

COORABAKH NATIONAL PARK
DRAFT PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

November 2002

FURTHER INQUIRIES

For additional information or inquiries on any aspect of the plan, contact the National Parks and Wildlife Service Mid North Coast Regional office at 152 Horton St, Port Macquarie or by phone on (02) 6586 8300.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This draft plan of management was prepared by Kim Luckie with assistance from staff of the Mid North Coast Region of the NPWS, together with valuable assistance from Heather Lloyd, Northern Directorate Planning Group. The contributions of the Regional Advisory Committee is greatly appreciated.

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INVITATION TO COMMENT

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, requires that a plan of management be prepared for each national park. A plan of management is a legal document that outlines how the area will be managed in the years ahead.

The procedures for the adoption of a plan of management are specified in the Act and involve five stages:

- * The Director-General of the National Parks and Wildlife gives notice that a plan of management has been prepared.
- * The plan is placed on public exhibition for at least three months and any person may comment on it.
- * The plan and copies of all representations are referred to the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council for consideration.
- * The Director-General submits the plan, together with the recommendations of the Advisory Council, to the Minister.
- * The Minister may adopt the plan after considering the recommendations of the Advisory Council or may refer the plan back to the Director-General and Council for further consideration.

Once a plan has been adopted by the Minister, no operations may be undertaken within the park except in accordance with the plan.

Members of the public, whether as individuals or as members of community interest-groups, are invited to comment on this plan of management. Submissions should be in writing, and as detailed and specific as possible; however any comments, no matter how brief, are welcome.

Comments should be forwarded to:

The Planning Officer
 Coorabakh National Park
 Draft Plan of Management
 National Parks and Wildlife Service
 PO Box 61
 Port Macquarie NSW 2444

The closing date for comments on the plan is Monday 10th March 2003.

Comments on this draft plan may contain information that is defined as 'personal information' under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and identifies you.

Following adoption of the plan by the Minister, copies of all representations received will (unless marked confidential) be available for public inspection by arrangement in the library of the Service's Head Office at 43 Bridge Street, HURSTVILLE 2220 (telephone: 02 9585 6444).

1. NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

1.1 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The management of national parks in New South Wales (NSW) is in the context of the legislative and policy framework, primarily the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act), the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act) and the Field Management Policies of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The Field Management Policies are a compilation of policies arising from the legislative background, the corporate goals of the NPWS and internationally accepted principles of park management. They relate to nature conservation, Aboriginal and historic site conservation, recreation, commercial use, research and communication. Other legislation, international agreements and charters may also apply to management of the area. In particular, the *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* requires the assessment and mitigation of environmental impacts of any works proposed in this plan.

For the purposes of preparing plans of management, the NSW NPWS has adopted the World Conservation Union Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories (IUCN 1994) which define a national park as:

"A natural area of land and/or sea, designated to:

- (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations;
- (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area, and;
- (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible."

National parks are part of the regional pattern of land use. Management of national parks aims to minimise disturbance to natural and cultural heritage. Other land uses, for example agriculture, forestry and mining, are distinguished by an acceptance or encouragement of environmental modification. National parks, therefore, provide for only a limited part of the range of land uses in a region.

1.2 MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

General objectives for National Parks

The following general objectives, derived from the NPW Act, apply to the management of national parks in NSW:

- protection and preservation of scenic and natural features, including significant geological and geomorphological features;
- conservation of wildlife, including maintenance of biodiversity and populations of threatened species;
- maintenance of natural processes;
- preservation of catchment values;

- preservation of Aboriginal sites in consultation with the Aboriginal community;
- conservation of non-Aboriginal historic features and places;
- provision of opportunities for appropriate use, understanding and enjoyment by the public; and
- encouragement of scientific and educational enquiry into environmental features and processes, cultural features and use patterns.

