

1.4 JOINT MANAGEMENT

Joint Management is about Traditional Owners and the Parks and Wildlife Service working together in order to achieve their shared goals and aspirations, exchanging their knowledge and expertise, solving problems and sharing decisions.

In 2005 the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act* was amended to provide for joint management of 27 parks and reserves that were subject to the *Parks and Reserves (Framework for the Future) Act*, often called the 'Framework Act'. The *Act* provided for the settlement of land and/or native title claims over these areas and created the framework for their joint management. Judbarra is one of the parks subject to the new joint management arrangements.

The land comprising Gregory National Park is held by a number of Aboriginal Land Trusts on behalf of Traditional Owners under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*. The land has been leased back to the Northern Territory for 99 years. This Joint Management Plan has force in law under the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act*. It must also comply with several leasesⁱⁱ and Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs)ⁱⁱⁱ registered under the *Native Title Act*.

Selected parts of the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act* are included in Appendix 2. Briefly, the *Act* defines the joint management partners of a park or reserve as the Northern Territory, or a body nominated by the Territory as its representative, and the traditional Aboriginal owners of the park or reserve.

Section 25AB of the *Act* states:

The objective of joint management of a park or reserve is to jointly establish an equitable partnership to manage and maintain the park or reserve as part of a comprehensive and representative system of parks and reserves in the Territory and for the following purposes:

- (a) Benefiting both the traditional Aboriginal owners of the park or reserve and the wider community;*
- (b) Protecting biological diversity;*
- (c) Serving visitor and community needs for education and enjoyment.*

The *Act* also establishes the requirements of Joint Management Plans and the role of the Land Councils in assisting joint management by representing and protecting the interests of the Traditional Owners in relation to the Park's management.

ⁱⁱ Four Leases exist for the Park – Wombardi, Winan, Nalipinkak and Bilinarra-Jutpurra.

ⁱⁱⁱ Three ILUAs exist for the Park – Gregory NP (NLC), Gregory NP (CLC) and Gregory's Tree Historical Reserve.