

Nairana Area

Management Statement

2013



Prepared by: **Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of Environment and Science**

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The Department of Environment and Science acknowledges Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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All due diligence and care has been taken in the preparation of this document based on the information in the 2013 management statement. The department holds no responsibility for any errors or omissions within this document. Any decisions made by other parties based on this document are solely the responsibility of those parties.

The Nairana Area Management Statement 2013 has been extended in 2023 in line with the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (s120G). Minor amendments have been made. There has been no change to the statement's original management intent and direction.

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Park size:	Nairana National Park	9,520ha
	Nairana National Park (Recovery)	9,880ha
	Wilandspey Conservation Park	5,200ha
Bioregion:	North Brigalow Belt	
QPWS region:	Central	
Local government estate/area:	Isaac Regional Council	
State electorate:	Dalrymple	

Legislative framework

✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>

Plans and agreements

✓	Bonn Convention
✓	China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Japan – Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

Thematic strategies

✓	Level 2 Fire Management Strategy
✓	Level 2 Pest Management Strategy

Vision

The natural ecosystems, flora and fauna populations within Nairana National Park, Nairana National Park (Recovery) and Wilandspey Conservation Park are conserved.

Partnerships are established with Traditional Owners, local community, neighbours, lessees, research institutes, conservation groups, emergency services and Isaac Regional Council that contribute to the area's ongoing management.

Outdoor recreation activities and commercial tourism opportunities that are in keeping with the area's natural values will be encouraged.

Conservation purpose

The management objectives for the Nairana area are to:

- retain the current natural integrity of native remnant plant communities, in particular blackwood, gidgee and brigalow
- recover the natural integrity of the blackwood, gidgee and brigalow plant communities that have been subject to clearing
- manage pests in cooperation with neighbours, to reduce their negative impact on the area's natural values
- manage fire effectively in cooperation with neighbours to encourage the regeneration of the natural communities and to minimise the risk of catastrophic wildfires
- continue to collect natural resource information and enhance over time
- enhance the interests and rights of Traditional Owners and their affiliations to the area by cooperatively protecting and managing cultural heritage places of significance
- continue to build on the cooperative broad scale land management activities with neighbours, interested parties and the local community.
- foster cooperative relationships with neighbouring land holders to build stronger relationships.

Specifically, Nairana National Park (Recovery) is managed where the environment is manipulated to restore and enhance its natural values. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) will explore a number of options to be used for restoring the area's natural condition. Their effectiveness will be monitored and assessed to determine whether specific vegetation communities can regenerate and mature to a stage where they are self-maintaining.

Protecting and presenting the area's values

Landscape

Nairana area is located approximately 170km north of Clermont, in the North Brigalow Belt bioregion and extends along the Belyando River and its confluence with Mistake Creek. The area contains widely diverse ecosystems extending from alluvial flood plains to lateritic escarpments.

Wilandspey Conservation Park is located 25km west of Nairana National Park and contains significant stands of gidgee *Acacia cambagei* ecosystems on clay soils. It is the only representation in a protected area of this type of regional ecosystem remaining in Belyando Downs, and possibly the Brigalow Belt.

A 2km wide stock route traverses Nairana National Park and Nairana National Park (Recovery). There is a block of unallocated State land within the stock route which is an old police camp that holds shared cultural significance.

Regional ecosystems

Nairana National Park, Nairana National Park (Recovery) and Wilandspey Conservation Park contains endangered blackwood *Acacia argyrodendron*, brigalow *Acacia harpophylla* and gidgee *Acacia cambagei* and a number of alluvial ecosystems that are of concern. The western side of Nairana National Park, which is intercepted by the broad flood plain of Mistake Creek, represents a landscape that is not represented in other protected areas in the North Brigalow Belt bioregion. Twenty-two regional ecosystems are mapped for the three parks with the majority on Nairana National Park (21) and Nairana National Park (Recovery) (20). Wilandspey Conservation Park has seven regional ecosystems, including 10.5.7 not represented on any other protected area estate. Five of the 22 regional ecosystems are listed as endangered, eight are listed as of concern (Table 1) and all 22 regional ecosystems have low representation in protected area estate.

Plants and animals

One plant species of significance has been recorded within Nairana National Park (Recovery). *Peripleura scabra* is listed as near threatened under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NCA) and listed to be a low priority in the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. There may be other species of conservation significance; further surveys would assist in their identification.