Specific objectives for Coorabakh National Park

- manage the park as part of a regional network of protected areas and as a wildlife corridor between the coast and the Great Dividing Range;
- protect the geological and natural scenic values of the park such as the Lansdowne escarpment, Newbys Creek caves and the volcanic plugs known as Big Nellie, Flat Nellie and Little Nellie;
- conserve native vegetation including threatened and regionally significant species, sclerophyll forests and rainforest communities, and in particular the endemic *Dracophyllum macranthum*;
- conserve the diverse native fauna including threatened species in the park such as the endangered bush stone curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) and the giant barred frog (*Mixophyes iteratus*);
- preserve and record historic heritage from past timber harvesting and forestry operations such as relics from the Langley Vale tramway;
- manage the park in consultation with the Biripi people, the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council, and relevant Elders groups;
- control and where possible eliminate feral and exotic species in the park, in consultation with relevant authorities and neighbouring landholders;
- educate the community on the natural and cultural heritage values of the park; and
- provide opportunities for day use recreation activities such as sightseeing, walking, car touring and hang gliding, which have minimal impact on the environment and which complement other surrounding recreational facilities.

2. COORABAKH NATIONAL PARK

2.1 LOCATION, GAZETTAL AND REGIONAL SETTING

Coorabakh National Park (referred to herein as 'the park') is located about 22 km north of Taree near the villages of Hannam Vale, Waitui, Coopernook and Moorland on the mid north coast of NSW. The park covers an area of 1837 ha and was dedicated as a national park on 1 January 1999. Previously the park was part of the Lansdowne State Forest and the Big Nellie Flora Reserve. The Big Nellie Flora Reserve was dedicated in 1988 to preserve landscape values and significant plant species. Coorabakh is an Aboriginal word which means bloodwood tree (*Corymbia sp.*) and / or white cedar (*Melia azedarach*).

The park lies within the Greater Taree City Council (GTCC) local government area. It borders Lansdowne State Forest to the south and Comboyne State Forest to the north. Other surrounding land uses are cattle grazing, dairy operations, private forestry plantations and small hobby farms.

The park is well recognised for its scenic and geological values. The park is situated on the Lansdowne escarpment, which is an important landscape feature of the Manning Valley. The escarpment is clearly visible from many surrounding villages, as well as from the Pacific Highway and Taree. A number of scenic lookouts in the park provide views over the Manning Valley, and to the Bulga and Comboyne Plateaus.

2.2 NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Hydrology, Geology and Soils

The park lies between the Manning River and the Watson Taylor Lake catchment, with tributaries feeding into Starrs Creek, Stewarts River and the Camden Haven River to the north and Newbys Creek and Lansdowne River to the south.

The park has a number of impressive rock formations including the dramatic rocky outcrops known as Big Nellie, Flat Nellie and Little Nellie which are composed of tertiary rhyolite, and the sandstone cliff line known as the Lansdowne escarpment. At Newbys Caves, there are large overhanging conglomerate rock formations. The remainder of the park consists generally of sedimentary geology which contain tuffs, tuffaceous sandstones, conglomerates, sandstone and shales. Soil in the region is primarily derived from sedimentary rock and consists of yellow earths, lateritic red earths and lateritic podsols (Forestry Commission of NSW, 1985).

The topography of the park is moderately steep with sharp ridges to the west of the park along the Lansdowne escarpment and to the north into the Stewarts River valley. Elevation ranges from 90 m in the east of the park to 600 m in the northwest. The summit of Big Nellie is 542 m above sea level.

Native Plants

Eighteen forest ecosystems have been identified in the park with the most predominate type being wet foothills blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) / turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) and mid elevation wet blackbutt. Other notable forest ecosystems present include coastal tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*) / Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*), turpentine, open coastal brushbox (*Lephostemon confertus*) and central mid elevation Sydney blue gum. In the sheltered gullies, there are areas of subtropical rainforest dominated by figs (*Ficus sp.*) and giant stingers (*Dendrocnide excelsa*).

The subtropical rainforest at Starrs Creek is dominated by Coachwood (*Ceratopetalum apetulum*) with an understorey of bangalow palm (*Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*).

The park is important at a regional level for a number of rare, threatened and significant plant species. The endangered plant *Hibbertia hexandra* has been recorded and extensive areas for this species are predicted throughout the park. The vulnerable plant *Hakea archaeoides* has been recorded at a number of locations in the park, and has a restricted range from Wauchope to the Lansdowne area. *Goodenia fordiana*, *Gahnia isignis* and *Callistemon acuminatus* listed as rare under ROTAP (Rare or Threatened Australian Plants) (Briggs and Leigh, 1996) have been recorded in the park and the area represents the southern limit for *Gahnia isignis*. The ROTAP list is an important reference list for the national status of threatened species, particularly rare and poorly known species which are not formally recognised under species protection legislation such as the TSC Act.

A number of other species have been recorded at their southernmost range including red carabeen (*Geissois benthamii*) and Macleay laurel (*Anopterus macleayanus*) (Williams, 1993). A new species of epacrid, *Dracophyllum macranthum* which is thought to be endemic to the park has been recorded. Potential habitat for the vulnerable *Parsonia dorrigoensis* and *Sarcophilus fitzgeraldii* is also predicted for the park.

The vegetation at Big Nellie (previously within the Big Nellie Flora Reserve) supports three Eucalypt species of unusual occurrence: Blue Mountain ash (*Eucalyptus oreades*) and Blue Mountain mahogany (*Eucalyptus notabilis*) which would normally only occur at altitudes greater than 820m in the Blue Mountains region; and the blue-leaved stringybark (*Eucalyptus agglomerata*) which is near the northern limit for this species.

Due to past timber harvesting and forestry activities, the park contains extensive areas of regrowth forest, with few areas of old growth forest remaining. Models developed as part of the comprehensive regional assessment process (CRA) predicted the occurrence of old growth forest areas over approximately 9% of the park. The largest predicted patches are located along the northern and eastern catchment of Newbys Creek in stands of wet foothills blackbutt/turpentine, mid elevation wet blackbutt and turpentine.

Native Animals

The park supports a diverse array of fauna, including a number of species listed under the TSC Act. Two endangered species, the bush stone curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) and the giant barred frog (*Mixophyes iteratus*) have been recorded in the park. Table 1 lists threatened and significant species recorded in the park or immediately adjacent to the park. Most fauna surveys of the area were previously undertaken as part of State Forest of NSW (SFNSW) pre-logging surveys, Regional Forestry Agreements (RFA) and the North East Forest Biodiversity surveys.

Predicted areas of core habitat for threatened fauna and areas with high species diversity are located in the north western section of the park, extending north of Flat Rock in a south easterly direction towards Big Nellie. Other important habitats are located towards the headwaters of Starrs Creek, south of Little Nellie and patches along the escarpment near Newbys Creek Road.

Table 1. Threatened and significant species present or predicted to occur in Coorabakh National Park. (SFNSW, [2001], Environment Australia [1999], NPWS Wildlife Atlas).

Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal Status	Recorded in (✓) or predicted (?)
Mammals			
Brush-tailed phascogale	<i>Phascogale tapoatafa</i>	V	✓
Common bent-wing bat	<i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i>	V	✓
Greater broad nose bat	<i>Scoteanax rueppelli</i>	V	✓
Koala	<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>	V	✓
Little bent-wing bat	<i>Miniopterus australis</i>	V	✓
Parma wallaby	<i>Macropus parma</i>	V	✓
Spotted-tail quoll	<i>Dasyurus maculatus</i>	V*	✓
Yellow-bellied glider	<i>Petaurus australis</i>	V	✓
Birds			
Bush stone curlew	<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>	E	✓
Glossy black cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i>	V	✓
Masked owl	<i>Tyto novaehollandiae</i>	V	✓
Square-tail kite	<i>Lophoictinia isura</i>	V	?
Wompoo fruit-dove	<i>Ptilinopus magnificus</i>	V	✓
Reptiles			
Stephen's banded snake	<i>Hoplocephalus stephensi</i>	V	✓
Amphibians			
Giant barred frog	<i>Mixophyes iteratus</i>	E	?
Stuttering frog	<i>Mixophyes balbus</i>	V	✓

Notes: V = vulnerable, E = endangered, ✓ = recorded in park or within a 1km buffer of the boundary, * = also listed under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Aboriginal Heritage

The area was traditionally used by the local Ngaamba (pronounced Namba) tribe and by surrounding clans as a major transport route between the coast and the Great Dividing Range. It is likely that the cliff lines and rugged topography of the park were used for cultural practises such as ceremonies and other social gatherings. No detailed Aboriginal heritage studies have been undertaken and there are no recorded Aboriginal sites in the park.

The park is visited by the local Biripi people for educational and spiritual purposes. The Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council, Elders groups, the Biripi people and other indigenous persons represent contemporary Aboriginal involvement in the park. It is NPWS policy to involve the Aboriginal community in the management of Aboriginal heritage in the park.

History Since European Occupation

The park has a long history of timber harvesting and forestry operations. In 1899, the area was set aside under the *Crowns Land Act 1884* as 'reserves for the preservation and growth of timber'. Timber harvesting occurred throughout the area, with an intensive logging period during World War I and II. Most accessible parts of the area were managed for timber production (Forestry Commission of NSW, 1985). Small sections of rainforest were also included in silviculture treatment, in an attempt to convert rainforest to flooded gum (*Eucalyptus grandis*).

The park contains remnants of the old Langley Vale tramway. Construction of the tramway started in the 1880s, and the section of the tramway in the park was built in the 1930s.

The tramway is considered to be one of the earliest logging tramways in eastern Australia (Forestry Commission of NSW, 1985). The tramway was used to haul timber to the local sawmill at Langley Vale. The line ran approximately 21km, from Langley Vale to Old North Camp in the vicinity of Deep Creek (in Lansdowne State Forest), with spur lines to Little Nellie and Juhles Mountain (near Stewarts River). Initially, logs were hauled along the line by horses on the lower slopes, and later by steam engines. The old tramway turn-around point was located at the western end of Tea Tree trail. The line was eventually abandoned in the 1940s. Some relics of the timber bridges and the works associated with the line, such as cuttings can still be found throughout the area.

2.3 RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

The park provides a range of recreational opportunities including sight seeing, hang gliding, car touring and bushwalking. At Flat Rock and Newbys lookouts there are constructed platforms that offer impressive views over the escarpment to the Manning Valley and the Bulga and Comboyne Plateaus. At Starrs Creek day use area there is a wheelchair accessible circular boardwalk through the rainforest. At Newbys Caves there is a short walk up Newbys Creek to the cave overhang. There is a steep walking track up to Big Nellie, which has vertical drop offs and the public is discouraged from using this track due to safety concerns. Picnic facilities are located at Newbys Lookout, Big Nellie and Starrs Creek.

Visitors can drive through the park along Cooperook Forest Way and Newbys Creek Road, which includes features such as Flat Rock and Newbys Lookouts, Big Nellie, Starrs Creek and Newbys Caves. They can then link up with Hannam Vale Road at Hannam Vale and Forest Road at Moorland to complete a circuit drive.

The surrounding State Forests have a number of recreational facilities that are often used by visitors to the park. There is a camping area at the Cooperook State Forest Headquarters off Forest Road (in Lansdowne State Forest) which is accessible by two wheel drive vehicles. In the Comboyne State Forest there is a swimming hole at Waitui Falls.

Hang gliding occurs in the park at a site located on the Lansdowne escarpment near Little Nellie. This site is generally flown in south-westerlies and is used by hang gliders as a 'winter thermalling' site. Hang gliders launch from this location and land on private property at the base of the mountain. An agreement previously existed between SFNSW and the Mid North Coast Hang Gliding Association to maintain this area as a hang glider take-off area. The tree line below the take off ramp requires regular pruning to ensure that the hang gliders have clean air when launching. Because of the small size of the hang gliding launching site and no parking opportunities along Cooperook Forest Way near the site, there is potential for overcrowding and safety issues on the road.

Horse riding is not permitted in the park because of the sensitive ecosystems, steep slopes and narrow and winding roads. Opportunities for horse riding are available in the surrounding areas including the State Forests.

2.4 ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

The main access roads in the park are along Cooperook Forest Way and Newbys Creek Road. The park can be accessed from Forest Road at Moorland and Hannam Vale Road at Hannam Vale.

The planning area includes three 'Ministerial roads': Cooperbrook Forest Way, Big Nellie Trail and Flat Nellie Trail. These roads were vested in the Minister for the Environment to ensure the continuation of access arrangements which existed immediately before the park's creation.

This primarily relates to use of these roads for timber hauling and private property access. Whilst Ministerial roads do not form part of the gazetted park area, the management of these roads is subject to the provisions of this plan, the NPW Act's Land Management Regulations 1995 and the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

In addition to the Ministerial roads, there is a network of management trails in the park (see map). The primary purpose of the management trail system is for fire management. The trails also provide access for other essential management operations such as pest control, research and access for other authorities such as SFNSW, Transgrid, and neighbouring landholders. These trails are for use by authorised vehicles only.

