

Conservation Action Plan

Gorge rice-flower (*Pimelea cremnophila*)

This plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of s.78C of the National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2019 (Reg.) in relation to an Asset of Intergenerational Significance (AIS) as declared under s.153G of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

Site details

AIS site	AIS-E0-046
Site location	An area of 3413 hectares in Oxley Wild Rivers National Park
NPWS contact	Project Officer Threatened Species, Northern Inland Branch

Environmental values

This table sets out the environmental values for which the land was listed as an AIS (Reg. 78C(3)(a)).

Identified value(s)	Value description
Important habitat for gorge rice-flower	Gorge rice-flower is a critically endangered shrub that grows up to 2.5 metres high. The plant is known to flower in spring with flowers grouping in clusters of one to four and fruit being pale green, and egg shaped. The population, which is found exclusively on national park estate, occurs in open forest on the perimeter of the Macleay River gorge at approximately 1000 metres altitude, growing in shallow skeletal loam soils over metasediments on cliff tops/shelters. There are estimated to be a low number of mature individuals, with fewer than 100 plants.

Key risks to environmental values

This table sets out the key risks to the environmental values of the land (Reg. 78C(3)(b)).

Key risk(s)	Description
Inappropriate fire regimes	<p>Inappropriate fire frequency, intensity and extent of fire that limits recruitment and depletes the soil stored seedbank, may lead to a decline or extinction of the gorge rice-flower at the site.</p> <p>This risk is exacerbated by the highly restricted distribution and small population size of the gorge rice-flower.</p>
Feral herbivores	<p>Damage to individual plants and degradation of Gorge rice-flower habitat by introduced herbivores, such as feral goats, through grazing and trampling.</p> <p>This risk is exacerbated by the highly restricted distribution and small population size.</p>
Interactions with native species	<p>Competition with other native plants, including <i>Acacia nova-anglica</i> (New England hickory), for light, space and resources may impede regeneration of gorge rice-flower plants after fire events.</p>
Anthropogenic climate change	<p>Changes in weather patterns and climatic conditions as a result of anthropogenic climate change that increases the frequency and severity of drought conditions and the frequency and intensity of fire may exceed the species adaptive capacity and reduce survivorship of Gorge rice-flower at the sites.</p> <p>This risk is exacerbated by the highly restricted distribution and small population size of the gorge rice-flower.</p>

Conservation activities

This table sets out the conservation activities required to:

1. Control, abate or mitigate the key risks and
2. maintain, restore and remediate the environmental values of the land (Reg. 78C(3)(c)).

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Key risk(s)	Impacted site(s)	Conservation activities
Inappropriate fire regimes	All sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidance on the appropriate fire management for the habitat of the gorges rice-flower within 12 months of adoption of this plan and update as required. This guidance must provide for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintenance of an appropriate fire regime by developing and implementing a site-specific burn plan for the declared areas - implementation of any required fire protection and response measures in the declared areas - integration of site-specific requirements into NPWS and NSW Government bushfire planning, risk management and operational response arrangements. • Implement fire management consistent with the guidance.
Feral herbivores	All sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the extent practicable, reduce feral goat densities to a level that is not having an ecologically significant impact on gorge rice-flower, and maintain densities at or below that level, by trapping, baiting and shooting.
Interactions with native species	All sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where impacts on the gorge rice-flower and its habitat are observed, reduce competition by removing <i>Acacia nova-anglica</i> (New England hickory) and other encroaching native shrubs.
All risks	All sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an ex-situ living collection and seedbank from a genetically representative sample of the population. • If required, establish a new wild population with ex-situ material (e.g., seed or cuttings).

Other land management activities

Within the declared land there are existing assets and infrastructure of NPWS and other external service providers, including public utilities.

Maintenance operations (including inspection, emergency works and routine and standard maintenance) that are exempt development in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and which are performed on and around existing assets and infrastructure, are authorised under this conservation action plan (CAP) provided such operations are taken in a manner that aims to minimise the risk to the declared environmental values of the land and with any other required consents or approvals.

All maintenance operations on the declared land are to be undertaken in accordance with this CAP.

Measuring and reporting

This table sets out the requirements for measuring and reporting on health and condition (Reg. 78C(3)(d)).

Attribute	Metric	Method
Health and condition of the Gorge rice-flower population	Population count	Design, and implement annually, monitoring to count all individuals at each sub-population, within the site.

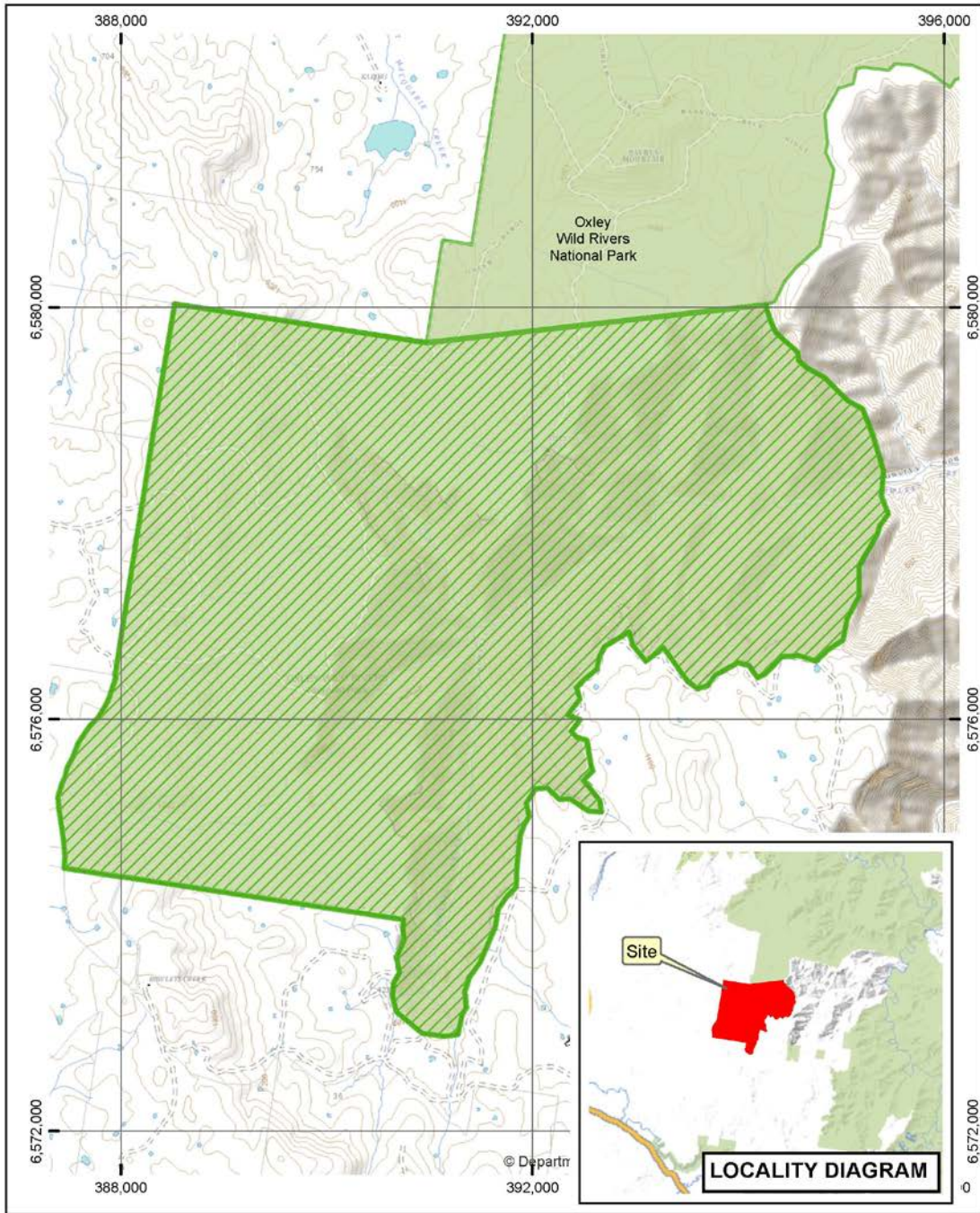
A report on the health and condition of the value for which this AIS was declared will be prepared and published on the Department of Planning and Environment website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au. The report will summarise the baseline and current health and condition of the values of the declared land and its overall trajectory.





Evaluation of conservation action plans

This CAP will be amended or replaced as new information becomes available that helps improve our management of the identified asset (Reg. 78H).

The Secretary must appoint a scientist, or a panel of scientists, to conduct a review, as soon as possible after the period of five years from the first approval of a CAP, to examine whether CAPs have been effectively implemented (Reg. 78J(1)).

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<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Declared Land  NPWS Estate 	<p style="text-align: center;">AIS-E0-046 Asset of Intergenerational Significance Gorge rice-flower <i>(Pimelea cremnophila)</i> Oxley Wild Rivers National Park</p> <p><small>Copyright of Department of Planning Industry and Environment. This map is not guaranteed to be free from error or omission. The Department and its employees disclaim liability for any loss or damage on the information in this map and any consequences of such acts or omissions.</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N 0 0.4 0.8 1.2 1.6 km</p> <p style="text-align: center;">   </p>
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Date prepared	July 2022
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Approved by	Atticus Fleming, Acting Coordinator General, Environment and Heritage
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