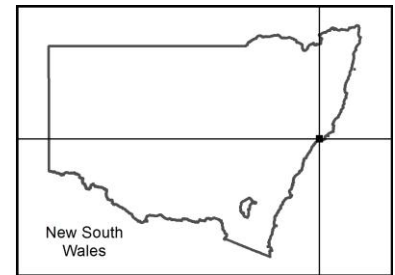


# Statement of Management Intent



## Gir-um-bit National Park and Gir-um-bit 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 Gir-um-bit National Park and Gir-um-bit 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

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*.

### 3. Context

**Reservation details:** Gir-um-bit National Park and Gir-um-bit SCA were both reserved on 1 July 2007.

**Size:** Gir-um-bit National Park is 580 hectares and Gir-um-bit SCA is 184 hectares.

Gir-um-bit National Park and Gir-um-bit SCA are located approximately 16 kilometres west of Nelson Bay. They fall within the NSW North Coast Bioregion and within the administrative areas of Port Stephens Council, Hunter Local Land Services and Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Gir-um-bit National Park and Gir-um-bit SCA were former Crown land. They were created as a result of the Comprehensive Regional Assessment process undertaken for the North East Regional Forest Agreement, and reserved under the *National Park Estate (Lower Hunter Region Reservations) Act 2006*.

Gir-um-bit National Park and Gir-um-bit SCA are made up of small parcels of land that are fragmented by residential land, vacant Crown land and land previously used for sand mining. The parks fringe the waterways of Port Stephens bay and include Swan Bay, Fame Cove and small islands. Gir-um-bit National Park and Gir-um-bit SCA comprise dry sclerophyll forests, drainage wetlands and salt marsh vegetation that provide key habitat for a variety of shorebird species and migratory bird species protected under international agreements.



#### 4. Values

- Gir-um-bit National Park protects important habitat for the endangered pied oystercatcher (*Haematopus longirostris*) and threatened eastern osprey (*Pandion cristatus*), sooty oystercatcher (*Haematopus fuliginosus*) and white-fronted chat (*Epthianura albifrons*).
- A section of Gir-um-bit National Park is listed as part of the Myall Lakes Ramsar site; collectively the Myall Lakes Ramsar site contains over 400 species of animals and supports a substantial number of waterbirds, including 22 migratory species listed under international agreements with Japan, China and the Republic of South Korea.
- Migratory shorebirds protected under international conservation treaties recorded within Gir-um-bit National Park include the white-bellied sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*), bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa lapponica*), eastern curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*), whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*), grey-tailed tattler (*Tringa brevipes*) and Pacific golden plover (*Pluvialis fulva*).
- Gir-um-bit SCA and Gir-um-bit National Park also protect habitat for the threatened koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*). Gir-um-bit SCA lies adjacent to Tilligerry SCA, which is recognised as significant koala breeding habitat in New South Wales in the National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy 2009-2014.

- Gir-um-bit National Park contains important wetland habitat and protects one of the largest areas of mangroves and saltmarsh in New South Wales; populations of Coastal Saltmarsh in the NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions endangered ecological community occur within the park.

## 5. Issues

- Pest animals occurring in the parks include wild dogs (*Canis lupus* spp.), European foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), feral cats (*Felis catus*) and rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*).
- Weed species occurring in the parks include lantana (*Lantana camara*) and bitou bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera* ssp. *rotundata*).
- The parks lie within an urban interface and as a result are subject to illegal and inappropriate use, including rubbish dumping, arson, firewood collection and vehicle and trail-bike activity.
- There have been occurrences of oil spills entering wetlands within Gir-um-bit National Park, caused from nearby boating use at Port Stephens.

## 6. Key management directions

- Fire is managed in accordance with the Medowie State Conservation Area, Gir-um-bit State Conservation Area and Moffats Swamp Nature Reserve [Fire Management Strategy](#).
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the [NPWS Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Lower North Coast Region.
- 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 Nelson Bay Office on 02 4984 8200 or at Level 1, 12B Teramby Road, Nelson Bay NSW or Locked Mail Bag 99, Nelson Bay NSW 2315.

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**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.

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