The park has two quartz based quarries located along Cooperbrook Forest Way near its intersection with the northern end of Newbys Creek Road. These quarries are used for the maintenance of roads and picnic areas in the park and along some sections of roads leading to the park. As assessment of the quarries has been undertaken in the mid north coast region and the quarries in the park will be managed in accordance with this planning document.

2.5 OTHER USES

Transgrid maintains an electricity transmission line traversing roughly north-south through the southern end of the park and the Lansdowne State Forest. This line is part of the Taree to Port Macquarie high voltage line. Prior to the area becoming a national park, the line operated under an occupational permit with SFNSW. It is now subject to a license with NPWS.

2.6 THREATS TO THE PARK

Pest Species

Pest plant species recorded in the park are mainly confined to areas of previous disturbance, and along roadways and trails. Crofton weed (*Ageratina adenophora*), and red lantana (*Lantana camera*) are known to be in the park and are listed as noxious weeds in the GTCC area.

The park also has a number of pest animal species recorded including the fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), feral cat (*Felis catus*) and wild dog (*Canis familiaris*) (SFNSW, 2001). Predation by the feral cat and the fox are both listed as threatening processes to native wildlife under the TSC Act and the Commonwealth *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPB Act). The current population and distribution of pest species in the park is unknown. Wild dog baiting programs have previously been undertaken in the east and north west of the park near the Comboyne State Forest. These baiting programs have been undertaken in conjunction with SFNSW and surrounding landholders. Wild dogs have been found in the surrounding environment, though to date no dogs have been found in the park during these control programs.

Fire

The NPWS regards fire as a natural phenomenon and one of the continuing physical factors influencing the Australian environment. Many native plants and animals of dry sclerophyll communities have adapted to particular fire regimes. Inappropriate fire

regimes have been identified as a key threatening process effecting the biological diversity of NSW. Vegetation communities in the park, such as rainforests and wet sclerophyll forest, are sensitive to fire.

One of the most significant fires to date recorded in the park was the 'Big Nellie' fire, which took place in 1964-65, in the north western section of the then Lansdowne State Forest (Forestry Commission, 1985).

It is considered that there is a low risk of fire entering the park. The Lansdowne escarpment in the south and north west is likely to restrict fire from entering the park from this vicinity. Most fires in the park are expected to enter the park from the north and east direction and are generally caused by incendiarism and escaped rural burns.

Soil Erosion

Generally soil erosion is not a significant issue in the park, though there are some small sections along roads near drain outlets where erosion is occurring. The steep topography of the park contributes to the high velocity of water during rainfall events. It is possible that during these events, silt could enter the surrounding catchment.

