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## 6.0 IMPLEMENTATION

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This section sets out a range of ways and means for pursuing the strategies for the study area's development and management. The section contains the following:

### **Targets and Performance Indicators**

Means for assessing the progress of implementation of the Plan (refer also to 5.0 for specific targets/indicators used in Strategy tables).

### **Funding**

An outline of additional funding sources external to NPWS.

### **Reviewing the Plan**

A recommended methodology and program for reviewing the Plan of Management.

## 6.1 TARGETS AND OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

In establishing a programme of implementation for this Plan NPWS should determine a means by which they can demonstrate that the strategies outlined have or have not been achieved over time; the two key measures are commonly termed *targets* and *performance indicators*.

Some strategies are more readily measured in tangible ways than others, but all must be measured by some means if performance is to be gauged.

A number targets and of performance indicators that follow in this section have a common basis and require co-ordination across the heads of consideration; for example an exit survey may be simply designed that covers quantitative measures of use and recreation but also establishes qualitative measures of awareness of natural and cultural significance.

In particular, the following processes are considered practical and useful survey methods that may cover a number of targets and performance measures. It is recommended that any such survey methods should be consistent for all of the proposed Regional Parks; by this means comparative analysis can be achieved and measured on a regular basis.

Care must be exercised when determining targets for particular strategies to ensure that the targets are balanced against those of other strategies.

For instance, a target for a recreation strategy might be given percentage increase in visitor numbers as measured by a site survey of footpath users. Without some degree of qualification to this target it may be possible that this increase in numbers has a negative impact on environmental values of a remote part of the Park.

### **User Survey**

Questionnaire carried out at 5 year intervals; qualitative and quantitative in nature. The survey / questionnaire would cover such diverse matters as measures of changes in Park usage, visitor experience and perceptions etc. This will be especially important as the Park develops and evolves.

The questionnaires target local and regional community users and potential users by the way of exit surveys and counts.

A re-run of the 1999 telephone survey (perhaps also addressing other Regional Parks) would assess changes in use and perceptions.

**Photographic Survey**

Photographs to be taken at key and consistent locations within and outside the Park every few years to establish degrees of change.

This should also be compared with aerial photographs reviewed every 5 years. This is a simple field and desktop exercise that is especially useful for monitoring vegetation and scenic quality changes.

**Log of Letters**

Review letters received each year (positive and negative) on various subjects in the Park indicating changes in praise and criticism of the Park's management according to performance. Some care must be exercised in specific interpretation if such letters of such letters and this method should be used to measure general trends and common topics rather than letter by letter.

**Monitoring**

Scientific monitoring at specific sites over a period of time eg bushland quality and water quality.

Whilst such monitoring may be carried out by RPU staff, much of this work may be carried out by external agencies or interest groups, particularly in the area of water quality. Providing a consistent format for such information will assist in comparative analysis.

**As-built Plans and Log of Works**

Drafting and updating plans of all works actually implemented in the Park will provide a basis for monitoring progress and change over time. It is essential that as-built plans are accompanied by design plans to ensure that such change is...

A Log of Works for those items of completed tasks that are not easily mapped, such as bushland weeding programs or interpretive work will perform a similar and important measure of progress.

**Financial Records and Annual Reports**

An annual review of these records can establish such trends as:

- changes in time or expenditure required for key maintenance tasks such as:
  - litter collection
  - vegetation management
  - facility maintenance
- Visitor management: day to day ranger contact time with visitors
- Neighbourhood issues: changes in maintenance required to address residential neighbour impacts (dumping, weeds, stormwater etc.)

The involvement of community groups should be seen as integral to the above processes.

Based on the topic headings adopted in the Plan the following are a recommended range of targets and performance indicators.

### **6.1.1 Environment and Conservation**

#### **Generic Plan Community Targets**

Ecological goals (eg. the form and nature of the plant community to be regenerated / reconstructed / fabricated) need to be clearly identified to objectively assess the success of the restoration and management strategies for plant communities in the long term. These goals are needed for two reasons:

- Establish performance targets and measures for work
- Provide essential feedback on the success or otherwise of applied restoration techniques.

The establishment of performance targets and measures for bushland measurement work is broached with considerable angst in the bushland management profession. It is important to recognise that applying performance targets and measures to the management of these natural systems is effectively making an educated guess (based on the information available / collected) on the achievability (and desirability) of our management activities. The eventual outcome can be swayed by many influences during the course of management (eg. occurrences of drought, flood, fire, lack of anticipated seed bank etc.).

The implication of not achieving a performance target in most industries is viewed unfavourably. Applying this same implication to most bushland management activities is not appropriate due to the unpredictable and dynamic nature of the system bushland managers are working with (much of which is out of the landowner's control). The context in which performance targets and measures are set for bushland management should be positive - providing important feedback which enables modification (or re-enforcement) of applied management practices / principles. In this way, they can form an important part of improving the understanding of the natural systems being managed and the management practices applied.

Performance measures for plant communities need to be developed to reflect desired plant community structure, species diversity and resilience to degrading influences.

Significant degrading influences on plant communities present in the catchment include:

- Presence of highly invasive weeds within and adjoining the Park.
- Stormwater discharges; point sources and diffuse sources form residential areas.
- Altered fire regime in non-riparian plant communities.

## **Bushland Restoration**

### *Target*

Implementation of restoration work in accordance with generic targets, management principles and techniques outlined in this Plan of Management.

### *Operational Performance Indicators*

Progressive increase in resilience of native plant communities to further weed invasion. Monitor generic community targets.

### *Target*

Establish clear regional conservation and management priorities for bushland areas in the Park.

### *Operational Performance Indicators*

Park and resource allocation priorities established and adopted.

## **Public Awareness of Environmental Values**

### *Target*

Greater appreciation of environmental values of the catchment and particularly the reduction of impacts from landuses adjoining bushland.

### *Operational Performance Indicators*

Measured by mapping and annual survey of 'blackspots' where garden encroachment, vandalism, dumping and so forth have regularly occurred.

Review log of complaints on key problem sites.

## **Weed and Litter Reduction and Water Quality**

### *Target*

Aim for 50% reduction in major identified litter groups (ie plastic, glass, paper) in a five year period.

### *Operational Performance Indicators*

Annual litter survey to ascertain types, quantities and locations of litter in bushland and Wollie Creek. This could be undertaken by local school children as part of their environmental studies, providing a simple tabular report.

## **Water Quality**

### *Target*

Aim towards achieving ultimate flows of low toxicity, odour and colour which are capable of supporting a diverse aquatic eco-system.

### *Operational Performance Indicators*

Scientific testing of the Creek to assess improvements in water quality. This could be undertaken by University and TAFE students or local school children.

## **Air Quality**

### *Target*

An air quality within all areas of the Park that meets World Health Organisation targets.

### *Operational Performance Indicators*

Request regular read outs on tests from the RTA relating to the M5 East exhaust outlet.

### **6.1.2 Natural and Cultural Heritage**

This aspect of the experience of the Park has the capacity to increase markedly the appreciation of an evolving cultural and natural landscape for the local and regional visitor. Interpretive designs and sign information are key contributors to a greater understanding.

### *Target*

Increased appreciation and knowledge of the site and its natural, cultural and historical significance to the area.

### *Operational Performance Indicators*

Measured by a quantitative exit survey every 5 years establishing visitor experience that identifies increased knowledge and appreciation of natural and cultural features of the Park.

### **6.1.3 Circulation and Access**

Much of the Park is currently relatively inaccessible due to the absence of a path system and the presence of dense weed growth. Whilst controlled access to sensitive environments within the Park such as high quality bushland and mangroves is essential to its health and vitality, the provision of a proposed linking path system should see an increase in regular use of the Park improving appreciation and assisting casual surveillance and security of the area. The test for increase use must however must be mindful of the carrying capacity of that particular area or element of the Park.

### *Target*

Increased daily destination use of path system. Seek to achieve say 30% increase in first 5 years.

### *Operational Performance Indicator*

As measured by user survey at consistent locations at start and end of school / commuter day. This could be readily measured at Girrahween Park or Turrella Reserve as part of the wider exit / site survey.

### **6.1.4 Recreation and Leisure**

The carrying capacity of the Park must necessarily dictate the ability for any area to sustain a given level of use. Accordingly simple increases in visitor numbers may not be appropriate across the board. The ideal measure may better be related to establishing the widest appeal of the Park's focus areas and open spaces.

*Target*

Increased diversity in user type and frequency of visit. Increased visits to the visitor / education centre (when established).

*Operational Performance Indicators*

Measured by exit survey / questionnaire every 5 years.

Re-run of the telephone survey to access regional community assessing wider use.

Maintain a visitors log at the visitor / information centre and review changes in user numbers and types as well as comments.

**6.1.5 Promotion, Interpretation and Education****Public Awareness***Target*

Significant increase in knowledge of the Park's existence and awareness of its key values by local and regional community.

*Operational Performance Indicator*

As measured by exit survey / questionnaire every 5 years.

Re-run of the telephone survey to access wider regional knowledge and perception.

**6.1.6 Planning and Management**

The degree to which a Park of this nature is cared for and appreciated is in large part a measure of how much the local people and visitors believe that it is genuinely a shared public resource. Where neighbours protect the bushland by good-neighbour practices and regional community groups gain equal opportunity to Park resource use and so forth then there is a tendency to take pride in the open space and their future.

*Target*

Improved quality and efficiency in maintenance of the Park with establishment and adaptation of environmentally appropriate techniques that suit the particular location and landscape type.

*Operational Performance Indicator*

As measured by improvements identified in five yearly user satisfaction survey and photographic survey.

### **6.1.7 Buildings and Infrastructure**

*Target*

Improved quality and use of BBQ, picnic and play facilities, toilets etc.

*Operational Performance Indicator*

Measured by user survey to determine increase in frequency of use and diversity in user types (ie. family, school or community use). Exit survey used to determine visitor satisfaction level.

*Target*

Improved quality and durability of facilities.

*Operational Performance Indicator*

Review of financial and operational records to establish facility maintenance.

## 6.2 FUNDING

A general assumption frequently resides within the communities that all funding sources for works in the Parks lies solely with the management agency. Whilst the NPWS already has funding committed to the Wollie Creek Regional Park initially much of this budget will go to preliminary bushland regeneration and early path and signage works.

Alternative funding sources can and should be sought to assist in the progressive upgrading of the Park. Given that the final management structure of all or parts of the Park are yet to be confirmed additional grant sources may be available to Council or community groups for works within the Park where or if they hold principal care and control of any part of the Park.

Areas and elements for some of this external funding might include:

- Local play area improvements (Section 94)
- Events in the Park
- Cultural / art exhibitions in the Park (Arts Council etc)
- Education / Visitors centre (funding partnership or sponsors etc.)
- Sponsorship of conservation works
- Federal Government Grants

It is recommended that the NPWS actively pursue some of these opportunities early in the Park's development, to enhance the sense of establishment of the Park and to engender community interest.

### 6.3 REVIEWING THE PLAN

If this Plan is to retain currency and relevancy over the coming years its will be essential that some degree of consistent review be carried out in a logical chronology.

The Plan has been drafted in such a manner that the separate elements can be readily reviewed and updated on differing time spans.

In essence the earlier sections of the Plan require review less frequently than do the later action-orientated sections.

In line with the targets and performance indicators set out in a previous section it is recommended that the Plan be reviewed in the following sequences and time spans, starting from the most frequent review requirement.

#### **Every Year**

- Review progress of programme prepared after this Plan
- Monitor performance Indicators

#### **Every Two Years**

- Review progress on all strategies
- Review Management and Administration structures
- Review priorities, staging and funding

#### **Every Five Years**

- Major review of all strategies
- Review of all objectives
- Review and update Resource and Issues
- Review / update Statutory Controls
- Review Targets and Performance Indicators

#### **Every Ten Years**

- Review of Strategies and Objectives
- Review and update all background issues
- Review and update the Values and Significance if external circumstances require or community values change markedly.