



FRIENDS OF GRASSLANDS

supporting native grassy ecosystems

PO Box 440, Jamison ACT 2614

MEETING NOTICE

Members are requested to attend the 2015 Annual General Meeting of FOG, to commence at 6:00pm Tuesday 17 March at the Lena Karmel Lodge, 26 Barry Drive, Acton ACT

AGENDA

1. Attendance and apologies
2. Minutes of 2014 AGM
3. Matters arising out of these minutes
4. Treasurer's report and presentation of audited accounts
5. Reports from groups and projects (to be circulated)
6. President's report (to be circulated)
7. Proposed changes to the FOG constitution (see Special Resolution information below)
8. Annual elections (see 'Being on the FOG committee' on page 4 below)
 - a. Appointment of returning officer
 - b. Election of FOG President, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee
9. Appointment of Public Officer
10. Other motions with notice. (FOG members may introduce a business item at a FOG AGM. However, the item must be received in writing, one week in advance, by FOG's secretary [email: kris.nash@fog.org.au] and the member must attend the AGM to discuss that motion.)

AGM AGENDA ITEM 7:

Special Resolution – Changes to FOG Rules as listed below. It is a formal requirement that, to accept the proposed changes, at least three-quarters of members at the meeting have to vote in favour of the resolution.

Summary of proposals in the Special Resolution:-

FOG was unsuccessful in its 2014 application to become a Registered Environmental Organisation able to accept donations that are tax-deductible to the donor. The Administrator of the Register of Environmental Organisations ruled that FOG's constitution did not mirror REO's set of model rules. The following changes to Objectives and to clauses 34 and 35 are therefore proposed.

Details of proposed changes – proposed deletions are struck through and proposed insertions italicised. If these changes are agreed, clauses in the Rules will be renumbered accordingly. A full copy of current FOG Rules can be downloaded via www.fog.org.au/statement.htm.

**Statement of the values, principles, functions and objectives of Friends of Grasslands Inc.
17 Mar 2015**

TABLE OF PROVISIONS

PART VI—MISCELLANEOUS

35. ~~Management~~ *Operation of the Public Fund*

Part A: Objectives

FUNCTION

*(3) **Establishment of the Public Fund.** The association will establish and maintain a public fund called Friends of Grasslands' Public Fund for the specific purpose of supporting the environmental objects/purposes of Friends of Grasslands. The Fund is established to receive all gifts of money or property for this purpose and any money received because of such gifts must be credited to its bank account. The Fund must not receive any other money or property into its account and it must comply with subdivision 30-E of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.*

PART VI—MISCELLANEOUS

~~34. **Rules for the Public Fund** as required by the Register of Environmental Organisations and Taxation Ruling 95/27:~~

- ~~(1) The association will maintain a Public Fund called the "Friends of Grasslands' Public Fund".~~
- ~~(2) This Public Fund is operated solely to support the values, principles and objectives of the association.~~
- ~~(3) Members of the public are to be invited to donate to the Public Fund for the purposes of the association. Donations are gifts made unconditionally.~~
- ~~(4) Money from interest on these donations is to be deposited into the Public Fund.~~
- ~~(5) A separate bank account will hold all money donated to the Public Fund, including interest accruing thereon, but no other moneys of the association.~~
- ~~(6) Receipts for gifts are to be issued in the name of the Friends of Grasslands' Public Fund and proper accounting records and procedures are to be kept and used for the Public Fund.~~
- ~~(7) The Public Fund will be not for profit in accordance with clause 35(3).~~
- ~~(8) A committee of management of no fewer than three persons will administer the Public Fund. This committee's membership will be an item for each Annual General meeting of the Association. A majority of the members of the Public Fund committee are required to be 'responsible persons' as defined by the Guidelines to the Register of Environmental Organisations.~~

34. **Rules for the Public Fund** reflecting the requirements of taxation policy, especially Taxation Ruling 95/27.

- (1) *The objective of the fund is to support Friends of Grasslands' environmental purposes.*
- (2) *Members of the public are to be invited to make gifts of money or property to the fund for the environmental purposes of the association.*
- (3) *Money from interest on donations, income derived from donated property, and money from the realisation of such property is to be deposited into the fund.*
- (4) *A separate bank account is to be opened to deposit money donated to the fund, including interest accruing thereon, and gifts to it are to be kept separate from other funds of the association.*
- (5) *Receipts are to be issued in the name of the fund and proper accounting records and procedures are to be kept and used for the fund.*
- (6) *The fund will be operated on a not-for-profit basis.*
- (7) *A committee of management of no fewer than three persons will administer the fund. The committee will be appointed by the association. A majority of the members of the committee are required to be 'responsible persons' as defined by the Guidelines to the Register of Environmental Organisations.*

35.— Management of the Public Fund

- ~~(1) Requirements of the Public Fund. The association must inform the Department responsible for the Environment as soon as possible if (a) there is any change to the association's name or that of its Public Fund; or, (b) there is any change to the membership of the management committee of the Public Fund; or, (c) there is any departure from the model rules for public funds set out in the 'Guidelines to the Register of Environmental Organisations'.~~
- ~~(2) Ministerial Rules. The association agrees to comply with any rules that the Treasurer and the Minister with responsibility for the Environment may make to ensure that the gifts made to the Public Fund are only used for its principal purpose.~~
- ~~(3) Not for Profit. The income of the association's Public Fund shall be used and applied solely in promotion of the association's objectives and no portion shall be distributed, paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or by way of profit to members of the association.~~
- ~~(4) Conduit Policy. Any allocation of funds to other persons or organisations will be made in accordance with the established purposes of the association's Public Fund and will not be influenced by the preference of any donor.~~
- ~~(5) Winding up. In the case of the winding up of the Public Fund, any surplus assets are to be transferred to another fund with similar objectives that is on the Register of Environmental Organisations.~~
- ~~(6) Statistical Information (a) Statistical information requested by the Department on donations to the Public Fund will be provided within four months of the end of each financial year (31 December). (b) An audited financial statement for the association and its Public Fund will be supplied with the annual statistical return. The statement will provide information on the expenditure of Public Fund monies and the management of Public Fund assets.~~

35. Operation of the Public Fund

- (1) Requirements of the Public Fund. The association must inform the Department responsible for the environment as soon as possible if (a) it changes its name or the name of its public fund; or (b) there is any change to the membership of the management committee of the public fund; or (c) there has been any departure from the model rules for public funds located in the Guidelines to the Register of Environmental Organisations.*
- (2) Ministerial Rules. The association agrees to comply with any rules that the Treasurer and the Minister with responsibility for the environment may make to ensure that gifts made to the fund are only used for its principal purpose.*
- (3) Not-for-Profit. The income and property of the association shall be used and applied solely in promotion of its objects and no portion shall be distributed, paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or by way of profit to members, directors, or trustees of the association.*
- (4) Conduit Policy. Any allocation of funds or property to other persons or organisations will be made in accordance with the established purposes of the association and not be influenced by the preference of the donor.*
- (5) Winding-up. In case of the winding-up of the Fund, any surplus assets are to be transferred to another fund with similar objectives that is on the Register of Environmental Organisations.*
- (6) Statistical Information. Statistical information requested by the Department on donations to the Public Fund will be provided within four months of the end of the financial year. An audited financial statement for the association and its public fund will be supplied with the annual statistical return. The statement will provide information on the expenditure of public fund monies and the management of public fund assets.*

**AGM AGENDA ITEM 8b:
Election of FOG committee.**

Here are some notes to help you decide to nominate to join the FOG committee.

Being on the FOG committee

AGM time is great, because it often brings new members onto the committee, with fresh ideas. However, only a few people volunteer for the committee. Why? Perhaps you have wondered what we do.

The committee meets every second month, at 5.30–7.30 pm. Sometimes we go to a local restaurant afterwards. Meetings are often at the Conservation Council office in Lena Karmel Lodge (parking is just across the road), and other times we meet at the President’s house. Meetings are pretty standard for committees: we work through the agenda and someone takes minutes, which are later circulated via Dropbox; and there is good camaraderie.

The big benefit of being on the FOG committee is that one gets better access to environment events and information. This includes other relevant groups’ newsletters, and invitations to FOG to attend openings, launches, etc., which come in to the President or Secretary who then forward them to the rest of us.

It is also easier to learn about FOG, and discuss aspects of FOG’s activities and operations, when you are on the committee. That is not just because it is convenient to discuss things with a group you know is committed to FOG’s welfare. It’s also because we do not want to be seen as nuisance spammers, sending out multiple emails to the whole membership about matters that may not interest everyone.

However, we *do* want to involve more members in activities. We do not want to be seen as an ‘in group’ that excludes other 180 (or so) members. *Your suggestions are keenly looked for.*

For instance, it would be much better if more FOG members were attracted to attend FOG activities – and so we would like to hear what everyone wants in return for our \$20 membership fees.

What about the newsletter, e-bulletin and website? Changes may be in the wind (like some grass pollen) and we hope to form a steering group – which need not necessarily comprise only the committee!

Talk to us! Join in!

See you soon...

Ann Milligan (newsletter person)