

Western Australia – Permits and permissions

Western Australia – Permits and permissions required to access indigenous and other lands, including national parks

General:

Most transit permits for aboriginal lands are able to be issued by the Aboriginal Lands Trust of WA. The Trust is a part of the Department of Indigenous Affairs. Applications can be made on-line at www.dia.wa.gov.au and simply follow the prompts. The web site contains a lot of excellent information including maps showing the specific areas where Permits are required and whether the Trust or a Land Council issues them. The conditions under which permits can be gained via an automated on-line process are also explained. The Trust can be contacted at: The Permits Officer, Aboriginal Lands Trust, PO Box 7770, Cloisters Square, Perth, WA 6850. Telephone (08) 9235 8000 or Fax (08) 9235 8088.

Central Reserves Area including Surveyor-General's Corner and Sandy Blight Junction Road:

Central Reserves Area (which extends some little way over the borders into both NT and SA), includes: The Great Central Road, the Gunbarrel Highway, the Gary Highway, the abandoned section of the Old Gunbarrel Highway, Giles-Mulga Park Road from Warakurna to Wingellina and Surveyor General's Corner, and the WA parts of the Gary Junction Road and the Sandy Blight Junction Road. It also includes the Docker River area (but not the Community) which is actually in NT. (Docker River is another of those areas where you will need two permits. The WA side takes you essentially from the Docker River Community, west across the border and on down the Great Central Road. For the NT side, see NT pdf download).

Permits for the Great Central Road and for the Heather Highway (which is the only approved access to the Gunbarrel Highway heading west) are obtainable on line from the Aboriginal Lands Trust. (See above).

For all other tracks noted above (but excluding the Gary Highway and the Gunbarrel Highway – see below) apply in writing to the Ngaanyatjarra Council, P.O. Box 644, Alice Springs, NT 0871. They are located at Shop 6, 56-58 Head Street, Alice Springs. Telephone (08) 8950 1711. Fax is (08) 8953 1892. Even though the vast majority of the Central Reserves Area is in WA, the Land Council office is located in Alice Springs.

The Ngaanyatjarra Land Council does have a website at: www.tjulyuru.com
The site contains a lot of great information including the fantastic art gallery located at Warburton, and has details of accommodation which is available at both the Warburton and Warakurna Roadhouses. There are no on-line permit processes available.

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Permits for Surveyor-General's Corner are \$100 per vehicle plus \$20 per person, but you do get an escort/guide to take you out there and tell you a bit about the history of the Corner.

The Sandy Blight Junction Road and the Gary Junction Road are two other examples of tracks where two permits are required. One permit is required for the parts that fall within Western Australia (Ngaanyatjarra Council) and another for the parts that fall within the Northern Territory, (Central Land Council). Access to the Sandy Blight Junction Road has recently been reviewed and permits to transit that part of the road which falls within the NT are once again being issued by the NT Central Land Council.

The Ngaanyatjarra Council generally applies a maximum period of three (3) days within which you can remain in the Central Reserves Area for the purposes of any transits.

Gary Highway:

A Permit is not required to transit the Gary Highway.

Gunbarrel Highway including Abandoned Section:

Permits are not being issued for travel on that part of the Gunbarrel Highway between Jackie Junction and the Heather Highway/Gunbarrel Highway intersection. Access to or exit from the Gunbarrel Highway in the east must be via the Heather Highway.

A Permit is not required to transit the Gunbarrel Highway between the Heather Highway Junction and Wiluna, but you must have a permit for the Heather Highway to access that part of the Gunbarrel and/or to exit from it.

Very special conditions apply for travel along the Abandoned Section of the Old Gunbarrel Highway between Warakurna and Warburton. Details may be obtained from the Ngaanyatjarra Council.

Accessing Communities:

If you wish to access actual communities, then it is best to ring that community and speak to them direct regarding any requirements.

Kimberley Communities:

Inquiries from the Kimberley Land Council at Derby, telephone (08) 9193 1118, showed that if you wished to visit any communities in the Kimberley, the best way is simply to

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report in to the Community Office on the day of your visit, (but not weekends), and purchase a permit on the day. The Kimberley Land Council's Broome Office telephone is (08) 9193 6199. Also check though the Department of Indigenous Affairs, Aboriginal Lands Trust website as a number of Kimberley Communities are nominated as having on-line permit approvals. Check the conditions which might apply, and particularly with respect to the automated on-line process. However, regardless of the availability of the on-line process, the advice from the Kimberley Land Council of reporting in to the particular community does appear to be the best way of gaining permits in the area.

Kalumburu:

To visit Kalumburu you will need to gain two Permits. The first is available via the Aboriginal Lands Trust in Perth. This can be done on-line, and is free. (See above). This Permit however, only gives you permission to enter the Kalumburu Reserve. Once you get to the Kalumburu Community you will also need to gain a Kalumburu Recreation Entry Permit. These can be obtained, at a cost of \$40 per vehicle, from the Kalumburu Aboriginal Corporation Office, (see below), or the Uraro Community Store on (08) 9161 4607. Alternatively, you can apply at the Kununurra Tourist Bureau on your way out to Kalumburu. If you do apply at the Tourist Bureau you will still need to call in to the Kalumburu Aboriginal Corporation Office to pick up your windscreen sticker. You can also apply direct by fax to the Kalumburu Aboriginal Corporation. A cheque for \$40 made out to the same body will also need to be sent. Allow at least a month for the permit to be returned to you. The Corporation's telephone number is (08) 9161 4300 and the fax is: (08) 9161 4331. Their email is ceo@kalumburu.org Fuel is not available in Kalumburu over the weekend. The Corporation Office is also closed over the weekend.

Once you arrive at Kalumburu there is only one place to camp in the Community itself, and that is at the Catholic Mission. The Mission can be contacted on (08) 9161 4333. It's a very cool, grassed and shaded camp site with good showers and toilets. Well worth the modest charge. Camping further up on the coast is only available at Honeymoon Bay, (telephone (08) 9161 4378), and at McGowan's. These camping areas are operated by members of the Community, and offer basic camping only at about \$15 per person per day. Camping is no longer available at Pago. You can also sometimes gain permission to camp within Drysdale National Park. Access is only available through the Carson River Pastoral Station which is operated by the Community, so it all depends on what mustering or other activities might be happening on the Station. A Recreation Entry Permit is required to access any of the camping areas and to gain access through Carson River Pastoral Station.

Access to Truscott Airfield; west of the King Edward River and to Winanghie Beach is prohibited.

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Cape Leveque:

If you wish to visit Cape Leveque contact the Broome Visitors Information Centre on (08) 9192 2222. Whilst again, the Aboriginal Lands Trust website says you must have a permit to drive the road out to Cape Leveque the Broome Visitors Centre is of the view that such information is way out of date. This is probably quite correct as the actual printouts from the on-line Permit process with the Lands Trust notes that the road to Cape Leveque is a public road. BUT! you do need booked accommodation to enter the Cape Leveque area. The Visitors Centre can make a booking for you at either the camping area or at the other (range of) accommodations available at the Cape, which is highly advisable. During popular times of school holidays and long weekends, all of the available accommodation, including camping can be booked out months in advance, so it is advisable to book well ahead.

Hamersley Iron Railway Line:

To drive the track which parallels the Hamersley Iron Railway Line from Tom Price to Dampier you MUST apply IN PERSON at any of: the Tom Price Tourist Information Service (08) 9188 1112; the Karratha Visitor Centre (08) 9144 4600; the Roebourne Visitor Centre (08) 9182 1060 or the Pannawonica Office & Library (08) 9184 1038. You MUST do this in person as you will be required to sit through about a 15 minute video which mainly concentrates on the rail safety aspects of the trip, and then you will be issued with your permit. The permits themselves are free.

Telfer Mine Road:

To traverse the Telfer Mine Road you don't need a permit, but you do need to notify the Mine Manager of your intentions. A few weeks before your visit write a letter to: The Village Manager, Newcrest Mining, Telfer, WA 6762, informing the Manager of who you are; where and how you can be contacted; the numbers and details of vehicles including: make, colour, registration number and State of registration; driver and passengers names; and the likely date/s of being on their road; your direction of travel and destination. Don't forget to thank them for the access. You will have to stop at a Security Check Point.

Trans Continental Railway:

You can now only follow the rail line from Kalgoorlie to Rawlinna. It is illegal to travel east of Rawlinna and absolutely no permits are being issued. In South Australia you are also permitted to travel the few kilometres along the rail line past Tarcoola to pick up

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Googs Track. The track beside the rail line is now on private property. This was a result of the corporatisation of Australian National Railways. Regrettably, there had been far too many instances of travelers breaking down, or needing help, and they were, incredibly, flagging down the trains! Management have now simply barred access and will have transgressors dealt with as trespassers. The fine can be quite hefty. You have been warned!

Canning Stock Route:

From April, 2006, the holding of an appropriate Permit has become necessary if you wish to visit any of the very numerous Aboriginal Sites located either on, or adjacent to, the Canning Stock Route. There are a whole series of such sites.

Essentially, all of the land adjacent to the Canning Stock Route Reserve between Well 5 and Well 40 has been granted to the Martu people under the Native Title Act, 1993, and is now restricted access land. So in essence, if you wish to leave the actual Canning Stock Route vehicular track, a permit to do so is now required. And, even though some of the sites are actually located within the Stock Route Reserve, they are nonetheless registered and protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, 1972, and as such, a permit is required to visit them.

The actual gazetted Canning Stock Route Reserve itself is generally about 8 kilometres wide. In the main, the vehicular track that you follow stays within the Reserve. However, there are a number of locations where the track itself is actually outside of, the gazetted Reserve. At times, it is up to 10 kilometres outside it. This should not however cause any difficulties, provided you remain on the track itself, and do not deviate from it unless you have an appropriate Permit.

If you simply wish to travel the Canning Stock Route itself, and have no intention whatever of deviating from it, (and that includes for the purposes of camping at night, or collecting water from any of the wells, etc. located off the track), then you can do so without the need for a permit. However, the moment you actually leave the vehicular track, you run the risk of entering an Aboriginal Site. You never know when you might wish to do that, either to visit a site just off the track, or for emergency reasons. The best course of action therefore is to apply for, and be in possession of a Permit that covers you for all of the areas that you may wish to visit.

The issuing of Permits for travel along the Canning Stock Route will assist in long term management of the environmentally and culturally sensitive area through which the Stock Route passes. Being in possession of a permit will also help to ensure that any contact with Martu people along the way can be a positive encounter, helping to build trust and respect for the privilege of traveling through their land.

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The Australian National Four Wheel Drive Council website (www.anfwdc.asn.au) currently has up to date information relating to the new requirements for the Canning. And, from 1 May, 2007, the Council, via its website, is the main point of contact both for information, and for the issuing of Permits. The website has download material available; including a listing of those areas where public access will be permitted, and those where it may be restricted, together with an on-line permit application and payment process. (A postal application and payment process is also offered if you do not wish to use the ANFWDC secure on-line payment system).

The Permit, its attached conditions and an information package will be available for download and printing once your purchase is approved. If you would prefer the package to be mailed to your address, there will be additional postage charges to be added to the purchase. Current prices are \$50 per vehicle Permit and \$15 postage for the package if it is to be mailed to an address within Australia. Postage outside Australia is \$27. Permits are valid for a one month period.

When you log on to the ANFWDC website, there is a “Canning Stock Route” button on the home page, just click on this button and you will be taken to the Canning Stock Route part of the website. An information download is available within the Canning Stock Route part of the website which provides up to date information, including the process that needs to be followed to gain a letter of entry to access the Calvert Ranges.

The CSR Permit gives you permission to visit certain nominated sites along the Stock Route. These sites are listed on the ANFWDC website. Access to other sites is not permitted unless you have been granted specific permission by either Central Desert Native Title Services or Western Desert Lands Aboriginal Corporation. At present, the only additional site for which access permits are being routinely granted to members of the public is the Calvert Ranges. (See below for details).

If you require any further information about the conditions that now apply along the Canning Stock Route, or if you want to discuss any proposed plans with an expert, and the information you require is not available on the ANFWDC website, there is another contact point:

For additional information and assistance between Wells 15 to 40, (the Martu area), and for applications for a letter of entry to the Calvert Ranges (which will only be accepted from CSR Permit holders) you can contact Richard Taylor, Field Coordinator, Western Desert Lands Aboriginal Corporation (WDLAC) by email at richard.taylor@westnet.com.au.

N.B.: Do not apply to the Ngaanyatjarra Council in Alice Springs for a Permit in relation to the Canning Stock Route.

Travelers on the Canning Stock Route should also bear in mind that the Capricorn Roadhouse in Newman no longer delivers fuel to Well 23. The only fuel available on the Canning once you leave either Wiluna or Billiluna is at the Kunawarritji Community

One contact deletion - April 2010

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adjacent to Well 33. Both diesel and unleaded is available via bowsers. Kunawarritji also offers a reasonably well stocked shop and internet access. Parngurr Community (Cotton Creek) also has diesel (but definitely no petrol) available from a gauged, gravity fed tank. Parngurr is located in the south eastern corner of Rudall River National Park. The turn off onto the 21 kilometre track to Parngurr is located 61 kilometres east of Georgia Bore (near Well 22) on the Talawana Track.

Steep Point:

Steep Point, the westernmost point on mainland Australia, is located on private property. A Ranger, with some powers, has been appointed by the property owners, and is resident in a cottage on the major access track. You can't miss it going in, there is a big sign advising all travelers to report to the Ranger Station. In 2009, a day trip entry cost \$22 per vehicle, payable at the Ranger Station. Entry fees for camping were \$22 per vehicle plus \$5.50 per person per night. Camping sites are located on and behind some of the beaches. Camping sites are extremely limited and can be booked out completely for school holidays and public holidays up to 12 months in advance. So, if you want to camp at Steep Point during those periods you should make your booking at least 12 months ahead to be sure of a site. Outside of school and public holiday times demand for camp sites can still be extremely heavy, so ensure you ring and book as far ahead as is possible. Access Permit applications must be completed. The Rangers at Steep Point (Paul and Pam) can be contacted on (08) 9948 3993.

Make sure you have an operating air compressor with you as you **MUST** lower your tyre pressures to 20 psi when you come to the first sand dunes, and you will need to put them back to your normal dirt road pressures when you exit.

A trip from Hamelin Pool Caravan Park and Telegraph Station ((08) 9942 5905) to Steep Point and return can easily be completed in a day. As long as you get an early start you will have ample time to savour the views, take photos, and perhaps return via the Zuytdorp Cliffs.

Entry and Camping Fees:

You should bear in mind that many WA National Parks charge both an entry fee and a nightly camping fee, whilst others only charge a camping fee. Some are totally free. Quite a number of those fees are payable by way of self registration when you enter the park. Other parks have ranger stations to which you must report, and others are controlled by the very friendly, effective and efficient "Park Hosts" system. Entry fees (where applicable) are generally \$10 per vehicle (\$5 concession) and camping fees (where applicable) will be either \$10.00, \$7.50 or \$6.50 per adult per night depending on the facilities available. The concession rates are \$5.50 or \$4.50 per adult per night, but bear in mind that a few parks do not offer a concession rate. School age children under

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16 are generally \$2.00 each per night wherever camping fees apply. Signs at entry points generally advise of the situation applying in the particular park.

Fees payable in some camping areas managed by commercial operators in some WA National Parks may be higher than those indicated above.

WA is also currently developing an on-line campground booking process which will cover most of their more popular National Parks.

If you are going to be in WA for some time, you might like to consider gaining a “WA All Parks Pass” before you go. This Pass in 2009 cost just \$75 or \$50 if you have a concession card and gives you access to all WA National Parks as many times as you like within a 12 month period. A “Holiday Parks Pass” is also available for \$35 (no concessions) which gives unlimited access to all WA National Parks for a one month period. Neither pass covers any camping fees which may be applicable. The Passes are obtainable on-line from Exploroz or from the WA Department of Environment and Conservation. The website for the WA Dept. of Environment and Conservation is www.naturebase.net or you can apply direct to the Dept. at PO Box 104, Bentley Delivery Centre, WA 6983. Telephone (08) 9334 0333 or fax (08) 9334 0498, and ask for a Customer Service Officer. The website also contains contact details for a whole host of smaller retail outlets where the various entry passes are obtainable.

N.B.: When you log on to “naturebase.net” to purchase a pass click on “Parks & Recreation” then “Visitor Information” then “Park Passes & Fees” and finally “Park Passes” and you can then apply on-line.

The website is very informative and contains heaps of information to assist you with your trip planning including current access restrictions and seasonal closures.

Road Conditions:

For road conditions in WA before you go, or whilst you are away go to www.mainroads.wa.gov.au and click on “Road and Traffic Info”.

Can I get a Concession?:

Don't forget, if you are dealing with a National Park Service or any Government Agency, and you have a Seniors Card or a Pension Card of some description; always ask whether a Seniors Discount is available. In most cases the answer is, yes!

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Disclaimer:

Whilst every care has been taken in the preparation of this information, no responsibility can be accepted for either the accuracy of the contents or for any errors or omissions.

With your assistance we might also endeavour to maintain this information in an updated form. So if you wish to amend, or add to any of the information contained in this article, please contact the undersigned on (02) 9523 9266 or email john.greig@bigpond.com

John Greig

Researched and compiled by John Greig – Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Australia, Sydney

Please also be sure to read the first part of this site titled “Heading Outback – Do I Need a Permit? – Can I drive that track?” in conjunction with the information above.