HIGHLIGHTS OF 25 YEARS OF NATIONAL PARKS ADMINISTRATION 1957 – 1982

On 30 October 1956 the National Parks Act 1956 came into effect. This was the first legislation in Australia to provide specifically for the control of National Parks by a single, specialised government body. Thirteen national parks with a total area of 125,262 ha were declared: Alfred, Bulga, Churchill, Fern Tree Gully, Kinglake, The Lakes, Lind, Mallacoota Inlet, Mount Buffalo, Tarra Valley, Wilsons Promontory, Wingan Inlet and Wyperfeld.

6.5.1957	Mr. P. Crosbie Morrison appointed Director of National Parks.
7.5.1957	The National Parks Authority was constituted under the new Act, the membership being a Chairman, Deputy Chairman, eight members representing government and community interests, and the Director of National Parks.
18.12.1957	Fraser National Park (2,671 ha) established.
7.6.1960	Hattah Lakes National Park (17,800 ha) declared, marking the successful conclusion of a campaign begun 20 years earlier. Mt. Eccles (32 ha) and Mt. Richmond (620 ha) National Parks also declared.
12.12.1962	Glenaladale National Park Act passed to formalise the donation of 161 ha of land to the State of Victoria by A.P.M. Forests Pty. Ltd.
1.7.1965	Port Campbell National Park (700 ha) came under the control of the National Parks Authority.
17.4.1967	Morwell National Park (137 ha) established; half the funds to purchase the land provided by the Council of the Shire of Morwell, half by a special State government grant.
16.12.1969	Little Desert National Park (established 10.12.68) enlarged to 34,748 ha following widespread public controversy over whether the land should be opened for farming or preserved in its natural state. Lower Glenelg National Park (8,960 ha) also established.
20.4.1970	Captain James Cook National Park (2,640 ha) dedicated by Premier of Victoria, Sir Henry Bolte, to mark the bicentenary of Cook's landfall during his voyage along east coast of Australia. (Now part of Croajingolong National Park.)
30.6.1970	The State government provided the first allocation of special funds for purchase of land to add to Fern Tree Gully National Park. Over 80 ha so acquired in following decade.
24.11.1970	Land Conservation Council Act passed, establishing the Land Conservation Council to make recommendations to the government on the balanced use of all remaining public land in Victoria. The Director of National Parks is a member of the Council. Several new parks have been created as a result of the Council's work, in which the public is able to participate.

15.3.1971 — The National Parks Authority was replaced by the Minister for State Development and the Director of National Parks. The National Parks Service was established as a Division of the new Department of State Development. There were then 23 national parks with an area of approximately 202,612 ha.

12.3.1972 — Organ Pipes National Park (66 ha) established.

23.1.1973 — Ministry for Conservation Act promulgated. National Parks Service became part of the Ministry, which included other conservation-oriented agencies.

30.10.1974 — The Victorian Government purchased the assets of Tatra Development Pty. Ltd. in Mt. Buffalo National Park and the National Parks Service took possession of the resort.

1975 — Decentralisation of National Parks Service initiated with the opening of offices in three Districts: Nepean, South West and East Gippsland.

1.12.1975 — A new National Parks Act provided for the setting aside of "other parks" (in addition to national parks) in which recreation, education, preservation of historical, archaeological or other features, or scientific study, may be the primary use. Warrandyte State Park and Cape Schanck Coastal Park established under this provision. The new Act also made provision for Park Advisory Committees to replace Committees of Management.

16.5.1978 — National Parks (Amendment) Act provided for the establishment of Burrowa — Pine Mountain National Park (17,300 ha), seven "other" parks, and additions to 12 existing national and two existing "other" parks.

19.12.1978 — National Parks Act passed which provided for the reservation of four new national parks (Baw Baw, Croajingolong, Snowy, Tingaringy) and 16 other parks and for additions to 12 existing parks, in two stages on 26.4.1979 and 26.4.1980. The area managed by the National Parks Service was thereby trebled to about 775,000 ha.

19.5.1981 — Legislation passed which included provision for establishment of Otway National Park (12,750 ha) on 1.7.1981; Bogong National Park (81,000 ha) on 1.10.1981; Wonnangatta-Moroka National Park (107,000 ha) on 1.7.1982; two "other" parks; and for additions to several existing parks.

NATIONAL PARKS AUTHORITY 1957 TO 1971

The first Authority, constituted 7.5.1957:

Chairman: Hon. A.J. Fraser, MC, MLA, Assistant Minister of State Development and Decentralisation.

Deputy: Hon. C.E. Isaac, OBE, representing persons having a special interest in national parks.

Members: W.T. Long, Secretary for Lands.
A.O.P. Lawrence, Chairman, Forests Commission, Victoria.
J.H. Aldred, Secretary for Public Works.
G.T. Thompson, Chairman, Soil Conservation Authority.
A. Dunbavin Butcher, Director, Fisheries and Game Department.
D.W. Goode, representing organisations concerned with protection of native fauna and flora.
E.H.R. Burt, Victorian Ski Association.
V.C. Dickson, Victorian Government Tourist Bureau.
P. Crosbie Morrison, Director.

Subsequent Members of the Authority

M.J. Harkins, Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, appointed 9.11.1957.
G.L. Wood, Secretary for Lands, appointed September 1958.
W.F. Thomas, Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, appointed September 1958.
F.H. Klenner, Secretary for Lands, appointed 22.5.1961.
Dr. R.G. Downes, Chairman, Soil Conservation Authority, appointed 2.3.1961.
L.W. Birch, Secretary for Lands, appointed 31.3.1963.
A.J. Holt, Assistant Secretary for Lands, appointed 7.6.1963 (later Secretary for Lands).
J.J. Stewart, Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, appointed 7.5.1963.
G.E. Hindle, Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, appointed 20.1.1965.
G. Pizzey, representing persons having a special interest in national parks, appointed 2.2.1967.
T.B. Wilson, Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, appointed 28.1.1969.
Dr. F.R. Moulds, Chairman, Forests Commission of Victoria, appointed 19.7.1969.

NATIONAL PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE 1971 TO 1975

The first committee, constituted 1.10.1971:

Chairman: Dr. L.H. Smith, Director of National Parks.

Members: J.D. Brookes, MC, representing community, business and professional interests.
Dr. D.M. Calder, representing the Conservation Council of Victoria.
Cr. S.L. Cooper, JP, representing municipal and rural interests.
Dr. E.H.M. Ealey, representing the Victorian National Parks Association.
D.W. Goode, member of the former National Parks Authority.
P.W. Merrett, Secretary for State Development.