

Goodedulla Area Management Statement 2013

Park size:	Goodedulla National Park 25,500ha Develin State Forest 845.6ha
Bioregion:	Brigalow Belt South Bioregion
QPWS region:	Central
Local government estate/area:	Rockhampton
State electorate:	Mirani



Goodedulla National Park. Photo: D. Witten

Legislative framework

a	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
a	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
a	<i>Forestry Act 1959</i>
a	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)</i>
a	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>

Plans and agreements

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

Thematic strategies

a	Level 2 Fire Management Strategy
a	Level 2 Pest Management Strategy

Vision

The natural ecosystems, flora and fauna populations in the Goodedulla National Park and Develin State Forest are conserved.

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

Partnerships are established with the Traditional Owners, local community, neighbours, research institutes, Rockhampton Regional Council and Queensland Fire and Rescue Service to contribute to the area's ongoing management.

Conservation purpose

The objectives of management for the Goodedulla management area are to:

- protect regional ecosystems and species of conservation significance and their habitats
- conserve and protect the management areas natural, cultural and scenic values
- minimise the impact of pests and inappropriate fire regimes on the natural environment
- incorporate the interests and rights of the Traditional Owners and their affiliations to the area by cooperatively protecting and managing cultural heritage of significance
- provide a range of low-key, nature-based recreational opportunities that complement opportunities offered in the surrounding area
- provide direction and actions to protect the natural, cultural and social values of the area through appropriate research and monitoring
- foster working relationships with interested parties to build stronger partnerships to assist management.

Protecting and presenting the area's values

Landscape

Goodedulla National Park and Develin State Forest are located 70km west of Rockhampton. Goodedulla National Park is centred on the Melaleuca Creek catchment of the Boomer Range. The area consists of semi-permanent creeks that are surrounded by scenic hilly and mountainous areas to 480m that were formed on Permian volcanics and sediments and Devonian–Carboniferous sediments. The area provides representation of the landforms of granites, acid volcanics and Permian sediments in the central brigalow belt bioregion. The soils are predominately black and brown cracking clays, bleached and clay loams.

Rural properties surround Goodedulla and Develin. Good cooperation and liaison with these properties is important in managing the biodiversity of the park and State forest on issues such as fire, pest plants and animals.

Gazetted road reserves exist throughout Goodedulla National Park. Where the roads join within the park a large area of road reserve exists that has not been gazetted to national park. The official gazetted road will be closed and allocated to national park, while maintaining public access.

Regional ecosystems

The management area supports a range of vegetation communities including large patches of semi-evergreen vine thickets, brigalow *Acacia harpophylla* open forest, rosewood *Acacia rhodoxylon* and eucalypt woodlands and open forests.

There are 17 regional ecosystems in the management area, with three listed as of concern and one listed as endangered as described in Table 1.

Of concern regional ecosystems include the tall eucalypt woodlands on alluvial plains and drainage lines which cover much of the Goodedulla management area.

Small patches of the endangered vegetation community, brigalow, occur on the south-western and southern boundaries of Goodedulla National Park

Native plants and animals

The park includes large patches of semi-evergreen vine thicket that contain a number of plant species at their northern limit of distribution. These include scrub ironbark *Bridelia leichhardtii*, velvet cassia *Cassia tomentella* and *Grevillea helmsiae*. Although once harvested for timber, woodlands of *Eucalyptus crebra* with a rosewood understory still occur in the area.

Goodedulla management area provides habitat for three significant plant species (Table 2). Black ironbox *Eucalyptus raveretiana* is listed as vulnerable under both the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and is a high priority in the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. It occurs within the riparian forests, especially along Melaleuca Creek. *Macropteranthes fitzalanii* and *Macropteranthes leiocaulis* are both listed as near threatened under the Nature Conservation Act. These mainly occur in the semi-evergreen vine thickets.

Three fauna species of conservation significance have been recorded in the management area (Table 2). Black-throated finch (white-rumped species) *Poephila cincta cincta* is classified as endangered under both the Nature Conservation Act and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act and is a high priority in the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. It requires grassy woodland dominated by eucalypts, paperbarks or acacias and access to seeding grasses. Australian cotton pygmy-goose *Nettapus coromandelianus* is listed as near threatened under the Nature Conservation Act. It requires permanent water sources including lagoons and rivers during the dry season and shifts to swamps and creeks in the wet season. The squatter pigeon (southern species) *Geophaps scripta scripta* is classified as vulnerable under both the Nature Conservation Act and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act and as a medium priority in the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. It requires permanent water close to dry eucalypt woodland on sandy soils.

There are 11 bird species in the area listed under international agreements that occur or are likely to occur in the management area (Table 3).

Aboriginal culture

The Darumbal people are the registered claimants over the Goodeedulla management area (QC99/1).

During the gazettal of the national park the Darumbal group requested the national park be named Goodeedulla meaning 'eagle flying overhead'. Limited information is available about sites of cultural or historic significance or any other heritage values in the management area. No cultural heritage survey is known to have been undertaken in the management area. 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.

It is important for Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (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

Prior to gazettal, Goodeedulla National Park was part of the Boomer and Rookwood pastoral holdings. Both pastoral properties were managed for grazing and harvested for rosewood. Remnants of the European heritage exist throughout the park including cattle yards, arsenic dip, dams, tin hut and well, fencing and an old logging truck. The fencing has been used previously to assist with the removal of cattle from the park. An action plan is required to consider the future interest in the fencing and whether this infrastructure should be retained or removed.

The degree of shared-history culture remains largely unknown in the Goodeedulla management area and additional information is required to assist with the interpretation and protection of these sites.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

Goodeedulla National Park provides an opportunity for nature-based appreciation of the natural and scenic values and supports low-impact recreation opportunities such as bushwalking and photography. Public four-wheel drive access is via a gazetted road (unformed) through the private property of Rookwood. Develin State Forest is accessed through Goodeedulla National Park. Goodeedulla National Park offers three undeveloped campsites at Palms Waterhole, Pigeon Camp Flat and the Tin Hut. Campers and day visitors have a range of outdoor recreational opportunities available in the park including mountain biking, four-wheel driving and bird watching. There are no designated walking tracks in the management area. Wet weather access into Goodeedulla National Park is limited by the rising of the Fitzroy River and seasonal creeks. Visitors are advised to be well prepared for heavy rain events.

Education and science

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

Further surveys would inform management of the protection of flora and fauna species, thereby reducing the impact of threatening processes of inappropriate fire regimes, pest animal and pest plant species.

Partnerships

QPWS is responsible for planning, managing and regulating activities in the management area. Working with neighbours, Traditional Owners, Rockhampton Regional Council, Fitzroy Basin Association, user groups, emergency services and individuals with similar interests in managing the area is highly desirable to achieve the vision. Where possible, efficiencies in resource sharing, improved communications, decision making and enhanced on-ground outcomes is to be facilitated through working partnerships.

QPWS promotes a working relationship with Queensland Rural Fire Service, neighbours, and local community and conservation groups for cooperative management of fire, pests and cattle management.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

A pest management strategy exists for the Goodeedulla area. This strategy helps to prioritise pest plant and animal control actions and guide operational work plans and evaluate program effectiveness on QPWS-managed estates.

Harrisia cactus *Eriocereus martini* and rubbervine *Cryptostegia grandiflora* are considered major threats in the Goodeedulla management area and is listed as a very high priority in the pest management strategy for Rockhampton base. The aim is to control and prevent further increase in distribution through an integrated control strategy consisting of ongoing biological and chemical control. Buffel grass *Cenchrus ciliaris* is considered a moderate threat in the Goodeedulla management area. This perennial grass colonises any disturbed soils and displaces native grass species. Buffel grass has the potential to impact on the vine scrubs, brigalow vegetation and riparian communities by promoting more frequent and intense fires. The aim is to map and identify priority infestations for chemical control.

Parthenium *Parthenium hysterophorus* is a moderate threat in the Goodeedulla management area. The aim is to identify and map infestation areas and reduce the density of this weed with chemical control. Good hygiene practices will continue with cleaning vehicles and machinery before leaving park to minimise spread. Lantana *Lantana camara* is another moderate threat in the Goodeedulla management area. Giant rat's tail grass *Sporobolus pyramidalis* is considered a minor threat in the Goodeedulla management area. Giant rat's tail grass has the potential to out-compete native grasses and has potential to cause more intense fires. The aim is to identify and map infestations and control with fire and herbicide.

Feral pigs *Sus scrofa* are considered a major threat to the Goodeedulla management area. Feral pigs cause significant damage and degradation to waterholes, spread weeds and diseases and cause significant losses to neighbouring primary producers. The aim is to monitor impacts, continue existing trapping program in partnership with neighbours and were feasible perform on ground shooting.

Feral cattle *Bos taurus* and *Bos indicus* are considered a moderate threat and are listed as a very high priority in the pest management strategy. The aim for feral cattle control is to work with neighbours to remove all branded stock to allow for aerial and ground control of wild stock on Goodeedulla National Park.

Fire management

A fire management strategy was developed in 1997 for the Goodeedulla area, a review of the strategy is required. Fire strategies provide the overall framework and direction for fire management and are the foundation from which planned burn programs are developed.

Wildfire and inappropriate fire regimes are considered the main threat to the Goodeedulla management area. The long-term fire management aims for the area is to maintain the current diversity of native flora and fauna species and ensure the conservation of fire sensitive ecosystems. Fire sensitive communities include brigalow, semi-evergreen vine thicket and rosewood and fire should be restricted from these communities. The encroachment of buffel grass is a concern for several of the vegetation communities. Buffel grass is known to increase fire intensity and alter the fire regimes of different vegetation types including brigalow and microphyll vine forest. A coordinated approach to fire management with surrounding neighbours will be maintained to assist in managing fire on the park.

Planned burn programmes are reviewed annually for Goodeedulla National Park in collaboration with the maintenance of fire control lines. Fire management in Develin State Forest is managed by the current grazing lessee's with QPWS.

Authorities

A grazing authority exists under the provisions of the *Land Act 1994* for Develin State Forest, it is valid until 2037. Future authorities in the management area must be consistent with the management strategies and plans are to be issued in accordance with the Nature Conservation Act and the Forestry Act.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Natural values</p> <p>The full range of naturally occurring biological diversity, ecological processes and landscape dynamics are maintained.</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>A1. 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>A2. Manage activities to be consistent with the areas values and their impacts to be mitigated.</p> <p>A3. Review and implement the pest management strategy annually.</p> <p>A4. Continue control of rubbervine throughout riparian areas particularly follow up in areas where substantial time and money has already been spent.</p> <p>A5. Treat roads and tracks through the park for parthenium to prevent further spread.</p> <p>A6. Work with neighbours to remove branded stock from the national park with the aim of significantly reducing the wild stock population on the park as outlined in the Goodeulla wild stock activity proposal.</p> <p>A7. Work with neighbours to complete the boundary fences around Goodeulla National Park and establish fencing maintenance agreements.</p> <p>A8. Minimise threats through cooperative fire management and pest plant and animal control.</p> <p>A9. Encourage and allow access for the implementation of research programs, particularly those that will benefit conservation management.</p> <p>A10. Investigate the closure of road easements that are not required and amalgamate with national park.</p>
<p>Tourism and visitor opportunities</p> <p>The park provides a range of recreational and tourism activities which highlight its special character and complement 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>A11. Promote minimal impact and safe driving, walking and camping opportunities.</p> <p>A12. 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>Authorities</p> <p>Facilities on the management area are correctly authorised under the relevant legislation and do not significantly impact on the areas values.</p>	<p>A13. Manage future grazing and lease renewals in the management area to be consistent with the management strategies and plans and to be issued in accordance with the Forestry Act and the Nature Conservation Act.</p> <p>A14. Develop a proposal for management facilities to provide for efficient and safe working conditions in Goodeulla National Park.</p>
<p>Partnerships</p> <p>The effectiveness of future management is strengthened through cooperative partnerships.</p>	<p>A15. Continue to build relationships with neighbours, visitors and interest groups to improve knowledge of the management area including the shared-history culture and to highlight its significance to the region.</p> <p>A16. 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	Description	Biodiversity status
11.3.4	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> and/or <i>Eucalyptus</i> spp. tall woodland on alluvial plains	Of concern
11.3.25	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> or <i>E. camaldulensis</i> woodland fringing drainage lines	Of concern
11.11.10	<i>Eucalyptus melanophloia</i> woodland on deformed and metamorphosed sediments and interbedded volcanics	Of concern
11.11.14	<i>Acacia harpophylla</i> open forest on deformed and metamorphosed sediments and interbedded volcanics	Endangered

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>Eucalyptus raveretiana</i>	Black ironbox	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	High
<i>Macropteranthes fitzalanii</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Macropteranthes leiocaulis</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low
Animals				
<i>Geophaps scripta scripta</i>	squatter pigeon (southern species)	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Medium
<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>	Australian cotton pygmy-goose	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Poephila cincta cincta</i>	black-throated finch (white-rumped sub-species)	Endangered	Endangered	High

Table 3: Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	Bonn	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Apus pacificus</i>	fork-tailed swift	-	P	P	P
<i>Ardea ibis</i>	cattle egret	-	P	P	-
<i>Ardea modesta</i>	eastern great egret	-	P	P	-
<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	Latham's snipe	P	P	P	P
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	white-bellied sea-eagle	-	P	-	-
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	-	P	P	P
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	barn swallow	-	P	P	P
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	-	-	P	-
<i>Monarcha melanopsis</i>	black-faced monarch	P	-	-	-
<i>Myiagra cyanoleuca</i>	Satin flycatcher	P	-	-	-
<i>Rostratula australis</i>	Australian painted snipe	-	P	-	-

BONN – Bonn Convention

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ROKAMBA – Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement