriginal People in Development of Interpretation

Meeting participants felt strongly that Aboriginal people should be involved in the development of interpretive material relating to Aboriginal heritage in the alps. It was recognised that this could only be achieved through close co-operation between the AALC (land management agencies) and Aboriginal people.

Interpretive material should convey the complexity of Aboriginal connections to the alps country.

Cooma Meeting

It was pointed out that in order to ensure that the information provided is appropriate and accurate, Aboriginal people involved would need to be properly resourced to assist development of information and to carry out appropriate consultation with community Elders.

Treating Cultural Information with Respect and Sensitivity

It is of utmost importance that information on Aboriginal culture in the alps reproduced in interpretive material such as signage, pamphlets, posters and written publications is accurate. Some participants referred to inaccuracies about Aboriginal culture that had crept into publications in the past. It was also pointed out that it is a

“Non-Aboriginal people also need to realise that talking about ancestors can be a painful experience”.
Cooma Meeting

matter of respect that interpretive information should only be used following approval of relevant Aboriginal people. It is not uncommon for Aboriginal peoples' information to be misconstrued and/or used without permission and this creates distrust between communities and researchers.

For Aboriginal people there are many sensitivities that need to be taken into account when “telling stories” about their history. This has to do with issues surrounding speaking of the dead but also because Aboriginal history since colonisation has been so painful for Aboriginal people.

Interpretive material needs to be sensitive to the way that European explorers are celebrated given their direct implication in the colonisation of Aboriginal land and the subsequent destruction of Aboriginal culture and society. At the same time it was suggested that the assistance given to early European explorers and surveyors to traverse the high country by Aboriginal guides should be acknowledged.

Co-ordinated Strategy for Interpretative Material Across the Alps

One outcome of the consultation process was the suggestion that the AALC develop an Aboriginal Cultural Interpretation Strategy for the alps. The strategy could establish uniformity in approach to consultation, ethics, community ownership and participation.

For Further Consideration:

1. Develop an Interpretation Strategy to coordinate the presentation of Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps:
 - Ensure that all interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps is genuinely inclusive of relevant Aboriginal groups and individuals.
 - Relevant Aboriginal communities should approve all interpretive material concerning the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps.
 - Participation in the development of interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps should be appropriately resourced.
2. Ensure that interpretation of National Parks and Reserves within the alps appropriately name and acknowledge the traditional owners of the country.
3. Ensure that interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps presents all periods of Aboriginal history – not just the pre-contact aspects. Allow for and present differing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal versions of the history of the period since European contact.
4. In partnership with the relevant Aboriginal communities, develop interpretation about the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps for key driving and walking routes (eg. Alpine Track, Bicentennial Trail, Alpine Driving Route, etc).

A4 Renaming Landmarks

The Ngannawal are currently developing proposals to change some place names within the ACT, such as Mount Ainslie and Yankee Hat.

Queanbeyan Meeting

Place names are an expression of peoples' tangible links with landscape. For Aboriginal people, place names invested the landscape with meaning and memory. Many of the place names in the Australian Alps were conferred by early white explorers, surveyors, administrators and settlers. While some of the Aboriginal names for features and localities remain today, the post-colonisation naming process has in many ways obliterated the linguistic expressions of Aboriginal peoples' connections to country.

Many meeting participants stated that they would like to see the reinstatement of Aboriginal names of landmarks/localities. As it stands now, the naming of most places within these areas fails to acknowledge Aboriginal culture. Mount Kosciuszko stands out as a clear example of how European naming has obliterated a sense of an Aboriginal presence in the high country. The community would like to have Aboriginal names recognised for Kosciuszko and other prominent places in the Alps.

Renaming places acknowledges Aboriginal occupation of the landscape. It provides a direct link with Aboriginal people from the past and where the meaning of places is known, provides insight into the ways that Aboriginal people perceived and related to the place.

Co-ordinated Approach to Renaming Places

It was felt by some participants that the AALC should take a lead in co-ordinating an approach to renaming Aboriginal places and landmarks in the Australian Alps. It was suggested that the AALC create a sub-committee to consider issues of renaming, to provide advice across the land management agencies and to liaise with relevant State and Commonwealth Place Names Committees.

Conducting Research into Place Names

Participants recognised that further research and consultation would be required in order to establish an inventory of Aboriginal place names in the Australian Alps. This information could come from oral information and archival sources where that information has been lost to community.

For Further Consideration:

1. Develop a consistent process for re-naming important cultural features within the Alps with Aboriginal names. Close involvement of all interested Aboriginal communities will be essential.
2. In close consultation with Aboriginal people, conduct research into names of Aboriginal places across the Alps.

A5 Community Control Over Cultural Information

"The traditional owners will always keep some cultural information secret. This should be respected".

Cooma Meeting

Meeting participants expressed their concern over the ownership and access to culturally sensitive information. Some people proposed that this type of information should only be held by the local communities whilst others expressed the need for communities to control and direct research into the cultural heritage of the Australian alps.

Security of Cultural Information

Many people expressed great concerns about how to protect the integrity of community cultural knowledge and stated that they are reluctant to share cultural knowledge with government agencies. Security of cultural knowledge is a critical issue. It is important for information about heritage places to be kept confidential if that's what the community wants.

Repatriation on Cultural Material

The Museum of Victoria currently has two Ngunawal canoes. Soon, the Ngunawal will ask for them to be returned (once their Keeping Place is ready). They are also very interested in pursuing the return of skeletal material held overseas.

Canberra Meeting

Some people consulted pointed out that cultural information that they have passed on to researchers in the past has never been returned. Future research must ensure that copies of all information is made available to the relevant Aboriginal people. This information could then be kept by the community and handed on to the next generation.

There are many artefacts and skeletal remains belonging to traditional custodians that are held in museums around Australia and overseas. Some communities expressed a desire for this material to be repatriated and held in community Keeping Places. Keeping Places are needed to provide interpretation and also to ensure that communities are able to house their own cultural material.

For Further Consideration:

1. Respect as valid the reluctance of Aboriginal people to provide their knowledge about their culture for state and agency registers. Consequently, recognise the limitations of such registers as representing only a partial depiction of the full range of cultural heritage values and places within a park, region or area.
2. Ensure that the rights of Aboriginal people to keep important cultural information confidential are respected and supported:
 - Ensure that agency information management systems include provision for confidential and culturally sensitive information.
 - Ensure that protocols for the release and use of Aboriginal cultural knowledge are developed and upheld by management agencies.
 - Facilitate access by Aboriginal communities to existing information held by management agencies, including information held on registers and databases.
3. Further explore the desired requirements and locations for Keeping Places within the alps, and develop collaborative approaches for pursuing agreed proposals.

4. Wherever appropriate, support the efforts of Aboriginal communities to achieve the repatriation of cultural materials and skeletal remains from private and public collections in Australia and overseas.

A6 Tourism

NPWS has previously offered the community a base at Jindabyne (Kosciuszko), but nothing has happened. There is disappointment about this – the community would like to discuss this idea further with NPWS. The community would like to have a base at Jindabyne and establish a tourism business there.

Bega Meeting

Meeting participants agreed that there was potential for the development of tourism opportunities in the alps region. Tourism would raise awareness amongst the wider public of Aboriginal values in the alps and potentially lead to economic development within their communities.

Community Run Tourism

It was pointed out that cultural tourism operations focussing on Aboriginal culture and heritage should be run and organised by Aboriginal communities and not by non-Aboriginal people. It was acknowledged that communities would need some assistance to apply for funds and get things started.

Balancing Tourism with Cultural Heritage Protection

Some participants observed that there is a lot of pressure for increased tourism in the alps. There was general consensus that tourism should not compromise the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the alps. It was suggested that there needs to be more cultural heritage assessments before tourism expands (eg. upgrading of the Barry Way is a concern). In particular, people should not be taken to any sacred sites.

For Further Consideration:

1. Acknowledge that there may be some places that are not appropriate for tourism activities because of their cultural sensitivity for Aboriginal people.
2. Involve Aboriginal communities in the presentation of cultural heritage places to visitors within National Parks.
3. Ensure that all cultural tourism operations which provide interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps involve consultation with the relevant Aboriginal communities.
4. In consultation with Aboriginal communities, monitor the impacts of cultural tourism on important cultural heritage places. Develop agreed management approaches to mitigating impacts.
5. Together with local and state tourism and regional development agencies, support Aboriginal communities to develop cultural tourism proposals and initiatives within their country.

B. Management Processes

B1 An Active Role for Aboriginal People in Management of the Alps

"We want recognition that we can manage our own land. We don't want to fit into their structure".
Bairnsdale Meeting

There is a strong desire amongst people with traditional connections to the alps to become involved in the management of the high country. They pointed out that the alps country has always been their country and that they have the right to say how it should be looked after. While there is no statutory requirement for agencies to enter into co-management arrangements with Aboriginal people, many meeting participants would like to be involved in negotiations to that effect.

Whilst most meeting participants agreed that the alps region should be jointly managed by Aboriginal communities and land management agencies, some people indicated that they would prefer a separate land management structure.

Co-management

Traditional owners voiced a desire to have co-management arrangements in parks in the alps. Once traditional ownership is recognised, traditional owners and parks managers can work through the issues. It was pointed out that co-management is about respecting Aboriginal peoples' rights to be involved in the future of their country. Alternative management strategies were proposed including the drafting of a 'MOU' specifying the parties and processes for consultation about future management issues in the alps.

Examples of existing co-management strategies for specific areas in the alps were discussed including the agreement for the Booderee National Park, at Wreck Bay, and participation of ACT Native Title Claim Groups on the Interim Board of Management for Namadgi National Park. Some groups have had discussions with parks management agencies about co-management arrangements and there is a strong interest in furthering these opportunities.

Separate Management Structure

One proposal put forward was for the creation of a separate land management structure operated on a regional basis by traditional owners. Another group would like to establish their own management of public land within their native title claim area rather than having to work through arrangements with government agencies.

Recognising Aboriginal Knowledge

If Aboriginal people are to have more of a say in the way land is managed then there needs to be an acknowledgement that some Aboriginal people possess substantial knowledge about how best to manage country. Some participants believe that the expertise of Aboriginal people has not been respected in the past by park managers. There is a great need to engage Aboriginal people in the processes of management.

For Further Consideration:

1. Acknowledge that Aboriginal community views about involvement in park management will vary throughout the alps, and that locally appropriate solutions must be sought.
2. Monitor and evaluate current experiences with co-management arrangements (both in the alps and elsewhere). Develop a range of joint management and co-management models – including joint management (for particular sites, areas or entire parks), co-management and sole management by Aboriginal organisations - as the basis for discussion between parks managers and Aboriginal communities at the local level. These discussions could lead, in the medium term, to broader agreements outlining the processes for ensuring effective joint management.
3. Ensure that Aboriginal communities are adequately resourced and given sufficient time to consider and participate in co-management and joint management arrangements.
4. Incorporate clear arrangements for Aboriginal community involvement in Park management plans (particularly for places identified as having special cultural values).

B2 Developing Partnerships with Land Management Agencies

Interest In Working Closely Together

It was suggested that a meeting with all local and government stakeholders to discuss the responsibilities of different agencies would help to reduce the confusion about who does what.

Wodonga Meeting

There is a genuine desire amongst many of the people who attended meetings to work more closely with land management agencies with responsibilities across the alps. This is a key to ensuring that community views are taken into account in planning and operational contexts. It would also enable agency staff to communicate more effectively the rationale behind decision-making. Most importantly, the community would like to have much more input into the management of their special places.

Better Links Between Land Management Agencies & Aboriginal People

It was recognised that links between Aboriginal people and land management agencies need to be strengthened. Meeting participants pointed out that representatives from the land management agencies should talk directly to the traditional owners. Some suggested that the AALC should develop a cultural heritage management strategy that would ensure Aboriginal involvement in the management of heritage places in the alps.

Clarification of Land Management Roles

There is a lot of confusion within Aboriginal communities about the different roles that government agencies play in relation to land management, development approvals and heritage management. It was suggested that the communities and land management agencies come together to discuss this and attempt to link the different programs across the three states.

For Further Consideration:

1. Take steps to clarify the roles and responsibilities of various land management agencies at the state, regional and local levels.
2. Ensure that park managers work closely with traditional owners, land councils and cooperatives at the local level.

B3 Employment of Aboriginal People in Land Management

The Moogji community is extremely interested in taking on contract work for a wide range of land management activities in the High Country. Skills have been developed to a good level at Moogji and the work crews have completed many different types of contracts.

Orbost Meeting

A common point made in meetings was that there should be more employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in land management activities. Employment has obvious economic benefits for communities but it also provides Aboriginal people with opportunities to connect with their ancestors' land and to contribute in a direct way to its management.

Agency Based Aboriginal Employment

One way of addressing increased employment of Aboriginal people is through the creation of more Aboriginal identified positions within land management agencies. Participants believe that this should be at all levels.

Community Based Employment

Another proposal concerned the creation of Cultural Heritage Officer positions within the community, rather than through the National Parks Service.

Meeting participants also highlighted the need for contract employment opportunities in land rehabilitation and management activities that use community labour. If there is any paid work available to manage the country and interpret Aboriginal heritage, the community here should be the ones to do that work.

For Further Consideration:

1. Recognising the high priority placed on jobs by Aboriginal communities, ensure that the potential for Aboriginal training and employment initiatives are considered in all cultural and natural heritage management programs.
2. Ensure that the Aboriginal employment strategies of State/Territory management authorities are broadly based and include:
 - Employment of cultural heritage officers to work closely with communities in managing specific Aboriginal cultural values.
 - Employment of knowledge holders to assist with the development of Aboriginal heritage interpretation programs.
 - Contract employment opportunities for Aboriginal organisations. Aboriginal organisations can provide services in a broad range of land management tasks, including weed management, catching brumbies, ecological burns, etc.
3. Consider the possibilities for funding the work of Cultural Heritage Officers within community organisations as well as within state/territory management authorities.

B4 Protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values

Management of natural values is very important. The community wants to see the alps kept as pristine as possible.

Queanbeyan Meeting

There was a general feeling amongst the meeting participants that Aboriginal places and sites are not being effectively managed in the Australian alps. More effort needs to go into identifying values and ensuring that Aboriginal people are involved in their management, possibly through survey or monitoring work. The lack of resources for Aboriginal communities was seen as a major barrier to effective community participation and involvement in management processes.

Need to Identify and Manage a Wide Variety of Values

“Our stories go back to the beginning of time. The mountains all have their meanings. Our people have struggled with invasion – stories are what we have left. They help us to understand the caves, underneath the ground, the rivers. The stories are here. We are worried about maintaining our cultural places and our culture.”

Umbarra Meeting

A point that was consistently raised was that all types of Aboriginal cultural values should be considered in heritage management processes in the alps not just archaeological values. These include spiritual and ceremonial places, travelling routes, historic places, massacre sites, men's and women's places, resource collection areas and natural values.

Effective Ongoing Management of Values

A number of special Aboriginal places were identified during the meetings. It was suggested by some participants that just because cultural places are identified this does not necessarily mean that they will be effectively managed. The point was raised that land management agencies need to be more accountable for the problems associated with managing Aboriginal sites such as graffiti and erosion. Time constraints, particularly those associated with development-oriented projects, and lack of funding were seen as barriers to effective management of cultural sites in the alps region.

“Aboriginal people look at the land in their own way. There needs to be a dual understanding about the same land – black and white.”

Umbarra Meeting

Participants believe that management of places should be sensitive to issues to do with gender as some places are men's/women's sites. Some female participants feel that women's places are not as well recognised and protected as men's places. This is partly an awareness issue but also because women do not get enough chances to be involved and have a say in management decisions.

Community Control Over Management of Cultural Heritage Values

Because a lot has been lost, all that is left is very important. Even stone artefact scatters are very important. They may not seem important to archaeologists, but they are important to the community because of what has been lost.

Brungle Meeting

Some participants felt that the decision-making powers for 'consent to destroy' sites currently vested with the Director of the NPWS in NSW should lie with the Aboriginal community.³¹ Local control is needed to make sure that community views are considered.

More Heritage Assessment Required

There was a prevalent view that effective ongoing management of Aboriginal heritage values in the alps is dependant on further heritage assessments. Many community members voiced an interest in archaeological surveys being conducted across the alps. Some people mentioned that they have good working relationships with archaeologists and enjoy being involved in survey work. Participants raised the

³¹ In the event of a proposed development that will result in the destruction of an archaeological site or Aboriginal place, a Consent to Destroy must first be obtained from the Director-General of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (under Section 90 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*).

concern that there is not enough funding to carry out surveys in new areas and that the surveys that are undertaken occur in response to development proposals only. They feel that this approach is too reactive. Heritage assessment processes need to be more strategic and consider methods such as mapping of areas of cultural sensitivity and creating management buffer zones around known sites. Assessments should also include ethnographic surveys and recording of oral histories.

Development of a Cultural Heritage Strategy

One proposal put forward was that the AALC should develop a cultural heritage strategy in close consultation with traditional owners. The strategy could guide the development of projects, management of Aboriginal places and values and co-ordinate approaches to interpretive material.

For Further Consideration:

1. Develop a Cultural Heritage Strategy to coordinate the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps:
 - Ensure the involvement of Aboriginal people with interests across the alps landscape
 - Participation in the development of the Cultural Heritage Strategy should be appropriately resourced.

B5 Environmental Protection and Management Issues

Because the alps is a relatively undisturbed landscape, it is likely that many aspects of Aboriginal culture will still be present. This makes the alps a special landscape for the community.
Orbost Meeting

Many meeting participants voiced concern over environmental management issues affecting the Australian alps. Aboriginal peoples' interest in the environment arises from the interconnectedness between the natural world and the cultural world. Detrimental impacts on the environment are therefore perceived as impacts on Aboriginal heritage. Poor environmental protection can also undermine the integrity of Aboriginal sites and places.

Impact of Development of Infrastructure

There is a need to better manage brumbies in the High Country. Many Aboriginal people have experience of chasing brumbies and could do this work for NPWS.
Orbost Meeting

Community members discussed the potentially negative impact of infrastructure development on Aboriginal heritage values in the alps. Large ground disturbing activities such as the development of ski resorts and construction of fire trails need to be subjected to appropriate heritage assessments.

Impact of Pests and Exotic Vegetation

Meeting participants raised concerns about the effects of exotic vegetation and pests on the alps environment. Brumbies in particular were raised as an obvious example of a persistent environmental problem. Environmental care is needed so that cultural practices can continue in the future (eg. weeds, ecological burning). The community is interested in taking on the environmental management required, particularly in special areas.

Water Management

Snowy Hydro is using Aboriginal waters to create electricity which is sold all over Australia. The community wants compensation for the use of the water. "We never gave up the rights to our water or our land." There are concerns about proposals for the transfer of water to keep the hydro scheme going.
Eden Meeting

River management is a concern (throughout the entire catchment). Concerns include pollution, fish population numbers, protection of water flows and access to medicine plants. The rivers need to be clean, with good fish supplies so that they can be used for cultural purposes. Participants are concerned about the impacts of management of water flows through dams in the region for electricity generation. There are concerns that changes to the ownership and management of water resources will not take account of Aboriginal cultural values. The future of the Snowy River is of particular concern. Management of natural values is very important. The community wants to see the alps kept as pristine as possible, and would like to see the flows returned and retained for major waterways.

Impact of Park Users

There is graffiti at Yankee Hat. This is very concerning to the Ngunawal. There is a concern that NPWS (NSW) is encouraging visitors to go into places that are special to the Ngunawal, and that those places are being damaged as a result. Allowing damage like this to occur is another form of genocide sanctioned by government agencies.
Canberra Meeting

The activities of park users were identified in meetings as having the potential to impact on Aboriginal places, particularly sites. Four wheel drives, tourism and horse riding in the high country were seen as obvious threats to sites that need to be properly managed. Graffiti on rock art sites was raised as an example of current visitor management problems. There is a need to monitor visitor pressure at Aboriginal cultural places. Sometimes these places will 'need a rest'. It may be necessary to restrict access by visitors from time to time.

For Further Consideration:

- 1 Ensure that Aboriginal people are consulted about major developments in the alps.
- 2 Explore ways of integrating Aboriginal community views on management of natural values into local park planning processes.

C. Improving Processes

C1 Fostering Connections Between Groups

“Let’s look at the positive things that we want to get. Let’s work on agreements to get the right Aboriginal involvement and resources to allow people to do their jobs.”

Bega Meeting

An underlying theme that emerged during consultation was the need to develop more sustained connections between Aboriginal people and key stakeholder groups with an interest in the alps. These interactions fall under connections between Indigenous people, connections with government agencies and connections with the broader community.

Between Indigenous Groups

There is a recognition that forums that bring together different Aboriginal groups with connections to the high country would provide a great opportunity for Aboriginal people with an interest in the alps to talk about culture and management issues. These forums could also foster exchange of cultural information.

With Agencies

Many participants voiced an interest in building stronger relationships with land management agencies. This interest extended to the AALC. Regular forums between Aboriginal people and land management agencies would assist in both parties developing a better understanding of each others views and concerns.

There is hope that discussions with the AALC will enable the community to progress a range of important issues with government and to secure government commitment to them.

With Broader Community

There was acknowledgement that cross-cultural sharing with community groups with an interest in the alps would raise the profile of an Indigenous presence in the alps.

For Further Consideration:

1. In consultation with Aboriginal groups, explore ways of bringing people together to discuss their interests in future management of Aboriginal heritage values in the alps.
2. Initiate regular information forums between Aboriginal people and land management agencies with responsibilities in the alps (a newsletter similar to the NSW NPWS produced *Coastal Custodians* could assist with this process).
3. Explore ways of fostering links between Aboriginal people and local community groups centring on the alps experience.

C2 Aboriginal Representation on the AALC and the CHWG

There should be indigenous representation on the AALC and on all of the working groups. There needs to be funding to support Aboriginal involvement in the AALC.
Bairnsdale Meeting

There was a strong interest amongst participants in the co-ordinating role of the AALC in management of the alps country.

Importance of Conveying Aboriginal Peoples' Views to AALC

A consistent view to emerge from meetings was that Aboriginal people should be represented on the AALC and its working groups (especially the CHWG). Generally speaking, people felt that this should involve representation from the wider Aboriginal community (in addition to Aboriginal staff employed in the land management agencies).

One point that was made is that it is not appropriate for the AALC to now recognise Aboriginal connections to country when there is no representation of Aboriginal people on the committee. An alternative view expressed was that Aboriginal people do not want to be on committees and fit into an outside structure.

Some meeting participants observed that the community would need funds to enable effective participation in committees and working groups and that any such representation should include an equal ratio of men and women.

Establishing an Elders' Representative Body

Maybe an Alps Committee of Elders could be formed – from all parts of the mountains. It could meet a couple of times each year and link in with the AALC. It could establish some needed protocols.
Brungle Meeting

A number of participants suggested the establishment of a community representative body, perhaps an alps Committee of Elders, as one way of ensuring Aboriginal representation and input into the management of the alps. Representatives could meet amongst themselves several times a year and report regularly to the AALC. The committee could work in partnership with the AALC to ensure that Aboriginal cultural values are recognised and appropriately managed. It could oversee the establishment of protocols for conducting consultation with Aboriginal people, the development of a cultural heritage strategy and other initiatives aimed at giving Aboriginal people a "real voice" in the future of the Australian alps.

For Further Consideration:

1. As a priority and in further consultation with Aboriginal communities, consider the most effective means of ensuring Aboriginal representation in the structures of the AALC. This may include:
 - Inclusion of Aboriginal people on the AALC and each of its working groups (involving both women and men).
 - Establishment of a new advisory body comprising a number of Aboriginal representatives.
 - Negotiated protocols for Aboriginal consultation and involvement in decision making.
 - Resourcing to support the participation of Aboriginal representatives to enable them to have a genuinely effective voice within the AALC structures.

C3 Improving Consultation with Aboriginal People

'At the end of the day, someone owns this heritage, and the AALC hasn't seen fit to talk to us. It has taken too long to recognise the rights of Aboriginal people.'
Bairnsdale Meeting

Some of the meeting participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities about management issues in the alps. This needs to be improved if Aboriginal people are to make a contribution to the future management of the alps landscape.

By way of example, participants reported that the recent reunion for the Snowy scheme did not involve any Aboriginal people, nor did the development of signage on Alpine Way. Lack of funding available for Aboriginal people is considered to be a barrier for effective Aboriginal community participation in consultation processes in the alps.

Aboriginal Peoples' Interests Are Often Ignored

A number of community members voiced a concern that their views on issues of interest to Aboriginal people in the alps are often ignored. For example, the recent television ads about the alps did not involve any consultation with Aboriginal people. Some participants stated that government agencies are more concerned about the interests and 'rights' of non-Aboriginal interest groups (eg. the mountain cattlemen) than about the rights of traditional owners. This is a source of disappointment for Aboriginal people with traditional connections to the alps.

Lack of Direct Links Between the AALC & Communities

There was general consensus that there need to be more direct links between the AALC and Aboriginal communities. The point was made that the AALC had taken too long to involve Aboriginal people in what it is doing.

Culturally Inappropriate Consultation

Several criticisms were made of the way that consultation is carried out with Aboriginal people across the alps. One point that was made was that women's knowledge has often been neglected in consultation processes and in processes aimed at identification of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Participants stated that all future processes (including research) should ensure that women are effectively involved.

Management agencies often want quick outcomes. They want the outcomes, but aren't prepared to do the ground work to consult effectively.
Cooma Meeting

The timeframes given for communities to respond to proposals are often inadequate. This has the effect of increasing the level of conflict between Aboriginal people and land managers. Consultation processes with Aboriginal people need to be more culturally sensitive. There needs to be more respect for Elders in consultation processes. Much of the consultation can be done by Aboriginal people themselves. Future consultation processes should allow for people to meet together prior to a meeting being held with agency staff. The community feels that government representatives come around and promise things, but do not give anything back and do not follow through. There is a sense that people 'come picking your brain to get what they need for their business' (Brungle Meeting).

The AALC and land management agencies need to ensure that they are consulting with the right people about particular areas of country. Traditional owners should be participating in a wide range of events taking place within their country. This should extend beyond just offering a 'welcome' at the start of events. Land managers need

The Taungurung are working on a protocol with Parks Victoria at the moment to clarify some of the issues about consultation and involvement.
Marysville Meeting

to take care to ensure that the involvement of Aboriginal people is genuine, and not 'token'. In working with the AALC in the future, it will be essential to ensure that consultation occurs regularly at the local level. In many cases, good relationships have been formed with parks agency staff at the local level.

There is also a perception that the views of parks staff have the most influence on what decisions are made. It is often assumed that Aboriginal staff in the parks agencies speak on behalf of Aboriginal people. However, all decisions need to come back to the relevant traditional owners.

Resourcing Consultation

Aboriginal communities need to be resourced to effectively participate in management processes and implementation of projects in the alps country. For example, the 'Snowy Journey' concept was a good one, but lack of resourcing is a barrier to Aboriginal community participation. There needs to be recognition that Aboriginal people need funds to assist them to get to meetings and participate in events.

Development of a Consultation Protocol

Several meeting participants raised the point that the AALC should consider developing a Community Consultation Protocol that. The protocol should have guiding principles that are applied in all interactions with Aboriginal people, including:

- a commitment to consult with all Aboriginal people with interests in the place/area/issue
- a commitment to treat Elders with respect
- a commitment to consult in a timely fashion
- a commitment to follow through on outcomes of consultation
- a commitment to provide feedback to community on progress of outcomes of consultation.

For Further Consideration:

In further consultation with Aboriginal communities, consider the development of a Community Consultation Protocol to guide consultation with Aboriginal people with an interest in the alps.

Provide financial and other support (such as transport, accommodation, childcare) to enable Aboriginal community members to effectively contribute to planning and decision making processes for National Parks in the alps.

D. Preliminary Research Directions Identified

D1 Future Research into Aboriginal Heritage in the Alps

Many stories have gone. A lot of cultural information has been lost. The challenge is to pass on what is known to young people.
Wodonga Meeting

There was a strong interest in future research into Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the Australian alps. Research is seen as a way of better understanding how ancestors occupied the high country and to fill in the many gaps that exist in knowledge about the experiences of Aboriginal people in the post-contact period.

Research to Date is Limited

Participants consistently pointed out that the research that has been completed to date on Aboriginal occupation of the alps is incomplete and simplifies what were complex connections to the high country. In particular, there was concern that the perception that Aboriginal people travelled into the high country predominantly for collection of moths was a misrepresentation in need of correction.

Cultural Recovery

For many Aboriginal people who participated in the meetings, the loss of cultural information in relation to the Australian alps is a source of great regret and research that synthesises information that exists in oral testimony and archival and archaeological sources was seen as one way of redressing that loss. Research can renew cultural connections to the alps. Some participants observed that research has helped them to re-establish specific cultural links with the land of their ancestors. A lot of cultural knowledge was lost following colonisation but it is being re-established now through research projects.

Supporting Community Directed Research

It was considered imperative that future research into Aboriginal culture in the alps be conducted in partnership with the communities. Resourcing is needed for training in research to enable people to conduct research.

Some participants indicated that it would be good for communities to get direct funding to conduct their own research as money for research projects usually goes to non-indigenous people and organisations. If there are archaeologists or historians needed, the funding should go to the community to commission and guide these researchers.

Research Proposals

Proposals for research arising from the meetings include area-based archaeological surveys, oral history collection, language research and analysis and further archival research.³²

³² In discussing research directions, it is important to note that the consultation was the beginning of a longer process of talking to communities about their preferences, and it can be expected that further and more detailed proposals will arise through the next stage of consultation.

Oral History Projects

There was a strong consensus that the collection of oral histories from people with information about the high country, particularly older people, should be a priority. Experiences and knowledge recorded should not be confined to a particular time period and pre-contact and post-contact information are both priorities. There was a sense of urgency behind this strategy. So much information has been lost and unless oral information collection is prioritised, a lot more knowledge will be lost forever when Elders die.

Language Research

Research into language was referred to by many meeting participants as an important area for future research. Language is central to cultural identity and was one of the first aspects of Aboriginal culture to be taken away. This research would focus on information held in archives although some people still speak their language.

Archaeological Investigations

There was a lot of support for further archaeological investigations in the alps country. This was discussed mainly in the context of archaeological surveys to detect sites. Some participants pointed out that much of the archaeological research conducted previously had been done to assess the impact of development proposals and is therefore patchy. Area-based surveys are needed to produce more systematic outcomes.

Archival Research

People consulted would like to see more archival research into Aboriginal connections with the high country. This should include research into ethnographic information and the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal history in the alps and surrounding areas. Themes that were nominated included research into:

- tracks/pathways/travelling Routes
- former government stations/missions around the alps
- patterns of Aboriginal occupation in the alps
- individual family histories
- traditional cultural information such as creation myths, cultural practices that relate specifically to the alps.

Publications such as *The Aboriginal People of the Monaro* and *The Kamberri* were seen as excellent models for future research.³³

Sharing Information with the Wider Community

A 'Sharing Day' could be planned to encourage local non-indigenous families to share important sources such as diaries, artefacts, records and photos with the Aboriginal community. Knowledge such as food and medicine plants and the importance of native vegetation could also be discussed.

Archaeological surveys are needed. These should employ and train local Aboriginal people, and then the community should be employed to do the surveys. The Elders should be paid to come along when fieldwork is done.

Wodonga Meeting

There was blanket support for the production of books similar to *The Aboriginal People of the Monaro* and *The Kamberri* publications.

All Meetings

³³ These publications were circulated at each meeting.

For Further Consideration:

1. In consultation with Aboriginal people with an interest in the alps and based on the work carried out by Argue (2000) develop an Aboriginal Heritage Research Strategy for the Australian alps that sets parameters for future research projects.
2. Consider establishing a discrete funding source for supporting the research needs of Aboriginal communities. Alternatively, set aside a portion of existing grants programs that can be accessed only by Aboriginal community organisations.
3. Consult further with Aboriginal communities about the priorities for research, and about the appropriate processes and approaches for commissioning and supporting needed research. Projects emerging from this consultation are likely to include:
 - Collection of oral histories
 - Archival research, including identification of materials held in archives
 - Site surveys and preparation of maps for community use
 - Production of community resources, information kits and/or publications and interpretive material.
4. Consult further with relevant Aboriginal communities and families about conducting further research about the former Delegate Reserve. This research area has been identified in a number of ways, and is likely to include:
 - Discussion with the current owner/leaseholder about the research program and about the future management and access to the site.
 - Support for Aboriginal families to visit Delegate on a number of occasions.
 - Surveying the site of the former settlement and cemetery, and production of an accurate map which is easily available.
 - Collection of oral histories.
 - Archival research.
 - Preparation of a publication.
5. Consider opportunities to fund research through Aboriginal communities to enable them to exercise a higher degree of direction over the work of external researchers (eg. archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, etc).
6. Require all funded research – particularly research conducted by academics and heritage consultants – to provide research outcomes in a readily useful form for interpretation.
7. Further develop the concept of ‘Sharing Days’ through the Landcare program to encourage non-Aboriginal people to share items held in private collections with Aboriginal communities. These events should include sharing of knowledge held by Aboriginal people also, including information about traditional plants uses.

Principal Themes & Issues Raised by Aboriginal People	For Further Consideration
A Issues Identified	
A1 Who Speaks for Country	1. As a matter of priority, explore ways in which protocols can be developed to involve traditional owner groups and organisations with heritage legislative responsibilities in the alps. • Consult extensively with relevant groups • Consider funding a conference/workshop in the alps to work through issues of responsibility and facilitate cohesion amongst different groups to assist dealings with land management agencies.
A2 Access to Country	1. Respond to requests by Aboriginal communities for assistance in accessing areas of the High Country to enable them to re-connect with their country (eg. through the provision of equipment and transportation). • Several places that people would like to be assisted to visit were identified in the consultation, and it is likely that additional consultation will identify further places. 2. Develop a common approach to enabling Aboriginal people to access cultural places within National Parks, with minimal requirements for permits and/or fees. 3. Develop a common approach to enabling Aboriginal people to access traditional animal and plant resources (for food and/or medicinal purposes) within National Parks, with minimal requirements for permits and/or fees. 4. In consultation with Aboriginal communities, identify 'designated areas' within National Parks for the conduct of cultural activities (including both women's and men's places, where needed). Negotiate clear management arrangements for these areas. 5. Where needed, assist Aboriginal communities to negotiate access arrangements through private land to access important cultural places and areas within National Parks and Reserves. 6. In partnership with Aboriginal communities, further explore the concept of 'cultural camps' within National Parks. This will require consideration of the identification of appropriate areas for the camps, agreed management arrangements, and

	resourcing to enable the culture camps to be used (eg. assistance with equipment and transportation).
A3 Representation of Aboriginal Culture in Alps Interpretative Material	1. Develop an Interpretation Strategy to coordinate the presentation of Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps: • Ensure that all interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps is genuinely inclusive of relevant Aboriginal groups and individuals. • Relevant Aboriginal communities should approve all interpretive material concerning the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps. • Participation in the development of interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps should be appropriately resourced. 2. Ensure that interpretation of National Parks and Reserves within the alps appropriately name and acknowledge the traditional owners of the country. 3. Ensure that interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps presents all periods of Aboriginal history – not just the pre-contact aspects. Allow for and present differing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal versions of the history of the period since European contact. 4. In partnership with the relevant Aboriginal communities, develop interpretation about the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps for key driving and walking routes (eg. Alpine Track, Bicentennial Trail, Alpine Driving Route, etc).
A4 Renaming Landmarks	1. Develop a consistent process for re-naming important cultural features within the alps with Aboriginal names. Close involvement of all interested Aboriginal communities will be essential. 2. In close consultation with Aboriginal people, conduct research into names of Aboriginal places across the alps.
A5 Community Control Over Cultural Information	1. Respect as valid the reluctance of Aboriginal people to provide their knowledge about their culture for state and agency registers. Consequently, recognise the limitations of such registers as representing only a partial depiction of the full range of cultural heritage values and places within a park, region or area. 2. Ensure that the rights of Aboriginal people to keep important cultural information confidential are respected and supported:

	• Ensure that agency information management systems include provision for confidential and culturally sensitive information. • Ensure that protocols for the release and use of Aboriginal cultural knowledge are developed and upheld by management agencies. • Facilitate access by Aboriginal communities to existing information held by management agencies, including information held on registers and databases. 3. Further explore the desired requirements and locations for Keeping Places within the alps, and develop collaborative approaches for pursuing agreed proposals. 4. Wherever appropriate, support the efforts of Aboriginal communities to achieve the repatriation of cultural materials and skeletal remains from private and public collections in Australia and overseas.
A6 Tourism	1. Acknowledge that there may be some places that are not appropriate for tourism activities because of their cultural sensitivity for Aboriginal people. 2. Involve Aboriginal communities in the presentation of cultural heritage places to visitors within National Parks. 3. Ensure that all cultural tourism operations which provide interpretation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps involve consultation with the relevant Aboriginal communities. 4. In consultation with Aboriginal communities, monitor the impacts of cultural tourism on important cultural heritage places. Develop agreed management approaches to mitigating impacts. 5. Together with local and state tourism and regional development agencies, support Aboriginal communities to develop cultural tourism proposals and initiatives within their country.

B Management Processes	
B1 An Active Role for Aboriginal People in Management of the Alps	1. Acknowledge that Aboriginal community views about involvement in park management will vary throughout the alps, and that locally appropriate solutions must be sought. 2. Monitor and evaluate current experiences with co-management arrangements (both in the alps and elsewhere). Develop a range of joint management and co-management models – including joint management (for particular sites, areas or entire parks), co-management and sole management by Aboriginal organisations - as the basis for discussion between parks managers and Aboriginal communities at the local level. These discussions could lead, in the medium term, to broader agreements outlining the processes for ensuring effective joint management. 3. Ensure that Aboriginal communities are adequately resourced and given sufficient time to consider and participate in co-management and joint management arrangements. 4. Incorporate clear arrangements for Aboriginal community involvement in Park management plans (particularly for places identified as having special cultural values).
B2 Developing Partnerships with Land Management Agencies	1. Take steps to clarify the roles and responsibilities of various land management agencies at the state, regional and local levels. 2. Ensure that park managers work closely with traditional owners, land councils and cooperatives at the local level.
B3 Employment of Aboriginal People in Land Management	1. Recognising the high priority placed on jobs by Aboriginal communities, ensure that the potential for Aboriginal training and employment initiatives are considered in all cultural and natural heritage management programs. 2. Ensure that the Aboriginal employment strategies of State/Territory management authorities are broadly based and include:

	• Employment of cultural heritage officers to work closely with communities in managing specific Aboriginal cultural values. • Employment of knowledge holders to assist with the development of Aboriginal heritage interpretation programs. • Contract employment opportunities for Aboriginal organisations. Aboriginal organisations can provide services in a broad range of land management tasks, including weed management, catching brumbies, ecological burns, etc. 3. Consider the possibilities for funding the work of Cultural Heritage Officers within community organisations as well as within state/territory management authorities.
B4 Protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values	1. Develop a Cultural Heritage Strategy to coordinate the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage of the alps: • Ensure the involvement of Aboriginal people with interests across the alps landscape • Participation in the development of the Cultural Heritage Strategy should be appropriately resourced.
B5 Environmental Protection and Management Issues	1. Ensure that Aboriginal people are consulted about major developments in the alps. 2. Explore ways of integrating Aboriginal community views on management of natural values into local park planning processes.
C Improving Processes	
C1 Fostering Connections Between Groups	1. In consultation with Aboriginal groups, explore ways of bringing people together to discuss their interests in future management of Aboriginal heritage values in the alps. 2. Initiate regular information forums between Aboriginal people and land management agencies with responsibilities in the alps (a newsletter similar to the NSW NPWS produced <i>Coastal Custodians</i> could assist with this process). 3. Explore ways of fostering links between Aboriginal people and local community groups centring on the alps experience.

C2 Aboriginal Representation on the AALC and the CHWG	1. As a priority and in further consultation with Aboriginal communities, consider the most effective means of ensuring Aboriginal representation in the structures of the AALC. This may include: • Inclusion of Aboriginal people on the AALC and each of its working groups (involving both women and men). • Establishment of a new advisory body comprising a number of Aboriginal representatives. • Negotiated protocols for Aboriginal consultation and involvement in decision-making. 2. Resourcing to support the participation of Aboriginal representatives to enable them to have a genuinely effective voice within the AALC structures.
C3 Improving Consultation with Aboriginal People	1. In further consultation with Aboriginal communities, consider the development of a Community Consultation Protocol to guide consultation with Aboriginal people with an interest in the alps. 2. Provide financial and other support (such as transport, accommodation, childcare) to enable Aboriginal community members to effectively contribute to planning and decision-making processes for National Parks in the alps.
D Research Directions Identified	
D1 Future Research into Aboriginal Heritage in the Alps	1. In consultation with Aboriginal people with an interest in the alps and based on the work carried out by Argue (2000) develop an Aboriginal Heritage Research Strategy for the Australian alps that sets parameters for future research projects. 2. Consider establishing a discrete funding source for supporting the research needs of Aboriginal communities. Alternatively, set aside a portion of existing grants programs that can be accessed only by Aboriginal community organisations. 3. Consult further with Aboriginal communities about the priorities for research, and about the appropriate processes and approaches for commissioning and supporting needed research. Projects emerging from this consultation are likely to include:

	• Collection of oral histories • Archival research, including identification of materials held in archives • Site surveys and preparation of maps for community use • Production of community resources, information kits and/or publications and interpretive material.
	4. Consult further with relevant Aboriginal communities and families about conducting further research about the former Delegate Reserve. This research area has been identified in a number of ways, and is likely to include: • Discussion with the current owner/leaseholder about the research program and about the future management and access to the site. • Support for Aboriginal families to visit Delegate on a number of occasions. • Surveying the site of the former settlement and cemetery, and production of an accurate map which is easily available. • Collection of oral histories. • Archival research. • Preparation of a publication.
	5. Consider opportunities to fund research through Aboriginal communities to enable them to exercise a higher degree of direction over the work of external researchers (eg. archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, etc).
	6. Require all funded research – particularly research conducted by academics and heritage consultants – to provide research outcomes in a readily useful form for interpretation.
	7. Further develop the concept of ‘Sharing Days’ through the Landcare program to encourage non-Aboriginal people to share items held in private collections with Aboriginal communities. These events should include sharing of knowledge held by Aboriginal people also, including information about traditional plants uses.

Table 3: Tabulation of Themes/Issues Raised by Aboriginal Communities and Suggested Strategies for Further Consideration/Implementation

5 Final Discussion

The Australian alps features prominently in the minds and aspirations of many Aboriginal people across NSW, the ACT and Victoria. For some, the alps constitutes the country of their ancestors, the responsibilities for which they have inherited. For others whose ties do not go back so far, it represents a highly significant landscape with important connections to Aboriginal culture. Consultation that has been undertaken for this project has revealed many different ways that contemporary Aboriginal people experience attachments to the Alpine country. It has also recorded a range of issues and concerns that people have for managing and protecting cultural heritage values that exist in the alps.

This project has been ambitious in its scope. Making contact with Aboriginal people with interests in the alps and canvassing those people to obtain a sense of what it is they value in the alps landscape has posed many challenges. These challenges are in part a consequence of issues to do with scale and time. They also arise from the difficulties inherent in establishing comprehensive rather than narrowly focussed lists of community contacts. Nevertheless, we are confident that contact has been made with a broad cross section of Aboriginal people with an interest in the alps. As a consequence of this project, many more Aboriginal people now have a better idea of the work of the AALC and the major programs currently underway across the alps region (for example the Kosciuszko Management Plan).

Aboriginal people today face many social, political and economic challenges. Communities want to better the health and well-being of their people and to create strong social and economic foundations for improved futures. Underpinning this desire to build healthy and prosperous families and communities is the issue of self-determination that is tied to a sense of agency and identity. “Country” is central to Aboriginal culture and identity and is widely seen as the critical backdrop against which issues of social justice and community health and well-being are played out. For many Aboriginal people, particularly in south-east Australia where loss of land following colonisation was swift and enduring, accessing country and having a say in how it is cared for has added symbolic importance. In many respects, meaningful involvement with “country” constitutes a vision rather than a lived reality for many people. Securing active involvement in caring for country will make those aspirations more of a reality.

Importance of Moving Forward

This initial contact with Aboriginal people involving discussions about attachments and issues in relation to the alps has made a good start in building the sustained relationships desired by the AALC and by Aboriginal communities. It is therefore essential that the AALC and State/Territory park management agencies build on these foundations. To build trust, it is critical to make progress from these beginnings, no matter how limited the available resources may be. Partnerships founded on mutual respect and common goals will be fundamental to producing ways of unlocking and dismantling social, political and economic systems that have served to disenfranchise Aboriginal people. Moving forward does not require all the issues raised to be solved at once. Rather, it will mean staying in regular communication, consulting further about the issues raised in this report, seeking feedback and further guidance about priorities, and developing an achievable work program.

Making a Start

To make a start in building on the achievements of the first stage of this project the AALC is encouraged to consider the specific recommendations:

1. The final report of the first stage of the Aboriginal Liaison and Directions Study should be widely circulated for discussion. It may be desirable to commission a summary version to assist interested groups/individuals to comment. Ideally, all organisations involved in the consultation should receive a copy, and relevant sections within State/Territory agencies with responsibilities for parks management and Aboriginal cultural heritage should be included. The AALC and State/Territory agency web sites could also be used to disseminate the report and seek feedback.
2. Ensure that people involved in relevant state/territory planning processes for the alps are aware of the report and its key messages – particularly in relation to the broad definition of Aboriginal cultural heritage expressed by the Aboriginal participants in the study. Examples of these processes include: the revision of the Kosciuszko National Park Management Plan, the Alpine National Park Management Plan, the Namadgi National Park Management Plan, the work by the Australian Heritage Commission on the heritage values of the Australian alps and development of joint management arrangements for Namadgi National Park.
3. Take every opportunity to hold briefings/discussion sessions with park managers with management responsibilities in the Australian alps about the report and its recommendations.
4. Develop and resource a process of discussing the report and its recommendations with relevant Aboriginal communities. Circulation of the written document is unlikely to be sufficient – scheduling local meetings wherever possible will be critical.
5. Ensure that copies of the report are available at the forthcoming International Year of Mountains celebration at Jindabyne (and any other relevant events in the alps).
6. Ensure that each of the AALC's working groups is aware of the report, and the many implications for them arising from the issues raised by Aboriginal people.
7. Develop a realistic implementation program for addressing the issues arising from the report. Some issues arising from the report can be considered further by the AALC's working groups, with input from State/Territory parks management agencies.
8. Following feedback from Aboriginal communities and park managers, as a priority, develop options for responding to the desire by Aboriginal people to have a stronger voice within the processes and structures of the AALC.
9. Priority areas for the initial implementation phase of the project are likely to include development of the following key strategies:³⁴
 - Aboriginal Heritage Research Strategy for the Australian alps³⁵

³⁴ Depending on the available funding for Stage 2 of the Aboriginal Liaison and Directions Study, it is likely that one of these priorities could be advanced in the coming year.

- Aboriginal Consultation Protocol for the Australian alps
- Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Strategy for the Australian alps

10. As a medium-term objective, consider resourcing and coordinating the development of a broad cultural heritage management strategy for the Australian alps.

It is possible to see a way forward on many issues raised during this consultation and indeed communities were frequently clear on how to resolve issues. Future management of the Australian alps represents an opportunity for land managers and Aboriginal people to develop meaningful and productive relationships. The key to securing productive outcomes that will benefit both Aboriginal people and land management agencies charged with the responsibility of managing the alps will be to build upon shared interests. Most importantly, it will rest upon continued meaningful engagement between Aboriginal people and government at all levels.

³⁵ Building on the research needs identified by Argue (2000).

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Project Brief



Project Brief
Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study

1 Client

The client is the Cultural Heritage Working Group (CHWG) of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC).

2 Project Management Team

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The management team will form the steering committee for the project. Unless otherwise instructed, Juliet Ramsay will be the contact between the consultant and the project management team/steering committee.

3 Introduction

The Australian Alps national parks extend from Canberra through the Brindabella Range in the ACT, the Snowy Mountains of NSW and along the Great Dividing Range through Victoria. The alpine and sub-alpine environment within the parks is a unique part of Australia, a mountainous biogeographical region in a predominantly dry and flat continent.

The national parks and reserves in the Australian Alps comprise over 1.6 million-hectares of protected areas across the rooftop of Australia. Nine conservation reserves are collectively referred to as the 'Australian Alps national parks'. The major reserves, Kosciuszko, Namadgi, Alpine, Snowy River and Mount Buffalo National Park are well known to much of the community of southeastern Australia. Brindabella National Park, Bimberi Nature Reserve, Scabby Range Nature Reserve and the Avon Wilderness are also becoming better known.

The Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage of the Alps documents the human history that has influenced and been influenced by this unique Alpine and sub-Alpine environment. This cultural heritage is collectively considered to be of national significance and includes significant individual places.

A tri-state co-operative management program for the Australian Alps was developed as an MOU in 1986 and is administered by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC). The Committee is composed of officers of the State, Territory and Commonwealth Park agencies. The protection of the Alps is an integral part of the cross-border co-operation program. Several sub-committees of the AALC manage projects to research aspects of management that will be beneficial to the region. The Cultural Heritage Working Group (CHWG) is one of the sub-committees and manages the cultural heritage component.

4 Background

A number of studies of aspects of Aboriginal heritage of the Alps region have been undertaken by researchers, J. Flood, J. Kaminga, M. Young and D. and E Mundy, J. Lennon, Hughes and Buckley and others. Many places or sites of significance have been recorded on heritage registers, and Aboriginal place lists. However there are still many gaps in our knowledge about the Aboriginal heritage of the Australian Alps.

In order to identify priorities for cultural heritage research, the CHWG commissioned a research project (2000) that identified a number of gaps in the knowledge of prehistoric, historic and contemporary Aboriginal heritage values in the Australian Alps National Parks. The findings of that research are presented in the *Cultural Heritage Research and Implementation Report* (Argue 2000).

The Cultural Heritage Working Group recognise that Aboriginal people have and continue to have a strong attachment to the Australian alps and that those people should provide direction to the cultural heritage research programs in the alps.

The Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) is seeking knowledge and understanding of the Aboriginal heritage values of the Alps, to provide information for an AHC study of the heritage significance of the Alps region. The interests of the AHC complements the desire of the CHWG to extend the understanding of contemporary Aboriginal heritage values of the Alps area, and how the CHWG can assist agencies to work with Aboriginal communities in caring for their heritage. Given the overlapping interests of the AHC and CHWG, a partnership has been established to conduct this project.

In addition, the Year 2002 is International Year of Mountains (IYM 2002). This provides an opportunity for mountain heritage values to be given recognition in the broader community. A conference on mountain values is planned for November 2002 and will be hosted by the AALC in partnership with other organisations such as the Eco Tourism Association of Australia and Australia ICOMOS.

5 Scope of Project

This project will undertake, in close consultation with park management agencies, essential liaison with Aboriginal communities in order to:

- 1 Develop a greater understanding of Aboriginal heritage values related to Australian Alps.
- 2 Engender a sense of value and appreciation within the agencies and community for Aboriginal heritage of the Australian Alps national parks.
- 3 Directly involve Aboriginal communities associated with and with ties to the Alps, in developing a process that will improve the understanding, appreciation and protection of Aboriginal values.
- 4 Provide direction from the Aboriginal people for the gap filling projects for the Alps' parks along with the proposals identified by the CHWG *Cultural Heritage Research and Implementation Report*.
- 5 Provide liaison and organisation for an Aboriginal Gathering to be held in late 2002 to celebrate International Year of Mountains (IYM).

6 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the project is to conduct, in consultation with park management agencies, liaison with all Aboriginal communities associated with and with ties to the Australian Alps, in order to:

- seek direction on cultural heritage projects that they feel would best contribute to the protection and management of Aboriginal heritage values;
- broadly ascertain the nature, extent and depth of Aboriginal heritage values relating to the Alps;
- Discuss and plan with the communities an Aboriginal Gathering proposed for late 2002 to celebrate International Year of Mountains.

The objectives of the study are to:

1 Read and understand studies and heritage place records that have documented Aboriginal values of the Alps, so that the consultant develops familiarity with the information base.

2 In consultation with park agency staff liaise with the Aboriginal people through workshops and meetings to discuss proposals, further develop proposals, and seek agreement on the following topics.

- The aims of AALC and the CHWG including:
 - ❖ the *Cultural Heritage Research and Implementation Study* and the suggested gap filling projects such as the pre-contact history project;
 - ❖ proposals such as the proposed Wonnangatta pathways study (Alpine National Park), proposed for the renaming of places, and the proposed Digging Stick site study (Namadgi National park);
 - ❖ other heritage aspects that the communities may wish the CHWG address; and
 - ❖ strategic co-operative ventures which may facilitate broad ranging and smaller projects such as promotion of Aboriginal stories and history relating to the Alps.
- The Aboriginal heritage significance of the Australian Alps
- The proposal for the IYM 2002 conference on mountain heritage with an Aboriginal Gathering component

3 Prepare an Aboriginal liaison report including:

- the workshop procedure and results;
- an essay on the broad extent and depth of Aboriginal heritage values of the Alps region;
- agreed directions for the Aboriginal gathering/conference for ITM 2002; and
- recommendations on a model for involving Aboriginal people in determining research requirements for the alpine parks.

7 Tasks

7.1.1 Preliminary

The successful applicant shall undertake the following tasks:

- 7.1.1 Be familiar with the works of J. Mulvaney, J Kamminga, J.Lennon, M.Young, and others (refer Item 10) along with relevant information from the NSW and Victorian Regional Forest Agreement studies.
- 7.1.2 With the assistance of agencies, develop a liaison list with contact details that includes all the Aboriginal communities associated with the Alps, the contact individuals, all the Aboriginal liaison officers in Parks, Land Councils, and the Victorian regional heritage officers. Include native title claimants that have an association with the Alps. The Parks Aboriginal Liaison Officers must be involved in the planning of the project. (Some information is available but this would probably need updating and check for accuracy and appropriateness). Include Chrissy Grant (AHC) in the liaison network.

- 7.1.3 Propose a detailed Aboriginal liaison program including workshop plans, timing and costing. This may involve, letters, phone calls, involvement in other agency liaison activities and conducting meetings/workshops. Prepare the program in a report format, and include the proposed dates of workshops and the venues. Submit the program to the project managers for comment, and review if necessary.
- 7.1.4 Seek cooperation from the park management agencies in implementing the liaison program, to ensure the process is consistent with park agency protocols. The AHC (Chrissy Grant) will provide some personnel assistance in the running of the workshops.
- 7.1.5 Refine the Aboriginal liaison program as directed by the Steering Committee.

7.2 Liaison Program

- 7.2.1 As a first step discuss with the traditional custodians of Jindabyne country the proposed Gathering for 2002 and seek their support for the Gathering in their area.
- 7.2.2 Organise workshops with Aboriginal communities. An example is provided at Attachment 1. Petrol costs may need to be made to workshop participants as well as venue hire and snack food. Some photographic images should also be taken provided participants are willing to be photographed.
- 7.2.3 Conduct workshops in a friendly manner that engages Aboriginal people in discussion, seeks their comments and clearances, and obtains input on the following.
 - The aims of the AALC and the CHWG.
 - The Cultural Heritage Research and Implementation Study and the suggested gap filling projects such as the pre-contact history project and other proposals received by the working group such the Wonnangatta trail study, the renaming of places proposal, and the Aboriginal digging stick site proposal.
 - Information being sought by the Australian Heritage Commission regarding important values of the Alps.
 - ❖ Discuss with Aboriginal people their heritage values related to the Australian Alps, if they would like places researched and if they have stories that they are willing to make known to the broader community.
 - ❖ Recognise that it may not be appropriate for Aboriginal people to reveal detailed information about their sacred places, but encourage Aboriginal people to explain the extent of the values that they attribute to the Alps, including intangible values.
 - ❖ Discuss with Aboriginal people how they would like their values protected and possible actions that would protect and conserve their values.
 - ❖ Ensure that the Aboriginal people understand that this project can only expect to achieve a broad picture of heritage values but that this may assist in directing future research.
 - ❖ Obtain clearances form Native Title Claimants/ Traditional Owners on the final drafts of information compiled from input from Aboriginal people. Seek permission for display on the Internet
 - ❖ Note the need to develop the appreciation of Aboriginal values of the Alps in the broader community as has been done in other places such as the McDonald Ranges.
 - The possibility of joint ventures with universities and key institutions, for undertaking small and large projects that could include documenting Aboriginal histories and stories relating to the Alps.
 - The proposal for the Aboriginal Gathering for IYM 2002 and how this can be a celebration of Aboriginal Mountain values. Suggest a Gathering on the first day, to

introduce Aboriginal people to each other, having a display room with information, including art, craft, poems etc. Elicit ideas for the Gathering from the Aboriginal people, such as celebrating their heritage through art, music and dance. Also explain that following the Gathering, a combined conference is proposed to share knowledge of mountain values with groups such as the tourism group (through Eco Tourism) and the cultural heritage group (through Australia ICOMOS). Explain that support will be provided for a few participants from each Aboriginal community to attend the gathering/conference.

7.2.4 If there is agreement from the Aboriginal people identify:

- opportunities for joint ventures with Universities and other key institutions; and
- opportunities for supplementary funding from grants funding bodies such as Australian Research Council, SPIRT, AIATSIS, ATSIC.

7.3 Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Report

Prepare a report to cover the following:

- an overview of the workshop procedure and summary of the results;
- a discussion on the nature extent and depth of Aboriginal heritage values that are known from existing studies, and additional information on values revealed during the meetings;
- an outline on future directions for Aboriginal heritage protection and management;
- opportunities for achieving Aboriginal heritage protection and management through joint ventures with institution and grants; and
- directions for the planning and organising for the Aboriginal gathering/conference for IYM 2002.

8 Reporting

The following copies of the report are required at submissions:

8.1 Draft outline of workshops program

The draft program is to be submitted to the project management contact in Microsoft word, via e-mail according to the timelines outlined in Item 9.

8.2 Draft of the Aboriginal heritage liaison and directions report

The draft report is to be submitted as one unbound copy suitable for photocopy reproduction, which includes but should not necessarily be limited to:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Summary of the Report
- Aims and any limitations of the project.
- Full report addressing Items 7.2.2 & 7.2.3
- Bibliography
- Images taken at the workshops

Draft reports shall be submitted to the Project Management Team contact who will arrange for comments from stakeholders and Alps agencies. Following receipt of comments and amendments, the consultant shall send copies of the draft report to all workshop participants for their comment.

The consultant will need to anticipate a turnaround time for comments to be returned on draft reports as per the timing outlined (below).

8.3 Final submissions

The consultant shall address the comments received from the workshop participants and prepare final submissions comprising:

- Four bound copies
- One unbound copy suitable for photocopy reproduction
- Text in Microsoft Word 6 or Word 97 for PC compatible format on 3.5" disc or CD-rom or via e-mail to the project manager
- Copies of photographs should be included in the report and in the electronic version. (in j.peg or .tiff format on 3.5" disc or CD rom)

9 References

The consultant is to be familiar with the following studies:

Young, M., Mundy E & D (2000) *The Aboriginal People of the Monaro*. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Grinbergs, A (1992) *The Myth Hunters- investigations towards a revised prehistory of the South Eastern Highlands of Australia*. Unpublished thesis ANU. (available in NPWS Jindabyne library and from the author)

Flood, J. (1980) *The Moth Hunters*. Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra.

Argue D (2000) *Cultural Heritage Research and Implementation Strategy*. Report prepared for the Cultural Heritage Working Group of the Australian Alp Liaison Committee.

Jane Lennon and Associates (1999) *The International Significance of the Cultural Values of the Australian Alps*. Report to the Australian Alps Liaison Committee.

Buckley, K (2000) *Working toward an Aboriginal heritage management system for the north east RFA region of Victoria*. Joint Commonwealth and Victorias Regional Forest Agreement Steering Committee.

Hughes, P. and Buckley, K (2000) *Development of an Aboriginal Heritage Management Model for the Victorian Forests with reference to the North East Forest Region*.

Attachment 1:

Suggestions for the Aboriginal Heritage Component of the Workshops

The consultant will need to design the workshops to ensure good participation and useful results. A set of 1:100,000 topographic maps of the Australian Alps will need to be available for use if people wish to identify places/landscapes. Scribes and recorders may be required.

In order to ascertain the nature and extent of Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the Australian Alps and associated values, the consultant should consider the extent of Aboriginal heritage places that are known and why they are important. Important places may include:

- Ceremonial and sacred places such as myth places, dreaming tracks, landscapes and landscape features (such as mountain peaks, rock formations, stones)
- Historic sites that hold importance for communities
- Archaeological sites
- Art sites
- Traditional landuse places and sacred trees
- Places used for contemporary activities such as cultural education and craft resources

If willing Aboriginal people might like to describe stories associated with places or be happy to contribute their stories at a later date (this could form part of a future Alps project). People may have traditional names for places that they are willing to share which would be a starting point for noting values.

Actions for conserving heritage can be discussed. These may include:

- Conservation of landscapes and features
- Involvement in management ie as exists through Liaison Officers
- Cross cultural awareness training ie as exists through Liaison Officers
- Documenting peoples perceptions and stories of places to provide an ongoing resource for communities
- Promotion of Aboriginal values of the Australian Alps
- Commemoration of people and places
- Promotion of Aboriginal places names and renaming such as in signage, maps, guidebooks
- Promotion of Aboriginal cultural tourism
- Conservation management plans for specific places
- Resources Aboriginal communities may require for heritage conservation

Appendix 2 Summaries of Community Consultation Meetings

Introduction

In this Appendix, summaries of each of the consultation meetings are presented. A total of seventy-five Aboriginal people attended meetings that were held at the following locations: Wodonga, Brungle, Orbost, Bairnsdale, Bega, Eden, Wallaga Lake, Nowra, Queanbeyan, Canberra, Marysville and Cooma.

The summaries presented below reflect the views expressed by the different Aboriginal community groups and individuals on a range of issues relating to the future management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Australian alps and have been previously circulated in the form of four subsidiary reports.³⁶ Prior to finalisation of this report the meeting summaries were circulated to each meeting participant for checking to ensure that they accurately reflect the outcomes of the meetings.

³⁶ Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting summaries – Wodonga, Brungle, Orbost & Bairnsdale meetings, July 2002; Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting Summaries – Bega, Eden, Umbarra & Nowra meetings, July 2002; Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting summaries – Canberra & Queanbeyan meetings, July 2002; Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study: Meeting summaries – Marysville & Cooma meetings, August 2002.

Summary of the Wodonga Meeting

The Wodonga meeting was held at the Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation on Friday, 15 March 2002.

Values

- The community is very interested in the recording and protection of archaeological sites throughout their region (including the high country, but also other areas such as the area around the Hume Weir).
- The community is very involved in the management of the art sites at Mount Pilot, Mudgeegonga and the Pinnacles. These are very important cultural places for this community.
- Camping and hunting in their country is important to this community.
- Places with special plants are also important.

Issues

- There is a diverse community now living at Albury and Wodonga. People have come from many places. Many stories have gone. A lot of cultural information has been lost. The challenge is to pass on what is known to young people. There are some aspects of cultural rejuvenation through training at TAFE (eg. making stone tools, cutting bark) and through spending time in the bush whenever possible. There is also an active CDEP program, including a range of environmental management projects.
- Aboriginal people in this area feel that their connections with the use of the high country and the Bogong moth have been misinterpreted. They don't feel that previous research by non-Aboriginal people has been accurate, and don't like the stereotype as 'the moth hunters'.
- There is a desire to leave archaeological sites there for the whole community, but there are concerns about vandalism and other forms of damage. Not enough is being done by management authorities to address these problems. For example:
 - damage to archaeological sites at the Hume Weir has been caused by recreational vehicles;
 - damage from weeds has occurred at Mudgeegonga/Pinnacles art sites, due in part to access to the area by horse riders;
 - Mount Pilot is vulnerable to damage from visitors.
- Archaeological surveys are needed. These should employ and train local Aboriginal people, and then the community should be employed to do the surveys. The Elders should be paid to come along when fieldwork is done.
- "Sometimes archaeologists think they own the past because they discover some sites, but Aboriginal people are the owners of their cultural heritage."
- The community wants to take a stronger role in managing the land and sees this as part of its cultural heritage and rights (especially at special places such as Mount Pilot). However, the community is under-resourced. There needs to be training and employment before this can happen.
- Aboriginal people need more of a say in the way land is managed. Aboriginal people can contribute their knowledge to the way in which land and water is managed. Employment in land management agencies is important.
- There is a lot of confusion for the community about what role different government agencies play in relation to land management, development approvals and heritage.

- A lot of material from the area is held in museums that should be repatriated to the local community. A keeping place is needed before this can happen as it's not always possible to return things to the place they were collected from.
- Archaeological sites are sometimes discovered during development (such as road construction). Work needs to stop when that happens, but this doesn't happen.
- Traditional plants and animals need to be collected and hunted by the community (eg. kangaroos, native bulbs, orchids). Aboriginal people shouldn't need a permit from NPWS or Parks Victoria to carry out this activity.
- There was great interest in the proposed Year of the Mountains celebrations, providing community with the opportunity to meet up with other Indigenous peoples.
- Mungabareena would like to hear more about the Kosciuszko Management Plan.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- A site officer based at Mungabareena is needed.
- A meeting with all local and government stakeholders to discuss the responsibilities of different agencies would be helpful to reduce the confusion about who does what.
- A community Keeping Place is needed to enable material held in museums to be returned to country.
- An MOU should be formalised with Shepparton Aboriginal Arts³⁷, with protocols that specify what will happen during development works (including instructions to contractors, consent processes, etc).
- Oral history recording is urgently needed to make sure that no more knowledge is lost from the community. Even recent stories are important to record for the future.
- Other possibilities for further discussion include: re-naming important landmarks within the area with Aboriginal names; archival research.
- The local Ngan Girra festival is held at the end of November. People in this area hope it doesn't clash with the Year of the Mountain celebrations.

Attendance

Richard Kennedy [Vice-Chairperson – Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation (Wodonga) and Chairperson - Wandoo Aboriginal Corporation (Albury)]

Ted Ots [Community Development Officer, Woomera Aboriginal Corporation, Albury]

Pam Griffin of Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation opened the meeting with a welcome. Thanks also to Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation for providing the catering for the meeting.

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Also attending were: Liz Wren and Linda Baulch (Australian Heritage Commission); Rod Mason and Dean Freeman (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).

There were a number of late apologies for the meeting due to a funeral on the day of the meeting.

³⁷ The Aboriginal community organisation with statutory responsibilities for this area according to Schedule 2, Part IIA of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1987.

Summary of the Brungle Meeting

The Brungle meeting was held at the Brungle CWA Community Hall on Saturday, 16 March 2002.

Values

- Although a lot of knowledge has been lost, there are strong attachments to the mountains – the tops of the mountains, foothills and the land to the west. ‘We sat down with our grandfathers who told us about the mountains, so it is extremely important to us.’
- The mountains are very important to people at Brungle. In the past, different tribes would come to the mountains for meetings and ceremonies, and for the Bogong moth – people would often camp there for some weeks at a time. All the tribes travelling to the mountains would meet at the foot of the mountains – this country is a meeting place and very important to many groups. ‘Other tribes have come to our country – to the foot of the mountains. We are the closest to the [northern] peaks, so we are the ones who have the strongest connection. Others need to respect our country.’ Brungle is the ‘gateway’ to the Alps and is connected to many travelling routes.
- The stories link together large areas of country – from Brungle to the mountains. The ‘Hairy Man’ story is found all through the Alps.
- Brungle people feel a responsibility to protect the cultural values within the Land Council boundary.
- Important places include: Blue Water Holes, Bogong Peaks, Goobarragandra National Park women’s places. Also, some stock routes were based on traditional routes and these are important to Aboriginal people.
- Historical events and associations are also important. For example, Yarry saved whitefellas during a flood. There are also some massacre sites – such as Red Hill. The King Billy name plate in the Gundagai museum is also important. There are many historical places that were built by Aboriginal people. Aboriginal fencers and drovers contributed a lot to the country. A lot of white people know some of this history and can help tell the story. Its really important to record all those places.
- Associations with the mountains are kept and strengthened by spending time in the country – through camping and bushwalking.
- Brungle mission is the 2nd oldest government run in NSW. People at Brungle today know the mission and surrounding country. People stayed here after the mission closed. Settlements close to the mountains became even more important after that period. People know their clan associations.
- The Brungle community want to change their stereotyped image as the ‘moth hunters’ – there was much more to their traditional ties to the high country, including trade, ceremonies, conflict resolution. Men, women and children all had their different activities during that time.
- Because the Wiradjuri area is very large, people at Brungle have travelled a lot for work and visiting family. People at Brungle have strong associations in other Wiradjuri locations such as Cootamundra, Gundagai, Yass, Young and Cumeragunja.

Issues

- People at Brungle want to find out more about the Wiradjuri connections with the Alps.
- A lot of knowledge has been lost for this community. In the past, people weren’t allowed to talk about Aboriginal things. They were too afraid.
- Each tribe has to respect tribal boundaries and no one should say what should happen in other peoples’ country.
- ‘Its important to be careful with behaviour and what you say up there – regain the respect for that country.’

- Access to cultural places is an important issue. For example, Goobarragandra is in a national park, but access is needed through private land to get there. Women's and men's places are in there.
- There are also a number of women's places known to the community that don't have any protection. These places are in the hands of many government departments, but the community can't get access to them to look after them. The community shouldn't have to ask permission to get access to these areas.
- The women in the community feel that women's places are not as well recognised and protected by government as the men's places (including open campsites, bora rings). Women don't get enough chances to be involved and have a say and haven't been employed in government jobs. The government is now starting to hire women too, but this is only recently.
- Because a lot has been lost, all that is left is very important. Even stone artefact scatters are very important. They may not seem important to archaeologists, but they are important to the community because of what has been lost.
- The community feels that government representatives come around and promise things, but don't give anything back and don't follow through. There is a sense that people 'come picking your brain to get what they need for their business'. The community wants the information that has been given in the past to be returned. This information could then be kept by the community and handed on to the next generation.
- It is important for information about heritage places to be kept confidential if that's what the community wants. Interpretation needs to be done by the community so that their culture isn't stereotyped or wrongly interpreted by outsiders.
- Better links are needed with land managers. The community would like to have much more say in the management of their special places.
- There are concerns about horse riding in the high country – causing damage to stone arrangements in the peaks.
- The women have asked to have some areas where they used to swim fenced off, but nothing has happened.
- If there is any paid work available to manage the country and interpret Aboriginal heritage, the community here should be the ones to do that work.
- There was a favourable response to the proposed Year of the Mountains celebrations. This will be a good chance to catch up with Elders from other places and talk together. It is a tradition for the Brungle people to welcome other people to the mountains.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- Elders on different sides of the mountains should meet regularly to sort out the boundaries. There is a need to sort out the boundaries so that everyone knows who should be looking after which country. There is a need to respect the boundaries of each group's country. The boundaries could be put onto a map so its clear.
- Maybe an Alps Committee of Elders could be formed – from all parts of the mountains. It could meet a couple of times each year and link in with the AALC. It could establish some needed protocols.
- The community would like more research to be undertaken into Aboriginal history in the area and into the links between Wiradjuri people and the high country.
- The community would like the opportunity to get into the high country and have a good look around. NPWS could facilitate this – a 1-2 day trip to spend time in the country and re-connect with some special places. People of all ages within the community would be interested to do this.

Attendance

Margaret Berg

Donna Freeman

Phyllis Freeman

Ramsay Freeman

Tina Freeman

Beverly Herrington

Sonia Piper

Alice Williams

Josie Williams

Kids: Jalissa, Alex, Moeisha, Peter, Lesha, Jirra, Kadeisha, Danica, Shian

Ramsay Freeman opened the meeting with a welcome.

Also attending were: Liz Wren and Linda Baulch (Australian Heritage Commission); Rod Mason and Dean Freeman (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).

Summary of the Orbost Meeting

The Orbost meeting was held at Moogji Aboriginal Corporation on Thursday, 18 April 2002.

Values

- The High Country has many different values for the community, including:
 - Traditional trade routes and links between the country of different groups
 - Traditions of meeting, gathering, travelling, cultural obligations in the High Country
 - Stories of movement between the mountains and the sea
 - Camping, chasing Brumbies, fishing
 - Access to natural resources
 - Working in the mountains and re-discovering the country
 - Cultural landscape – not just the ‘dots’
 - Opportunities for younger people to experience cultural traditions (eg. bush tucker)
 - Acknowledging the Aboriginal contribution to the surveying and settlement in the early non-Aboriginal history of Gippsland
- Particular places of strong value include the lower Snowy River, Royals Creek and Willis, where Moogji has been working recently. Contract employment projects with land management agencies has allowed people to get up into the High Country more frequently and re-connect with the country.
- Because the Alps is a relatively undisturbed landscape, so it is likely that many aspects Aboriginal cultural values will still be present. This makes the Alps a special landscape for the community.

Issues

- There must be Aboriginal representation on the AALC and on the working groups advising the AALC.
- Gippsland communities have had a disappointing experience of requesting funding assistance from the AALC. The AALC needs to know that resources are needed to support the work of communities at the local level.
- Many collections of cultural material are held privately. The community is starting to build good relationships with these people, and gradually getting access to these materials.
- Aboriginal communities need to control and direct cultural heritage research. If there are archaeologists or historians needed, the funding should go to the community to commission and guide these researchers.
- There is a need to have better Aboriginal involvement (including consideration of Aboriginal cultural values) in all sorts of land management processes. East Gippsland people live close to the Victoria/NSW border, but there are very different systems in place in each state. The community would like to build stronger relationships with communities and land management agencies in NSW and try to link different programs. Regular meetings (quarterly?) would help.
- Coordination of interpretation throughout the Alps is an important priority, and Aboriginal history needs to be acknowledged in park interpretation. The AALC could assist with this coordination, but local communities need to be resourced to ensure that the information is appropriate and accurate.
- There is a lot of pressure for increased tourism in the area. However, there needs to be more cultural heritage assessments before tourism expands (eg. upgrading of the Barry Way is a concern).

- Aboriginal communities need to be resourced to effectively participate in projects in the region. For example, the 'Snowy Journey' concept seems a good one, but lack of resourcing is a barrier to Aboriginal community participation.
- There is a need to monitor visitor pressure at Aboriginal cultural places. Sometimes these places will 'need a rest'. It may be necessary to restrict access by visitors from time to time.
- There shouldn't be any requirements for permits and licenses for Aboriginal people to hunt or collect bush foods.
- The community wants more employment opportunities in land rehabilitation and management activities using the team at Moogji.
- Environmental care is needed so that cultural practices can continue in the future (eg. weeds, ecological burning). The community is interested in taking on the environmental management required, particularly in special areas.
- There is a need to better manage brumbies in the High Country. Many Aboriginal people have experience of chasing brumbies and could do this work for NPWS.
- Other park management plans should be revised in the way that is being proposed for the Kosciuszko National Park. Maybe the process being developed for Kosciuszko could be a model for other parks (eg. Alpine National Park). The community would be glad to talk further about this with Parks Victoria. Dave Darlington suggested that people from the Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit should contact Chris Rose (Parks Victoria) about this.
- Rod Mason discussed the idea of having 'designated areas' within the parks for Aboriginal people to use for cultural purposes. The community was very interested in this idea.
- There was generally a positive reaction to the proposed Year of the Mountains celebrations.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- All research on cultural heritage should include enough funding to put information into a useful form – for the community and for the wider public (through interpretation)
- Oral history research and language research are important priorities for the community.
- A comprehensive cultural assessment of the Snowy River is needed. Archaeological surveys are also needed in many areas – especially the Snowy River.
- The community would like to work with park managers to interpret the Aboriginal cultural values and history (as well as specific place information/interpretation) – particularly for the Alpine Walking Track and the Alpine Driving Route.
- Aboriginal people in East Gippsland would welcome the opportunity to meet regularly with other communities to discuss common issues. For the Upper and Lower Snowy, it would be good to have workshops for NSW and Victorian Aboriginal people to coordinate their discussions with governments. This would need resourcing. Perhaps the AALC could assist.
- Landcare and Bushcare projects could include days for cross-cultural sharing.
- The community is extremely interested in taking on contract work for a wide range of land management activities in the High Country. The skills have been developed to a good level at Moogji and the work crews have completed many different types of contracts.
- Publications such as the Monaro book are a great resource for the community. More books like this (covering different areas) would be good.

Attendance

Chris Allen (attended 2nd half of meeting)
Shaun Mundy
Mathew Turvey

Darren Collins

Brett Martin

Linda Meehan

Christine Milliken

Mick Harding, Manager, Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit

Barry Kenny, Heritage Protection Officer, Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Also attending were: Liz Wren (Australian Heritage Commission); Dave Darlington and Rod Mason (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).

Summary of the Bairnsdale Meeting

The Bairnsdale meeting was held at the Elders' Hostel on Friday, 19 April 2002.

Values

- People at the meeting are connected to the country in the mountains.
- Culture is all aspects of the land – including the forests, mountains, ecology, living things. A living landscape.
- Culture is what the traditional owners have inherited.
- Culture is not just 'sites', and there is no distinction between 'historic' and earlier aspects. It's all culture. 'We don't want to put our heritage into little boxes – it's our country. We don't want to identify small particular places.'
- Delegate is an important place for many people in Gippsland. Some people have associations with the Kosciuszko area.

Issues

- There is a need to identify and recognise the prior ownership of the land. This is the first point – must start with respect for traditional owners and their rights.
- There should be indigenous representation on the AALC and on all of the working groups. The view was strongly put that it's not enough for the AALC to now wish to recognise Aboriginal connections to country when there is no Aboriginal representation. There needs to be funding to support Aboriginal involvement in the AALC. [However, another view expressed was that Aboriginal people don't want to be on committees and fit into an outside structure.
- The group also wanted to know why it has taken so long for the AALC to want to involve Aboriginal people in what they are doing. 'At the end of the day, someone owns this heritage, and the AALC hasn't seen fit to talk to us. It has taken too long to recognise the rights of Aboriginal people.' Some people were disappointed that the members of the Cultural Heritage Working Group did not attend the meeting.
- The traditional owners should be the people to negotiate with the AALC and parks managers – not the Land Councils. A lot of people think they have cultural associations, but they aren't the same as the inherited rights of the traditional owners.
- People from land management agencies should come and talk directly to the traditional owners.
- There was interest in the question of how much funding is available for Indigenous heritage through the AHC. When Aboriginal people apply for grants and funding, only a few crumbs are given to traditional owners to use. Most of the money goes to non-Indigenous people and organisations.
- Not all ways of using the land are going to be consistent with Aboriginal heritage. There is a need to respect this.
- Boundaries should not be an issue. Traditional owners know which country they speak for. There are links between groups which have arisen through trade and inter-marriage. The Monaro-Ngarigo-Cheruiipirn Elders need to agree on a protocol with the Wiradjeri people regarding their boundaries.
- The traditional owners would like to have co-management of the Alps. In Victoria, there is some discussion about this, but the government isn't sure where to go with it. Once the ownership is recognised, traditional owners and parks managers can work through the issues.
- There is a desire to set up a separate land management structure operated on a regional basis by traditional owners. 'We want recognition that we can manage our own land. We don't want to fit into their structure.' To do this, resources would need to be transferred

from governments and government agencies to communities. Kosciuszko National Park should be owned and managed by Aboriginal people.

- There is great reservation about providing a information to government held registers such as the Register of the National Estate. Information and databases with cultural information should be kept by traditional owners, not government organisations. Government agencies can come to the traditional owners if they want access to that information and explain why they want it.
- Royalties for use of the land should be paid to traditional owners.
- Training and employment of Aboriginal people must continue and increase.
- There was general support for the proposed Year of Mountains celebrations. The group felt that it would be a good opportunity to meet with people from the AALC and discuss the issues raised at the Bairnsdale meeting. It would be good if the AALC could respond to these issues at that time.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- Set up and support/fund meetings between traditional owners.

Attendance

Fay & Frank Harrison
Violet and Jack Hayes
Norman Hood
Albert & Rachel Mullett (and Netanya)
Grattan Mullett
Pauline Mullett
Ricky Mullett
Edith Terrick

Edith Terrick opened the meeting with a welcome.

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Also attending were: Liz Wren (Australian Heritage Commission) and Rod Mason (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).

Summary of the Bega Meeting

The Bega meeting was held at Bega Land Council offices on Monday, 6 May 2002.

Values

- Aboriginal heritage includes the following types of values/places:
 - The land and water
 - Dreaming tracks
 - Birthing places
 - Camps
 - Plants used by our people
 - Spiritual connections to land
- Natural and cultural values are the same thing for Aboriginal people.
- Heritage is bound up into hereditary rights. Many Aboriginal people are challenging the distinctions made between natural and cultural heritage. Good management of natural areas is part of heritage.
- “Before invasion our people had full access to all the resources of the land. The Alps were a big part of that – including the Bogong moths and the ceremonies that went on in the mountains.”
- “Culture is complex. Old people are still collecting food. We are still learning stories and activities from our Elders, so who is to say that we don’t live our traditional ways?”
- Jindabyne is known as a special place. Margaret Dixon was told by her Elders that people went there for medicine plants, and that it was a meeting place.
- The Craigie Range Birthing Place, near Delegate is a special place.
- Wollondibby is a very special place. “No one is consulting us about that place. Other Aboriginal people can go there, but we can’t go there. You need a key. It’s locked up. NPWS needs to let us have access, but NPWS has put up barriers that keep us out.” The eldest brother of Margaret Dixon’s father was born there (Lawrie Mundy).
- Corrowong is also a very special place.
- Delegate is a very special place for many families. Uncle Arthur (Wreck Bay) has done a video about the time when people lived at Delegate.

Issues

- There is hope that discussions with the AALC will enable the community to progress a range of important issues with government and to secure government commitment to them. “Let’s look at the positive things that we want to get. Let’s work on agreements to get the right Aboriginal involvement and resources to allow people to do their jobs.”
- There is inadequate consultation by the Cultural Heritage Division of NPWS. There is a lot of talk about consultation, but the community doesn’t see people enough. The relationships need to be stronger.
- There is a lot of money spent by NPWS employing Aboriginal staff, but that money should come directly to the communities instead. The community would like to have their own Heritage Officers. NPWS Aboriginal staff shouldn’t speak for Aboriginal communities – only the Elders and Land Councils can do that. The resources could go to communities instead – to resource communities to negotiate management agreements.
- Aboriginal communities need to be resourced in consultation processes with government to bring information back and to be effective. This has to be more than one Aboriginal person sitting on a committee. In committees, it is often the case that everyone else at the table is paid to be there as part of their job (“on big wages”), but the Aboriginal community representative is unemployed. Representatives on committees need to have the capacity to work towards positive opportunities for Aboriginal people. There needs to be more

respect for Elders in consultation. For management purposes, consultation should stick to the Land Council boundaries plus Native Title holders.

- The community feels that NPWS is able to make a lot of money through the parks in the mountains, but that Aboriginal people haven't had access to any of this money.
- There are many sites in the mountains. Aboriginal people need to have a say in management. The community wants to be involved in joint management. There will need to be proper resourcing to enable Aboriginal people to take on a management role.
- There is a need to set up an Aboriginal body to meet with the AALC, to ensure that Aboriginal people participate in what's happening and ensure that Aboriginal heritage is conserved. A separate sub-committee would be a good idea.
- Native Title is a complex issue for Aboriginal people. It does enable Aboriginal people to be involved in negotiations. On the other hand, there is a view that it requires Aboriginal people to 'prove' their rights - "I'm born with my rights, I don't need a certificate to have them." Some members of the community find the term 'native title' offensive for this reason.
- The community is very interested in developing tourism opportunities. Will need some help to apply for funds and get things started.
- The signs on the Alpine Way have information about Aboriginal culture. This has gone ahead without consultation. All interpretation about the Alps should involve Ngarigo people.
- The creation of new parks and reserves arising from the Southern RFA has occurred without the necessary notification required by Native Title processes. The community would like to ensure that this issue is noted by NPWS.
- Access to country is an important issue. Aboriginal people shouldn't have to pay fees to enter National Parks – should be able to go into the Parks offices and get a free pass. There should be a system worked out for this. Locally this happens because the Rangers know who people are – should be the same at Kosciuszko. Should also be available for Aboriginal kids coming from other parts of Australia for cultural education.
- There needs to be better consultation regarding artefacts held by Museums.
- NPWS has previously offered the community a base at Jindabyne (Kosciuszko), but nothing has happened. There is disappointment about this – the community would like to discuss this idea further with NPWS. The community would like to have a base at Jindabyne and establish a tourism business there.
- Snowy Hydro is using Aboriginal waters to create electricity which is sold all over Australia. The community wants compensation for the use of the water. "We never gave up the rights to our water or our land." There are concerns about proposals for the transfer of water to keep the hydro scheme going.
- The recent reunion for the Snowy scheme did not involve any Aboriginal people – this was disappointing. A lot of migrants were brought over for the construction of the Snowy scheme, but Aboriginal people were never consulted.
- TV ads about the Alps – this has not involved any consultation.
- The proposed Year of the Mountains celebration at Jindabyne was discussed with enthusiasm by the group. There is a lot of interest in participating. Some possibilities for Aboriginal entertainers were suggested: Dale Huddleston (Canberra), River Band, Wallaga dancers, Jimmy Little, Joe Mundy (Bega)/Joe and the Country Cowboys. Aunty Margaret could do the welcome to country.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- NPWS should fund a conference to bring together all the Land Councils plus Native Title holders. This will allow everyone to come together to sort things out. If this doesn't

happen, then NPWS will keep having problems (with determining who to consult with). An informed Aboriginal response is what is needed.

- There are many ties between the community and people at Brungle (Tumut) because of the mission there. Would like the opportunity to meet with those people.
- The community would like to see the Aboriginal history of Delegate better recognised. Maybe a cairn could be put there. The landowner is known to be sympathetic about these issues. More research at Delegate would be welcomed, including a proper archaeological survey and re-location and marking of the cemetery. Aboriginal people would need to be closely involved in this project. Also, the community would like support to visit Delegate. There is one problem – Delegate is located in the Eden LALC boundary – this is seen as a barrier for progressing desired projects there by people at Bega. “The BEM Elders should put their foot down about this – should say that it doesn’t matter whose Land Council area it is – that there are wider attachments to that place that should be respected.”
- More research about the people of the Monero is needed – oral history and archival research. Would especially like to find out more about how people moved through the country and the links between different areas.
- The community would like the opportunity to visit Jindabyne to discuss the new management plan and get to know management staff better. There are many issues to discuss. For example, they would like to see the interpretation give more recognition to Old Mundy. The community would like to have camping areas at Kosciuszko for their use. Would like to particularly discuss interpretation, trails and culture camps.
- The community would like to have Aboriginal names recognised for Kosciuszko and other places in the Alps. It would be good to talk with the Brungle community more about this. The AALC should fund a sub-committee to consider these issues and provide advice.

Attendance

David Dixon
John Dixon
Margaret Dixon
Kathy Jones
Ellen Mundy
Martha Tongai

Margaret Dixon opened the meeting with a welcome on behalf of the Deringunj people. The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Also attending were: Rod Mason and Pam O’Brien (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service); and Jim Kaucz (Planning NSW).

Summary of the Eden Meeting

The Eden meeting was held at Eden TAFE on Tuesday, 7 May 2002.

Values

- Aboriginal heritage includes the following types of values/places:
 - Archaeological sites
 - Recreational places
 - Historical places (where Aboriginal people have worked, etc)
 - Tracks
 - Food & medicine plants
 - Spiritual places
 - Views of the mountains from the coast
 - Ancestral links to country
- Heritage values throughout the area are held by people with cultural rights as well as people with historical connections (ie. people who have come from other places to settle here since European contact).
- Recreation is a cultural activity for Aboriginal people. Things that whitefellas see as recreation are cultural necessities for Aboriginal people.
- "Our people have spent the summer months in the mountains, winters on the coast. There were 4 seasons and 4 areas. So, if we don't have a say in that area (mountains), then we will be denied 50% of our inherited rights."
- "The creator created Aboriginal people and created the environment. The creator gave Aboriginal people the technology to survive in the environment. When Aboriginal people applied that technology to the environment, that gave us our culture. That's the link between natural and cultural values for us."

Issues

- The community hasn't known about the AALC before. The parties to the process and the consultation processes should be re-visited, with the involvement of Aboriginal people. Then Aboriginal people could work as equal parties within these processes with the management agencies. The community will have an interest in all aspects of the work of the AALC.
- There is a need for an 'MOU' or other form of agreement which specifies the parties and processes for consultation about future management issues in the Alps.
- Aboriginal representation on the AALC and its working groups is needed. The NSW State Aboriginal Land Council could be a way of determining the appropriate representation.
- There is a need to respect the legitimate legal structures which are already in place. The Land Councils have certain legal responsibilities and the AALC should respect these.
- Only the Federal Court can give credibility to Native Title claims, not the AALC. Native Title processes have divided people. People who have moved to the area during recent times have ties to the country too. "We see people with historical and cultural rights as equal. All have associations that require respect... This follows traditional practice – new people were accepted into the tribe. Native Title only deals with some lands, not with everything. It is legislation which can take away our rights."
- The BEM Federation of Elders should be the mechanism for consultation on all decisions in this region. They have delegated responsibilities from the Land Councils. Everyone needs to respect the legal jurisdictions of each group.
- There is concern that various forms of heritage listing will result in a lesser decision making role for the Land Councils.

- The community has a problem with Aboriginal groups from Victoria being funded to come into the Eden LALC area to do work, have a say, etc. There is a feeling that Victorian groups have better funding, but should not have rights within NSW.
- The current processes in NSW for 'consent to destroy' sites need to be changed. At present, the power is held by the Director of NPWS. Local control is needed to make sure that community views are considered. This will require changes to the legislation.
- The legislation and views of archaeologists have resulted in the artefacts left by 'our ancestors' being seen as more important than the well being of living Aboriginal people. These aspects of culture should not be separated.
- Aboriginal people feel that many other stakeholder groups are given considerable say about management of the land, but they are not. This has to change.
- There is not enough funding to carry out surveys in new areas. The surveys that are done occur in response to development proposals only. This is too reactive. The community gets paid a fee for service to be involved in these surveys, but this is not sufficient to do surveys of wider areas.
- The timeframes given for communities to respond to proposals are often inadequate.
- Aboriginal heritage values are vulnerable to a range of industrial developments and uses, especially at places without visible evidence of their Aboriginal associations. More resources are needed for monitoring.
- Site protection is a big issue. The relationship with NPWS is improving. The community wants to be more involved in assessments within Parks. Slowly, this is happening, but needs to go further. Since Aboriginal workers have been employed in Parks, things have started to improve.
- There needs to be mapping of areas of sensitivity for areas not surveyed, and buffer zones for known sites.
- Cultural tourism operations should be run and organised by Aboriginal communities (not by non- Aboriginal people).
- Access to country is very important. Aboriginal people feel that they are being kept out of their country. There is a need for access to particular areas for cultural purposes and camping, and also to run tourism businesses. There need to be places for enrichment of Aboriginal people.
- Keeping Places are important for providing interpretation and to allow communities to control cultural information. Detailed information should be held locally, and developers should consult directly with local people, not with government agencies.
- River management is a concern (throughout the entire catchment) – pollution, fish supply, water flows, medicine plants. The rivers need to be clean, with good fish supplies in order to be used for cultural purposes. There are worries about the impacts of management of water flows through dams in the region for electricity generation. There are concerns that changes to the ownership and management of water resources will not take account of Aboriginal cultural values.
- Erosion is a management issue for Aboriginal sites in some areas.
- The community would like to be consulted in relation to the renewal of leases for ski resorts.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- The Eden community are doing their own research with support from the TAFE. They haven't done much research so far about the Alps. Have tended to concentrate on researching some of the coastal areas. They need more resources to do this work – eg. to support travel to do research at AIATSIS, and for photocopying.

- There has been a lot of interest in researching family histories, including the family connections with Delegate. Trainees have studied information about the Alps, including the Bogong moths.
- More research on ancestral and family links to country is needed. Kinship and family history research is very important.
- Research projects need resources. There should be a separate fund set aside for community projects (rather than competing with government agencies or other non-Aboriginal organisations). The fund should have simple guidelines and application requirements so that communities can easily apply for funding. There should be a handbook that helps Aboriginal communities get funding.
- Opportunities and support are needed for people to travel into the Alps and get to know the country better. People need special places to go, where they can camp (eg. culture camps).
- Area-based surveys for sites in the High Country are needed. The community would like to set up and operate their own databases.
- There is a strong desire to be involved in cultural assessments at Jindabyne (for Kosciuszko).

Attendance

Shirley Aldridge
Laurence Bamblett
Catherine Clarke
Mervyn Clarke
Ben Cruse
Beryl & Ossie Cruse
Cheryl Davison
Bobby Maher
Liddy & Ossie Stewart

Ben Cruse, Chairman of the Eden LALC, opened the meeting with a welcome.
Thanks to Sue Norman, Eden TAFE for providing a meeting space and contributing to the discussions.

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Also attending were: Liz Wren and Chrissy Grant (Australian Heritage Commission); Rod Mason, Sam Rando and Pam O'Brien (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).

Summary of the Umbarra Meeting

The meeting was held at Umbarra, Wallaga Lake on Wednesday, 8 May 2002.

Values

- Aboriginal heritage includes the following types of values/places:
 - Archaeological sites
 - Dreaming tracks
 - Travelling routes
 - Pathways from Mumbulla Mountain
 - Cultural/spiritual/ceremonial sites – for men and women
 - Burials
 - Trading between mountains and the coast – ochre, shells, wives. Wives were exchanged to reduce conflict between different groups. Trading allowed groups to sort out their problems.
 - Cultural exchange
 - Food, bush tucker, medicine plants/practices
 - Fire management and land management knowledge
 - Bogong moths
 - Spiritual links with the landscape and natural features
 - Views of the mountains across the lake
- “Civilisation started here, at this mountain (Gulaga). There’s just one god – same for all religions. Religious beliefs are tied into the land. There are spiritual links to everything.”
- Importance of cleansing with the Bogong moth (for men). Only two men from each tribe would go to the mountain to look after the mountain. The women had ceremonies at that time as well.
- “Everyone here at Wallaga came from the High country. Importance of the forests and the trees – an Aboriginal way of life right through our history including the present.”
- “Many Aboriginal people say they know their culture, but they don’t know much. It’s not their fault.”
- No tribe owned Kosciuszko – it was a meeting place – where people went for ceremonies. It was part of a larger interconnected network of mountains and ceremonies. There are therefore lots of sites there. Some people are continuing to go to Kosciuszko for ceremonies.
- “Aboriginal people look at the land in their own way. There needs to be a dual understanding about the same land – black and white.”
- “Our stories go back to the beginning of time. The mountains all have their meanings. Our people have struggled with invasion – stories are what we have left. They help us to understand the caves, underneath the ground, the rivers. The stories are here. We are worried about maintaining our cultural places and our culture.”
- “The “dolphin holes” near Tilba are important. They are blisters from the volcano at Gulaga. They are men’s places. The kids at Wallaga all know where they are. The Aboriginals were there when that volcano was cooling down. Aboriginal men had necklaces made from the black rock from the volcano.”
- “After the Manager left Wallaga, we started teaching our culture. The people at Wallaga Lake know a lot about this country.”
- People from Wallaga still travel into the mountains sometimes – especially in the spring when the mountains are cooler than the coast.

Issues

- There should be Aboriginal representation on the AALC (and its working groups) and in National Parks' structures as well. Not just National Parks employees – community members as well. Community representatives need to be equal numbers of women and men.
- It is important for knowledge holders to speak. People who have the knowledge born inside them should assist with surveys, sit on boards, etc. Not just men or women – there needs to be both. People who really do have the knowledge – those people should have a role in managing national parks. It doesn't matter where they come from or where they live now – its having the knowledge that matters.
- Knowledge holders need to be supported to pass on their knowledge to others. Maybe they could be employed one day per week to do this.
- Cultural tours are generally supported, so long as people aren't taken to any sacred sites. It's a good thing if Aboriginal people can make some money from tours, and they are good for raising awareness.
- Gulaga is to be handed back soon. There will be a co-management board. There is an issue for Gulaga – a proposed rifle range. It has been approved by Narooma LALC – other people who know a lot about it didn't have a say. "Even when Gulaga gets handed back, it won't be in our area – it will be in the area for Narooma Land Council."
- There are concerns about the charcoal kiln proposal for Mogo.
- One person thought that NPWS is planning to establish a monument to Strzelecki on top of Mt Kosciuszko. The group would be opposed to that. There is a burial ground in that area.
- There are a lot of sites at Kosciuszko. During the RFA, all the sites were recorded, but there are concerns that they are not being looked after. It seems not to be a priority for NPWS. The Aboriginal staff there don't know where they all are – they need to be taught where they are and how to look after them. Even Aboriginal people can do damage to sites because they don't have the knowledge.
- Currently Aboriginal people are required to have a license to fish in the lake. This isn't right.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- Funding is needed to establish culture camps. These need to be for men and women. NPWS could also help out by providing the equipment and transportation.
- There is a lot of interest in collecting stories from people. Some of this has been done (especially by Guboo Ted Thomas), but more of this would be good.

Attendance

Noelene Leha
John Mumbulla
Ann Thomas

John Mumbulla opened the meeting with a welcome to Yuin country and Wallaga Lake. Thanks to Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Tours for providing the meeting space and catering.

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Also attending were: Liz Wren and Chrissy Grant (Australian Heritage Commission); Rod Mason and Sam Rando (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).

Summary of the Nowra Meeting

The Nowra meeting was held at South Coast Aboriginal Cultural Centre on Thursday, 9 May 2002.

Values

- The Wreck Bay community has established a co-management agreement with the Commonwealth government for the Booderee National Park. It has taken a number of years to develop the Management Plan, but it has now been completed, and the community feels that it represents an important achievement in gaining management responsibility for this special area.
- The McLeod family has strong ties to Delegate. People with these connections mainly live at Wreck Bay. The community at Nowra has fewer ties to the mountains.

Issues

- There are a number of land management issues in the high country which are likely to be of concern, including construction of fire trails, 4WD use, dingo culling, and conflicts with mountain cattlemen.
- The issues concerning the future of the Snowy River are of concern, including future power generation plans. The return of water flows to the Snowy is a concern.
- In working out an agreement, it will be important to recognise that these processes can take time. Rushing can lead to conflict.
- Arthur McLeod has been pushing for a land claim to be made for Delegate as its such an important place for many families.
- The proposed Year of Mountains celebration would be welcome as a way for people from many areas to get together and listen to each other's stories and experiences.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- Some of the younger members of the community don't know Delegate as well, and would welcome support to visit Delegate with the Elders to keep that knowledge.
- People at Wreck Bay would be interested in collecting and learning more stories about the experiences of their people at Delegate. This might need more research (including oral history), and also bringing it all together into a publication. Getting people up there would assist.
- Some oral history has been done with Uncle Arthur and others. This is held in the archives in Canberra. They are not sure how to get access to that information.
- There are many photos and information relevant to the McLeod family in the NPWS book 'The People of the Monaro' – the community would like a copy of this book, if possible.
- Future meetings to consult regarding the Alps should be held at Wreck Bay. Phillip McLeod suggested that Arthur McLeod should be involved. Uncle Arthur should be invited to attend the Year of the Mountains celebrations.

Attendance

Phillip McLeod

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley. Also attending was: Rod Mason (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).

Summary of the Queanbeyan Meeting

The Queanbeyan meeting was held at Ngunnawal Land Council offices on Friday, 24 May 2002.

Values

- The Ngunnawal have very strong connections to the Alps. While people always knew they were from this area, recent research has helped them to re-establish their specific links with the land. A lot of cultural knowledge was lost, and is being re-established now.
- The Ngunnawal Aboriginal Land Council is involved in the interim Board of management for Namadji National Park. Many of the community's interests are focused on Namadji and its future.
- The Ngunnawal people have connections with other communities – including the Brungle mob. There are close ties with the Ngarigo, Walgalu and Wiradjuri.
- The Ngunnawal are very interested in the management of archaeological sites in the High Country, and places of special significance known through anthropological research. The rock art in caves at Namadji are of special interest to the Ngunnawal.
- Research has recently been carried out on the Ngunnawal language (by Sharon Lane and Marie Williams). Too much language has been lost, but the community wants to use some words and phrases, and to make sure that everything that has been retained is written down.
- The Bogong moth associations with the High country are important to the Ngunnawal. Much of this cultural history has been learned through the work of non-Aboriginal researchers, such as Josephine Flood.
- A book piecing together the history of the Ngunnawal people has just been published – 'The Kamberri' by Ann Jackson-Nakano. Books like this one (and the Monaro book by Michael Young and Ellen Mundy) are very important.

Issues

- Management of natural values is very important. The community wants to see the Alps kept as pristine as possible, and would like to see the flows returned as far as possible to the Snowy River.
- Aboriginal people need to respect each other's traditional boundaries. Right now, there are some overlaps in the country of different groups. This causes tensions and confusion, and needs to be sorted out. Some groups have claimed very large areas as their country – this isn't right. Although there are groups which claim traditional associations and others with historical connections – all these people have a sense of connection to the country.
- The Ngunnawal are very interested in community-based tourism business opportunities, especially at Namadji.
- In discussing the future of the Snowy River and the water flows, it will be important for government to involve a number of Aboriginal communities with an interest.
- There are concerns about a wide range of land management issues – eg. brumbies at Kosciuszko.
- The rock art at Namadji must be well managed. Environment ACT has asked that groups visiting the sites be limited to 6 people only, but this hasn't always worked well.
- The Ngunnawal are currently developing proposals to change some place names within the ACT, such as Mount Ainslie and Yankee Hat.
- The Ngunnawal are very supportive of proposals to get all Aboriginal people with an interest in the Alps together to talk about culture and management issues. There is a strong desire for Aboriginal people to have a say in the management of the High Country.

- Some people from the community will be interested to participate in the Year of the Mountains celebration in November 2002.
- The Ngunnawal are interested in being consulted about the Kosciuszko Management Plan.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- There need to be more systematic archaeological surveys.
- Local non-Indigenous people should be involved in the research. Often local families have a lot of information from the early period of European settlement which is of value to Aboriginal communities. These people also have their own strong attachments to the country which are shared with Aboriginal people.
- Aboriginal people need to reconcile amongst themselves. Traditionally, people came from many areas for the Bogong festivals. Starting to hold ceremonies in the mountains again would be a good start. Culture camps would also be helpful.

Attendance

Arnold Williams

Joe House (part of the meeting)

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Also attending was: Simon Tozer (Environment ACT).

Summary of the Canberra Meeting

The Ngunawal meeting was held at the home of Don and Ruth Bell in Dunlop, ACT on Friday, 24 May 2002.

Values

- The Bells state that they are the Ngunawal – the traditional people of the country.
- The Bells have strong ties to Namadji, and have lodged a Native Title claim for a large area of land in NSW and the ACT.
- The land covered by their claim is part of their identity.
- Although many government agencies frequently ask the Ngunawal to identify their special places, they don't want to give this information to outside agencies.
- Cultural heritage includes natural values. Natural and cultural values just cannot be separated for Aboriginal people. It's very hard for many people to understand that.
- Archaeological sites are important aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- The Bells have many personal connections to their country. Don Bell worked for many years on the electrical transmission line through the high country, and has camped in many places within Kosciuszko over the years. Don is a direct descendant of Queen Nellie. Don's grandmother, Lucy, was Queen Nellie's mother, and her father was Hamilton Hume. Don was born at Hollywood Mission and learned traditional knowledge from the Elders at Hollywood.
- Don Bell and his daughter-in-law have published several children's books with traditional Ngunawal stories.

Issues

- Many issues flow from the traditional ties the Ngunawal have to their country. These include: respect, recognition, employment, tourism and park management.
- The Bells are aware that some government agencies see them as hard to get along with. However, as traditional owners, they feel that they have no choice but to stand up for their culture and their identity.
- The Ngunawal are very unhappy about the arrangements that have been put in place for the management of Namadji. Because of the way in which the ACT government has chosen to set things up, the Bells have been unable to sign the management agreement, and so have no role at present. Because of their refusal to sign the agreement, the ACT government has not involved or consulted them about decisions for Namadji. They don't believe that Aboriginal people have sufficient power within the interim Board.
- Because Ngunawal country includes land in NSW and the ACT, they have a lot of difficulties arising from the need to negotiate with two state governments and their various agencies. There is no ability to get a coordinated approach between the ACT and NSW. There is currently no representative body for Native Title for the ACT – this is a problem for the Bells in pursuing their claims in the ACT.
- The Ngunawal strongly feel that the final say about management of land should come back to traditional owners. The people involved in the Ngunawal Land Council (Queanbeyan) are being consulted by government, and are involved in the Namadji Interim Board, but do not have a traditional claim to the country. There is a feeling that in recent times, a lot of Aboriginal people have come 'out of the woodwork' with claims to country in this area. The Ngunawal feel that many of these claims have little validity. The Ngunawal have had to prove who they are (through the Native Title process), and have successfully proven that they are the traditional owners. Despite this, government agencies often choose to consult with other people about matters of cultural heritage.

- NPWS (NSW) have caused a lot of trouble through their policy of acknowledging the claims of all Aboriginal people. As a result, people without traditional rights have a strong say – often more than the traditional owners do. NPWS give permits to destroy sites because they aren't listening to the right people.
- Despite this, some developments have involved the Ngunawal appropriately. However, its very mixed.
- In some instances, NPWS (NSW) seems to feel that it's too much trouble if sites are found in an area subject to development proposals. NPWS is supposed to care for the land, cultural heritage, flora and fauna, but this doesn't always happen.
- Eventually, Native Title will change the way that many things happen. Neither the Land Councils nor NPWS (NSW) should have decision making powers for cultural heritage. Ultimately, this will be in the hands of the traditional owners. The Ngunawal would like to see the role of the Land Councils clarified.
- The Ngunawal have had good relationships with many archaeologists, although others tend to have a very narrow view of Aboriginal heritage. Sometimes archaeologists have assumed that there won't be sites in the high country, and haven't really made an effort to find out. The Bells have participated in many surveys with archaeologists, and greatly enjoy survey work.
- Ultimately, the Ngunawal would like to establish their own management of public land within their claim, rather than having to work through arrangements with government agencies. They are currently discussing a possible agreement with NPWS (NSW) to take on direct management of areas within the Brindabellas and Scabby Range.
- There is graffiti at Yankee Hat. This is very concerning to the Ngunawal. There is a concern that NPWS (NSW) is encouraging visitors to go into places that are special to the Ngunawal, and that those places are being damaged as a result. Allowing damage like this to occur is another form of genocide sanctioned by government agencies.
- The Ngunawal are very concerned about the appearance of signs in many locations in the ACT. They are using Aboriginal language, but only the Land Council has been consulted. There hasn't been consultation with the traditional owners. Areas such as Namadjji, Tidbinbilla and Brindabella shouldn't have lots of signs everywhere.
- The Museum of Victoria currently has two Ngunawal canoes. Soon, the Ngunawal will ask for them to be returned (once their Keeping Place is ready). They are also very interested in pursuing the return of skeletal material held overseas.
- The book 'The Kamberri' by Ann Jackson-Nakano has created some difficulties for the Bells. The book only researches one family (the Williams family), and doesn't include the history of the Bells. The book has been used to establish claims to country by other people. Because there were a number of missions at Yass, many people came into the area during historical times. This has caused a lot of confusion about who has traditional ties.
- The Bells were interested in the proposed Year of the Mountains celebrations in November 2002.
- The Bells would like to be consulted about the Kosciuszko Management Plan as it includes part of the Ngunawal traditional country.

Attendance

Don Bell
Ruth Bell
Tyronne Bell

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Thanks to Don and Ruth Bell for inviting us into their home for the meeting.

Summary of the Marysville Meeting

The Taungurung meeting was held at The Cumberland, in Marysville on Saturday, 1 June 2002.

Values

Aboriginal heritage includes the following types of values/places:

- Belonging to country
- Ceremonies
- Tracks and trade routes
- Intellectual property rights
- Archaeological sites
- Spiritual refreshment
- Many Taungurung people feel a strong 'pull' to get back to their country, and a passion for the High Country, despite the fact that they live elsewhere. "The High Country is our country."
- The Taungurung are looking to re-establish their spiritual connections and physical ties to their country.
- The Taungurung would like to start having regular gatherings and ceremonies in the high country again.
- Opportunities to spend time in their country are highly valued by the Taungurung. They especially want to take their children into their country.
- The Taungurung welcome the opportunity to share their culture with others – to share their passion for their country, and to show others that they are 'still here'.
- Important places for the Taungurung include Mount Bogong, Camp Jungai, the Acheron and Mohican missions, and the Cathedral Ranges. The routes through the Ranges recorded in historic times have traditional meanings also and are of great importance to the Taungurung.

Issues

- Current legislation for cultural heritage in Victoria doesn't give the Taungurung a direct say. This is a huge problem for them. Legislative powers for Taungurung country are currently given to other groups. Sometimes decisions are made which haven't involved Taungurung people, and as a result, the wrong decisions are sometimes made. Changes to the legislation to properly acknowledge the rights of the Taungurung are urgently needed.
- The AALC process for allocating funds for research and interpretation projects is of interest to the Taungurung. The AALC procedures should be simple and easy to access for Aboriginal communities.
- There should be Aboriginal representatives on the AALC, and on each working group. The Taungurung need to be involved at every level of decision making. As well as including Aboriginal people on these committees, a separate group made up of representatives of different groups of traditional owners would also be worthwhile. This group could work in partnership with the AALC to ensure that Aboriginal cultural values are recognised and appropriately managed. There is a concern to develop a mechanism that gives Aboriginal people a 'real voice'.
- The Taungurung would like to see co-management of the Alps and surrounding areas.
- The AALC and Parks agencies need to ensure that they are consulting with the right people about particular areas of country. The Taungurung are working on a protocol with Parks Victoria at the moment to clarify some of the issues about consultation and involvement. Traditional owners should be participating in a wide range of events taking place within their country. This should extend beyond just offering a 'welcome' at the start

of events. Land managers will need to take care to ensure that the involvement of Aboriginal people is genuine, and not 'token'.

- In working with the AALC in the future, it will be essential to ensure that consultation occurs regularly at the local level. In many cases, good relationships have been formed with Parks agency staff at the local level.
- There is a perception that government agencies are more concerned about the interests and 'rights' of non-Aboriginal interest groups (eg. the Mountain cattlemen) than about the rights of traditional owners. This is a source of disappointment for the Taungurung.
- Access to country is an important issue. The Taungurung do not believe they should need to ask permission from NRE or Parks Victoria to have access to public land within their country.
- The Taungurung would like to see co-management agreements for the future management of important areas.
- The Taungurung would like to establish a cultural centre within their country – 'the gateway to the Alps'. As well as providing employment, it would be a base for the provision of information and interpretation about Aboriginal culture. The Taungurung have had discussions with the Delatite Shire Indigenous Reference Group about this proposal.
- The Taungurung would like to take over Camp Jungai, to be used as their base. Currently there is a lease agreement between Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Outback Education, which is an obstacle to achieving this aim. Ultimately, the Taungurung would like to own Camp Jungai, but in the meantime the lease payments should be returned to the Taungurung to support the operation of their organisation. The Taungurung feel that this is a very important goal because it will provide a base closer to the High Country, within their country. It is the key to their efforts to work towards greater self-sufficiency (including increasing the employment opportunities within their country).
- Interpretive signage is an important issue. Signs should correctly identify the traditional owners of the country. The text for signs and their locations should be decided only after consultation with traditional owners. Particular attention should be paid to the spelling of group and place names.
- All interpretation should acknowledge the pre-European history of the land, and the existence of its 'First Nation'. Existing interpretation about the history of the High Country must be sensitive to the Aboriginal 'side of the story'. For example, the Taungurung feel offended by the acknowledgment of the achievements of Major Mitchell, who is seen by them as a murderer. The assistance given to early European explorers and surveyors by Aboriginal guides should also be acknowledged.
- Some Taungurung people have had the experience of approaching the AALC (with Parks Victoria) for funding for research and interpretation in the High Country. There is disappointment that this project was not funded.
- Naming of features within Parks is an interest for the Taungurung. There will be some places that could be re-named with traditional names. Further research and consultation would be needed.
- More surveys for Aboriginal archaeological sites are needed, but these must occur with full community participation.
- The Taungurung would like to collect copies of Environment Effects assessment reports and other resources that identify key land management impacts on their heritage.
- There are concerns that Aboriginal archaeological sites are damaged through poor land management practices. The Taungurung would like to be more closely involved in addressing management issues such as weed management and burning regimes. There are concerns about the effects of artificial snow-making in the resorts – the Taungurung would like to find out more about this.

- Jobs are a priority for the community. The Taungurung are very interested in any employment opportunities that enable community members to live and work in or close to their country (which is difficult for many right now because of the lack of employment possibilities).
- There is interest in the proposed process for revising the Kosciuszko National Park Management Plan. The emphasis on Aboriginal involvement (rather than just consultation) was endorsed. Although the Park is not in Taungurung country, the community is keen to stay informed about the process. They would be very interested if a similar process involving Aboriginal people could be initiated in relation to the Alpine National Park.
- There is a lot of interest in the proposed Year of the Mountains celebrations and the participants in the meeting would like to be kept informed about the planning for the Aboriginal Gathering. The Year of the Mountains meetings should be an opportunity for Aboriginal people to get together for a few days (perhaps with a facilitator), discuss a wide range of issues, and make some recommendations that can go forward to the AALC. This will need resourcing to support travel and accommodation, and also a meeting space, facilitator and scribe. If this can't happen at the Year of the Mountains meeting, then this kind of meeting should be organised anyway.
- If possible, the Taungurung would like to have a copy of the Alpine Touring Map and the Monero book.

Ideas for Future Research or Activities

- The AALC should develop a cultural heritage strategy, with close involvement of traditional owners. The strategy would then guide projects, management and interpretation of the High Country.
- The Taungurung have worked on a 'connections report' to clarify their clan boundaries, and are also working on negotiating their boundaries with other Aboriginal groups. Lack of funding and resources has prevented this work being finished. Funding for research of this kind is an important short-term priority.
- There is a lot of interest in having interpretation of the Taungurung history of the area on major driving and walking routes through the area, such as the Alpine Track, Bicentenary Trail, etc.
- The Taungurung are very interested in historical research about Aboriginal tracks and routes and their relationship to present-day routes (eg. the Butcher country track to the King River; the Wonnangatta area; and the traditional connections with the early stock routes).
- Resourcing is needed for training and research to enable Taungurung people to put together information packs about Taungurung culture and heritage. A book similar to the publication done for the Monero would be welcomed.
- Archaeological surveys are needed. The Taungurung would like more community-based surveys in their country.
- The Cathedral Range is an area of particular interest – research about the Aboriginal history and archaeology is needed.
- The Taungurung would like to prepare a list of Aboriginal people in the High Country during historical times, including people who were at the Acheron and Mohican missions.
- A 'Sharing Day' could be planned in conjunction with Landcare groups to encourage local families to show important sources such as diaries, artefacts, records and photos with the Aboriginal community. Knowledge such as food and medicine plants and the values of native vegetation could also be discussed.

Attendance

Mick Harding (with Mitchell and Corey)

Gary Hansen

Bernadette Franklin-Crocker

Trish Terry

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding and Kristal Buckley.

Summary of the Cooma Meeting

The Cooma meeting was held at the Motel Marlborough on Saturday, 15 June 2002.

Values

- The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn have very strong relationships with the Alps. These attachments are very strong, even if people are living elsewhere. Traditional knowledge has been passed on, and people know about some important sites and places.
- The connections that the Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn have to their country are the basis of their traditional rights, and also obligations to the country. The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn know about their relationship to the land – they don't feel they have needed the Native Title process to prove it.
- The Monero are matrilineal people – the women are the decision makers and the custodians of cultural information.
- The 'living cultural' values of the landscape have not been recorded or recognised by Park managers. This will take a shift in the way that people view Aboriginal cultural heritage. Land managers need to recognise the living nature of Aboriginal heritage values, rather than seeing them as static.
- There are great concerns about how to protect the integrity of cultural knowledge, and a reluctance to share cultural knowledge with government agencies. Security of cultural knowledge is a critical issue. The traditional owners will always keep some cultural information secret. This should be respected.
- Aboriginal heritage includes the following types of values/places:
 - Spiritual attachments
 - Travelling routes
 - Birthing places
 - Ceremonial places
 - Social places
 - Camp sites
 - Bush medicine
 - Archaeological sites
 - Men's sites and Women's sites
 - Names of important features
 - Oral histories
 - Moth hunting
- Archaeological sites are part of the story. Archaeology has been the focus of Park managers, but this is only one part of Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
- Public awareness of the living and ongoing importance of the Alps to Aboriginal people is extremely important.

Issues

- Park management agencies are not responsible for Aboriginal heritage – Aboriginal people are. There needs to be a close and ongoing process of engagement with Aboriginal people.
- Recognition and respect are essential.
- There is a need for Aboriginal people to have a voice on the AALC and its working groups. However, there is a concern that appointing one or two people will be too tokenistic, and not achieve the need for effective engagement. It is inappropriate to expect one person to represent a whole group – the Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn represent their families and work as a group.

- There is a need to balance the rights of traditional owners with the interests of people with historical attachments to country. There are primary rights [traditional owners] and secondary rights [historical groups]. All of these need to be appropriately recognised, but they are not necessarily the same. When making decisions, the primary rights of traditional owners need to be respected. The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn hope that the project will assist the AALC in developing clear guidelines for consultation with the traditional owners.
- There are many concerns about who speaks for country. It is essential to sort this question out and to ensure that the right people are involved in processes concerning their country. The AALC need to follow through a process of engagement.
- In New South Wales, the Land Council system means that people who are not Monero-Ngarigo people are consulted by governments and land managers. The Land Councils are funded by government, but no resources are provided for traditional owners. There is a lack of resources for traditional owners to meet and discuss issues about the cultural heritage and management of the Alps. The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn needs to be resourced to meet to discuss these issues, and then to meet with traditional owners from other parts of the Alps landscape.
- The BEM Elders group was formed through the negotiations for the RFA, but it hasn't always represented the views of the traditional owners. Legislative changes are needed in New South Wales to change this situation.
- There is also a perception that the views of Parks staff have the most influence on what decisions are made. It is often assumed that Aboriginal staff in the Parks agencies speak on behalf of Aboriginal people. However, all decisions need to come back to the relevant traditional owners. The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn have been endorsed by their families to speak for country.
- The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn is very committed to achieving co-management arrangements and management partnerships for public land within their country.
- An Aboriginal Cultural Interpretation Strategy for the Alps is needed.
- The expertise of Aboriginal people has not been respected in the past by Park managers. There is a great need to engage Aboriginal people in the processes of management.
- Women's knowledge has often been neglected in consultation processes and in the identification of Aboriginal cultural heritage. All future processes (including research) should ensure that women are effectively involved.
- The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn would like to see the names of some important features changed to their traditional names (eg. Mount Kosciuszko). As it stands now, the naming of most places within these areas fails to acknowledge Aboriginal culture.
- Management agencies often want quick outcomes. They want the outcomes, but aren't prepared to do the ground work to consult effectively. This has often increased the level of conflict with Aboriginal people. Consultation processes with Aboriginal people need to be culturally appropriate. Much of the consultation can be done by Aboriginal people themselves. Future consultation processes should allow for the Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn to meet together prior to a meeting being held with agency staff.
- Mistakes have occurred in the past (eg. inaccurate information in publications). Misconstruing information provided by Aboriginal people, or using information without permission, has created distrust. This will have to be overcome in order to move forward. Non-Aboriginal people also need to realise that talking about ancestors can be a painful experience.
- The rights of Aboriginal people to have access to National Parks land within their country, and to camp, hunt and collect plants should not be questioned or subject to permit requirements.

- The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn are concerned about the process for the Kosciuszko National Park Management Plan.
 - The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn worry that their primary status as traditional owners will not be recognised. They don't want to have to 'prove' their connections with the country.
 - The Kosciuszko process should facilitate a process that satisfies the concerns of the traditional owners. The process should not be set up to suit the interests and convenience of NPWS.
 - There are concerns about the NPWS proposal to bring all the groups together. Traditional owners should only have a say for their own country, so what is the purpose of trying to 'get everyone together' to discuss the Plan?
 - The process needs to take the time to engage with Aboriginal people in a way which is meaningful to them.
 - The Monero-Ngarigo-Cheripurn will need to have a pre-meeting prior to any larger meetings at Jindabyne.
 - Co-management needs to be part of the new Plan. This is an opportunity to get it right.

Attendance

Rae Stewart
 Lynne Dent (Solomon)
 Jeff Dent
 Ricky Mullett
 Rachel Mullett
 Pat Davison
 Matthew Stewart
 Jennifer Stewart
 Sharon Anderson
 Deanna Davidson
 Iris White
 Katherine Mullett
 Jessica Stewart
 Rachel Stewart
 Cassandra Stewart

Rae Stewart opened the meeting with a welcome on behalf of the Monero-Ngarigo people.

The meeting was facilitated by Megan Goulding. Juliet Ramsay and Sam Rando assisted with note taking. Cath Renwick assisted with setting up the meeting.

Also attending were: Mike Young, Pat Darlington, Gary Currey, Vanessa Mason, Sam Rando, Dave Darlington and Pam O'Brien (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service); Cath Renwick (Out in the Open/Community Media Projects, Australian Alps national parks); and Juliet Ramsay (Australian Heritage Commission).

Appendix 3 Full List of Stakeholders Contacted

Stakeholder	Contact Person
ACT/NSW Aboriginal Groups	
Interim Namadgi Advisory Board	Terence Uren Matilda House Roslyn Brown Valda Connors Fred Monaghan
Ngunawal ACT & District Aboriginal Council of Elders Association Inc.	Tyrone Bell Don Bell Ruth Bell
Ngunnawal ACT & District Indigenous Peoples Association	Bruce Merritt Jean Merritt
Ngunnawal Elders Council Inc.	Matilda House Arnold Williams Rosalind Brown Valda Connors
Land Councils	
Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council	Ben Cruse, Administrator
Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council	David Dixon, Co-ordinator
Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council	Noelene Leha, Co-ordinator
Wagonga Local Aboriginal Land Council	To be established
Bodalla Local Aboriginal Land Council	Janelle Rotumah
Cobowra (Moruya) Local Aboriginal Land Council	Norman Parsons, Co-ordinator
Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council	Fred Nye Ron Nye
Batemans Bay Local Aboriginal Land Council	Lana Callagan, Manager
Ngunawal Local Aboriginal Land Council	Arnold Williams
Onerwal Local Aboriginal Land Council	Stephen Wallace Helen Wallace
Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Tours	Laureen Naylor
Albury & District Local Aboriginal Land Council	Justine Clark, Manager
Pejar Local Aboriginal Land Council	Delise Freeman
Nowra Coast Local Aboriginal Land Council	Sonny Sims
Jerringa Local Aboriginal Land Council	Ronald Carberry
Ulludulla Local Aboriginal Land Council	Shane Carridge
South Coast Aboriginal Cultural Centre	Carol Dalton Karina Scarcella

Stakeholder	Contact Person
Tumut-Brungle Local Aboriginal Land Council	Lindsay Connelly
Wiradjuri Elders Council	Ramsay Freeman
Snowy Mountains Indigenous Elders	Ramsay Freeman
Shoalhaven Aboriginal Elders Advisory Council	C/- Nowra LALC
Mungabareena Aboriginal Co-operative	Richard Kennedy, Vice Chairperson
Wandoo Aboriginal Corporation	To be established
Woomera Aboriginal Corporation	Greg Murray, Chairperson
ATSIC Albury	Greg Murray
Native Title	
Bidawal (Maap)	Aunty Edith Terrick Aunty Deanna Davison Uncle Jeffrey Tongai Harry Hayes
Monaro-Ngarigo Cheruipirn Council of Elders	Ricky Mullett, Chairperson Aunty Deanna Davison Aunty Rae Stewart Rachel Mullett Sharon Anderson Iris White Deanna Davison
Monaro-Ngarigo Cheruipirn – Mundy Dixons	Ellen Mundy Debbie Mundy Aunty Margaret Dixon Sandra (Sandy) Mundy
Ngunawal People AG 6001/98	Nurri Arnold Williams
Ngunawal People AG 6002/98, AC 97/1	Dwyer Durack – Applicant Representative Body
Victorian Aboriginal Groups	
Part IIA ATSIHP Act	
Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd	Ricky Mullett Jeffrey Cooper
Moogji Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd	Chris Allen, Administrator Christine Milliken
Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust	Peter Ryan, Administrator
Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health & Housing Co-operative Ltd	Mick Harding
Far East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative	Alex Mongta Aileen Blackburn Maureen Mongta

Stakeholder	Contact Person
Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation & Cultural Heritage Council Inc	Glenda Monqta
Coranderrk Koorie Co-operative Ltd	Peter Mongta
Camp Jungai	Harry Terrick, Chairperson ³⁸
Shepparton Aboriginal Arts Council Co-operative	Simon Wallace Smith, Administrator
	-
	Kevin Atkinson
Native Title	
Gunai Kurnai Council of Elders	C/- Ian Campbell-Fraser, NNTT
Yeerung Kurnai	Ricky Mullett
Taungurong Elders Council	Regina Rose
Durdiwarrah Elders Group	Pauline Mullett
	Glenys Merry, Chairperson
	Andom Rendell
	Lisa Arnold
Regional Cultural Heritage Units	Contact Person
Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit	Mick Harding, A/Manager
Kulin Nations Cultural Heritage Unit	Annette Xiberras, Manager
North East Cultural Heritage Unit	Des Morgan
	Damien Bulled
Other	
Ramahyuck Aboriginal Co-operative	Beth Yarram, Chairperson
Gunai Kurnai	Russell Mullett
NSW-Victoria Snowy River Aboriginal Working Group	Graham Enders & Brett Miners

³⁸ At the time of writing the Chairperson of the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation & Cultural Heritage Council Inc is Margaret Gardiner.

Appendix 4 Letter Introducing the Project

28th February, 2002

Dear [Name],

Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison Project

As discussed in our recent telephone conversation, I am writing to provide you with information on the Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison Project. We have been engaged by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee to meet with Aboriginal people who have an interest in the Australian alps. The Australian Alps Liaison Committee is made up of representatives from National Parks and Wildlife Service, ACT Heritage, Parks Victoria and Environment Australia, and co-ordinates management of the Australian alps.

The main aim of these meetings will be to start to identify why the Alps are important to Aboriginal people and to find out what your views are on future management of those values. This could take the form of future research projects that your community may wish to see go ahead. Included with this letter is a colour flier that describes the aims of our project and ways of contacting us.

Meetings

We are planning 12 community meetings in the ACT, NSW and Victoria. The current meetings locations and dates are:

Location	When	Address
Wodonga	Friday, 15 March 2002 12pm-3pm	Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation
Tumut (Brungle)	Saturday, 16 March 2002 11am-2pm	Brungle CWA Hall
Orbost	Thursday, 18 April 2002 1pm-4pm	Mooggj Aboriginal Corporation
Bairnsdale	Friday, 19 April 2002 10am-1pm	Elders Hostel Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-op
Eden	Tuesday 7 May, 2002	Eden Tafe
Bega	Monday, 6 May 2002	Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council
Umbarra	Wednesday, 8 May 2002 11am-2pm	Umbarra Cultural Centre Wallaga Lake
Nowra	Thursday, 9 May 2002 11am-2pm	South Coast Aboriginal Cultural Centre
Queanbeyan	Friday 24 May, 2002 9am-12pm	Ngunnawal ACT and District Aboriginal Council of Elders Association Inc
Canberra	Friday, 24 May 2002 3pm-6pm	Ngunnawal Elders Council
Marysville	Saturday, 1 June 11am-2pm	The Cumberland
Cooma	Saturday, 15 June 1pm - 4pm	Motel Marlborough

We will send out a reminder letter closer to the time of meetings planned in your area. In the meantime, if you would like to discuss this project with us, please call 03 9380 6159 (Melbourne), 0409 145 489 or 02 9318 0699 (Sydney). If you are calling long distance, give us a quick call and we will phone you back.

Kind regards

Meg Goulding & Kristal Buckley

Appendix 5 Project Flier

Have Your Say About the Future of the Australian Alps

The strong cultural and spiritual ties that Aboriginal people have had to the Australian Alps for thousands of years continue today.

These connections to country are an important part of the history and future of the Australian Alps.

This is why your input into the Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Directions & Liaison project is so important.

What is the Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Directions & Liaison project?

The Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Directions & Liaison project, which is being run by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC) and the Australian Heritage Commission, is designed to give Aboriginal people a voice in the future of the Alps.

We are organising meetings with Aboriginal communities who are connected to the Australian Alps to:

- find out why the mountain country is important to you
- to give you the opportunity to have your say or ask questions about the management of Aboriginal heritage in the Alps

What is the AALC?

The Australian Alps Liaison Committee was set up to help different land management agencies work together to co-operatively manage the Australian Alps national parks.

The committee is made up of representatives from NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, Environment ACT, Parks Victoria & Environment Australia.





Meetings

These meetings will be held at the following locations in the ACT, NSW and Victoria over the next 6 months:

Tumut (Brungle)
Canberra
Queanbeyan
Cooma
Nowra
Wallaga Lake (Umbarra)
Bega
Eden
Orbost
Bairnsdale
Marysville
Wodonga

Heritage consultants Meg Goulding and Kristal Buckley will be contacting you soon by phone to discuss the project and to invite you to a meeting in your area.

If you wish to contact us at any time during the project, our details are:

Goulding Heritage Consulting Pty Ltd
1019 Drummond Street
North Carlton Victoria 3054
Phone/Fax Melbourne: 03 9380 6159
Phone Sydney: 02 9318 0699
Mobile: 0409 145 489
Email: m.goulding@bigpond.com

If you are calling long distance, give us a quick call and we will phone you back.
Written comments are also welcome...

International Year of Mountains 2002 Celebration

The year 2002 is International Year of Mountains (IYM 2002). A conference on mountain values is planned for November 2002 and will be hosted by the AALC.

The conference will be held in Jindabyne and the AALC is keen for local Aboriginal people to be involved in the conference. This can be discussed at our meetings.



Appendix 6 Meeting Flyer

Alps Meeting at Brungle

Would you like to have a say about the future of
Aboriginal heritage in the Australian Alps?

Do you have cultural connections with the Alps country
that you would like to talk about?

Then come along to a meeting of Aboriginal groups at
Brungle to discuss heritage values in the Australian Alps.

When: Saturday 16 March
Time: 11-2pm
Where: Brungle Memorial (CWA) Hall

Following a meeting in the hall there will be a lunchtime
barbecue on the Nimbo River.

Everyone Welcome!

Organised by Meg Goulding & Kristal Buckley (Goulding Heritage Consulting
Pty Ltd) and Dean Freeman (NPWS) on behalf of the Australian Alps Liaison
Committee (AALC) as part of the Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage
Directions and Liaison project.

Appendix 7 Information Distributed to Meeting Participants

Introduction

The primary aim of the Australian Alps Aboriginal Heritage Liaison and Directions Study has been to establish a consultation process with Aboriginal people with ties to the mountain country. This consultation process aimed to canvass Aboriginal peoples' attachments to the alps landscape and to seek direction from them concerning future research into Aboriginal associations in the region. There were however, several other processes and events that relate directly to Aboriginal people with interests in the Australian alps about which it was felt that meeting participants should be informed.

Kosciuszko Management Plan

The NSW NPWS is currently in the early stages of developing the Kosciuszko Management Plan. This planning process will involve extensive consultation with interested Aboriginal people and these meetings provided NPWS with an excellent opportunity to inform Aboriginal people about the project.

Australian Heritage Commission Alps Assessment

The Australian Heritage Commission is seeking information on Aboriginal heritage values in the Australian alps to inform an AHC study of the heritage significance of the region. This consultation program succeeded in raising awareness of the work of the Commission. Meeting participants were informed of the Register of the National Estate and about the opportunities to nominate places of cultural significance to the Register (or the proposed National List according to planned changes to the National heritage regime).³⁹

International Year of Mountains Conference – November 2002

This project presented the first opportunity to commence discussions with Aboriginal people about the Year of Mountains Conference to be held in November 2002. The AALC and conference working party are keen for Aboriginal people with ties to the high country to be involved in the Conference proceedings. Meeting Forums were used to bring the conference to the attention of Aboriginal people and to obtain feedback on peoples' interest in attending.

³⁹ The *Ask First: A Guide to Respecting Indigenous Heritage Places and Values* publication was circulated at meetings when it became available in early June.

Appendix 8 List of Meeting Participants

Meeting	Group	Name
Wodonga Friday 15 March 2002	Mungabareena Aboriginal Co-operative	Richard Kennedy, Vice Chairperson Ted Ots, Community Development Officer
Brungle Saturday 16 March 2002	Tumut-Brungle Local Aboriginal Land Council	Beverly Herrington Josie Williams Alice Williams Natina Freeman Donna Freeman Sonia Piper Margaret Berg Phyllis Freeman
	Wiradjuri Elders Council	Ramsay Freeman
Orbost Thursday 18 April 2002	Moogji Aboriginal Corporation Ltd	Chris Allen Linda Meehan Christine Milliken Shaun Mundy Mathew Turvey Brett Martin Darren Collins
	Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit	Mick Harding, A/Manager Barry Kenny, Heritage Protection Officer
Bairnsdale Friday 19 April 2002	Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd/ Gunai Kurnai Peoples	Ricky Mullett Grattan Mullett Fay & Frank Harrison Violet & Jack Hayes Norman Hood Edith Terrick Albert Mullett Rachel Mullett
	Kurnai Peoples	Pauline Mullett Howard Mullett (& Michelle)

Meeting	Group	Name
Bega Monday 6th May 2002	Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council	David Dixon, Co-ordinator
		Kathy Jones
		John Dixon
		Martha Tungai
	Monaro-Ngarigo – Mundy Dixons	Margaret Dixon
		Ellen Mundy
Eden Tuesday 7 May 2002	Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council	Ben Cruse, Administrator
		Beryl Cruse
		Ossie Cruse
		Shirley Aldridge
		Liddy Stewart
		Ossie Stewart
		Sue Norman
		Mervyn Clarke
		Catherine Clarke
		BJ Cruse
		Cheryl Davison
		Laurence Bamblett
		Bobby Maher
Umbarra Wednesday 8 May 2002	Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council	Noelene Leha, Co-ordinator
		John Mumbulla
		Ann Thomas
Nowra Thursday 9 May 2002	Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council	Phillip McLeod, Deputy Chairperson
Canberra Friday 24 May 2002	Ngunawal ACT & District Aboriginal Council of Elders Association Inc.	Tyronne Bell
		Don Bell
		Ruth Bell
Queanbeyan Friday 24 May 2002	Ngunnawal Elders Council Inc.	Arnold Williams
		Joe House

Meeting	Group	Name
Marysville Saturday 1 June 2002	Taungurung Elders Council	Mick Harding
		Garry Hansen
		Bernadette Franklin-Crocker
		Trish Terry
Cooma Saturday 15 June 2002	Monaro-Ngarigo-Cheripurn Council	Rae Stewart
		Mathew Stewart
		Cassandra Stewart
		Jennifer Stewart
		Jessica Stewart
		Rachel Stewart
		Lynne Dent (Solomon) (& Jeff Dent)
		Ricky Mullett
		Katherine Mullett
		Rachel Mullett
		Pat Davison
		Mathew Stewart
		Sharon Anderson
Additional Consultation	Sanctuary Point - Yuin	Dave Tout
	Dinner Plain – Gunai/Kurnai	Russell Mullett

Appendix 9 Feedback on Year of the Mountains Event

Participants at each meeting showed a great interest in the International Year of the Mountains event planned for November 2002. The conference is seen as an opportunity to meet with the AALC members and catch up with elders from other places to discuss a range of issues and start making preliminary recommendations in relation to the management of Aboriginal heritage in the alps. This type of gathering will need resourcing to support travel and accommodation.

The contact details of participants collected during the project will provide a basis from which to keep people informed of the celebration and conference planning process. All participants were happy for their contact details to be used for this purpose.

There was general consensus that Aboriginal people with traditional connections to the Jindabyne country, the Monero-Ngarigo people, should be involved in some sort of opening or welcome ceremony.

Appendix 10 Feedback on Kosciuszko Management Planning Process

There was great interest in the Kosciuszko Management Plan. Meeting participants noted that there is a need for proper inclusion of Aboriginal peoples' interests and concerns in the management planning process. Points raised included:

- The consultation Kosciuszko consultation strategy should facilitate a process that satisfies the concerns of the traditional owners
- The process needs to take time to engage with Aboriginal people in a way which is meaningful to them
- The plan should consider a broad range of Aboriginal values.

Some participants saw the Aboriginal involvement in the development of this plan as setting a precedent for the development of such plans in Victoria's Alpine regions and providing an opportunity for the co-management of national parks and reserves. Issues such as who speaks for country, opportunities for co-management, access to country and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage would need to be addressed in this process. Some participants observed that the KMP process represented an opportunity to get it right in relation the proper inclusion of Aboriginal heritage values.

Everyone agreed to their contact details to being used by the Kosciuszko Management Plan team in future consultation processes and were keen to hear more about the project as it progresses.

