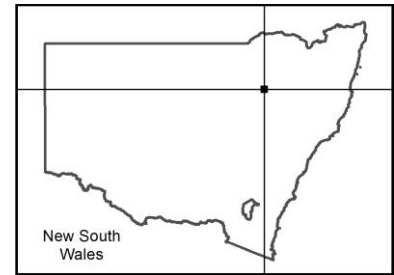


Statement of Management Intent



Pilliga East State Conservation Area Community Conservation Area Zone 3

1. Introduction

This statement outlines the main values, issues, management directions and priorities of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for managing Pilliga East Community Conservation Area Zone 3 State Conservation Area (Pilliga East SCA). This statement, together with relevant NPWS policies, will guide the management of the SCA until a plan of management has been prepared in accordance with the [National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 \(NPW Act\)](#). The NPWS [Managing Parks Prior to Plan of Management Policy](#) states that parks and reserves without a plan of management are to be managed in a manner consistent with the intent of the NPW Act and the ['precautionary principle'](#) (see Principle 15).

2. Management principles

Zone 3 community conservation areas are reserved as state conservation areas under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas that:

- contain significant or representative ecosystems, landforms or natural phenomena or places of cultural significance
- are capable of providing opportunities for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment, the sustainable use of buildings and structures, or research
- are capable of providing opportunities for uses permitted under other provisions of the NPW Act.

Under the NPW Act ([section 30G](#)), Zone 3 community conservation areas are managed to:

- conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem functions, protect natural phenomena and maintain natural landscapes
- conserve places, objects and features of cultural value
- provide for the undertaking of uses permitted under other provisions of the NPW Act (including uses permitted under section 47J such as mineral exploration and mining), having regard to the conservation of the natural and cultural values of the state conservation area
- provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with conservation of the area's natural and cultural values and with uses permitted in the area
- provide for sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to conservation of the area's natural and cultural values and with other uses permitted in the area

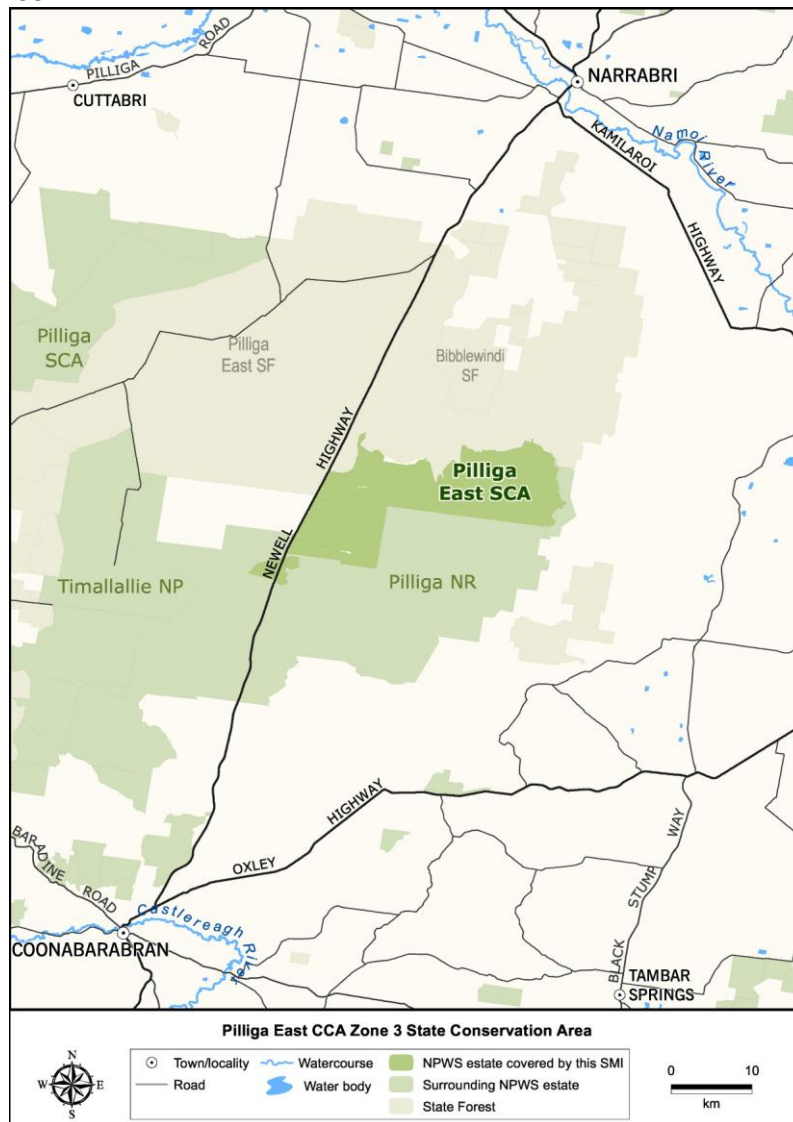
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

Land is reserved as a state conservation area where mineral values preclude reservation as another category. The NPW Act requires a review of the classification of state conservation areas every five years in consultation with the Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992*.

3. Context

Reservation details: Pilliga East SCA was reserved on 1 December 2005.

Size: 24,710 hectares.



Pilliga East SCA is located 40 kilometres north-east of Baradine in the northern inland of New South Wales. It forms part of the traditional area of the Gamilaroi (also known as Gomeri and Gamilaraay) People. The SCA was previously state forest tenure and was reserved under the *Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area Act 2005*. The SCA is located within the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion and within the administrative areas of Narrabri Shire Council, Narrabri and Coonabarabran local Aboriginal land councils and North West Local Land Services. The parks are part of an extensive Native Title Claim by the Gomeri People (NC11/6-1).

Pilliga East SCA is contiguous with Pilliga Nature Reserve, located south of the SCA, and Willala (Community Conservation Area Zone 2) Aboriginal Area located to the east. Pilliga East State Forest adjoins the northern boundary of the SCA. The SCA was formerly part of Pilliga East, Ruttle

and Yaminba state forests. The main road providing access to the SCA is the Newell Highway, which forms the western boundary for the majority of the SCA, bisecting a small section in the south. There are a number of roads within the SCA identified as key roads for access to private land; these are vested in the Minister under Part 11 of the NPW Act to ensure continued access. These roads do not form part of the reserved area of the SCA but their management is subject to the NPW Act and Regulations. A telecommunications tower adjacent to the Newell Highway is also vested in the Minister under Part 11 of the NPW Act.

The main land-use patterns east of the SCA are primary production (mainly cropping but also livestock). To the north, south and west is an area of contiguous forest comprising both state forest and NPWS lands. Yaminba, Sandy, Borah and Cowalla creeks are the main drainage systems in the SCA. The neighbouring Pilliga Nature Reserve and Willala Aboriginal Area are currently managed under a co-management agreement (through a Memorandum of Understanding) with the Gawambaraay Pilliga Co-management Committee. The reserve is part of an extensive Native Title Claim by the Gomeri People (NC11/6-1).

The SCA is part of a larger Pilliga reserve system which conserves significant examples of the largest intact native forest west of the Great Dividing Range. The vegetation communities commonly include red ironbark (*Eucalyptus fibrosa*), white bloodwood (*Corymbia trachyphloia*), black cypress pine (*Callitris endlicheri*), narrow-leaved ironbark (*E. crebra*), white cypress pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*), bulloak (*Allocasuarina luehmannii*), rough-barked apple (*Angophora floribunda*), smooth-barked apple (*Angophora leiocarpa*), inland scribbly gum (*E. rossii*), fuzzy box (*E. conica*), yellow box (*E. melliodora*), Dwyer's red gum (*E. dwyeri*) and Blakely's red gum (*E. blakelyi*).

4. Values

- Pilliga East SCA provides important habitat for at least 14 threatened animal species including the glossy black-cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*), turquoise parrot (*Neophema pulchella*), koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), squirrel glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) and Pilliga mouse (*Pseudomys pilligaensis*). The SCA also supports species of regional conservation significance including declining woodland birds and endemic Pilliga invertebrates such as the mollusc species, *Galadistes pilligaensis*.
- Lowland Darling River Aquatic Ecological Community, an endangered ecological community listed under the NSW *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, occurs within the SCA.
- The threatened plant species *Rulingia procumbens* is recorded in the SCA. The endangered ecological community White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland listed under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* occurs within the SCA.
- The parks of the Pilliga forest are of spiritual significance and contemporary importance to the Aboriginal community. There are a range of Aboriginal sites indicating a long history of occupation by local Gamilaroi People including grinding grooves, modified trees and artefact scatters.
- Historic heritage sites associated with European settlement include Airlands, Yamborah, Creaghs Crossing, Borah Creek and Delwood Road. Conservation management strategies have been prepared for Yamborah and Airlands precincts.
- The SCA generally experiences low levels of visitation. There are no visitor facilities provided. Currently visits are centred on recreational driving and, less commonly, low-impact, self-reliant nature-based recreation such as bushwalking and birdwatching.

5. Issues

- Pest animals recorded in Pilliga East SCA include foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*), cattle (*Bos taurus*), goats (*Capra hircus*), rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), wild dogs (*Canis lupus* spp.) and feral cats (*Felis catus*). The invasive freshwater snail *Physella acuta* that competes with native snail species is also known to occur within the SCA.
- Weeds occurring within the SCA include prickly pear (*Opuntia* spp.), tree pear (*Opuntia tomentosa*), spiny burrgrass (*Cenchrus incertus* and *C. longispinus*) and blue heliotrope (*Heliotropium amplexicaule*).
- Conservation management strategies are prepared for Airlands and Yamborah historic precincts but there are no strategies available for other sites including Creaghs Crossing and the hut site on Borah Creek.
- Illegal hunting, including damage to roads and vegetation and associated littering, is an ongoing issue in the SCA.
- Damage to historic sites and removal of moveable heritage items has also been an ongoing issue.
- Boundary irregularities and uncertainties exist between the SCA and adjacent state forest estate and a feasible boundary needs to be identified between Creaghs Road and Deldam Trail.
- The GIS mapping needs to be reviewed in relation to the location of Part 11 Lands associated with the telecommunications tower; it is currently inaccurate.
- Sections of creek bed that are Crown land and never formed part of state forests estate have not been reserved as part of the SCA even though they are entirely surrounded by it.
- Sections of the Newell Highway managed by Roads and Maritime Services abut the SCA, or in some cases impinge on the SCA boundary, such that road works may occasionally occur within the SCA.
- Existing exploration licences are associated with the SCA.
- Fifty-two apiary sites are located within the SCA.
- Fire intensity and frequency of un-prescribed burns is a threat to the SCA's ecology.
- Two inholdings exist within the SCA that are in private ownership and comprise approximately 16 hectares each.

6. Key management directions

- Fire is managed in accordance with the Pilliga East [Fire Management Strategy](#).
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the [NPWS Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Northern Plains Region.
- Where resources permit, distribution maps of endangered ecological communities will be prepared for use in pest control programs and fire management activities. Roadside populations of *Rulingia procumbens* will be marked to reduce disturbance from road maintenance work.
- Regulatory signage will be installed at significant historic sites noting that the removal of any items is prohibited. Roadside historic sites will be marked to reduce disturbance from road maintenance works.
- Erosion of roads and trails within the SCA will be monitored, and appropriate measures undertaken to stabilise affected areas when required.

- NPWS will liaise with Forestry Corporation of NSW to resolve boundary irregularities and uncertainties and identify a feasible boundary between Creaghs Road and Deldam Trail.
- The GIS mapping of Part 11 land associated with the telecommunications tower will be reviewed.
- The transfer to NPWS estate of un-reserved creek beds surrounded by the SCA will be investigated.
- NPWS will consult with Roads and Maritime Services to investigate realigning the boundary of the SCA with the Newell Highway.
- The opportunity to purchase inholdings to enhance park management will be investigated when they become available.
- Trails within the park where horse riding is permitted will be identified in accordance with the NPWS Horse Riding Policy.
- The potential to construct a fire trail around the telecommunications tower will be investigated, to assist in the management of the asset protection zone.
- Further research into the natural and cultural values of the SCA will be supported and encouraged, in consultation with the Aboriginal community and the wider local community, to promote use of the SCA for cultural activities.
- Where resources permit, Bora Creek hut and Creaghs Crossing will be assessed to determine their historic significance and develop conservation strategies where appropriate.
- Bush camping is permitted within the SCA.
- Law enforcement programs will be implemented to discourage illegal activities within the SCA.
- Existing apiary sites will be licensed and managed in accordance with the licence conditions and NPWS Beekeeping Policy.
- 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 and wildlife or to prevent damage to park assets.
- A plan of management will be prepared to set out the ongoing management objectives for the SCA. The plan of management is a statutory document under the NPW Act which will be available for public comment. NPWS will also encourage the community to contribute to the ongoing conservation of the SCA by promoting and raising public awareness of its special values.

For additional information or enquiries about any aspect of this SCA or this statement, contact the NPWS Baradine Area Office on (02) 6843 4000 or 50–58 Wellington Street, Baradine NSW 2396.

Disclaimer: This is a statement of intent to guide the management of the SCA prior to the development of a plan of management. Any statements made in this publication are made in good faith and do not render the Office of Environment and Heritage liable for any loss or damage. Provisions in the final plan of management may vary from those identified in this document as a result of new information and community consultation. The maps in this statement are intended to show the SCA's location and basic features only, and are not suitable for use when navigating to or exploring within parks.

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