



Plan of Management



Keverstone National Park and State Conservation Area

Keeverstone National Park and State Conservation Area Plan of Management

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

March 2013

This plan was adopted by the Minister for the Environment on the 11th March 2013

Acknowledgments

The NPWS acknowledges that these reserves are in the traditional country of the Wiradjuri people.

This plan of management is based on a draft plan prepared by the staff of the Southern Ranges Region of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), part of the Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

For additional information or any inquires about this park or this plan of management, contact the NPWS Queanbeyan Area Office at 11 Farrer St, Queanbeyan NSW 2620 or by telephone on (02) 62297166.

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**KEVERSTONE NATIONAL PARK AND
STATE CONSERVATION AREA**

PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

March 2013

FOREWORD

Keeverstone National Park and State Conservation Area are situated approximately 40 kilometres north-west of Crookwell on the central tablelands of NSW. The first section of the park was reserved in 1979 and now covers 1,860 hectares, while the state conservation area covers 1,164 hectares.

Keeverstone National Park and State Conservation Area contain a number of significant vegetation communities, including an area of White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland Endangered Ecological Community. A large variety of native fauna, including many arboreal mammal species and birds recognised as declining woodland species, have been recorded in these parks as well as several Aboriginal artifact scatters.

The New South Wales *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* requires that a plan of management be prepared for each national park and state conservation area. A draft plan of management for Keeverstone National Park and State Conservation Area was placed on public exhibition from 9 September until 12 December 2011. The submission received was carefully considered before adopting this plan.

The plan contains a number of actions to achieve the NSW 2021 goal to protect our natural environment, including strategies to assist the recovery of threatened species and ecological communities, to undertake planting in previously disturbed areas, to control weeds and pest animals, and to minimise erosion. To achieve the goal of enhancing recreation opportunities additional facilities are proposed, including a car-based camping area, two picnic areas and an interpretive walking track.

This plan of management establishes the scheme of operations for Keeverstone National Park and State Conservation Area. In accordance with section 73B of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, this plan of management is hereby adopted.



Robyn Parker MP
Minister for the Environment

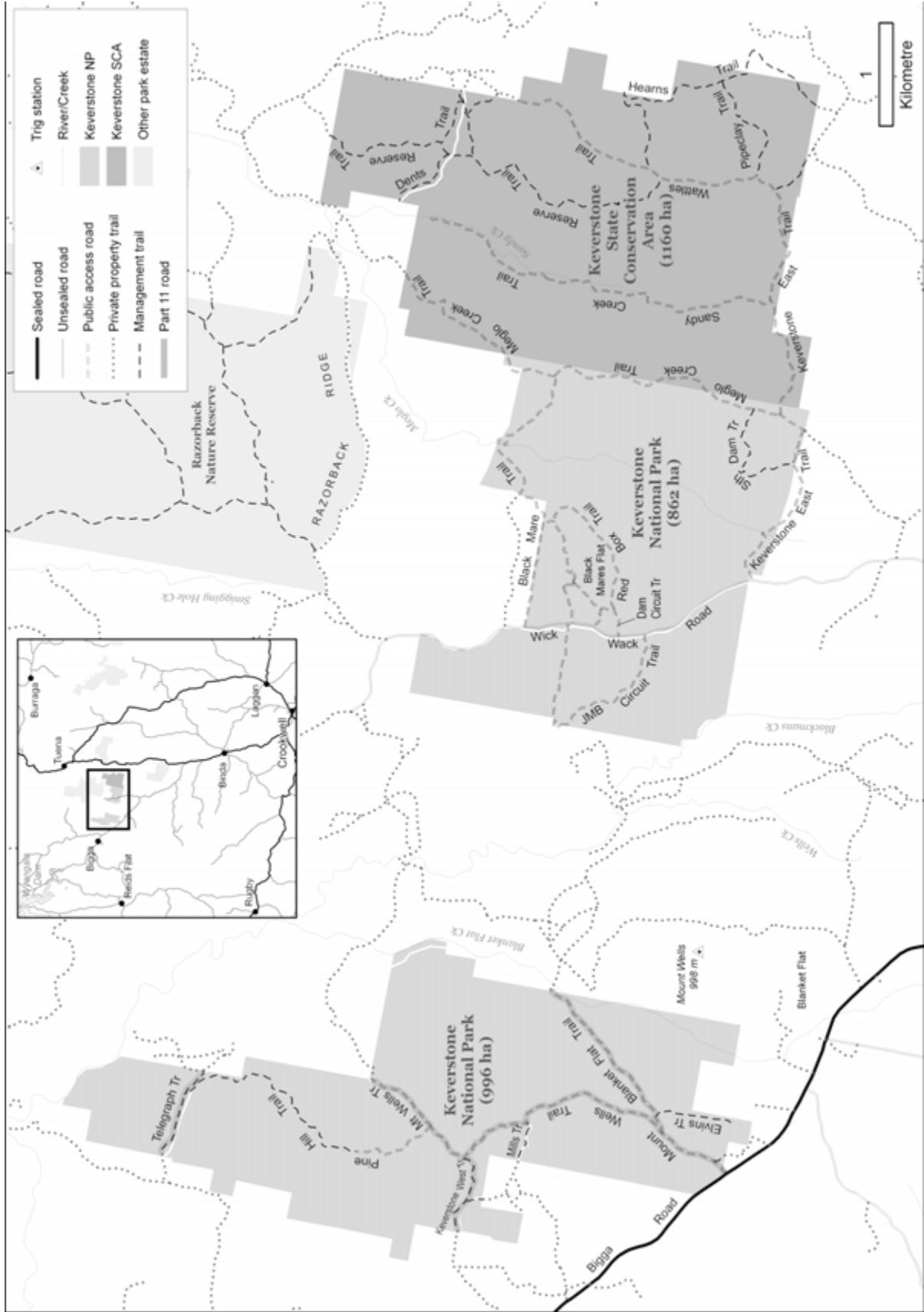
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Maps of the Park

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MAP OF THE PARK



1. LOCATION, GAZETTAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Keverstone National Park and Keverstone State Conservation Area are located approximately 40 kilometres north-west of Crookwell and 4 kilometres east of Bigga on the central tablelands of NSW. Keverstone National Park is comprised of two separate sections with a total area of 1,860 hectares, and Keverstone State Conservation Area has an area of 1,164 hectares. The national park and state conservation area are collectively referred to as “the Park” in this draft plan of management.

