

Ferntree Creek National Park Management Statement 2013

Park size:	71.9ha
Bioregion:	South Eastern Queensland
QPWS region:	Sunshine and Fraser Coast
Local government estate/area:	Sunshine Coast Council
State electorate:	Nicklin

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

Ferntree Creek National Park will be managed to protect small patches of notophyll vine forest and tall open forest on alluvial plains and their associated threatened species. The park will continue to provide a green corridor and scenic amenity along the train line.

Conservation purpose

Ferntree Creek National Park was originally gazetted in 1947 as one of a number of scenic reserves along the North Coast Railway line between Landsborough and Yandina. Another one of these scenic reserves was Tuckers Creek National Park (52ha) to the south. In 1994 these two parks were amalgamated to form the current Ferntree Creek National Park.

The park provides vegetated links with Parklands Conservation Park to the east and Mapleton National Park to the west.

Protecting and presenting the park's values

Landscape

The park's main landscape value lies in it being a scenic green space to the east of the North Coast Railway Line. It contains steep land and protects vegetation along Ferntree Creek which is part of the Maroochy River Catchment.

The park is surrounded by hobby farms, a golf course and a housing estate and provides a green backdrop to these areas.

Regional ecosystems

The park is mostly covered by *Eucalyptus siderophloia*, *E. propinqua*, *E. acmenoides* open forest on near coastal hills on Mesozoic to Proterozoic igneous rocks (regional ecosystem 12.12.15) which is classed as not of concern under the biodiversity status. Small patches of the endangered 12.3.1 gallery rainforest (notophyll vine forest) on alluvial plains and the of concern 12.3.2 *Eucalyptus grandis* tall open forest on alluvial plains also occur, (Table 1).

Native plants and animals

There have been no comprehensive plant surveys completed for the park. However, one plant has been recorded on the park which is a priority species of regional significance—*Austromyrtus glabra*. It is only known from one other protected area in the South East Queensland bioregion namely Mapleton National Park.

Over 50 species of birds have been recorded which represents a significant diversity for such a small park. The near threatened grey goshawk is present; along with six species protected under international bird agreements (tables 2 and 3). The vulnerable tusked frog *Adelotus brevis* is recorded on the park and known threats include impacts from introduced species and water pollution. The species has apparently undergone local declines and extinctions and is a cause for concern (Wildnet 2011).

The majority of the park is considered of state biodiversity significance as habitat for threatened species and as a wildlife refuge.

Aboriginal culture

Coastal areas of the Sunshine Coast are of very high intrinsic value to Traditional Owners, however site specific values in the park and the degree of significance is unknown to Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). There is currently no native title claim over the park.

Opportunities exist to improve relationships with local Traditional Owner groups and involve them in park management.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

There are currently no formal recreational facilities on the park and visitor use is constrained by limited access, safety and the steep landscape. An informal walking track was established but needs further consideration for future use as QPWS does not currently maintain this track. Given that Parklands Conservation Park is so close and provides a diversity of recreation opportunities, Ferntree Creek National Park will be maintained predominantly for its conservation and aesthetic value.

There are potential impacts from future development surrounding the park.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

The number of pest plant species recorded for this park is extensive, with many being declared pest plants and located in significant ecosystems. The disturbed edges of the park are visibly thick with pest plants but the internal areas appear to be in better condition. The steepness of the land in some areas makes the park difficult to access for management.

Declared pest plants occurring on the park include broad leaf pepper *Schinus terebinthifolius* (within most ecosystems), camphor laurel *Cinnamomum camphora* (occurring within endangered regional ecosystem 12.3.1), African tulip *Spathodea campanulata* (occurring adjacent to endangered regional ecosystem 12.3.1), groundsel *Baccharis halimifolia*, Chinese elm *Celtis sinensis* (occurring adjacent to endangered regional ecosystem 12.3.1), lantana *Lantana camara* (occurs adjacent to and within regional ecosystem 12.3.1), and umbrella tree *Schefflera actinophylla* (occurs adjacent to and within regional ecosystem 12.3.1).

Other environmental pest plants compromising the integrity of the plant communities are Singapore daisy *Sphagneticola trilobata*, asparagus fern sp., and mother of millions *Bryophyllum delagoense*, coral tree *Erythrina crista-galli* (occurs adjacent to riparian zone), wild tobacco bush *Solanum mauritianum*, castor oil bush *Ricinus communis*, eastern cassia *Senna pendula* var. *glabrata*, and slash pine *Pinus elliotii*.

Foxes *Vulpes vulpes* and wild dogs *Canis familiaris* are recorded from across the whole park area and from neighbouring properties. There have been occasional sightings of feral cats *Felis catus* on the park by neighbours and staff.

Fire management

The park is managed under a current Level 2 Fire Management Strategy for Parklands Conservation Park. Fire should be excluded from the notophyll vine forest and fringing riverine systems. Repeated scorching of rainforest margins will lead to retraction of rainforest and increased potential for invasion by pest plants, in particular lantana.

Partnerships

There is a need to liaise with Queensland Rail and the Nambour Golf Club in regards to managing issues along the boundaries that affect all parties, including pests and fire. Liaising with Queensland Rail and other land managers across the Sunshine Coast region needs to be done more formally for all parks that have a shared management responsibility rather than at the individual park level.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Native plants and animals</p> <p>Regional ecosystem health is maintained.</p> <p>The knowledge of native plants and animals is increased.</p>	<p>A1. Undertake plant and animal surveys including pest plants to update species lists and establish management programs for species of management concern, where necessary.</p> <p>A2. Conduct a biodiversity condition assessment for key ecosystems and document any threats. Carry out management to mitigate these impacts.</p> <p>A3. Continue implementing and updating the fire management strategy with new information as it becomes available.</p>
<p>Aboriginal culture</p> <p>Traditional Owners have meaningful involvement with park management planning and direction.</p>	<p>A4. Encourage Traditional Owners to identify and document values, sites, artefacts and places of cultural heritage significance so that management strategies and decisions relating to fire regimes, access and track maintenance minimise potential threats to these values.</p>
<p>Tourism and visitor opportunities</p> <p>Opportunities for public use and enjoyment of the park are investigated.</p>	<p>A5. Investigate future management options for the informal walking track.</p> <p>A6. Consider the visitor opportunities on the park in relation to those provided on other protected areas in the vicinity.</p>
<p>Pest management</p> <p>The integrity of communities and species is improved through the implementation of the pest management strategy.</p>	<p>A7. Update the pest management strategy with focus given to declared species, species with the potential to increase fire intensity and those threatening the endangered vine forest community.</p>
<p>Partnerships</p> <p>Adjacent land managers are aware of and help achieve the desired management outcomes for the park.</p>	<p>A8. Liaise with adjoining property managers about cooperative arrangements for park management issues, including pest management, recreational opportunities and boundary fences.</p> <p>A9. Liaise at the regional level with land managers including Energex and Queensland Rail who have joint responsibilities for managing impacts such as fire and pest management on park boundaries.</p>

Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
12.3.1	Gallery rainforest (notophyll vine forest) on alluvial plains	Endangered
12.3.2	<i>Eucalyptus grandis</i> tall open forest on alluvial plains	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
<i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>	grey goshawk	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Adelotus brevis</i>	tusked frog	Vulnerable	-	Medium

Table 3: Bird species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	Bonn	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Ardea ibis</i>	cattle egret	-	✓	✓	-
<i>Coracina tenuirostris</i>	cicadabird	-		✓	-
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	-	-	✓	-
<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>	rufous fantail	✓	-	-	-
<i>Symposiarchus trivirgatus</i>	spectacled monarch	✓	-	-	-

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