

Grey Peaks National Park

Management Statement

2013



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

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The Grey Peaks National Park Management Statement 2013 has been extended in 2024 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:	1,083ha
Bioregion:	Wet Tropics
QPWS region:	Northern
Local government estate/area:	Cairns Regional Council
State electorate:	Mulgrave

Legislative framework

✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
✓	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwth)</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>
✓	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i>

Plans and agreements

✓	Bonn Convention
✓	China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Mandingalbay Yidinji Indigenous Protected Area management plan
✓	Mandingalbay Yidinji people and the State of Queensland Indigenous Land Use Agreement 2006
✓	Memorandum of understanding between Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation, Djunbunji Limited and the State
✓	National recovery plan for the spectacled flying fox <i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i>
✓	Recovery plan for cave-dwelling bats, <i>Rhinolophus philippinensis</i> , <i>Hipposideros semoni</i> and <i>Taphozous troughoni</i> 2001–2005
✓	Recovery plan for the southern cassowary <i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i>
✓	Recovery plan for the stream-dwelling rainforest frogs of the wet tropics biogeographic region of north-east Queensland 2000–2004
✓	Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Strategic plan for Mandingalbay Yidinji Country 2009
✓	Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement 2005

Thematic strategies

✓	Level 2 Fire Strategy
✓	QPWS Wet Tropics Pest Strategy

Vision

Grey Peaks National Park remains an undisturbed component of the coastal range forest massif. The values of the park will be protected and biodiversity will be maintained. Views of this park across Trinity Inlet from the Cairns esplanade continue to create a significant visual feature of the Cairns experience.

The Mandingalbay Yidinji people, through their connection to country, and the Djunbunji people play an important role in park management.

Conservation purpose

Grey Peaks National Park will be managed to protect culture and maintain biodiversity.

The protected area was first gazetted in 1989 with an area of 920ha. In 1994 the park was re-gazetted with no changes to its area. In 2003 the area of the park was increased to 1,085ha then revised to 1,083ha in 2005.

Protecting and presenting the park's values

Landscape

Grey Peaks National Park has high scenic values and contributes to the scenic backdrop of Cairns and the Mulgrave Valley. The major surrounding land uses are sugar cane farming on the western side of the park, with natural landscapes on the northern, eastern and southern sides of the protected area. The park is intact with no roads or infrastructure corridors crossing it.

The Malbon Thompson Range consists of granite and granodiorite from the late Permian and early Triassic periods. The granite tors on and in the vicinity of Grey Peaks National Park hold cultural significance for Traditional Owners. Management of the tors will ensure that they are not disturbed or developed.

The protected area contains the headwaters of numerous small creeks. The northern section of the park is adjacent to Trinity Inlet. This inlet is listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia. The park extends from an elevation of 20m to 644m at the summit of Grey Peaks itself.

Regional ecosystems

The national park area is included in Queensland's Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and is largely uncleared. Nineteen regional ecosystems have been recorded from Grey Peak National Park. Six of these regional ecosystems have a biodiversity status of endangered, with a further seven having the status of concern (Table 1). The park is covered by a mosaic of sclerophyll and rainforest vegetation. Actions to clear similar environments in the region have reduced the occurrence of these sclerophyll ecosystems in the area.

Native plants and animals

Little has been recorded about the native plants and animals of Grey Peaks National Park although the species of conservation significance which are known to exist on the park are listed in Table 2 including four with endangered status. Three species are listed in international agreements and are outlined in Table 3.

The rainforest and vine forests on the park provide critical habitat for the southern cassowary *Casuarius casuarius johnsonii* much of which is mapped as essential habitat for the species.

The park contains populations of restricted fish whose current distribution is the remnant of a previously larger distribution range that has been reduced due to environmental changes. These include the Cairns rainbowfish *Cairnsichthys rhombosomoides* and disjunct populations of McCulloch's rainbowfish *Melanotaenia maccullochi* and spotted blue-eye *Pseudomugil gertrudae*. These fish are threatened by collection for aquaria.

Reducing the stresses on the area's natural systems will make them more resilient to a range of threats including fire, pests, weeds, weather events and climate variability.

Aboriginal culture

Grey Peaks National Park's eastern boundary represents a section of the border between the Gunggandji (eastern side) and the Mandingalbay Yidinji (western side) of the Malbon–Thompson Range. This is within the Yidinjdji language area. There are numerous places of cultural significance on the park. Knowledge about these sites, protocols and stories is held by the Traditional Owners for these sites.

