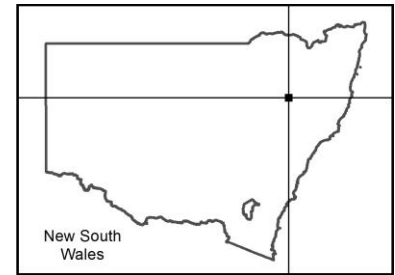


Statement of Management Intent



Melville Range Nature Reserve

1. Introduction

This statement outlines the main values, issues, management directions and priorities of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for managing Melville Range Nature Reserve. This statement, together with relevant NPWS policies, will guide the management of the reserve 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

Nature reserves are reserved under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas containing outstanding, unique or representative ecosystems, species, communities or natural phenomena. Under the NPW Act ([Section 30J](#)), nature reserves are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, and protect geological and geomorphological features and natural phenomena
- conserve places, objects, features and landscapes of cultural value
- promote public appreciation, enjoyment and understanding of the reserve's natural and cultural values
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

The primary purpose of nature reserves is to conserve nature. Nature reserves differ from national parks in that they do not have the provision of visitor use as a management purpose or principle.

3. Context

Reservation details: Melville Range Nature Reserve was reserved on 3 May 2002.

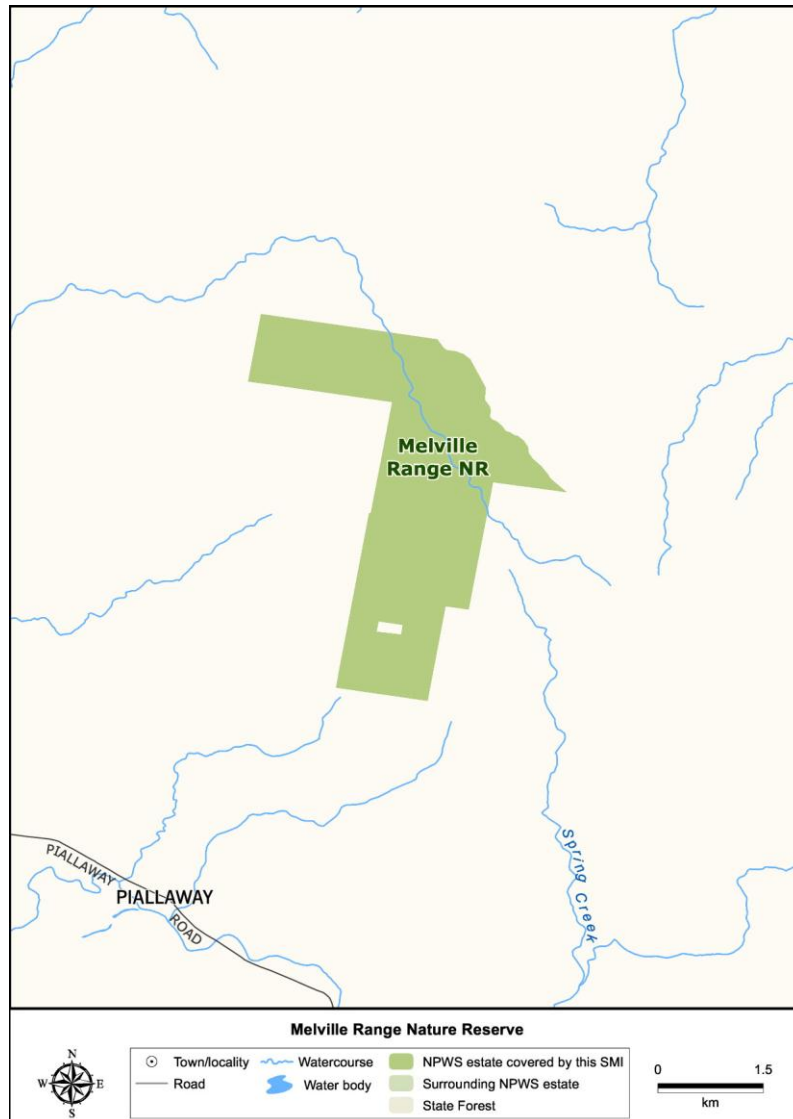
Size: 843 hectares.

Melville Range Nature Reserve is located approximately 28 kilometres west of Tamworth. It falls within the Nandewar Bioregion. It also lies within the administrative areas of the Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Red Chief Local Aboriginal Land Council and North West Local Land Services.

Melville Range Nature Reserve is a small, isolated reserve that is surrounded by private property much of which has been cleared for agricultural use. The reserve protects a diverse assemblage of fauna and habitat mosaics located on the steeply folded hills of Melville Range and bisected by Oaky Creek. The reserve is within the broader catchment of the Namoi River.

Tree cover in the reserve is dominated by black cypress pine (*Callitris endlicheri*), white cypress pine (*C. glaucophylla*), narrow-leaved ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra*) and rough-barked apple (*Angophora floribunda*). There is a sparse shrub layer and a dense grass cover.

There are no public access roads to the reserve and no visitor facilities. The Oaky Creek Management Trail traverses the reserve from north to south. The southern section of the reserve contains a trigonometrical station within a small Crown reserve.



4. Values

- Melville Range Nature Reserve protects a variety of threatened species including the brown treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus*), little eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*), little lorikeet (*Glossopsitta pusilla*), varied sittella (*Daphoensitta chrysoptera*), yellow-bellied sheath-tail-bat (*Saccolaimus flaviventris*), speckled warbler (*Chthonicola sagittata*), squirrel glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) and turquoise parrot (*Neophema pulchella*). The reserve may also provide habitat for other threatened species recorded in the southern plains area of the Nandewar Bioregion including koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), border thick-tailed gecko (*Underwoodisaurus sphyrurus*) and a number of bird and bat species.
- Melville Range Nature Reserve protects stands of the White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Endangered Ecological Community.

- The reserve is important from a local and bioregional perspective, as it protects vegetation assemblages that are disjunct and at the southern limit of their distribution. The reserve may offer considerable research and educational opportunities.
- Melville Range Nature Reserve lies within the traditional country of the Kamilaroi People.

5. Issues

- Pest animals recorded in Melville Range Nature Reserve include feral goats (*Capra hircus*) foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) and rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*). Goats are of particular concern in this reserve and effective control programs require cooperative approach with neighbouring properties.
- Partial grazing and clearing, that occurred prior to gazettal of the reserve, has resulted in a range of weed species occupying disturbed sites in the vicinity of Oaky Creek. These weed species include Coolatai grass (*Hyparrhenia hirta*), African lovegrass (*Eragrostis curvula*), lippia (*Phyla nodiflora*), narrow-leaf cotton bush (*Gomphocarpus fruticosus*), squirrel tail fescue (*Vulpia bromoides*) and cobbler's pegs (*Bidens pilosa*).
- Coolatai grass is of particular concern, dominating the grassy understorey in white box/yellow box vegetation communities in areas adjacent to the reserve and is currently present on trails through private property entering the reserve.
- Gully erosion is evident in some sections of Oaky Creek where past land clearing and grazing has occurred.
- Intermittent access through the reserve will be required by Crown lands officers or contractors for the maintenance of the Pialloway Trig station.

6. Key management directions

- Fire is being managed in accordance with the [Reserve Fire Management Strategy](#) for Melville Range Nature Reserve.
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the priorities of the NPWS [Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Northern Tablelands Region.
- Fox and pig control activities will be undertaken within the reserve as required, in conjunction with neighbours and the Local Land Services.
- NPWS will support and encourage neighbours in the control of Coolatai grass on the reserve peripheries, particularly to source funding for control activities.
- 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 on-going management objectives for the reserve. 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 on-going conservation of the reserve by promoting and raising public awareness of its special values.

For additional information or enquiries about any aspect of this reserve or this statement, contact the NPWS Walcha Office on (02) 6777 4700 or 188W North Street, Walcha NSW 2354.

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

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