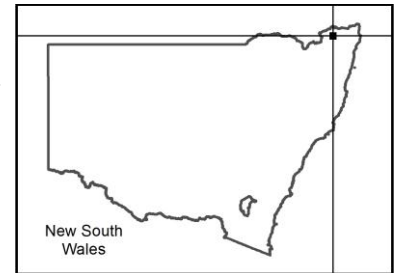




# Statement of Management Intent



## Yabbra National Park

### 1. Introduction

This statement outlines the main values, issues, management directions and priorities of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for managing Yabbra National Park. This statement, together with relevant NPWS policies, will guide the management of the park until a plan of management has been prepared in accordance with the [National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 \(NPW Act\)](#). The NPWS [Managing Parks Prior to Plan of Management Policy](#) states that parks and reserves without a plan of management are to be managed in a manner consistent with the intent of the NPW Act and the ['precautionary principle' \(see Principle 15\)](#).

### 2. Management principles

National parks are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas containing outstanding or representative ecosystems, natural or cultural features or landscapes or phenomena that provide opportunities for public appreciation, inspiration and sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment. Under the NPW Act ([section 30E](#)), national parks are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, and protect geological and geomorphological features and natural phenomena and maintain natural landscapes
- conserve places, objects, features and landscapes of cultural value
- protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations
- promote public appreciation and understanding of the park's natural and cultural values
- provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with conservation of natural and cultural values
- provide for sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas, having regard to conservation of natural and cultural values
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

The primary purpose of national parks is to conserve nature and cultural heritage. Opportunities are provided for appropriate visitor use in a manner that does not damage conservation values.

### 3. Context

**Reservation details:** Yabbra National Park was reserved on 1 January 1999.

**Size:** 8890 hectares.

Yabba National Park is located in the Upper Clarence River catchment, approximately 10 kilometres south of Urbenville and 15 kilometres west of Old Bonalbo in far north-east New South Wales. The park falls within the South Eastern Queensland Bioregion, and within the administrative areas of Githabul Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Muli Muli Local Aboriginal Land Council, North Coast Local Land Services and Kyogle Council.



NPWS acknowledges the park is part of the traditional tribal area of the Githabul Aboriginal People. In 2007 the Federal Court of Australia made a consent determination recognising the Githabul People’s native title rights and interests over 1120 square kilometres of land, including the park. The park is jointly managed by NPWS and the Githabul People through an Indigenous Land Use Agreement.

The park contains several roads that are not part of the reserved area. Management of these roads is vested in the Minister administering the NPW Act. Prior to reservation as national park, the land was part of Yabba State Forest. The North East New South Wales Regional Forest Agreement covers the park and provided for major additions to the park system, including the establishment of Yabba National Park. State and private forestry operations make up the majority of the surrounding land uses, along with some grazing and cropping.

The park is dominated by stands of subtropical rainforest. Drier communities also occur, including those dominated by brush box (*Lophostemon confertus*), Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*),

tallowwood (*E. microcorys*) and Dunn's white gum (*E. dunnii*). Adjacent to the rainforests, areas of sclerophyll forests occur dominated by grey gums, ironbarks and white mahogany (*E. acmenoides*), along with a large stand of forest red gum (*E. tereticornis*) woodland. The park is biologically diverse, with 712 known species of native plants and animals, including four plant and 32 animal species listed as threatened under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act).

#### 4. Values

- Country and landforms in the park, including Haystack Mountain and Callawajune Mountain (South Obelisk), plus the nearby Bandahngan Aboriginal Area (Tooloom Falls), hold deep, ongoing cultural associations for the Githabul People.
- Much of the park is subtropical rainforest surrounded by wet and dry sclerophyll forests. Many plants and animals in this landscape were used by the Githabul People for food and economic purposes. Aboriginal artefacts have been located at two sites within the park.
- Threatened plants listed under the TSC Act recorded in the park include northern clematis (*Clematis fawcettii*), white-flowered wax plant (*Cynanchum elegans*), slender marsdenia (*Marsdenia longiloba*) and rainforest cassia (*Senna acclinis*). Northern clematis, white-flowered wax plant and slender marsdenia are also listed as threatened under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).
- Threatened animal species listed under the TSC Act recorded in the park include six listed as endangered and six species also as threatened under the EPBC Act. Threatened animals recorded in the park include green-thighed frog (*Litoria brevipalmata*), Fleay's barred frog (*Mixophyes fleayi*), giant barred frog (*M. iteratus*), masked mountain frog (*Philoria richmondensis*), three-toed snake-tooth skink (*Coeranoscincus reticulatus*), glossy black-cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*), varied sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*), Albert's lyrebird (*Menura alberti*), powerful owl (*Ninox strenua*), marbled frogmouth (*Podargus ocellatus*), wompoo fruit-dove (*Ptilinopus magnificus*), rose-crowned fruit-dove (*P. regina*), superb fruit-dove (*P. superbus*), masked owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*), sooty owl (*T. tenebricosa*), rufous bettong (*Aepyprymnus rufescens*), eastern pygmy-possum (*Cercartetus nanus*), spotted-tailed quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*), golden-tipped bat (*Kerivoula papuensis*), black-striped wallaby (*Macropus dorsalis*), parma wallaby (*M. parma*), little bentwing-bat (*Miniopterus australis*), eastern bentwing-bat (*M. schreibersii oceanensis*), eastern long-eared bat (*Nyctophilus bifax*), yellow-bellied glider (*Petaurus australis*), brush-tailed rock-wallaby (*Petrogale penicillata*), koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), common planigale (*Planigale maculata*), eastern chestnut mouse (*Pseudomys gracilicaudatus*), grey-headed flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), greater broad-nosed bat (*Scoteanax rueppellii*) and red-legged pademelon (*Thylogale stigmatica*).
- The park protects almost the entire catchment of Yabbra Creek, a significant feature of the park, which is forested from its headwaters to its junction with the Clarence River.
- The park contains two endangered ecological communities including two significant areas of subtropical and dry rainforest, plus areas of old growth forest. Areas of subtropical rainforest below 600 metres above sea level are classed as Lowland Rainforest in the NSW North Coast and Sydney Basin Bioregions endangered ecological community listed under the TSC Act, and rainforest below 300 metres above sea level forms part of the Lowland Rainforest of Subtropical Australia critically endangered ecological community listed under the EPBC Act. Dunn's white gum forest is part of the endangered ecological community White Gum Moist Forest in the NSW North Coast Bioregion listed under the TSC Act.
- The low levels of use in the park have not warranted development of any visitor facilities. Nearby areas managed by NPWS support a range of recreation activities with visitor

facilities including camping and day use at Bandahngan Aboriginal Area (Tooloom Falls) and Richmond Range, Toonumbar and Koreelah national parks.

- Visitation is mainly low-impact, self-reliant, nature-based recreation such as bushwalking, remote camping and birdwatching. Other uses such as vehicle-based touring, cycling and horse riding are also undertaken. Cycling and horse riding are allowed on park roads and certain management trails (as sign posted), except when temporary closures are in place following periods of significant rain and during periods of severe fire danger. Public vehicle access is not permitted on management trails.

## 5. Issues

- Weed species occurring in the park include crofton weed (*Ageratina adenophora*), giant Parramatta grass (*Sporobolus fertilis*), lantana (*Lantana camara*), groundsel bush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), mistflower (*A. riparia*), moth vine (*Araujia sericifera*), wild tobacco bush (*Solanum mauritianum*) and smooth senna (*Senna septemtrionalis*).
- Pest animals recorded in the park include wild dogs (*Canis lupus* spp.), European red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), cats (*Felis catus*) and cattle (*Bos taurus*).
- Past disturbances such as logging have contributed to pest species in the park. Weed management has concentrated on disturbed areas along access roads and around the telecommunication towers on Haystack Mountain. Monitoring and control of foxes, feral cats and wild dogs has been undertaken regularly over the past seven years. Projects aimed at controlling feral cats and refining trapping methodologies commenced in 2009. Prescribed burns have aimed to control invasion by lantana and moth vine.
- Bell Miner Associated Dieback occurs in sclerophyll forests within the park. The White Gum Moist Forest endangered ecological community is threatened by this form of dieback.
- Myrtle rust is a plant disease caused by the exotic fungus *Uredo rangelii*. The introduction and establishment of myrtle rust is a key threatening process under the TSC Act. It has not been observed in the park but given the park's proximity to known infestations it is likely to occur and poses a significant threat. The NPWS *Management Plan for Myrtle Rust* outlines how myrtle rust will be managed on national park estate, and incorporates strategies to limit its spread and minimise impacts on threatened species and ecological communities.
- Sensitive areas, including Aboriginal sites and threatened species which occur along roadsides or other areas, may be at risk of damage during management operations. NPWS uses the 'Green Guidepost' Sensitive Area Management System to manage this risk and identify appropriate management activities in these areas.
- Predicted changes in climate are likely to increase frequency and severity of flood and drought events which may impact on the riparian zones of Yabbra and Haystack creeks. These are important habitats for threatened frog species, which are particularly sensitive to disturbance and spread of pathogens such as frog chytrid fungus (*Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*).
- A disused quarry, which pre-dates the park's reservation, is located in the park. There is no material stockpiled at this site and it is revegetating naturally.
- A plantation of hoop pine (*Araucaria cunninghamii*), approximately 33 hectares, was planted in 1989 in the north of what is now the park. NPWS has prepared a strategy for the management of such remnant plantations on its estate. As hoop pine occurs naturally in the local area, ecological thinning may allow understorey development to improve the ecological value of the plantation.

- Apiarists maintain honeybee hives at two sites within the park. The authorised use of these sites for beekeeping pre-dates the park's reservation and so the sites are recognised as existing interests under the NPW Act and will be allowed to persist.
- There are two telecommunications towers on Haystack Mountain. The northern telecommunications site is a radio tower which is an important communication facility especially during emergency situations. Both facilities are managed by the NSW Telecommunications Authority under licence from NPWS and are within environmentally sensitive areas bordered by rainforest where threatened species are known to occur.

## 6. Key management directions

- The park is managed jointly with the Githabul People, in accordance with the provisions of the Githabul Indigenous Land Use Agreement and through the Githabul National Parks Management Committee.
- Fire is managed in accordance with the Yabbra National Park [Fire Management Strategy](#).
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the NPWS [Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Northern Rivers Region.
- Appropriate hygiene protocols for the control of myrtle rust will be used during bush regeneration and general maintenance work to reduce the risk of myrtle rust infection.
- The existing Green Guide Post System, identifying sensitive zones and locations for threatened species in the park, will be maintained and expanded, particularly along roads and management trails.
- Non-native grazing stock will be excluded from the park by liaising with neighbouring landholders and removing stock where necessary. Subject to available resourcing, assistance may be provided to neighbours to install stock-proof park boundary fencing in accordance with the NPWS Boundary Fencing Policy.
- The quarry will be allowed to revegetate naturally, with supplementary erosion control or revegetation works undertaken as required and as resources permit.
- The remnant hoop pine plantation will be managed in accordance with the NPWS Plantation Strategy. This may include thinning seedlings to allow development of understorey vegetation.
- Existing apiary sites will be managed in accordance with the NPWS Beekeeping Policy.
- Existing telecommunication facilities will be managed in accordance with formal agreements which address access, maintenance of asset protection zones for firefighting, and protection of threatened species.
- All management activities will be preceded by the preparation of an environmental assessment or heritage assessment where this is a requirement of NPWS policy or legislation.
- Environmental repair and threat management programs, such as erosion mitigation measures, pest management, and activities arising from threatened species requirements may be implemented in accordance with NPWS policies and procedures.
- Non-intrusive works may be undertaken where necessary to protect cultural heritage items from further deterioration, to ensure the safety of visitors, to protect wildlife or to prevent damage to park assets.
- A plan of management will be prepared to set out the ongoing management objectives for the park. The plan of management is a statutory document under the NPW Act which will be available for public comment. NPWS will also encourage the community to contribute to the

ongoing conservation of the park by promoting and raising public awareness of its special values.

For additional information or enquiries about any aspect of this park or this statement, contact the NPWS Kyogle Office on (02) 6632 0000 or 136 Summerland Way or PO Box 174, Kyogle NSW 2474.

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**Disclaimer:** This is a statement of intent to guide the management of the park prior to the development of a plan of management. Any statements made in this publication are made in good faith and do not render the Office of Environment and Heritage liable for any loss or damage. Provisions in the final plan of management may vary from those identified in this document as a result of new information and community consultation. The maps in this statement are intended to show the park's location and basic features only, and are not suitable for use when navigating to or exploring within parks.

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