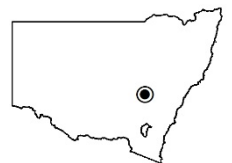




NSW NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area

Plan of Management



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How to use this plan

This plan of management directs the management of Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area. This plan includes a scheme of operations prepared consistent with Part 5, section 72 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. Once the plan is adopted, no management operations can be undertaken that are not consistent with the plan and its scheme of operations. The plan is for use by park managers in developing and monitoring park management priorities. This plan also serves to inform communities about the values of the park and what the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is doing to care for them.

This plan will also apply to any future additions to the park. Should management strategies or works be proposed in future that are not consistent with this plan, an amendment to the plan in accordance with section 73B of the National Parks and Wildlife Act will be required.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act sets out the matters that need to be considered when preparing a plan of management. These are presented in the companion document — *Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area Planning Considerations*.

Acknowledgments

NPWS acknowledges that Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area is in the traditional Country of the Wiradjuri People.

This plan of management was prepared by staff of NPWS.

Contacting NPWS

For more information or any inquiries about this plan of management or Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area, contact NPWS at 203–209 Russell Street Bathurst, by mail to PO Box 2267 Bathurst, NSW, 2795 or by telephone 02 6332 7640.

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Connection to Country

Wiradjuri People have a long connection with the area now known as Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area and the surrounding lands. Cultural knowledge about the park and surrounding lands is held and safeguarded by Wiradjuri People.

Connections to Country and the significance of Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area to Wiradjuri People – past, present and future – are acknowledged and respected.

The role of Aboriginal people in identifying traditional connections and custodians for the park is acknowledged and respected.



Silver-leaf candlebark, one of two threatened native plant species in the park. Photo credit: Barry Collier.

Why this park is important

Landform

Mount Canobolas is an extinct volcano and, with a height of 1397 metres above sea level, it and its surrounding peaks are an important and monolithic landmark of the Central West. Views to Mount Canobolas from Orange and surrounds are striking.

Unique and important plants and animals

Owing to its high altitude the park contains one of the few **subalpine** areas in the Central West. Its isolation from other similar formations has enabled the evolution of unique plants and animals, distinct from similar species in other parts of New South Wales. A number of the vegetation communities and species are listed as threatened under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. The endangered Mount Canobolas *Xanthoparmelia* Lichen Community, the critically endangered *Prostanthera gilesii* and the vulnerable silver-leaf candlebark are known only from Mount Canobolas.

The **altitudinal range** of the park means that it is likely to become increasingly important as a refuge for plant and animal species responding to **climate change** and associated extreme climatic events.

The natural vegetation of the Central West has been extensively cleared for agriculture and the remaining remnants are highly fragmented. Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area is an important **island remnant** in this landscape.

Significant Aboriginal cultural landscape

The cultural landscape of the park is part of the Country of the Wiradjuri People. The name Canobolas comes from the Wiradjuri words *gaanha bulla* meaning 'two shoulders', referring to the two main peaks, Old Man Canobolas (Mount Canobolas) and Young Man Canobolas.

Mount Canobolas is a major Wiradjuri ceremonial site. Eleven Aboriginal sites have been recorded in the park, though there has been no systematic survey. Aboriginal people have continuing cultural associations and connections to Country in the park including the use and enjoyment of foods and medicines, caring for the land, passing on cultural knowledge, kinship systems and strengthening social bonds.

Significant nature-based attractions

Mount Canobolas is one of the most significant nature-based attractions in the NSW Central West and the most significant in the Orange area. It has long been used for recreation by the people of Orange. The **panoramic views** from the summit are a major drawcard for locals and visitors from outside the region.

Our vision for the park

Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area is a sentinel in the landscape. It is a park valued, understood and protected by the community for its uniqueness, biodiversity, visitor experiences and for the spiritual and cultural connections between people and this special place, now and into the future.

Management principles

Section 30G of the National Parks and Wildlife Act states that a state conservation area is to be managed in accordance with the following principles:

- Conserve biodiversity, ecosystem function, natural phenomena and natural landscapes.
- Conserve places, objects and features of cultural value.
- Provide for permitted uses, including uses permitted under section 47J, such as mineral exploration and mining, having regard to the conservation principles.
- Provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with the conservation principles and permitted uses.
- Provide for the sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to the conservation principles and permitted uses.
- Provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

Under section 72AA these principles are to be taken into consideration in the preparation of this plan. Land is reserved as a state conservation area primarily where mineral values do not allow for 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*. Subject to the outcomes of future reviews, it is anticipated that Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area may eventually become a national park, so the management of the state conservation area will be guided by the management principles for national parks as far as possible.

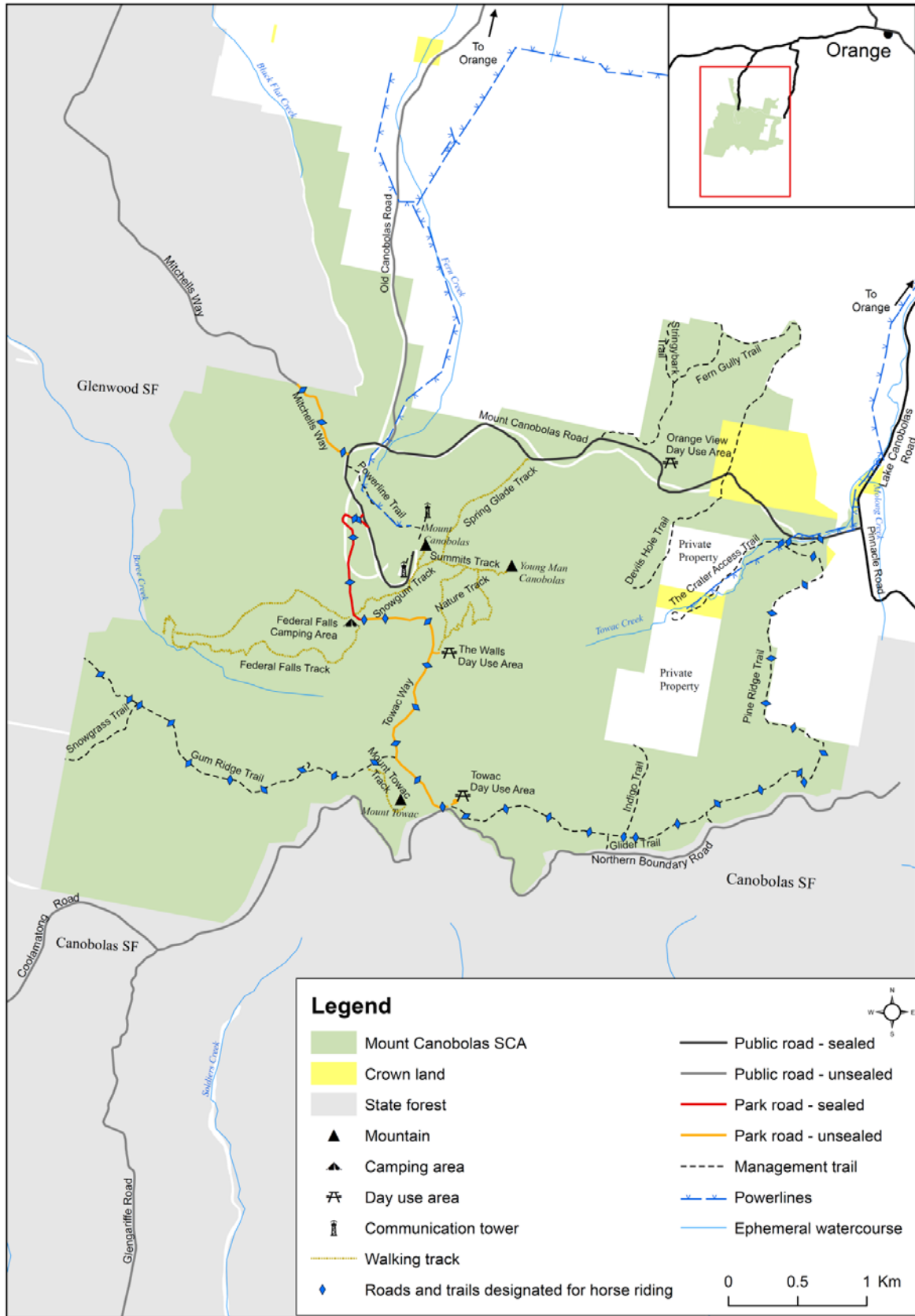


Figure 1 Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area

1. Landscape setting

Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area rises more than 500 metres above the surrounding central tablelands landscape and lies roughly 15 kilometres south-west of Orange in the NSW Central West. The name Canobolas comes from the Wiradjuri words *gaanha bulla* meaning ‘two shoulders’, referring to the two main peaks of Old Man Canobolas (Mount Canobolas) and Young Man Canobolas, which can be seen from up to 50 kilometres away.

Mount Canobolas is an extinct volcano and, with a height of 1397 metres above sea level, it and its surrounding peaks are an important and monolithic landmark of the Central West. Views to Mount Canobolas from Orange and surrounds are striking. Owing to its high altitude the park contains one of the few subalpine areas in the Central West. Its isolation from other similar formations has enabled the evolution of unique plants and animals, distinct from similar species in other parts of New South Wales. The altitudinal range of the park means that it is likely to become increasingly important as a refuge for plant and animal species responding to climate change and associated extreme climatic events.

Mount Canobolas is one of the most significant nature-based attractions in the NSW Central West and the most significant in the Orange area. It has long been used for recreation by the people of Orange.

The panoramic views from the summit are a major drawcard for locals and visitors from outside the region. The view from Mount Canobolas shows the rich agricultural country of the Central West tablelands and slopes, with their highly fertile volcanic soils.

The natural vegetation of the Central West has been extensively cleared for agriculture and the remaining remnants are highly fragmented. Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area is an important island remnant in this landscape which is dominated by sheep and cattle grazing on the tablelands and wheat and canola cropping on the slopes. Orchards, vineyards and plantations of radiata pine are found on the lower slopes of Mount Canobolas.

Table 1 The park and its regional setting

Features	Description
Area	1672 hectares.
Reservation date	The park was reserved as the Mount Canobolas State Recreation Area in 1997. In 2002 it was renamed Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area.
Previous tenure	The park was previously managed by the Canobolas Regional Parkland Trust as the Mount Canobolas Park.
Biogeographic region	The park lies in the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion and is an isolated high-altitude remnant in good condition.
Other authorities	The park is in the administrative areas of Cabonne Shire, the Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Central Tablelands Local Land Services region.

2. Protecting the natural environment

2.1 Geology and landform

The geology and landform of the park are the result of past volcanic activity. It is thought at least three separate eruption events occurred about 13–11 million years before present. The first formed a large shield volcano and spread magma over hundreds of square kilometres, forming the basis for the rich agricultural soils in and around Orange. The second and third eruptions produced slower-moving lava, which formed steep-sided features, such as domes, vents, dykes and plugs, as they cooled. Over millions of years, the softer outer rocks have eroded leaving the present-day landforms of relatively hard domes and plugs. These domes form the tops of the rounded peaks of the park including Mount Canobolas (or Old Man Canobolas), Young Man Canobolas and Mount Towac.

Mount Canobolas is related to other volcanic landforms stretching in a chain from Oberon to south-east Queensland. The most famous of these are the Warrumbungle Range near Coonabarabran and the Nandewar Range near Narrabri.

Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area is situated on some of the most prospective rocks for **gold and copper** in New South Wales, and significant deposits may lie at depth. Exploration for minerals and petroleum (including gas), as well as mining and petroleum production, are permissible uses in state conservation areas. Exploration licences for Group 1 minerals, including copper, gold, lead, molybdenite, silver and zinc, cover Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area (see section 6.3).



Tablelands Snow Gum Grassy Woodland. Photo credit: Steve Woodhall/DPIE.

2.2 Native plants and animals

The park contains one of the largest remnants of **subalpine vegetation** in the Central West and supports threatened species and communities listed under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

Seven vegetation communities have been identified in the park. Most of the park is comprised of grassy woodlands and tall open forests, with grasslands and grassy open woodlands at higher elevations and shrubby open forests and woodlands occupying the lower elevations. Most of the plant communities are at the north-western limit of their known distribution.

Three **threatened ecological communities** occur in the park, as components of the seven vegetation communities: Mount Canobolas *Xanthoparmelia* Lichen Community, Tablelands Snow Gum Grassy Woodland and Tablelands Basalt Forest, all listed as endangered. Two **threatened plant species**, the vulnerable silver-leaf candlebark and a critically endangered prostanthera, *Prostanthera gilesii*, are known from the park.

Threats to these listed native plants and communities include invasion by weeds and pest animals, climate change, high-intensity and high-frequency fire and disturbance by recreational use.

Protecting native vegetation and managing appropriate development (see Section 6) will help to protect the **scenic values** of the park.

The different vegetation communities and the altitudinal range of the park provide a diversity of habitat for **native animals**. Furthermore, as an island of native vegetation in a largely cleared and fragmented landscape, the park is likely to contain species that are less likely to be encountered elsewhere throughout the NSW Central West.

More than 120 species of native animals, including more than 70 species of birds, are known to occur in the park and nine threatened native animals have been recorded. There is a need for systematic and targeted surveys to improve our understanding of species that occur in the park and their ecological needs. It is particularly important to improve our understanding of how populations adapt and respond after significant environmental change (e.g. the severe wildfire that occurred in 2018), and to inform adaptive management of the park and its natural values.



Varied sittella. Photo credit: Michael Todd.

2.3 Managing threats

Weeds in the park include **state and regional priority weeds**, such as blackberry, gorse, Scotch or English broom, serrated tussock, St John's wort and willow. Radiata pine wildings are also present. Weeds compete with native plants and may provide habitat for pest animals. Blackberry and pine wildings are both recognised threats to the park's threatened plants.

Although the highly pathogenic *Phytophthora cinnamomi* has not been recorded in the park, a species of *Phytophthora* has been detected. The species and distribution of *Phytophthora* within the park are not known. However, *Phytophthora* has the potential to adversely impact the park's threatened plants and vegetation communities and its spread throughout the park could be exacerbated by management and recreational activities.

Pest animals known to occur in the park include red foxes, goats, pigs, rabbits and deer. Issues with these pests include foxes eating blackberries and spreading the seed throughout the park, and pigs disturbing the soil allowing invasive plants to spread.

Pest species and priority programs for the park are identified in the NPWS regional pest management strategy.

Overall **fire management** of the park is directed by the park's fire management strategy. This strategy is reviewed after all significant fire events and updated periodically to prioritise the protection of life, property and natural and cultural values. A major wildfire burnt approximately 70% of the park in February 2018 and the fire management strategy for the park will be reviewed to reflect this event. This fire is expected to have a significant influence on the vegetation of the park. A post-fire recovery program will be developed to guide recovery works, research and monitoring to assess the recovery of plants and animals. The outcomes of this work will influence future fire planning.

The park's steep terrain makes construction of control lines difficult, and therefore fires that start on park, or enter the park, can burn substantial parts of it. NPWS will work with the Rural Fire Service and Forestry Corporation of NSW to investigate and, if appropriate, construct a new management trail on the western side of the park to provide a control line that may assist firefighters in minimising the size and intensity of fires in this part of the park.

Projected increases in temperature and in the number of hot days and severe fire weather days resulting from **climate change** are likely to influence bushfire frequency and intensity across the Central West. Climate change may have a significant impact on biodiversity and barriers to movement are a significant issue for many species at Mount Canobolas because the possibility of dispersal from the park or to higher altitudes is restricted. Programs to reduce the pressures arising from other threats, such as habitat fragmentation, invasive species and bushfires may help reduce the severity of the effects of climate change.

Where appropriate, NPWS will continue to engage with the community, including neighbours and other agencies, to better protect the natural environment.

3. Looking after our culture and heritage

3.1 Aboriginal cultural heritage

The park is part of Country of the Wiradjuri People, known as the land of the three rivers, extending across a vast area of central New South Wales from the Great Divide in the east, and bordered by the Macquarie, Lachlan and Murrumbidgee rivers.

The name Canobolas comes from the Wiradjuri words *gaanha bulla* meaning 'two shoulders', referring to the two main peaks of Old Man Canobolas (Mount Canobolas) and Young Man Canobolas.

Mount Canobolas is a major Wiradjuri ceremonial site. Dreaming stories are known by some people with a strong traditional connection to Orange but these are not in the public domain.

Mount Canobolas is highly significant to the local Aboriginal community and the mountain has contributed to the social, economic and ceremonial life of the Wiradjuri People for thousands of years. Aboriginal people have continuing cultural associations and connections to Country in the park including 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 Country are inseparable and need to be managed in an integrated manner across the landscape.

Eleven Aboriginal sites are known in the park, including open campsites, stone tool working sites and a scarred tree. A survey is needed in the park and there is a high likelihood that other sites will be found.

3.2 Shared heritage

Little is known about past European use of the park and further work is required to increase our understanding of this shared cultural heritage.

The park has reportedly been used for some small-scale timber harvesting and grazing in the past and was the site of a proposed water supply dam for the city of Orange. The park may also contain historical transport routes.

4. Providing for visitor use and enjoyment

The park has a long history of visitor use and the **Mount Canobolas summit** is a significant destination for visitors to the region.

Existing facilities on the summit of Mount Canobolas, which are dated and provide limited accessibility, will be redeveloped to provide an improved visitor experience and to improve visitor safety. The redevelopment will improve traffic flow, parking and toilet facilities and provide lookout platforms and interpretive materials. All facilities will be wheelchair accessible.

In addition to the facilities provided at the Mount Canobolas summit, the park has a **camping area, day use areas, lookouts** and **walking tracks**. Activities undertaken in the park include picnicking, camping, bushwalking, photography, cycling and horse riding.

New **interpretive signage** will be installed at the summit and other key visitor destinations in the park. All new signs will be consistent with the NPWS Park Signage Manual and a program to upgrade existing signs will be undertaken.

Works will be undertaken on the **walking track** network to ensure all tracks meet proposed standards (see Table 2). The exception is Hopetoun Falls Walking Track, which has been little used and will be closed. **Cycling** will continue to be permitted on park roads and management trails.

A concept plan to develop a substantial network of mountain bike single-track in the park and on adjoining lands has been proposed by a third party. The concept plan includes approximately 63 kilometres of mountain bike single-track traversing much of the park, except for the most environmentally sensitive areas east of The Walls Day Use Area. It also includes the development of a hub or track head at, or near, the Tea House Day Use Area (at the park entrance on Mount Canobolas Road) to provide riders and park visitors with facilities, such as a café or kiosk, toilets and services such as bike hire, transport shuttles and visitor information.

Mountain bike riding is an increasingly popular recreational activity and further opportunities for mountain bike riding and associated facilities in the park may be provided if deemed appropriate. Appropriateness must be assessed in accordance with the *NPWS Cycling Policy* and the *Sustainability Assessment Criteria for Visitor Use and Tourism in New South Wales National Parks*. Under the policy, decisions about the planning, development and management of cycling experiences are guided by:

- ecological sustainability
- appropriateness of the location
- the quality of the experience for cyclists
- the need to balance competing visitor demands
- consideration of opportunities and demand for cycling across the region, including on other land tenures
- visitor safety
- the availability of resources to provide and maintain the experience.

The proposed development of any significant new mountain bike riding opportunities and associated facilities in the park would require the preparation of a 'review of environmental factors' in accordance with the *Office of Environment and Heritage Guidelines for Preparing a Review of Environmental Factors* and include public and stakeholder consultation.

The Tea House Day Use Area is poorly drained and receives very little visitor use. It will be closed and revegetated, unless it is used as part of the proposal for mountain biking.

Horse riding will continue to be allowed on designated park roads and management trails.

The park is situated on some of the most prospective rocks for gold and copper in New South Wales. However, given the depth of the mineral deposits, the steep slopes of the park and the potential for disturbance to a threatened ecological community (Mount Canobolas *Xanthoparmelia* Lichen Community), **fossicking** will not be permitted in the park.



Walkers on the Nature Track, looking towards The Walls and Mount Towac in the background. Photo credit: Boris Hlavica, DPIE.

5. NPWS infrastructure and services

NPWS manages a wide range of infrastructure assets in the park, including assets that enable and assist park management.

A network of management trails is maintained in the park for fire management, emergency access, pest animal and weed control and monitoring and research. NPWS will work with the Rural Fire Service and Forestry Corporation of NSW to investigate and, if appropriate, will construct an additional management trail for fire management purposes on the western side of the park.

Boundary gates are located at strategic locations. They restrict public vehicle access to some management trails to ensure the trails remain serviceable for park management activities such as firefighting and pest management, and to maintain visitor experiences for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other non-motorised users.

Boundary fences are generally in good repair. NPWS will work with neighbours to maintain the park in a stock-proof condition where required.

Two large water tanks in the park provide water for firefighting and weed control.

6. Non-NPWS infrastructure and services

6.1 Telecommunication infrastructure

A substantial amount of telecommunication infrastructure has been established on the summit of Mount Canobolas. The towers and associated buildings contain or facilitate a wide range of services including television, radio, telephone, mobile phone, emergency services and private radio networks.

To limit further impacts on the visual amenity of the site, additional towers will not be constructed in the park unless there are no feasible alternatives. Construction of any new buildings or other ground structures will only be permitted within the existing fenced compounds at the summit of Mount Canobolas.

Existing trenching on the summit of Mount Canobolas has capacity for installation of additional underground optical fibre cables. New trenching for underground optical fibre cables will only be permitted at the summit once existing trenching reaches capacity.

6.2 Powerlines

Powerlines supply the telecommunications infrastructure on the summit of Mount Canobolas and the private inholding in the east of the park. Options for partial or complete burial of the summit overhead powerline will be encouraged for fire protection purposes. Burial may be undertaken where it is deemed appropriate, necessary and environmentally acceptable.

6.3 Mining and exploration

Exploration for minerals and petroleum (including gas), as well as mining and petroleum production, are permissible uses in state conservation areas. Exploration licences for Group 1 minerals (including copper, gold, lead, molybdenite, silver and zinc) cover Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area.

Significant metalliferous deposits may lie at depth. Numerous deep holes drilled through the basalt around Mount Canobolas resulted in the discovery of the Ridgeway ore body some 500 metres below the surface, the most profitable gold and copper ore deposit in Australia and part of Cadia Valley Operations. This operation is located less than 10 kilometres south of the park. The Department of Planning and Environment – Resources and Geoscience in NSW is the lead authority for mining and petroleum activities, including mineral exploration and rehabilitation of mine sites. NPWS and Resources and Geoscience in NSW work together to ensure that exploration and production proposals in state conservation areas comply with all statutory requirements, including any necessary environmental impact assessments and approvals.



Columnar trachyte lava flow. Photo credit: Steve Woodhall, DPIE.

Scheme of operations

The implementation of actions set out below may be subject to environmental impact assessments and approvals as required by NSW and Commonwealth legislation. Further community consultation on the proposed actions may be undertaken as part of these processes.

NPWS' performance in meeting the **objectives** in the scheme of operations will be measured through the periodic assessments undertaken in the NSW State of the Parks program. Performance in delivering the **actions** in the scheme of operations will be measured through a cyclical plan of management audit process. Assessments of performance and local review will be used to inform adaptive management and any adjustments and improvement to future plans of management for the park.

A priority has been assigned to each action to guide the allocation of resources and timely delivery. Some measures require ongoing effort. The indicative timeframes for achievement are:

- Priority 1 – within 3 years
- Priority 2 – within 5 years
- Priority 3 – within 10 years
- Ongoing (O).

Protecting the natural environment

Objectives: The natural setting and scenic values of the park are protected.

Impacts on park values from mineral exploration and mining are minimised.

Native plant and animal communities are self-sustaining through natural recruitment, migration and evolutionary processes.

Understanding of the ecology, management needs and threats to threatened plant and animal communities is increased and applied to park management.

Geology and landform

1. Protect the landforms and natural vegetation of the park, including the Mount Canobolas skyline.	0
2. Ensure works and activities in the park avoid or minimise impacts to park values, including native vegetation, habitat features and visual amenity.	0
3. Ensure all activities in the park are subject to environmental impact assessment and approvals, including community consultation where appropriate.	0
4. Do not permit fossicking in the park.	0

Native plants and animals

5. Implement relevant strategies in the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Program</i> and recovery plans for threatened species, populations and ecological communities present in the park.	1
6. Implement actions to conserve the critically endangered <i>Prostanthera gilesii</i> .	1
7. Identify and map threatened ecological communities in the park.	1
8. Undertake and encourage actions to protect the park's threatened ecological communities, threatened species and significant native plants and animals.	2
9. Map the vegetation units currently used to define the park's vegetation into the plant community types consistent with the NSW Vegetation Information System.	1