The western portion of the Park was reserved as Keverstone National Park on the 27th March, 2009. Within this section of the Park are lands which are vested in the Minister under Part 11 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act). These are the Mount Wells Trail, Blanket Flat Trail, Keverstone West Trail and Telegraph Trail which provide a continuation of access to neighbouring private land (refer to map). Part of the eastern portion of the Park was reserved as Keverstone National Park and part was reserved as Keverstone State Conservation Area on 25th February, 2011.

The Park lies within the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion, one of the 85 bioregions defined in Australia on the basis of common vegetation and land systems. Over 58% of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion has been cleared for agriculture and development while less than 10% lies within conservation reserves. Much of the land surrounding the Park is used for sheep and cattle production.

The Park was previously comprised of Keverstone State Forest, Crown and Leasehold land. It was recommended for addition to the protected area system as a result of the Goulburn Comprehensive Regional Assessment (CRA) to enhance the protection of a number of significant vegetation communities in this poorly conserved region.

The Park is located less than 1 kilometre south of Razorback Nature Reserve (2,595 hectares) and is connected to it by vegetated private land. Nuggetty State Conservation Area (1,148 hectares) is approximately 3 kilometres to the east, and Gillindich Nature Reserve (1,253 hectares) is approximately 5 kilometres to the south. These reserves, plus a number of smaller reserves located within 25 kilometres of the Park (Mount Davies Nature Reserve, Burwood Creek Nature Reserve and Thalabar State Conservation Area) were also reserved as a result of the Goulburn CRA. Abercrombie River National Park (19,402 hectares) is located approximately 20 kilometres to the east of the Park.

The Park is within the geographical area of the Upper Lachlan Shire Council, Lachlan Catchment Management Authority, Pejar and Cowra Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Southern Tablelands Bushfire Management Zone and the Tablelands Livestock, Health and Pest Authority.

2. MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

2.1 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The management of national parks in NSW is in the context of a legislative and policy framework, primarily the NPW Act and Regulation, the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act) and the policies of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

Other legislation, international agreements and charters may also apply to management of the area. In particular, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EPA Act) requires the assessment and mitigation of the environmental impacts of any works proposed in this plan. The Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) also applies in relation to actions that may impact on migratory and threatened species listed under that Act.

A plan of management is a statutory document under the NPW Act. Once the Minister has adopted a plan, no operations may be undertaken within Keverstone National Park and Keverstone State Conservation Area except in accordance with the plan. The plan will also apply to any future additions to the Park. Should management strategies or works proposed for the Park or any additions that are not consistent with the plan occur, an amendment to this plan or a new plan will be prepared and exhibited for public comment.

2.2 MANAGEMENT PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES

2.2.1 National Parks

National Parks are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas containing outstanding or representative ecosystems, natural or cultural features or phenomena that provide opportunities for public appreciation and inspiration and sustainable visitor use.

Under the Act (section 30E), national parks are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, 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, enjoyment and understanding of the reserve's 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; and
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

2.2.2 State Conservation Areas

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; that are capable of providing opportunities for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment, the sustainable use of buildings and structures, or research; and that are capable of providing opportunities for uses permitted under other provisions of the Act.

Under the 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; and
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

The NPW Act requires a review of the classification of state conservation areas every 5 years in consultation with the Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992*. In the long term it is intended for Keverstone State Conservation Area to become a national park. Accordingly the management principles applying to national parks will be applied as far as possible to the state conservation area in the interim.

There is currently a petroleum title application and a mineral exploration licence over Keverstone State Conservation Area. The lead authority for mining, mineral exploration and mine rehabilitation is the Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services (DTIRIS). A memorandum of understanding between NPWS and DTIRIS (Minerals) describes the arrangements associated with exploration and mining in state conservation areas. DTIRIS must ensure that any exploration and mining proposals in state conservation areas comply with all statutory requirements, including environmental impact assessments and all necessary approvals.

2.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Keverstone National Park and State Conservation Area are considered to be of significance for:

- Biological Values

The Park contains a number of significant vegetation communities, including an area of White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland Endangered Ecological Community. It also contains one plant species listed as vulnerable under the TSC

Act, and four plant species that are considered to be significant because they have limited distribution or are uncommon (Porteners, 2008).

The Park supports a large variety of native fauna. It is rich in arboreal mammal species. Nine animal species listed under the TSC Act have been recorded in the Park and it provides suitable habitat for several other threatened species. Many of the birds identified within the Park are recognised as declining woodland species (Rhind, 2008b).

- Aboriginal Heritage

Several Aboriginal sites have been recorded within the Park. These sites consist of artefact scatters of varying density. The majority of sites indicate travelling routes however one site in Keverstone National Park is of a higher density and indicates the presence of a camp.

- Historic Heritage

There are the remains of a wire telephone line in Keverstone National Park, comprising timber poles. The heritage significance of the line has not been formally assessed.

- Recreation

The Park provides opportunities for recreation activities such as driving, cycling, bushwalking, camping, picnics, bird watching and horse riding.

2.4 SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT DIRECTIONS

In addition to the general principles for the management of national parks and state conservation areas, management of the Park will focus on the:

- Protection of the range of plant and animal communities within the Park, with particular attention to minimising further fragmentation, enhancing connectivity to other remnants, and the maintenance of populations of threatened or regionally significant species and communities.
- Protection of Aboriginal cultural values in consultation with the local Aboriginal community.
- Co-operation with the NSW Rural Fire Service and the local community regarding fire management activities and fire suppression in the Park.
- Control of introduced plant and animal species, including through cooperative programs with neighbours and the Livestock Health and Pest Authority.
- Encouragement of appropriate use of the Park.
- Provision of low key facilities.

3. VALUES

The location, landforms and plant and animal communities of an area have determined how it has been used and valued. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people place values on natural areas, including aesthetic, social, spiritual and recreational values. These values may be attached to the landscape as a whole or to individual components, for example to plant and animal species used by Aboriginal people. This plan of management aims to conserve both natural and cultural values. For reasons of clarity and document usefulness, various aspects of natural heritage, cultural heritage, threats and on-going use are dealt with individually, but their inter-relationships are recognised.

3.1 GEOLOGY, LANDSCAPE AND HYDROLOGY

The landscape of the Park was formed by the uplifting of the underlying Lachlan Fold Belt which was laid down in horizontal beds about 350 million years ago. A broad bed of mixed volcanics and metamorphics of Silurian Age lies below the eastern portion of the Park, resulting in silty sandstone, siltstone, greywacke, phyllite, shale, slate and quartzite, with granites dominating in western portion of the Park (Porteners, 2008).

The Park is characterised by high rolling hills and undulating ridges up to 920 metres above sea level, dissected by broad valleys and steep gullies. The lowest altitude in the Park is approximately 500 metres above sea level, where the northern boundary of the Park adjoins Blackmans Creek.

The Park contains part of Blanket Flat Creek which flows into Blackmans Creek, and part of Meglo Creek and its tributary Sandy Creek, all of which flow into the Abercrombie River and form part of the Upper Lachlan Catchment Area.

Soil erosion is present in the Park, particularly within gully systems and areas of disturbance, for example, the trail network.

3.2 NATIVE PLANTS

The region is characterised by a pattern of extensively cleared forest and woodland across most of the landscape. Much of the remaining vegetation occurs in very small patches or as scattered trees. This fragmentation is largely the result of past clearing for agricultural purposes (Resource and Conservation Assessment Council, 2002).

The Park is one of a number of substantial vegetated areas in the region, and contributes to connectivity with other reserves of significant size in the vicinity.

Three vegetation communities have been identified in the Park (Porteners, 2008), ranging structurally from open woodlands with tussock grass or shrub understoreys on higher altitude slopes and ridges, to tall open woodlands and forest with grass and tall shrub understoreys growing on the more fertile clay-loam soils of the foot slopes, flats and gullies. A further survey by biodiversity conservation staff in 2008

identified a small area of White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland in south-western corner of the western portion of Keverstone National Park, and on the eastern boundary of Keverstone State Conservation Area, north of the Hearn's Trail. This community is listed as an endangered ecological community under both the TSC Act, and the Commonwealth EPBC Act. There is a Draft National Recovery Plan for this community.

Table 1 provides a summary of the vegetation communities located within the Park.

Table 1: Summary of vegetation communities located within Keverstone National Park and State Conservation Area.

Community	Dominant Species	Structure	Geomorphology
Apple Box – Red Stringybark Open Forest	<p>Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i> (Apple Box), <i>E. macrorhyncha</i> (Red Stringybark)</p> <p>Associated Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> (Ribbon Gum)- (creek gullies), <i>E. dives</i> (Broad Leaf Peppermint)</p> <p>Understorey: <i>Acacia dealbata</i> subsp. <i>dealbata</i>, <i>Cassinia longifolia</i>, <i>Pteridium esculentum</i>, <i>Microleana stipoides</i> var. <i>stipoides</i>, <i>Austrodanthonia racemosa</i> var. <i>racemosa</i>.</p>	Tall open woodland to open forest with grass/shrub understorey	Foot slopes, creek gullies, lowland and flats. The largest area is south of Blanket Flat Trail in the western portion of the Park.
Scribbly Gum – Red Stringybark – Long Leaved Box Woodland	<p>Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus rossii</i> (Scribbly Gum), <i>E. macrorhyncha</i>, <i>E. goniocalyx</i> (Long Leaved Box)</p> <p>Associated Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus dives</i>, <i>E. bridgesiana</i></p> <p>Understorey: <i>Joycea pallida</i>, <i>Cassinia longifolia</i>, <i>Lomandra filiformis</i> subsp. <i>coriacea</i>, <i>Poa sieberiana</i> var. <i>cyanophylla</i>, <i>Hibbertia obtusifolia</i>, <i>Leptospermum brevipes</i>.</p>	Woodland to open woodland with tussock grass understorey	Mid level to high rocky hills, slopes, foot slopes, ridges and broad crests. This community covers the majority of the Park.
Black Cypress Pine – Tumbledown Red Gum Open Woodland	<p>Canopy: <i>Callitris endlicheri</i> (Black Cypress Pine), <i>Eucalyptus dealbata</i> (Tumbledown Red Gum)</p> <p>Associated Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus rossii</i>, <i>E. goniocalyx</i></p> <p>Understorey: <i>Calytrix tetragonal</i>, <i>Lepidosperma laterale</i>, <i>Cheilanthes sieberi</i> subsp. <i>seiberi</i>, <i>Austrodanthonia racemosa</i> var. <i>racemosa</i>, <i>Microleana stipoides</i> var. <i>stipoides</i></p>	Woodland to open woodland with grass, dry shrub or heath understorey	Rocky hills, ridges and crests of the granite areas. Western portion of the Park.
White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland	<p>Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus melliodora</i> (Yellow Box), <i>E. blakelyi</i> (Blakely's Red Gum), <i>E. macrorhyncha</i>, <i>E. bridgesiana</i></p> <p>Associated canopy: <i>Acacia dealbata</i>, <i>Leptospermum</i> sp.</p> <p>Understorey: <i>Austrodanthonia</i> sp., <i>Microlaena stipoides</i>, <i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i></p>	Grassy Woodland	Gently undulating lower slopes and valleys. South-western corner of western portion of the NP and on eastern boundary of the SCA.

The Yass Daisy (*Ammobium craspedioides*) is found in the Park. This species is listed as vulnerable under the TSC Act. Other threatened species that could potentially occur within the habitats described for the Park are listed in Appendix 1 (Porteners, 2008).

The Threatened Species Priorities Action Statement (PAS) contains strategies for the recovery of endangered ecological communities and threatened species. Strategies for the Yass Daisy include weed control in and adjacent to populations. Strategies for the Box-Gum Woodlands include retention of fallen timber, and pest animal and weed control using methods that do not disturb native species within the remnant.

Several species located within the Park are considered to be significant. *Gonocarpus longifolius* is listed as a Rare or Threatened Australian Plant (Briggs and Leigh, 1996), due to its limited distribution. Honeypots (*Acrotriche serrulata*), Black-eyed Susan (*Tetralochebauerifolia*), Weeping Boree (*Acacia vestita*), and a Snowgrass *Poa sieberiana* var. *cyanophylla* have conservation significance as they have limited distribution in NSW or are uncommon (Porteners, 2008).

These vegetation communities are considered to have high conservation value due to their remnant status in NSW, for example, the Applebox – Red Stringybark Open Forest is under represented in the reserve system in NSW (Porteners, 2008).

The most significant threats to the ecological condition of the Park are hazard reduction burning of drought stressed vegetation, competition from weeds, and impacts from feral animals, particularly rabbits and goats (Porteners, 2008). (Refer also to Section 4.)

3.3 NATIVE ANIMALS

The Park supports a large variety of native fauna, with eighteen mammal species, nineteen reptiles, eight amphibians and sixty-one species of birds recorded (Rhind, 2008a; Rhind, 2008b; Daly, 2009). Approximately one quarter of the bird species recorded within the Park are either threatened or are regionally declining species, hence the Park is valuable as habitat. The Park also contains at least four hollow-dependant, arboreal mammal species which have limited habitat in an extensively cleared agricultural region (Rhind, 2008b).

The Gang-gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*), Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*), Scarlet Robin (*Petroica boodang*), Speckled Warbler (*Pyrrholaemus sagittatus*) and Varied Sitella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*) are known to occur within the Park and are all listed as vulnerable under the TSC Act. The presence of Powerful Owls and the identification of a high density of prey species (Greater Gliders) signal that the Park is likely to be significant habitat for Powerful Owls (Rhind, 2008b).

Preliminary scat analysis has indicated that the Spotted-tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*) is located within the Park. The Eastern False Pipistrelle (*Falsistrellus tasmaniensis*), Eastern Bentwing Bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis*) and Rosenberg's Goanna (*Varanus rosenbergi*) have also been recorded within the Park. These species are listed as vulnerable under the TSC Act. Other threatened fauna

species may also be present. Threatened fauna species predicted to occur within the Park (based on information in Rhind a and b, 2008) are listed in Appendix 1.

The PAS and recovery plans contain strategies for the recovery of threatened animal species. A recovery plan has been prepared for the Large Forest Owls, which includes the Powerful Owl. Continued management of habitat values, such as hollow bearing trees, fallen logs, and open understorey vegetation; and weed and feral animal control is required to limit further decline of threatened species, and of woodland birds towards threatened status.

3.4 ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

Aboriginal communities have an association and connection to the land. The land and water within a landscape are central to Aboriginal spirituality and contribute to Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal communities associate natural resources with the use and enjoyment of foods and medicines, caring for the land, passing on cultural knowledge, kinship systems and strengthening social bonds. Aboriginal heritage and connection to nature are inseparable from each other and need to be managed in an integrated manner across the landscape.

Keeverstone National Park lies within the cultural country of the Wiradjuri people, and is likely to have been the shared country of the Gundungurra and Ngunnawal people (NSW Aboriginal Land Council et al., 2009). The Gundungurra Tribal Council Aboriginal Corporation has registered a native title claim over the area in which the Park is located. The western portion of the Park is within the boundaries of the area of the Cowra Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and the eastern portion is within the boundaries of the Pejar LALC.

An Aboriginal site survey along the trail network in the Park was conducted by NPWS staff between January and March, 2009. Approximately 31 kilometres of trail was surveyed, which was mainly located along ridgelines, but also crossed gullies and travelled along creek lines. Sites identified during the survey included artefact scatters of varying density. During Aboriginal community consultation it was suggested that the majority of sites consisted of individual artefacts indicating travelling routes, however one site is of a higher density and indicates the presence of a camp. These sites describe a cultural landscape associated with Aboriginal usage patterns and movements or traditional pathways across country (pers.comm. Rod Wellington, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer, DECCW).

Some place names within the Park indicate Aboriginal association with the area, for example, 'Blanket Flat Creek' suggests a distribution point of blankets during the time of the Aboriginal Protection Board (pers.comm. Rod Wellington).

The key threats to the Aboriginal heritage values are fire and fire management operations (see section 4.2) and the maintenance of the trail network.

3.5 HISTORIC HERITAGE

Prior to gazettal, the Park comprised Keeverstone State Forest, Crown land, and leasehold lands. Several permissive occupancies were held over the Crown land areas.

There are the remains of a wire telephone line in the western portion of the Park, comprising timber poles. Most sections of wire are on the ground and require removal where there is the potential for it to be a hazard to animals, walkers and vehicles. The poles are in varying states of deterioration. The heritage significance of the line has not been assessed formally, however, informal discussions with the adjoining landowner, the Crookwell Historical Society and others have been undertaken. Fire is the major threat to the telephone line, due to the wooden fabric (see section 4.2).

There are no known historic buildings or plantings of cultural significance located within the Park.

3.6 RECREATION, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Visitor opportunities provided in national parks should be ecologically sustainable and contribute to visitor understanding and appreciation of the park. The level of facilities provided will reflect current and expected use levels.

Currently the level of use of the Park is low and there are no visitor facilities provided other than some 30 kilometres of roads which are primarily of 4WD standard. There are also limited opportunities for 2WD access.

Other recreational opportunities in the region include Upper Lachlan Shire Council campsites along the Abercrombie River; camping and bushwalking in Abercrombie River National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park; camping, picnicking bushwalking and caving at Wombeyan Caves Karst Conservation Reserve; camping, cabins, picnicking, water-based activities and bushwalking at Grabine Lakeside State Park and Wyangala Waters State Parks, picnicking at Pejar Dam; and bird watching (including a bird hide located in Crookwell).

The level of use of the Park is unlikely to change significantly as it is not located near major or growing population centres or along a major travel route, and does not have any unusual features that are likely to attract tourists. However the development of some low key visitor facilities is considered desirable to provide for the enjoyment, appreciation and understanding of the value of our natural and cultural heritage.

Research into the natural and cultural features of the Park and their maintenance requirements is important as it provides an effective framework for making informed management decisions. Research to date has included flora and fauna surveys, Aboriginal site survey and consultation, consultation regarding historical heritage significance and assessments of fuel hazard.

4. ISSUES

4.1 WEEDS AND PEST ANIMALS

A weed is defined in this plan as any plant species not native to the Park. Weeds can be listed as noxious weeds, weeds of national significance and environmental weeds. The *Noxious Weeds Act, (NW Act) 1993* places an obligation upon public authorities to control noxious weeds on land that they occupy to the extent necessary to prevent such weeds spreading to adjoining lands. The NPWS also has a priority to control environmental weeds which threaten natural habitats.

The NPWS South West Slopes Region Pest Management Strategy (NPWS, 2008) identifies priority pest species and programs for the Region. A pest plan has not been prepared for the Park, however by following this same process the prioritisation of pest species programs in the Park may be established and directly linked into the regional pest strategy. This strategic approach will consider such issues as the control of weeds in endangered ecological communities, threatened/endangered species habitat and areas of community/neighbour concern.

Programs have been undertaken in the Park to control Serrated Tussock (*Nassella trichotoma*), Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*), Thistles such as Spear Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Paterson's Curse (*Echium plantagineum*), and St Johns Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), all of which exist in low to medium densities. Serrated Tussock, Blackberry, Paterson's Curse and St Johns Wort are all declared noxious weeds, under the NW Act, and Serrated Tussock and Blackberry are also declared Weeds of National Significance.

Infestations are generally associated with disturbed areas such as from clearing native vegetation, stock, fence lines, fire trails, and in gullies and creeks. Priority treatment areas include the White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland, which also contains the Yass Daisy.

A pest animal is defined in this plan as any animal species not native to the Park. Pest animals within the Park and on adjoining land are of concern because they have the potential to have detrimental effects on native animal communities through competition for resources, predation, disturbance and transmission of diseases. Pest animals can also impact on native vegetation and have the potential to have an adverse economic impact on neighbouring properties.

Pest animals recorded in the Park include Foxes, Goats, Sheep, Deer, Pigs, Dogs, and Rabbits. The species list has been derived from baseline sand plot monitoring, fauna survey, and track identification. All of these species except Sheep have been listed as Key Threatening Processes under the TSC Act, and a Threat Abatement Plan has been endorsed for foxes. Rabbits, Goats, Foxes and Pigs are also listed as a key threatening process under the EPBC Act. Pigs, Dogs and Rabbits are declared pests under the *Rural Lands Protection Act, 1989*.

Control programs for these species are implemented as needed in line with the Regional Pest Management Strategy (NPWS, 2008). The highest densities of pest animals occur within the north of the western portion of the Park. A Goat cull

undertaken in the Park and adjacent properties in 2006 resulted in the removal of 115 Goats and 1 Pig.

The Park is surrounded primarily by cattle and sheep properties. There is some evidence of straying stock, which needs to be addressed with neighbouring landholders as required.

4.2 FIRE

The primary fire management objectives of the NPWS are to protect life and property and community assets from the adverse impacts of fire, whilst managing fire regimes to maintain and protect biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Fire is a natural feature of many environments and is essential for the survival of some plant communities. However, inappropriate fire regimes can lead to loss of particular plant and animal species and communities, and high frequency fires have been listed as a key threatening process under the TSC Act.

Little is known of the fire regime in the Park prior to European settlement of the area. Traditional fire practices of Aboriginal people in NSW have not been well researched and are therefore poorly understood.

There is limited information on ignitions, prescribed burns and wildfires for the Park. The fire frequency for the Park and the surrounding area is low. Recent fire within the Park is limited to an escaped hazard reduction burn in Razorback Nature Reserve occurring in March 1997 which burnt sixteen hectares. Lightning strikes during dry electrical storms have been the major cause of fires within the northern half of Upper Lachlan LGA. The majority of these storms occur between November and February. Other fire threats are from arson, escaped hazard reduction burning and accidental ignitions on nearby properties or public roads.

A separate (map-based) fire management strategy (NPWS, 2010) has been prepared for the Park. The fire management strategy outlines the recent fire history of the Park, key assets within and adjoining the Park including sites of natural and cultural heritage value, fire management zones, and fire control advantages such as management trails and water supply points. Strategies to protect private and community assets, cultural heritage sites, significant vegetation communities, and threatened species have been identified in the fire management strategy.

There are few assets that are vulnerable to fire within the Park, however the Park adjoins areas of private grazing land with associated houses and outbuildings.

Fuel monitoring sites have been established in the Park to provide baseline information on fire fuel levels.

Windrows, established when the trail network was originally constructed, are located on most trails within the Park. A program to reduce fuel in targeted windrows has commenced.

NPWS maintains cooperative arrangements with surrounding landowners and Rural Fire Service (RFS) brigades and is an active participant in the Southern Tablelands

Bush Fire Management Committee. Cooperative arrangements include trail maintenance, asset protection, fuel management, support for neighbour fire management efforts and information sharing.

4.3 ISOLATION AND FRAGMENTATION

The area surrounding the Park has been extensively cleared, which has resulted in a high loss of biodiversity and fragmentation of habitat in the region. Long term conservation of biodiversity depends upon the protection, enhancement and connection of remaining habitat across the landscape, incorporating vegetation remnants on both public and private lands. Nearby vegetated areas contribute to the habitat values of the Park and provide ecological corridors to other vegetated areas. Maintaining the integrity of the remaining habitat within the Park and, where possible, linking this to adjacent areas of vegetated land to facilitate wildlife corridors is important in ensuring long term viability of the Park's biological values.

4.4 CLIMATE CHANGE

Anthropogenic climate change has been listed as a key threatening process under the TSC Act. The NSW Climate Impact Profile (DECCW 2010) for the southern tablelands outlines projected changes in climate and the physical responses expected to these changes. The projections for the Southern Tablelands are that temperatures are virtually certain to rise, there is likely to be a substantial increase in summer rainfall but conversely, winter rainfall is projected to decrease by up to 50%.

Many parts of the Southern Tablelands are likely to become significantly drier than in the past, especially during the winter. Water stress, particularly during drought years, is likely to kill many trees in woodlands, and stressed trees are also likely to die from additional pressure from insect attack and disease. Such impacts are likely to be most severe for resident species or those with low dispersal capacity including many threatened woodland birds such as Gang-gang Cockatoos and Diamond Firetails, and small mammals. The seasonality of growth in the tablelands is likely to intensify. This change is likely to increase the browsing and grazing of herbivores on grasslands and grassy woodland during drier winter periods. Summer-growing grasses such as wallaby grass, red grass and weeds such as St John's Wort are likely to expand and displace other native species such as poa tussocks (DECCW 2010).

These changes are likely to lead to greater intensity and frequency of fires, more severe droughts, reduced river runoff and water availability, regional flooding, and increased erosion.

Programs to reduce the pressures arising from other threats, such as habitat fragmentation, weeds and pest animal species and fire, will help reduce the severity of the effects of climate change.

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5. IMPLEMENTATION

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Priority
<p>1 On-Park Ecological Conservation</p> <p>The Park protects a number of key vegetation communities, including an area of the White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland Endangered Ecological Community.</p> <p>The Park contains one plant (the Yass Daisy) and seven animal species listed as vulnerable under the TSC Act. The Park provides suitable habitat for several other threatened species.</p> <p>The Park is rich in arboreal mammal species. Many of the birds identified within the Park are recognised as declining woodland species eg. Rufous Whistler (<i>Pachycephala rufiventris</i>).</p> <p>Parts of the Park, particularly gully systems, have the potential to erode.</p> <p>Research to date provides a good basis for management, however further research will expand the knowledge base.</p>	<p>Landscape and catchment values are protected.</p> <p>Native plant and animal species and communities are conserved.</p> <p>Negative impacts on threatened taxa are stable or diminishing.</p> <p>Research outcomes will enable improved management decisions to be made.</p> <p>The Park is managed as part of the broader environment.</p>	<p>1.1 Continue existing fire, pest and weed management programs to increase the Park's ability to cope with future disturbances, including climate change.</p> <p>1.2 Protect endangered ecological communities and threatened species through implementing relevant strategies in the PAS and recovery plans.</p> <p>1.3 Place fallen logs along roadsides near the Box-gum woodland community to ensure vehicles do not access known locations of Yass Daisy, do not mow or slash understorey near known Yass Daisy locations, and undertake weed control in and adjacent to populations of Yass Daisy (taking care to spray or dig out only target weeds), and monitor known Yass Daisy locations every two to three years to determine extent and to identify population changes.</p> <p>1.4 Do not widen roads or move debris into the Box-Gum woodland community during road maintenance activities.</p> <p>1.5 Monitor natural regeneration of canopy species in Box-Gum woodland in Keverstone SCA, and prepare rehabilitation plan if required.</p> <p>1.6 Identify areas of erosion, targeting gully systems. Monitor and undertake remedial actions if necessary.</p> <p>1.7 Encourage further survey work of fauna and flora species. Priorities for research include:</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Priority
<p>2 Cultural Heritage</p> <p>The Park is located within the area of the Pejar and Cowra Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC). The Park is also located within the area of a registered native title claim by the Gundungurra Tribal Council Aboriginal Corporation.</p> <p>The Gundungurra Aboriginal Heritage Association Inc., Bila Yalbinga and the Pejar LALC have been involved in consultation regarding significance and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage within the Park. An invitation has also been extended to the Cowra LALC.</p> <p>In addition, the Onerwal and Pejar LALC's were consulted during the Goulburn Comprehensive Regional Assessment process, to explain the objectives and intended outcomes of the assessment and to seek the LALC's consideration and input (Resource and Conservation Assessment Council, 2002).</p>	<p>Aboriginal and historic places and values are identified and protected.</p> <p>Aboriginal people are involved in management of the Aboriginal cultural values of the Park.</p> <p>Negative impacts on Aboriginal and historic heritage values are stable or diminishing.</p> <p>Understanding of the cultural values of the Park is improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Threatened flora species survey. ◆ Quoll surveys to assess population density and conservation status. ◆ Bat surveys to identify species present and assess conservation status. ◆ Surveys of glider population density and the predator/prey relationship with large forest owls. 	
		<p>2.1 Consult and involve relevant Aboriginal community organisations in the management of Aboriginal sites, places and values, including interpretation of places or values.</p> <p>2.2 Assess potential impacts on Aboriginal and historic sites prior to all works. Obtain all necessary approvals, such as an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit, where works such as trail maintenance have the potential to impact on sites.</p> <p>2.3 Encourage further research into the Aboriginal heritage values of the Park with the Aboriginal community.</p> <p>2.4 Coil telephone wire that has fallen to the ground and attach it to the poles, due to the potential hazard risk.</p> <p>2.5 Undertake a heritage assessment of the telephone line to determine its significance and future management. Pending the assessment, retain the remaining intact wiring and poles associated with the</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Low</p> <p>High</p> <p>Low</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Priority
<p>Preliminary survey work for Aboriginal sites has been conducted along the trail network and targeted landform features. Sites identified consist of artefact scatters of varying density. The majority of sites indicate travelling routes, however one site is of a higher density and indicates the presence of a camp.</p> <p>The remains of a wire telephone line are located within the Park. The poles are in varying states of deterioration. The heritage significance of the line has not been formally assessed.</p>		<p>telephone line in situ.</p>	

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Priority
<p>3 Visitor Use and Services</p> <p>There are currently no facilities within the Park other than the road and trail network. These provide opportunities for driving, cycling, bushwalking, bird watching and horse riding.</p> <p>The opportunity exists for the provision of low key camping and picnic facilities within the Park that provide opportunities to enjoy, appreciate and understand the value of our natural and cultural heritage. The level of facilities will reflect the use levels.</p> <p>Some illegal use of the Park is evident, for example hunting.</p> <p>Promotion of visitor understanding and appreciation of the values of the Park is important for minimising damaging activities and maximising visitor enjoyment.</p>	<p>Visitor use is appropriate and ecologically sustainable.</p> <p>Negative impacts of visitors on Park values are stable or diminishing.</p> <p>Visitor use and services encourage appreciation of the Park's values.</p> <p>The local community is aware of the significance of the area and of management programs.</p>	<p>3.1 Allow public vehicle access on the roads shown on the map in this plan. Public vehicle access is not permitted on management trails.</p> <p>3.2 Allow minimum impact bush camping in the Park at locations that are more than 200 metres from roads.</p> <p>3.3 Allow vehicle-based camping adjacent to the large dam on the Dam Circuit Trail in the eastern portion of the Park. Controls on vehicle access, designated camping sites and toilets will be instituted if there is evidence of impacts.</p> <p>3.4 Allow cycling and horse riding on roads and management trails only. Overnight camping with horses will not be permitted in the Park.</p> <p>3.5 Develop picnic facilities at the Meglo Creek Crossing on Black Mares Flat Trail in the eastern portion of the Park.</p> <p>3.6 Develop a picnic area at the junction of Mt Wells and Pine Hill Trails in the western section of Keverstone NP. This area would be dry weather 2WD accessible.</p> <p>3.7 Investigate suitability of constructing a walking track, interpreting the diversity of vegetation communities in the Park. Potential locations include the JMB circuit trail (eastern section).</p> <p>3.8 Provide interpretative and minimal impact use information signs at the Park entrance off Bigga Road and at visitor facility areas.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Priority
		<p>3.9 Prepare a Park brochure, and provide information via the internet.</p> <p>3.10 Permit organised group visits, such as commercial tours and non-commercial groups, subject to limits on numbers and other conditions if necessary to minimise impacts.</p> <p>3.11 Monitor visitor use and impacts, and undertake mitigation works and/or close trails if unacceptable impacts occur.</p> <p>3.12 Continue to undertake law enforcement patrols and to work with neighbours and law enforcement agencies to control illegal activities.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Low</p>
<p>4 Community Programs and Education</p> <p>The area surrounding the Park has been extensively cleared, which has resulted in a high loss of biodiversity and fragmentation of the remaining habitat within the Park and, where possible, linking this to adjacent areas of bushland to facilitate wildlife corridors is important in ensuring long term viability of the Park's biological values.</p>	<p>Park neighbours support conservation of native vegetation near the Park.</p> <p>The local community is aware of the significance of the Park and of park management programs.</p>	<p>4.1 Liaise with neighbours to encourage the retention and appropriate management of key habitats and corridors adjacent to the Park.</p> <p>4.2 Foster community engagement to build community pride in new parks, eg. media promotion, targeting interest groups, Discovery activities.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Priority
<p>5 Weeds and Pest Animals</p> <p>Weeds present in the Park include Serrated Tussock, Blackberry, Paterson's Curse, Thistles, and St Johns Wort. These occur in areas associated with disturbance such as fire trails and in gullies. Treatment commenced in December 2008.</p> <p>Feral fauna species recorded in the Park include Foxes, Goats, Sheep, Deer, Pigs, Dogs, and Rabbits. Consultation with pest officers and local knowledge, suggest that the feral animals shelter in the Park and utilise the adjacent private property for water. The highest densities of pest animals occur in the north of the western section of the Park.</p> <p>There is some evidence of straying stock, which needs to be addressed with neighbouring landholders as required.</p>	<p>Introduced plants and animals are controlled and where possible eliminated.</p> <p>Negative impacts of weeds and pest animals on Park values and neighbouring lands are stable or diminishing.</p> <p>Weed and pest control programs are undertaken where appropriate in consultation with neighbours.</p>	<p>5.1 Manage introduced species in accordance with the Regional Pest Managements Strategy. Priority will be given to control programs for Serrated Tussock, Blackberry, Goats, Foxes and Pigs, particularly where they threaten endangered ecological communities, the integrity of native communities, or have the potential to spread rapidly.</p> <p>5.2 Treat new occurrences of highly invasive weed species with the potential for significant impacts on Park.</p> <p>5.3 Seek the cooperation of neighbours and the local Livestock Health and Pest Authority in implementing weed and pest control programs.</p> <p>5.4 Undertake planting of canopy and <i>Acacia</i> species in previously disturbed areas, where serrated tussock is present, to assist with weed control in these areas.</p> <p>5.5 Undertake construction and maintenance of boundary fences with neighbours to exclude stock from the Park. Fencing assistance may be provided in accordance with NPWS policy.</p> <p>5.6 Minimise crossing of private property to reduce the transmission of weeds into the eastern portions of the Park.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<p>6 Fire Management</p> <p>A Fire Management Strategy has been recently prepared for the Park.</p> <p>The Park is located within the area of the Southern Tablelands Zone Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC).</p> <p>Several private assets are located within close proximity of the Park boundary. Park assets include cultural heritage sites, proposed visitor facilities and significant vegetation communities. Windrows are located on most trails within the Park, and may increase the risk of spotting.</p> <p>The fire history of the Park is unknown. It is presumed that the Park has not been affected by a significant wildfire for several decades. Ecological burns should only be introduced into the Park if there is a demonstrated biodiversity decline, however, long-unburnt areas are ecologically significant, as they are rare. Further research will assist in determining appropriate fire regimes for the Park's vegetation communities.</p>	<p>Life, property and natural and cultural values are protected from fire.</p> <p>Fire regimes are appropriate for conservation of native plant and animal communities.</p> <p>Negative impacts of fire on natural and cultural heritage values are stable or diminishing.</p>	<p>6.1 Implement the Park Fire Management Strategy, including establishment of fuel reduced zones around Park facilities and cultural sites.</p> <p>6.2 Participate in the Southern Tablelands Zone BFMC. Assess cooperative fire management programs with adjacent landholders and implement where appropriate, in consultation with BFMC.</p> <p>6.3 Suppress all unplanned fires in the Park as quickly as possible.</p> <p>6.4 Reduce fuel in targeted windrows by prescribed burning, mulching or dispersal.</p> <p>6.5 Establish a monitoring program to identify areas where vegetation communities are senescing due to lack of fire, and undertake ecological burns if necessary.</p> <p>6.6 Encourage research into improving understanding of the influence of fire on the diversity of tableland dry sclerophyll forest, particularly focussing on senescent vegetation due to lack of fire.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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<p>7 Infrastructure and Maintenance</p> <p>There are approximately 56 kilometres of vehicle trails in the Park. They vary from disused trails in poor condition to routes that link major roads, provide access to private property, or could be used for recreation access, fire and park management purposes. Most trails are maintained to 4WD only standard due to steep terrain and low use.</p> <p>All trails have been mapped and named, and directional signage has been installed throughout the Park.</p> <p>There is one apiary licence that predates reservation of the Park. The European Honey Bee (<i>Apis mellifera</i>) can have adverse impacts on some native plants and animals. NPWS policy on bee keeping allows existing sites to continue, and relocation of sites if necessary, but does not allow any new additional sites.</p>	<p>Management facilities and operations adequately serve management needs and have minimal impact.</p> <p>Infrastructure and assets are routinely maintained.</p>	<p>7.1 Maintain all roads and management trails shown on the map in this plan. Undertake all road works in accordance with NPWS policy, in a manner that minimises erosion and water pollution, ensures protection of natural and cultural values, and to the standard designated in the fire management strategy.</p> <p>7.2 Install gabions downstream of the culvert on Keverstone East Trail to minimise erosion and undercutting of the culvert structure.</p> <p>7.3 Investigate the need to realign the Keverstone East Trail as it passes Meglo Creek to prevent ongoing erosion and maintenance issues. Realignment of the trail would be subject to an environmental assessment.</p> <p>7.4 Signpost management trails to restrict unauthorised use. If visitor use impacts on Park values or neighbours, install locked gates.</p> <p>7.9 Negotiate with the apiarist to relocate the existing bee hive sites if apiary activities result in unacceptable environmental impacts, user conflicts or are inconsistent with other park management objectives.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>High</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p>
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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.

Ongoing is for activities that are undertaken on an annual basis or statements of management intent that will direct the management response if an issue that arises.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Known and Predicted Threatened Species located in Keverstone National Park and State Conservation Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Plants		
*Box Gum Woodland		Endangered Ecological Community
*Yass Daisy	<i>Ammobium craspedioides</i>	Vulnerable
Pale Grass-lily	<i>Caesia parviflora var. minor</i>	Endangered
	<i>Calotis glandulosa</i>	Vulnerable
Narrow Goodenia	<i>Goodenia macbarronii</i>	Vulnerable
Silver leaved Mountain Gum	<i>Eucalyptus pulverulenta</i>	Vulnerable
	<i>Eucalyptus robertsonii</i> <i>subsp. hemisphaerica</i>	Vulnerable
Animals		
*Eastern Bentwing Bat	<i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i>	Vulnerable
*Eastern False Pipistrelle	<i>Falsistrellus tasmaniensis</i>	Vulnerable
*Spotted-tailed Quoll	<i>Dasyurus maculatus</i>	Vulnerable
Koala	<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>	Vulnerable
*Gang Gang Cockatoo	<i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i>	Vulnerable
*Powerful Owl	<i>Ninox strenua</i>	Vulnerable
*Scarlet Robin	<i>Petroica boodang</i>	Vulnerable
*Speckled warbler	<i>Pyrrholaemus sagittatus</i>	Vulnerable
*Varied Sittella	<i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i>	Vulnerable
Black-chinned honeyeater (Eastern subspecies)	<i>Melithreptus gularis gularis</i>	Vulnerable
Brown Treecreeper	<i>Climacteris picumnus</i>	Vulnerable
Diamond Fire-tail	<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	Vulnerable
Flame Robin	<i>Petroica phoenicea</i>	Vulnerable
Glossy Black Cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i>	Vulnerable
Hooded Robin (south-eastern form)	<i>Melanodryas cucullata cucullata</i>	Vulnerable
Little Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus morphnoides</i>	Vulnerable
Little Lorikeet	<i>Glossopsitta pusilla</i>	Vulnerable
White-Browed Woodswallow	<i>Artamus superciliosus</i>	Vulnerable
Rosenberg's Goanna	<i>Varanus rosenbergi</i>	Vulnerable
Golden Sun moth (Grass)	<i>Synemon plana</i>	Endangered

* Species that are known to occur within Keverstone NP and SCA. If there is no asterisk adjacent to the species name they are predicted to occur only, and their presence in the Park has not been confirmed.

