

Woowoonga National Park

Management Statement

2013



Prepared by: **Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation**

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The Woowoonga National Park Management Statement 2013 has been extended in 2024 in line with the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (s120G). Minor amendments have been made. There has been no change to the statement's original management intent and direction.

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Park size:	2,650ha
Bioregion:	South Eastern Queensland
QPWS region:	Sunshine and Fraser Coast
Local government estate/area:	North Burnett Regional Council
State electorate:	Callide

Legislative framework

✓	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>

Plans and agreements

✓	Bonn Convention
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Thematic strategies

✓	Statement of Fire Management Intent
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Vision

The park continues to protect large remnant areas of hardwood forests and rainforest that have not been impacted on by harvesting for timber. The high conservation values and biodiversity of the native plant and animal species present on Woowoonga National Park will be protected. Opportunities for visitors to undertake low-impact activities and appreciate these values will be maintained.

Conservation purpose

Woowoonga National Park covers an area of 2,650 hectares (ha) and contains a high diversity of plants and plant communities, including some that are threatened or at the limit of their known distribution. Previously forest reserve tenure, the area was gazetted as national park in 2006 as part of the South East Queensland Forests Agreement process. This conversion to protected area estate has improved the conservation outcomes for a number of threatened regional ecosystems as well as several threatened plant and animal species.

Prior to this, an area of 750ha within the park was gazetted as Scientific Area 27 under the Forestry Regulation 1998. That declaration has lapsed and the park is now managed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

Protecting and presenting the park's values

Landscape

Located in the Burnett River catchment area, the landscape is predominantly mountainous with hills and lowlands on metamorphic and granitic rocks together with flats and floodplains associated with Woowoonga, Tawah and Fairview Creeks. National parks nearby include Wongi and Fairlies Knob to the east. Conserving remnant vegetation connections to these parks provides some resilience for Woowoonga's natural communities to cope with the effects of more extreme weather events.

The mountainous area forms a watershed and protection of this catchment area is important for water quality. Erosion is a major contributor to the depletion of natural integrity and requires regular monitoring.

Several communication towers located on Mount Goonaneman stand out visually in the surrounding natural landscape.

Regional ecosystems

Vegetation communities on the park are high in number and diversity. Of the twelve regional ecosystems on the park, two are endangered and five are of concern (Table 1). Large areas of the hardwood forest and the rainforest have not been harvested for timber. Notable examples include patches of brush box *Lophostemon confertus*, kauri pine *Agathis robusta*, hoop pine *Araucaria cunninghamii*, forest red gum *Eucalyptus tereticornis*, spotted gum *Corymbia citriodora*, mature yellow stringybark *Eucalyptus acmenoides* and pink bloodwood *Corymbia intermedia*.

Birds and flying foxes forage in the park when the trees are in flower.

Native plants and animals

Species of conservation significance are listed in Table 2. Although not recorded in species lists for the park, the vulnerable cycad *Macrozamia parcifolia* has been sighted here and this requires confirmation. The endangered cycad *Cycas megacarpa* occurs on the park and has a recovery plan. Brown kurrajong *Commersonia fraseri*, Bennett's ash *Flindersia bennettiana*, pink bloodwood *Corymbia intermedia* and kauri pine *Agathis robusta*, are coastal species thought to be at the western limit of their distribution on the park.

The vulnerable black-breasted button-quail *Turnix melanogaster* has been recorded on the park. Known threats include destruction and fragmentation of low closed forest for agriculture, forestry and urban development; too frequent burning; predation by feral cats *Felis catus* and foxes *Vulpes vulpes*; and disturbance of habitat by native and exotic grazers, i.e. wallabies and cattle.

Aboriginal culture

The park is covered by a native title claim (QC2012/003) on behalf of the Wakka Wakka People #4. The Maryborough area holds high importance to Aboriginal people and there are many sites of Aboriginal cultural significance across the region. The park has not been formally assessed for Aboriginal cultural heritage values but artefact scatters, scarred trees and burial sites have been found in the surrounding region.

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

Shared-history culture

Forestry workers camped in the area around Woowoonga Creek in the 1920–30s and activities included operating a forestry nursery, conducting trial plantings of hoop pine and various silky oak species, and planting of red cedar *Toona ciliata* for seed stock. Cotton, wheat and sheep were grown in the area after World War I and an historic plane crash site is located here. It is also believed mining occurred in the area. No formal cultural heritage assessment has been completed for the park.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

There are several access roads to the park but recreational use is mostly limited to bushwalking and nature appreciation. Development of vehicle tracks is impractical due to the size of the park and the topography.

A council managed picnic area is located off park at the entry point and has a shelter, barbecues and car park. The picnic area also serves as a trail head for a day walking trail which leads to the summit of Mount Woowoonga.

Education and science

The park has high scientific values due to sections of undisturbed vegetation and high biodiversity. It is not known what research was carried out on the scientific area prior to gazettal as national park. Declarations of these areas were often made for purposes of protecting beauty spots, preserving genetic integrity, seed collection and trial plantings. The park is now managed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and the scientific area declaration has lapsed.

Partnerships

Regular liaison is maintained with neighbours and other individuals and organisations with shared interests in fire management and habitat and wildlife conservation.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

Lantana *Lantana camara* patches are found in areas of rainforest that have been previously logged or damaged by fire as well as in the hardwood forest along Woowoonga Creek. Stinkwort *Dittrichia graveolens*, Brazilian nightshade *Solanum seaforthianum*, groundsel bush *Baccharis halimifolia*, prickly pear *Opuntia*, green panic *Megathyrsus maximus* var. *pubiglumis*, giant rat's tail grass *Sporobolus natalensis*, variegated thistle *Silybum marianum* and Dutchman's pipe *Aristolochia elegans* have all been recorded. Cat's claw creeper *Macfadyena unguis-cati* may also be present. Tobacco plant *Solanum mauritianum* is growing in disturbed areas. Chemical spraying, manual removal and biological control methods are all being used to manage these pest plants.

Foxes, cats, wild dogs *Canis lupus familiaris*, hares *Lepus europaeus*, rabbits *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, cane toads *Rhinella marina* and pigs *Sus scrofa* are all present and regular monitoring and control measures need to be applied to prevent their impacts becoming more damaging. Trapping for feral cats and foxes has met with some success.

A level 2 pest management strategy is in development.

Fire management

Fire is an important tool in controlling pest plants and maintaining regional ecosystem structure and integrity. Broad-scale management involving small fires on land surrounding vine forest communities throughout the year reduces the risk of wildfire damage. Eucalypt open forests and woodlands are protected using a regime of low or moderate intensity fires at varying intervals to produce fine scale mosaics of burnt and unburnt areas and control pest plant infestations. These fire intervals are adjusted according to the perceived health of the ecosystems to ensure a correct response to changing climate conditions.

A Statement of Fire Management Intent is used to guide fire management actions.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Native plants and animals Species of conservation significance remain at viable levels. Information on plants and animals is comprehensive and current.</p>	<p>Implement recovery plans for the black breasted button quail and the cycad species. Review currency of species records and conduct surveys where needed to inform management actions.</p>
<p>Aboriginal culture Traditional Owners have meaningful involvement with park management planning and direction.</p>	<p>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 Opportunities are provided to enable self-reliant visitors to enjoy the natural and cultural values.</p>	<p>Support low impact recreational activities such as bushwalking and nature appreciation. Manage visitor impacts to retain the park's remote, undeveloped character.</p>
<p>Pest management Impacts from pests are managed effectively to minimise damage or loss to habitat and native species.</p>	<p>Complete development of the level 2 pest management strategy. Continue to monitor impacts from feral animals, particularly cats, and implement control measures such as trapping where needed.</p>
<p>Fire management Fire is used effectively as a management tool and inappropriate fire regimes and wildfire instances are avoided.</p>	<p>Develop a level 2 fire management strategy for the park. Maintain or construct firebreaks where feasible. Consult and develop cooperative management actions with neighbours regarding reducing the risk of wildfire.</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
12.3.3	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> woodland to open forest on alluvial plains	Endangered
12.11.9	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> open forest on metamorphics +/- interbedded volcanics. Usually higher altitudes	Of concern
12.11.12	Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest on metamorphics +/- interbedded volcanics; usually northern half of bioregion	Of concern
12.11.14	<i>Eucalyptus crebra</i> , <i>E. tereticornis</i> woodland on metamorphics +/- interbedded volcanics	Of concern
12.12.4	<i>Eucalyptus acmenoides</i> +/- <i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> tall open forest on Mesozoic to Proterozoic igneous rocks, especially granite	Of concern
12.9-10.20	<i>Eucalyptus montivaga</i> open forest on sedimentary rocks	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
Plants				
<i>Acomis acoma</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Alyxia sharpei</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Cycas megacarpa</i>	-	Endangered	Endangered	Critical
<i>Rhodamnia pauciovulata</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low
Animals				
<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i>	glossy black-cockatoo	Vulnerable	-	-
<i>Turnix melanogaster</i>	black-breasted button-quail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Critical

Table 3: Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	BONN	JAMBA	CAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Monarcha melanopsis</i>	black-faced monarch	✓	-	-	-
<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