10. Conduct and support surveys to improve knowledge of the parks native animals, particularly threatened animals and other endemic and significant species, and use to inform park management.	1
11. Implement pest animal and weed programs in the park in accordance with pest management strategies relevant to the park. Ensure pest animal and weed programs primarily target species whose control will provide the greatest benefit to native species, including threatened species and communities, and the protection of cultural heritage.	0
12. Implement blackberry control and minimise the impacts of blackberry on threatened plants and communities.	1
13. Work with neighbours and other authorities to target priority pests.	0
14. Improve knowledge about the distribution and impacts of <i>Phytophthora</i> within the park and ensure its spread is not exacerbated by management or visitor activity.	1
15. Undertake bush fire management programs to protect the park and neighbouring assets and infrastructure and adapt to new information and emerging threats.	0
16. Ensure the fire management strategy for the park includes the protection of life and property and the maintenance of natural and cultural values through the development of a mosaic of vegetation fire age-classes, and is implemented and updated as required.	0
17. Develop and implement a post-fire recovery program for the park following the 2018 wildfire to plan and prioritise fire response tasks including infrastructure repair, post-fire rehabilitation works, weed and pest control and research and monitoring of biodiversity fire response.	1
18. Conduct hazard reduction works as specified in the fire management strategy and annual fire program.	0
19. Continue NPWS participation in strategic fire planning for the region through its involvement in the Canobolas Bush Fire Management Committee.	0
20. Continue implementing park programs for fire, pest and weed management and respond to the impacts of climate change.	0
21. Support research on the impacts of climate change on the values of the park and use it to inform park management.	0

Looking after our culture and heritage

Objective: Aboriginal and shared histories are protected and celebrated, and Aboriginal people have opportunities to maintain, restore and build connections to Country.

Aboriginal community engagement in park management, caring for and building connections to Country

22. Consult Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council, Elders groups and other relevant Aboriginal community organisations and community members and provide opportunities for involvement in management of Aboriginal sites and values.	0
23. Support the local Aboriginal community to access Country to maintain, renew or develop cultural connections and practices.	0
24. Develop and implement interpretation of Aboriginal sites, places or values in consultation with the local Aboriginal community.	0

Aboriginal cultural sites, objects and significant places

25. Undertake Aboriginal site surveys with Aboriginal people and in consultation with specialists, targeting sites of known cultural significance, areas with a higher likelihood of Aboriginal sites and areas at risk, including those at or near existing or proposed infrastructure.	1
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26. Record all known Aboriginal sites and Aboriginal cultural information appropriately, giving recognition and protection to secret or sacred information and intellectual property rights.	1
27. Apply due diligence to ensure appropriate protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage including an appropriate level of cultural impact assessment and consultation before undertaking works that have the potential to affect Aboriginal sites, places or values.	0
<i>Shared heritage sites, objects and significant places</i>	
28. Protect known shared heritage sites, objects and significant places in the park.	0
29. Support and encourage further work to increase our understanding of the park's shared heritage, record shared heritage sites and assess their significance.	3
30. Prepare conservation management plans or heritage actions statements as necessary.	3
Providing for visitor use and enjoyment	
Objective: Provide visitors with opportunities to safely and sustainably enjoy, appreciate and understand the values of the park which are compatible with the conservation of the park's natural and cultural values.	
<i>Recreational opportunities</i>	
31. Provide public vehicle access on park roads shown on Figure 1. Close roads in the park where necessary (e.g. after snowfall or extended wet weather) to ensure public safety and to protect park values. Closures of Mount Canobolas Road and Old Canobolas Road are managed by Cabonne Council.	0
32. Provide a range of recreational opportunities at appropriate locations in the park, as identified in Table 2.	0
33. Permit horse riding on designated park roads and management trails shown on Figure 1.	0
34. Work cooperatively with Cabonne Council regarding any maintenance and upgrading works on public roads that are administered and maintained by the council, namely Mount Canobolas Road and Old Canobolas Road.	0
35. Consider applications for events, functions and commercial activities in line with this plan and the park use regulations in Table 4.	0
<i>Signage and information</i>	
36. Provide appropriate interpretive, directional and safety signage and information to help park visitors experience and enjoy the park in a safe and sustainable way.	0
37. Develop new interpretive signage and install at the summit and other key visitor destinations in the park.	1
38. Replace existing NPWS signs, including interpretive, directional, safety and regulatory signs, with new signs consistent with the NPWS Park Signage Manual.	2
39. Provide appropriate warning and safety signage at key locations, such as exposed cliffs.	1
40. Ensure appropriate interpretive signage is in place to limit visitor impacts on the park's natural and cultural values, such as the Mount Canobolas <i>Xanthoparmelia</i> Lichen Community.	1
41. Provide directional signage at track heads and key junctions on the walking track network.	2