There are six species of conservation significant that have been recorded on the park and a further three birds that are likely to occur in the area (Table 2). Three species listed as near threatened, three as vulnerable and three as endangered under the NCA. The painted honeyeater *Grantiella picta* is listed as vulnerable under the NCA and is a high priority in the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. The squatter pigeon *Geophaps scripta scripta* which is listed as vulnerable under both the NCA and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC) is considered a medium priority in the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. The black-throated finch *Poephila cincta cincta* is listed as endangered under both the NCA and EPBC and as a high priority within the Back on Track species prioritisation framework.

The koala *Phascolarctos cinereus* has been recorded on Nairana National Park (Recovery). This species is listed as vulnerable under the EPBC. Two significant species of reptile have been recorded in the area and likely to occur on the parks. The ornamental snake *Denisonia maculate* and the yakka skink *Egernia rugosa* are both listed as vulnerable under the EPBC and the NCA and are listed as a medium priority within the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. There are also 14 bird species listed in international agreements that are likely to occur or whose habitat occurs in the area (Table 3).

Historic vegetation clearing of surrounding properties has caused habitat fragmentation; however the Belyando River provides a habitat corridor. Some fragmentation has occurred on the estates; a stock route runs through Nairana National Park and Nairana (Recovery) and has supporting infrastructure including fences and dams. The Gregory Development Road runs through both Nairana National Park and Nairana National Park (Recovery).

Aboriginal culture

Traditional Owners are an important part of effectively managing the area as they have a strong desire for continued involvement in its cultural and sustainable use.

A cultural heritage report identified a number of culturally significant places. Old camps exist along Mistake Creek in the north-west area and artefacts can be found on the stony ridges of Nairana.

It is important for QPWS to continue to work with Traditional Owners to identify cultural connections and ensure appropriate measures are taken to protect known sites in the area. QPWS will work towards ensuring Traditional Owners are actively participating in the day-to-day management and that cultural heritage is protected by maintaining relationships with the traditional owners.

Shared-history culture

Nairana National Park and Nairana National Park (Recovery) were a breeding and fattening cattle property prior to becoming protected area. The property was excised from the adjacent Mount Douglas property as a ballot block in 1927–28. Approximately 7,000ha of the protected area has previously been modified as part of the development for grazing cattle. Vegetation thinning commenced in 1948 with the majority being undertaken in the 1960s.

Edgar Burnett, owned and managed the property from 1967 until its gazettal as protected area in 2003. Mr Burnett had a philosophy that moderate stocking rates are more beneficial in the long term. Limited clearing and Mr Burnett's conservative management practices resulted in the property being maintained in a condition considered by QPWS to be suitable for gazettal as protected area.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

Access to Nairana National Park and Nairana National Park (Recovery) is via the Gregory Development Road. Wilandspey Conservation Park is surrounded by private property and no formal legal access exists. Tourists visit this area for scenery and wildlife. The area has a remote natural setting and visitors wishing to access the area must be totally self-reliant. Visitors need to note that during the wet season (November to March) access can be restricted due to wide spread flooding. A private commercial camping, caravan park and accommodation facility exists five km to the north at Belyando Crossing.

Education and science

The management area provides abundant opportunities for scientific research and monitoring. Results from research and monitoring can benefit the area's management.

Nairana National Park (Recovery) will be managed as an area where the environment will be manipulated in order to restore and enhance its natural values. QPWS will explore a number of options to be used to restore the area's natural condition. Their effectiveness will be monitored and assessed to determine whether specific vegetation communities can regenerate and mature to a stage where they are self-maintaining.

Partnerships

The Nairana Area's management is subject to regional protocols and good neighbour policies. A strong working relationship with the Traditional Owners is essential to ensure the views and aspirations of the Traditional Owners of the land can be encompassed in planning and management.

QPWS engages with other stakeholders such as emergency services, local government, neighbours, and grazing authority holders about managing issues of mutual concern such as fire, pests, grazing and infrastructure management.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

An approved Level 2 pest management strategy is in place for the Nairana area.

Buffel grass *Cenchrus ciliaris* is a perennial tussock grass native to parts of Africa and Asia. It was introduced into the Brigalow Belt Bioregion in combination with clearing of brigalow and/or gidgee communities in the second half of the 20th century. It is an important food source for grazing cattle but has detrimental effects on natural communities managed for conservation. Buffel grass is particularly invasive in disturbed areas and can form dense swards, reducing both plant and animal diversity. It can also significantly increase fuel loads and potentially increase fire intensity and frequency.

Jerusalem thorn *Parkinsonia aculeate*, which is a declared class 2 pest plant in Queensland and is listed on the Weeds of National Significance (WONS) register, also presents a threat. It is known to occur on floodplains in the management area. Parthenium *Parthenium hysterophorus* is a declared class 2 pest plant in Queensland and is listed on the WONS register. It occurs throughout the national park and national park (recovery). It is a weed of disturbance and is prevalent on recently graded tracks and roads. The Harrisia cactus *Harrisia martinii* is present; however biocontrol methods are used to control the spread.

Feral pigs *Sus scrofa* are present in the area. This is evident from diggings in some areas, however the extent of the impacts are difficult to quantify. Wild dogs *Canis lupus familiaris* and dingoes *Canis lupus dingo* are present. Dingoes are protected on QPWS managed areas however there is a need to build and maintain neighbour relationships to assist in the control of wild dogs. Baiting will only occur along park boundaries. Stray stock occurs within the area.

Fire management

A fire management system has been adopted statewide by QPWS which is the primary agency for fire management on protected areas and State forests. Fire strategies provide the overall framework and direction for fire management and are the foundation from which planned burn programs are developed. A Level 2 fire management statement has been developed for the area and is due for review.

Many of the vegetation communities, in particular the gidgee communities, are sensitive to fire. The main concern is the build-up in fuel loads, particularly buffel grass, which has the potential to increase the fire risk to these fire-sensitive vegetation communities.

The main threat is inappropriate fire regimes and wildfires. A coordinated approach with neighbouring properties will help to ensure fire is managed appropriately.

Authorities

Wilandspey Conservation Park has a grazing authority issued under the Nature Conservation (Administration) Regulation 2006. The grazing authority is due to expire on 31 August 2017. Grazing over the Conservation Park assists in reducing the fire threat to the gidgee communities.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Landscape</p> <p>The landscape is protected, particularly areas of high scenic quality or traditional or cultural significance, while allowing natural processes to continue.</p>	<p>Monitor the impacts from natural processes, pests, fire and recreation. Use the information to guide management decisions and amend current and future plans and strategies.</p> <p>Manage activities to be consistent with the high scenic landscape values. Activities that compromise these values, and cannot be mitigated or managed, will not be permitted.</p>
<p>Fire management</p> <p>Fire is managed to meet the ecological requirements of fire-dependant and fire-sensitive communities.</p>	<p>Regulate the frequency and intensity of fire to maintain the regional ecosystem composition, structure and ecological dynamics of all vegetation communities.</p> <p>Develop and implement the Level 2 fire management strategy.</p>
<p>Native plants and animals</p> <p>Plant species and communities and animal species of significance are protected.</p> <p>The composition and extent of vegetation is maintained or increased.</p>	<p>Minimise threats through appropriate fire regimes, grazing and pest plant and animal control.</p> <p>Incorporate new information about threatened plants, animals or communities into plans or strategies.</p>
<p>Tourism and visitor opportunities</p> <p>The park provides a range of recreational and tourism activities which highlight its special character and complements other local and regional opportunities.</p> <p>Recreation and tourist access and facilities on the national park complement the natural setting and do not compromise natural and cultural values.</p>	<p>Promote minimal impact and safe driving, walking and camping opportunities.</p> <p>Develop cooperative liaison with user groups to ensure that the park is promoted in a manner appropriate with the level of services and facilities provided.</p>
<p>Partnerships</p> <p>The effectiveness of future management is strengthened through cooperative partnerships.</p>	<p>Continue to build relationships with the local community, organisations, visitors and interest groups to improve knowledge of the management area, and to highlight its significance to the region.</p> <p>Encourage and support Traditional Owners in conducting a comprehensive cultural heritage survey including recording sites, stories, language names and cultural heritage places.</p>

Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status	Park
10.5.7	<i>Grevillea striata</i> , <i>G. parallela</i> and <i>Acacia coriacea</i> low open woodland or <i>Corymbia terminalis</i> open woodland on relict sand plain	Of concern	Wilandspey CP
11.3.1	<i>Acacia harpophylla</i> and/or <i>Casuarina cristata</i> open forest on alluvial plains	Endangered	Nairana NP & NP (Rec)
11.3.3	Grassy woodland to open woodland of <i>Eucalyptus coolabah</i> on alluvial plains. Sometimes as a grassland (e.g. <i>Astrebla lappacea</i>) with emergent <i>Eucalyptus coolabah</i> .	Of concern	Nairana NP & NP (Rec); Wilandspey CP
11.3.5	<i>Acacia cambagei</i> woodland on alluvial plains	Of concern	Nairana NP & NP (Rec)
11.3.7	Tall woodland of <i>Eucalyptus dolichocarpa</i> , <i>E. tessellaris</i> and <i>E. papuana</i> on alluvial plains. Sandy soils.	Of concern	Nairana NP & NP (Rec)
11.3.8	Woodland of <i>Acacia argyrodendron</i> and/or <i>A. cambagei</i> <i>A. harpophylla</i> on alluvial plains.	Of concern	Nairana NP & NP (Rec)
11.3.25	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> or <i>E. camaldulensis</i> woodland fringing drainage lines	Of concern	Nairana NP & NP (Rec)
11.3.27	Freshwater wetlands	Of concern	Nairana NP
11.4.5	<i>Acacia argyrodendron</i> woodland understorey of <i>Terminalia oblongata</i> and <i>Eremophila mitchellii</i> on Cainozoic clay plains.	Endangered	Nairana NP & NP (Rec); Wilandspey CP
11.4.6	<i>Acacia cambagei</i> woodland understorey of <i>Terminalia oblongata</i> and <i>Eremophila mitchellii</i> on Cainozoic clay plains.	Endangered	Nairana NP & NP (Rec); Wilandspey CP
11.4.8	<i>Eucalyptus cambageana</i> woodland to open forest with <i>Acacia harpophylla</i> or <i>A. argyrodendron</i> on Cainozoic clay plains	Endangered	Nairana NP & NP (Rec); Wilandspey CP
11.4.9	<i>Acacia harpophylla</i> and/or <i>A. argyrodendron</i> shrubby open forest with <i>Terminalia oblongata</i> and usually with <i>Eremophila mitchellii</i> in understorey scattered eucalypts on Cainozoic clay plains. <i>Casuarina cristata</i> sometimes present.	Endangered	Nairana NP & NP (Rec)
11.11.13	<i>Acacia harpophylla</i> or <i>A. argyrodendron</i> , <i>Terminalia oblongata</i> low open forest on deformed and metamorphosed sediments and interbedded volcanics.	Of concern	Nairana NP & NP (Rec)

Table 2: Species of conservation significance

Scientific name	Common name	Nature Conservation Act 1992 status	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 status	Back on Track status
Plants				
<i>Acacia ramiflora</i>	-	Least concern	Vulnerable	Low
Animals				
<i>Denisonia maculata</i>	ornamental snake	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Medium
<i>Egernia rugosa</i>	yakka skink	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Medium
<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>	black-necked stork	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Erythrotriorchis radiatus</i>	red goshawk	Endangered	Vulnerable	High
<i>Geophaps scripta scripta</i>	squatter pigeon	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Medium
<i>Grantiella picta</i>	painted honeyeater	Vulnerable	-	High
<i>Lophoictinia isura</i>	square-tailed kite	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Neochmia ruficauda ruficauda</i>	star finch	Endangered	Endangered	-
<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>	cotton pygmy-goose	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Notaden bennettii</i>	crucifix toad	Least concern	-	Medium
<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>	koala	Special least concern	Vulnerable	Low
<i>Poephila cincta cincta</i>	black-throated finch	Endangered	Endangered	High
<i>Rostratula australis</i>	Australian painted snipe	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Medium

Table 3: Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	Bonn	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Apus pacificus</i>	fork-tailed swift	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Ardea modesta</i>	great egret	-	✓	✓	-
<i>Ardea ibis</i>	cattle egret	-	✓	✓	-
<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	Latham's snipe	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	white-bellied sea-eagle	-	✓	-	-
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	barn swallow	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Macronektes giganteus</i>	southern giant-petrel	✓	-	-	-
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	-	-	✓	-
<i>Monarcha melanopsis</i>	black-faced monarch	✓	-	-	-
<i>Myiagra cyanoleuca</i>	satin flycatcher	✓	-	-	-
<i>Rostratula australis</i>	Australian painted snipe	-	✓	-	-
<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	little tern	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Symposiarchus trivirgatus</i>	spectacled monarch	✓	-	-	-

Bonn – Bonn Convention; CAMBA – China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement; JAMBA – Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement; ROKAMBA – Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement