Minister for Parks and Wildlife Matt Conlan said creating a better experience for visitors and tourists would be the priority of a new management plan for one of the Territory’s most popular recreation spots.

Mr Conlan today released a new Draft Plan of Management for the Howard Springs Nature Park and encouraged all Territorians to have their say on how the park should be managed and developed over the next 10 years.

“Howard Springs Nature Park is one of the Top End’s great attractions and this new management plan will ensure it stays that way now and into the future,” Mr Conlan said.

“The Draft Plan will play an important role in the ongoing protection of the natural environment at the park and long-term management of the facility.

“Our parks and reserves are key drawcards for tourists to the Territory so a major focus of the Plan will be on providing quality facilities and activities at the park to create a better overall experience for visitors.”

The Howard Springs Nature Park has been a popular recreation site since World War Two and last year attracted 134,000 visitors.

The new Draft Plan proposes that the Park be managed and developed as a tourism and family destination providing the local community and visitors with an opportunity to relax, picnic and enjoy natural wildlife and scenery close to Darwin and Palmerston.

Key strategies include development of a new Ranger’s office and kiosk, development of a boardwalk to the springs, promoting more public involvement and interaction with the Park through education signage, protection of the natural environment through targeted programs to control weeds, fire and feral animals and implementing a Waterhole Management Plan to maintain a healthy aquatic ecosystem in the Waterhole.

“The Waterhole has been closed to swimming since 2007 due to poor water quality and risks to public health and the Draft Plan will continue this initiative to ensure visitor safety,” Mr Conlan said.

“The Plan aims to further enhance the shallow rock pools as an alternative way for visitors to cool off at the Park by implementing shade structures over the pools.

“The Waterhole will be continued to be promoted as an opportunity for visitors to view aquatic wildlife unique to the Territory such as barramundi, turtles and other fish with plans to implement more educational material around the Park to enhance this experience.

“Another safety initiative of the Plan is to ban glass around the toddler’s pool and eastern side of the waterhole including the shallow rock pools and playground areas.
MATT CONLAN MLA | Member for GREATOREX

“With more visitors expected at the Park, banning glass where young children play will give mums and dads piece of mind their kids can cool off safely.”

Glass containers will be permitted within the picnic areas on the western side of the waterhole and signage will be put up to inform visitors of the new ‘glass free’ areas.

“These suggested improvements in the Draft Plan will make the Howard Springs Nature Park an even better attraction for Territory families and tourists to enjoy,” Mr Conlan said.

“I urge all Territorians to read the Draft Plan and provide feedback. All feedback will be considered and is essential to ensure the community’s views are incorporated into the long-term management of the Park.”


Interested members of the public, community and user groups can read the Draft Plan at: www.parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/consult

The Draft Plan will be open for feedback for approximately one month until 7 September. The Parks and Wildlife Commission will consider all public comments and amend the draft as appropriate.

Written submissions can be emailed to parkplanning@nt.gov.au or for more information please call 89994555.

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