

Friends of Parks Induction Booklet

Information for new Friends of Parks members



A warm welcome is extended to you, as you join Friends of Parks and the wider Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) volunteering community.

Department of
Environment and
Natural Resources



“...a sustainable and prosperous South Australia where natural resources are used wisely and a healthy environment is understood to be the basis of a good quality of life”

Welcome

A warm welcome is extended to you, as you join Friends of Parks and the wider Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) volunteering community.

DENR would like you, as a volunteer, to share the department's vision:

“...a sustainable and prosperous South Australia where natural resources are used wisely and a healthy environment is understood to be the basis of a good quality of life”

Volunteer activities contribute significantly to this vision. Friends of Parks groups have been working in partnership with the department since the early 1980s. There are now well over 100 groups around the State and many thousands of members, so you are joining a longstanding and successful program.

The national parks and reserves network in South Australia includes over 330 parks, covering over one fifth of the State (approximately 21%). Volunteer efforts are vital in helping conserve native flora and fauna and our natural and cultural heritage across these reserves/sites, and also in helping provide the community with places that will be around for future generations to enjoy.

DENR and Friends of Parks are committed to providing support and opportunities to volunteers, where all individuals feel welcome and are able to contribute meaningfully and safely.

Thank you for your time and commitment. It is hoped that you will find your volunteering an enjoyable and rewarding experience knowing that you are giving your time and skills to a worthy cause.

The induction process

Valuing and keeping volunteers safe is of paramount importance to DENR and Friends of Parks, and to help ensure this, the induction of new volunteers is very important.

Using a checklist which is attached to this document, a member of your Friends group or the local DENR liaison officer will introduce you to your role as a volunteer. The activities and workings of the group, site facilities, first aid locations, use of equipment and tools, fire precautions and emergency telephone numbers etc.

Once you are happy with this discussion, please sign the checklist, along with the person who took you through the induction, as a record. The checklist can then be detached from this booklet and kept securely (the place can be decided between your group and DENR liaison officer) along with your signed registration form. Both the induction and registration forms are treated confidentially.

This induction booklet contains other relevant information to you as a volunteer with DENR/Friends of Parks, and you are encouraged to read through it at your leisure. If there are any questions arising please don't hesitate to contact either the president of your Friends group, your DENR liaison officer, or the DENR Volunteer Support Unit.



Opportunities for involvement

As a volunteer, you may be involved in a range of activities, such as:

- Habitat improvement activities including weed control and eradication
- Revegetation programs including seed collection, propagation, and planting
- Community events including sharing information and holding displays
- Walking trail maintenance
- Community education on environmental matters
- Administrative and clerical work
- Displays, brochures, and signage
- Biodiversity research including flora and fauna identification, surveys and monitoring
- Heritage restoration and presentation to the public
- Fundraising to support your volunteering activities
- Historical research and writing
- Guided walks for visitors
- Campground hosts – helping rangers provide visitor/campground information and assisting with park management activities.

Occupational health, safety and welfare

Volunteers and DENR staff have the same responsibility and accountability under the *Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act (1986)*. This means the department has a duty of care and is responsible to provide volunteers with a safe working environment. It also means your group and you as a volunteer have a responsibility to work safely, look out for each other, and observe any safety measures or policies that are in place including DENR's OHSW policies and procedures. Groups are encouraged to appoint their own voluntary safety officer who can keep a particular eye out for the safe practices of the group, whilst in no way being liable if an accident or injury should occur.

There are several important safety processes for your group to follow, with the help of your DENR liaison officer, including:

- **Risk assessment** for any activities that take place. This is as simple as identifying any potential risks (i.e. what could possibly go wrong), and putting some things in place to help prevent or minimise these risks. There is a DENR volunteer risk assessment form that can help with this.
- **Registration of ongoing volunteers and induction of new volunteers.** DENR has a volunteer registration form to use, which includes letting your group know your contact details, emergency contact details, and any health issues that may be relevant to your volunteer activity. These forms will be treated confidentially.
- **Activity Attendance Record.** This to record who attends each activity and when, and is useful for both volunteer statistics and for insurance purposes should you be hurt whilst volunteering.

