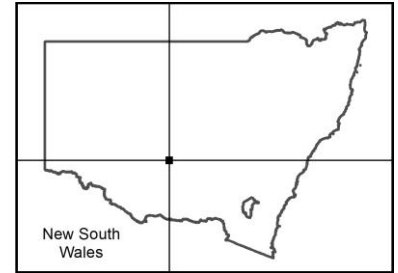




Statement of Management Intent



Lachlan Valley Parks (Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve, Lachlan Valley Regional Park and part of Lachlan Valley National Park and Lachlan Valley State Conservation Area)

1. Introduction

This statement outlines the main values, issues, management directions and priorities of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for managing Lachlan Valley Parks (comprising Lachlan Valley Regional Park and Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve and part of Lachlan Valley National Park and Lachlan Valley State Conservation Area (SCA)). This statement, together with relevant NPWS policies, will guide the management of the parks until a plan of management has been prepared in accordance with the [National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 \(NPW Act\)](#). The NPWS [Managing Parks Prior to Plan of Management Policy](#) states that parks and reserves without a plan of management are to be managed in a manner consistent with the intent of the NPW Act and the ['precautionary principle'](#) (see Principle 15).

2. Management principles

Nature reserves are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas containing outstanding, unique or representative ecosystems, species, communities or natural phenomena. Under the NPW Act ([section 30J](#)), nature reserves are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, and protect geological and geomorphological features and natural phenomena
- conserve places, objects, features and landscapes of cultural value
- promote public appreciation, enjoyment and understanding of the reserve's natural and cultural values
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

National parks are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas containing outstanding or representative ecosystems, natural or cultural features or landscapes or phenomena that provide opportunities for public appreciation, inspiration and sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment. Under the NPW Act ([section 30E](#)), national parks are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, and protect geological and geomorphological features and natural phenomena and maintain natural landscapes
- conserve places, objects, features and landscapes of cultural value

- protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations
- promote public appreciation and understanding of the park's natural and cultural values
- provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with conservation of natural and cultural values
- provide for sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to conservation of natural and cultural values
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

The primary purpose of national parks is to conserve nature and cultural heritage. Opportunities are provided for appropriate visitor use in a manner that does not damage conservation values.

State conservation areas are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas that:

- contain significant or representative ecosystems, landforms or natural phenomena or places of cultural significance
- are capable of providing opportunities for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment, the sustainable use of buildings and structures, or research
- are capable of providing opportunities for uses permitted under other provisions of the NPW Act.

Under the NPW Act ([section 30G](#)), state conservation areas are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, protect natural phenomena and maintain natural landscapes
- conserve places, objects and features of cultural value
- provide for the undertaking of uses permitted under other provisions of the NPW Act (including uses permitted under section 47J such as mineral exploration and mining), having regard to the conservation of the natural and cultural values of the state conservation area
- provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with conservation of the area's natural and cultural values and with uses permitted in the area
- provide for sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to conservation of the area's natural and cultural values and with other uses permitted in the area
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

Land is reserved as a state conservation area primarily where mineral values preclude reservation as another category. The NPW Act requires a review of the classification of state conservation areas every five years in consultation with the Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992*.

Regional parks are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas in a natural or modified landscape that are suitable for public recreation and enjoyment. Under the NPW Act ([section 30H](#)), regional parks are managed to:

- provide opportunities for recreation and enjoyment in natural or modified landscapes
- identify, interpret, manage and conserve the park so as to maintain and enhance significant landscape values
- conserve natural and cultural values
- promote public appreciation and understanding of the park's natural and cultural values
- provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with conservation of natural and cultural values

- provide for sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to conservation or natural and cultural values.

Regional parks are established for the purpose of providing recreational opportunities while protecting natural, cultural and landscape values.

3. Context

Reservation details: Lachlan Valley Regional Park, Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve, Lachlan Valley National Park and Lachlan Valley State Conservation Area were reserved on 1 July 2010.

