Guidelines for developments adjoining land managed by the Office of Environment and Heritage
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1 Introduction

These guidelines have been prepared for use by councils and other planning authorities when they assess development applications that may impact on land and water bodies managed by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is part of OEH. NPWS is directly or jointly responsible for managing a wide range of lands acquired, reserved or dedicated under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NPW Act). These include:

- national parks
- historic sites
- nature reserves
- Aboriginal areas
- karst conservation areas
- regional parks
- state conservation areas.

Approximately 30% of these lands are also declared wilderness areas under the Wilderness Act 1987. Some of these parks are in World Heritage areas or on the National Heritage Register or State Heritage Register.

These areas of land are referred to as the conservation reserve system or protected areas. In this document, OEH land or land managed by OEH is used as an abbreviated reference to the full spectrum of reserves, including terrestrial and aquatic areas.

OEH recognises the benefits of working in partnership with planning authorities to ensure that developments adjoining parks and reserves are sympathetic to the values of those areas. The issues and approaches outlined in these guidelines are provided to assist planning authorities in their decision-making.

OEH also provides support services to the Botanic Gardens Trust. The Trust is responsible for management of the three botanic gardens in the greater Sydney area – Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and Domain, Blue Mountains Botanic Garden (Mount Tomah) and Australian Botanic Garden (Mount Annan). These guidelines recognise the unique nature and management objectives applying to the botanic gardens and provide key contacts for consultation regarding the potential impacts of development proposals.

For developments in proximity to, or that may impact on marine parks or aquatic reserves, guidance and advice should be sought from the Department of Primary Industries1.

1.1 Values of OEH land

Land managed by OEH includes unique, biologically diverse and culturally significant areas in NSW and Australia. It plays an important role in protecting native flora and fauna (including threatened species, migratory fauna and endangered ecological communities) and natural features (such as wetlands, estuaries and caves). It also provides protection for natural and cultural landscapes that support Aboriginal sites, cultural heritage values and non-indigenous heritage. Direct benefits of reserved land are provided to the community through opportunities for recreation, education and scientific research, and the services that land provides in the form of clean water, amenity and tourism.

1.2 Applying the guidelines

The goal of these guidelines is to guide consent and planning authorities when assessing development applications that adjoin land managed by OEH. The aim of this advice is to avoid and minimise any direct or indirect adverse impacts on this land.

The guidelines will also be of assistance to planning authorities in the development of environmental planning instruments (such as local environmental plans) applying to land adjoining, or in the vicinity of, land managed by OEH.

Councils and other consent authorities need to consider the following issues when assessing proposals adjoining OEH land and, in particular, their impacts:

- erosion and sediment control
- stormwater runoff
- wastewater
- management implications relating to pests, weeds and edge effects
- fire and the location of asset protection zones
- boundary encroachments and access through OEH lands
- visual, odour, noise, vibration, air quality and amenity impacts
- threats to ecological connectivity and groundwater dependent ecosystems
- cultural heritage.

For each of these issues, the guidelines identify the key risks to OEH land and a recommended approach for consideration by planning authorities. The potential for cumulative impacts from developments along the boundaries of OEH land should be considered as part of case-by-case assessments.

There are also specific legislative requirements for development in the locality of wild rivers declared under the NPW Act. These requirements, which may include consultation with the Minister for the Environment, are discussed below.

While every effort has been made to ensure that these guidelines are as comprehensive as possible, it is acknowledged that they cannot foresee every possible circumstance or proposed development that may adjoin OEH land. Nevertheless, where unique or unusual circumstances arise, the main priority should still be to avoid and then minimise any direct or indirect adverse impacts on land managed by OEH.

2 Issues to be considered when assessing proposals adjoining OEH land

2.1 Erosion and sediment control

Aim

To prevent erosion and the movement of sediment onto OEH land, and ensure no detrimental change to hydrological regimes.
Risks to OEH land

Removal of vegetation and disturbance of groundcover from construction activities will expose the soil and increase the risk of erosion. Eroded sediments, including those from soil stockpiles, may be transported downstream or down slope and deposited on vegetation and in creeks, rivers, wetlands and other aquatic habitats.

Changes to the hydrology of streams outside the reserve system, including from activities on land that may not immediately adjoin reserves, can impact on land managed by OEH by:
- increasing the intensity and frequency of flows as a result of clearing vegetation
- increasing the area of impermeable surfaces.

These changes can result in damage (sometimes permanent) to downstream aquatic habitats by scouring the bed and banks of watercourses, altering water quality and smothering sensitive areas (such as seagrass beds). Coastal lakes, which may intermittently be closed, are particularly susceptible to increased sedimentation. OEH manages a number of coastal lakes such as those in Myall Lakes and Jervis Bay national parks.

Developments may also direct flows to a single discharge point thereby increasing erosion potential downstream. Some developments may interrupt natural flows.

Erosion can affect the landscape values assigned to a location by Aboriginal people and impact on any Aboriginal objects present through the removal and subsequent displacement of sediments. Changes to an Aboriginal site caused by erosion will affect the site’s setting in the landscape which is important to Aboriginal people. The setting of a place is often as important as the objects the place may contain.

Furthermore, erosion can affect any Aboriginal objects, including stone objects, shells and rock art, that may be present. It can expose objects to increased weathering and other impacts, resulting in a greater chance of displacement from the original location. Sediment accumulation over Aboriginal objects can also result in further damage if the objects are in contact with acidic soils.

Many national parks also support significant historic heritage, including archaeological relics, convict-built roads, cemeteries, buildings and bridges, which is vulnerable to the impacts of erosion.

Recommended approach

Appropriate erosion and sedimentation control measures should be implemented prior to works commencing and maintained for the duration of construction and until soil is stabilised after construction. In some cases it will be necessary to prepare detailed sediment and erosion control plans (soil and water management plans) for the proposed development.

As general erosion and sediment control measures, OEH recommends that:
- clearance of native vegetation be kept to a minimum
- areas of vegetation be fenced off during construction
- areas of bare soil and stockpiles be managed to prevent erosion during the construction process
- disturbed areas are rehabilitated and appropriately stabilised as soon as possible following construction (this includes removal of control measures, such as sediment fences, when they are no longer required).
To prevent sediment moving from an adjacent property onto OEH land and to avoid and minimise erosion risks, OEH also recommends that appropriate controls should be applied in accordance with the following guidance documents:

- *Erosion and sediment control on unsealed roads* (OEH 2012)\(^2\)
- *A Resource Guide for Local Councils: Erosion and Sediment Control* (DEC 2006).\(^5\)

### 2.2 Stormwater runoff

**Aim**

Nutrient levels are minimised, and stormwater flow regimes and patterns mimic natural levels before it reaches OEH land.

**Risks to OEH land**

The discharge of stormwater to OEH land poses a threat to the values of land and downstream environments by:

- dispersing litter and pest species (especially weeds)
- altering nutrient composition and pollutant levels, which can damage native vegetation and aquatic ecosystems, reduce water recreation safety and promote weed growth
- causing potential erosion and sedimentation in watercourses, particularly where new developments have led to an increased volume and concentration of flow
- impacting on Aboriginal sites, which are frequently located close to watercourses, and historic heritage.

These potential impacts, which are also cumulative, have a range of implications for the management of OEH land. They pose serious risks to the protection of park values and assets, and to catchment ecological health.

These risks are recognised in provisions in the National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2009 which requires the consent of OEH to discharge stormwater into a park (for example, where a development proposes new infrastructure that alters stormwater flows and directs them into a park). In addition, State Environmental Planning Policy 71 – Coastal Protection provides that untreated stormwater may not be discharged into certain coastal lakes and other areas.

Information and support is available to deal with diffuse source pollution associated with stormwater, including a tool developed by OEH to estimated changes in pollutant loads resulting from land-use changes.\(^6\)

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Recommended approach

- Development proposals for areas adjacent to OEH land should incorporate stormwater detention and water quality systems (with appropriately managed buffer areas) **within** the development site.
- Stormwater should be diverted to council stormwater systems or to infiltration and subsurface discharge systems **within** the development site.
- The discharge of stormwater to OEH land, where the quantity and quality of stormwater differs from natural levels, must be avoided.

Infrastructure associated with stormwater treatment must **not** be located on OEH land and any stormwater outlets should disperse the flow at pre-development levels. Landowners and development proponents are responsible for ensuring that all tanks, storage areas and associated infrastructure are appropriately sized and maintained to ensure that there is no unauthorised overflow onto OEH land.

OEH acknowledges that in some limited and exceptional cases it may not be possible to avoid the discharge of stormwater from development sites onto OEH land. In these cases OEH may be willing to grant an approval to allow the discharge of stormwater onto OEH land. Such an approval will only be granted where it can be clearly shown to be in the best overall interests of the environment (for example, by addressing existing impacts from unmanaged stormwater). The final decision rests solely with OEH.

Any person seeking approval to discharge stormwater onto OEH land should provide a written request to the relevant NPWS Regional Office containing detailed information on the proposal which should include:

- current stormwater flows (volume and quality) emanating from the adjoining property into OEH land, including existing undeveloped and developed areas
- current stormwater management arrangements (if any)
- identification of any existing impacts on the land as a result of stormwater from the property (including erosion, sedimentation, weeds and tree dieback)
- proposed changes to stormwater related to the development where the following stormwater management standards should be met:
  - for subdivisions, multi-unit dwellings, commercial and industrial development:
    - no increase in pre-development peak flows from rainfall events with a 1 in 5 year and 1 in 100 year recurrence interval
    - no increase in the natural annual average load of nutrients and sediments
    - no increase in the natural average annual runoff volume.
  - for single residential dwellings or small developments on highly constrained lots:
    - standard local council discharge requirements and best practice stormwater treatment to reduce nutrient and sediment loads and average annual runoff volumes to pre-development levels.
- likely impacts from those changes to OEH land
- clear explanation of the reasons why stormwater discharge is considered unavoidable
- an explanation of the overall environmental benefits to OEH land from the proposed stormwater management system.

In considering any requests to allow stormwater discharge, OEH may also require the proponent to submit an environmental impact assessment to meet relevant requirements of Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Councils and other planning authorities should **not** grant approvals that involve the discharge of stormwater to OEH land or include conditions requiring such an outcome from OEH.
Where new stormwater infrastructure may discharge into marine parks or aquatic reserves, planning authorities should consult with the Department of Primary Industries.

2.3 Wastewater

Aim
There are no adverse impacts on OEH land due to wastewater from adjacent development.

Risks to OEH land
Some new developments, particularly in remote or rural areas, do not have access to mains sewerage systems. In these cases other options for sewage disposal are required, including septic tanks and composting toilets. Some developments (such as horticultural or turf industries) may propose to undertake effluent irrigation or the discharge of other types of wastewater into the environment.

If wastewater disposal systems are not designed, installed, operated and maintained correctly they can pose significant risks to OEH land. These risks are similar to the risks from stormwater runoff, although the degree of risk is relatively greater given the nature of waste products involved and the potential impacts to ecosystem and human health.

Recommended approach
In considering proposals involving wastewater disposal, including sewage management, consent authorities should ensure that disposal systems will be designed and operated to the highest standards. This will require consideration of compliance measures that will be used to ensure ongoing satisfactory operation of the systems.

With the exception of facilities that are directly related to the provision of park visitor or management facilities, wastewater management infrastructure must not be located on OEH land. In addition (with the same exception), there must be no discharge of wastewater to OEH land, including nutrient or pathogen export from effluent disposal areas.

OEH recommends that planning authorities refer to the following information when considering proposals involving wastewater management:

- Environmental Guidelines: Use of effluent by irrigation\(^7\) (DEC 2004)
- water quality.\(^8\)

2.4 Management implications relating to pests, weeds and edge effects

Aim
Adjoining development does not:

- lead to increased impacts from invasive species (weeds and pests), domestic pets and stock

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- facilitate unmanaged visitation, including informal tracks, resulting in negative impacts on cultural or natural heritage values
- lead to impacts associated with changes to the nature of the vegetation surrounding the reserve
- impede OEH access for management purposes, including inappropriate fencing.

**Risks to OEH land**

Development adjoining OEH land has the potential to significantly affect the operation or management of OEH land, resulting in damage to conservation values and cost implications for future management. Development may result in:

- increased informal and inappropriate access (such as by trail-bike riders)
- increase in invasive species and decline in biodiversity and ecosystem health (such as dieback)
- impacts on areas of particular environmental sensitivity, including Aboriginal and historic heritage sites, watercourses and threatened species habitat
- disturbance and predation by domestic pets or stock animals.

Clearing of vegetation (including aquatic vegetation) along or near the boundary of OEH land can lead to edge effects such as:

- increased drying of soils and consequent changes to vegetation at the land boundary
- decline in fauna species that are sensitive to changes in vegetation along newly created edges
- increased predation in the vicinity of the OEH land boundary associated with aggressive species in open situations (such as nest predation by ravens and currawongs).

OEH encourages and supports the sustainable management and development of adjoining land, particularly where it is sympathetic to the protection of conservation values in parks and reserves. The Conservation Partners Program provides support for landowners interested in voluntarily protecting the conservation values of their land, and the Backyard Buddies program provides advice on how to attract and maintain native animals and plants.

OEH also works with adjoining neighbours and other authorities to undertake strategic pest management programs. Regional Pest Management Strategies focus efforts on the highest priority pest species across OEH lands.

**Recommended approach**

In assessing proposals, consent authorities should consider the types of impacts associated with development adjoining land managed by OEH. OEH considers that site layout and design should seek to avoid and then minimise and mitigate any adverse environmental impacts.

The management of companion animals, such as cats and dogs, and stock is a particular challenge for developments adjoining OEH land. OEH recommends that planning authorities investigate all available options for minimising the risks from domestic pets and stock that may arise from new development. This includes educational tools (such as signage).

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10 [www.backyardbuddies.net.au/](http://www.backyardbuddies.net.au/)
compliance (such as regular council patrols), physical controls (such as fencing), and other options (such as restrictive covenants where legally possible).

Adjoining developments should not compromise public and OEH staff access to OEH land. For proposals involving boundary fencing, OEH has established policies and procedures to guide the choice of suitable fencing and cost-sharing arrangements. Consent authorities should refer development proponents to the *Boundary Fencing Policy*.  

OEH also encourages consideration of an appropriate buffer, vegetated where possible, or set-back between any development and OEH land. Where managed effectively, a buffer may minimise the impact to the natural and cultural values of OEH land, and increase the resilience of the area to counter potential impacts of climate change. Given the differences between sites and development types, it is not possible to specify a standard buffer; each development will need to be assessed on its merits. Developments that are designed to be sympathetic to adjoining lands, and to integrate with the landscape, are likely to require less need for buffers or set-backs.

Where there is no buffer, consideration should be given to developing appropriate conditions or land management practices that minimise the potential edge effects from development. This might mean requiring the retention of areas of vegetation, siting a building back from an OEH boundary, or recommending a suitable boundary fence to contain domestic pets or stock animals. As noted above, OEH operates a number of programs that can assist and support landowners.

OEH acknowledges that in some situations clearing of vegetation on neighbouring land is required to manage risks associated with bushfire. OEH nevertheless recommends the retention of existing native vegetation where appropriate.

### 2.5 Fire and the location of asset protection zones

**Aim**

All asset protection measures are within the development area, and there is no expectation for OEH to change its fire management regime for the land it manages.

**Risks to OEH land**

OEH recognises fire as a natural and recurring factor which shapes the environment. However, it also acknowledges that altered fire regimes may pose a significant threat to life, property and other values including biodiversity, cultural heritage and tourism, and that the onset of climate change may exacerbate these risks. Fire management is one of the most important tasks in managing protected areas.

**Recommended approach**

For any proposals adjoining OEH land, consent authorities need to undertake an assessment of the fire risk in accordance with the bushfire guidelines.  

13 The assessment should address appropriate fire management practices for the area. Councils should also ensure that the provisions of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* are implemented in the area proposed for development, and further consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service may be required.

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13 *Planning for Bushfire Protection*, NSW Rural Fire Service 2006
While the bushfire guidelines note that asset protection zones can be located beyond property boundaries in certain ‘exceptional circumstances’, they also acknowledge that easements for bushfire protection should not be considered where the adjoining land is used for a public purpose where vegetation management is not likely or cannot be legally granted, for example in a national park. This means that asset protection zones should be provided in the development site and not extend into OEH land or rely on actions being undertaken by OEH. Appropriately designed fire protection zones and fire-fighting access tracks should be located on the land where development is proposed.

Fencing to be erected between the boundary of the property and OEH land should be of non-combustible material and designed for the intended purpose (for example, stock exclusion). Factors such as disruption to wildlife movements and impacts on fire suppression activities (including the ability of fire-fighting personnel to safely evacuate an area) should always be taken into account. Further information is provided in OEH’s Boundary Fencing Policy.14

Councils and other planning authorities should not grant approvals that involve the undertaking of bush fire hazard reduction works within OEH land, including the establishment of asset protection zones, or include conditions requiring such an outcome.

2.6 Boundary encroachments and access through OEH land

Aim
No pre-construction, construction or post-construction activity occurs on land managed by OEH. Any access that does occur must be legally authorised and comply with park management objectives.

Risks to OEH land
Unauthorised access to OEH land can have direct physical impacts on the conservation values of parks, such as those due to the removal of vegetation, erosion and soil disturbance. If such access continues or other encroachments occur (such as the construction of buildings, car-parks or roads) this can have long-term implications affecting park planning, park management (for example fire protection) and public use and enjoyment.

Recommended approach
Consent authorities should ensure that where land involved in a proposal shares a common boundary with OEH land the boundary has been accurately surveyed to ensure there is no encroachment on OEH land as a result of the proposed development.

OEH land is not to be used:
- to access development sites
- to store materials, equipment, workers' vehicles or machinery
- for maintenance access after development.

Measures, such as temporary fencing of ‘no-go’ areas during construction or installation of permanent, wildlife-compatible fencing should be considered, and will require OEH approval if they are proposed to be located along the site boundary.

In addition, where ongoing access to the development site requires access through OEH land, the consent authority should ensure that there is a legal basis for such access prior to granting an approval. Consent authorities should specifically consider whether:

- access will be via an existing public access road
- access has been, or will be, granted by OEH including any conditions or limitations on such access (such as road widths) if there is no existing public access road
- there are any statutory limits on the use of the access roads in national parks that have been created by legislation related to Regional Forest Agreements. ¹⁵

Councils and other planning authorities should not grant approvals that involve access through or across OEH land, or include conditions requiring such access, without clear written evidence of an agreement from OEH.

2.7 Visual, odour, noise, vibration, air quality and amenity impacts

Aim

There is no reduction of amenity on OEH land due to adjacent development.

Risks to OEH land

These impacts may particularly affect native fauna species (for example, noise, vibration and lighting may disrupt foraging and breeding habits). They may also adversely affect the use and public enjoyment of walking trails, camping and picnic areas.

Recommended approach

Planning authorities should take into account the visual (including lighting), noise, odour and air quality impacts of development adjacent to OEH land to ensure that it is sympathetic with natural and cultural heritage values, and does not impact upon amenity or public enjoyment of the land.

Planning authorities should consider whether it is appropriate to apply control measures, such as landscaping with local native plant species, implementing buffer areas, limiting hours of operation, and use of appropriate colours, building materials, lighting and height controls. Some types of developments, such as quarries and road works, can result in particularly significant impacts (for example noise and dust). Large-scale developments of this type are likely to need detailed site-specific management plans.

OEH land should not be considered as a buffer zone between a development and other surrounding uses (such as residential areas).

2.8 Threats to ecological connectivity and groundwater-dependent ecosystems

Aim

Native vegetation and other flora and fauna habitats that provide a linkage, buffer, home range or refuge role on land that is adjacent to reserves are maintained and enhanced, where possible.

Groundwater-dependent ecosystems in OEH land are protected.

Risks to OEH land

Naturally vegetated areas adjoining OEH land provide essential linkages for the maintenance of biodiversity and also minimise potential edge effects. These areas have a role in maintaining the viability of local populations and form an important component of home ranges of mobile species, as well as providing valuable wildlife refuge areas (including during periods of stress). Streams, rivers and other water bodies adjacent to OEH land may play similar roles.

Avoiding native vegetation clearing and fragmentation and retaining landscape connectivity will also assist in mitigating some of the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. Native vegetation in good condition and with a minimal edge to area ratio will be better able to resist weed invasion, wind damage, desiccation and other edge effects.

Development in areas of native vegetation or along water bodies that adjoin OEH land can result in fragmentation of habitat corridors and isolation from other areas of habitat in the locality. As noted in section 2.4, OEH runs a number of programs aimed at supporting and encouraging landowners to protect and manage the conservation values of their properties.

Recommended approach

OEH recommends that vegetation, waterways and water bodies adjoining OEH land that exhibit ecological connectivity should be retained, protected and, where necessary, rehabilitated. Consent authorities should consider the corridor values, or connective importance, of any vegetation (not only trees) and waterways or water bodies and possible impacts from the proposed development.

For proposals involving the extraction of groundwater, OEH recommends that consent authorities obtain and consider a comprehensive assessment of any potential impacts that may occur to groundwater-dependent ecosystems in adjoining OEH lands. This can include wetlands, vegetation, mound springs, river base flows, cave ecosystems, playa lakes and saline discharges, springs, mangroves, river pools, billabongs and hanging swamps. The groundwater dependence of ecosystems can range from complete reliance to a partial reliance on groundwater, such as might occur during droughts.

Ecological processes in groundwater-dependent ecosystems are threatened by the regular extraction of groundwater and changes in land use or management.

The protection of groundwater-dependent ecosystems is a key principle of the NSW State Groundwater Protection Policy. Further information on groundwater, including groundwater vulnerability maps, is available from the NSW Office of Water.

2.9 Cultural heritage

Aim

Aboriginal heritage values on OEH land, and areas and sites of heritage value that are World Heritage listed, on the National Heritage Register, or the State Heritage Register are protected.

**Risks to OEH land**

OEH land contains some of the most significant and intact areas of Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage values in NSW. This includes physical objects, items and places, as well as areas that are significant with respect to cultural traditions, customs, beliefs and history. It can include values that pre-date the arrival of settlers to Australia (for example, Aboriginal objects), as well as more contemporary associations (such as cemeteries).

Cultural heritage values can, and often do, extend across the landscape, spanning multiple land tenures and properties. Ensuring that these values endure and are able to be interpreted and appreciated by future generations requires protective action across boundaries.

As noted in the Introduction, there are a number of OEH lands that are either World Heritage listed (such as Blue Mountains National Park) or on the National Heritage List (Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park). The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* requires that approval be obtained from the Australian Government before any action that could have a significant impact on the world heritage or national heritage values of a listed place. Such impacts are not limited to those from adjoining properties, and could occur due to developments some distance away.

There are also many OEH lands (or areas, items or features in parks) that are listed on the State Heritage Register and protected under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*.

**Recommended approach**

Consent and planning authorities should ensure that they give adequate consideration to potential impacts of adjoining development on the cultural heritage values of OEH land. In particular, this includes:

- Aboriginal heritage values on OEH land which can, but do not always, include areas listed on the State Heritage Register or gazetted as an Aboriginal Place (for example impacts on Aboriginal objects resulting from erosion, sediment and stormwater from adjoining developments)

- historic heritage values, especially any areas or specific places listed on the State Heritage Register

- World Heritage or National Heritage values.
3 Special requirements for botanic gardens and wild rivers

3.1 Botanic gardens

The Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and Domain, Blue Mountains Botanic Garden (Mount Tomah) and Australian Botanic Garden (Mount Annan) were established and are managed under the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust Act 1980. The Botanic Gardens Trust is the authority responsible for management of the three botanic gardens. OEH provides support services to the Trust.

The principal objectives of the Trust, as specified in the Act, are to:

- maintain and improve Trust land, the National Herbarium and the collections of living and preserved plant life owned by the Trust
- increase and disseminate knowledge with respect to the plant life of Australia, and of NSW in particular
- encourage the use and enjoyment by the public of Trust lands by promoting and increasing the educational, historical, cultural and recreational value of those lands
- give particular emphasis to encouraging and advancing the study of systematic botany and to plant conservation.

The Trust is interested in working with proponents and planning authorities at an early stage to provide advice on developments adjoining any of the botanic gardens that may affect achieving the above objectives. Information and contacts for each botanic garden are available as follows.

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<tr>
<th>Botanic garden</th>
<th>Information and contacts</th>
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3.2 Wild rivers

Wild rivers are declared under s.61 of the NPW Act. The purpose of declaration is to identify, protect and conserve any water course of natural origin and exhibiting substantially natural flow. Wild rivers are managed to restore or maintain natural processes, and to identify, conserve and protect Aboriginal objects and places associated with wild rivers.

Under s.61A of the NPW Act, a statutory authority cannot carry out development in relation to a wild river unless it has consulted with, and considered any advice given by, the Minister.
for the Environment in relation to the development. This requirement could potentially apply to upstream developments that may affect a wild river.

Wild rivers can only been declared over areas in OEH land. Wild rivers currently declared are:

- Upper Brogo River (Wadbilliga National Park)
- Forbes River (Werrikimbe National Park)
- Upper Hastings River (Werrikimbe National Park)
- Kowmung River (Kanangra-Boyd and Blue Mountains national parks)
- Washpool Creek (Washpool National Park)
- Colo River (Blue Mountains National Park)
- Grose River (Blue Mountains and Wollemi national parks).

**Further information**

**National parks and wild rivers**

General information on national parks: Environment Line on 1300 361 967


**Botanic gardens**


**Heritage**


OEH lands that are heritage listed: