

**ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION – BLOCK 10 RENDEZVOUS CREEK -  
YANKEE HAT PICNIC SHELTER (ESO 202300051)**

In accordance with section 140(4) of the *Planning Act 2023* (the Act), I provide the following environmental significance opinion:

**APPLICANT**

ACT Parks and Conservation Service, as represented by Pete Cotsell, Director – National Parks and Catchments.

**APPLICATION and DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

The applicant has applied under section 140 (4) of the Act to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna for an environmental significance opinion to the effect that the development proposal set out in the submission is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact (the application).

The development proposal is for construction of a picnic shelter as described in the submission.

**LOCATION**

Block 10 District of Rendezvous Creek, Namadgi National Park.

**MATTERS TO WHICH THIS OPINION APPLIES**

This opinion applies only to the development proposal as described in the application.

**OPINION**

Provided the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.

Bren Burkevics  
Conservator of Flora and Fauna  
January 2024

## STATEMENT OF REASONS REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The proposed development is a proposal mentioned in Schedule 1 of the *Planning (General) Regulation 2023* – Development proposals requiring environmental impact statement, being:

*Part 1.2, item 18 proposal for development in a reserve, unless the proposal is for minor public works to be carried out by or for the Territory in accordance with a minor public works code approved by the conservator of flora and fauna under the Nature Conservation Act 2014, section 318A;*

The proposed works are within Namadgi National Park.

The proponent wants the application for the development approval assessed in the merit track on the grounds that the proposal is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact, and has applied to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna to that effect.

### **Meaning of *significant* adverse environmental impact**

An adverse environmental impact is ***significant*** if—

- (a) the environmental function, system, value or entity that might be adversely impacted by a proposed development is significant; or
- (b) the cumulative or incremental effect of a proposed development might contribute to a substantial adverse impact on an environmental function, system, value or entity.

In deciding whether an adverse environmental impact is ***significant***, the following matters must be taken into account:

- (a) the kind, size, frequency, intensity, scope and length of time of the impact;
- (b) the sensitivity, resilience and rarity of the environmental function, system, value or entity likely to be affected.

In deciding whether a development proposal is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact it does not matter whether the adverse environmental impact is likely to occur on the site of the development or elsewhere.

It has been determined that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant environmental impact, based on the documentation submitted, known values of the site, and provided the works and ongoing management are carried out in accordance with the conditions attached to this ESO.

### **Project description**

The Orroral Valley Fire of January/February 2020 burnt most of Namadgi National Park, including the Gudgenby Valley. Most of the Yankee Hat walking track, car park and picnic area were affected by the fire.

This project forms one of the deliverables under the Commonwealth funded Black Summer Bushfire Program, for which the ACT government, with PCS as the lead agency, is contracted to deliver by the end of March 2024. This project sits under the umbrella of a larger project that focusses on the maintenance and upgrade of the Yankee Hat Walking Track and rock art site infrastructure and includes improvements to the car park and picnic area and access road.

Proposed works will be constructed by the PCS Namadgi team, using small machinery including a mini excavator (1 tonne), hand-held plate compactor, as well as manual labour and will include:

- Preparation of a 5m x 5m (25m<sup>2</sup>) base for the picnic shelter, which includes scalping the grass to 100mm depth, installing a timber edge, and filling with compacted decomposed granite.
- Installation of 4 x concrete footings for the supporting posts of the shelter.
- Construction of the prefabricated shelter in accordance with diagrams and instructions from supplier.

### **Documentation Submitted**

- Supporting statement
- Letter(s) of Authorisation
- Form 1M.

### **Natural conservation values present**

Namadgi National Park conserves a wide variety of ecosystems and contributes to regional ecological connectivity through its links to reserves within NSW.

The site proposed for the picnic shelter has been heavily modified by past land uses and has low conservation value. The site is surrounded by derived woodland recovering from rehabilitation of the former Boboyan Pine Plantation and derived grassland featuring some native grasses such as *Stipa* species and *Poa siberiana*. The grassland is heavily influenced by exotic plants such as Nodding thistle, St John's wort, fleabane and Yorkshire fog.

The area of Namadgi National Park within a 500m radius of the proposed picnic shelter supports several bird species including the threatened White Winged Triller (*Lalage tricolor*).

**Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts**

The site proposed for works has been heavily modified by past disturbance and bushfire and is considered of low conservation values. The works will impact a very small 25m<sup>2</sup> pad and avoid any disturbance to trees. The shelter itself is of standard design and model used elsewhere in the park and is considered unobtrusive against the environment and mountain backdrop. The works will be carried by PCS and the risk of weed spread and fire ignition have been well mitigated in the proposal including post works weed monitoring. The works are not of a scale that will cause any significant impact to the site or surrounding National Park.

The construction of a picnic shelter will provide better amenities to the popular Yankees Hat visitor spot within Namadgi National Park and, in turn, lead to a more positive visitor experience.

It has been determined that if the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.