References

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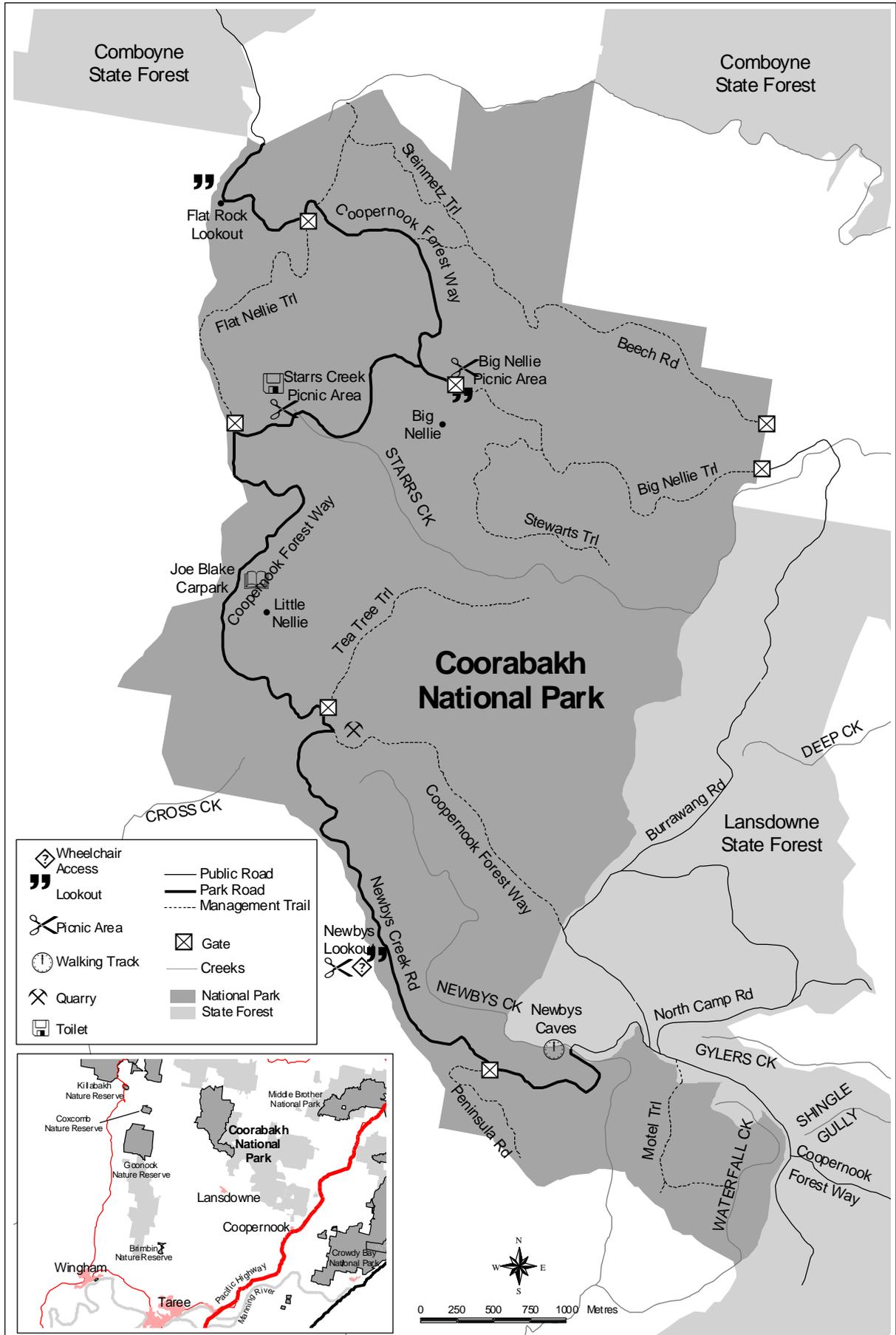
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Map: Coorabakh National Park



3. MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
<p>Soil and water conservation</p> <p>Soil erosion is a minor issue in the park, but occurs at some drain outlets along roads. Erosion can cause localised damage during high rainfall events, and soil may enter the surrounding catchment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any soil erosion occurring in the park is minimised. • The water quality in the catchment is maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain roads to an appropriate standard and investigate options for the installation of erosion protection measures along sections of the road. • Undertake all works in the park in a manner that minimises erosion and water pollution. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>
<p>Native plant and animal conservation</p> <p>Eighteen forest ecosystems have been identified in the park. Some of these forest ecosystems are poorly conserved within NSW. The park contains a number of rare, threatened and regionally significant plant and animal species as well as species at their geographical limit.</p> <p>Wet sclerophyll forests, subtropical rainforests and potential old growth forests in the park have high conservation value and may be sensitive to fire.</p> <p>Past logging and timber production have disturbed some areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native plant and animal species and communities are conserved. • Natural processes, such as succession of regenerating forest communities, in the park continue. • Improve knowledge of threatened and significant plants, animals, ecology and habitat requirements. • Areas of previous disturbance are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow natural revegetation of disturbed areas. Undertake rehabilitation works where necessary. • Implement recovery plans for threatened species when they are prepared. • Exclude fire from fire sensitive communities such as rainforest and wet sclerophyll forests. • Undertake monitoring and surveys of threatened and significant species, and in particular for <i>Dracophyllum macranthum</i> and to ascertain the presence of old growth forest. • Liaise with neighbours to encourage the retention and appropriate management of key habitat and corridors adjacent to the park through Voluntary Conservation Agreements or other appropriate strategies. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>

