



NSW National Parks  
and Wildlife Service

**Amendment to**

**SEA ACRES**

**NATURE RESERVE**

**Plan of Management**

**Relating to a new walking track**

Department of **Environment and Conservation** NSW



**This amendment to the plan of management for Sea Acres Nature Reserve was adopted by the Minister for the Environment on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2006.**

For additional information or enquires about Sea Acres Nature Reserve, contact the NPWS Hastings Area Office at 22 Blackbutt Road, Port Macquarie, NSW 2444 or by phone on (02) 6562 2376.

© Department of Environment and Conservation 2006.

ISBN: 1 74122 264 8

## **AMENDMENT TO SEA ACRES NATURE RESERVE PLAN OF MANAGEMENT**

### **Background:**

This amendment provides for the full investigation and possible extension of a walking track in Sea Acres Nature Reserve. The extension of this section of track within the nature reserve will provide for the coastal walking track from Town Beach to Lighthouse Beach (located on both DEC lands and Hastings Council lands) to be completed.

Sea Acres Rainforest Nature Reserve is situated on Pacific Drive 4 km from the centre of Port Macquarie. The reserve contains significant geological features and remnants of coastline littoral rainforest (previously identified under State Environmental Planning Policy Number 26 – Littoral Rainforest). Specific objectives for the management of the reserve includes (among others) “to protect and interpret the rainforest, other plant communities and the habitat values of the reserve” and “to provide specialist tourist/visitor experience which complements other tourist attractions available in the Port Macquarie area” (Sea Acres Nature Reserve Plan of Management, 1995).

The existing Plan of Management (PoM) notes that the tracks in the reserve form part of the proposal by Hastings Port Macquarie Council for an extended walk from Town beach to Tacking Point. The coastline walk that passes through Sea Acres Nature Reserve is a popular attraction. However, the existing track culminates at a small car park on Lighthouse Road 800m before Tacking Point. There is no pedestrian link to the lighthouse other than the narrow and somewhat dangerous Lighthouse Road. It is proposed to provide a pedestrian link through the southern part of the reserve to the complete the coastal walk.

The construction of the walking track will only be permissible after all environmental, social and economic impacts have been fully investigated. Comprehensive site planning and landscaping plans are also required. In addition, the impact on the visual amenity will be investigated before a final determination can be made. This amendment does not automatically approve construction of a new walking track.

Construction of the walkway will also provide for conservation outcomes, primarily the protection of the littoral rainforest by providing access to the southern end of the reserve which will assist in the implementation of the weed control program.

Bitou Bush infests the southern end of the reserve and is considered as the most serious threat to the area. In places, it forms an impenetrable monoculture that severely affects the stands of littoral rainforest. Weed control in the northern section of the reserve has been successful in protecting coastal rainforest due to the network of walking tracks that provides access for weed spray units. Suppressing the weed infestations to liberate the native species could be extended south if access was available. The proposed walking track south of Lighthouse car park will assist the effective control of Bitou Bush and protect the natural features of the reserve.

The proposed walking track traverses a ridge to a high point that provides commanding coastal views both north and south. It partially overlooks the rainforest canopy of Sea Acres. One of the objectives in the current Plan of Management is to provide an opportunity for visitors to view the rainforest canopy and the ocean from the one vantage point. The walking track extension could include a low key viewing platform which achieves the PoM objective.

**Adopted Amendment:**

**1. Section 4.3.2 Recreational Opportunities:**

*Insert a paragraph at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph:*

“There is a proposal to continue the coastal walking track from Lighthouse Road car park to Tacking Point Lighthouse. Currently pedestrians trying to reach the lighthouse are forced to walk along the road verge. A walking track through the southern end of the nature reserve provides a safe route for walkers, allows views across the rainforest canopy and continues the link track from Town Beach to Lighthouse Beach. It will also provide access for weed spray units which will greatly assist in the control of extensive Bitou Bush infestations.

**2. Section 4.3.2 Recreational Opportunities – Policies:**

*Insert as policy 2:*

- “The construction of a walking track and viewing platform that links the Lighthouse Road car park with Tacking Point will be investigated.”

**3. Section 4.3.2 Recreational Opportunities – Actions:**

*Insert as new Actions:*

- “An appropriate level of environmental assessment will be completed for the proposed walking track, incorporating a viewing platform, that links Lighthouse Road car park with Tacking Point.”
- “Subject to satisfactory environmental assessment and planning the proposed walking track and viewing platform will be constructed from the Lighthouse Road car park to Tacking Point.”

**4. Section 5 Plan Implementation Activity Table:**

*Insert as a high priority:*

“An appropriate level of environmental impact assessment will be completed for the proposed walking track and viewing platform.”	4.3.2
“Subject to satisfactory environmental assessment and planning, a walking track extension with a viewing platform will be constructed from the Lighthouse Road car park to Tacking Point Lighthouse.”	4.3.2

END OF AMENDMENT