



Issue 44
Winter 2022

Read our

Resort Round-up

A newsletter for the resorts
community of Kosciuszko
National Park

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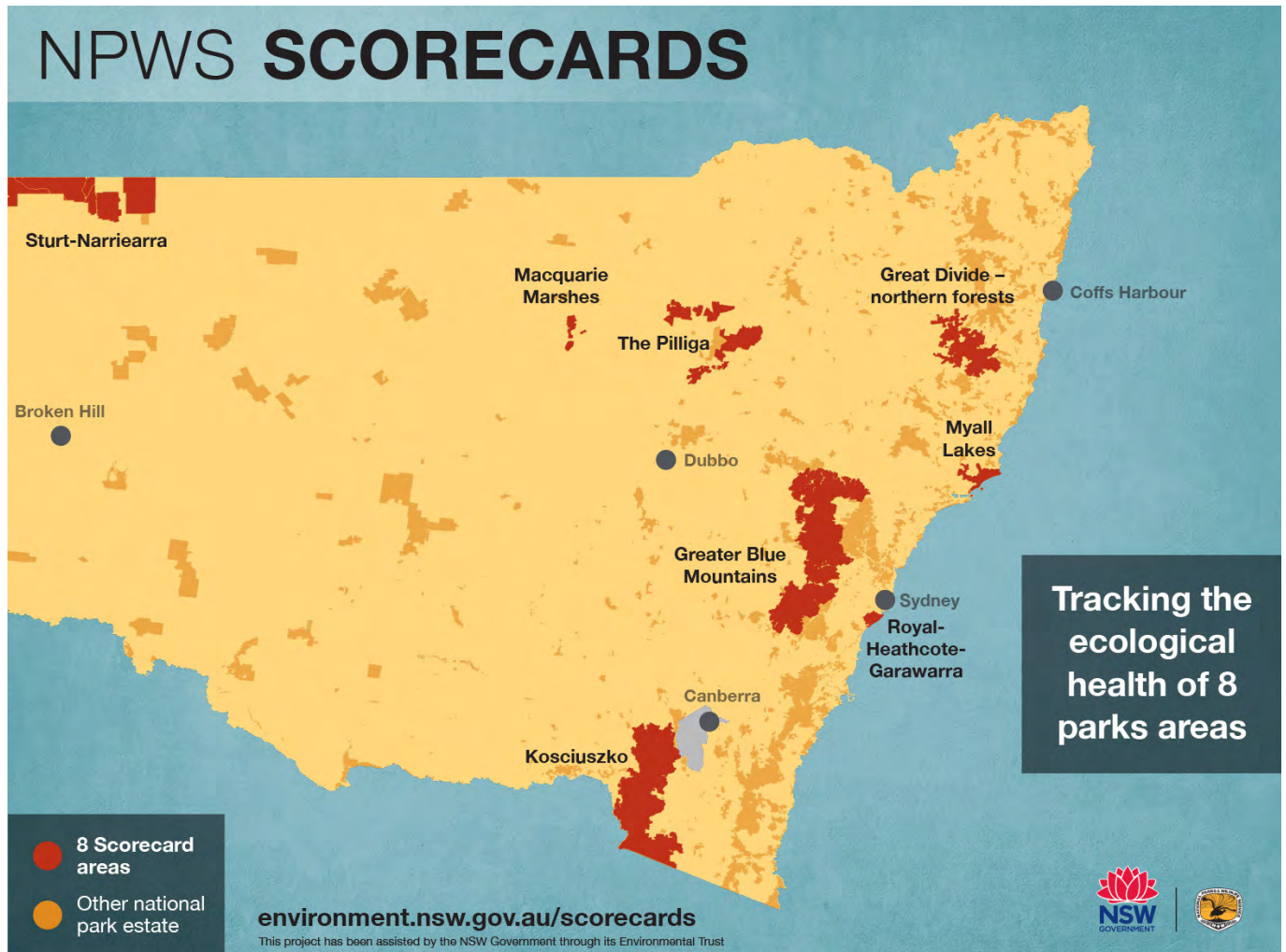
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National Park Performance Scorecards

Tracking 8 national park sites with Ecological Health Performance Scorecards



Scorecards is an ecological health monitoring system. It is a world-leading initiative that aims to significantly enhance the health of NSW national parks by tracking key ecological indicators and using that data to refine management actions. For the first time in our history, Scorecards will enable National Parks and Wildlife Service to systematically collect and apply the critical information required to design and deliver effective park management.

Our national parks are extraordinary places. They make up 9.3% of New South Wales across various desert, alpine and coastal ecosystems. Around 800 of the approximately 900 threatened species in New South Wales are found on the national park estate. Scorecards are to be developed across 8 sites that represent the varied ecosystems right across New South Wales, with Kosciuszko National Park among the first to be rolled out.

On-ground monitoring data and park management actions will be fed into Scorecards, providing ongoing

snapshots of what is happening with native plants and animals, important ecological processes, and threats to ecological health such as feral animals and weeds. The first data will be published from late 2022, enabling people to track our park's health online.

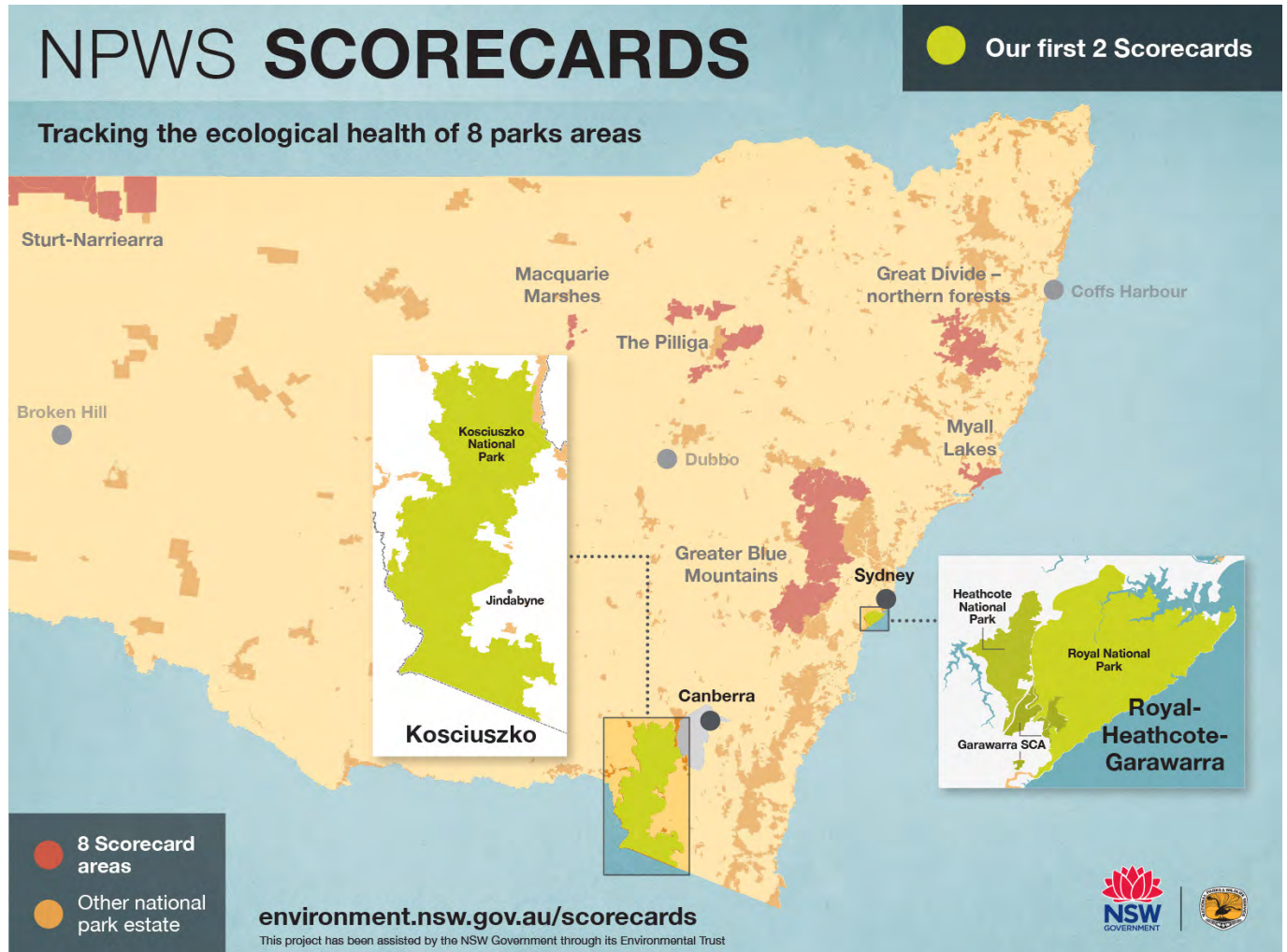
Scorecards is designed to deliver, for any given level of resourcing, a reduction in the impacts from feral animals, weed, fire and other threats, as well as increases in the populations of threatened and declining species and improvements in the functioning of ecological processes.

