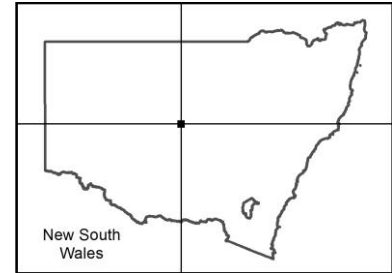


Statement of Management Intent



Balowra 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 Balowra State Conservation Area (SCA). This statement, together with relevant NPWS policies, will guide the management of the SCA 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

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*.

3. Context

Reservation details: Balowra SCA was reserved on 1 January 2011.

Size: 1718 hectares.



Balowra SCA is located 18 kilometres south of the township of Nymagee. It falls within the Cobar Peneplain Bioregion and the administrative areas of Cobar Shire Council, Western Local Land Services, and Condobolin Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The SCA is located within the Ngemba, Ngiyampaa, Wangaaypuwan and Wayilwan native title claim which is being considered by the National Native Title Tribunal. Balowra SCA was established under the *National Park Estate (South-Western Cypress Reservations) Act 2010* to protect remaining areas of cypress pine woodlands in a heavily cleared agricultural region of

NSW. Declared as a state forest in 1960, Balowra was subsequently gazetted as a state conservation area in 2011. There is little or no evidence to indicate the SCA was used for forestry purposes however the area was subject to grazing leases.

A portion of land that adjoins the eastern boundary of Balowra SCA is state forest. Balowra SCA is surrounded by four agricultural properties and is bounded on the western side by Nymagee–Burthong Road. No management trails or gates exist within the SCA. The surrounding land has been subject to clearing predominately for grazing. The SCA forms part of a vegetation corridor that links areas of remnant native vegetation including Cumbine State Forest and Nangerybone State Forest to the west via privately owned land. Several ephemeral creeks traverse the SCA but no permanent water sources or ground tanks (dams) exist.

4. Values

- Balowra SCA contributes to biodiversity in the region by protecting flora and fauna in a variety of woodland vegetation communities as part of a vegetation corridor within a highly fragmented landscape. It also provides a refuge and habitat to woodland birds and other native animals.
- Balowra SCA supports a range of semi-arid woodlands with shrubby subformations. Vegetation communities are typified by white cypress pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*), bumble box (*Eucalyptus populnea*) and scattered vegetation communities of red mallee (*E. socialis*) and western red box (*E. intertexta*).
- The reserve provides a connection to Country for the local Aboriginal community.

5. Issues

- Further surveys would assist to determine the occurrence and extent of infestation of feral goats (*Capra hircus*), European red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), feral cats (*Felis catus*), feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) and rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) within Balowra SCA in order to inform management responses.
- Weed occurrence varies from year to year depending on weather conditions. Weeds within the SCA include Bathurst burr (*Xanthium spinosum*) and Patterson's curse (*Echium plantagineum*). The Western Rivers Pest Management Strategy identifies other weed species that occur in the Cobar area that may pose a threat to biodiversity values in this SCA. These include mesquite (*Prosopis* sp.), Parkinsonia (*Parkinsonia aculeata*), African boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*), prickly pear (*Opuntia* spp.) and Mexican poppy (*Argemone mexicana*).
- Little is known about park values including flora, fauna, Aboriginal and historic heritage. Surveys are therefore required to build knowledge about the values of the SCA.

6. Key management directions

- Fire is managed in accordance with Balowra SCA [Fire Management Strategy](#).
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the [NPWS Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Western Rivers Region.
- Investigations are underway to identify ways to encourage closer liaison with the Aboriginal community in the management of the SCA. The development of a memorandum of understanding between NPWS and the Yathong Culture Camp Group will be investigated.
- 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 SCA. 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 SCA by promoting and raising public awareness of its special values.

For additional information or enquiries about any aspect of this SCA or this statement, contact the NPWS Cobar Office on 02 6836 2692 or 18 Barton Street, Cobar NSW 2835.

Disclaimer: This is a statement of intent to guide the management of the SCA 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 SCA's location and basic features only, and are not suitable for use when navigating to or exploring within parks.

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