

TOORALE AND GUNDABOOKA NATURE TOURISM ACTION PLAN

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service



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INTRODUCTION

Two outstanding areas of natural beauty and cultural importance – Toorale and Gundabooka national parks and state conservation areas – can be found on the doorstep of the iconic north-west NSW town of Bourke.

These parks contain diverse and spectacular landscapes extending from the rocky red ranges - with Mt Gunderbooka as the centrepiece - across to the floodplains and wetlands of both the Darling and Warrego Rivers.

The long and ongoing connection of Aboriginal people to these places provides a tapestry of stories to be shared. Both parks have a fascinating and significant

history extending from the early settlement days to the present. A visitor to these parks will experience the real outback.

As part of the Government's plan to "make NSW number one", it aims to double tourism expenditure by 2020 and increase participation in recreational activities by 10% by 2016. Our network of national parks and reserves play an important role in attracting people to regional NSW and enticing them to stay longer.

To achieve this, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has prepared a strategy to guide the establishment of Toorale as an attractive destination for visitors.

At the same time, facilities at Gundabooka will be enhanced to ensure that visitors to these parks, and to the region, have a rewarding outback experience.

NPWS has consulted with a range of communities and stakeholders from Bourke and Cobar during preparation of the strategy. This will continue as the plan is progressed with a view to integrating the parks into broader regional tourism strategies and identifying commercial opportunities for business operators. Surveys of visitors to Bourke are in progress. Many stories about Toorale's past have already been collected as part of an oral history project and these will be shared with visitors.





MAKING IT HAPPEN

NPWS will **develop visitor experiences** at Toorale and Gundabooka that provide:

- an emotive connection to the “outback” and to Bourke as an iconic landmark in Australian culture, and
- immersion in an experience that provides the visitor with an appreciation of the landscape and the history of the people who lived there.



This approach will link with the existing strengths of the broader tourism industry and will target themes such as:

- the dynamic indigenous culture,
- interesting local characters,
- pastoral history,
- the iconic Darling and Warrego Rivers as sources of water, trade and development and as valuable ecological and recreational resources, and
- awe-inspiring landscapes that change throughout the day, the season, and the years.

A strong opportunity exists to develop and market indigenous cultural experiences through working with the Aboriginal community.

Initially, the priority for NPWS will be to develop the necessary infrastructure and access that will provide a platform for creating additional visitor experiences.

As new experiences are created, NPWS will undertake **marketing and promotion** of the parks to

raise awareness and grow tourism interest. This will build on existing marketing campaigns to promote nature tourism in Outback NSW that NPWS is already undertaking in co-operation with Inland NSW Tourism and Destination NSW.

NPWS will **partner** with specialists whose knowledge will provide the operational capacity to develop and promote experiences that are outside the scope of NPWS to deliver on its own.

Although significant work has already been undertaken, developing Toorale for visitors is still in its early days. Ongoing **consultation and communication** with the park joint management committees, local government, the local community, tourism groups and business operators will continue as projects are rolled out.

Monitoring and ongoing market research will continue to inform future planning for the parks.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN AND WHEN?

Several exciting new visitor projects will commence at Toorale during 2012. Additional enhancements to some of the more popular sites and attractions at Gundabooka will also take place to support the overall tourism appeal of the parks. These projects are listed in the Action Table on the next page.

Subject to the outcomes of further consultation and studies, additional projects are proposed to be implemented between 2013 and 2015. These are also outlined in the Action Table.

TOORALE – EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Project Name	Details	Due to Commence
Mt Talowla (Acton Hill) Lookout	A lookout accessed from the Bourke-Louth Road to access the spectacular panoramic view across the plains to Mt Gunderbooka	2012
Telling the Stories of Toorale	A project to identify and develop innovative and engaging ways to share the stories of Toorale	2012
Park Tours	Tours will be offered and promoted to allow visitors to access and enjoy the magnificent natural environments and the fascinating history of Toorale	2012
Darling River Access	Access to the Darling River for traditional fishing, camping and nature appreciation will be supported	2012
Scenic Drive – Darling River	A scenic drive loop from the Bourke-Louth Road to enable visitors to explore the natural beauty of the Darling River	2012
Regional Driving Routes	Driving routes that draw together experiences and sites in the parks with regional attractions and highlights	2012
Commercial Opportunities	NPWS will liaise with interested stakeholders regarding the potential development of commercial opportunities	2012
Indigenous Tourism Opportunities	NPWS will work with the Aboriginal community to integrate Aboriginal history and stories into visitor experiences, and to identify and develop indigenous tourism opportunities	2013
Wetlands Drive	Investigations into a scenic drive to allow visitors to experience the wetlands of the Warrego	2013
Warrego Wetlands Access	Access to the wetlands to enable low key, self sufficient camping and recreation	2013
Warrego Wetlands Wildlife Experience	Wildlife viewing opportunities such as walking trails, boardwalks, bird hides with supporting interpretation and information	2013

GUNDABOOKA – EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Mulgowan Aboriginal Heritage Site – Infrastructure Improvements	The capacity of the day use area will be increased, and improvements will be made to road and track signage	2012
Yanda Campground	Completion of works for this recently-opened campground on the Darling River	2012
Mulgowan Aboriginal Heritage Site – Tours	Tours will be offered and promoted to increase visitors' options to access and enjoy this already popular Aboriginal art site	2013
Bennett's Gorge Upgrade	Replacement track signage and information boards will be installed	2013
Redbank Homestead	Further improvements will be made to this accommodation facility	2013
Walking Trail Network	Increased walking opportunities will enable visitors to experience the diverse nature and landscapes of the park	2014
Five Mile Heritage Experience	Access to additional cultural heritage experiences on Yanda Track	2014

BOTH PARKS – EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Marketing and Promotions	Marketing and promotions for both parks will be undertaken in co-operation with local, regional and state agencies	2012
Research	Focused research to improve understanding of visitors and their requirements will be undertaken	2012

FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more, please contact
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