

KARST CONSERVATION UNIT

*Key responsibilities and work
priorities.*

INTRODUCTION

- ➔ Established in July 2006. Located within Policy, Planning and Programs Section of Reserve and Wildlife Conservation Branch.
- ➔ An outcome of the recent transfer of Abercrombie, Borenore, Jenolan and Wombeyan Karst Conservation Reserves to DEC management.
- ➔ Primary role is to protect and conserve karst values for the on-going benefit, use and enjoyment of current and successor generations.



Introduction (cont)



→ Consists of five staff:

- Manager
- Senior Policy Officer
- Policy Officer
- Research Officer (vacant)
- P/T Administration Officer

→ Based in Bathurst.

→ Has state-wide responsibilities.

→ Over 100 karst areas/environments within the DEC Estate. A further 100-150 karst areas are located *off-park*.

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- ➔ Develop policies, plans and guidelines in relation to cave and karst management (eg. cave access policy).
- ➔ Regulate, monitor and report on, the environmental performance of lessees/licensees.
- ➔ Develop frameworks for monitoring social and environmental conditions in caves and karst.
- ➔ Consult with stakeholders and provide secretariat support to the Karst Management Advisory Committee.



Key Responsibilities (cont)

- Develop and maintain a database of all caves and karst areas (and their attributes) in New South Wales.
- Assess and approve applications for research (including cave exploration).
- Identify off-park areas which may be suitable for acquisition.
- Prepare *state of caves* reports.



Key Responsibilities (cont)



- Develop voluntary land/resource management agreements for areas of karst under private tenure.
- Support regions and areas in meeting best practice karst management via the provision of high quality advice, operating guidelines and educational resources.
- Conduct workshops, seminars or similar cross-departmental activities to engender a cooperative and unified approach to cave and karst management.
- Monitor the impact of visitors in high use areas.

3. WORK PRIORITIES

3.1 Short Term

- ➔ Prepare Karst Management Position Paper.
- ➔ Develop Karst Resources Database.
- ➔ Convene NSW Karst Managers Forum.
- ➔ Prepare Karst Managers Handbook.
- ➔ Develop Cave and Karst Access Policy.



Work Priorities (cont)

- Investigate requirement for karst-specific SEPP.
- Develop Karst Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
- Develop Karst Acquisition Strategy.
- Establish or formalise research links/partnerships with relevant tertiary institutions.
- Prepare Karst Research Prospectus.
- Develop unified permit system.

