



NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

Kalyarr National Park

Draft plan of management



Acknowledgement of Nari Nari Country

Kalyarr National Park is the traditional Country of the Nari Nari People. The park is an integral part of this rich and complex cultural landscape which is of profound significance. The rights of the Nari Nari People and their aspirations for their Country are acknowledged and respected.

This resource may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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Have your say

We want to know what you think about this draft plan. To give us feedback, please send a written submission via:



the online submission form at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/have-your-say



email to npws.parkplanning@environment.nsw.gov.au



post to NPWS Manager, Planning and Assessment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124.

Written submissions must be received by **5 pm 1 November 2024**.

All written submissions on this draft plan will be considered in the preparation of a final plan of management. Submissions are most effective when we understand your ideas and the outcomes you want for park management. Some suggestions to help you write your submissions are:

- write clearly and be specific about the issues that are of concern to you
- note which part or section of the document your comments relate to
- give reasoning in support of your points – this makes it easier for us to consider your ideas and will help avoid misinterpretation
- tell us specifically what you agree or disagree with and why you agree or disagree
- suggest solutions or alternatives to managing the issue if you can.

What happens to your feedback?

Your submissions will be provided to the West Regional Advisory Committee and may also be provided to the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council. Each of these bodies are established under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and have a formal role in the preparation of plans of management through the provision of advice.

Your privacy

The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water complies with the NSW *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, which regulates the collection, storage, quality, use and disclosure of personal information.

Information that identifies you may be gathered when you use our website or send us an email. If you indicate in your written submission that you object to your submission being made public, we will ask you before releasing your submission in response to any access applications under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

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Acknowledgments

Kalyarr National Park is in the traditional Country of the Nari Nari People.

This plan of management was prepared by staff of NPWS, in consultation with the Mawambul Co Management Group.

Contact us

For more information about this plan of management or Kalyarr National Park, contact the NPWS Riverina Area at 200 Yambil Street, Griffith NSW 2680; by post PO Box 1049 Griffith 2680; or by telephone on 02 6966 8100.

Summary

This plan of management directs the management of Kalyarr National Park. The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* requires the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to prepare plans of management for parks and historic sites. This draft plan of management outlines proposed management outcomes and actions, and a scheme of operations for Kalyarr National Park. Once adopted, the plan will also apply to areas that are vested in the Minister responsible for the National Parks and Wildlife Act for future reservation as part of Kalyarr National Park. These areas are referred to as Part 11 land.

Once adopted, all operations undertaken in this park need to be in accordance with this plan of management. In preparing this draft plan, the following were considered:

- the objects of the Act (Appendix A)
- the management principles for national parks (see Appendix B)
- the matters listed under section 72AA(1) of the Act.

Section 72(AB)(1) of the Act requires each plan of management to include the objectives of the plan of management and the operations proposed to be carried out on the land. These objectives and operations are detailed in section 7 (Table 2).

This draft plan of management focuses on the operations that will be necessary to achieve the plan's objectives. In a dynamic environment that contains uncertainties, natural variability, new technologies and information, a flexible management approach is required. Operations will be adjusted as necessary. Subsidiary plans such as feral animal and weeds strategies, and fire management strategies may be developed to guide operations.

Sections 1 to 6 of the plan summarise the park's key values, management principles and management considerations. These matters are outlined thoroughly in the Kalyarr National Park planning considerations report (NPWS 2024). It is recommended that readers of the plan refer to the planning considerations report for detailed explanations of the park's values and management considerations.

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1. Introduction

Kalyarr National Park is located on the floodplains of Lachlan River in the semi-arid areas of south-west New South Wales (NSW). The park is approximately 40 km north-west of Hay and 20 km upstream of Oxley (see Figure 1).

'Kalyarr' is the Aboriginal name used by Nari Nari and other local groups for the Lachlan River. Kalyarr National Park is referred to as 'Kalyarr' or 'the park' in this plan.

The park is in traditional Nari Nari Country and is of high cultural significance. Nari Nari People have a strong and enduring connection to Country, including the land now in Kalyarr National Park.

The alluvial plains, wetlands and lakes of the lower Lachlan and lower Murrumbidgee are rich in resources which continue to support Nari Nari traditions and culture. Nari Nari are actively engaged in caring for Country, including protecting and managing cultural values and features, facilitating cultural camps for teaching and healing, and participating in water resource planning and water management as it affects the lower Lachlan and lower Murrumbidgee floodplains.

In recognition of the importance of Kalyarr to Nari Nari People and NPWS, Kalyarr is jointly managed under a memorandum of understanding. The memorandum of understanding establishes the Mawambul Co Management Group (referred to as 'Mawambul' in this plan) and facilitates Nari Nari involvement in management of the park.



Photo 1 Mawambul and NPWS working together to install signage at Ita Lake Cultural Centre, Kalyarr National Park. Gary Currey/DCCEEW

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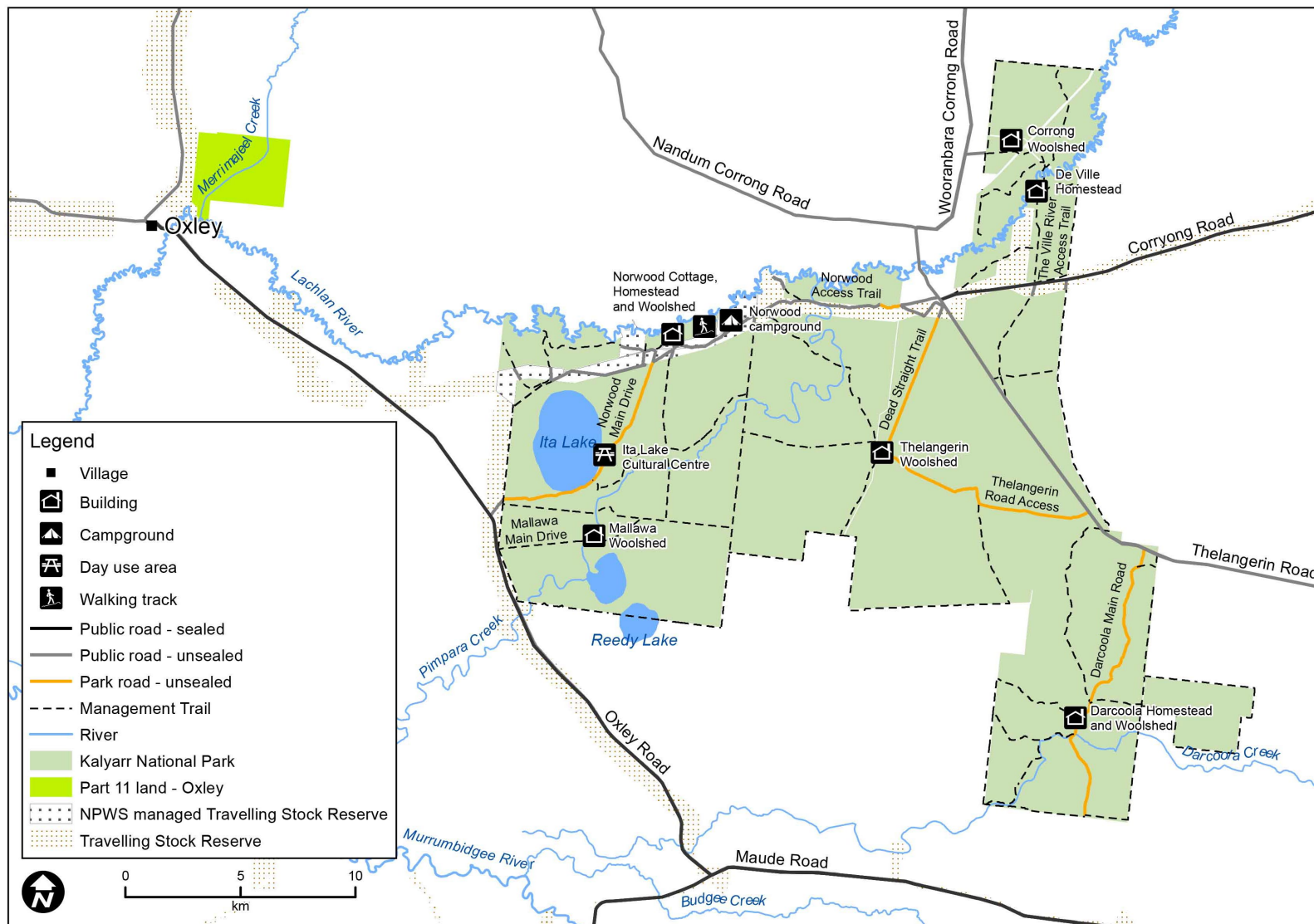


Figure 1 Kalyarr National Park

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The 40,899 ha park lies on the vast flat plains to the north of Hay (see Figure 2). From an agricultural perspective, these plains are known for producing fine Australian merino wool.

The park is located on the Riverine Plain of south-eastern Australia, which comprises the fluvial plains of the Murray, Murrumbidgee, Goulburn and Lachlan rivers and their tributary and distributary streams in southern New South Wales and northern Victoria. The Riverine Plain covers an area of about 76,800 km² (Butler et al. 1973).

Following acquisition and destocking of several pastoral properties, Kalyarr is now managed for its significant cultural and natural values. Table 1 provides a summary of the park and its regional setting.

Table 1 The park and its regional setting

Features	Description
Area	Kalyarr National Park (NP) – 40,899 ha
Reservation history	<p>Darcoola (8,173 ha) – first reserved as Kalyarr NP, 24 June 2005</p> <p>Norwood (6,768 ha) – first reserved as Kalyarr State Conservation Area (SCA), 10 November 2006</p> <p>Mullawa (south of Norwood) (4,028 ha) – first reserved as Kalyarr SCA, 15 August 2008</p> <p>Former McFarlands State Forest (769 ha) – reserved as Kalyarr NP, 1 July 2010 under the <i>National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Act 2010</i>.</p> <p>Geramy (870 ha) – reserved as Kalyarr SCA, 1 July 2010 under the National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Act.</p> <p>In 2014 the above park parcels were renamed as the Lachlan Valley parks. On 6 May 2016 they were consolidated and renamed Kalyarr National Park.</p> <p>Thelangerin, including De Ville and Corrong (20,149 ha) – added to Kalyarr NP, 4 November 2016.</p>
Biogeographic region	Riverina Bioregion – this bioregion has been extensively cleared for agricultural and horticultural production. Only 3.84% of the bioregion is reserved for conservation purposes (Cth DCCEEW 2020).
Administrative areas	Hay Shire Council (south of the Lachlan River), Balranald Shire Council (north of the Lachlan), Hay Local Aboriginal Land Council (south of the Lachlan), Balranald Local Aboriginal Land Council (north of the Lachlan), Riverina Local Land Services

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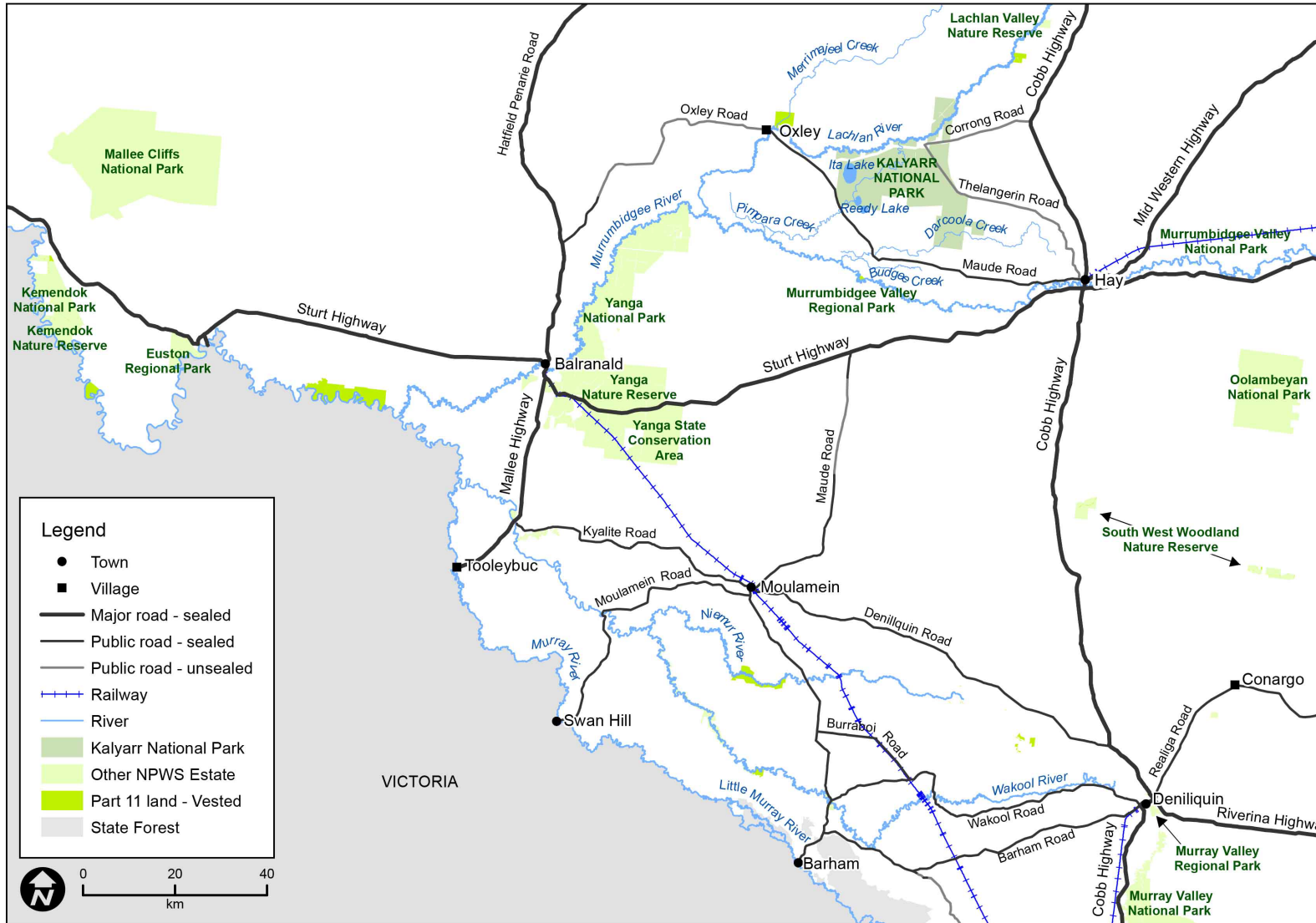


Figure 2 Kalyarr National Park regional setting

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Significance of Kalyarr National Park

The park protects significant Aboriginal cultural heritage values and historic heritage values, including:

- the Country of the Nari Nari people, who retain strong cultural connections through caring for Country – Ita Lake and its surrounds is of particular significance
- an abundance of cultural heritage features and values (sites) which demonstrate a long history of Nari Nari occupation – these sites include mounds, burials, modified (scarred) trees, hearths and stone artefacts and many native plant species used traditionally and today for food, fibre, medicine, shelter and tools
- historic heritage dating from a long history of pastoral activities on the Hay Plains, and a more recent period of irrigated farming – built heritage includes homestead and shearing shed complexes on former Darcoola, Norwood and Thelangerin stations.

The park protects significant biological values, including:

- extensive chenopod shrublands such as bladder saltbush, black bluebush, ruby saltbush and old man saltbush communities – the old man saltbush and bladder saltbush are among the most easterly NSW occurrence of these species and are in the best condition remaining on public land
- a sizeable remnant of Sandhill Pine Woodland endangered ecological community (EEC) and regionally significant riverine plain grasslands and river red gum
- approximately 60 km of Lachlan River frontage and part of the Lachlan Swamp, listed under the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia, is within the park – the majority of the Lachlan River frontage on Kalyarr provides lateral and longitudinal connectivity between the Lachlan River channel and Lachlan Swamp floodplain wetlands downstream, such as Baconian Swamp
- wetlands and ephemeral streams such as Ita Lake and Pimpara Creek, which provide habitat for birds protected under international migratory bird agreements and are considered priority water-dependent assets and ecosystem functions in the Lachlan long-term watering plan (DPIE 2020)
- part of the aquatic ecological community in the natural drainage system of the lowland catchment of the Lachlan River, listed under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (referred to in this plan as the Lachlan River EEC).
- threatened animals (such as the plains-wanderer and southern bell frog) and threatened plants listed under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The park is comprised of the following landscapes, known as Mitchell Landscapes:

- Lachlan Depression Plains
- Lachlan Channels and Floodplains
- Lachlan Lakes, Swamps and Lunettes
- Lachlan Scalded Plains
- Murrumbidgee Scalded Plains.

2. Protecting the natural environment

The semi-arid landscapes in and around Kalyarr National Park and the biodiversity they support are subject to long cycles of drought and infrequent rainfall followed by periods of flooding and inundation. This 'boom and bust' cycle means that Kalyarr has bursts of wildlife activity and strong seasonal variations.

2.1 Managing water and wetlands

Kalyarr is located on the Riverine Plain which contains the major west-flowing rivers of inland New South Wales – the Murray, Murrumbidgee, Goulburn and Lachlan (see Figure 2). The plain is incredibly flat, with an average gradient of 20 cm/km.

While rivers are prominent in the modern landscape, they have not significantly shaped the current topography. Except for a few small riparian areas, the landscape mainly consists of old geological landforms. The park contains prior streams (also known as palaeo-channels), which are remnants of former ancient drainage systems that existed prior to the current river and creek alignments.

Kalyarr's landscape is typical of the western Riverina Bioregion as it includes flat treeless plains, ephemeral watercourses and lakes, and overflow creek systems. The park has frontage to the Lachlan River for approximately 60 km. Other than the Lachlan River, there is no permanent natural water in the park. The Lachlan River is the fourth longest river in Australia (1,488 km) and drains a catchment of nearly 8.5 million hectares. It starts near Goulburn in the Great Dividing Range and terminates at the Great Cumbung Swamp near Oxley, 20 km downstream of the western boundary of Kalyarr.

The section of the Lachlan River that flows through Kalyarr National Park is part of the nationally significant Lachlan Swamp (Part of mid Lachlan Wetlands) riverine and floodplain wetland system (listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia).

The Lachlan Swamp includes and extends from above Lake Waljeers downstream to Baconian Swamp, Oxley, to just east of the Great Cumbung Swamp (see Figure 3). While not included in the directory's spatial definition of Lachlan Swamp, Ita Lake (on the Kalyarr ephemeral floodplain) is recognised as a regionally significant wetland for its contribution to the Lachlan landscape using the 5 Murray–Darling Basin Plan selection criteria for inclusion as a priority environmental asset. Ita Lake and Pimpara Creek support threatened species and communities, and significant biodiversity as they cycle through wet and dry and can provide critical habitat for biota to complete life history stages.

Kalyarr also provides for an important inter-valley connection, as the south-western portion of Pimpara Creek is where flood waters from the Murrumbidgee and Lachlan valleys can mix.

River regulation since the 1930s has substantially modified the hydrology and natural watering regime of the Lachlan River, resulting in deterioration of its freshwater ecosystems. The effects of these changes are exacerbated at the terminal end of the catchment. Wetland values are greatly impacted by reduced flows, loss of regular flooding, changes in timing and season of flows, and loss of connectivity. The lowland sections of the Lachlan River where Kalyarr is located are listed as an EEC under the Fisheries Management Act.

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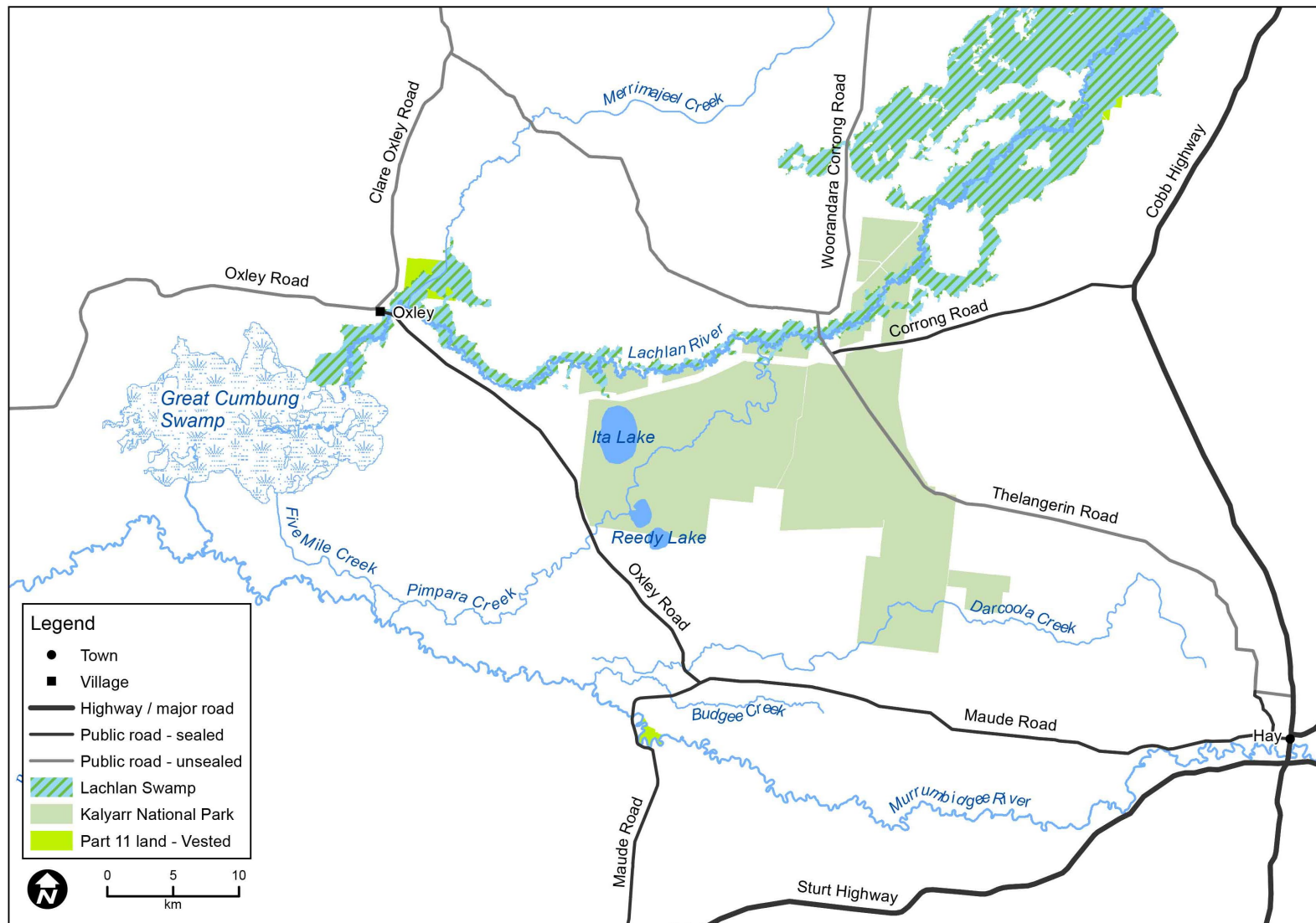


Figure 3 Wetlands and rivers near Kalyarr National Park

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Under the Murray–Darling Basin Plan, the delivery and protection of **planned and held environmental water** (see box) are the key mechanisms to restore natural values and productivity of the lower reaches of the Lachlan River. Delivery of environmental water helps to maintain connectivity along the Lachlan River and its anabranches and boost end-of-system floodplain flows.

Environmental water

Environmental water, or ‘water for the environment’, is surface or groundwater that is managed specifically to improve the health of rivers, wetlands, floodplains and other water-dependent ecosystems.

Water for the environment is typically referred to as either ‘planned environmental water’ or ‘held environmental water’.

- Planned environmental water is water committed for ecosystem health or other environmental purposes through rules in surface and groundwater sharing plans.
- Held environmental water is water allocated to a water access licence held for environmental purposes. Held environmental water is a commonly used term for ‘licensed environmental water’.

(From What is water for the environment webpage)

NPWS is involved in the NSW Environmental Water Advisory Group for the Lachlan and is collaborating with other relevant stakeholders in exploring options for improving environmental watering outcomes. Planned environmental water and uncontrolled floodplain inundation are the basis for maintaining and improving the water-dependent values of Kalyarr. Other actions that contribute to maintain these values include local rainfall and groundwater interactions; large, system-scale environmental watering actions; the health and condition of floodplain vegetation, which influences infiltration; and reduced grazing and browsing pressure by feral animals.

With an area of 1,200 ha, Ita Lake is large enough to sustain significant ecological values and a regionally significant wetland typical of many fed by the lower Lachlan during medium to high flows. When full, Ita Lake provides important habitat for waterbirds in the lower Lachlan. This includes waterbirds listed on international agreements aimed at protecting migratory bird habitat in Australia and overseas.

The lake is also culturally significant for Aboriginal people. Ita Lake has sustained Nari Nari for thousands of years and Nari Nari have cultural obligations to maintain the health of Ita Lake. The presence of many Aboriginal cultural heritage sites around the lake highlights its importance in sustaining Nari Nari culture over thousands of years.

River regulation has changed the natural watering cycles, including the extent, frequency, timing, depth and duration of inundation at Ita Lake from overland flooding. Reduction in the number of connection events between the Lachlan River and floodplain wetlands and creeks, such as Ita Lake and Pimpara Creek, results in much lower volumes of water ending up on the floodplain. Dyer et al. (2020) estimates that the total volume of water which inundated the floodplain of the lower Lachlan is approximately half (54%) of what have occurred under natural flow conditions.

The challenges associated with delivering the necessary volume of water this far down from river storages means Ita Lake is not a target for stand-alone environmental watering actions. Environmental water intended for the lake can only currently be delivered as a ‘piggyback’ event with other large flows on the Lachlan River or under ‘already-wet’ conditions (usually following a flood). Watering is usually also dependent on large volumes of both Commonwealth and state-held or licensed environmental water being available.

2.2 Native plants and vegetation communities

A total of 14 native vegetation communities have been identified in the park. Due to extensive clearing of the Riverina Bioregion and low level of conserved lands in New South Wales (3.84%), all of these communities are of regional conservation significance. Consistent with the flooding regime of inland rivers, river red gum dominates the Lachlan River corridor, and black box woodlands occur on the outer margins of the floodplains where they receive less regular inundation. Lignum and nitre goosefoot shrubs also occur in parts of the floodplain that experience occasional and sometimes prolonged flooding. These ephemeral freshwater wetlands provide important foraging and breeding habitat for waterbirds and flow-dependent frog species.

One of the most significant vegetation types in Kalyarr is chenopod shrubland, which occupies 75% of the park. Chenopod shrubland thrives in the sporadic rainfall and low soil moisture of the semi-arid and arid zones of western New South Wales, which are unable to support tree-dominated vegetation. The shrublands are dominated by saltbush, which has diminished dramatically in extent since European settlement, due to its widespread use as dry-country fodder for stock.

A small remnant (28 ha) of Sandhill Pine Woodland EEC vegetation at Darcoola was fenced by the former landowners in the late 1990s to exclude stock. Since it became part of the national park in 2003, the area has been known as the 'Darcoola exclusion area' (although it no longer functions as an enclosure because the fence is damaged). In the Riverina Bioregion this woodland community has been extensively cleared and grazed by feral herbivores, particularly rabbits (which favour the sandy soils for their warrens), and goats (which cause severe erosion).

Three threatened plants and several regionally significant plants are also recorded in the park.

The main weeds occurring in the park are African boxthorn, horehound, Bathurst burr, willow and peppercorn trees. Control of these species is a high priority especially where they impact threatened ecological communities and threatened species.



Photo 2 Sandhill Pine Woodland endangered ecological community and the Darcoola exclusion fence. Jess Murphy/DCCEEW

2.3 Native and introduced fauna

Kalyarr is an important refuge for native animals in a region extensively cleared for agriculture, particularly as the park provides a variety of habitats. The most abundant species recorded include woodland birds, skinks, bats and waterbirds. When full, Ita Lake and other black box and lignum depressions provide significant ephemeral wetland habitat for waterbirds. Over 40 species of waterbird have been recorded in ephemeral wetlands during flooding events.

In this semi-arid landscape, the presence and persistence of both native and non-native animals are strongly influenced by the availability of water. Rainfall and flooding events have the potential to generate bursts of animal activity and breeding. Just under 100 native animal species have been recorded in the park. The majority of these are woodland species and waterbirds, but bats and reptiles are also well-represented.

Kalyarr's fauna records include 13 threatened species listed under the Biodiversity Conservation Act. Records for plains-wanderer and southern bell frog are particularly significant given the rarity of these species.

Annual waterbird and frog surveys are undertaken at Kalyarr by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (the department) and vegetation community monitoring is undertaken as part of the Commonwealth's Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Program. Data collected through these monitoring programs helps to inform management.



Photo 3 Pink-eared ducks are one of the most abundant species in the park. Warren Chad

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In addition to the constraints associated with water availability, the other most significant threats to native animals in Kalyarr are feral animals, weeds and climate change. Feral animals present in the park include rabbits, foxes, goats, pigs, feral cats and deer. Feral animals occur throughout the broader landscape but take advantage of permanent water being available in the Lachlan River. The impacts of all these species are listed as key threatening processes under the Biodiversity Conservation Act. The presence of pigs and deer in the park has resulted in illegal access and hunting.

Feral animal control activities focused on foxes, cats, pigs and rabbits will be undertaken to maintain the ecological health of the park, and to protect native plants and animals and their habitat including threatened species and communities. The ongoing control of rabbits is a high management priority for protecting Sandhill Pine Woodland EEC vegetation.

2.4 Fire and climate change

Fire is a natural feature of many environments but is not a key driver for the ecology of the Riverine Plain. The vegetation communities found in Kalyarr National Park will generally not carry fire unless high ephemeral fuel loads have developed following flooding events. When high ephemeral fuel loads are present and grasses have cured, grassfires can potentially occur.

The fire management strategy for Kalyarr applies a land management zone across the park for conserving regionally significant vegetation and other biodiversity values. Asset protection zones are maintained around park infrastructure and heritage buildings.

NPWS's policy for cultural fire management defines cultural fire management as the involvement of Aboriginal people in fire management. This covers both culturally informed burning and community (low risk) involvement in cultural burning activities. Cultural burning provides opportunities for sharing knowledge with a diverse range of individuals, including the younger generation and NPWS staff.

Mawambul would like to pursue cultural burning on Kalyarr as a cultural activity for Nari Nari People. The Nari Nari Tribal Council has published a Cultural burning guide (Nari Nari Tribal Council 2021), which explains the Nari Nari's approach to cultural burning of lands on the Hay Plains.

In the longer term, the impacts associated with climate change are likely to increase. Climate change modelling predicts the park will experience increases in temperature, the number of hot days and potential fire weather. Evaporation rates will in turn increase and create drier soil conditions throughout the year. By 2050, the region's climate is predicted to be hotter. With an expected reduction in total annual rainfall, droughts are likely to become more severe and cycles of inundation and drying across the floodplains in the park are likely to change. These changes could potentially result in increased vulnerabilities for the natural values of Kalyarr. These vulnerabilities include increased stress for all vegetation types. They may also lead to less frequent and shorter periods of inundation and filling of ephemeral watercourses, causing a decline in the health of wetland habitat. These changes could also result in further losses of scarred trees and may accelerate the aging of the timbers in heritage buildings.

Habitat for threatened species which are already under stress could also be permanently changed or lost. Implementing feral animal, weed and fire management programs along with environmental watering will help to improve the health of the park's ecosystems and build resilience against impacts associated with climate change.

3. Looking after our culture and heritage

3.1 Aboriginal cultural heritage

The land, water, plants and animals within a landscape are central to Aboriginal peoples spirituality and contribute to their identity. Aboriginal communities associate natural resources with the use and enjoyment of foods and medicines, caring for the land, passing on cultural knowledge, kinship systems and strengthening social bonds. Aboriginal heritage and connection to nature are inseparable and need to be managed in an integrated manner across the landscape.

Although the fertile land resource of the lower Lachlan and lower Murrumbidgee is vastly changed through agricultural activities and water regulation, significant evidence of Aboriginal occupation remains. This is demonstrated by an abundance of features and values (also called Aboriginal sites), historical journals, the archaeological record and oral histories, and through community knowledge and use. Together these indicate that Aboriginal community use and occupation has been focused on the wetlands and wetland resources over the last 5,000 years to the present. The red gum forests, black box woodlands and associated wetlands provided a wealth of resources for Aboriginal people in the past, including foods, medicinal plants and materials for canoes and tools.

Kalyarr lies within the traditional Country of the Nari Nari People. The Nari Nari are one of a group of Aboriginal peoples who occupied the lower Murrumbidgee and lower Lachlan area of the Riverine Plain, extending almost as far as Balranald to the west, and Booligal/Hay to the east. They share a border to the south-west with Mutthi Mutthi and Wathi Wathi, to the south with Wemba Wemba, to the north with Ngiyampaa and to the east with Wiradjuri (noting these names have various spellings).

In 2010, NPWS, the Nari Nari Tribal Council and the Hay Local Aboriginal Land Council formed the Mawambul Co Management Group under a memorandum of understanding. This group provides for ongoing dialogue between the Aboriginal community and NPWS. The group focuses on the identification, advice and direction related to the management of cultural heritage values, cultural tourism, and support for programs such as on-Country culture camps and other cultural activities.

Through Mawambul, the Aboriginal community is actively involved in the management of Kalyarr. Due to the significance of Ita Lake, visitor facilities for use by Aboriginal communities and the general public have been developed overlooking the lake (see Section 4). Interpretative signage describing Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the park has been developed in partnership with Mawambul. Dual naming of Ita Lake and other park features and places to reflect Nari Nari language has also been proposed.

Kalyarr contains extensive evidence of past use by Aboriginal people in the form of mounds, middens, ancestral burials, stone artefacts, heat retainer ovens, modified trees (including ceremonial ring trees), resource gathering locations, and locations of cultural significance. Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity mapping has been prepared for Kalyarr following surveys of the road and trail network which identified a substantial number of previously unidentified features and values. This mapping informs maintenance of the road and trail network and other land management activities.

The Water Sharing Plan for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source 2020 (under the *Water Management Act 2000*) recognises the importance of water to Aboriginal communities and makes provision for granting Aboriginal cultural access licences.

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Photo 4 Aboriginal Nari Nari artefacts, Kalyarr National Park. Mawambul Co Management Group



Photo 5 Modified tree, Kalyarr National Park Mawambul Co Management Group

3.2 Historic heritage

The first European explorer to pass through this area was John Oxley as he traced the course of the Lachlan River in 1817. In 1829 Charles Sturt passed along the Murrumbidgee River and continued on to the Murray River. These expeditions ultimately led to the displacement of Aboriginal people and settlement of the country by Europeans, firstly along the inland rivers and then the 'back blocks'.

Kalyarr's historic heritage values are related to the wool industry which became established on the Hay Plains from the late 1830s onwards. Pastoral runs were well-established in the western Riverina by the mid-1850s, and the Hay Plains produced some of the best merino wool in Australia. Some Aboriginal people were employed on pastoral runs as stockmen, shearers, fencers and house servants and were able to stay on Country. However, other Aboriginal people were forced into township fringe camps and government-run missions.

Kalyarr conserves a significant number of historic heritage buildings dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This includes homesteads and shearing shed complexes of the former pastoral properties – Norwood, Darcoola, Thelangerin and Corrong stations (part of Corrong Station was added to De Ville in 2005). These stations were typical of the resourceful, self-sustaining pastoral life of graziers in western New South Wales of the time.

Heritage assessments and heritage action statements have been prepared for key historic heritage buildings and structures in the park. The homesteads and shearing complexes on Kalyarr have been assessed as generally being of local heritage significance. The only exception is the Darcoola Woolshed, which was of regional significance (a grading that is no longer in use) and possible state significance, due to its early date of construction.



Photo 6 Norwood shearing shed. Samantha Ellis/DCCEEW

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Further assessment is needed to determine which heritage buildings are suitable for adaptive reuse. NPWS will determine which buildings should be maintained or removed, following appropriate heritage assessment and documentation. These decisions will seek to ensure the efficient use of resources and enhance the visitor experience.

NPWS manages historic heritage structures in the park in accordance with the *Heritage Act 1977*, guidelines prepared under section 170A(3) of the Act, and local policies.

The adaptive reuse provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act require that building work and modifications be sympathetic to the original fabric of the building and maintain the integrity of the historic heritage values. Any future proposals for adaptive reuse will be guided by the outcomes of heritage assessments and will be subject to feasibility and environmental impact assessments.

NPWS has carried out stabilisation works to key buildings and other structures in Kalyarr to help maintain their integrity and usefulness. Norwood Cottage, Darcoola Homestead and De Ville Homestead are used for accommodation by NPWS staff, Mawambul Co Management Group and researchers. Mawambul has expressed interest in using Norwood Cottage in the park for gatherings and overnight accommodation.



Photo 7 De Ville gateway, Kalyarr National Park. Samantha Ellis/DCCEEW

4. Providing for visitor use and enjoyment

The park is not widely promoted as a visitor destination and levels of visitor use are relatively low. However, the former pastoral properties, Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage may be of interest to visitors. The park also provides opportunities for community education as it conserves significant biodiversity values of the lower Lachlan environment.

The park is within a comfortable driving distance of Hay and offers opportunities for self-sufficient recreational activities such as bushwalking, camping, birdwatching and self-guided driving tours (see Figure 2).

Since the establishment of the park, a day use area has been developed at Ita Lake which includes a women's shelter, men's shelter and community shelter. This area is known as the Ita Lake Cultural Centre. This facility will be made available for cultural activities and other gatherings by Mawambul Co Management Group and the broader Aboriginal community.

A basic campground has also been established on the banks of the Lachlan River about 3 km east of Norwood Homestead complex (see Figure 2). This site is also suitable for day use. The campground lies outside the boundary of the park within an adjoining travelling stock reserve (TSR) managed by NPWS under licence.

NPWS will assess the feasibility, the level of demand for facilities and the impacts on natural and cultural values before considering the adaptive reuse of any existing facilities or the development of any additional visitor facilities.



Photo 8 Ita Lake Cultural Centre. Mitchell Fosdick/DCCEEW

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The Mawambul Co Management Group oversaw a project to develop and install interpretative signage for the park. The project generated a series of interpretative signs for park entrances and at Ita Lake. The signs incorporate Aboriginal language and several themes, including Welcome to Country, the history of Kalyarr, the role of Nari Nari women in traditional life, and the role of Nari Nari men in traditional life. In future, other emerging digital visitor engagement technologies may also contribute to the interpretation of cultural values at Kalyarr.

There is also scope for environmental education activities to be held in the park. For example, the Aboriginal community, neighbours, school groups and local community could participate in monitoring surveys, such as for threatened species and waterbirds after rainfall and flood events.



Photo 9 Interpretation sign at Kalyarr National Park. Jess Murphy/DCCEEW

5. NPWS infrastructure and services

A range of infrastructure is required to protect park values, provide opportunities for visitors and support management operations. This infrastructure includes park roads and management trails, fencing, walking tracks, works compounds, water supply and sewage infrastructure, buildings, and other visitor facilities.

NPWS manages an extensive collection of buildings and structures associated with the former pastoral properties that make up Kalyarr. Norwood Cottage, Darcoola and De Ville homesteads are retained for the accommodation of staff, Mawambul Co Management Group and researchers. Shearing shed complexes containing woolsheds, shearers quarters, yards and other ancillary structures will continue to be managed according to the Heritage Act and may be decommissioned and removed if appropriate.

Sealed water storage is provided to support staff accommodation. Enclosed water tanks are also supplied along the route of the Darcoola East Pipeline (see Section 6) to support firefighting and other management activities.

Several ground tanks (dams) exist throughout the park but are no longer connected to the stock and domestic water supply. Those not required for water supply or firefighting purposes are being decommissioned.



Photo 10 Entrance and typical road infrastructure in Kalyarr National Park. Jacqueline Hindmarsh/DCCEEW

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The road and management trail network traversing Kalyarr totals over 500 km. This requires regular maintenance due to issues associated with cracking clay soils, particularly when wet weather results in slippery conditions and alternative tracks are made to avoid wheel rutting. NPWS is in the process of rationalising the management trail network to identify the most suitable routes to be retained for access through the park and for park management activities. A priority is access for strategic fire management under the approved fire access trail plan.

Roads, trails and tracks may be temporarily or permanently closed to protect park values. Most roads and trails in the park are impassable during and after wet weather and are closed to all vehicle use at this time. Extensive cultural heritage features exist on Kalyarr and the road and management trail network are maintained and managed to protect these values consistent with the Aboriginal cultural heritage management plan for Kalyarr (NPWS 2022).

There are multiple access points into the park, some of which cross private land or adjoining Crown land. Identifying options to secure more park access arrangements is ongoing. Where improved access arrangements can be secured, they will be implemented by NPWS through the reserve access strategy.

Some internal paddock fences are being progressively removed where they pose a risk to park values and once heritage significance has been assessed.



Photo 11 Park Air helicopter operating at Kalyarr National Park. Nick Hanlon/DCCEEW

6. Non-NPWS infrastructure and services

6.1 Utilities

Powerlines owned and operated by private energy companies cross the park and provide power to homesteads and associated buildings, NPWS depots, and other infrastructure essential for park management. External operators maintain these powerlines. Access for maintenance purposes is also subject to compliance with the Kalyarr National Park Aboriginal cultural heritage management plan.

6.2 Darcoola East Pipeline

A pipeline was constructed in 2018 to 2019 as part of a water supply system to deliver domestic water to the park and several privately owned properties nearby, as well as provide water for stock outside the park. NPWS and the other landowners cooperatively administer and maintain the scheme through membership in the Darcoola East Joint Water Authority. The scheme was designed to achieve water savings by reducing evaporation losses and seepage by replacing open channels and dams with pipes. Removing open water sources (e.g. dams) in the park also reduces feral animal populations.

The pipeline runs from the Murrumbidgee River and delivers water to 7 enclosed water tanks on Kalyarr through 180 km of pipe, providing water for bushfire response and other park management activities. The width of the pipeline corridor incorporates a designated access track to facilitate continuous maintenance activities, with specific access and maintenance approvals outlined in deed arrangements. The route of the pipeline and siting of the water tanks was determined through a consultative process with the Aboriginal community and other stakeholders, to minimise negative impacts on park values, including cultural heritage.

6.3 Travelling stock reserves

Travelling stock reserves (TSRs) are Crown land managed by Local Land Services. TSRs contribute to the historical significance of the pastoral stations within the park. An extensive area of TSR passes east–west through the park along Corryong Road south of the Lachlan River, and then southwards along the western border of the park (see Figure 1). The area of TSR that abuts the park boundary is approximately 2,150 ha. The TSR has not been used for grazing by adjoining owners or used for moving stock for many years and therefore complements the conservation values of the park. There may be potential for future additions to the park from these lands, subject to negotiation and outcomes of Aboriginal land claims within the TSR boundary.

7. Scheme of operations

The scheme of operations in Table 2 details the plan’s objectives and operations that are proposed to be carried out on the land.

A management priority has been assigned to each operation to guide the allocation of resources.

- Very high – loss or significant decline in the condition of the park value is likely if action is not taken or significant improvement in the condition of the value is likely if action is taken
- High – decline in the condition of the park value is likely if action is not taken or improvement in the condition of the value is likely if action is taken
- Medium – some decline in the condition of the park value is possible if action is not taken or some improvement in the condition of the value is possible if action is taken
- Low – while decline in the condition of the park value is not likely in the short term, the action would help build the long-term resilience of the park value.

The scheme of operations sets strategic goals that may include the development and delivery of subsidiary plans. Subsidiary plans enable adaptive responses to new information or changed circumstances, such as for feral animals, weeds, fire and recreational activities, as required by NPWS policy.

The implementation of operations set out below may be subject to statutory responsibilities under the National Parks and Wildlife Act and other relevant state and Commonwealth legislation, including environmental impact assessments and approvals. Further community consultation on the proposed operations may be undertaken as part of these processes.

Information on popular recreational or commercial activities that are permitted in the park is provided in the park use regulations tables in Section 8. More detailed information on other activities is available on the NPWS website.

Table 2 Scheme of operations

Objectives	Operations	Priority
Protecting the natural environment		
1. Soil structure and sensitive landscapes are conserved.	a. Maintain roads, particularly following wet conditions. This may include temporary road closures to prevent public access into and within the park.	Very high
2. The health of ecosystems is maintained.	a. Implement feral animal and weed control and cooperate with park neighbours to maximise the effectiveness of these activities.	Very high
	b. Monitor the health and distribution of native plants and vegetation communities. Undertake works to assist in the recovery of priority communities.	High

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Objectives	Operations	Priority
	c. Implement appropriate controls for feral animals and weeds in the Darcoola exclosure area. If necessary, revegetate areas to improve the condition of the Sandhill Pine Woodland EEC. Monitor vegetation condition and adapt restoration and mitigation measures as needed.	Very high
	d. Support targeted surveys for potential threatened species where required to assist park management.	Medium
	e. Implement priority actions in conservation action plans, threat abatement plans and national recovery plans for threatened plant species and ecological communities.	High
	f. Implement priority weed management actions. Where possible apply a cross-tenure approach in conjunction with park neighbours to maximise the effectiveness of control activities. Primarily target boxthorn and other weed species whose removal will provide the greatest benefit to threatened species and communities, native habitat and the protection of cultural heritage values.	Medium
3. Ephemeral wetlands and aquatic ecosystems of the park and their connectivity within the lower Lachlan are maintained.	a. Support monitoring activities relevant to the Lachlan Swamp (listed in Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia) and habitat values in the park.	High
	b. Promote 2-way learning to ensure Aboriginal ecological and scientific knowledge is applied to water management for the park.	High
	c. Offer support, as needed, to facilitate the participation of the local community as volunteers in surveying and monitoring park values. This includes assessing waterbird and wetland vegetation, providing input into adaptive management processes.	Low
	d. Participate in decision-making processes for environmental watering in the lower Lachlan through water advisory groups.	Medium
4. Populations of threatened and regionally significant animal species and the diversity of native fauna are maintained or improved.	a. Undertake or support a comprehensive fauna survey of the park, with priority placed on Darcoola and other precincts which have not been formally surveyed. Where possible schedule the survey(s) to follow rainfall and flood events when biodiversity is most abundant.	Medium
	b. Undertake or support surveys targeting threatened animal species, including the southern bell frog and plains-wanderer. Encourage tertiary and or research sector and Mawambul Co Management Group participation.	High

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Objectives	Operations	Priority
	c. Implement appropriate compliance activities in response to illegal hunting and other activities that threaten park values. Activities may include surveillance in cooperation with other agencies, working cooperatively with neighbours, regulatory signage and community education.	High
5. Fire is managed as part of the ecology of the park to conserve and maintain semi-arid ecosystems, infrastructure, cultural and historic heritage, and neighbouring assets.	a. Implement the fire management strategy for the park. Update the strategy as required.	High
	b. Support cultural burning practices in consultation with Mawambul Co Management Group consistent with the fire management strategy for the park and the NPWS <i>Cultural fire management policy</i> .	Medium
	c. Participate in strategic fire planning for the region through the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area Bush Fire Management Committee.	High
6. The integrity of the semi-arid ecosystem /landscape is maintained to build resilience to the impacts of climate change.	a. Participate in ongoing reviews of the park's land management programs (fire, feral animal and weed programs, environmental water) to ensure threat reduction actions are focused where they can provide greatest mitigation against climate change stressors.	Low
	b. Support research relevant to semi-arid landscape processes and ecosystems to inform ongoing park management.	Low
Looking after our culture and heritage		
7. The local Aboriginal community has access to Country to maintain, renew or develop cultural connections and practices, where consistent with maintaining the park's natural and cultural values.	a. Support the Mawambul Co Management Group and the Nari Nari People in surveying, recording, interpreting, and managing cultural heritage in the park. Give priority to surveying areas with high archaeological potential such as sandhills and areas which have not yet been surveyed.	Very high
	b. In consultation with Mawambul Co Management Group, support opportunities for Aboriginal people to access and connect to Country as per the Mawambul–NPWS memorandum of understanding. This may include cultural heritage surveys, culture camps, employment opportunities, collection of natural resources for cultural use and other activities.	Very high
	c. Support use of existing buildings in the park for cultural activities by the Mawambul Co Management Group.	Medium

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Objectives	Operations	Priority
8. There is increased awareness among park visitors and the broader community about the park's Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage.	a. Provide interpretation of cultural and historic heritage relevant to the park. Where possible, incorporate Aboriginal language that has been approved by the Mawambul Co Management Group in naming of places such as Ita Lake, signage and interpretation.	High
	b. Work with the Mawambul Co Management Group and the broader Aboriginal community to ensure appropriate protection and management of cultural heritage sites (features and values).	Very high
	c. Prioritise protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage values in feral animal, weed and fire management programs.	Very high
	d. Continue to identify, record and map Aboriginal cultural heritage values and areas of cultural sensitivity. Where possible, support research into cultural heritage values.	High
	e. Record and manage Aboriginal sites (features and values) and other cultural information appropriately. This will include application of access protocols (e.g. for sacred information) and intellectual property rights.	High
9. Historic heritage values are conserved and managed in accordance with appropriate legislation.	a. Manage historic heritage values by preserving or conserving sites, documenting historic heritage and maintaining records.	Medium
	b. Continue use of Darcoola Homestead, Norwood Cottage and De Ville Homestead for accommodation by NPWS staff and researchers and to support Mawambul Co Management Group activities on Country.	High
	c. Seek the development of a movable heritage collections plan for the national park to inform future management of the collection.	High
10. Historic heritage values are promoted to visitors and the broader community.	a. Interpret and promote the park's historic heritage through a range of measures which could include on-park signage, self-drive tours, the NPWS website, on-park public events and use of emerging technologies.	Medium
Providing for visitor use and enjoyment		
11. Visitor use is appropriate and ecologically sustainable, and visitors enjoy the park experience.	a. Maintain a day use area at Ita Lake. This area may also be used for culture camps by the Mawambul Co Management Group.	High
	b. Consider the feasibility of developing a campground and walking track in Kalyarr National Park, as an alternative to the Lachlan River Campground and associated walking track and implement as required.	High

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Objectives	Operations	Priority
	c. Work with tourism stakeholders to ensure visitor experiences in the park align with NPWS and regional tourism objectives which could include the park in a regional touring loop.	Medium
	d. Incorporate conditions licences to ensure that tours undertaken by tour operators are culturally appropriate, consistent with the wishes of the Mawambul Co Management Group.	Medium
	e. Close roads, trails and tracks on a temporary or permanent basis to protect park values.	High
	f. Maintain the approved road and trail network as guided by the fire access fire trail plan.	High
	g. Implement the reserve access strategy and where required adjust park boundaries consistent with section 188c of the National Parks and Wildlife Act.	High
NPWS infrastructure and services		
12. Management infrastructure meets NPWS management needs and supports protection of park values and assets.	a. Monitor the condition of boundary fencing and negotiate and maintain cooperative fencing agreements with relevant neighbours as appropriate.	High
	b. Decommission internal fences as appropriate, considering the potential impact on park values and heritage significance.	Medium
	c. Participate in the Darcoola East Joint Water Authority and undertake maintenance of access tracks to the Darcoola East Pipeline within the park as required.	High
	d. Work with Local Land Services, Crown Lands and other relevant stakeholders to improve management of invasive species and other issues related to the travelling stock reserves adjoining the park.	Medium
	e. Work with Crown Lands, Local Land Services and other neighbouring landowners to secure legal road access where required.	Medium
Non-NPWS infrastructure and services		
1. Non-NPWS infrastructure has minimal impact on park values and is appropriately licensed.	a. Ensure all non-NPWS uses and occupancies are appropriately authorised or removed.	High

8. Park use regulations

8.1 Recreational activities

There are many recreational activities that can be undertaken in the park without consent from park managers. Other activities can occur if consent is provided by NPWS. All activities that occur in the park are subject to relevant policies and legislation.






Conditions may be applied to ensure an activity is undertaken safely and to minimise environmental risks and risks to other users. Alternatively, consent may be refused after consideration of the proposed activity and its likely environmental, visitor safety and park management impacts.

Activities may be subject to operating conditions or limits from time to time. For example, access to parts of the park may be closed during periods of bushfire risk, bad weather or to enable maintenance or improvement works.






Activities not shown in Table 3 may also be regulated by signage or by consent.

Information regarding activities that require consent and obtaining consent is available on the NSW national parks visitor website or by contacting the relevant NPWS office (contact details at the at the front of this plan).

Table 3 Park use regulations – recreational activities

	Type of activity	Allowed	Note/Exceptions
	Barbecues – portable	Yes	Portable gas and liquid stoves are allowed. To reduce risks to conservation values and minimise disturbance to other park users, the use of portable heat bead or solid fuel barbecues is prohibited. Use of all barbecues during total fire bans is prohibited.
	Camping	Yes	In designated camping areas where provided. Camping is available at Lachlan River Campground on the travelling stock reserve.
	Dog walking	No	Dogs and other pets are not allowed in the national park without consent. This applies to dogs and pets in vehicles. A person may be accompanied by their trained assistance animal provided they meet the requirements of proof and other conditions set out in the NPWS <i>Pets in parks policy</i> .
	Wood fires	Yes	Permissible where fireplaces are provided. Visitors must bring their own firewood. Collection of firewood is not permitted in the national park. Solid fuel fires are prohibited during total fire bans and park fire bans.
	Walking	Yes	Permitted as signposted along the river corridor or elsewhere, on park roads and on management trails.

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	Type of activity	Allowed	Note/Exceptions
	Water-based recreation (e.g. boating, canoeing and recreational fishing)	Yes	Access through the national park to waterways is permitted. Other legislative requirements outside National Parks and Wildlife Act may apply to these activities, such as licensing requirements and certain types of recreational or safety equipment.
	Cycling	Yes	Permitted on park roads and management trails, subject to road closures. No cycling on walking tracks or off trail.
	Vehicle access (including motorbikes)	Yes	Permitted on park roads. Not permitted on management trails or off-road. Registered vehicles are permitted on public roads. Not permitted on management trails or off-road owing to risks to conservation values and potential risks to other park users.
	Horse riding	No	Not permitted.
	Model aeroplanes and drones	Yes	Recreational use of drones is not permitted in the parks. Consent is required for commercial use consistent with the NPWS <i>Drones in parks policy</i> . Drones may be used for park management purposes or by consent for research purposes.

8.2 Events, functions and commercial activities

Commercial and non-commercial activities within NSW national parks that require prior approval vary from guided tours, commercial events, filming and photography permits and group gatherings.

Due to the remoteness and lack of services available in Kalyarr, events, functions and commercial activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Table 4 lists some common events, functions and commercial activities that may be permitted in the national park with approval from NPWS under a consent, licence or lease. It is not an exhaustive list of permitted commercial or other activities. Links to information on relevant policies, guidelines, approvals and fees is provided in the 'More information' section at the end of this document.

Commercial filming and photography in national parks and nature reserves requires approval. Commercial filming or photography information is available on the department's website.

Commercial activities such as tours are licensed under the Parks Eco Pass program. This program licences operators who conduct commercial tours, recreational and educational activities in NSW national parks and reserves. Information is available on the website.

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NPWS is committed to ensuring opportunities to experience Aboriginal culture in the parks are developed and delivered in a culturally sensitive manner. These experiences must respect the authenticity and integrity of local Aboriginal people and their culture, adhere to cultural protocols, and recognise that Aboriginal culture is the intellectual property of Aboriginal people. Licensing of commercial tour operators, recreation and education operators includes conditions about the delivery of Aboriginal cultural heritage interpretation and requirements for Aboriginal cultural awareness training.

Table 4 Park use regulations – events, functions and commercial activities

Type of activity	Group size where applicable	Type of approval required
Commercial and charity events, including walking, running and road cycling events open for public participation	All groups irrespective of size	Consent or licence
Sporting activity that is part of an organised competition or tournament	All groups irrespective of size	Consent
Commercial tours, recreational and educational activities, transport service and any other commercial services	All groups irrespective of size	Consent or licence
Commercial filming and photography	All individuals and groups irrespective of size	Consent or licence
Non-commercial events and gatherings	All groups of more than 40 people	Consent
Research (scientific and educational, and related to conservation or park management)	All groups irrespective of size	Consent or licence ¹

¹ May require consent or licence from other consent authorities.

Appendices

Appendix A: Objects of the National Parks and Wildlife Act

The objects of the NPW Act, set out in section 2A(1) of the Act are:

- (a) The conservation of nature, including, but not limited to, the conservation of—
 - (i) habitat, ecosystems and ecosystem processes, and
 - (ii) biological diversity at the community, species and genetic levels, and
 - (iii) landforms of significance, including geological features and processes, and
 - (iv) landscapes and natural features of significance including wilderness and wild rivers,
- (b) the conservation of objects, places or features (including biological diversity) of cultural value within the landscape, including, but not limited to—
 - (i) places, objects and features of significance to Aboriginal people, and
 - (ii) places of social value to the people of New South Wales, and
 - (iii) places of historic, architectural or scientific significance,
- (c) fostering public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of nature and cultural heritage and their conservation,
- (d) providing for the management of land reserved under this Act in accordance with the management principles applicable for each type of reservation.

Appendix B: Management principles

National parks

The management principles for national parks, as set out in section 30E of the NPW Act are:

- (a) the conservation of biodiversity, the maintenance of ecosystem function, the protection of geological and geomorphological features and natural phenomena and the maintenance of natural landscapes,
- (b) the conservation of places, objects, features and landscapes of cultural value,
- (c) the protection of the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations
- (d) the promotion of public appreciation and understanding of the national park's natural and cultural values,
- (e) provision for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with the conservation of the national park's natural and cultural values,
- (f) provision for the sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to the conservation of the national park's natural and cultural values,
- (g) provision for the carrying out of development in any part of a special area (within the meaning of the *Hunter Water Act 1991*) in the national park that is permitted under section 185A having regard to the conservation of the national park's natural and cultural values,
- (h) provision for appropriate research and monitoring.

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More information

- [Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia](#)
- [Environment and Heritage website](#)
- [Kalyarr National Park planning considerations](#)
- [Murray–Darling Basin Plan](#)
- [National Parks and Wildlife Service visitor website](#)
- [NPWS park management policies](#)
- [Privacy and security](#) – Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water webpage
- [Water Sharing Plan for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source 2000](#) – under the *Water Management Act 2000*
- [What is water for the environment?](#)

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