Scorecards is world-leading – it integrates ecological monitoring with management and financial data. Scorecards will help optimise the ecological return on investment in our national parks and provide greater transparency around improving biodiversity outcomes.

The \$10 million pilot program will run over four years, supported by a \$7 million grant from the NSW Government through its Environmental Trust and philanthropic investment of \$1 million.

X-Country trails

Our first 2 NPWS Scorecards for Kosciuszko National Park and Royal-Heathcote-Garawarra





REMINDER...

**NO WALKING
SNOWSHOEING
TOBOGGANING or
FAT BIKING**

on the cross country trails





Native fauna

Spotted-tailed quoll

There are four species of quoll found across Australia and Kosciuszko National Park is fortunate to contain suitable habitat for one of them; spotted-tailed quolls (*Dasyurus maculatus*), which can be identified from other species by the characteristic white spots which continue right along the tail. Spotted-tailed quolls are the second largest carnivorous marsupial in Australia, behind the Tasmanian devil, and are similar in size to the domestic cat. Quolls are not often seen in the wild, preferring to spend days in their dens of rock caves, soil burrows, hollow trees or fallen logs, but will feed on birds, smaller mammals and reptiles at night.

Interestingly, while this species spends most of its time on the ground, they are excellent tree climbers. They also use communal 'latrine sites' where they scent mark as a means of communication, to keep track of one another and maintain social cohesion where populations might be wide-spread and face-to-face contact between individuals uncommon.

Spotted-tailed quolls are considered vulnerable under NSW legislation and are a priority for the Saving our

Species (SoS) team within National Parks & Wildlife Service, which coordinate an ongoing survey program across key populations within Kosci, to monitor species health, population changes and identify any emerging threats such as the presence of feral predator animals.

Our local spotted-tailed quoll populations, while moderate in number, are currently in good condition, with monitoring indicating a healthy age range and gender balance. The most recent quoll numbers are in fact higher than average of the last several years, and individuals have been sighted across diverse habitats, such as 'Pepper' the male spotted-tailed quoll found injured within a ski resort in 2020. With his full health recovered, Pepper was released to an ideal quoll habitat site within the known quoll monitoring area.

Nevertheless, there are ongoing threats to the survival of the species, and it is imperative that the SoS team and conscientious community continue to be involved in positive Park management actions which will brighten the future for quolls in the wild.



NPWS remote camera capturing a curious spotted-tailed quoll investigating the plastic bucket. Photo: EES

Add to your library

Shhh...Be Veewy Quiet

Rabbit populations have steadily increased in Perisher Valley over the past couple of seasons and this is not good news for endangered and threatened species such as the Mountain Pygmy Possum (*Burramys parvus*), and the Broad Toothed Rat (*Mastacomys fuscus*).

Why?

Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) not only compete for food with our small native animals, eating a variety of plants, they also provide lots of food for feral predator species. Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) and cat (*Felis sp*) populations increase during times of abundant rabbit numbers because bunnies are so tasty. Increased predator numbers leads to more predation of our native animals, particularly during winter months when rabbits are less abundant.

Don't Worry; We have a Plan:

During the coming summer season NPWS will implement a Rabbit control program, utilising specialists to assist with controlling rabbit numbers. A variety of control measures will be used with the aim to reduce rabbit numbers before they cause a decline in our Endangered and Threatened native species populations.

Oh Dear!

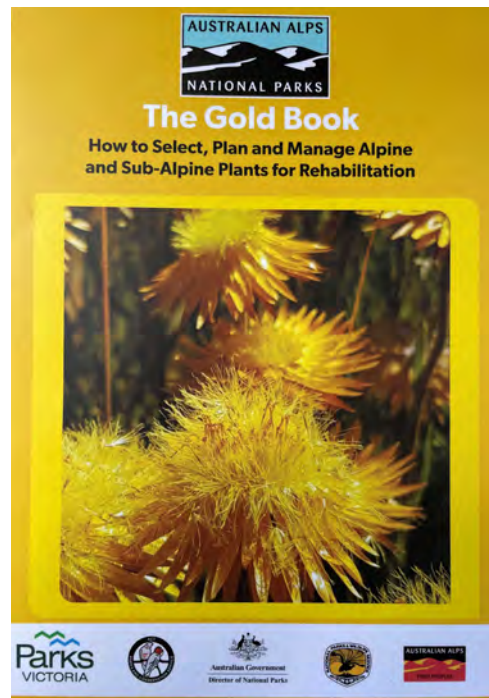
Other feral animals causing harm to our alpine ecosystems are Deer and Pigs.

Deer and pigs cause varying types of damage to alpine and subalpine environments. Deer are selective browsers, and when present in high numbers, can cause alterations of species abundance and presence within a locality. Deer enjoy browsing on the rice flower (*Pimelea sp*) and will eat these soft bushes to death. Pigs are small bulldozers, overturning large sods of soil, while snuffling for roots, fungi and insects. These areas are slow to regenerate, and weeds often grow in these disturbed sites. Both species can spread soil pathogens and weed seeds large distances.

An aerial cull was undertaken by NPWS last Spring in the subalpine areas surrounding the alpine resorts. This was a success with 65 Fallow deer (*Dama dama*), 20 Samba (*Cervus unicolor*) and 17 feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) culled during this program. A win for the tasty plants and biodiversity in Kosciuszko National Park.

For more information please see [NPWS](#)

'The Gold Book'



A recent publication by the Australian Alps Liaison committee 'The Gold Book' aims to assist all land managers of the Australian Alps to select appropriate plants to achieve their rehabilitation goals.

Written by Liz MacPhee, who has over 25 years' experience in alpine revegetation, this booklet is complimentary to the practical landscaping details found in the 'Green Book - Rehabilitation Field Guide for the Australian Alps'. The Gold Book introduces the specific flora species which are best used for revegetating the alpine and subalpine landscapes. This handy booklet assists those undertaking a revegetation program to select the most appropriate species for the location and purpose of the site, no matter how big or small your project may be. It is important to remember that plants used in revegetation in the alpine resort areas must be obtained from a licenced operator and be certified weed and pathogen free.

Whilst 'The Gold Book' is aimed at professionals working in revegetation of the Australian alpine environment, it can be equally useful to those unfamiliar with the rehabilitation process, including members of lodges who wish to plant out small areas of native garden (to improve the aesthetics of the lodge entrance, for example).

Are you a member of a Perisher Lodge and have an interest in creating a beautiful native garden on or adjacent to, your leasehold? Would you like to improve the scenic quality of your lodge in summer and work toward a sustainable future? Get a group of members together and get your hands dirty for a good cause.

Contact [NPWS Environmental Liaison Officer](#) on (02) 6450 5575.

Water quality

Catastrophe averted; local superhero saves Perisher Creek

Do you ever wonder what's in all that carpark runoff or where it all flows?

Carpark runoff contains various pollutants such as hydrocarbons (fuel and oils leaking from vehicles), plastics, and other litter. These pollutants are carried downslope by melting snow or rain. In the case of NSWs two main ski resorts, Perisher and Thredbo, this downslope flows into natural creeks, rivers and wetlands.

Various management measures such as formed drains, Puri-Ceptor systems and vegetation buffers are in place, aimed at intercepting and filtering runoff events. These are all excellent mitigation measures, however they can and do get overloaded. Luckily there are a few things that we can all do to reduce the risk of our own vehicles contributing to pollution in alpine streams.

1. Service your car regularly to stop the leaks before they begin.
2. Check under your vehicle occasionally to observe any potential leaks/drips
3. Immediately report any large or obvious spills to NPWS or the Perisher Fire Station. Take photos and remember the location.

Last August, a local snowboarder alerted NPWS to a pollution incident. On returning to their vehicle after riding a bluebird powder morning, they noticed a large oil slick moving steadily across the carpark, toward the drains. They noted the location, took some photographs and went to the NPWS office in Perisher. NPWS immediately conducted an inspection and decided the magnitude of the spill called for reinforcements and the Fire brigade were alerted. Jumping into action the Perisher Fire and Rescue Crew placed an absorbent bunding around the entrance to the drain and sprinkled sawdust around to absorb as much of the pollutant as possible.

Thanks to the quick thinking of a caring visitor, immediate response by dedicated NPWS Officers and the Spill Response Training by The Fire Brigade, Perisher Creek can continue to flow happily and cleanly down-stream.

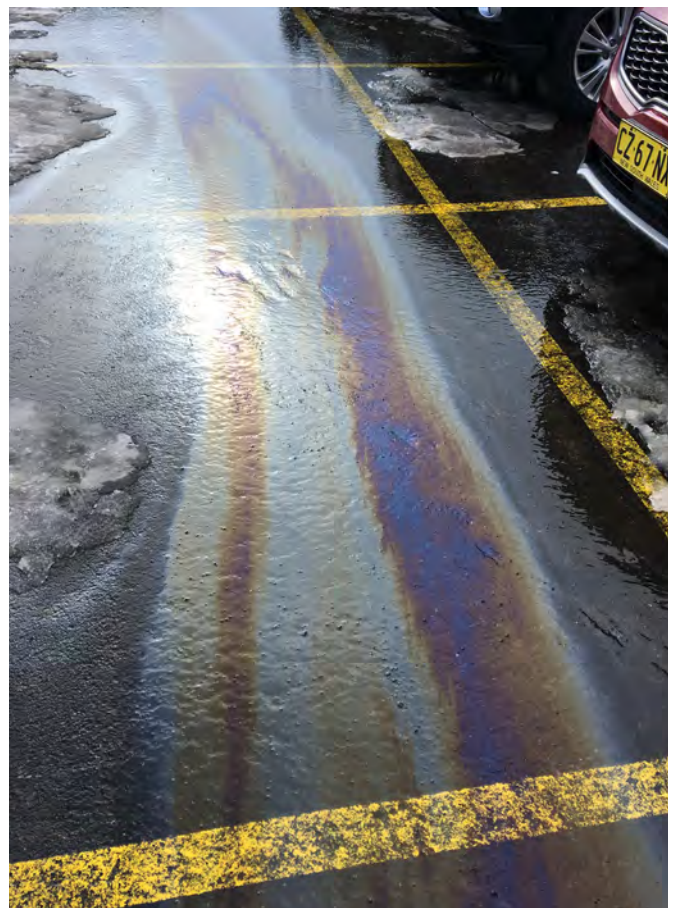
Did you know?

The wetlands, known as Alpine Bog and Fen, surrounding the Perisher carpark are dated to be 10,000 years old? They began to form when the alps were frozen year-round and Blue Lake still had a glacier present! Home to several threatened species, it is listed as an Endangered Ecological Community and justifies our protection.

Resort Round-up Winter 2022



Hydrocarbon pollution from the Perisher carpark flows directly into the surrounding waterways. Photo: A Slocombe/EES



Hydrocarbon spill in the Perisher carpark. Photo: M Battishall/EES

Inside the Thredbo Alpine Museum

Article by Chrissi Webb, Thredbo Alpine Museum (TAM) Curator

The special Winter Olympic Collection in the Thredbo Alpine Museum is on display until the October Long Weekend. This exhibition will continue during the winter so everyone will have the opportunity to enjoy the changing styles before the garments are 'rested' for the next four years.

Local Winter Olympians, both past and present have generously contributed garments for the display including those worn in competition by Sami Kennedy-Sim, Manuela Berchtold, Torah Bright and Jenni Owens.



Sami Kennedy-Sim and Manuela Berchtold with their Winter Olympic uniforms. Photo: Thredbo Alpine Museum

The Community Volunteer Program kindly sponsored by Kosciuszko Thredbo Pty Ltd enables the Museum to be open between 12 midday and 4 pm daily during July, August, September and during summer school holidays, subject to volunteer availability.

Work progresses on the digitalization of the four thousand objects in the Collection, some of which can be viewed on the Museum's data program Mosaic. The aim is to put the entire collection online. As part of this work, Randy Wieman has photographed 200 iconic pairs of ski boots ranging from the 1930s though to the 2000s.

The federal government funded Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) grant facilitated the purchase of a new computer. It has an expanded memory capacity will enable opportunities to share Thredbo's past and present with the 'digital' generation and target younger museum visitors.

The installation of the security camera purchased through a Small Museums Grant funded by the NSW Museums and Galleries ensures the safety of the Thredbo Alpine Museum's collection and equipment.

A relaxed social evening was held recently in the Museum when Snowy Mountain residents gathered to meet with past and present local Winter Olympians. Thirty-eight guests attended, including the local Winter Olympians Abi Harrigan, Josie Baff, Sami Kennedy-Sim, Adam Dickson, Manuela Berchtold, Kim Clifford, Alice Jones, Jono Brauer and Paralympians Sam Tait and Amelia Hodgson.

For further information please [email](#).



Winter Olympians Back (L-R) Amelia Hodgson, Josie Baff, Sami Kennedy-Sim, Adam Dickson, Manuela Berchtold, Kim Clifford, Jono Brauer. Front (L-R) Sam Tait, Abi Harrigan and Alice Jones. Photo: Thredbo Alpine Museum



Abi Harrigan. Photo: Thredbo Alpine Museum

Our heritage

Perisher Historical Society

Perisher Historical Society (PHS) was incorporated in 2007, with support and encouragement from both Perisher Resort management and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The Society is interested in the history of skiing and resort development along the Kosciuszko Road from the Thredbo River to the summit of Mount Kosciuszko.

Our [webpage](#) includes an eMuseum, which, like a physical museum, collects memories, photographs, videos, stories and articles about the Perisher Valley and surrounding area. Whilst a physical museum has not been a possibility, we do have a display case in the Perisher Skitube Terminal containing memorabilia and historic skiing film footage.

We have a small band of volunteers who produce a newsletter twice a year, develop the website, organise social events and carry out research for publication.

The society has published several history books which are available from [PHS Bookshop](#) or the Snowy Region Visitor Centre in Jindabyne.

- **Highway to Heaven: A history of Perisher and the Ski Resorts along the Kosciuszko Road** by Peter Southwell-Keely (awarded 'Most Outstanding Regional Ski History 2014' by the International Ski History Association known as the 'Skade Award').
- **A History of the Early Development of Perisher Smiggins** by John Davis.
- **Hotel Kosciuszko: The history and legacy of Australia's first planned resort** by Donald A Johnston. (2021 Skade Award and shortlisted for the 2020 NSW Premier's History Awards – Regional and Community History.) Also available at the Tumut Visitor Centre.

Soon to be published is a book on snowfields pioneer Johnny Abbottsmith, who built the first ski tow at Smiggin Holes (now part of Perisher Resort) and ran the first oversnow transport with his dog team.

2022 will mark the 70th Anniversary of several milestones in the development of the Perisher Range including the first ski lift in Perisher, and Perisher Historical Society along with Perisher Resort will be marking this anniversary in a number of ways, with planning still underway.

The society would be interested to hear from anyone who has photos or stories about the early days in Perisher. Please [email](#) or phone Jan Glover on 0419 256 038. For those wishing to join PHS, you can be assured of a warm welcome, and know that your membership will assist us to research and document the early days of the exploration and development of the Perisher Range area.

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An object in the Thredbo Alpine Museum Collection – Jack Morrisey's Kiandra skis

These wooden skis measure 190cm in length. They are 10cm wide, with straight sides and they appear to have been used as jumping skis because each of the rough ski soles have three running grooves to ensure the skis tracked straight down the hill. On the tip of the shallow shovel is a curiously carved circular knob. It is difficult to identify the age of the skis however a pair with a similar knob appear in a Charles Kerry photograph taken of the Kiandra Ski Club circa 1896.

A Kiandra resident, Jack Morrisey was employed as a dingo trapper by the NSW Pastures Protection Board. He used these skis when setting traps in Winter or as the relieving mailman when Postmaster Bill Patrick was unable to collect or deliver the mail during his 40 year tenure in Kiandra.

When Jack grew old and moved to Nimmitabel, he brought the skis with him, and his grandson, a much younger Peter Evans, endeavoured to ski on them. How Peter managed to stay on the skis is a big question as the leather bindings have long since fallen off, leaving just the screws.

Quiz question

Why is there a knob on the tip of each ski?

Answer

To hold the sealskin climbing aid in place.



Jack Morrisey's wooden skis.
Photo: Thredbo Alpine Museum

Litter clean-up

Sustainable Snowies update

In October 2021, Sustainable Snowies and the Jindabyne Chamber of Commerce published a series of Litter Prevention documents for the Snowy Monaro Region, including a Litter Prevention Strategy, Action Plan and Project Summary. These documents were created using grant funding from the 'NSW EPA Own it and Act' Community Litter Grant.

The litter preventing documents include data from clean up events and local litter checks collected between 2019 and 2021, as well as suggestions on litter prevention strategies that would reduce littering in specific hotspot areas of the Snowy Monaro Region.

In November 2021, using the litter prevention strategy, Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC), with the support of the Sustainable Snowies group, applied for the NSW EPA Council Litter Grant.

In February 2022 it was confirmed by the EPA that Snowy Monaro Regional Council had been awarded grant funding for On-Ground litter prevention projects.

Saturday, 9 April 2022 marked the launch of the Snowy Monaro Regional Council Litter Prevention project with a community clean up event at the Claypits in Jindabyne. On the day, volunteers collected 480 litres of general waste and 360 litres of recyclables.

The general waste included a large quantity of fabrics, clothing and wire fencing, as well as 68 cigarette butts, 582 pieces soft plastics, 22 takeaway containers and 12 face masks.

The recyclables collected were mostly cans and plastic drink bottles. Some of the recyclable products were heavily contaminated, therefore they had to be disposed in the general waste and became landfill.

Snowy Monaro Regional Council's litter prevention project will continue throughout 2022. This will include Council-run pop up information and education stalls, and another community clean-up event planned for October at Banjo Paterson Park. There will also be infrastructure improvements in the region, such as:

- additional public bins in highlighted litter hotspots
- installation of 2 x solar compact bins
- upgrade of EPA litter signage as well as educational signage on Council public space bins

Snowy Monaro Regional Council and Sustainable Snowies will continue to collect litter data using the local litter check, to see how the volume and types of litter in hotspot areas changes after the installation of additional bins, improved signage, and community education.

At the end of the project Snowy Monaro Regional Council will produce a report that will be shared on the Council website and on the Sustainable Snowies Facebook page.

Follow Snowy Monaro Regional Council and Sustainable Snowies on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date on the progress of the litter prevention project.



Edwina Lowe with the 480 litres of general waste collected from the Claypits, Jindabyne. Photo: Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Reduce, reuse, and recycle



Tasman and Indigo Bishop ready for the community clean up event at the Claypits. Photo: E Lowe/Snowy Monaro Regional Council
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Maranatha Lodge achieves amazing results



These Dusty daisy bushes (*Olearia phlogopapa*) are thriving on the embankment below Maranatha Lodge. Photo: T Hazell/Maranatha Bush Regeneration Team Co-ordinator

Article by Tom Hazell, Maranatha Bush Regeneration Team Co-ordinator, Thirroul Ski Club.

The resurgence of native vegetation enables Maranatha Lodge to enjoy a comfortable co-existence within the National Park.

The improved visual amenity and the restoration of natural habitat are notable achievements.

Located in South Perisher on a site carved into the slope above the Kosciusko Road, Maranatha enjoys a spectacular view from Mt Perisher to Front Valley.

In 1970 the newly formed Thirroul Ski Club purchased the 10-year-old lodge and over the next 50 years undertook a series of upgrades and extensions.

In 2009, alarmed by the proliferation of weeds and the spread of exotic grasses (which had been introduced to control erosion), the club decided action was needed.

Following a site assessment in cooperation with NPWS, a rehabilitation plan was developed for the disturbed site and the surrounding precinct.

As well as erosion control and soil stabilisation, a comprehensive weed control and native vegetation rehabilitation program was developed, that complimented the subalpine forest and heath surrounding the lodge.

This program has been running for 13 years now, with dedicated annual working bees carried out by 6 to 10 club volunteers. NPWS undertakes site preparation works in advance where needed, and provides native plants, tree guards, compost, and mulch for the working bees.

Starting from the leasehold area of 700 sq meters this project has now extended well into the surrounding heath and grass lands.

Weeds are being greatly reduced, with some species eradicated. Annual maintenance and targeting keeps them under control. Invasive Cocksfoot and Timothy

Grasses are a special focus and the replacement with native heaths and poas has the bonus of reducing the fire hazard.

NPWS has supplied over 2100 native plants to the project and commissioned supplemental works by contractors in the surrounding area.

A feature of the early stages of the project was the planting of Dusty Daisies on the steep embankment below the lodge. This has resulted in a spectacular display in late spring, much to the joy of summer occupants at the lodge.

We also planted Billy Buttons to acknowledge our lodge address 'Billy Button Place', not only a delight for members but also our resident wombat that enjoys the succulent leaves. We have planted snow gums selectively throughout the area; they are a feature of the tall sub-alpine forest particularly behind the lodge. We are concerned as this iconic species around the lodge is affected by the dieback event caused by the infestations of Phoracantha beetles. Lodge members have been involved in the associated citizen science monitoring project occurring throughout the valley.

Other significant heath species with attractive flowers that have been planted include Alpine Grevillia, Alpine Hovea, Alpine Mint Bush and the Tasman Flax Lilly. All these young plants need the protection of the tree guards in the early stages as they are tempting to the feral deer that enjoy the young shoots.

We have found that having a designated working bee every year enables us to concentrate on the project, maintain our work and to progressively increase the rehabilitation area. This is now more than ten times the size of our lease! Alpine areas have much slower growing rates compared to coastal, hinterlands and slopes, and this feature that helps with weed control as it narrows the time that weeds can establish, flower and set seed. We have also found that planting in late summer has the best results, with late rains in autumn, a settling in period over winter and then the flush of growth in spring.

The current emphasis on bushfire control and the requirement for lodges to establish Asset Protection Zones has let us prepare a Fire Hazard Management Plan that can be integrated with our Rehabilitation Program. Weeding is combined with the removal of fine fuels, the maintenance of heath and grasses to acceptable height levels along with maintenance of tree canopy and other management techniques. As part of this we also do maintenance of drains, erosion controls and pathed areas. The Regeneration Team members find it is a pleasure to visit Perisher Valley outside the ski season every year and to be actively engaged with the environment. Part of our team includes retired members who no longer actively ski. They find it rewarding to continue to be part of the club activities and have an opportunity to spend time at the lodge.

Plant natives



2019 Annual working bee at Maranatha Lodge. Photo: T Hazell/Maranatha Bush Regeneration Team Co-ordinator



Before (2019) and after (2022). Annual working bees have transformed the slopes below Maranatha Lodge as native species thrive. Photo: T Hazell/Maranatha Bush Regeneration Team Co-ordinator

At one with environment

Snowies Alpine Walk update



The new Charlotte Pass to Perisher walk. Photo: A Cahill/EES

The Snowies Alpine Walk (formerly known as the Snowies Iconic Walk) is a major walking track project in Kosciuszko National Park. Track construction commenced in 2019 and is scheduled to be finalised by late 2023. The Snowies Alpine Walk is a 55-kilometre (km) 4-day walk which expands on the existing walking track network across the park's spectacular alpine and sub-alpine areas. This walk will link the resorts of Charlotte Pass, Guthega, Perisher and the historic Bullocks Flat.

- **Day 1** Guthega to Charlotte Pass (9 km)
- **Day 2** Charlotte Pass to Charlotte Pass via Main Range (22 km)
- **Day 3** Charlotte Pass to Perisher Village (13 km)
- **Day 4** Perisher Village to Bullocks Flat (11 km)

Guthega to Charlotte Pass

The construction of this new section of the Snowies Alpine Walk from Illawong Hut to Charlotte Pass is now complete, and the renewal works on the existing section of Illawong Walk between Guthega and Illawong Hut were completed in March 2022. The Guthega to Charlotte Pass section was officially opened by the NSW Environment Minister James Griffin on 5 June 2022.

Once the winter season passes and the snow melts, walkers can experience this unique walk which runs parallel to the Snowy River from Guthega to Charlotte Pass (or vice versa). Walkers can walk one-way (9km) and organise to be picked up at the other end or they can walk it return (18km). Ask at the Snowy Region Visitor Centre or information kiosk if you require transport services to complete your chosen walk.

This section of the Snowies Alpine Walk includes

experiencing the new Spencers Creek suspension bridge - Australia's highest suspension bridge at an elevation of 1640m above sea level.

Charlotte Pass to Perisher

Construction of the Charlotte Pass to Perisher section of the walk commenced in 2020 and is due to open in late 2022 or early 2023. This section of track links Charlotte Pass and Perisher Village via the existing Porcupine Walk.

This walk will provide spectacular views of the Thredbo Valley and Bullocks Flat as well as extensive views of the Main Range.

Upgrades to the existing Porcupine Walk, funded by Kosciuszko National Park visitor use fees, have also commenced, and will continue into late 2022.

Perisher to Bullocks Flat

As part of the Australian and NSW Government's Regional Recovery Partnerships program announced in June 2021, the Snowies Alpine Walk project received an additional \$10 million in funding to deliver a 11.4-kilometre walking track between Perisher Valley and Bullocks Flat.

Construction on this section commenced in 2022 and will continue into 2023.

The final track alignment has been fine-tuned using ground-truthing to ensure that any potential impacts on identified natural and cultural features along the route are minimised. Whilst the expected snow load for this new section will be lighter than on alpine tracks, the steep terrain through dense vegetation, coupled with a 700m vertical descent will provide plenty of challenges for track construction teams.

Oh, the serenity...



Spencers Creek suspension bridge. Photo: A Cahill/EES



A stretch of the new Charlotte Pass to Illawong walk. Photo: A Cahill/EES

Beachcombers Lodge team members



Larry Davis and his grandsons, Toby and Ryder Davis prepare a snowgum planting site at Beachcombers Lodge. Photo: A Slocombe/EES

Lodge revegetation works

Summer Beauty



Tree guards and mulch will help the new plantings survive on the northern slope below Beachcombers Lodge. Photo: A Slocombe/EES

With COVID curtailing both the 2020 and 2021 winter seasons and shutting down international travel in 2021, KNP saw both its quietest winters and busiest summers on record.

Summer in Perisher is generally a ghost town, with limited staff and even fewer visitors. The past two summers, however, have been buzzing. Many lodges recorded their highest summer visitation numbers for many years, and this trend is likely to continue.

When Perisher resort was first developed, the plan was to blend the resort buildings into the surrounding environment, minimising the visual impact, and creating an eco-village. This has been achieved in some instances; however, many lodges are surrounded by weedy grasses and look shabby at best.

To improve the summer appeal of your lodge, why not try planting native grasses, herbs, and shrubs?

Imagine your front entrance surrounded by Snow Daisies, sweet smelling Alpine Mint or perhaps a Kosciuszko Rose. Here at NPWS we love to encourage native plantings, and offer free plants, mulch, compost, tree guards – and our expertise – to any lodge that requests it. We provide the materials; you provide the labour!

We can assist with creating a revegetation plan specific to your lodge. Whether you want a nice entrance way, or wish to replant an entire hillside, your friendly [NPWS Environmental Liaison Officer](#) can help.

Some outstanding examples of dedicated lodge members helping our natural environment include:

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- Maranatha, who infill planted 100 plants this summer in an area they have been regenerating for many years.
- Valhalla Lodge who has greatly improved their summer entrance by with providing 40 native plants which were then used to create a lovely garden.
- Beachcombers also put in 40 native species to improve their summer entrance and revegetate an area adjacent to their lodge.
- Warratah, with sole representative Anne planting more than 30 plants around the entrance way and across to the north west of the lodge.
- Rugby Lodge has been working on improving the native species surrounding their lodge, and their new native gardens are looking amazing!
- Sponars Chalet, with Rosemary planting around 25 snow gums – all while nursing a broken leg!
- Doorak, who planted many native species around their lodge to a create diverse and interesting entrance way for summer guests.

Well done to all the dedicated lodges out there who take pride in giving back to the amazing environment in which we love to play.

Revegetation is easy and satisfying. Get the kids involved, get dirty, and get planting!

If your lodge would like to be involved in this excellent program, contact your friendly [NPWS Environmental Liaison Officer](#).

Perisher Range revegetation



Rosemary Marchant from Sponars Chalet with four new snowgums to be planted on her site. Photo: A Slocombe/EES

'Blossom' possum

Possum Conundrum

Blossom was a small and frightened young ringtail possum, who came into the care of LAOKO (Looking After Our Kosciuszko Orphans) in early July 2021 when her mother was seriously injured in a machinery shed accident at Perisher.

Sadly, her mother could not be saved, and Blossom's injuries meant she needed care and rehabilitation. Luckily for her, LAOKO had the expertise and facilities to do just that. By mid-August, 6 weeks later, she was ready for release, back to her home territory, the icy winter wonderland of Perisher Valley.

Blossom is a sub-adult, and it is hoped she located her family and was welcomed home into the communal drey. Whilst in care, Blossom was comfortable, living in a possum box lined with coconut fibre and gum leaves and this safe and cosy home will be secured high in a snow gum near her rescue site.

Ringtail possums are folivores, which means that Eucalypt leaves make up the primary source of nutrition. In Perisher Valley, there is only 1 species of Eucalypt, *E. niphohila*, the snow gum. Blossom was fed exclusively on snow gum leaves from her home range for the 2 weeks prior to her release to ensure she was familiar with their taste. In fact, after being offered snow gum leaves, she wouldn't eat any other eucalypt species, talk about fussy!

Ringtail possums have small home ranges (.88Ha) and are territorial. This makes it very important to release them as close as possible to their original location.

And herein lies the conundrum. Blossom was rescued from a place of heavy machinery and moving parts. It would endanger Blossom to release her too close to the site of her rescue, but she needed to be released within 100m of her original location or she may have never located her family and been forced away from her release site by unfamiliar possums.

Blossom required a few important features in her release site:

1. Must be within 100m, but beyond 50m, of capture site.
2. A full and healthy canopy which provides:
 - connectivity to surrounding areas (important to be safe from predators)
 - Abundant leaves to eat
 - Shelter from the cold temperatures
3. A sturdy tree limb approximately 4m off the ground.

During our search for a suitable site, it became apparent that the possums around Perisher must be moving into smaller and smaller territories due to the ever-increasing dieback event which is decimating the snow gum canopy.

After much searching, a site was found near Edelweiss Lodge which had all the necessary components for Blossom to be released into.

The next tricky part of this release was accessing the tree, with all possible routes snowbound. Carrying a ladder on a skidoo is not very practical, so I recruited our friendly Perisher Valley Fire Brigade, who were pleased to help.

They came with their Håggglund oversnow vehicle with the extra tall ladder. The Fire Officers were very enthusiastic, and even tied the rather heavy and awkward box in the tree. Finally, it was time for Blossom to return home.

I cradled her in a beanie, within which she was curled, and climbed the ladder. I held the beanie near the entrance of the Blossom Box, and after a moment's hesitation she was gone! Blossom was home.

I have since frequented the release site, and on each occasion, I find fresh ringtail scats, a very promising sign!

Next time you are in Perisher Range take a torch out during a calm night and you can often spot our resident bobucks and ringtails. Our mountain pygmy possums may be famous, but our common possums are pretty special too.



Marion Battishall releasing 'Blossom' the possum back into her native environment. Photo: B Williams/EES

Valhalla Lodge regeneration



Kylie Langford and Graeme Gibson of Valhalla Lodge with their native plants supplied by NPWS. Photo: A Slocombe/EES

Underground Petroleum Storage Systems (UPSS) within Kosciusko National Park

Alpine resort lodges with underground Petroleum Storage Systems (UPSS) were, up until 1 September 2021, exempt from complying with certain requirements of the [Protection of the Environment Operations \(Underground Petroleum Storage Systems\) Regulation 2019](#) (the Regulation). Since then, NPWS has been assisting lodge owners with UPSS, to align their practices with the Regulation. The response from lodges has been overwhelmingly positive. Currently, lodges have now moved to an alternate fuel source, or adjusted their operation, maintenance, and monitoring processes, to ensure that potential environmental pollution is reduced.

Why does NPWS regulate UPSS?

Leaks from underground petroleum storage systems are a common source of land and groundwater contamination, accounting for more than half of the contaminated sites in NSW. Because they are buried, leaks from these systems can go unnoticed, leading to expensive clean-up action, damage to the environment or risks to human health.

What are some ongoing actions?

UPSS operators will continue to operate and monitor their system in accordance with their [Fuel Systems Operations Plan](#). This will show any contamination resulting from a leaking or faulty UPSS. In this instance, all operators have a duty to report pollution incidents immediately and then provide a completed [UPSS Regulation leak notification form](#) to NPWS.

Some lodges still have UPSS that require [decommissioning](#). This means that a Duly Qualified Person must remove all flammable and/or combustible liquid and dispose of it appropriately, and then remove the tank/s and associated pipework. In some rare instances, where infrastructure or the natural environment is affected, tanks will be filled with an inert substance, and left onsite.

For further information:

- [NSW EPA](#) resources for implementing the UPSS Regulation
- [NPWS Resorts Environmental Health](#)
- [NPWS Environmental Health Officer](#)



Helen Smith (NPWS) and Yvette Bortoli (NSW Health) participating in UPSS Training conducted in Kosciusko National Park. Photo: M Rogers/Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Perisher Ski Resort news



Tree planting on Perisher's 5th Annual Epic Promise Day. Photo: Perisher Resort

Article by Tanya Bishop, Environmental Manager, Perisher Resort

Throughout last summer and in the lead-up to winter 2022, the Perisher team continued with a program of works in support of our commitment to conserving our beautiful environment for generations to come. Here's a few of the highlights:

- Planting of native heath, grasses and trees continued across all Resort areas, with over 3,500 new plants enjoying the wet summer
- Spraying and removal of weeds when possible, given the rainy summer conditions. Problem weeds such as Juncus spp. and St. John's Wort were targeted, among others.
- The return of our Epic Promise Day for its fifth annual occurrence! Perisher staff and family members volunteered their time to help local charity Keep It Cool plant 1,000 trees. The day was a great way for staff and kids to get involved in a local environmental initiative.
- A break in the wet weather allowed Perisher's Mountain Operations team to conduct a litter clean-up of Resort areas, from Bullocks Flat to Guthega and lots of areas in between.
- Energy-efficient lighting retrofits continued across the Resort in the lead up to winter, with hundreds of fluorescent tubes sent for recycling.

- Initiatives continued to reduce waste to landfill. Food waste, e-waste, soft plastics and other streams continue to be diverted from landfill. With covid restrictions easing, efforts will be re-focused on reducing disposable plastic items and moving Perisher towards our Commitment to Zero landfill goals.
- Perisher continued to support Researchers from the Australian National University studying the extensive effects of eucalyptus dieback within the Resort and beyond. This cooperation facilitates monitoring, sampling and other works within the Resort area.



Waste sorting signage. Photo: Perisher Resort

Perisher Resort revegetation works



A revegetation area within the Perisher Ski Resort. Photo: Perisher Resort
Resort Round-up Winter 2022

Charlotte Pass Snow Resort update



Charlotte Pass accommodation including Southern Alps Lodge, Stillwell Hotel, Arlberg Ski Lodge, Burrawong Lodge.
Photo: Charlotte Pass Snow Resort

Article by Chelsea Rae, Charlotte Pass Snow Resort

Charlotte Pass is Australia's highest snow resort and is completely snow bound all winter long! Experiencing snow for the first time is something you will never forget, and at Charlotte Pass we've got something for everyone. Whether you want to find your ski legs or enjoy some après ski, everything you need is right here at Charlotte Pass.

Recycling

This season to date we have improved our recycling program so much so that we have done more recycling in Charlotte Pass than ever before. By engaging, educating and working with our communities, employees and lodges we have increased options for recycling.

Rehabilitation and Revegetation

- Each spring, Blyton Group employees band together to clean up the areas around Charlotte Pass. There is a particular focus on the river passages and high foot traffic areas, where employees sweep the environment for any kind of rubbish. Some of

the findings include water bottles, tissues, gloves, facemasks and glass.

- Expanding our commitment to the health of our beautiful environment, Charlotte Pass joined forces with NSW National Parks by training employees as operators in monitoring the dieback of snowgums in the surrounding landscape.
- In conjunction with NSW National Parks, Charlotte Pass is planting native trees to restore and rehabilitate the landscape in 2023.

Capture and Release

Native small mammals take advantage of the warmth and shelter offered by the buildings around Charlotte Pass during the chilly winter months. Due to wet summer conditions, we saw an increase in the number of small mammals in our buildings. We have since increased the capture and release of small native mammals using Elliot Traps without harm.

Improving Energy Efficiency

We have significantly reduced energy usage by replacing electricity in Lucy Lodge and Stillwell with gas.

Meet the locals

Resort Resident: Gunter the Guthega Wombat

Iconic local, Gunter the Guthega Wombat, was spotted out and about one dreary Sunday afternoon. Oblivious to the skiers zooming by, he ambled along the home trail. Bernie, from the Jindabyne DPIE SoS team, saw him nearly collide with a skier. Concerned for his safety, she alerted the incident to the REST team, who quickly sprang into action.

Wombats generally come out to feed in the dark, and the report of him wandering among the skiers during the day and appearing 'sick and blind' sounded like he might have a mange problem. Gunter needed observation and possibly medicine. Together with LAOKO (Looking After Our Kosciuszko Orphans) volunteer mange coordinator, Laura Vaugne, we went off in search of Gunter.

Wombat Mange, or sarcoptic mange, is caused by a mite (*sarcoptes scabiei*), that burrows beneath the skin. Have you ever had headlice? Can you feel the itch? Imagine having incredibly tiny headlice living just below your skin all over your body. Now that's itchy! The unstoppable itch causes the wombats to scratch and scratch and scratch. They scratch until they bleed and scabs form where their fur used to be. They scratch so much they can't sleep; they lose weight and eventually go blind. They scratch until they scratch no more.

But just like headlice, the mites can be eradicated with a simple treatment. Wombats recover from mange using a special medication poured onto the skin. The treatment is especially effective if used early in the infestation. We hoped we weren't too late for Gunter.

Arriving at Perisher, the REST team and LAOKO coordinated a plan to locate, observe and possibly treat Gunter. With an extendable painter's pole and a small bottle of mite treatment attached, we skied to Guthega to see what we could see. Fresh snow the evening before made for some pleasant turns in the hunt for Gunter, through the Guthega trees and along the home trail. We found an active burrow not far from his original sighting and wondered if he would emerge. After 5 laps on the T-Bar we finally spotted him, wandering along the home trail. On closer observation he was not sick and blind, however, he did have the tell-tale signs of early stage sarcoptic mange. A decision was made to apply treatment to halt any further mite infestation.

While his head was buried beneath a shrub happily eating some exposed snow grass, Laura stealthily crept up behind him and applied the medicine. Success! The initial treatment was applied and Gunter will be free of itchy mites and be able to amble along the trail for many years to come.

Monitoring and treatment of this special resort resident will continue, to ensure his safety and wellbeing in the years to come.



LAOKO volunteer Laura Vaugne about to apply the mite treatment to Gunter. Photo: M Battishall/EES

Working together

Rebuilding the Rest House at Sawyers Hill



Sawyers Hut was burnt down after the 2019-20 bushfires. Photo: M Bowden/EES

Article by Megan Bowden, NPWS Project Officer

NPWS is putting the finishing touches on the rebuild of the Rest House at Sawyers Hill, on the Snowy Mountains Highway near Kiandra. The Rest House at Sawyers Hill is one of 11 historic huts damaged during the 2019-20 summer bushfires that will be rebuilt in Kosciuszko National Park by NPWS, with assistance by volunteers from the Kosciuszko Huts Association (KHA) and families associated with the huts.

We have maintained the Rest Houses' distinctive aesthetic appeal with unusual vertical board and batten construction, while utilising modern building techniques and bushfire-resistant features. Timber for the rebuilding program has been milled from burnt trees that were fallen during roadside risk reduction programs, following the bushfires. It adds to the evolving story of this place, with some of the timbers requiring specialist milling to get the boards just right for Rest Houses' unique style.

Rest House at Sawyers Hill has a long and fascinating history and hopes to keep families connected with their history and record their stories while it's still possible. It was built in the early 1900s and is the only hut in Kosciuszko built for use as a traveller's rest house, even until it was burnt in the 2003 fires, rebuilt, and burnt again in the 2020 fires. It is significant because of its association with an important historic transport route

through the Snowy Mountains and was the location where coach horses would be changed over during the arduous trip across the mountain. The mailman from Adaminaby used to change his horse for skis, delivering mail to Kiandra in winter and in the 1950s. Thieves who stole a truck from Cooma reportedly accidentally ended their own lives here when they drank arsenic, thinking it was alcohol!

Further research has uncovered that a licensed Tavern was built in the area called the 'Sawyers Arms'. An article from the 1860s reports the tragic death of Mrs Crowe, the landlady of the Sawyers Arms, when the Bullock Dray she was in capsized and "medical aid was unable to reach her". Makes you thankful for the modern medical services we have in the mountains!

Planning is underway for the rebuilding of Vickery's Hut, with Harveys, Delany's, Four Mile, Happys, Brooks, Round Mountain, Fifteen Mile Ridge Linesman's No 3 huts and Bradley/O'Brien's huts scheduled for completion by 2026.

Descendants and others with photographs and other historic records of these huts, or those interested in volunteering to help rebuild these huts, are encouraged to contact NPWS by [email](#) or phone 02 6947 7000.

Historic hut rebuild



Volunteers and NPWS work together to complete Sawyers Rest Hut. Photo: M Bowden/EES



Newly completed Sawyers Rest Hut. Photo: M Bowden/EES
Resort Round-up Winter 2022

Northern end of the park

Sewlyn update



The new Selwyn Complex is nearing completion. Photo: Selwyn Snow Resort

Article by Chelsea Rae, Charlotte Pass Snow Resort

After being destroyed in the 2019-20 bushfires, Selwyn is set to re-open in 2023.

'We are thrilled to re-open. It takes a village to bring a Snow Resort back to life over a short period, I look forward to welcoming our guests back to enjoy Selwyn in 2023, knowing the hard work, sweat and tears we have poured into rebuilding' says Angela Murdoch, Selwyn's General Manager.

Families love spending time at Selwyn, it's ideal for beginners or for those who have never seen snow before. Nothing beats the look of excitement when your child sees snow for the first time. Whether it's tobogganing, learning to ski or making a snowman, kids are guaranteed to have fun at Selwyn.

New Selwyn Centre – Improved energy efficiency

Guests will find an expanded 'Selwyn Centre' that will house all guest facilities and services in the one building, including ski & snowboard Hire, enhanced food and drink offerings and improved toilet amenities. The new building

will significantly reduce how much energy is consumed, with improved insulation and double-glazed windows maximising the sun's energy.

Native Wildlife

After the 2019-20 bushfires devastatingly destroyed the beautiful Selwyn environment, it's wonderful to see native animals and greenery come back.

Rehabilitation

After the impacts of the bushfires, the Selwyn team has focused efforts on rehabilitating the beautiful surrounding environment. Efforts include sowing grass seeds and planning native trees.

Brand New TT10 Snowmaking Machines

Selwyn will be the first snow resort in the Southern Hemisphere to install brand new TT10 snow machines, and thanks to their next generation technology this will enable snowmaking at temperatures more than two degrees warmer than the previous system Selwyn had prior to the bushfires. The nozzle valve technology enables optimum energy efficiency alongside resource conservation.

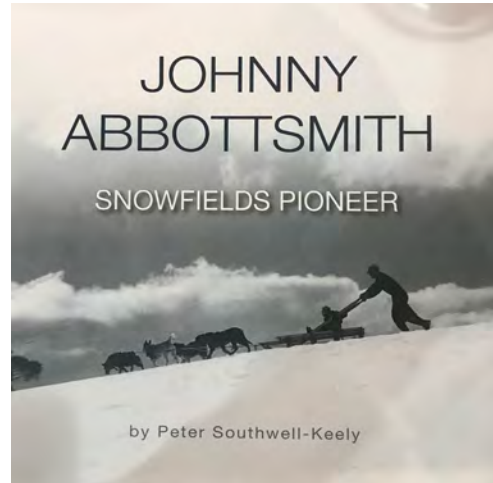
New history book

Johnny Abbottsmith: Snowfields Pioneer by Peter Southwell-Keely

This new book is the story of Johnny Abbottsmith – a name familiar to many who have travelled the Perisher range from Jindabyne to Mount Kosciuszko. He played a pioneering role in the development of the snowfields at a time when there were few of the facilities which skiers today take for granted.

Johnny Abbottsmith built the first ski tow at Smiggin Holes (now part of Perisher Resort). He also started the first oversnow transport in Perisher Valley with his dog sleigh team operating between Smiggin Holes and Perisher Valley.

This book gives an account of his remarkable life and can be purchased from the [Perisher Historical Society \(PHS\) bookshop](#) or the Snowy Region Visitor Centre in Jindabyne.



The front cover of the new 'Johnny Abbottsmith: Snowfields Pioneer' book.



Johnny Abbottsmith at the Ski Haven Tow in 1952 with Steven Thatcher, Doug Thatcher and Danny Collman. Photo: Abbottsmith Collection
Resort Round-up Winter 2022

Did you know...?

Food hygiene and sanitisation

Did you know that within food businesses, many potentially infectious bacteria and viruses can survive on surfaces and equipment, for significant amounts of time? These viruses and bacteria can then be easily transferred to food, causing illness if eaten. This process is called cross-contamination. To prevent cross-contamination, all businesses must have the appropriate equipment and chemicals for constant personal hygiene and sanitisation of surfaces, utensils and equipment.

The impacts of poor hygiene and sanitisation are evident nationally and worldwide. For example, Noma in Copenhagen, named one of the world's best restaurants, caused a [serious outbreak of Norovirus](#) causing 63 diners to become considerably ill. Local health inspectors identified poor hand washing practices as the cause. Within QLD, over 250 people became seriously ill at a Principles Conference with [Salmonella poisoning](#). This was caused by a mixer, that had not been cleaned or sanitised, which was used to mix an egg product.

Because of the serious risks of food poisoning, there are strict laws in place to ensure all food businesses have:

- a [Food Grade Sanitiser](#), to clean and sanitise with; and
- dedicated [hand wash basins](#), to enable all staff to continuously wash their hands. By following strict hygiene and sanitisation practices, businesses can dramatically reduce cross-contamination and subsequent risk of food poisoning.

The NPWS Resort Environmental Services Team will be conducting inspections of all food businesses that operate over winter in Kosciusko National Park. The inspections are undertaken to ensure that businesses are following food safety practices, as guided by the [Food Standards Code](#). One of the main focuses of the inspections is to ensure that practices are in place to prevent cross-contamination.

Lodge Easter Packs

In a new initiative this year, lodges were able to register for Easter Packs provided by NPWS. Thirteen lodges took up the offer, and 100 lodge children received a selection of goodies including:

- Aussie animal chocolates
- a Perisher EPIC buff; and
- a tailored activity packs including puzzles, colouring in sheets and Easter trivia.



NSW Fire and Rescue participated in the Back to Perisher events including the Duck Race. Photo: F Zipfinger/SLOPES

'Back to Perisher' celebrations

SLOPES Duck Race



SLOPES duck race held on the Perisher Creek over the Easter Weekend. Photo: F Zipfinger/SLOPES

On Saturday afternoon, a large crowd turned out for the 2022 Perisher Duck Race. It was a sell-out, with all 400 plastic ducks held by SLOPES being snapped up by the excited race goers – a new record! Proceeds from this year's event (\$1010) were split equally between the Burns Unit at Westmead Children's Hospital and fauna care group LAOKO (Looking after our Kosciuszko orphans).

With hundreds of people lining the banks of the creek, all 400 brightly coloured ducks were released from the main bridge over Perisher Creek and were cheered on as they made their way downstream, helped by blasts of water from the Fire Brigade's hoses. The first three ducks to cross the finish line received prizes from the NPSW Snowy Region Visitor Centre – a Sea to Summit Ultra Sil Daypack; a Black Diamond head torch and a locally made jigsaw puzzle of Jindabyne.



Amy Slocombe, NPWS Environment Liaison Officer catching ducks at the end of the race. Photo: F Zipfinger/SLOPES

Guided walk



Enjoying the spectacular views from the top of Porcupine Rocks. Photo: A Slocombe/EES

Discovery Walk

An enthusiastic group of 25 people registered for the 5.7km return Discovery Walk to Porcupine Rocks (1908 metres) on Saturday morning. Lead by Discovery Ranger Ros Easton, family groups including grandparents, parents and children alike made their way up the newly upgraded track to take in the magnificent views from the summit. Children worked their way through the 'kids quest' app along the way, learning about the habitat and some of the native animals that make this part of the Snowy Mountains their home. They also enjoyed two Easter egg hunts along the way.



Looking for Mountain galaxias in the creeks around Perisher Valley. Photo: A Slocombe/EES

Community event

NSW Fire and Rescue Open Day

On Easter Saturday, NSW Fire and Rescue New South Wales (FRNSW) held an open day at the Perisher Fire Station, with their fire truck, over-snow Hägglunds, snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles on display. It was an excellent opportunity to discuss fire-safety concerns. The children enjoyed climbing into the fire trucks, sounding the sirens, and operating live fire hoses, and they took home activity bags full of educational material. Thanks to FRNSW for their wonderful contribution to the community events.



NSW Fire and Rescue 'Perisher Valley 426' fire truck on display for the 'Back to Perisher' events. Photo: S Woodall/EES



Children trying out the over-snow Hägglunds at the NSW Fire and Rescue Open Day at Perisher Valley. Photo: S Woodall/EES

Reduce, recycle and reuse

Know where it should go – Waste and recycling across the resorts

You've just had a hot, creamy takeaway coffee and a slice of banana bread in a cardboard tray served with a bamboo fork. Delicious!

But where to put your waste?

With winter visitation back up to pre-covid levels and lodges fully booked, now is a great time to remind ourselves of the four main waste and recycling streams across the resorts and 'what goes where'.

While not all bins are available at all locations, understanding what can and can't be recycled and using the correct bins where possible will go a long way towards improving our waste management across the Valley.

Now back to that morning tea

- Coffee cups and lids both go in the landfill
- Cardboard container (if not soiled) goes in the paper/cardboard recycling bin where available, otherwise into landfill
- Bamboo cutlery goes in the food organics bin where available, otherwise in landfill.



Guthega Ski Club members receive their new compost bin. Photo: A Slocombe/EES

Waste management



Food and Organics

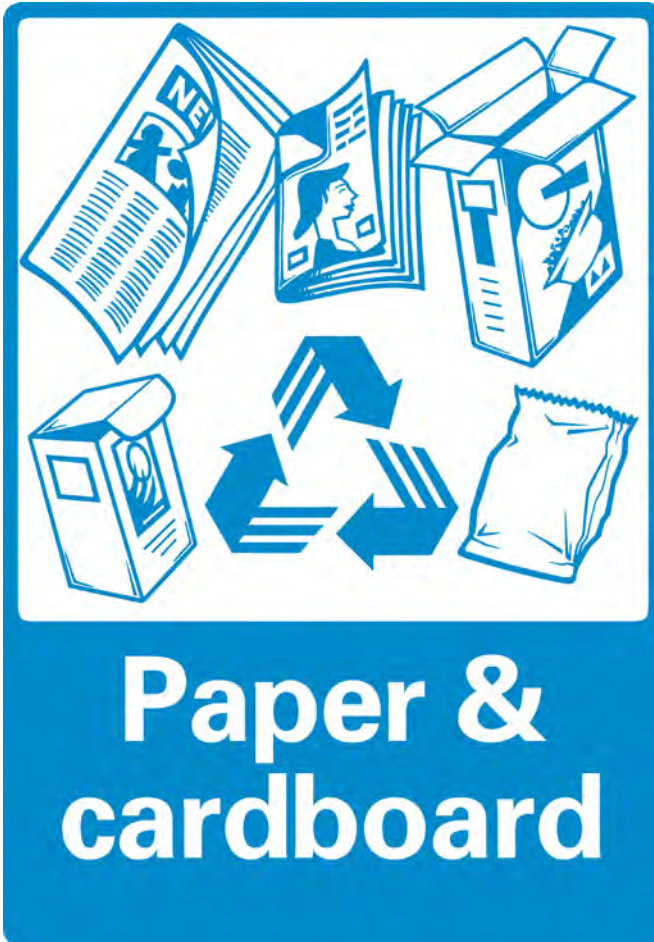
- Bread and pastry
- Cereals and flours
- Meat, poultry and bones
- Seafood (no oyster or scallop shells)
- Bamboo cutlery
- Teabags, coffee grounds, paper sugar sachets and wood stirring sticks
- No clear liquids



Mixed containers

- Glass bottles and jars
- Steel/aluminium cans
- Aerosol cans
- Plastic soft drink/milk bottles and detergent bottles
- Ice cream tubs
- No takeaway coffee cups
- No hot chip tubs
- No foam food trays
- No broken glass

Sort it out!



Paper and Cardboard

- Clean paper and cardboard
- Clean cardboard food trays
- No waxed cardboard, milk or juice cartons
- No takeaway coffee cups
- No food napkins
- Nothing smaller than a credit card



Landfill

- Food wrappers
- Takeaway coffee cups
- Lids
- Foam containers
- Soft plastics
- All other general waste that can't be recycled

Great news!

Walking tracks update

Works occurred over the 2021-22 summer season to upgrade several popular walking tracks within Kosciuszko National Park. Upgrades to these walking tracks are part of the Improving Access to National Parks (IANP) Program. The aim of the IANP Program is to improve accessibility to national parks across NSW by upgrading and renewing poor condition walking tracks and other visitor infrastructure.

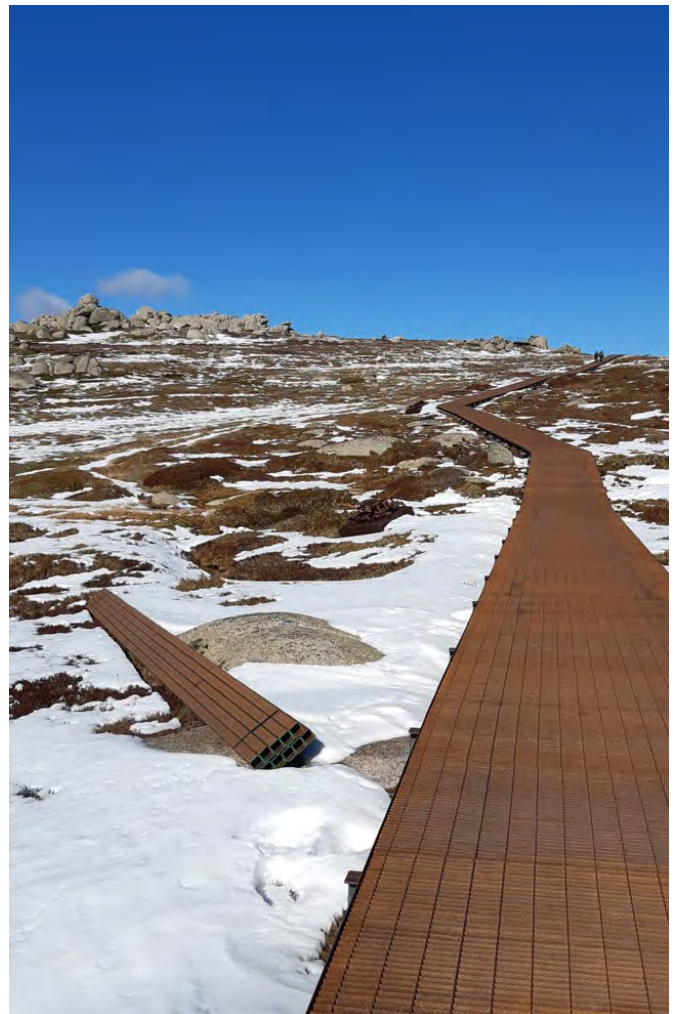
Near Kosciuszko Thredbo Village, the Kosciuszko walk, Dead Horse Gap walking track and Thredbo River walk all received upgrades. This season, 440m of steel mesh track was replaced on the Kosciuszko walk. The upgrades to this walking track, including removal of all steps, will help to improve restricted mobility access to the summit of Mt. Kosciuszko. Along Dead Horse Gap walking track, 280m of track was upgraded with new stone steps and paving, adding to the 380m of track that was upgraded in the 2020-21 summer season. Funding kindly received from Kosciuszko Thredbo Resort was able to be used to assist with the upgrades to Dead Horse Gap walking track. Close by on Thredbo River walk, the first 417m of track was renewed with fresh gravel. The upgrades to Dead Horse Gap walking track and Thredbo

River walk have made a significant improvement to the walkability of the tracks, which were highly eroded and wet in many places. Additional upgrades to these walking tracks will continue next season after the winter snowmelt.

Closer to the Perisher Resort area, the Illawong walk and Porcupine walk have also had significant upgrades over the summer season. Over the last two summers, upgrade works to the Illawong walk have included installation of 850m of new rock paving, 1,150m of new gravel, reinstatement of all elevated steel mesh platforms, the realignment of 300m of the track and a new lookout area, which provides incredible views of the adjacent Snowy River. Upgrade works to the Porcupine walk over the 2021-22 summer season have included 600m of new rock paving, 800m of new gravel and installation of 200m of new steel mesh walkways. Upcoming works for the 2022-23 summer season will see the upgrading of all remaining walking track surfaces, including the realignment of the first 400m of the track to link up with the final stage of the new Snowies Alpine Walk from Perisher to Bullocks Flat.



Newly upgraded steps on the Illawong Walk. Photo: G Harmer/EES
Resort Round-up Winter 2022



New steel mesh on the Kosciuszko Walk. Photo: E McInerney/EES

KNP improvements



Before (left) and after (right) photos show the improvement to the Dead Horse Gap steps. Photo: E McInerney/EES



Steel mesh elevates the Porcupine walking track above the sensitive alpine bog habitat. Photo: G Harmer/EES

More information

Snow gum dieback update

Article by Michelle Rawson, *Save Our Snowgum*

Research is well underway into the snow-gum dieback which is rapidly occurring across the alps. Dead and dying snow gums are now increasingly visible from all ski resorts, and throughout the greater alpine area. Dr Matthew Brookhouse, from ANU, is leading a small group of scientists who are attempting to map the extent of the dieback, as well as understand the cause. Dr Brookhouse's team has recently joined with research partners and colleagues to form the High-Country Dieback Network, which aims to collaborate and connect land managers and researchers to understand the history, extent and cause of the dieback.

What is known is that the native longicorn beetle, which is experiencing favourable conditions in a warming climate, is now breeding in plague proportions. The larvae of the beetle effectively ringbark the snow gums, resulting in their death. Unfortunately, little is yet known about this native beetle, or how to stop it. What is certain, however, is that the snow gum population is being rapidly decimated, and without adequate resources, there is little hope of finding a solution in time to save them. Add to this recent drought stress, bush fires, and the snow gums specific vulnerability to climate change, and the long-term outlook for snow gums is not good.

One of the biggest challenges in the effort to save the snow gums is the pace in which they are dying. Dr Brookhouse and his small team are literally racing the clock to not only map the extent of the dieback, understand the cause, but also to come up with and implement solutions. Likely solutions include identifying any hormones/chemicals that can potentially disrupt the longicorn beetles' reproductive cycle, as well as ensuring the longer-term survival of the essential alpine eco-system through identifying a sub-species of snow gum that can survive at higher altitudes, is more resistant to the warmer temperatures of climate change and can be reforested in at-risk alpine areas.

Whilst there is hope for the snow gums, Dr Brookhouse's team need our help if they are to have any chance of succeeding. Essentially, they need the funding and resources to be able to undertake concurrent research projects on multiple fronts. There is a general lack of awareness about the plight the snow gums face - and without awareness - little is likely to change.

What you can do to help

- Raise awareness. Have conversations. Share media articles about Snow gum dieback on your socials.
 - This powerful 7-minute segment from [The Project](#) is a great one to share amongst your networks
 - This short video, recently screened on the ABC, outlines not only the [snow gum dieback](#), but the catastrophic implications that the loss of snow gums will have on the alpine ecosystem as a whole

- This [article](#) by the ABC last week.

- Out and about in the Alps? Become a citizen Scientist. Just log on to the [site](#) to find out how you can help.
- Have expertise in website design/maximisation, or know someone who does? The Save Our Snow gums site is in need of an upgrade. If you have some time to spare and can help with this, we would love to hear from you.
- Donate. We are in the process of adding a [donations function](#) to so please keep an eye on it and share to your networks when the donations button goes live. Whether you can spare \$10 or \$100 – it all helps and is much appreciated
- Have a fundraising idea of your own? Talk to friends, get a team together and get in touch! Just [email](#) - we would love to hear from you.
- Lobby all levels of Government. Write a letter to your local, State, or Federal MP. Let them know about the Snow gum dieback, why saving this iconic Australian tree is important to you, and how increased Government funding for research is essential for the Snow gums continued survival. Want to maximise your impact? Email your State or Federal representative and request a meeting. Meeting with constituents is part of their role. It's in their best interest to know which issues are important to the people who elect them.
- Have any media contacts? We would love to hear from you. The media is a fantastic medium to raise awareness of the Snow gums plight. The more press received, the better the outcome for Snow gums.
- Have any other ideas on how to help? [Please let us know](#). We would love to hear from you.



Snow gums, Thredbo Resort. Photo: M Rawson/SOS

Help save our beautiful Snow gums



The larvae of the native longicorn beetle ringbark the limbs of snow gums, causing death. Photo: M Rawson/SOS