<i>Visitor facilities</i>	
42. Redevelop facilities at the summit of Mount Canobolas to provide an improved visitor experience and to promote a better understanding of the park's values and recreational opportunities.	2
43. Manage the Federal Falls Camping Area as one of the principal visitor locations in the park, providing basic camping and day use facilities in an unspoiled natural setting.	0
44. Continue to provide day use areas at The Walls, Towac and Orange View.	0
45. Undertake minor capital improvements at day use areas, such as formalising car parking and installing or upgrading picnic tables, as necessary to improve visitor experience and protect park values.	2
46. Close and revegetate the Tea House Day Use Area, unless it is used as part of the Orange City Council mountain biking proposal.	2
47. Maintain and, where necessary, upgrade lookouts to meet relevant Australian Standards and NPWS infrastructure guidelines.	1
48. Revegetate closed visitor nodes, either through natural regeneration or with active rehabilitation where necessary, to encourage them to become self-perpetuating and maintenance-free.	2
<i>Walking tracks</i>	
49. Provide and maintain a network of walking tracks in the park that provide sustainable and safe access to key features and destinations.	0
50. Maintain walking tracks to grades specified in Table 3 in accordance with Australian Standards, including works to limit environmental impacts, protect visitor safety and signage to assist visitors to find their way.	2
51. Close the Hopetoun Falls Walking Track and, where necessary, undertake works to prevent ongoing erosion and support regeneration.	2
<i>Cycling opportunities</i>	
52. Provide and maintain sustainable cycling opportunities in the park that provide safe access to key features and destinations and links to cycling tracks outside the park.	0
53. Continue to provide cycling opportunities on the park roads and management trails shown in Figure 1.	0
54. Investigate the provision of sustainable single-track mountain biking opportunities and a hub or track head in the park. Considerations will include ecological sustainability, appropriateness of the location, competing visitor demands, visitor safety, opportunities on alternative sites, and the availability of resources to provide and maintain the experience. 'No go' areas may be established in this investigation.	1
55. If the investigation delivers a final proposal, prepare a review of environmental factors. Publicly exhibit the final proposal and the environmental assessment. Outcomes of the environmental assessment and the public exhibition will inform the final plan.	2
56. If approved, construct and maintain any mountain bike single-tracks and any associated facilities in a way that avoids or minimises impacts on the park's natural and cultural values and existing visitor experiences.	2
57. Consider new agreements for the lease or licencing of land, buildings or structures within the park for the purposes of visitor facilities as required in accordance with Part 12 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and the NPWS Property Leasing Guidelines.	0

58. Provide additional car parking and other facilities at track heads as necessary to limit adverse impacts resulting from increased visitation associated with the provision of mountain bike opportunities in the park.	2
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NPWS infrastructure and services

Objectives: NPWS infrastructure meets the needs of management and has minimal environmental impact.

NPWS infrastructure that is no longer required is decommissioned and removed.

59. Maintain NPWS infrastructure to required standards and to support protection of park values.	0
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60. Maintain the network of park roads and management trails shown on Figure 1 in accordance with their strategic fire classification and management needs.	0
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61. Investigate an additional management trail on the western side of the park for fire management purposes. If considered appropriate, construct and maintain the additional trail in accordance with its strategic fire classification and management needs.	2
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62. Reduce adverse environmental impacts on park values from unauthorised entry into the park.	0
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63. Decommission and remove assets no longer required for park management purposes.	0
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Non-NPWS infrastructure and services

Objective: Non-NPWS uses and activities have minimal impact on park values and are appropriately licensed.

64. Manage non-NPWS infrastructure and services to minimise impacts on park values.	0
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65. Maintain and manage existing leases, licences, easements and rights of way granted under the National Parks and Wildlife Act for infrastructure and services in accordance with the conditions of the agreement and any other applicable laws and policies.	0
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66. Consider new leases, licences, easements or rights of way in relation to infrastructure and services within the park (including telecommunications and broadcasting facilities, pipelines and powerlines) as required in accordance with Part 12 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and the NPWS Property Leasing Guidelines.	0
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67. Do not permit construction of additional towers in the park where feasible alternatives exist. Only permit construction of any new buildings or other ground structures within the existing fenced compounds on the summit of Mount Canobolas.	0
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68. Subject any new facilities, operations or other works to environmental impact assessment and only allow if they are consistent with the purposes of reservation of the park, with the management principles set out in section 30G of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and with this plan of management.	0
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69. Encourage the electricity provider to move the powerline to the summit of Mount Canobolas underground where capacity exists and where this would result in a net environmental benefit. Remove obsolete above-ground infrastructure where the powerline has moved underground.	3
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Park use regulations

Recreational activities

There are many recreational activities that can be undertaken in the park without consent from park managers. Other activities can only occur if consent is provided by NPWS. All activities that occur in the park are subject to relevant policies and legislation.






Conditions may be applied to ensure an activity is undertaken safely and to minimise environmental risks and risks to other users. Consent may be refused after consideration of the proposed activity and its likely environmental, visitor safety and park management impacts.












Activities may be subject to operating conditions or limits from time to time. For example, access to parts of the park may be closed during periods of bushfire risk, bad weather or during maintenance or improvement works.


Activities not shown in Table 2 may also be regulated by signage within the park or by consent.

Information regarding activities that require consent and obtaining consent is available on the NSW national parks visitor website (at www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au) or by contacting the relevant NPWS office (contact details at the front of this plan).

Table 2 Park use regulations – Recreational activities

	Type of activity	Allowed	Notes/Exceptions
	Barbecues – portable	Yes	Portable gas and liquid stoves are allowed. Solid fuel fires are prohibited during total fire bans and park solid fuel fire bans. Residues from solid fuel fires must not be deposited in the park.
	Camping	Yes	Only at Federal Falls Camping Area. Bush camping is not allowed.
	Cycling	Yes	On park roads, management trails and, if constructed, on appropriately signposted single-track routes. No cycling on walking tracks or off-trail. All organised group (e.g. club) events require consent, irrespective of the size of groups (see Table 3).
	Climbing and abseiling	No	Not permitted owing to the lack of suitable safe locations and risks to conservation values.
	Dog walking ¹	No	Not permitted in state conservation areas in New South Wales.

	Type of activity	Allowed	Notes/Exceptions
	Four wheel driving	No	Not permitted on management trails or off road owing to risks to conservation values and potential risks to other park users.
	Fossicking	No	Not permitted owing to potential environmental impacts, particularly given the presence of high-gradient slopes and the endangered lichen community.
	Group gatherings – non-commercial (e.g. family or social gatherings, school groups)	Yes	Consent is required for groups of more than 40 people, as per the National Parks and Wildlife Regulation.
			Consent is required for larger groups to ensure limited available space can be managed.
	Hang gliding	No	Not permitted owing to lack of suitable safe locations and potential risks to other park users.
	Horse riding	Yes	On park roads (Towac Way and Mitchells Way) and on Gum Ridge, Pine Ridge and Glider trails. Consent required for recreational groups of more than six horses. All organised group (e.g. club) events require consent, irrespective of size of groups (see Table 3).
	Model aeroplanes and drones	Yes	Consent required.
			Not permitted to be launched where there are potential risks to telecommunications infrastructure and impacts to other park users. Drones may be used for park management purposes and may be authorised as part of a commercial filming consent.
			This plan does not regulate aeroplanes or drones launched from outside the park that may be within the airspace above the park. In these circumstances, the use of such devices is subject to relevant civil aviation regulations.
			Motorcycling and trail bike riding
	Walking	Yes	On tracks

	Type of activity	Allowed	Notes/Exceptions
	Wood fires	Yes	<p>Only in fireplaces provided at Federal Falls Camping Area. Wood fires are prohibited elsewhere in the park.</p> <p>Wood fires are prohibited during total fire bans and park fire bans.</p> <p>Gas barbecues are provided at Federal Falls Camping Area.</p>

¹ These regulations relate to dogs that are not assistance animals. Assistance animals are allowed in all sections of the park provided they are kept under effective control at all times with a leash or harness

Table 3 Walking tracks and proposed works

Name (length)	Proposed standard ¹ and works
Federal Falls Track (4.1 km)	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Upgrade section to base of waterfall with new steps and handrails.</p> <p>Install steps on other steep sections to deal with erosion.</p> <p>Reroute as required.</p> <p>Install warning signs and/or safety fencing where required.</p> <p>Install directional signage.</p>
Nature Track (2.0 km loop)	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Reroute and or install steps on steep sections to deal with erosion.</p> <p>Reroute any sections affecting the endangered lichen ecological community.</p> <p>Install directional signage.</p>
Summits Track (1.0 km one way)	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Remediate erosion and install steps. Where necessary reroute steeper sections.</p> <p>Ensure track does not affect the endangered lichen ecological community.</p> <p>Install directional signage.</p>
Spring Glade Track (1.0 km one way)	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Remediate erosion and where necessary reroute the lower section.</p> <p>Formalise track head carpark on Mount Canobolas Road.</p> <p>Install directional signage.</p>
Mount Towac Track (0.65 km one way)	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Formalise car park at junction of Towac Way and Gum Ridge Trail.</p> <p>Install additional steps and drains to address erosion.</p> <p>Install directional signage.</p>
Snowgum Track (0.7 km one way)	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>Reroute or install steps, or both, on steep sections to deal with erosion.</p> <p>Install directional signage.</p>

¹ The Australian Walking Track Grading System has been used as the basis for this track classification system. For further information on these grades and their relationship to the Australian Standard please refer to the Users Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System (DSE no date; see Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area Draft Planning Considerations).

Events, functions and commercial activities

The following table lists some common event, function and commercial activities that may be permitted in the park with consent from NPWS or under a licence or lease. It is not a definitive or exhaustive list of permitted commercial or other activities. Information on relevant policies, required approvals and fees is available on the NPWS website (www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/venues/special-events).

Approval to use supporting equipment, such as marquees, amplified sound or drones, will be determined on a case-by-case basis subject to an assessment of potential impacts on park values and other park users. Use of any supporting equipment will be subject to consent conditions.

Under NPWS policy, commercial operators may be required to support understanding of cultural heritage conservation and management and promote respect for Aboriginal culture and sites. This may include requirements to consult with Aboriginal communities to develop appropriate material and information for participants.

Table 4 Park use regulation – Events, function and commercial activities

Type of activity	Group size	Type of approval required
Public events (e.g. fun runs, commemorative ceremonies open to public participation)	All groups irrespective of size	Consent
Commercial activities including tours, filming and photography	All groups irrespective of size	Licence or lease
Non-commercial, organised (e.g. club-based) events	All groups irrespective of size	Consent
All other private functions involving groups of more than 40 people	All groups of 40 or more	Consent
Research (scientific and educational, and related to conservation or park management)	All groups irrespective of size	Consent or licence