	revegetated.		
<p>Pest species</p> <p>Pest plant species are located in disturbed areas and along roadsides. Noxious weeds present in the park include crofton weed and red lantana.</p> <p>Pest animals recorded in the park include foxes, feral cats and wild dogs. Wild dog baiting programs have previously been undertaken in the park in conjunction with SFNSW and surrounding landholders.</p> <p>The Regional Pest Strategy identifies the park for reactive pest animal species control rather than on going regular control programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced species will be controlled and if possible eradicated. • Appropriate pest management techniques are implemented. • The impact of introduced species on native species and neighbouring lands is minimised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake pest species control and bush regeneration works in accordance with the Regional Pest Strategy. Target noxious weeds and areas of disturbance such as roadways, trails, quarries and the hang gliding site for priority weed control programs. • Encourage surrounding landholders and SFNSW to be involved in joint weed maintenance programs. • Undertake wild dog baiting programs on a needs basis in cooperation with SFNSW, RLPB and surrounding landholders. • Monitor pest animal species and implement control programs when necessary. 	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>
<p>Fire management</p> <p>Vegetation communities such as rainforests, and wet sclerophyll forest are fire sensitive.</p> <p>Fire has historically entered the park from the north and east. Most fires are generally caused by incendiarism and escaped rural burns. Fire can damage infrastructure and threaten neighbouring land.</p> <p>There is currently no fire management plan for the park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire frequencies are appropriate for conservation of native plant and animal communities. • Life, property including adjoining dwellings, and park infrastructure are protected from fire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage fire regimes to protect biodiversity in accordance with the identified fire frequency thresholds for vegetation communities and any fire sensitive communities. This includes excluding fire from rainforest, old growth forest and wet sclerophyll communities. • Participate in Greater Taree District Bush Fire Management Committee. Maintain coordinated and cooperative arrangements with the Rural Fire Service Brigades, GTCC, SFNSW and surrounding landholders with regard to fuel management and fire suppression. 	<p>High</p> <p>High</p>

<p>Fire management continued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire is excluded from rainforest, old growth forest and wet sclerophyll forest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and implement a Fire Management Plan for the park, which identifies appropriate fire regimes. • Maintain a network of strategic trails and roads for fire management as shown on the map. • Install gates where necessary to reduce the incidence of incendiarism and to assist in the maintenance of management trails. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p>
<p>Cultural heritage</p> <p>The Biripi people use the park for a range of cultural purposes. It is likely that the park was traditionally used by local tribes as a transport route and a place where cultural practices such as ceremonies and social gatherings were undertaken.</p> <p>No comprehensive surveys have been undertaken in the park for sites of indigenous or non-indigenous cultural significance.</p> <p>Remnants of the old Langley Vale tramway, including timber bridges and cuttings, have been recorded although the exact route of the tramway is unknown.</p> <p>Other cultural sites may exist in the park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage features are identified, conserved and managed in accordance with their significance. • The community and other relevant persons are involved in the consultation and preservation of cultural heritage sites and information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a cultural heritage assessment in areas where any new developments are proposed. • Encourage an Aboriginal cultural heritage study of the park in consultation with the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council. • Ensure that any information on Aboriginal cultural heritage in the park is provided to the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council and remains confidential where requested. • Discuss and encourage any opportunities for the interpretation of Aboriginal heritage values in the park with the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council, Elders groups and other relevant Indigenous persons. • Install an interpretation sign at the top of Tea Tree Trail, at the old tramway turn around site, to provide information on the historic tramway. 	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>

<p>Cultural heritage continued</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake or encourage a survey to identify the location of any relics from the Langley Vale tramway in the park. 	Medium
<p>Recreational opportunities</p> <p>The park provides opportunities for day use as well as a circuit drive through the park and neighbouring State Forests and local villages. The road network in the park is not suitable for large buses.</p> <p>Facilities in the park include scenic lookouts, picnic facilities and walking tracks.</p> <p>There are currently no toilets or camping facilities in the park but facilities are available in the nearby Lansdowne State Forest.</p> <p>The walking track up to Big Nellie is steep and there are safety concerns regarding public access. Walking access to Newbys Cave requires minor upgrading and consideration of a small car park.</p> <p>Hang gliding occurs from a launch site in the park but requires upgrading for safety purposes. The Mid North Coast Hang Gliding Association regularly trim vegetation and control weed growth at the site. The hang gliding platform is not suitable for large groups.</p> <p>There is currently limited information on the recreational use and the number of visitors to the park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The park provides opportunities for day visitor use with minimal impact on natural and cultural heritage values. Walking tracks provide opportunities not generally available elsewhere in the surrounding area and are maintained to an appropriate standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the park as a day use destination with opportunities to undertake a circuit drive incorporating lookouts, picnic facilities and surrounding areas. Camping facilities, barbeques and rubbish bins will not be provided. Fuel stoves only will be permitted. Install a lookout, seats and interpretation bay at Big Nellie picnic area and upgrade the existing picnic table. Discourage public use of the existing walking route to Big Nellie and remove walking track sign at the base of the mountain. Install a sign highlighting the risks to public safety. Maintain and upgrade the existing walking track at Newbys cave to the first cave overhang only and manage as a low use, short stay destination in a natural setting. Investigate the feasibility of a small car park for 3-4 vehicles off Newbys Road near the site. No other facilities will be provided. Assess the feasibility and demand for a circular walking track that would link Tea Tree Trail and Stewarts River Trail and provide the opportunity for a circular day walk in the park. Construct toilet facilities at Starrs Creek picnic area. 	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>

<p>Management operations</p> <p>There is a network of management trails in the park used by NPWS for fire management and other essential management operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management trails are appropriately maintained and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain roads and trails shown on map. Public vehicle access will not be permitted on management trails and trails will be gated as necessary. 	<p>High</p>

<p>There are two quarries in the park that are essential for park maintenance purposes, including maintenance of roads within the park boundary and some of the major roads leading to the park.</p>	<p>gated where necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarries in the park have minimal impact on park values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressively close and rehabilitate other roads and tracks no longer required for management purposes. Public vehicle access will be promoted though Newbys Creek Road in the vicinity of Newbys Cave and Newbys Lookout rather than along Cooperbrook Forest Way. Flat Nellie Trail will be a gated management trail, but access will be maintained to the adjacent landholder. Seek an agreement with State Forests of NSW about maintaining Cooperbrook Forest Way to a 2WD standard to ensure continued public access to Coorabakh National Park. With prior consent, allow SFNSW to access quarries for maintenance of roads that lead to the park. Allow natural revegetation of areas in the quarries no longer required for extraction. If necessary undertake rehabilitation works. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>
<p>Research</p> <p>Research is needed to improve understanding of the park's natural and cultural heritage, the processes that affect them and the requirements for management of particular</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge is increased on the park's natural and cultural heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage or undertake research into the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of threatened species distribution and habitat requirements; 	<p>Medium</p>

<p>species.</p> <p>The limited research undertaken has tended to focus on flora and fauna surveys of the area.</p>	<p>values and this information is incorporated into management decision making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research programs are conducted in a coordinated and sustainable manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. information on the historic values of the park including location of the old tramway; iii. information on the Aboriginal values of the park; and iv. visitor use patterns, preferences and impacts. 	
<p>Other uses</p> <p>Transgrid maintains an electricity transmission line traversing through the park near Motel trail.</p> <p>The transmission line is under license with NPWS and is maintained by Transgrid.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing transmission lines are managed to minimise impacts on the natural, cultural and scenic values and park roads and management trails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure vegetation management under power lines is undertaken in accordance with best practices such as “Procedures for Power Line Maintenance in National Parks” (Electricity Association of NSW, 1994). • Encourage any replacement, or upgrading of existing transmission lines to incorporate best environmental design such as bundled or underground cable. 	<p>High</p> <p>High</p>

High priority activities are those imperative to achievement of the objectives and desired outcomes. They must be undertaken in the near future to avoid significant deterioration in natural, cultural or management resources.

Medium priority activities are those that are necessary to achieve the objectives and desired outcomes but are not urgent.

Low priority activities are desirable to achieve management objectives and desired outcomes but can wait until resources become available.

Once a plan has been adopted by the Minister it must be implemented, and no operations may be undertaken except in accordance with the plan. If after adequate investigation, operations not included in the plan are found to be justified, the plan may be amended in accordance with section 76(6) of the Act.

This plan applies both to the land currently reserved and to any future additions. Where management strategies or works are proposed for additions that are not consistent with the plan, an amendment to the plan will be required.