



## **Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association.**

**WAKKERSTROOM NATURAL HERITAGE ASSOCIATION (WNHA)** is a non-governmental/ profit organisation (041-230-NPO) whose vision is *“to engage in the conservation, rehabilitation and protection of the natural environment in the Wakkerstroom area “*

This association which started 25 years ago has undertaken, and is continuing to undertake, a variety of initiatives to enhance the conservation status of the area. A considerable number of international and local conservation organisations recognise the importance of conserving Wakkerstroom natural heritage.

The South African Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism has listed the Grasslands Biosphere Reserve, in which Wakkerstroom lies, as a conservation priority site.

The Wakkerstroom wetland is so important ecologically that in 2007 the MTPA started the work of applying for a Protected Environment status. The **WNHA** is a founder member of the Wakkerstroom Protected Environment Management Committee which is now managing this process. This application has reached an advanced stage and all signs are extremely positive.

The Wakkerstroom wetland is also registered as a South African Natural Heritage Site (No 220).

Wakkerstroom wetlands are approximately 960 ha in size, located on the northern edge of the town. It is a very important wetland due to its size, its stream-flow regulation and high water purification values.

Ossewakop consists of 1100 ha of mostly open grassland forming the watershed between the Uthaka and Slang River along the Kwazulu-Natal border west of the town.

The present situation is by no means static. The main threats to the present conservation value of the area come from further forestation, expansion of coal mining, and insensitive tourism development (including trout waters). Such changes could impact very negatively on the water yield and quality from the region.

The **WNHA** looks after the day to day management of the wetland area, including The Clive Beck Memorial and Wings over Wetland hides. This covers general repairs, maintenance, working with fire fighting teams and grass cutting of pathway and walkways.

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Registration Number: 041 - 230 - NPO