

# Flourishing Nature | Flourishing Culture

## Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary Strategy

### REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD



## MULLIGANS FLAT WOODLAND SANCTUARY STRATEGY

The Mulligans Flat Woodlands Sanctuary Strategy establishes a vision of Flourishing Nature, Flourishing Culture. This vision will be delivered under three pillars of activity:

- Restoring the wellbeing of nature and communities;
- Learning about nature; and
- Inspiring change to benefit future generations.

The Strategy has been prepared by a partnership that binds together the ACT Government, the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, and the Australian National University with input from the Ngunnawal Traditional Owners, and the community.



## THE CONVERSATION

The draft Strategy and online feedback were available on the ACT Government's *YourSay* website from its release on 10 December 2020 until 4 March 2021. To foster more informal consultation, two drop-in sessions were held at the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust's Forde offices on 17 December 2020 and 24 February 2021.

## WHO ENGAGED?

All 35 survey respondents on the *YourSay* site had visited the Sanctuary, either with family or to view nature. Just over half were women, and the ages of respondents were evenly spread. Importantly for a strategy that will be in effect until 2045, half of all survey respondents were under 45. While respondents were from a range of locations, 70% were from either Belconnen or Gungahlin.

In addition to the survey respondents, four formal submissions were received from Canberra Ornithologists Group, Friends of Grasslands, the National Parks Association of the ACT, and one individual.

Six individuals visited the two open days. In addition, twenty three informal conversations about the Strategy and management of Mulligans Flat were conducted and compiled. Positive comments on the Draft Strategy were lodged via the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust's social media.

Both the YourSay survey and the informal feedback have informed the feedback summary below.

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#### Key insights from the community

##### **Ngunnawal Country, customs, stories and traditions**

1. There is strong support for learning from Ngunnawal culture, with active Indigenous involvement in land management such as applying Aboriginal fire management practices.

##### **Support for the draft Strategy and suggestions for improvement**

2. While many survey respondents found the Strategy 'exciting and inclusive', others would like to understand more about how the Strategy will be implemented and performance measured. Moving beyond a Vision Statement to provide 'more clear-cut actionable items' was recommended.
3. Illustrating how the Strategy and management of the Sanctuary aligns with the broader framework for management of public reserves in the Canberra Nature Park was requested.

##### **Strengthening the recognition and role of the community**

4. Expanding the Principle *Partnering with the community* to include 'formal mechanisms for broader community input to ongoing management of the Sanctuary' is a specific response to the broader requests by other respondents for 'more engagement with the local community' and 'wider engagement of the community to ensure long-term support for maintenance of the Sanctuary.'
5. 'Neighbours matter – they can make or break your management.' Individual respondents documented how important the Sanctuary is to them and their families.
6. There is an opportunity to formally acknowledge the ongoing role of community groups and citizen science and to ensure 'culture' is inclusive, reflecting the historical and social values of Mulligans Flat along with Ngunnawal culture.

##### **Active use of the Sanctuary**

7. Maintaining access to the Sanctuary for recreation including photography, walking, and cycling was requested.
8. The role of the Sanctuary as an outstanding natural recreation area in the north of Canberra does not have any profile in the Strategy.

##### **Specific recommendations on land management**

9. Specific areas of focus such as weed control, fire management and recognising the potential of the new visitor's centre were suggested for inclusion in the final Strategy.
10. Some respondents made detailed recommendations for edits and additions to the draft Strategy.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The Draft Mulligans Flat Woodlands Sanctuary Strategy has been revised considering feedback received through the consultation processes. While there are several specific revisions, major amendments involve the inclusion of recreation and the recognition of the multifaceted roles the community plays in the Sanctuary such as citizen science.

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Development of an Implementation Plan specifying actions, responsibilities, timeframes and measures of success is underway. Timing is aligned to incorporate this community feedback, reviewing the specific recommendations for reserve management along with reflecting the modifications made to the Strategy.

The Strategy will be finalised in 2022.

To find out more about the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary Strategy and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit [www.yoursay.act.gov.au](http://www.yoursay.act.gov.au) or follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/EnvironPlan> or <https://www.environment.act.gov.au>.

#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

**1,194**

people were reached through YourSay

**39**

submissions were received

**1,609**

views of the strategy

**2**

open days were held

**6,584**

people were reached via social media

**29**

individual conversations and submissions  
outside of YourSay and open days