1. Management directions and purposes

1.1 Management directions

Mt Blaney Conservation Park lies approximately 2.5km south-west of Sarina. The 72ha park will be managed to maintain the integrity of existing ecosystems within the park. By keeping the park free of structures and through careful fire management the park's scenic values as a forested backdrop to the township of Sarina will be maintained.

Limited park access allows for minimal recreational use. Only self-sufficient recreational activities which do not impact on the natural values of the park will be permitted.

Increasing the cultural and natural resource knowledge base of the park will be a priority.

1.2 Purposes

The major purposes of management will be to ensure that:

- rare and threatened species are identified and conserved through specific management strategies;
- fire management ensures that areas of grassy woodland/open forest are maintained by preventing rainforest from spreading beyond its present range;
- invasive weed species such as lantana are controlled;
- grazing impacts on the park's edges is minimised;
- the visual integrity of the area's landscape is maintained by not permitting developments that impact on its scenic values;
- neighbours, local government, Aboriginal groups and other interested parties are made aware of park management issues and are provided with opportunities to contribute to management; and
- self-reliant, nature-based, low-impact recreation is permitted, but not encouraged.

2 Basis for management

Mt Blaney Conservation Park is gazetted under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and must be managed under s 20 of the Act to:

- conserve and present the area's cultural and natural resources and their 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.

2.1 Regional and management context

Mt Blaney Conservation Park lies in the Sarina- Proserpine Lowlands natural province of the Central Mackay bioregion. Mt Blaney is its highest point. The park consists of rainforest and provides a scenic background to neighbouring properties and to the Sarina township. It is largely rainforest and grassy woodland/open forest, and is surrounded by cleared grasslands.

Management of the park is undertaken by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Mackay District office. The park has no permanent ranger presence.

Gazetted road access to the park exists on two sides via Rainforest and Bells Roads. However these roads have not been formed to the park boundary and access is by foot.

Most neighbouring properties comprise lesser steep terrain that has been cleared for grazing and rural residential purposes.

2.2 Values of Mt Blaney Conservation Park

Geology and landform

Mt Blaney Conservation Park covers most of two low ridges and an intervening valley formed by the Paleozoic Carmila Beds. The ridges run in a general northerly direction. The dominant soil type is a lithic, brown, shallow, stony and dominated by the presence of underlying rock material. This soil type is of low fertility and susceptible to erosion. The summit of Mt Blaney rises to 275 metres.

Plants and animals

The park is dominated by two ecosystems: the monophyll vine/microphyll rainforest, which comprises coastal hills and ranges, is a major rainforest type of the central Queensland coast. A number of rare and threatened flora species occur within this type of ecosystem and may exist on the park.

A smaller area of open forest containing gum, ironbark and bloodwood species occurs on the eastern slope of the western ridge of the park. In the absence of fire, such open forest is readily invaded by rainforest species. This invasion degrades the habitat value of open forest and may result in decreased plant and animal diversity.

The conservation status of both ecosystems is not considered to be of concern at present.

Cultural heritage

No information is available regarding the traditional use of the area by Aboriginal people or its cultural heritage significance. No places of European or Aboriginal heritage value are known to occur within the park. However, such values may be present and will be taken into account in the future management of the park.

Given the history of the sugar industry in the area and anecdotal evidence that South-Sea Islanders may have used higher park lands for agriculture, cultural artefacts of significance to South-Sea Islanders may exist.

Scenic and aesthetic

Mt Blaney Conservation Park presents a uniform canopy from most viewpoints. There are no obvious rock.