Size: Lachlan Valley Regional Park is 1536 hectares and Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve is 437 hectares. Those parts of Lachlan Valley National Park and Lachlan Valley State Conservation Area included in the Lachlan Valley Parks group are 2135 hectares and 21,973 hectares, respectively. The group also includes lands that, while not currently part of the reserved area, are vested in the Minister administering the NPW Act including an area of 1315 hectares known as the Oxley precinct.

The remaining parts of Lachlan Valley National Park and Lachlan Valley State Conservation Area are subject to the Statement of Management Intent for the Lachlan Valley Kalyarr Group.

Following an assessment by the Natural Resources Commission, most of the Lachlan Valley Parks were reserved on 1 July 2010 under the *National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Act 2010* (Riverina Red Gum Reservations Act) with further areas added to the parks on 1 January 2011 as part of the *National Park Estate (South-Western Cypress Reservations) Act 2010* (South-Western Cypress Reservations Act). Many of the precincts are former state forests and Crown lands that were reserved to conserve unique natural and cultural landscape features within the Lachlan Valley.

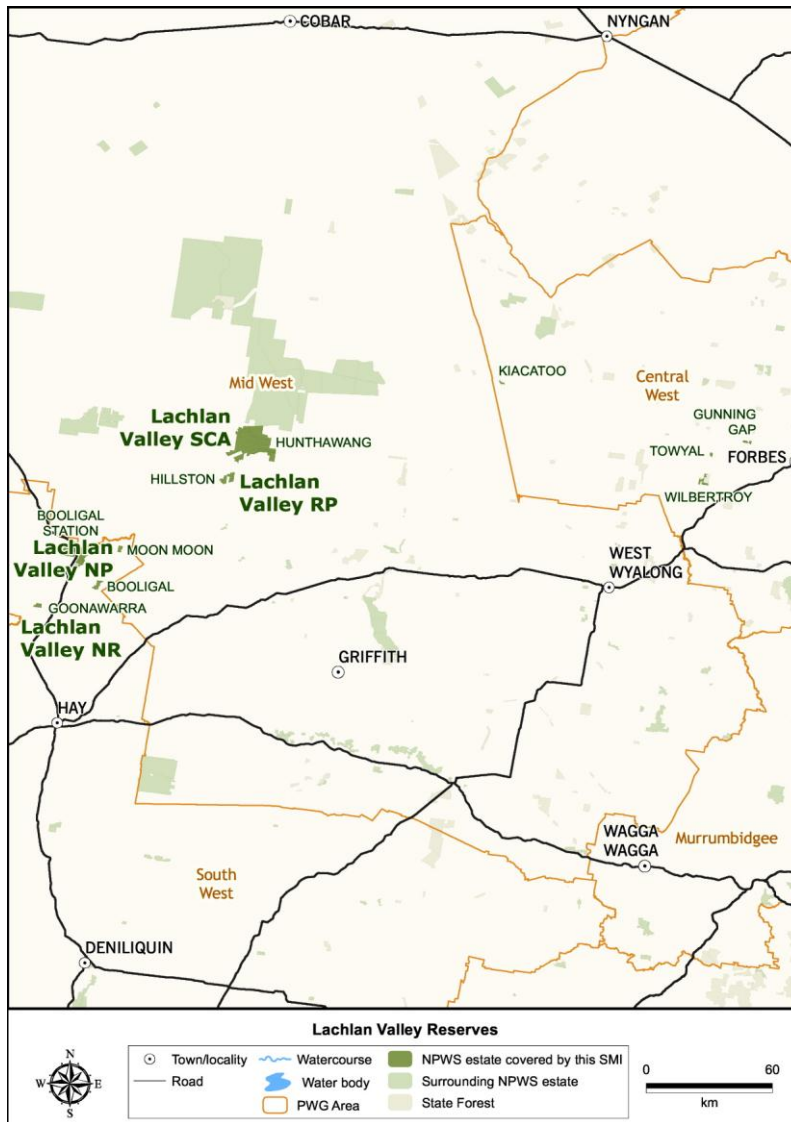
The Lachlan Valley Parks comprise a number of disjunct precincts. For management purposes the precincts' names are consistent with their names under previous tenures, such as their former state forest or property name. Details of these precincts are provided below.

Precinct	NPWS administrative area	Reserved area (hectares)
<u>Lachlan Valley National Park</u>		
Booligal	South West	677*
Gunning Gap	Central West	270
Kiacatoo	Central West	117*
Moon Moon	South West	372*
Towyal	Central West	140
Wilbertroy	Central West	559*
<u>Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve</u>		
Goonawarra	South West	437
<u>Lachlan Valley SCA</u>		
Booligal Station	South West	4,219*
Hunthawang	Mid West	17,754*
<u>Lachlan Valley Regional Park</u>		
Hillston	Mid West	1,537*
<u>Other land vested in the NPW Minister</u>		
Oxley	South West	na*

*Denotes parks/precincts that have additional areas vested in the Minister administering the NPW Act

An area of 17,754 hectares of 'Hunthawang' (a former iconic Riverina stock station) was reserved under the NPW Act as an addition to Lachlan Valley SCA in 2011. 'Booligal Station' was purchased on 28 April 2009. It was reserved as part of Lachlan Valley SCA under the Riverina Red Gum Reservations Act. Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve was first reserved as Goonawarra Nature

Reserve in 1967, its name being changed to Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve under the Riverina Red Gum Reservations Act.



Spread along the Lachlan Valley, extending from where the mid Lachlan River commences upstream from Forbes to the lower Lachlan River, south of Booligal, these precincts are located within the Lachlan catchment. The parks comprise a range of plant communities and habitat types, including temperate forests, semi-arid woodlands, shrublands and floodplain wetlands that support a range of native animal species, particularly woodland and migratory bird species.

Four bioregions: the Riverina, NSW South Western Slopes, Cobar Peneplain and Murray–Darling Depression occur across the Lachlan Valley and each of these is represented within the Lachlan Valley Parks. The parks fall within the administrative areas of the Carrathool, Hay, Lachlan and Forbes shire councils, Central West, Riverina and Western Local Land Services and Griffith, Hay and Condobolin local Aboriginal land councils.

The Lachlan River has undergone a long history of regulation and water extraction. The major water storages on the river are Wyangala Dam and Carcoar Dam. Land use surrounding the precincts within the Lachlan Valley Parks is predominantly agriculture-based, including dryland and irrigated cropping and horticulture and rangeland grazing. The parks generally experience low levels of visitation.

4. Values

- The parks protect a number of endangered ecological communities listed under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act) including Inland Grey Box Woodland in the Riverina, NSW South Western Slopes, Cobar Peneplain, Nandewar and Brigalow Belt South Bioregions; and Myall Woodland in the Darling Riverine Plains, Brigalow Belt South, Cobar Peneplain, Murray–Darling Depression, Riverina and NSW South Western Slopes Bioregions. These are also considered likely to conform to the definition of the endangered ecological community Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia and Weeping Myall Woodlands, respectively, listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The Sandhill Pine Woodland in the Riverina, Murray–Darling Depression and NSW South Western Slopes Bioregions endangered ecological community listed under the TSC Act also occurs.
- The parks potentially support over 30 threatened animal species listed under the TSC Act including the endangered grey falcon (*Falco hypoleucos*) and vulnerable spotted harrier (*Circus assimilis*), brown treecreeper (eastern subspecies) (*Climacteris picumnus victoriae*), pied honeyeater (*Certhionyx variegatus*), white-fronted chat (*Epthianura albifrons*), grey-crowned babbler (eastern subspecies) (*Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis*), blue-billed duck (*Oxyura australis*), little eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*), black falcon (*Falco subniger*), varied sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*), and barking owl (*Ninox connivens*). The superb parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*) is also listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act.
- Migratory birds protected under international agreements and recognised under the EPBC Act recorded within the parks include the rainbow bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*), glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) and sharp-tailed sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*).
- The Booligal Wetlands are nationally significant and have been identified as a key environmental asset and hydrological indicator site within the Murray–Darling Basin. In the past these wetlands have hosted major waterbird breeding events including the largest population (4000 pairs) of glossy ibis documented in Australia.
- The parks are characterised by a variety of vegetation classes comprising inland floodplain shrublands in which lignum (*Duma florulenta*) is a signature species as well as forests and woodland dominated by river red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), belah (*Casuarina cristata*) and black box (*E. largiflorens*).
- Threatened plant species listed as vulnerable under the TSC Act and EPBC Act recorded within Lachlan Valley SCA include mossgiel daisy (*Brachyscome papillosa*) and slender darling pea (*Swainsona murrayana*).
- The Lachlan Valley Parks form an important part of Country for Aboriginal people. Precincts of the parks are known to be part of Country for the Wiradjuri, Nari Nari and Ngiyampaa Aboriginal people.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between Nari Nari Tribal Council, Hay Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (now Office of Environment and Heritage), applies to the reserved lands within the boundary of the Hay Local Aboriginal Land Council. The Memorandum of Understanding establishes a co-management arrangement between the three parties.
- Precincts within the Lachlan Valley Parks were visited by European explorers. Examples of early Australian pastoral development are found in Lachlan Valley SCA including Hunthawang Homestead, a woolshed complex and heritage gardens with State Heritage significance.

- Lachlan Valley Regional Park provides recreational opportunities, particularly for the residents of the nearby town of Hillston. The park is used for dog walking, bushwalking, cycling, horse riding and four-wheel driving.
- Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve was previously reserved as Goonawarra Nature Reserve. There is an adopted plan of management under the NPW Act for Goonawarra Nature Reserve.

5. Issues

- Consistent with the surrounding landscape, pest fauna species recorded within the parks include foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*), feral cats (*Felis catus*), feral goats (*Capra hircus*), fallow deer (*Dama dama*) and house mice (*Mus musculus*).
- African boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*) is one of the most significant weeds in the Lachlan Valley Parks. Other weed species recorded include Noogoora and Bathurst burrs (*Xanthium* spp.), white horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), Paterson's curse (*Echium plantagineum*) and lippia (*Phyla nodiflora*).
- Irrigation in the surrounding area and regulation of the Lachlan River is a significant issue due to inappropriate water regimes impacting on the wetlands within the Lachlan Valley Parks. River red gums, black box woodlands and other flood-dependent vegetation species in some precincts show signs of water stress and dieback.
- Delivery and management of water to significant wetland areas such as the Booligal wetlands requires a cooperative and integrated management with Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Office of Water and water trust organisations.
- There are occurrences of illegal motorbike use, off-trail vehicle use, illegal firewood collection, illegal pig hunting and rubbish dumping within precincts of the Lachlan Valley Parks.
- Grazing by domestic stock is an ongoing issue within Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve and SCA (Booligal) due to the fluctuating height of the Lachlan River and poor condition of boundary fencing.
- Boundary fencing across the precincts is generally in a state of disrepair or non-existent.
- Essential Energy has several powerlines traversing the Lachlan Valley Parks. These powerlines are not covered by a formal easement or maintenance agreement.
- NSW Office of Water structures along the Lachlan River, such as Toringanny Regulator at Booligal Station, is in poor condition which has impacted upon park management activities and access to parts of the park.
- Whilst some of the precincts have been surveyed and have registered Aboriginal sites, further surveys and ongoing relationships with Aboriginal communities are required to better understand the significance and appropriate management of precincts in relation to Aboriginal values.
- Existing grazing licences within areas reserved under the Riverina Red Gums Reservations Act and the South-Western Cypress Reservations Act have been offered an extension to the end of 2016 to enable licence-holders to adapt to the change to national parks management, and, in some areas, to facilitate further research into the impact of grazing on conservation values. Grazing is currently permitted under licence within some precincts of the parks subject to licence conditions. Under the NPW Act this licence is recognised as an existing interest.

6. Key management directions

- Fire is managed in accordance with the Lachlan Valley National Park, Lachlan Valley Regional Park and Lachlan Valley State Conservation Area [Fire Management Strategies](#).
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the NPWS [Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Western Rivers Region. Current priorities for the parks include African boxthorn, white horehound and feral pig programs with the focus on protecting riparian landscapes and endangered ecological communities.
- The parks' trail network will be upgraded to improve access for firefighting and pest management activities, where required.
- NPWS will seek the cooperation of neighbours, Local Land Services and other authorities in implementing weed and pest control programs.
- *NSW River Red Gum Nature Tourism Action Plan* (NPWS) will direct visitor experience development within the parks.
- Management of Lachlan Valley Nature Reserve will be consistent with the provisions of the plan of management for Goonawarra Nature Reserve until a new plan of management for the Lachlan Valley Parks is prepared.
- Further surveys of European and Aboriginal cultural heritage will be undertaken to determine cultural heritage significance across the parks.
- The recommendations of any conservation management plan, heritage action statement or other heritage advice will be implemented to maintain historic heritage values.
- NPWS will work with key stakeholders and investigate options and works required to sustain wetlands within the parks and protect their values.
- NPWS will continue to consult and involve Griffith, Hay and Condobolin local Aboriginal land councils, the Mawambul Co-Management Group, other relevant Aboriginal community organisations, and custodial families in the management of their Country, including the management of Aboriginal sites, places and cultural and natural values.
- Regulatory enforcement and patrols will continue to be carried out to reduce the occurrence of illegal activities within the parks, including illegal firewood collection, motorbike and trail use.
- The need for boundary fencing works will be monitored. Subject to available resourcing, assistance may be provided to neighbours to install stock-proof park boundary fencing in accordance with the NPWS Boundary Fencing Policy.
- An agreement will be formalised with Essential Energy for access to existing electricity infrastructure, and the decommissioning of surplus infrastructure will be negotiated.
- NPWS will continue to liaise with NSW Office of Water regarding the management and maintenance of water infrastructure along the Lachlan River which impacts on park management.
- Water use plans for the parks will be developed and implemented in consultation with relevant stakeholders, water trust organisations and NSW Office of Water.
- Grazing under licence will be monitored and managed in accordance with licence conditions.
- All management activities will be preceded by the preparation of an environmental assessment or heritage assessment where this is a requirement of NPWS policy or legislation.

- Environmental repair and threat management programs, such as erosion mitigation measures, pest management, and activities arising from threatened species requirements may be implemented in accordance with NPWS policies and procedures.
- Non-intrusive works may be undertaken where necessary to protect cultural heritage items from further deterioration, to ensure the safety of visitors, to protect wildlife or to prevent damage to park assets.
- A plan of management will be prepared to set out the ongoing management objectives for the parks. The plan of management is a statutory document under the NPW Act which will be available for public comment. NPWS will also encourage the community to contribute to the ongoing conservation of the parks by promoting and raising public awareness of their special values.

For additional information or enquiries about any aspect of these parks or this statement, contact the NPWS Hay Office on (02) 6990 8200 or 339A Murray Street, Hay NSW 2711 (South West Area); Forbes Office on (02) 6851 4429 or Camp Street, Forbes NSW 2871 (Central West Area); or Griffith Office on (02) 6966 8100 or 200 Yambil Street, Griffith NSW 2680 (Mid West Area).

Disclaimer: This is a statement of intent to guide the management of the parks prior to the development of a plan of management. Any statements made in this publication are made in good faith and do not render the Office of Environment and Heritage liable for any loss or damage. Provisions in the final plan of management may vary from those identified in this document as a result of new information and community consultation. The maps in this statement are intended to show the parks' location and basic features only, and are not suitable for use when navigating to or exploring within parks.

Published by:

Office of Environment and Heritage
59 Goulburn Street, Sydney NSW 2000
PO Box A290, Sydney South NSW 1232
Phone: (02) 9995 5000

ISBN 978 1 74359 496 4
OEH 2014/0184
June 2014