1. Management directions and purposes

1.1 Management directions

Buckleys Hole Conservation Park is dedicated under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and must be managed under section 20 of the Act to:

- conserve and present the area's cultural and natural resources and values;
- provide for the permanent conservation of the area's natural condition to the greatest possible extent; and
- ensure that any commercial use of the area's natural resources, including fishing and grazing is ecologically sustainable.

Buckleys Hole Conservation Park will be managed as a place of significance for migratory birds and to provide for environmentally sensitive recreation opportunities such as birdwatching and bushwalking.

The park will also be managed according to the Ramsar Convention on wetlands of international importance, the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA), the China Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA) and the Bonn Convention for the protection of migratory birds and their environments. The Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 1994 requires that the special cultural significance of the wildlife listed in the above agreements is recognised and that their populations and habitats are conserved through appropriate management.

1.2 Purposes

The major purposes of management will be to ensure that:

- the lagoon and its surrounds are maintained to ensure continued use by water birds;
- the vegetation communities and dune system are protected;
- threatened fauna is monitored and their requirements are included in management programs;
- nature-based recreational and educational day use opportunities are provided; and
- Aboriginal groups and the local community are aware of park management issues and provided with opportunities to be involved in management of the park.

2. Basis for management

2.1 Bioregional Context

Buckleys Hole Conservation Park conserves 87.7ha of coastal forest and wetlands on the south-western extremity of Brise Island, adjacent to Pumicestone Passage and Moreton Bay. It was initially gazetted as an environmental park in 1991 and subsequently dedicated as conservation park in 1994. Brise Island is the northern most island within Moreton Bay and is low-lying with a maximum elevation of 1.6m. Pumicestone Passage and the adjacent terrestrial ecosystems are of national and international significance for species of water birds, providing a staging area during migration and important roosting and feeding sites.

2.2 Values of Buckleys Hole Conservation Park

Geology and landform

The conservation park is made up of beach sand ridges and swales which date back 6000 years to the Holocene Period. This dune system contrasts with the rest of Brise Island and provides a valuable record of the recent geological development of the area.

Plants and animals

The park processes a range of ecosystems including wetlands, Maloebia quinquenervia woodland and open forest, with areas of eucalypt open forest. Small areas of Callicalis caliciformis open forest and Casuarina equisetifolia open forest also occur within the park. Although small in size, Buckleys Hole Conservation Park contributes to the conservation of these vegetation community types, which are under threat throughout coastal south-eastern Queensland.

Pumicestone Passage and Buckleys Hole Conservation Park are included in the Moreton Bay Ramsar site which recognises their international importance as wetland areas. Buckleys Hole has a great diversity of bird life recorded, including 13 migratory bird species covered under the JAMBA and CAMBA agreements. Migratory species such as the Miyolta mtarana (Migratory Bird Agreement) and the Maloebia quinquenervia and Casuarina equisetifolia open forest are regular visitors. Many resident and vagrant bird species have also been observed.

Six species of birds that are listed as rare or threatened under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 are known to live in these areas. These are the Spectacled eared owl (Spotted earlowl), little tern (Sternus albifrons), eastern curlew (Numenius australis), black swan (Cygnus atratus), greater white-fronted goose (Branta nigricans), and the black swan (Cygnus atratus). These species are also threatened with the loss of suitable habitat.
### 3 Management strategies

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#### Native plants

The vegetation in the park consists primarily of eucalypt open forest on the dune ridges, with Melaleuca gumarreba communities in the swales. Freshwater saltmarshes, cassarina and Bribie Island pines Callitris columnaris also occur. The various forest types are at risk from overly frequent fires, weed invasion and uncontrolled private vehicle access. No individual plant species of conservation interest is known to occur in the park.

**The biological diversity and integrity of the natural vegetation communities are conserved.**

**Undertake a vegetation survey to determine the distribution and condition of the various vegetation types in the park.**

**Develop a vegetation rehabilitation plan which will determine the risks from inappropriate fire, weeds and visitor impacts on each of the identified vegetation communities in the park and recommend appropriate remedial strategies.**

**Seek community support for, and participation in, an active rehabilitation program.**

#### Native animals

Buckleys Hole is an important habitat with respect to international agreements on the conservation of migratory birds, and must be protected. Migratory birds are vulnerable to disturbance, particularly from uncontrolled dogs.

**The diversity of habitats for both resident and migratory fauna species is maintained.**

**Establish a monitoring program for native animals and implement any necessary management actions to ensure the continued suitability of their habitats within the park.**

**Compile a fauna database for the park, from historical and contemporary records.**

**Encourage community involvement in wildlife monitoring programs.**

**Enforce the control of dogs within the conservation park and investigate the need for local government restrictions on dogs on the adjacent beaches to be extended beyond the current limits.**

#### Catchment management

Buckleys Hole was previously a shallow lagoon which flushed into Moreton Bay periodically after heavy rain. Over 30 years ago the area was deepened and flushing was restricted by blocking the inlet with a sand wall to address sandfly and mosquito problems. During periods of heavy rain the sand wall may break, allowing inundation of the freshwater lagoon and altering the leading grounds for birds.

**The quality and quantity of water within the freshwater lagoon are maintained in good condition.**

**Investigate the hydrology of the lagoon and the dynamics of the adjacent beach dunes in conjunction with the Beach Protection Authority to determine the appropriate management of the lagoon and dune system.**

**Develop a program of water quality monitoring in conjunction with local governments and catchment management groups.**

**Encourage neighbouring landholders from areas which drain into the lagoon to adopt catchment management practices which reduce nutrient and sediment inputs.**

#### Introduced plants and animals

A recent survey of the park identified 46 species of weeds. These were scattered throughout the park, with major infestations along Red Beach Road, around the lagoon and on the dunes near South Point. Four weed species — groundsel, prickly pear, annual ragweed and milkweed — are declared plants which must be controlled. Many of the remaining species are environmental weeds which threaten the existing structure and regeneration of the native plant species.

**Declared plants are controlled in accordance with the Rural Land Protection Act.**

**Implement a weed control program with priority given to declared plants and serious environmental weeds. Initial control work on environmental weeds should focus on reducing the further spread of the weeds using environmentally sensitive techniques and revegetating disturbed areas with native species.**

**Regular control work is also required to keep access tracks open and reduce the fire hazard around infrastructure such as the bird hide.**

**Seek support for and participation in, the weed control program from local interest groups and neighbours.**

**Investigate the impact of feral animals on native animals and if necessary implement a co-ordinated control program in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources.**

#### Fire management

The park and surrounding areas were burnt by an intense fire in October 1994 and most of the park was burnt again in 1997. Arson has been responsible for frequent fires in the past. These fires have altered the vegetation communities creating a general lack of diversity in the mid and understorey where hilly grass and black wattle dominate. The draft fire management plan for Bribie Island protected areas recommends a fire-free period for the conservation park of 8-10 years.

**The existing diversity of vegetation communities and flora habitats is maintained.**

**Revise the draft fire management plan in consultation with local government and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority to include fuel reduction zones, mosaic burning, wildfire suppression strategies and the ecological requirement of fire sensitive species and ecosystems.**

#### Cultural heritage

Two shell middens are protected within the park. The conservation park is closely associated with the landing of Matthew Flinders in 1799 and the first documented contact between Aborigines and Europeans in southern Queensland.

**Sites of cultural heritage significance are protected and the historical significance of Flinders’ landing at South Point is recognised.**

**Initiate a monitoring program to ensure that the shell middens are being adequately protected. Liaise with the local Aboriginal community and historical society regarding the management of cultural heritage values within the conservation park.**

#### Recreation and tourism

The conservation park is a popular recreational venue for both residents and visitors to Bribie Island. Improved maintenance of facilities and access tracks will ensure the appeal of the park. The boundaries of the park are not readily identifiable to visitors. Camping opportunities are adequately provided for elsewhere on Bribie Island.

**The park will be a safe and enjoyable place for people to visit.**

**Clearly define and regularly maintain the pedestrian access points into the park.**

**Redesign the Red Beach Road carpark and day use area and prevent vehicular access beyond the carpark, except for that required for commercial fishing purposes.**

**Place dune fencing at Red Beach and delineate pedestrian access across the dune system.**

**Install boundary signs to indicate the extent of the park and give it a clearer public identity.**

**Camping will not be permitted.**

#### Education and interpretation

The park is currently used by local schools for environmental education programs. The natural and cultural values of the park provide a broad range of educational and interpretive opportunities.

**The protection of natural and cultural values will be improved through greater public appreciation of the area.**

**Encourage nature-based educational use of the park. Identify appropriate cultural educational opportunities in consultation with traditional Aboriginal custodians.**

**Develop a public contact plan, including interpretive signs at access points and the carpark.**

#### Plan implementation and monitoring

A control agreement for the management of Buckleys Hole Conservation Park is in the process of being developed by Caboolture Shire Council and the Department of Environment. This agreement will form the basis for directing the implementation of the management plan.

**Effective implementation of the management plan.**

**Day-to-day management of infrastructure, introduced plants and animals and visitor use will be the responsibility of Caboolture Shire Council.**

**The monitoring of natural and cultural resources, fire planning and approval of proposed facilities and interpretive material will be the responsibility of the Department of Environment.**

**Joint responsibility will be taken for the protection of natural and cultural resources and the implementation of the fire management program.**