The park is within the area of native title determined for the Mandingalbay Yidinji #1 (QC99/040) Native Title Claim. There is no claim over the northern section of the park. ILUA Q12006/023 is an area agreement between the Mandingalbay Yidinji and the State of Queensland that encompasses most of the southern section of Grey Peaks

National Park.

A memorandum of understanding between the State and the Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation and Djunbunji Limited was signed in 2011 to set out the joint commitment to collaboration in looking after Mandingalbay Yidinji country, including the implementation of Indigenous Land Use Agreements and the management of the Indigenous Protected Area.

Djunbunji Limited manages the Djunbunji Land and Sea program which provides employment and training for Djunbunji rangers working across the Indigenous Protected Area. They have a land and sea base at Grey Peaks National Park.

Shared-history culture

There is no shared history culture recorded on departmental databases for Grey Peaks National Park. While the surrounding area of Cairns and islands were important for European colonisation, little incursion into the park area was attempted due to its heavily vegetated and steep terrain.

Timber was harvested in the area and the Australian Defence Force are thought to have used the park and surrounding area.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

Access to Grey Peaks National Park is possible from the road reserve on the southern end of Phillip Gray Road. There are no facilities or maintained walking tracks on the park. Past cyclone damage makes movement within the forest difficult.

The Traditional Owners welcome visitors to the area. They aspire to establish walking tracks in selected locations including the development of a loop walking track adjacent to the Djunbunji ranger base and to provide eco-cultural tours.

Education and science

Little is known about the native plants and animals of Grey Peaks National Park. Investigations into the components of the park at higher altitudes may provide valuable vegetation data. The park is in a convenient location close to Cairns for potential educational visits.

Its undisturbed nature and broad altitudinal range make it attractive for scientific research.

The Traditional Owners have developed protocols for collaborating with researchers and are pursuing a number of research priorities across their country, which support the management of the cultural and natural values of the area. This includes a partnership with Charles Darwin University to undertake a community wellbeing baseline study to assist in monitoring and supporting economic, social and cultural development of the area.

Partnerships

QPWS is legislatively responsible for the day-to-day management of the national park and the Wet Tropics Management Authority regulates activity in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The goal of both agencies is to present the area's values while protecting its natural and cultural values.

The park will be cooperatively managed with the Traditional Owners and agreed actions from the Indigenous Protected Area agreement will be implemented in partnership where required.

Where possible the park is managed in partnership with the Djunbunji Land and Sea Program.

Partnerships with research institutes will be developed and strengthened to support the management of the cultural and natural values of the area.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

Pest management on Grey Peaks National Park will be managed as identified in the QPWS Wet Tropics pest strategy. The Djunbunji Land and Sea program includes pig control and pest plant management components.

Guinea grass *Megathyrsus maximus* and thatch grass *Hyparrhenia rufa* from adjacent areas may impact park values. Thatch grass has been observed on disturbed areas in the park and is spreading further in areas which are burnt more frequently. Blue billygoat weed *Ageratum houstonianum*, giant sensitive weed *Mimosa pudica*, Jamaica snake weed *Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*, mother-in-law's tongue *Sansevieria trifasciata*, African tulip *Spathodea campanulata* and Singapore daisy *Sphagneticola trilobata* from adjacent areas are significant threats. Lantana

Lantana camara is known from the foothills in the park.

Cane toads *Rhinella marina* and pigs *Sus scrofa* are found throughout the park. Horses *Equus caballus*, wild dogs *Canis lupus familiaris*, Asian honey-bees *Apis cerana* and deer from adjacent areas may impact on the park. Deer are a recent incursion to the area and are increasing in number. Pest fish, such as the black mangrove cichlid *Tilapia mariae*, guppy *Poecilia reticulata* and platy *Xiphophorus maculatus*, in neighbouring streams may also impact park values.

Fire management

The Grey Peaks National Park Level 2 fire strategy will be used to manage fire on the park. Fire management will be undertaken through collaborative arrangements between QPWS and the Djunbunji rangers on Grey Peaks National Park.

Pollution

Agricultural chemical overspray, aerial aviation-fuel dumping in relation to Cairns airport and aircraft noise are all activities which may occur in the area and have potentially threatening consequences to park values.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Native plants and animals</p> <p>A sound knowledge of the native plants and animals forms the basis for park management.</p> <p>Populations of restricted fish species are maintained.</p>	<p>Incorporate improved knowledge of native plants and animals in the upland areas of the park into park management actions.</p> <p>Support monitoring of Cairns rainbow fish and of the spotted blue-eye populations and investigate mechanisms to address threats to the population.</p>
<p>Aboriginal culture</p> <p>Traditional Owners are involved in cooperative park management.</p>	<p>Support the active engagement of the Traditional Owners in park management through the Djunbunji Land and Sea program.</p> <p>Cooperatively manage the park with the Traditional Owners.</p> <p>Implement agreed actions from the Indigenous Protected Area agreement in partnership with Traditional Owners.</p> <p>Undertake fire management through collaborative arrangements between QPWS and the Djunbunji rangers.</p>
<p>Tourism and visitor opportunities</p> <p>Visitor experiences are consistent with the cultural and natural values of the park.</p>	<p>Investigate the potential for the development of walking tracks and other appropriate recreation activities in selected locations on park.</p>

Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
7.3.10	Simple to complex mesophyll to notophyll vine forest on moderate to poorly drained alluvial plains of moderate fertility	Endangered
7.3.12	Mixed eucalypt open forest to woodland, dominated by <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> and <i>Corymbia tessellaris</i> +/- <i>Melaleuca dealbata</i> , (or vine forest with these species as emergents), on alluvial plains of lowlands	Endangered
7.3.20	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> and <i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> , or <i>C. intermedia</i> and <i>Eucalyptus pellita</i> , or <i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> and <i>Allocasuarina</i> spp., or <i>E. cloeziana</i> , or <i>C. torelliana</i> open forests (or vine forests with these species as emergents), on alluvial fans at the base of ranges	Of concern
7.3.40	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> medium to tall open forest on well drained alluvial plains of lowlands	Endangered
7.12.4	<i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus pellita</i> open forest of granites and rhyolites, on deep soils	Endangered
7.12.5	<i>Eucalyptus pellita</i> +/- <i>Corymbia intermedia</i> open forest, or <i>Acacia mangium</i> and <i>Lophostemon suaveolens</i> open forest (or vine forest with these species as emergents), on granites and rhyolites	Endangered
7.12.9	<i>Acacia celsa</i> open to closed forest on granites and rhyolites	Of concern
7.12.23	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> and/or <i>C. tessellaris</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> medium to tall open forest to woodland (or vine forest with these species as emergents), on coastal granite and rhyolite headlands and near-coastal foothills	Endangered
7.12.37	Rock pavements and see areas of wet lowlands, uplands and highlands of the eastern escarpment and central range (excluding high granite areas of Hinchinbrook Island and Bishops Peak) on granite and rhyolite, with <i>Allocasuarina</i> spp. shrublands and/or sedgeland	Of concern
7.12.40	Closed vineland of wind disturbed vine forest, on granites and rhyolites	Of concern
7.12.48	Wind-sheared notophyll vine forest of exposed granite and rhyolite ridge-crests and steep slopes	Of concern
7.12.61	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> +/- <i>E. granitica</i> woodland to open forest of moist and dry foothills and uplands on granite and rhyolite	Of concern
7.12.66	Exposed rocky slopes on granite and rhyolite, with <i>Lophostemon confertus</i> low shrubland or low to medium closed forest	Of concern

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
Animals				
<i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i> (southern population)	southern cassowary (southern population)	Endangered	Endangered	Critical
<i>Nyctimystes dayi</i>	Australian laceid	Endangered	Endangered	Low
<i>Rhinolophus philippinensis</i>	greater large-eared horseshoe bat	Endangered	Endangered	High
<i>Taudactylus acutirostris</i>	sharp snouted dayfrog	Endangered	Extinct	Low
<i>Murina florum</i>	tube-nosed insectivorous bat	Vulnerable	Least concern	High
<i>Taphozous australis</i>	coastal sheathtail bat	Vulnerable	Least concern	High
<i>Aerodramus terraereginae</i>	Australian swiftlet	Near threatened	Least concern	Low
<i>Dendrolagus lumholtzi</i>	Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo	Near threatened	Near threatened	Low
<i>Hipposideros diadema reginae</i>	diadem leaf-nosed bat	Near threatened	Least concern	Low
<i>Kerivoula papuensis</i>	golden-tipped bat	Near threatened	Least concern	Medium
<i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i>	spectacled flying-fox	Least concern	Vulnerable	High

Table 3: Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	BONN	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	white-bellied sea-eagle	-	✓	-	-
<i>Pandion cristatus</i>	eastern osprey	✓	-	-	-
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	-	-	✓	-

BONN – Bonn Convention

CAMBA – China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

JAMBA – Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA – Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement