

# Mowbray National Park, Mowbray National Park (Recovery) and Mowbray Conservation Park Management Statement 2013

|                                  |                             |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Park size:                       |                             |
| Mowbray National Park            | 8,496ha                     |
| Mowbray National Park (Recovery) | 235ha                       |
| Mowbray Conservation Park        | 23.5ha                      |
| Bioregion:                       | Wet Tropics                 |
| QPWS region:                     | Northern                    |
| Local government estate/area:    | Tablelands Regional Council |
| State electorate:                | Cook                        |



Mowbray Valley overlooking the coast south of Port Douglas. Photo: NPRSR.

## Legislative framework

|   |  |
|---|--|
| ✓ | <i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>                         |
| ✓ | <i>Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>     |
| ✓ | <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>                                  |
| ✓ | <i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Management and Protection Act 1993</i> |

## Plans and agreements

|   |   |
|---|---|
| ✓ | National recovery plan for the southern cassowary <i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i> 2007 |
| ✓ | Siam and Four Tropical Weeds Management Plan  |
| ✓ | Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement 2005                       |

## Thematic strategies

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ✓ | Level 2 Fire Management Strategy    |
| ✓ | Level 2 Pest Management Strategy    |
| ✓ | QPWS Wet Tropics Pest Strategy 2010 |

## Vision

Mowbray National Park maintains high-quality ecosystems that support the southern cassowary and other species of conservation significance. Tourism and recreation activities are considerate of these special values as are fire and pest management programs.

Mowbray Conservation Park provides a natural location for horse riding activities. Pest and fire management programs help protect the natural values.

## Conservation purpose

Mowbray National Park, previously Mowbray State Forest, was transferred to protected area as part of the Wet Tropics Forest Transfer Program 2005. The park is located adjacent to Kuranda, McAllister Range and Mount Lewis national parks. It is located almost entirely within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

Mowbray National Park was declared mainly because of the high natural integrity of the forests which are also critical cassowary habitat.

The adjacent Mowbray Conservation Park provides an area where horse riding activities can reasonably occur while protecting its natural values.

Mowbray National Park (Recovery) is located along Black Mountain Road (East), Black Mountain Road (West) and the Bump Track. This area is anticipated to be amalgamated with Mowbray National Park.

Mowbray Conservation Park was dedicated to accommodate horse riding needs in the community within the surrounding district.

## Protecting and presenting the park's values

### Landscape

Mowbray National Park forms an important ecological link and an important corridor in the narrowest part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Maintaining linkages throughout the World Heritage area is vital for maintaining the ecological integrity of the Wet Tropics and for providing continued gene flow for wildlife, in particular species such as the southern cassowary and Lumholtz's tree kangaroo.

The Mowbray section of the Wet Tropics is recognised as an important watershed/catchment area, draining into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.

The parks run parallel to the coast line and ranges in altitude from approximately 10m to 1,068m. They play an important part in the climatic and aesthetic appeal of this area. The two main points of geological interest on the park are Black Mountain (1,068m) and Mowbray Falls. The tiered Mowbray Falls has an overall height of 220m and an average width of 12m.

Urban development pressures and subdivision occurs on former grazing and cane lands in the Mowbray catchment surrounding the protected area. Local government has recently implemented restrictions on development in the area in recognition of significant conservation and tourism values.

### Regional ecosystems

Twenty-eight regional ecosystems have been mapped on Mowbray National Park. Of these, 21 are of conservation significance (Table 1).

### Native plants and animals

Plant and animal species of conservation significance are listed on Table 2.

Ten bird species recorded from Mowbray National Park are listed in international agreements (Table 3).

### Aboriginal culture

No native title claims are currently registered over this area.

The Bump Track is reported to have Aboriginal cultural significance as a walking track (Bama Trail) linking the coast to the highlands. Particular sites have been identified as camping areas overlooking the coast.

## Shared-history culture

Mowbray National Park was one of the first forests in the Cairns district to experience non-Indigenous settlement impacts. The Bump Track was commonly known as the Seven Mile Road which provided a wagon track over the escarpment from Port Douglas to the Hodgkinson mining fields. Although the distance was relatively short from top to bottom, it was steep and required quite advanced technologies such as adding timber logs (corduroying) to assist vehicles ascending and descending the track.

Mowbray National Park was logged for rainforest timbers and legacy of forest roads continue to provide visitor access to scenic and interesting natural environments.

## Tourism and visitor opportunities

Black Mountain Road is frequently used by the public to access Julatten, Kuranda and the Aboriginal community at Mona Mona. Mountain biking, four-wheel driving, cycling and spotlighting are popular activities on this road. East Black Mountain Road is a Wet Tropics Management Area (WTMA) presentation restricted road. Non-motorised vehicles such as mountain bikes are approved to use this road, along with walkers.

Part of the Bump Track is on the Bicentennial National Trail (BNT) in Mowbray National Park. Horse riding is allowed on the BNT. Dogs are not allowed to accompany the horses and riders in an effort to protect the significant animal species in the area. Non-motorised vehicles can use the Bump Track, which is also popular with walkers and mountain bikers. Occasional competitive or extreme mountain bike activities are allowed on the Bump Track. Cairns Mountain Bike Club holds a RRR mountain bike competition annually for 150 riders over the Bump Track. The Bump Road is a gazetted road extending south of Black Mountain Road towards Mount Molloy.

Mowbray Falls walking track is accessed from the Bump Track. Safety signs are located near the watercourse because it is slippery and water levels are unpredictable. Horses are not allowed on this track.

A circuit walking track to the Twin Falls (Twin Bridges or East Black Mountain Road) is also a recognised mountain bike track. A loop walk to the Pinnacle is a popular walking trail.

The road off Rifle Creek Road and the Molloy Lagoon track is a gazetted road that is mostly native forest. Mountain bikes and trail bikes use this road through Mowbray and Kuranda national parks and Kuranda West Forest Reserve.

Mowbray Conservation Park is used for horse riding, and includes commercial as well as independent activities.

## Education and science

Natural, cultural and visitor information on the park is provided via multiple mediums including the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and WTMA websites, brochures and park based signs.

Scientific research is consistent with park management objectives and is mainly environmentally based. Local community volunteer organisations such as the Tableland Frog Group have requested access to the park to monitor frog populations.

## Partnerships

QPWS is responsible for the day-to-day management of the national park in association with the WTMA. The goal of both agencies is to present the area's values while protecting its natural and cultural values.

## Other key issues and responses

### Pest management

Pest management in Mowbray National Park is undertaken under the Level 2 Daintree South Pest Management Strategy.

### Fire management

Fire is managed on park based on the Daintree South Level 2 Fire Management Strategy.

## Other management issues

Communications facilities located on the park include occupational leases for the Queensland Police Service, Mossman Central Mill and Ergon Energy.

## Management directions

| Desired outcomes  | Actions and guidelines   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Plants and animals</b></p> <p>Endangered species and their habitats will be protected in the long term.</p>   | A1. Identify critical knowledge gaps requiring research, monitoring and assessment |
| <p><b>Tourism and visitor opportunities</b></p> <p>Quality information and mediums provide an understanding of park values, opportunities, obligations and potential hazards.</p> | A2. Develop a statement of interpretative intent for the park.                     |

## Tables – Conservation values management

**Table 1: Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems**

| Regional ecosystem number | Description   | Biodiversity status |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 7.3.8                     | <i>Melaleuca viridiflora</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus</i> spp. +/- <i>Lophostemon suaveolens</i> open forest to open woodland on alluvial plains   | Endangered          |
| 7.3.10                    | Simple to complex mesophyll to notophyll vine forest on moderate to poorly drained alluvial plains of moderate fertility  | Endangered          |
| 7.3.16                    | <i>Eucalyptus platyphylla</i> woodland to open forest on alluvial plains  | Endangered          |
| 7.3.25                    | <i>Melaleuca leucadendra</i> +/- vine forest species, open to closed forest, on alluvium fringing streams   | Of concern          |
| 7.3.45                    | <i>Corymbia clarksoniana</i> +/- <i>C. tessellaris</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus drepanophylla</i> open forest to open woodlands on alluvial plains   | Of concern          |
| 7.11.8                    | <i>Acacia polystachya</i> woodland to closed forest, or <i>Acacia mangium</i> and <i>Acacia celsa</i> open to closed forest, on metamorphics  | Of concern          |
| 7.11.10                   | <i>Acacia celsa</i> open to closed forest on metamorphics   | Of concern          |
| 7.11.16                   | <i>Eucalyptus portuensis</i> and <i>Corymbia intermedia</i> open forest to woodland, on wet and moist metamorphics of foothills and uplands   | Endangered          |
| 7.11.18                   | <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 metamorphic headlands and near-coastal foothills | Of concern          |
| 7.11.28                   | Wind-sheared notophyll vine forest of exposed metamorphic ridge crests and steep slopes   | Of concern          |
| 7.11.32                   | <i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> and/or <i>Allocasuarina</i> spp. +/- heathy understorey, medium to tall woodland to open forest (or vine forest with these species as emergents), of steep rocky metamorphic slopes with shallow soils             | Of concern          |

| Regional ecosystem number | Description  | Biodiversity status |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 7.11.39                   | <i>Themeda triandra</i> , or <i>Imperata cylindrica</i> , <i>Sorghum nitidum</i> and <i>Mnesithea rottboellioides</i> closed tussock grassland, on metamorphic headlands and near-coastal hills                          | Endangered          |
| 7.11.42                   | <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> , <i>Pandanus</i> sp., <i>Lophostemon suaveolens</i> , <i>Melaleuca dealbata</i> and <i>E. pellita</i> woodland to open forest, in perched drainage areas on peats on metamorphic rocks   | Endangered          |
| 7.11.44                   | <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> open forest to woodland of coastal metamorphic foothills  | Of concern          |
| 7.11.49                   | <i>Eucalyptus leptophleba</i> , <i>Corymbia clarksoniana</i> and <i>E. platyphylla</i> open forest to woodland, on moist metamorphic foothills   | Of concern          |
| 7.11.51                   | <i>Corymbia clarksoniana</i> and/or <i>Eucalyptus drepanophylla</i> open forest to woodland on metamorphics  | Of concern          |
| 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          |
| 7.12.12                   | <i>Acacia mangium</i> and <i>A. celsa</i> open to closed forest, or <i>A. polystachya</i> woodland to closed forest on granites and rhyolites  | Of concern          |
| 7.12.59                   | <i>Eucalyptus leptophleba</i> and <i>Corymbia clarksoniana</i> open forest to woodland, on moist foothills on granite and rhyolite   | Endangered          |
| 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          |

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 |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| <b>Animals</b>   |  |                                     |  |                      |
| <i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>                           | grey goshawk                             | Near threatened                     | Least concern  | Low                  |
| <i>Aerodramus terraereginae</i>                            | Australian swiftlet                      | Near threatened                     | Least concern  | Low                  |
| <i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i> (southern population) | southern cassowary (southern population) | Endangered                          | Endangered   | Critical             |
| <i>Cyclopsitta diophthalma macleayana</i>                  | Macleay's fig-parrot                     | Vulnerable                          | Least concern  | Low                  |
| <i>Dendrolagus lumholtzi</i>                               | Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo                 | Near threatened                     | Near threatened  | Low                  |
| <i>Kerivoula papuensis</i>                                 | golden-tipped bat                        | Near threatened                     | -  | Medium               |

| Scientific name                  | Common name    | Nature Conservation Act 1992 status | Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 status | Back on Track status |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| <i>Numenius madagascariensis</i> | eastern curlew | Near threatened                     | Marine   | Low                  |
| <b>Plants</b>                    |                |                                     |  |                      |
| <i>Randia audasii</i>            | -              | Near threatened                     | -  | Low                  |
| <i>Xanthophyllum fragrans</i>    | -              | Near threatened                     | -  | Low                  |

**Table 3: Bird species listed in international agreements**

| Scientific name                  | Common name               | BONN | JAMBA | ROKAMBA | CAMBA |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------|-------|---------|-------|
| <i>Apus pacificus</i>            | fork-tailed swift         | -    | ✓     | ✓       | ✓     |
| <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>Monarcha melanopsis</i>       | black-faced monarch       | ✓    | -     | -       | -     |
| <i>Numenius madagascariensis</i> | eastern curlew            | ✓    | ✓     | ✓       | ✓     |
| <i>Pandion cristatus</i>         | eastern osprey            | ✓    | -     | -       | -     |
| <i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>       | rufous fantail            | ✓    | -     | -       | -     |
| <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