

CANDIDATE NOMINATIONS FOR POSITIONS ON THE CONSERVATION COUNCIL BOARD

2025 AGM 20 November

NOMINATION FOR THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT (ONE POSITION)

Leon Arundell – Pedal Power, Climate Action Canberra

Nominated by: Christopher Watson, National Parks Association ACT, Ginniderra Falls Association

Seconded by: Christopher Emery, National Parks Association ACT

I have six years of experience on the board. The current president has one.

Unlike the current president, I will:

- lead a Council that represents the views of all its members, and not merely those of its president, its office-bearers, or a faction within the Council
- invite you to identify issues for the Council's quarterly discussions with the government, and report back on those discussions
- allow all member groups to participate in Council working groups
- be ethical and transparent
- inform you of issues that come before the board, and welcome your contributions to board discussions
- lead a board that makes decisions, and informs you of its decisions
- convey board decisions to people who are affected by those decisions

I have demonstrated leadership ability. Under my leadership in 2018-19, the North Canberra Community Council:

- recommenced keeping records of all committee and general meetings
- instituted the transparent practice of providing all members with committee meeting minutes
- replaced its treasurer
- prepared three years of financial statements, and had them audited and accepted
- adopted a new constitution that made it a peak body for local residents associations.

Danny Jowers Blain – SEE Change, ACF Community Canberra

Nominated by: Sarah Reid, ACF Community Canberra

Seconded by: Kathy Ehmann, SEE Change

It's been a privilege to be a board member for two years, the past year as a vice president. It's also been an absolute joy to work with other board members, Simon, Grit and Aoibhinn as we continue to evolve the Conservation Council to maximise its support for members and its impact for the environment.

Next year I'm particularly excited about implementing the new Strategic Plan. It sets a clear direction and priorities for our work. It's been informed by our members and the broader environmental movement. It includes a strengthened focus on things that I think are crucial to our future as an organisation - providing strong support for members; collaborating with other organisations to increase our reach and impact; engaging meaningfully with First Nations communities; and raising awareness across the ACT region about just how special our environment is here and how much of it is at risk. We have an exciting opportunity to integrate caring for Country with connecting people to nature.

I would be honoured to help lead through this change.

NOMINATION FOR THE POSITION OF VICE PRESIDENT (TWO POSITIONS)

Leon Arundell – Pedal Power, Climate Action Canberra

Nominated by: Christopher Watson, National Parks Association ACT, Ginniderra Falls Association

Seconded by: Christopher Emery, National Parks Association ACT

As Vice President I will act ethically, transparently, constitutionally and legally.

I will welcome the participation of every Council member, support any application to attend a board meeting, and represent the views of all Council members.

I will be courageous when I speak up for the environment. I will put forward bold and inspiring evidence-based ideas that support our vision with economic and social justice.

To help protect the hundreds of local species that are at risk of extinction due to global warming, I will argue for a government target to reduce the Territory's per capita carbon footprint to below twice the world average.

I will argue that government funding per kilometre of healthy walking and cycling should be more than one eighth of funding per kilometre of polluting public transport travel.

I will argue to reduce local public transport emissions below those of the travel that it displaces. I will continue to argue for public transport projects that reduce emissions and increase public transport travel.

I support our rights to [respond to allegations before being disciplined](#), and to [appeal disciplinary decisions](#).

Clare De Castella – Pedal Power

Nominated by: Cecily Michaels, Pedal Power

Seconded by: Stepanie Booker, Friends of Aranda Bushland, Friends of Grasslands

I am an environmental sustainability professional who has been a CCACT board member since 2024. I hope to continue this vital work by applying the following skills to increase CCACT's impact:

Governance – Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors' course (GAICD). I served on the board of Garran Primary School and was founding convenor of Garran Residents Association. I work as Associate Director, Environmental Sustainability at ANU where I have designed and implemented a range of governance structures. I also chair Go8 Universities Sustainability Forum.

Strategic planning and reporting – At ANU, I lead development of the Environmental Sustainability Plan and reporting. As a member of the CCACT Strategic Planning Sub-Committee, I have contributed to developing the new Strategic Plan and plan to contribute to future impact reporting demonstrating the great work of CCACT.

Risk management – In my work, I integrate climate risk into governance structures and risk management frameworks. If re-elected, I will seek to strengthen CCACT's risk management, building organisational resilience.

Research, policy and community engagement on climate change – I have more than a decade's experience working with researchers, policy makers and community on climate issues, including managing the ANU Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions (ICEDS).

Other qualifications – Master of Environmental Management, UNSW.

Jess Fordyce – Rising Tide

Nominated by: Ruth Ragless, Rising Tide

Seconded by: John Smith, Extinction Rebellion

I'm seeking to reapply for the role of Vice President (VP) on the Board of the Conservation Council. I'm a dedicated environmentalist with a background in waste and resource recovery, local and state government, and community organising. I'm passionate about building connections to help deliver strategic objectives, and have demonstrated experience in project management, advocacy, and stakeholder engagement.

During my time as a regular board member (2024) and VP (2025), I've demonstrated my commitment to the organisation with strong representation across board meetings, sub-committee meetings, and working group meetings.

As VP, I'll contribute to the executive's strategic work in line with the organisation's operational plans. I'll also advocate for the Council's justice and inclusion work and help build cultural awareness in the organisation.

As a waste professional, I bring unique perspectives leading projects across food rescue, food waste avoidance, waste procurement, litter reduction, circular economy, and community recycling education. I have experience engaging businesses, industry experts, politicians, councillors, community members, media outlets and volunteers.

My community organising experience includes co-leading Trash Gather for over five years, facilitating the Macquarie Climate Alliance for the 2025 federal election, and organising with Rising Tide for three People's Blockades.

Thank you for considering my application.

NOMINATION FOR THE POSITION OF SECRETARY (ONE POSITION)

Leon Arundell – Pedal Power, Climate Action Canberra

Nominated by: Christopher Watson, National Parks Association ACT, Ginniderra Falls Association

Seconded by: Christopher Emery, National Parks Association ACT

As Secretary I will support ethical, constitutional, legal and transparent governance. I accept that office-holders of Council member organisations have a moral right (previously a constitutional right) to inspect Board records.

I am courageous when I speak up for the environment and put forward bold and inspiring ideas.

My dangerous ideas include.

- prioritising the views of Council members ahead of the personal agendas of the Board's office-bearers
- reducing the Scope 3 emissions that put Canberrans in the top 10% of greenhouse polluters and threaten the survival of hundreds of local species
- supporting cost-effective investments that reduce greenhouse emissions
- addressing the funding imbalances between healthy non-polluting active transport and our public transport system that causes more pollution than the car travel that it displaces
- allowing people to present a case before expelling them and their member groups from Council working groups
- telling people what decisions the Board has made about them
- allowing people to appeal disciplinary decisions
- not fabricating allegations against people and forcing them to go to court to defend their rights to communicate with the board and to enter the Council's office.

Maisie Walker Stelling – National Parks Association ACT

Nominated by: Rosemary Hollow, National Parks Association ACT

Seconded by: Jess Fordyce, Rising Tide

I have been a Board member of the CCACT since 2024, also serving as Secretary for that year. It has been a fantastic learning experience, and frankly, a joy, to work with such spirited and hardworking people, both on the Board and in the Office. As Secretary, I would like the opportunity to utilise my knowledge of the role to enhance support and improve the flow of Board functioning over the next year. This would particularly focus on how the Board can implement the new Strategic Plan to provide direction and guidance for decision-making and priorities for the year, enabling the Board to make a meaningful impact. I would love the opportunity to help implement this plan for a better Board, and a better Conservation Council into the future.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE POSITIONS OF ELECTED BOARD MEMBER (SIX POSITIONS)

Henry Adam – PTCBR, Rising Tide

Nominated by: Bill Gemmell, PTCBR

Seconded by: Hazel Dortch, Rising Tide

Hi friends,

I'm Henry— an ANU student, a young person and an environmental campaigner. The Conservation Council's work is incredibly valuable, and I would be grateful for the opportunity to contribute to it as a general board member in 2026.

I'm passionate about grassroots activism for the environment and climate. I've knocked on doors with the Queensland Greens, where I felt the power of a community movement. I've paddled with Rising Tide, where I felt the power of direct action. And I've run campaigns for the ACT Greens and the Conservation Council ACT, where I felt the power of organising. As advocates of the environment, with the right strategy, we can be powerful together.

I hope to assist with the Conservation Council's governance and strategy, contributing my own experience and learning from others. I've studied politics, philosophy and economics, and care deeply about the role of public policy in shaping society to protect the environment and climate. I am an enthusiastic team player with strong integrity, strategic thinking and political judgement. I'm excited to collaborate with passionate people to continue the Conservation Council's growth.

In hope,

Henry Adam

Leon Arundell – Pedal Power, Climate Action Canberra

Nominated by: Christopher Watson, National Parks Association ACT, Ginniderra Falls Association

Seconded by: Christopher Emery, National Parks Association ACT

A vote for Leon is a vote for:

- the confidence and stability that come from six years of experience on the Conservation Council's board
- the hundreds of local species that are at risk of extinction due to the actions of the 10% of the world's highest emitters (including Canberrans) who cause 30% of global greenhouse emissions
- ethical, well-informed and transparent governance
- a board that invites participation of member group representatives, and prioritises the concerns of Council members ahead of the personal views of the board's office-bearers
- instead of funding a billion dollars project that would reduce public transport travel, funding projects to increase travel by public transport, walking and cycling, to reduce emissions from buses and cars, and to get more people to their destinations, more quickly, in fewer cars.

A vote for any outgoing board member is a vote against all of those things.

Stephanie Booker – Friends of Aranda Bushland, Friends of Grasslands

Nominated by: Maisie Walker Stelling, National Parks Association ACT

Seconded by: Ian Falkoner, Friends of Aranda Bushland

My name is Stephanie Booker and this is a short statement in support of my nomination on the board of the Conservation Council ACT Region.

I am the current President of the Conservation Council ACT Region. It has been a privilege to take up this role as the fight to protect the environment we love ramps up. Over the past year, the organisation has become more financially stable. We've developed a new strategic plan. The organisation has increased its engagement with members and the broader community through events, information sessions and working groups. I'm really proud of the work that the staff of the Cons Council have done over the past year, and I'm proud of my contribution - and the board's contribution - in supporting this work. I renominate as an ordinary board member, and will not renominate as the President. I remain committed to ensuring that nature is protected in the ACT and the surrounds, and that the Cons Council is governed in a good and ethical way

Kasy Chambers – Canberra Bushwalking Club, City Farm Canberra, Earthly Remains

Nominated by: Judith Bourne, Canberra Forest Alliance

Seconded by: Angela Seymour, Molonglo Park Care

I hold qualifications in governance (GAICD); have worked with the Federal government on governance and the charitable sector (most recently part of the ministerially appointed Blueprint for the future of the charitable sector Expert Reference Group for example); and have academic qualifications in psychology (Hons), business administration (MBA) and environmental ethics (Grad Dip).

I am employed in the social area of the NFP sector and work to a national network which provides services to 1 in 19 Australians. Through this I am involved in advocacy at the national level.

I have served on many boards over a board career of over 20 years, and in my day job work to a board.

In addition to ministerial and social sector boards I have served on the board of the Environmental Defender's Office of the ACT (including periods as Chairperson) and the board of Greenpeace Australia Pacific.

Louise Crossman – SEEChange, PTCBR

Nominated by: Bill Gemmell, Pedal Power

Seconded by: Damien Haas, PTCBR

Our climate is changing faster than ever, governments both local and national need to take action, and right now is the opportunity for the Conservation Council to lead local conversations about nature conservation and climate change. I want to be part of the Conservation Council Board to ensure the Conservation Council can support its campaign activities with effective advocacy, making sure we're targeting the right people, at the right time, with a persuasive message. I am also committed to ensuring effective governance, so our organisation can continue to be strategically minded and financially strong, handing over a legacy of campaigning and local contribution for generations to come.

I bring two decades of professional experience in Federal and ACT Government, plus experience as a political staffer and active member of ACT Labor. I have qualifications in employment relations and have worked as a consultant to not-for-profits on their employment arrangements; an important skill for the Board as our employment landscape is changing. My professional experience is complemented by my experience in not-for-profit governance of local sporting and community organisations.

I have a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Laws, a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice, and a Masters of Employment Relations. I'm a member of SEE-Change Tuggeranong and PTCBR.

Damien Haas – Public Transport Association of Canberra (PTCBR)

Nominated by: Bill Gemmell, PTCBR

Seconded by: Matt Whitting, Friends of Grasslands

Damien is former chair of the Belconnen Community Council, former Chair of ACT Light Rail, and founding Chair of the Public Transport Association of Canberra. He brings to the Board significant experience in the development, oversight and management of volunteer and community groups. His professional background is in defence intelligence and the development and implementation of government policy. He has also worked as an industrial relations mediator and as a Senior Advisor to the ACT Transport Minister. Damien holds a BA in International Relations and Public Policy.

His particular interest in transport is to bring about an increase in public transport use, and a decrease in transport emissions. As a member of the Conservation Councils 'Transport Working Group' he has contributed to the submission that was made on the ACT Light Rail Stage two B Environmental Impact Statement.

Rohan Pillutla – PTCBR

Nominated by: Bill Gemmell, Pedal Power

Seconded by: Matt Whitting, Friends of Grasslands

I am nominating to be an elected member of the board for the Conservation Council ACT as I believe that my experience working for the organisation, broader experience in fundraising, events and arts management give me a helpful perspective that can enhance the Conservation Council's activities. I was the fundraising and events manager in 2021, which included fundraising events planning, developing materials, messaging and scripts to support the gifts in wills capability as well as major appeals. Back then, I began to develop ideas on increasing reach and developing volunteers and interested persons into volunteers, donors and more active leaders. After four years organising arts events and professional experience in workforce design, training and strategy, I am confident that I can help inform and support the ED and team in fundraising and outreach. On a personal level, I deeply care about the conservation of our beautiful natural environment - a clear distinction from the other cities in Australia. I firmly believe that conservation efforts require connection with the personal love and care individuals have for their surroundings and I am dedicated to helping us find that for those who aren't engaged and those who have further to come along.

John Smith – Extinction Rebellion Canberra, Peoples Climate Assembly, Rising Tide, CBR Climate Activists

Nominated by: Amy Blain, Peoples Climate Assembly

Seconded by: John Wurcker, Rising Tide

I am nominating for the Board of the Council because I believe I can contribute to the effectiveness of the Council in responding to the twin climate and biodiversity crises. Unless

we rapidly reduce fossil fuel emissions and simultaneously protect and restore the integrity of natural ecosystems, we will have no chance of limiting warming to under 2 degrees.

I am a member of XR ACT, the Peoples Climate Assembly (PCA), Rising Tide and CanberraClimate Activists and I represent the PCA on the Council's Climate Working Group' I am Treasurer of xR ACT and the PCA. I convene the CANA Ecosystems & Climate Working Group.

My strength is in bringing people together and acting as an information sharer. There are many groups in the Council, and while each brings particular knowledge and skills, working together we are far stronger and can achieve so much more. As a board member I will bring my years of administrative experience together with my passion for nature to work tirelessly for a better climate and a better environment for Canberra I have a public service background with most of my service being in the Department of Environment working in diverse areas including Kakadu National Park, the Natural Heritage Trust, the Forests TaskForce and HRD. I have a BA (Sydney) and an Associate Diploma in National Parks Management from RMIHE (now CSU).

Isabelle Zhu-Maguire - Peoples Climate Assembly

Nominated by: Amy Blain, Peoples Climate Assembly

Seconded by: Danny Jowers Blain, SEE-Change, ACF Community Canberra

I have been volunteering with the ACT Conservation Council for a year - assisting with climate campaigning and helping to chair the Climate Working Group. The community cultivated by the council is one of the brightest spots of all of Canberra. It is my honour to continue to contribute to it.

I initially applied to volunteer with the conservation council for the same reason why I stand for board today. I have spent the greater part of my adult life so far as a climate activist engaging with the United Nations processes and I wanted to ensure that my work at a global level is being informed by work that I was doing in my own community.

My interests are to bring the climate strategies that I've learned from a global perspective to mobilise the Canberra community to stand for a healthy climate. If the climate movement is a canoe, then I am a paddler, someone who has spent years working on my craft as a climate campaigner, but wanting to ensure that other people navigate the movement - platforming and supporting those in Canberra whose knowledge is usually marginalised but hold the key to our climate salvation. I know that a board membership would provide me a unique opportunity to do so.

Overall , I would say the strength that I am most proud of cultivating is a sense of tenacious optimism. I believe that climate activism can be a source of hope. I believe that people are drawn to campaigns filled with joy - something I fill my life with. I believe that being a board member of the Conservation Council will be my greatest opportunity to bring infectious joy to the climate movements of the ACT region