

Fire bans

In NSW there is a defined bush fire danger period– which is set under the NSW Rural Fire Service Regulations from October to March.

TOTAL FIRE BANS

- Declared by the Rural Fire Service based on the forecast weather, fire conditions for the day and existing fire activity.
- Declared for ‘fire weather districts’ such as Monaro Alpine and Southern Slopes.
- Last 24 hours from midnight.

Total fire ban signs are usually placed at popular picnic and camping areas or call the Rural Fire Service 1800 679 737.

PARK FIRE BANS

- Declared by the NPWS based on concerns about local fire conditions.
- May be in force even though a Total Fire Ban is not. If a Total Fire Ban has been declared in one of the ‘fire weather districts’, a Park Fire Ban is declared for all of the park.
- May be in place for longer than 24 hours depending on conditions.

NO FIRE MAY BE LIT IN THE OPEN DURING FIRE BANS

This includes incinerators and barbecues which burn solid fuel (wood or charcoal).

Camp fires, liquid fuel stoves and portable gas cookers cannot be lit within tents or annexes in Kosciuszko National Park during fire bans.

Fuel stoves in huts can be used. Permanently fixed gas cookers within campervans and caravans can be used in Kosciuszko National park, but only if:

- it is in a designated camping or picnic area managed by NPWS
- there is an immediate and continuous supply of water available
- it is under the direct control of a responsible adult

You may use a gas or electric barbecue, but only if:

- it is on a residential property within 20 metres of the house or dwelling or
 - it is a permanent fixture within a picnic area managed by council, NPWS or Forests NSW
- and
- it is under the direct control of a responsible adult

- there is a clear area for 2 metres around the barbecue
- you have an immediate and continuous supply of water available.

Penalties for lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban include a maximum fine of \$100,000 and 14 years imprisonment.

KEEP FIRES IN FIREPLACES

- A campfire should be in a properly constructed fireplace at least five metres from any log or stump. Clear combustible material around the fire for two metres.
- Avoid lighting fires and fuel stoves in huts except for warmth and cooking—huts are for emergencies only.
- Never leave a fire unattended.
- Ensure the fire is completely out when you leave, use water, not soil.
- Do not light a fire during hot, windy weather or if in any doubt about safety.
- Keep the fire small, use only small pieces of wood and have water close by.

CAMPING IN THE ALPINE AREA

All five lakes in the Kosciuszko alpine area were formed by glaciers and they are naturally low in nutrients. To maintain this nutrient balance and prevent contamination, camping is not permitted in the catchment areas of Lake Albina, Lake Cootapatamba, Blue Lake, Hedley Tarn or Club Lake.

The catchment comprises all the areas surrounding the lakes where rainfall could drain into the lakes via streams or as runoff. Imagine dropping a ball from where you intend to camp. If the ball would roll into a lake (disregarding obstacles) you are in its catchment.

Camping is also not permitted at any time within 200 metres of:

- the trackheads at Charlotte Pass, Crackenback Chairlift, Guthega Village, Guthega Power Station and within the resort boundaries;
- the walkway from Crackenback Chairlift;
- the summit of Mt Kosciuszko;
- Rawson Pass;
- Foreman’s Crossing (where the Main Range Track crosses the Snowy River).

Woodfires are not permitted at any time of year although a fuel stove is permitted except when advised otherwise.

Bushfire safety

Fire can start in many ways including lightning strikes, sparks from other bushfires and from campfires.

HELP IN A BUSHFIRE

- If you are caught in a bushfire, try not to panic. Stop, think and look for a refuge. The air is freshest close to the ground, so get down low.
- The greatest danger comes from radiant heat (the heat you feel on your exposed skin). You can shelter from radiant heat behind a fallen log, rock outcrop or by digging a shallow trench in the ground. Lie face down and cover exposed skin.
- Shelter in a spot where vegetation is low and sparse. A bushfire passes quickly and when it has passed, move on to the burnt ground where you will be safer.
- If you are in a car do not drive through the smoke. Park on the side of the road, or the barest spot you can find, and face the fire—the windscreen provides strength. Leave the vehicle idling, turn on the headlights, close windows and block all vents and crevices. You are safest in the car. Lie on the floor and cover all exposed skin—a woollen blanket is best. Do not leave the car until the main fire has passed.

REPORTING A FIRE

If you think you see a fire, note its position and phone the NPWS incident service on 1800 629 104 (24 hours) or call emergency services on 000.

Mountain safety

Alpine areas present special safety issues, particularly in winter. Take precautions all year round, though, as weather can still change quickly in summer.

- Travel with at least two others and tell a reliable friend of your travel plans—and tell them when you return.
- Check the weather before leaving and change your plans if bad weather is approaching—at any time of year.



Seaman’s Hut © OEH

- Bad weather includes an approaching low pressure system, approaching cold front, strong wind warning or severe weather warning.
- Take layers of warm, waterproof clothing— even in summer and even on day trips.
- Take plenty of food as it helps provide heat for the body.
- Take plenty of water or boil all stream water before drinking.
- Wear sunblock and sunglasses all year. UV is high and new snow reflects much of the sun—children are especially prone.

- Know where you are going. If leaving the marked tracks in summer or heading into the backcountry in winter, take a topographic map and compass and be sure you know how to use them.
- Take a bivouac bag or space blanket for emergencies. You may also want to hire a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) from the Snowy Region Visitor Centre.

BACKCOUNTRY RISKS IN WINTER

- Know how to stay in control—you should be experienced as ungroomed surfaces may be unpredictable.
- Know how to check for unstable layers before skiing or boarding.
- Stay away from overhanging cornices and edges where overhangs may develop. Although avalanches are uncommon (except on the western side of the Main Range), you should take precautions.

DON’T RELY ON TECHNOLOGY

- Mobile phones are no guarantee of safety. The coverage within the park is patchy and the cold can severely affect batteries.
- Global Positioning System (GPS) devices use a satellite network to provide you with your location. However batteries are affected by cold and they should be used with a topographic map and compass.
- PLBs (Personal Locator Beacons) can be hired from NPWS visitor centres. They transmit a signal via satellite to the emergency centre in Canberra. Technology won’t guarantee your safety though as mountain weather means helicopters can only fly about 50 percent of the time.
- The analogue EPIRB network has now been shut down.

IF LOST OR INJURED

- Stay where you are. You will be harder to find on the move and will use a lot of energy. It’s best to find a sheltered spot and leave something visible for searchers such as an item of colourful clothing.
- If you’re above the treeline, don’t drop down into the trees except for temporary shelter. It is almost impossible to be seen by helicopters if you do. The only sensible way back out of the alpine area is along the trails to Charlotte Pass, Guthega or Thredbo.

HYPOTHERMIA

- In cold and wet conditions inadequate clothing, tiredness and insufficient food can combine to cause a lowering of normal body temperature which can result in collapse or death if untreated.
- Children get colder and tire faster than adults. They are especially susceptible to hypothermia. Check them regularly, especially inactive babies in backpacks.
- Signs of hypothermia are often mistaken for fatigue. The victim is exhausted, lags behind, stumbles, may have slurred speech and appear drunk, is reluctant to keep walking or skiing, is cold to touch and has a slow pulse.
- Treat the victim immediately by providing shelter and warm, dry clothes, a sleeping bag or shared body warmth. Warm the person from the inside out so give them a warm drink if they are conscious.
- Around wind chill –30°C there is a serious danger of frostbite on exposed skin.
- Wind chill is a combination of temperature and wind speed.

Wind speed km/hr					
0	10	20	40	60	
10	7	4	0	–3	
5	4	–2	–7	–7	
0	–2	–8	–14	–17	
–5	–7	–14	–21	–24	
–10	–12	–20	–28	–32	
–15	–18	–26	–35	–39	
–20	–23	–32	–42	–47	
–25	–28	–39	–49	–54	

If weather conditions are bad, summer or winter, change your plans

BEFORE YOU GO TO THE SNOW

- Have your vehicle checked especially the tyres, battery, brakes, cooling system, engine and windscreen.
- Add anti-freeze to your engine radiator and windscreen washing fluid. Make sure the anti-freeze/coolant copes with temperatures down to –25°C.
- Check tyre pressure is at manufacturers recommendations.
- Use cold-weather diesel in diesel engines during winter. This is usually only available from service stations close to Kosciuszko National Park during the winter months.
- Allow enough time. Weather can change quickly in the mountains and you may need to fit chains.
- Avoid fatigue. Driving to and from the snow can be more tiring than normal driving given the difficult conditions you may encounter. Stop, revive, survive.

SAFE DRIVING IN THE SNOW

- Drive to weather conditions in all vehicles—4WD doesn’t help your vehicle stop
- Keep a steady momentum going uphill—don’t start and stop
- Use your gears to slow down or when going downhill—not your brakes
- Use short, gentle pumps on the brakes
- Keep twice the normal distance between yourself and the car in front
- Put headlights on in white-outs, fog and blizzards
- Keep to the correct side of the road
- Watch for snow-clearing machinery—give them plenty of room
- Watch for wildlife which are most active at dawn and dusk. If you injure an animal report it to a carer group such as WIRES or LAOKO.
- Watch for black ice—especially from dusk until dawn. Black ice can remain in shaded areas even during fine days so reduce your speed.
- Have plenty of fuel so that you can keep the engine running in traffic
- Carry spare blankets, spare warm clothing, food and drink
- Carry correct fitting snow chains (compulsory in 2WD vehicles)
- Don’t brake hard—even 4WDs slide
- Don’t use sharp steering movements
- Don’t let children play near the road
- Don’t toboggan near the road—you can’t steer a toboggan to get out of danger

WINTER PARKING

- Park in designated day parking areas. Outside these areas your vehicle is prone to damage by snowploughs or may be buried under snow.
 - Park in designated overnight parking areas. Overnight parking is available at Thredbo, Guthega (1.6km before the main car park), Sawpit Creek and Bullock’s Flat Skitube.
 - There is no overnight parking during winter at Perisher Valley, Smiggin Holes, Blue Cow or Charlotte Pass.
- Overnight visitors to these areas in winter may leave their vehicle at Sawpit Creek car park and arrange a car shuffle or leave their vehicle at Bullock’s Flat Skitube Terminal on the Alpine Way and travel to the resorts by train (winter only).

FITTING AND USING SNOW CHAINS

Chains that are the correct size for your vehicle must be carried in two-wheel drive vehicles from the NSW June long weekend to the NSW October long weekend:

- from the park boundary at the Thredbo River on the Kosciuszko Road
- along Guthega Road
- between Thredbo and Tom Groggin on the Alpine Way.

You can hire chains from ski hire outlets and service stations. Ask for advice on fitting them and practice before you head into the snow and ice-risk sections. Fit chains when directed at chain fitting bays or when indicated by signage.

Fitting snow chains can be a wet and muddy job so carry a sheet of plastic to kneel on and an old pair of gloves.

In two-wheel drive vehicles you only need to fit chains to the two driving wheels:

- Front-wheel drive vehicles fit to front wheels
- Rear-wheel drive vehicles fit to rear wheels.

In four-wheel drive vehicles you only need to fit chains to the front wheels.

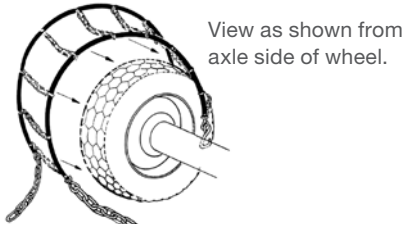
In all-wheel drive vehicles you will need to consult your vehicle manual for which wheels to fit chains to.

Some vehicles can’t be fitted with chains so always consult your vehicle manual.

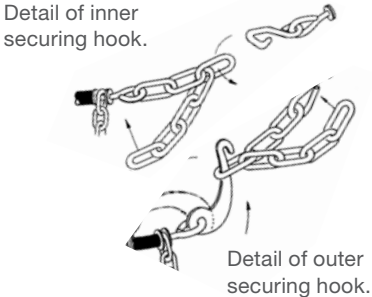
- Pull over on a clear stretch of road. When fitting chains, pull off the road as far as possible. Choose a clear stretch of road where you can be seen from a distance. Never stop on the crest of a hill. Generally you will be directed to fit chains by an authorised officer in a chain-fitting bay along the route.
- Do not use a jack. Do not use a jack to lift a vehicle to put on snow chains. In icy conditions your car will slide off a jack. All snow chains can be fitted without the need to lift the vehicle.
- Drive at a maximum speed of 40km/hr. Tyre manufactures recommend that cars with radial tyres shouldn’t travel faster than 40km/hr when fitted with chains. Stop and check the tension of the chains after about 200 metres.

FITTING LADDER-STYLE CHAINS

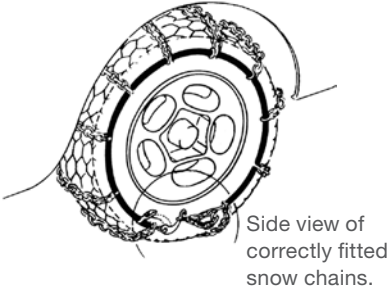
1. Snow chain is fitted over tyre.



2. Make sure inner and outer securing hooks are correctly fastened.



3. Tie loose ends of chain down to prevent damage to mudguards.



4. Tighten after 200 metres

- Keep your distance. Snow chains are not infallible and many accidents still occur involving vehicles with chains fitted. Chains can also increase the braking distance of your vehicle.
- Remove chains when clear of snow. Remove chains as soon as they are not needed — unnecessary use of chains wears out tyres and the road surface.

YOUR PARK ENTRY PASS

If you lose your pass it can’t be replaced.

Your pass should be fixed to the bottom right-hand corner of the windscreen

The front of your pass must be clearly visible from the outside. Please don’t fix your pass to any dark tinted area of the windscreen.

Your pass is not transferable between vehicles.

UPGRADE A DAY PASS OR UNEXPIRED MULTI-DAY PASS

Upgrade your day pass to an annual All Parks Pass within 7 days of purchase.

Upgrade your unexpired Kosciuszko multi-day pass to an annual All Parks Pass. Once your pass has expired you won’t be able to upgrade.

Only one pass (day or unexpired multi-day) can be upgraded.

ANNUAL ALL PARKS PASS ONE & TWO YEARS

Your annual All Parks Pass is only for private-use vehicles with up to 8 seats.

An annual All Parks Pass mustn’t be altered in any way or it will be considered invalid and further action may be taken.

An annual All Parks Pass allows you to use the Passholders Only Lane during winter on Kosciuszko Road, Alpine Way and to Selwyn Snowfields, as well as access all other NSW national parks.

SECOND HOUSEHOLD PASS ONE & TWO YEARS

Provide proof of purchase of the first annual All Parks Pass and valid registration papers for both vehicles showing the same address.

Any second household annual All Parks Pass must be dated the same as the first annual All Parks Pass.

REPLACE AN ANNUAL PASS

If you are purchasing a new vehicle provide a copy of new registration papers, bill of sale for original vehicle plus the original annual All Parks Pass.

If replacing your windscreen provide a receipt for the work and the original annual All Parks Pass.

If your vehicle is stolen or written-off provide documentation such as a police report.

SHORT BREAKS PASS

This operates from the end of the NSW October long weekend to the start of the NSW June long weekend.

It provides five days access to Kosciuszko National Park for the price of four.

This product cannot be upgraded to an annual All Parks Pass or upgraded from a day pass or multi-day pass.

PRE-PURCHASE AN ANNUAL ALL PARKS PASS

Purchase an annual All Parks Pass at any local visitor centre, over the phone or www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au.

TRANSIT PASS

This is a free non-stop pass through the park along the Alpine Way and from Kiandra to Tumbarumba.

Check with our visitor centres for a list of local agents who sell passes during winter.

REPORT WILDLIFE INJURED BY VEHICLES

Jindabyne–Adaminaby/Kiandra

LAOKO (Looking After Our Kosciuszko Orphans)
24 hours phone (02) 6456 1313

Tumut–Talbingo/Batlow

WIRES (Wildlife Information & Rescue Service)
24 hours phone (02) 6949 5999

Khancoban–Tumbarumba/Adelong

SONA (Saving Our Native Animals)
24 hours phone (02) 6946 2222

General advice

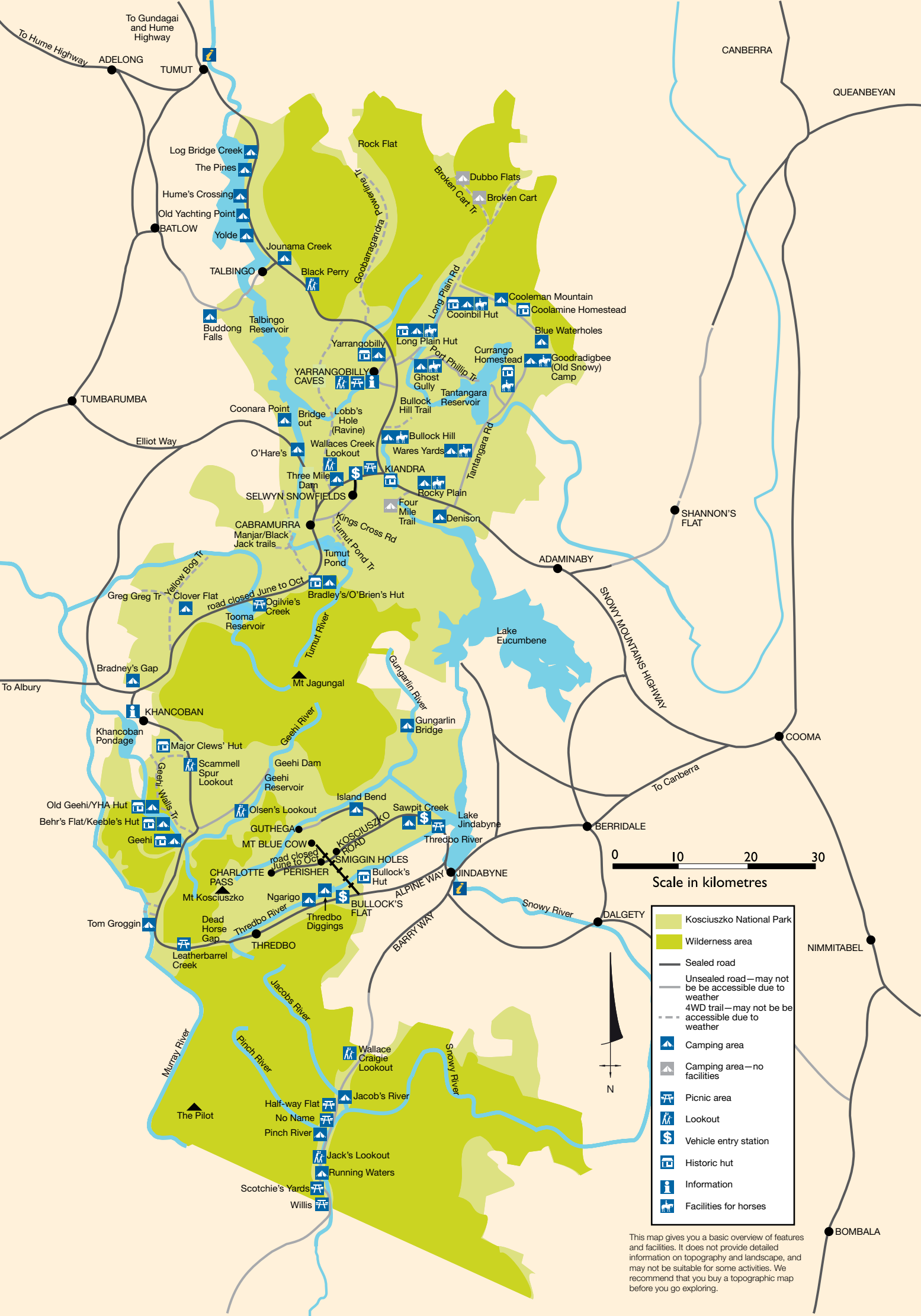
WIRES General advice line NSW
13000WIRES (1300 094 737)

NPWS Emergency 1800 629 104

Animals are marked with paint after they have been checked for young. They are often left on the roadside to warn motorists of animal presence. Please slow down in these areas.



Swamp Wallaby. Photo: Stephanie Jackson



NPWS Visitor Centres

NPWS visitor centres provide up-to-date information on road and weather conditions, visitor facilities and activities, fire bans and park regulations. They also carry a range of books, maps and souvenirs. Closed Christmas Day

JINDABYNE

Snowy Region Visitor Centre
Kosciuszko Road, Jindabyne
Phone: (02) 6450 5600

7 days a week
8.30am – 5.00pm

July to August
Saturday 7.00am – 5.00pm

TUMUT

Tumut Region Visitor Centre
The Old Butter Factory
Adelong Road, Tumut
Phone: (02) 6947 7025

7 days a week
9.00am – 5.00pm

KHANCOBAN

Khancoban Information Centre
Cnr Scott and Mitchell Ave
Phone: (02) 6076 9373

Open most days
9.00am – 12.00pm &
1.00pm – 4.00pm

PERISHER VALLEY

Kosciuszko Road,
Perisher Valley
Phone: (02) 6457 4444
Fax: (02) 6457 4455

Visitor facilities
7 days a week in winter
8.00am – 4.00pm
Monday to Friday in summer
8.00am – 4.00pm

Office
7 days a week in winter
8.00am – 4.00pm
Monday to Friday in summer
8.00am – 12.00pm &
1.00pm – 4.00pm

YARRANGOBILLY CAVES

Located 6.5km off the Snowy Mountains Highway between Tumut (77km) and Cooma (109km)
Phone: (02) 6454 9597

7 days a week
9.00am – 5.00pm

Emergencies

There is someone to speak to at all times in an emergency.

If someone is lost, injured or overdue call the Police 000

For all accidents call the Ambulance Service 000

To report a fire, gas leak, chemical, fuel or oil spill call the Fire Brigade 000

To report car trouble and request assistance call the NRMA 13 11 11

To report a bushfire within the park call the NPWS Emergency line (24 hours) 1800 629 104 or emergency services 000

To find out about fire bans call our visitor centres or the Rural Fire Service 1800 679 737.

To report injured wildlife see page 6

For other emergency issues within the national park call the NPWS Emergency line (24 hours) 1800 629 104