There is a publication titled '*In Safe Hands, A Safety Management Toolkit for Practical Conservation*', produced by Conservation Volunteers Australia. While the information in this manual is not mandatory nor DENR policy, it does contain some useful OHSW information for groups and volunteers, especially around conducting risk assessments. You might like to look through a copy which should be held by your group or local DENR office.

Some volunteer activities require basic instruction or formal training before they can be undertaken, for example, using specialised equipment. Whilst many activities don't require formal training, if you are unfamiliar with an activity, you will need to be shown by an experienced Friends member or DENR staff member. Please don't hesitate to ask questions of your DENR liaison officer for help with this – remember, your safety and comfort is of utmost importance.

Insurance cover

You are covered under DENR's insurance through SAICORP (the state government's self-insurance scheme) for any loss of life, injury to person, or damage to property caused or suffered whilst carrying out DENR approved volunteer activities, except in the cases of:

- Defamation
- Liabilities covered under compulsory third party motor vehicle insurance
- Volunteers affected by alcohol or recreational drugs
- Volunteers acting outside of or contrary to activities approved of by DENR

To claim, there needs to be a record that you were engaged in a DENR approved volunteer activity at the time of injury.

Therefore, it is important for insurance purposes as well as volunteer statistical purposes that:

- All projects, meetings and volunteer activities are registered on a '**Volunteer Project Form**' (also referred to as a '**Pink Form**'). Confirm this with your group leader or your DENR liaison officer
- Your name is recorded in your group's **Activity Attendance Record** when attending working bees, meetings etc (see above OHS&W section).

If an accident occurs, it needs to be reported to a DENR staff member as soon as possible (see below section on reporting an accident). You then need to complete a Medicare or private health cover claim, after which the department covers the gap. When making a claim you will need to state that you were volunteering at the time, as the insurance cover is administered differently to Workcover. Civil liability (with provisions) is covered by the volunteers' indemnity legislation. Office bearers and committee members are also covered under the *Volunteer Protection Act* or SAICORP.

Reporting an accident

If an accident occurs or nearly occurs, whether major or minor, the first step is to attend to any urgent first aid, and to call 000 if urgent medical or fire assistance is needed.

After or whilst this is taken care of, the incident/near miss needs to be reported as soon as possible to your group's president, working bee leader or safety officer, or to a DENR staff member if they are present.

Your group leader will then notify a DENR staff member, which will usually be a Duty Officer who is on-call 24 hours a day for park emergencies. The Duty Officer/DENR staff member will then offer you any further support needed, and arrange to submit on your behalf a DENR Incident Report (known as IR001 and IR002 forms) within 24 hours. Further investigations may take place if the incident requires medical attention.

Please ensure that you report any accident, injury or near miss. It may help prevent the same or worse things happening to someone else in the future.

Vehicles and travel

Driving vehicles is a significant hazard which needs to be managed carefully.

Please be careful at all times when travelling. This applies particularly when negotiating difficult terrain, in adverse weather conditions and in vehicles with which you are unfamiliar.

All government vehicles need to be driven in accordance with the Fleet SA policy which DENR abides by. Suitability to drive a government vehicle depends on assessment by a staff member, proof of licence, and an approved 'Non-Public Sector Driver' form – please see your DENR liaison officer or the Volunteer Support Unit for more details.

In addition, neither staff nor volunteers can drive a departmental 4WD vehicle without having completed an accredited 4WD training course and shown proof of certification.

Volunteers are allowed to travel in government vehicles if they are formally registered as a DENR volunteer, and have been given signed permission by DENR management, using the State Fleet form.

Equal opportunity

DENR and Friends of Parks believe that everyone should have the opportunity to make a positive contribution through volunteering.

As an employer, DENR has a legal and ethical responsibility for providing volunteers with an environment that is free of bullying, humiliating, undermining or threatening behaviour.

In line with the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*, no one is to behave in such a way that is or could be deemed discriminatory, or to treat others unfavourably on the grounds of sex, race, impairment or age. The Act applies equally to volunteers as it does to department staff.

If you encounter any behaviour like this, it should be reported to a DENR manager/supervisor immediately or to your groups president. The department, following an investigation into any matters raised, may seek to move a volunteer to a different type of activity or group, or may even cease their involvement with the department.

Conflict resolution

Should a dispute arise that can't be resolved within your group, it should be worked through with your DENR liaison officer and their relevant management staff in the first instance.

Should further assistance be required, advice may be sought from the Manager of DENR's Volunteer Support Unit and the president of Friends of Parks Incorporated. Depending on the circumstances, involvement may also be sought from the relevant Director and/or Executive Director.

If an issue remains unresolved, the president of Friends of Parks Inc and the Chief Executive of the department or his/her nominee will, in consultation, attempt to resolve the issue.

Friends of Parks Incorporated

Friends of Parks Incorporated (Inc.) is an umbrella organisation for Friends of Parks member groups across the State. Friends of Parks Inc. is an independent body incorporated under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1985*. It has a board, which plays a role in:

- Liaising with the department on policy, planning and program initiatives that impact on Friends of Parks
- Supporting Friends of Parks member groups
- Assisting in communications between the department and Friends of Parks member groups
- Raising the profile of national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage and associated volunteer activities and
- Securing and administering funds and receiving gifts for associated projects and activities.

Volunteer forums

Each year a state-wide Friends of Parks Forum is hosted by different Friends of Parks groups around the State. The program, run over two to three days, includes speakers, presentations on topics of interest such as local biodiversity and heritage, policy discussions, social interaction, awards and field excursions. It is an excellent opportunity for you to expand your understanding, and to meet lots of other Friends and DENR staff from around the State.

Friends of Parks Incorporated also holds an annual general meeting where office bearers are nominated for the board. You are welcome to nominate for a position.

Leaders of Friends of Parks groups also have the opportunity to attend regional meetings/forums with DENR regional management staff.

Contact information

Your Friends of Parks group contacts

Name:

Role:

Telephone:

Email:

Name:

Role:

Telephone:

Email:

Name:

Role:

Telephone:

Email:

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

DENR and parks information: www.environment.sa.gov.au. Follow the 'Work With Us' links on the website for volunteering information, newsletters and other opportunities.

Liaison Officer

A departmental DENR liaison officer is assigned to each group. Your liaison officer is your primary point of contact with the department.

Name:

Role:

Telephone:

Email:

Volunteer Support Ranger (where relevant)

Volunteer Support Rangers provide additional support for volunteer activities in some Regions/District.

Name:

Role:

Telephone:

Email:

Induction Checklist

Introduction to group

- Main activities of the group
- When the group meets
- Membership (if applicable)
- Introduction to group members and key roles
- Contact details e.g. group contacts, DENR emergency number (e.g. District or Regional Duty Officer)
- Group badges/uniform (if applicable)
- Transport arrangements
- About the park/site
- Friends of Parks Inc

Group procedures

- Registration form (including emergency contact person; any relevant health conditions) NB group to treat this form confidentially.
- Attendance log/sign in sheet for each working bee/meeting
- Risk assessment for main group activities
- Training required/available for relevant to group activities
- Cancellation of activities on Total Fire Bans/ extreme weather conditions
- Equal opportunity
- Complaints/conflict resolution

How group works with DENR

- DENR liaison officer
- Annual activity plan/calendar
- "Pink form" (Project Commencement Form) process

Facilities & equipment

- Toilet & hand washing (might be nearest facility or using the bush/bringing water bottle)
- First aid kit
- Tools and equipment
- Personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, glasses)
- Appropriate clothing
- Security of personal belongings

Group's emergency procedures

- Communication in remote areas
- Working alone
- Reporting an accident

Other info to be aware of

- Annual Friends of Parks Forum
- Grants/funding rising relating to the group
- Other

New Member Signature: **Date:**

Group Leader Signature: **Date:**

Friends of Park Incorporated

www.communitywebs.org/FriendsofParks

Volunteer Support Unit

DENR's Volunteer Support Unit plans and coordinates strategic initiatives to support safe, effective and sustainable volunteering across DENR.

Ground Floor,
1 Richmond Road, Keswick SA 5035
PO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone: 8124 4784

Emergency Contacts

Emergencies (Fire, Ambulance, Police)

Telephone 000 (or 112 from mobiles with limited range)

Police – General

Telephone 131444