

FUTURE DIRECTIONS ROADMAP



NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NSW
protecting nature through community action



A Three-Year Program of Organisational Renewal

September 2026

Photo: David Gallan

Executive Summary

The National Parks Association of NSW has been protecting nature through community action for nearly 70 years. It has played a part in the protection of nearly every conservation reserve in NSW, helping grow the protected area network from 1% in 1957 to about 10% in 2022. It most recently contributed to the announcement of the Great Koala National Park: one of the most significant conservation achievements in the state's history. NPA's expertise, credibility and conservation track record are genuinely remarkable, and they remain the foundation on which everything else is built.

This roadmap is about ensuring that foundation is strong enough to carry NPA's ambitions for the next 70 years.

The organisation faces real and significant challenges. Membership has declined by nearly 60% since 1989, with losses accelerating to more than 200 members per year. Because the vast majority of NPA's financial support comes from members, through subscriptions, donations and bequests, this decline directly affects the organisation's capacity to deliver on its conservation mission. These are not new problems, and NPA has the commitment to address them directly, deliberately and with the resources needed to do the job properly.

The Future Directions Renewal Roadmap represents NPA's response: a structured, three-year program of organisational renewal built on eleven interconnected priorities. It has been developed through a rigorous process of review,

analysis and workshop deliberation, and it is grounded in an honest assessment of where NPA stands and what it will take to thrive. The priorities span understanding members, clarifying identity, strengthening fundraising, modernising governance, building public profile, and deepening government relationships, all of the organisational foundations that will allow NPA to do more of what it does best.

Progress will be tracked through a dedicated tracking framework maintained by the Future Directions Coordinator, with oversight provided by the Future Directions Working Group and regular reporting to the Executive and State Council.

NPA has made a deliberate investment in this renewal work. Its mission remains as compelling as ever, the future direction is now clearly mapped, and staff, members and supporters have the clarity and pathways they need to contribute to achieving it.

The timing is right. The conservation landscape is shifting, the political moment is favourable, and NPA has the standing to shape what comes next. A stronger, better resourced and more visible NPA will protect more nature, connect more people with the natural world, and advocate more effectively.

1. Why Change Is Needed

THE NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NSW FACES SIGNIFICANT AND URGENT CHALLENGES.

Membership has declined from a maximum of 8,150 in 1989 to approximately 3,290 today, a loss of nearly 60%. During the same period, population increased by 50%. Over the past two years, the rate of decline has accelerated to 15–20 members per month, with net losses averaging over 200 members annually. This decline directly impacts donations, bequests, and overall income, challenging NPA's long-term capacity to deliver on its conservation mission.

The Future Directions Working Group's comprehensive review through regular meetings and themed workshops confirmed there are no untapped 'magic bullet' funding solutions. Most donations and bequests come from existing members, making member engagement the critical driver of financial sustainability. While NPA's protected area advocacy remains our core strength, competition for public attention from prominent organisations such as the NCC, WWF, Wilderness Australia, Bush Heritage and the Bob Brown Foundation is intensifying. A multitude of newer and smaller organisations are also exploiting niches that we have failed to identify or occupy.

To remain viable and effective, NPA must differentiate itself within NSW's crowded conservation landscape by strengthening our identity, diversifying engagement opportunities, enhancing our public profile, and building deeper relationships with members, government, and philanthropic partners.

Critically, the vast majority of NPA's financial support comes from its members — through subscriptions, donations and bequests. This means that growing membership is not only a conservation and engagement priority; it is the most direct path to cultivating our own next generation of members, supporters and donors supporting our long-term financial sustainability.

2. Strategic Response:

The Future Directions Renewal Roadmap represents a structured program to address fundamental organisational challenges while building lasting capacity for the future. This is a comprehensive approach to organisational renewal that will position NPA for long-term sustainability and impact.

The roadmap is built on eleven interconnected priorities (see in section table 7.3) that address the full spectrum of current organisational challenges outlined below:

Foundation Work establishes the clarity and understanding needed for effective change. This includes clarifying NPA's distinctive identity and purpose, conducting research to understand what does and doesn't motivate people to join and stay, and implementing a robust change management strategy that recognises the strength of feeling members hold about NPA's identity and traditions, and works with that feeling rather than against it, to build shared commitment to the changes ahead.

Member Engagement & Retention focuses on stopping membership decline through improved onboarding, presenting clearer value propositions, and diversifying nature-based activities so that they directly support our dual nature conservation and appreciation mission. This includes piloting citizen science, conservation-focused walks, Bushcare, marine monitoring, and other activities that clearly differentiate NPA from outdoor recreation clubs.

But growing support from members is not simply a numbers game. It is also a function of how interested in and committed to NPA's objectives members feel. A member who is deeply engaged, who participates in campaigns, attends events, serves on a committee, or gives regularly, is worth far more to the organisation than a passive subscriber. The real challenge, then, is not only to grow the membership but to provide meaningful pathways for more members to become more deeply involved: whether through committees, campaigns, events, advocacy, or financial support. Member engagement and financial sustainability are two sides of the same coin.

Contemporary Fundraising evolves NPA's approach from transactional giving toward a strategic, relationship-driven model that builds sustainable revenue while deepening donor engagement with conservation outcomes. The priority focus areas are bequests and legacy giving, where NPA's membership profile and conservation credibility create significant untapped potential regular and monthly giving programs, project-specific crowd funding tied to NPA's campaigns, and philanthropic foundation relationships. Underpinning all of this is a commitment to systematic donor stewardship: ensuring that supporters feel genuinely connected to NPA's work and can see the impact of their contribution. The full fundraising program will be shaped by the member survey, which will test attitudes to different fundraising approaches before they are deployed at scale.

The Renewal Roadmap

Strategic Partnerships strengthens NPA's capacity through deeper relationships with philanthropic foundations, enhanced voice in government beyond NPWS, and support for branches to secure grants. This positions NPA to access new funding streams while increasing our influence on conservation policy and practice.

Public Profile & Visibility addresses NPA's need to maintain leadership visibility in the conservation work we champion, strengthen our media presence, and ensure our distinctive contributions remain recognised. This goes beyond what has traditionally been understood as campaigning, a push for a new national park or against a development in an existing one. NPA's public profile must reflect its areas of genuine specialisation and leadership within the broader conservation movement: championing the importance of Protected Areas, extending the protected area network into the marine estate, and lifting the overall ambition for PA creation towards, and potentially beyond, the 30 by 30 goals to which Australia has committed.

Sustaining that profile requires protocols for collaborative campaigns that maintain NPA's prominence and strategies for sustaining momentum after individual wins. It requires that NPA's outward-facing communications channels are of the highest quality, current, and reaching the audiences that matter: the website, social media, media spokespersons, media presence, and publications. These are the primary means by which NPA is seen, known and trusted by the public, by government, and by the conservation community.

Operational Effectiveness streamlines publications, reviews internal structures, reallocates resources from low-value to high-impact activities, and ensures governance supports rather than hinders progress. This includes the website redevelopment that will provide a contemporary face to the public and easier pathways for engagement. By no means of least importance will be renewal of NPA's governance arrangements. To grow participation, we need to make our internal workings much easier to understand and navigate.

This raises a question worth naming explicitly: who is the target of all this? There is an ongoing and legitimate debate within NPA about whether the primary focus should be members, those who have made a formal commitment to the organisation through subscription, or the broader category of supporters, who may engage with NPA's work, attend events, donate, and advocate without ever joining. The two are not mutually exclusive, and both matter. They require different strategies, different channels, and different measures of success. Part of the work ahead is to resolve this question with sufficient clarity to make good decisions about where to direct effort and investment.

3. Implementation Approach

The roadmap will be implemented by a dedicated Future Directions Coordinator (0.6 FTE) over an initial two-year period, with potential extension at this point to three years based on progress. The Coordinator will work across the organisation, with staff, branches, committees, the Executive and State Council, to drive change through both hands-on implementation and support and facilitation of others' work.

This investment of \$120,000 per annum (including salary, on-costs, and operating budget) provides a focused capacity. Existing staff and volunteer resources are stretched managing business-as-usual operations and require assistance to deliver the transformational change while maintaining current programs.

The timing is strategic. This foundational work will directly inform NPA's next strategic planning process in 2027, providing insights into member needs, tested approaches to engagement, and clearer organisational identity. The anticipated timeframe recognises that sustainable organisational change cannot be rushed but requires structured effort, regular evaluation, and adjustment based on learning.

4. Change Management: The Critical Success Factor

The roadmap explicitly addresses a fundamental reality: many issues have been identified for years or decades, and there are long-held views about what NPA should be and how it should operate. Without deliberate change management, even well-designed initiatives will struggle.

The change management strategy will provide the scaffolding for transformation through transparent communication, genuine engagement within clear decision-making boundaries, early identification and support of champions, honest acknowledgment of concerns, quick wins to build credibility, and regular monitoring and adjustment based on feedback and results.

This approach balances care for people and their attachment to current ways with the courage to make difficult decisions in service of organisational sustainability. It recognises that not everyone will embrace change but focuses energy on building sufficient momentum with those who can see the need and opportunity.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Over the medium term, NPA can anticipate:
- Stabilised then growing membership in line with stronger public profile, clearer value proposition, wider appeal and diversified engagement options
- Membership growth in niches that are presently not being tapped
- Enhanced member satisfaction through better understanding and responsiveness to member interests and needs
- New, sustainable revenue streams from contemporary fundraising, philanthropic partnerships, and grants
- Improved donor retention through systematic stewardship and appealing opportunities to contribute to NPA's full range of work, not only conservation campaigns but also connecting communities to nature and expanding the extent and role of Protected Areas
- Stronger public profile with NPA recognised as a leading voice for nature protection and appreciation in NSW, and as the go-to organisation for expertise on Protected Areas
- Measurable progress on NPA's core conservation objectives: growing the Protected Area network, extending protection into the marine estate, and strengthening community connection to nature across the state
- Deeper stakeholder relationships expanding NPA's influence
- More efficient operations with resources directed toward high-impact activities
- Branch capacity strengthened through grants support and clearer connection to organisational strategy
- Organisational culture shift toward adaptation, innovation, and external focus
- Strong foundation for 2027 strategic planning with tested approaches and clear identity.

5. Investment Rationale

NPA is able to undertake this strengthening work. We have sufficient financial capacity to make a strategic investment in organisational renewal, a mission that remains relevant and compelling, recognised expertise and credibility in advocacy, and a network of passionate members and volunteers ready to contribute when provided with clear pathways and support.

The alternative to investment is continued decline. Without intervention, current trends suggest that NPA's organisational capacity, membership base and long-term sustainability will continue to erode, placing increasing pressure on the organisation's ability to fulfil its mission.

The investment proposed through the Future Directions program is modest relative to both the risks of inaction and the potential benefits that successful renewal can deliver. The program combines dedicated implementation capacity through a Future Directions Coordinator with investment in the enabling systems and infrastructure required to support stronger member engagement, communications, fundraising and organisational effectiveness.

The level of investment required to implement the roadmap will be considered through NPA's annual budget process and approved by State Council as part of the organisation's normal governance arrangements. Expenditure and progress against the roadmap will be reported regularly through Future Directions progress reports, enabling State Council, the Executive and

members to monitor implementation, outcomes and the effectiveness of the investment over time.

This is not expenditure designed to maintain the status quo. It is a strategic investment in organisational renewal that seeks to address underlying causes rather than symptoms. The roadmap provides clear priorities, realistic staging of implementation, regular evaluation points, and accountability through reporting to the Executive, the Future Directions Working Group, State Council and members. By investing now, NPA has the opportunity to strengthen its foundations, build resilience and position itself for long-term growth and impact.

6. Our Path Forward

The Future Directions Renewal Roadmap provides NPA with a structured path to address fundamental sustainability challenges while building capacity for greater impact. It balances ambition with realism, recognising what can be achieved with dedicated but modest resources. Most importantly, it positions NPA not just to survive but to thrive as a trusted voice for nature protection and appreciation in NSW.

State Council endorsement of the roadmap and associated funding enables NPA to move from identifying problems to implementing solutions, from incremental adjustment to transformational change, and from concerning decline to confident renewal.

The work begins with clarity about who we are and what makes us distinctive, builds through enhanced engagement and contemporary practices, and results in a stronger, more sustainable NPA capable of delivering on our mission for decades to come.

7. Renewal Roadmap Activities

7.1 Strategic Plan Alignment

NPA's Strategic Plan 2023–2027 is built around three overarching priorities: protecting, restoring and connecting natural areas across NSW; promoting, experiencing and appreciating nature; and building a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation.

The Future Directions Renewal Roadmap addresses the third of these priorities directly, but it serves all three. An organisation in membership decline, with weakening public profile, ageing governance and under-resourced staff, cannot effectively protect nature, advocate for Protected Areas, or connect communities with the natural world. The renewal work is not separate from NPA's conservation mission. It is the foundation that makes that mission possible.

Section 7.3 maps each of the eleven priorities to the relevant Strategic Plan priority or priorities and explains the specific strategic link. Where a priority primarily serves 'Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation', this should be understood as enabling the other two priorities rather than displacing them. NPA's commitments under the other two Strategic Plan priorities — to protect, restore and connect natural areas across NSW, and to promote, experience and appreciate nature — remain as vital as ever. NPA will continue to advocate for an end to logging in public forests, for no-take marine protected areas, and to deliver a premier bushwalking program. The purpose of this Renewal Roadmap is to strengthen the organisation's capacity to pursue those goals more effectively and sustainably: a more resilient NPA is a more powerful force for conservation.

7.2 How We Prioritised

With eleven interconnected priorities across a three-year program, the question of sequencing is not merely practical, it is strategic. The order in which priorities are addressed determines whether the work builds on itself or stalls. Four criteria guided the sequencing of this roadmap:

Foundational dependency: does other work depend on this being done first? Some priorities are prerequisites; others can only succeed once foundational work is in place

Urgency: how quickly does this need to happen given membership decline and the financial trajectory? Some things cannot wait two years

Organisational readiness: does NPA currently have, or can it quickly develop, the capacity to deliver this well? A priority that is right in principle but impossible to resource in the near term may need to be sequenced later

Strategic impact: how directly does this move the needle on NPA's core challenges: membership, financial sustainability, public profile, and conservation outcomes?

Applying these criteria produces three broad phases:

Priorities 1–4 are Year One essentials. Understanding members, clarifying identity, establishing change management practice, and rebuilding the website are prerequisites for almost everything else. They must come first because the evidence and foundations they create will shape all subsequent decisions.

Without Priority 1 (member survey), Priority 6 (fundraising) risks introducing techniques that alienate rather than attract. Without Priority 2 (identity), Priority 4 (website) risks building the wrong public face.

Priorities 5–8 build capability across Years One and Two. These priorities depend on foundational work being underway but can begin to be scoped and designed in Year One. Priority 7 (Governance Review) is a partial exception; some governance matters are sufficiently urgent to warrant early action in Year One even while the full review follows in Year Two.

Priorities 9–11 are important but appropriately sequenced to Year Two and beyond. Publications review, organisational alignment, and voice in government are genuine priorities, but they benefit from, and depend on, the identity, member understanding and cultural shift work that comes first.

This sequencing is a starting point, not a fixed plan. It should be reviewed regularly as the program progresses, and new information emerges from the member survey, the identity work, and the experience of implementation.

7.3 Priority Overview — Strategic Alignment and Sequencing

The following table provides an at-a-glance view of all eleven priorities, their strategic alignment, the Future Directions theme they address, their implementation year, and their lead. Detailed activities and success measures for each priority follow in Section 7.4.

Priority Overview

Strategic Alignment and Sequencing

Priority	Strategic Plan	FD Theme	Year
Priority 1 Understand Members	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Foundation work Member engagement & retention	1
Priority 2 Clarify Identity and Purpose	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Foundation work Public profile & visibility	1
Priority 3 Change Management and Cultural Shift	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Foundation work	1
Priority 4 Website Redevelopment	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Operational effectiveness Public profile & visibility	1
Priority 5 Address Membership Decline and Diversify Engagement	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Member engagement & retention	1-2
Priority 6 Contemporary Fundraising	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Contemporary fundraising	1-2
Priority 7 Governance Review	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Foundation work Operational effectiveness	1-2
Priority 8 Strengthen Public Profile and Visibility	All three strategic priorities	Public profile & visibility Strategic partnerships	1-2
Priority 9 Organisational Alignment and Capacity	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Operational effectiveness	2
Priority 10 Publications Review and Streamlining	Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation	Operational effectiveness Public profile & visibility	2
Priority 11 Developing Relationships and Influence	Protect, restore and connect	Strategic partnerships	2

Lead	Strategic Link
Richard Liz and Ian Membership Committee.	Understanding our members is the prerequisite for all other renewal work. Without it, decisions about identity, engagement and fundraising are made on assumption.
FD Chair, Coordinator + Executive	A clear and compelling identity is foundational to attracting members, building public profile, and differentiating NPA in a crowded conservation landscape.
FD Chair, Coordinator + Project Leader	Without deliberate change management, even well-designed initiatives will fail. This establishes the scaffolding for all other renewal work.
Richard + CEO + staff	The website is NPA's primary public face and the main pathway for joining, donating and engaging. Directly supports member engagement and public profile.
FD Coordinator, Secretary + membership committee, staff	Stopping membership decline is the most urgent financial and organisational challenge NPA faces. Directly linked to financial sustainability and conservation capacity.
Secretary; Executive project	Diversifying revenue is essential for long-term sustainability. Follows member survey work which will test member attitudes to new fundraising approaches.
Exec + CEO	Some governance matters require urgent attention in Year One; full constitutional review follows in Year Two. Fit-for-purpose governance is foundational to effectiveness.
CEO + staff	A stronger public profile serves all three strategic priorities, attracting members, building government relationships, and maintaining NPA's conservation leadership.
CEO + staff	Ensuring roles and resources are aligned to deliver the renewal agenda. Follows identity and strategy work which will give this clear direction.
CEO + staff	Streamlining publications frees resources for higher-impact work. Should follow identity work so the right publishing approach reflects who NPA is.
CEO	Deeper relationships expand NPA's conservation influence. Builds on stronger identity and public profile established in Years One and Two.

7.4 Priority Activities

The following sections set out the detail for each of the eleven priorities in implementation order. The majority of priorities align with the strategic plan theme of 'Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation.' This is deliberate. As noted in Section 7.1, the organisational renewal work is the precondition for NPA being able to pursue its conservation and nature appreciation missions with full effectiveness. A stronger, more resilient NPA is a more powerful force for nature. Each priority is also explicitly linked to the relevant action or actions within the strategic plan, so that the connection between this roadmap and NPA's existing strategic commitments is clear throughout.

Priority 1: Understand Members

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — prerequisite for all other renewal work

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of providing new members with opportunities to contribute to NPA activities, advice and advocacy, and ensuring the Member and Supporter Development program is promoted and attractive to a new and younger generation and members of diverse communities. It is also the essential foundation for almost every other priority in this roadmap, without a clear understanding of who our members are, what they value, and what they need, decisions about identity, engagement, fundraising and communications rest on assumption rather than evidence.

Scope of work

A comprehensive survey of the member base across three groups: current members (what motivated them to join and stay?); discontinued members (what motivated them to leave?); and potential members in untapped niches (what would motivate them to join and stay?). The survey will also capture member interests, priorities and values; what they want to get out of NPA membership; and barriers to deeper engagement. Findings will be used to analyse member segmentation, bushwalkers, conservationists, naturalists and others, and

their engagement patterns, and to map the line of sight from State Council strategy to branch activities. Insights from this work will directly shape all other priorities in the roadmap.

Activities

- Commission and design the member survey, drawing on professional survey expertise where appropriate
- Conduct the survey across current, discontinued and potential member cohorts
- Analyse results, including segmentation analysis and engagement patterns
- Map the line of sight from State Council strategy to branch activities
- Report findings to the Future Directions Working Group and Executive, with clear implications for subsequent priorities.

Success measures

- Member survey completed within Year One
- Response rates sufficient to support meaningful segmentation analysis across member cohorts
- Findings reported to the Working Group and Executive with actionable recommendations
- Insights demonstrably informing decisions under subsequent priorities, particularly Priority 2 (identity), Priority 5 (membership engagement) and Priority 6 (fundraising).

Priority 2: Clarify Identity and Purpose

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — foundational to member engagement, public profile and differentiation

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of effective agenda setting engagement with all levels of government, community-based advocacy and a strong and diverse media profile and enhancing NPA's profile and effectiveness as an advocate for nature through collaboration and partnership with local communities and conservation organisations. A clear and compelling identity is the precondition for all

of these, NPA cannot project a strong public presence, build effective partnerships, or attract a new generation of members without first being able to answer clearly who it is and why it matters.

Scope of work

This priority addresses the foundational questions of organisational identity: who is NPA, and what makes it distinctive in a crowded conservation landscape? What do members, supporters, government and the broader public currently understand NPA to be, and is that understanding accurate? How does NPA articulate its dual mission of nature protection and nature appreciation in a way that is compelling, consistent and recognisable? The work spans brand audit, positioning, name and tagline evaluation, and relaunch, and its outputs will directly inform the website redevelopment under Priority 4 and NPA's public profile work under Priority 8.

Activities

- Conduct a brand audit to assess how NPA is currently perceived by members, supporters, government, and the broader public
- Develop a clear positioning statement that articulates NPA's distinctive contribution, with a focus on its leadership in the Protected Areas space: their promotion, establishment, protection, and the opportunities they provide to connect people with nature
- Differentiate NPA clearly from outdoor recreation clubs and from other conservation organisations operating in an increasingly crowded landscape
- Create internal alignment across staff, branches and committees on mission articulation and messaging, building shared understanding of 'who we are and why it matters'
- Evaluate whether the NPA name helps or hinders the organisation's ability to project a distinct and recognisable public identity, and whether it reflects NPA's dual purpose of nature protection and nature appreciation, noting that name changes elsewhere in the sector have not always produced differentiation, and care is needed to ensure

any change genuinely strengthens NPA's position rather than adding to the noise

- Develop a tagline or elevator pitch that reflects both nature protection and nature appreciation, this is a priority in its own right, separate from any formal name change process, as the current tagline ('protecting nature through community action', in use since 2008) captures only one half of NPA's dual mission
- If a name change is warranted, determine a process for selecting a name and consider any required transitional arrangements, including acquiring a business name
- Review logo, tagline and visual branding in light of the above
- Once identity is clarified and brand refreshed, launch the rebranded entity with a coordinated communications strategy.

Success measures

- Brand audit completed and findings reported to the Executive and Working Group
- Clear positioning statement developed and endorsed, articulating NPA's distinctive contribution and dual mission
- Name and tagline question resolved, with outcome, whether change or affirmation, formally decided and communicated to members
- Visual branding reviewed and updated to reflect refreshed identity
- Internal alignment achieved across staff, branches and committees on mission articulation and messaging
- Relaunch executed with coordinated communications strategy
- Member and stakeholder feedback indicates improved clarity about who NPA is and what it stands for.

Priority 3: Change Management and Cultural Shift

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — the scaffolding that enables our renewal work

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of encouraging a new generation to take on leadership roles within the organisation and implementing a volunteer development and management approach that encourages program participants to become active contributors to the work of NPA. It also provides the scaffolding without which the other ten priorities are unlikely to succeed — even well-designed initiatives falter without deliberate attention to how change is managed and how people are brought along.

Scope of work

At the heart of NPA's renewal is a commitment to becoming an organisation that offers genuine, meaningful opportunities for members and supporters to contribute to securing the future of nature in NSW. Every change we make should be tested against that commitment: does this make NPA a more worthy investment of members' time, energy and resources? If yes, we proceed. If not, we reconsider.

This is the driving principle of our approach to cultural change, not change for its own sake, but change in service of a clearer, stronger, more accessible NPA. The scope of this priority encompasses the questions that must be honestly engaged: what are the cultural patterns or habits that have held NPA back, and how do we name them without blame? What does a healthier organisational culture look and feel like, and how will we know when we are living it? How do we bring members, branches, staff and committees along through change in a way that builds trust rather than eroding it?

Activities

- Develop a change management approach grounded in genuine respect for NPA's traditions and the depth of feeling members hold about the organisation's identity, working with that attachment to build shared commitment to the changes ahead
- Create opportunities for open dialogue about the renewal program, its rationale, its priorities and its progress, so that members, staff, branches and committees feel genuinely part of the conversation
- Build understanding and confidence in the renewal agenda through transparent communication, early engagement and honest acknowledgment of the complexity of organisational change
- Build a champions network across branches and committees, people who understand the need for change and can model and advocate for it in their communities
- Communicate early and often about the reasoning behind changes, so that people are not surprised and do not feel decisions are being made over their heads
- Celebrate small wins and visible progress to build confidence and momentum
- Address concerns transparently and involve people in designing solutions wherever possible
- Provide support and training for new ways of working
- Establish regular feedback loops so that the approach can be adjusted based on what is being learned

Success measures

- Change management approach developed and operational in Year One
- Champions network established across branches and committees
- Regular feedback loops in place and informing adjustments to the program
- Staff, branches and committees report feeling informed about and engaged with the renewal program
- Evidence of cultural shift toward adaptation, innovation and external focus, as measured through member and staff feedback over the life of the program.

Priority 4: Website Redevelopment

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — NPA's primary public face and pathway for joining, donating and engaging

This priority will address the strategic plan action of effective agenda setting engagement with all levels of government, community-based advocacy and a strong and diverse media profile. A contemporary, well-functioning website is the foundation of NPA's public presence, it is the primary means by which potential members, donors, government contacts and the broader public encounter the organisation, and the main pathway through which existing members engage, join, give and stay connected.

Scope of work

NPA's website is often the first encounter a potential member, donor or ally has with the organisation. It is also the primary tool through which existing members access information, engage with conservation campaigns, and stay connected. A redeveloped website is a strategic asset, one that can strengthen NPA's public presence, make it easier to join and give, and bring the organisation's conservation work to life for a wider audience.

While this priority is sequenced after the identity work of Priority 2, in practice some elements may proceed concurrently. The identity work will inform the website brief and design direction, and the two streams should remain in close communication to ensure the redeveloped site reflects NPA's emerging sense of who it is and what it stands for. The scope of this priority encompasses the core questions the redevelopment must answer: does the website communicate who NPA is and why it matters, clearly and immediately? How easy is it for someone new to join, and are there obvious pathways for deeper engagement? Does the site bring conservation outcomes and member stories to life in ways that inspire and connect?

Activities

- Review the current website against NPA's strategic needs, drawing on insights from the member survey (Priority 1) and the identity work (Priority 2)
- Develop a website brief reflecting NPA's refreshed identity, including joining pathways, member engagement, conservation storytelling, and donation functionality
- Manage the redevelopment with appropriate volunteer and staff capacity in place
- Update website content as part of the redevelopment, including conservation campaign pages, branch information, and member resources
- Establish an ongoing content governance approach so the site remains current and accurate after launch

Success measures

- Website redeveloped and launched, reflecting NPA's refreshed identity
- Joining process simplified and measurably easier
- Increase in online memberships and donations in the twelve months following launch
- Positive member feedback on usability and content

Priority 5: Address Membership Decline & Diversify Engagement

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — addressing the most urgent financial and conservation capacity challenge NPA faces

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of ensuring the Member and Supporter Development program is promoted, attractive and available to a new and younger generation and members of diverse communities, ensuring effective administration of the program through dedicated staff support and efficient use of systems, and providing new members with opportunities to contribute to NPA activities, advice and advocacy. Stopping membership decline is the most urgent financial and organisational challenge NPA faces, and diversifying engagement is the most promising pathway to reversing it.

Scope of work

This priority focuses on halting membership decline and building the conditions for sustainable growth. It addresses both the immediate challenge of member attrition and the longer-term opportunity to diversify engagement so that NPA is genuinely accessible and appealing to a wider range of people. Growing support from members is not simply a numbers game, it is also a function of how interested in and committed to NPA's objectives members feel. A member who participates in campaigns, attends events, serves on a committee, or gives regularly is worth far more to the organisation than a passive subscriber. The real challenge is not only to grow the membership but to provide meaningful pathways for more members to become more deeply involved, whether through committees, campaigns, events, advocacy, or financial support. Member engagement and financial sustainability are two sides of the same coin.

Activities

- Improve member onboarding and welcome processes based on survey insights from Priority 1
- Strengthen messaging about what makes NPA distinctive, drawing on identity work from Priority 2
- Create a clearer member journey and value proposition
- Pilot one or two new low-cost engagement activities, which may include citizen science projects such as bird counts, koala sightings and frog surveys that feed into advocacy; conservation-focused nature walks that identify threatened species, explain habitat importance and link to current campaigns; Bushcare and habitat restoration activities; photo exhibitions and competitions with conservation themes; marine monitoring programs; and online natural history webinars connecting observation to protection
- Develop a donor stewardship program, potentially involving invitations to campaign-related field work, select briefings from the CEO or President, mentored engagement with conservation committees, and other special events.

Success measures

- Evidence of membership growth in previously untapped niches, including younger age groups, diverse communities and new interest-based segments
- Measurable reduction in membership attrition rate year on year
- Increase in new member recruitment, particularly among younger age groups and diverse communities
- Positive member feedback on onboarding experience and sense of connection to NPA's work
- At least one new engagement activity piloted and evaluated in Year One
- Growth in donor retention and average giving

Priority 6: Contemporary Fundraising Strategy

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — diversifying revenue to sustain conservation work and organisational capacity

This priority will address the strategic plan action of continuing to seek new sources of donations and bequests and will also support the broader objective of ensuring NPA has the financial sustainability to pursue its conservation mission over the long term. Evolving NPA's fundraising approach from transactional giving toward a strategic, relationship-driven model is both a financial imperative and an opportunity to deepen the connection between donors and NPA's conservation work.

Scope of work

This priority seeks to evolve NPA's fundraising from transactional giving toward a strategic, relationship-driven model that maximises sustainable revenue and strengthens engagement with conservation outcomes. It requires both ambition and self-knowledge. Many techniques used effectively by other organisations, urgency-driven appeals, donate buttons on all content, matched contribution campaigns, cold outreach, cause-specific sponsorship programs, have real capacity to generate revenue. But NPA is not a mass-market conservation brand. Its membership has a strong and legitimate sense of what NPA is and how it behaves, and fundraising approaches that feel out of character carry genuine risk: damaged trust, reduced engagement, and a net cost rather than a net gain.

Before introducing new fundraising techniques at scale, NPA needs to understand how its members and supporters will actually respond to them. This makes the member survey work

under Priority 1 directly foundational here, not a nice-to-have precursor but a genuine prerequisite. The survey should specifically test attitudes to different fundraising approaches so that decisions are based on evidence rather than assumption. Where members are comfortable with a technique, NPA can proceed with confidence. Where they are not, the choice is either to adapt the approach to suit NPA's culture and tone, or to develop the capability to target those approaches only to segments of the supporter base for whom they are appropriate. The scope also encompasses the questions the working group will need to resolve: what fundraising approaches are most consistent with NPA's culture, values and membership profile? How do we build a fundraising program that deepens rather than transacts the relationship between donors and NPA's conservation work? What does NPA need to put in place, in terms of systems, skills and capacity, to support a more sophisticated and sustainable fundraising program?

Activities

- Complete a comprehensive review of current fundraising practices in Year One, covering existing revenue streams, donor engagement and retention patterns, digital fundraising capability, and gaps between current practice and contemporary approaches
- Use the member survey (Priority 1) to test member and supporter attitudes to different fundraising approaches before introducing new techniques at scale
- Develop a multi-year fundraising strategy for Executive endorsement, with clear targets, accountability, and integration with the broader renewal program
- Prioritise bequests and legacy giving as NPA's single greatest fundraising opportunity, including a structured legacy giving program with personal acknowledgment, conservation impact reporting, and field visit invitations for legacy donors

- Develop a regular giving program to convert one-off donors to monthly giving, improving revenue predictability and donor retention
- Build project-specific funding campaigns around NPA's conservation work, including the 50 Parks proposal, marine protection and the 30 by 30 agenda
- Map the philanthropic landscape for foundations aligned with protected areas, biodiversity conservation and community action.
- Support branches to access local, state and federal grants as both a fundraising and capacity-building measure
- Develop a donor stewardship approach across all giving streams, including systematic impact reporting, personalised acknowledgment, and opportunities for donors to deepen their connection to NPA's work

Success measures

- Fundraising review completed and multi-year strategy endorsed by the Executive in Year One
- Growth in bequest intentions and legacy giving program participants
- Increase in regular giving and monthly donor numbers
- New philanthropic funding secured in Year Two
- Improved donor retention rates across all giving streams
- Positive member and donor feedback on the tone and approach of NPA's fundraising
- Branches supported to access local, state and federal grants, with measurable increase in branch grant revenue over the life of the program.

Priority 7: Governance Review

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — fit-for-purpose governance is foundational to NPA's long-term effectiveness

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of overhauling, updating and more clearly articulating NPA's governance arrangements to support its long-term growth, influence and future, implementing best practice in compliance with legislative requirements applying to charities and non-government organisations, and ensuring strict compliance with work, health and safety standards in all NPA operations. Fit-for-purpose governance is not merely a compliance obligation, it is foundational to NPA's credibility, effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

Scope of work

NPA's governance documents (including the constitution and subsidiary instruments) are in need of a comprehensive review and overhaul. The contents of the constitution mostly dates from 1984 or earlier, and reflects approaches and thinking from a different era. A modern governance framework is required that is fit for purpose, supports NPA's mission, and strengthens its distinctive member-driven character. Key issues include:

- consider a change of legal structure (incorporation type)
- compatibility with the national charity regime
- revise objects to reflect societal changes over the last half a century
- change of name, if determined under Priority 2
- making internal structures and processes much more user-friendly and legible
- recognising special interest groups to complement traditional geographically-based groups
- balance between certainty and flexibility
- ensuring accountability and transparency
- ensuring structures and processes serve the organisation, not the reverse
- acceptable conduct standards for officers
- clearly written language.

Activities

- Conduct a structured review of governance arrangements according to the scope of work
- Consult with members, branches and committees to ensure that outcomes reflect NPA's distinctive character and member-driven culture
- Draft updated constitution and subsidiary instruments, incorporating outcomes of the Priority 2 identity work where relevant
- Present draft proposals to the Executive and State Council for consideration
- Submit proposals for member approval at a special general meeting, or by postal/electronic ballot
- Implement consequential measures related to registration with regulatory bodies
- Review work health and safety standards across all NPA operations as part of the broader governance review.

Success measures

Governance review completed and recommendations presented to the State Council and members within the agreed timeframe

Updated constitutional and subsidiary instruments adopted that support NPA's mission and needs for coming decades, including appropriate legal structure, charitable requirements, contemporary governance practice and retention of NPA's member-driven character

- Governance documents written in clear, accessible language
- Change of name addressed if determined under Priority 2
- Work health and safety standards reviewed and confirmed across all NPA operations
- Member feedback indicates improved understanding of and confidence in NPA's governance arrangements.

Priority 8: Strengthen Public Profile & Maintain NPA Leadership Visibility

Strategic Plan: All three strategic priorities, a stronger public profile serves conservation advocacy, nature connection and organisational sustainability

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of effective agenda setting engagement with all levels of government, community-based advocacy and a strong and diverse media profile, and enhancing NPA's profile and effectiveness as an advocate for nature through collaboration and partnership with local communities and conservation organisations. A stronger public presence serves all three of NPA's strategic priorities, it attracts members, builds the relationships needed to influence government, and maintains NPA's standing as a leading voice for conservation in NSW.

Scope of work

This priority addresses NPA's need to maintain leadership visibility in the conservation work it champions, strengthen its media presence, and ensure its distinctive contributions remain recognised. This goes beyond what has traditionally been understood as campaigning, a push for a new national park or against a development in an existing one. NPA's public profile must reflect its areas of genuine specialisation and leadership within the broader conservation movement: championing the importance of Protected Areas, extending the protected area network into the marine estate, and lifting the overall ambition for protected area creation toward, and potentially beyond, the 30 by 30 goals to which Australia has committed. Sustaining that profile requires protocols for collaborative campaigns that maintain NPA's prominence, strategies for sustaining momentum after individual wins, and outward-facing communications channels of the highest quality,

the website, social media, media spokespersons, and publications through which NPA is seen, known and trusted by the public, by government, and by the conservation community.

Activities

- Social media training for key branch leaders
- Develop a media toolkit for conservation announcements
- Establish regular member stories showcasing conservation connection
- Establish a protocol for ensuring NPA prominence in collaborative campaigns
- Develop a 'beyond the win' approach for sustaining momentum after campaign victories
- Create a systematic approach to claiming credit and maintaining profile
- Ensure NPA's distinctive voice and contributions remain visible in all advocacy work
- Identify and develop future media spokespersons, the people the media sees as the natural go-to on issues within NPA's chosen ambit.

Success measures

- Measurable increase in NPA's media mentions and social media reach year on year
- Branch leaders report increased confidence and capability in media engagement following training
- NPA prominently credited in collaborative campaigns in which it plays a leading or significant role
- Identified future media spokespersons actively engaged with media on issues within NPA's ambit
- Sustained public profile maintained following major campaign victories.

Priority 9: Organisational Alignment & Capacity

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — ensuring roles and resources are aligned to deliver the renewal agenda

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of maintaining relevant expertise, capabilities and capacity in NPA's employed workforce, and delivering effective support to State Council, the Executive, branches and committees. Ensuring that roles, resources and systems are aligned to the renewal agenda is what makes delivery of the other ten priorities possible, this is the organisational infrastructure that holds everything else together.

Scope of work

This priority ensures NPA's human and operational resources are effectively aligned to deliver on Future Directions priorities and the Strategic Plan, while supporting staff development and clear accountability. It is appropriately sequenced to Year Two, following the identity and member understanding work that will give organisational alignment its clearest direction. The work encompasses role and workload review, process simplification, accountability frameworks, and capability building, the internal scaffolding that allows the renewal program to be sustained over the full three years.

Activities

- Review roles and workloads in the context of Future Directions priorities to identify opportunities for alignment and efficiency
- Assess tasks and processes to determine where activities can be simplified, automated, or consolidated, reducing duplication and freeing capacity for strategic initiatives
- Align roles and responsibilities with organisational priorities, ensuring that key areas such as member engagement, fundraising, and profile-building receive appropriate focus and support

- Establish clear accountability and decision-making protocols to support transparent allocation of resources and clarify responsibilities across the organisation
- Integrate priorities into staff workplans so individual roles are clearly connected to strategic objectives
- Build staff capability where needed to support new ways of working, through professional development and targeted support.

Success measures

- Roles and workloads reviewed and aligned to Future Directions priorities, with any changes implemented and bedded down
- Staff workplans reflect strategic objectives and individual accountability is clear
- Measurable reduction in duplication and low-value tasks, freeing capacity for higher-impact work
- Staff capability gaps identified and addressed through professional development and targeted support.

Priority 10: Publications Review & Streamlining

Strategic Plan: Build a respected, resilient and vibrant organisation — freeing resources from low-value activities for higher-impact work

This priority will address the strategic plan action of continued provision of effective support for branches and committees, including assistance with media, information and citizen science. Streamlining NPA's publications frees staff and volunteer capacity for higher impact work and ensures that what NPA publishes is consistent with its refreshed identity and genuinely useful to its members and audiences.

Scope of work

The publication landscape has become increasingly complex. Audiences are inundated with digital content across countless channels, and traditional tools such as email and social media are often less effective for communicating in-depth material. NPA's publishing approach needs to reflect this reality, concentrating resources where they achieve the greatest communication value, while preserving the traditions and expertise that give NPA's publications their distinctive character. This priority is appropriately sequenced to Year Two, following the identity work of Priority 2, so that any revised publishing approach reflects a clear and settled sense of who NPA is and what it stands for.

- Undertake a collaborative review of NPA publications to assess reach, impact, production costs and volunteer capacity
- Streamline and strengthen NPA's publishing approach to ensure resources are concentrated where they achieve the greatest communication value
- Engage editors, contributors and volunteers throughout the process to preserve valued traditions and ensure any new approach reflects the organisation's collective expertise and commitment
- Invest in the chosen publication's success, whether print, digital or a hybrid format, through design, distribution and integration with broader communication and fundraising strategies
- Free up resources for higher-impact activities.

Success measures

- Publications review completed with clear recommendations endorsed by the Executive
- Revised publishing approach implemented, with resources concentrated in highest-impact channels
- Editors, contributors and volunteers actively engaged in the review process and supportive of the outcome
- Staff and volunteer capacity freed for higher-impact work as a result of streamlining.

Priority 11: Developing Relationships and Influence

Strategic Plan: Protect, restore and connect natural areas across NSW — deeper government relationships expand NPA's conservation influence

This priority will address the strategic plan actions of enhancing NPA's profile and effectiveness as an advocate for nature through collaboration and partnership with local communities and conservation organisations, and effective agenda setting engagement with all levels of government, community-based advocacy and a strong and diverse media profile. Deeper relationships expand NPA's conservation influence well beyond what the organisation can achieve alone, and position NPA as a trusted and authoritative partner in the NSW conservation landscape.

Scope of work

NPA's conservation impact depends not only on the quality of its advocacy but on the depth and breadth of its relationships with government, agencies and allied organisations. Building and maintaining those relationships systematically, rather than reactively, is what transforms good advocacy into lasting influence. This priority is sequenced to Year Two, building on the stronger identity and public profile established in the first year of the program. The scope encompasses relationship mapping across key government departments and agencies, identification of priority policy areas where NPA can make the greatest difference, and development of a strategic stakeholder engagement plan that guides how NPA cultivates, maintains and activates key relationships over time.

Activities

- Map key relationships needed across DCCEEW, DPHI, NPWS and beyond, identifying where NPA currently has strong connections and where gaps exist
- Identify three to four priority policy areas for increased influence, concentrating effort where NPA can make the greatest difference
- Build a strategic stakeholder engagement plan that guides how NPA cultivates, maintains and activates key relationships over time
- Position NPA as the go-to voice on protected areas and nature protection through consistent, credible and well-timed engagement.

Success measures

- Measurable progress on NPA's core conservation objectives, including growth of the Protected Area network, extension of marine protection, and strengthening of community connection to nature across the state
- Key relationship map completed and stakeholder engagement plan developed and endorsed
- Three to four priority policy areas identified and actively pursued
- Measurable increase in NPA's engagement with DCCEEW, DPHI, NPWS and other key agencies
- NPA recognised and sought out as a leading voice on protected areas and nature protection in NSW.

7.5 Tracking progress and accountability

Effective implementation of the roadmap requires clear accountability and a structured approach to monitoring progress. Without this, priorities can drift, interdependencies can be missed, and the Executive and State Council lose visibility over whether the renewal program is on track.

The following arrangements are proposed:

Future Directions Working Group

The Future Directions Working Group will provide high-level oversight of the renewal program. It will meet regularly to review progress against the roadmap, consider emerging issues and risks, and provide strategic guidance to the Future Directions Coordinator. Where significant decisions or changes of direction are required, the Working Group will bring these to the NPA Executive for consideration.

Future Directions Coordinator

The Future Directions Coordinator is the operational engine of the renewal program. The Coordinator will be responsible for driving implementation across the eleven priorities, supporting committees and volunteers in delivering their components of the work, and maintaining the program tracking framework. The Coordinator will report regularly to the Future Directions Working Group on progress, risks and emerging issues, and will prepare periodic progress reports for the NPA Executive and State Council.

Reporting to the Executive and State Council

The NPA Executive will receive regular progress reports as a standing agenda item. State Council will receive updates at each of its meetings, ensuring that the broader membership leadership has visibility over the renewal program and opportunities to contribute to its direction.

The Tracking Framework

A visual tracking framework — including a Gantt chart showing milestones and timelines across all eleven priorities, and a simple progress dashboard — will be developed by the Coordinator and maintained throughout the program. This will be available to the Working Group, the Executive and State Council, and updated regularly to reflect actual progress against plan.

7.6 Measures of Success

- The priority-level success measures detailed in Section 7.4 are the building blocks through which the following program-level outcomes will be achieved. Progress against these measures will be reported to State Council annually and will inform the 2027 strategic planning process.
- Membership is stabilised and then growing, in line with a stronger public profile, clearer value proposition, wider appeal and diversified engagement options
- Membership is growing in niches that are presently not being tapped
- Member satisfaction is enhanced through better understanding of and responsiveness to member interests and needs
- New, sustainable revenue streams are established from contemporary fundraising, philanthropic partnerships and grants
- Donor retention is improved through systematic stewardship and appealing opportunities to contribute to NPA's full range of work — not only conservation campaigns but also connecting communities to nature and expanding the extent and role of Protected Areas
- NPA's public profile is stronger, with the organisation recognised as a leading voice for nature protection and appreciation in NSW and as the go-to organisation for expertise on Protected Areas
- Measurable progress is made on NPA's core conservation objectives: growing the Protected Area network, extending protection into the marine estate, and strengthening community connection to nature across the state
- Stakeholder relationships are deeper, expanding NPA's influence
- Operations are more efficient, with resources directed toward high-impact activities
- Branch capacity is strengthened through grants support and clearer connection to organisational strategy
- Organisational culture has shifted toward adaptation, innovation and external focus
- A strong foundation is in place for 2027 strategic planning, with tested approaches and a clear identity.

