

Topaz Road National Park Management Statement 2013

Park size:	37.8ha
Bioregion:	Wet Tropics
QPWS region:	Northern
Local government estate/area:	Tablelands Regional
State electorate:	Dalrymple



Topaz Road National Park. Photo: NPRSR

Vision

Topaz Road National Park protects remnant rainforest in the upper Johnstone River catchment. The park and nearby nature refuges form a network of protected areas that adjoin Wooroonooran National Park, providing habitat connectivity for a wide variety of Wet Tropics species.

Conservation purpose

Topaz Road National Park was gazetted in 1977. It supports an area of complex mesophyll vine forest on volcanic soils.

A 19th century water race associated with past gold mining activity is located in the southern part of the park. The 150 metre (m) long tunnel is home to a number of bat species.

The adjoining Galaji Nature Refuge supports 41 identified species of native wildlife prescribed as near threatened, vulnerable or endangered; including the endangered southern cassowary *Casuarus casuarus*. It is likely that the park supports a similar range of plants and animals.

Legislative framework

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

Plans and agreements

✓	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ngadjon-Jii, Environmental Protection Agency and the Wet Tropics Management Authority 28 February 2003.
✓	National recovery plan for the southern cassowary <i>Casuarus casuarus johnsonii</i> 2007
✓	Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement 2005

Thematic strategies

✓	Level 2 fire strategy
✓	Level 2 pest strategy

Protecting and presenting the park's values

Landscape

The surrounding freehold land consists of grazing properties and nature refuges. The latter involve a number of properties that have revegetated parts of the area over time with local rainforest species. Parts of the general area are very steep, and this is particularly the case within the park.

Topaz Road National Park lies on the western side of Topaz Road, from which landslides have occurred in the past. This presents serious risks for any park user.

Regional ecosystems

One regional ecosystem, 7.8.1a, occurs in the park—comprising of complex mesophyll vine forest on lowlands and foothills on basalt, of the very wet and wet rainfall zone. This regional ecosystem is endangered (Table 1).

Aboriginal culture

No significant Aboriginal cultural values associated with this park are known by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS).

The park is covered by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Ngadjon-Jii, the former Environmental Protection Agency and the Wet Tropics Management Authority. This MOU provides for the involvement of Ngadjon-Jii people in the management of the park.

Shared-history culture

The park was part of the Russell River goldfields area and gold mining occurred in this vicinity. Most mining took place to the south-east of the park.

A nineteenth century water race occurs in the park. It was excavated for approximately 150m underground through the basalt from two differing levels. The tunnel is now home to a number of bat species. Most of the tunnel remains intact.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

The topography of Topaz Road National Park is very steep. As such, the park has no developed visitor facilities.

Education and science

No research is known to have been undertaken on the park. However, the park is a semi-isolated remnant which may be of interest to researchers.

Partnerships

The Ngadjon-Jii people have expressed interest in undertaking resource management activities on the park. This aspiration is supported by the MOU.

Tablelands Regional Council maintains Topaz Road along the eastern boundary of the national park.

The neighbouring Galaji Nature Refuge is managed in a manner which supports the integrity of the park.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

Pest plants

Most pest plants occur along the edges of Topaz Road. These include the coral tree *Erythrina x sykesii*, wild tobacco *Solanum mauritianum*, lantana *Lantana camara*, *Setaria* sp., devil's fig *Solanum torvum*, giant bramble *Rubus alceifolius*, Guinea grass *Megathyrsus maximus* var. *maximus*, *Tristemma mauritianum* and common guava *Psidium guajava*.

Pest animals

The presence of feral cats *Felis catus*, wild dogs *Canis familiaris* and the black rat *Rattus rattus* is likely. Pest animal management in this park is not a priority due to its small size and steep terrain. However, pest management actions may be possible on neighbouring properties to assist with reduction of detrimental impacts on the park.

Fire management

This area is very wet for most of the year. Fire is not currently required to manage any specific issue.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Native plants and animals Information on the occurrence and distribution of plants and animals is sufficient for management purposes.</p>	<p>A1. Conduct plant and animal surveys to improve knowledge of the park's plants and animals.</p>
<p>Shared-history culture Shared history is protected.</p>	<p>A2. Investigate the actions necessary to preserve the nineteenth century water race on the park.</p>
<p>Partnerships Traditional Owners are involved in cooperative park management.</p>	<p>A3. Support the involvement of Traditional Owners in park management.</p>

Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Endangered regional ecosystems.

Regional ecosystem	Description	Biodiversity status
7.8.1a	Complex mesophyll vine forest. Lowlands and foothills on basalt, of the very wet and wet rainfall zone.	Endangered

Table 2: Species of conservation significance.

Scientific name	Common name	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> status	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> status	Back on Track status
Animals				
<i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i>	southern cassowary (southern population)	Endangered	Endangered	Critical
<i>Cyclopsitta diophthalma macleayana</i>	Macleay's fig-parrot	Vulnerable	-	Low
<i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i>	spectacled flying-fox	Least concern	Vulnerable	High
Plants				
<i>Austromuellera trinervia</i>	Mueller's silky oak	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Eidothea zoexylocarya</i>	-	Vulnerable	-	Low
<i>Hollandaea sayeriana</i>	Sayer's silky oak	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Peripentadenia mearsii</i>	buff quandong	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Solanum hamulosum</i>	Dirran curse	Endangered	-	Medium
<i>Wendlandia basistaminea</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low

Table 3: Bird species listed in international agreements.

Scientific name	Common name	BONN	JAMBA	ROKAMBA	CAMBA
<i>Ardea ibis</i>	cattle egret	-	✓	-	✓
<i>Coracina tenuirostris</i>	cicadabird	-	✓	-	-
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Monarcha melanopsis</i>	black-faced monarch	✓	-	-	-
<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>	rufous fantail	✓	-	-	-
<i>Symposiarchus trivirgatus</i>	spectacled monarch	✓	-	-	-

BONN: Bonn Convention

JAMBA: Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

CAMBA: China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA: Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement