



NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

# Thurloo Downs – the largest acquisition in NSW national parks history

## Factsheet

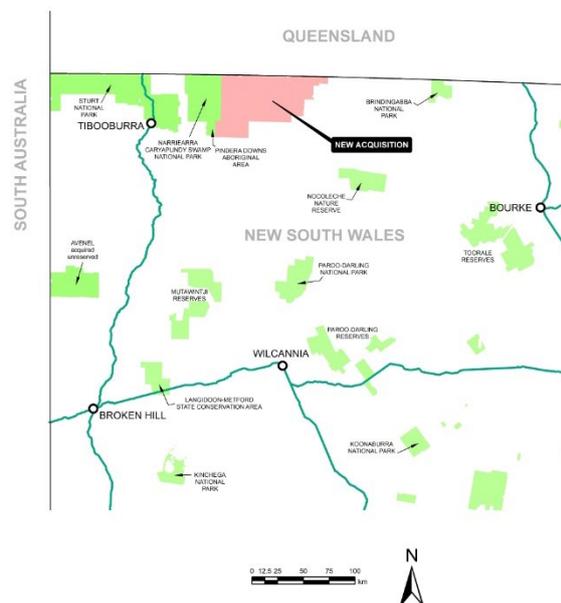
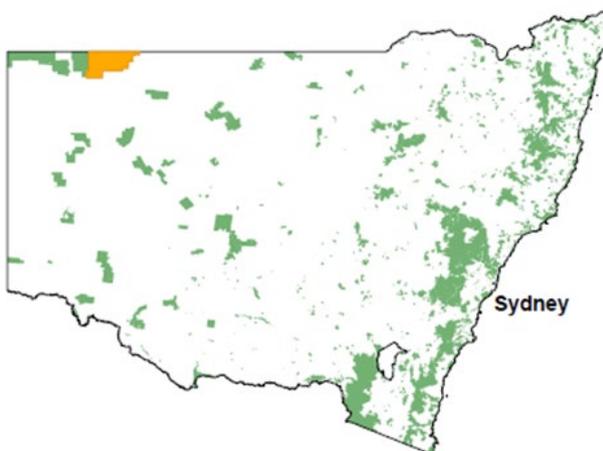


Arid woodlands of Thurloo Downs. A Pike/DPE

**The National Parks and Wildlife Service acknowledges this is the traditional country of the Karenggapa and Parundji, and pays respects to Elders past and present.**

## Key facts

- 437,394 hectares or 1.08 million acres in size – the single largest acquisition in NSW national parks history.
- Located 250 kilometres north-west of Bourke, via Wanaaring.
- Straddles 2 bioregions (Channel Country and Mulga Lands) and 3 subregions.
- A large area of arid zone wetlands meets the requirements for listing as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- The property fills important gaps in the national park estate, protecting landscapes and ecosystems that are not found in any other NSW national park. It includes:
  - 2 of the highest priority subregions for addition to the NSW estate:
    - Bulloo Dunefields is one of 5 subregions (out of 131) with 0% reservation
    - Ursino Sandplains is one of 10 subregions with less than 0.5% reservation
  - 4 landscapes that are not protected anywhere else in New South Wales, including Bulloo Salt Lakes and Playas, Ursino Alluvial Plains, Ursino Linear Dunes and Ursino Tablelands and Downs
  - 6 landscapes that are not protected at the subregional level
  - at least 39 ecosystems (plant community types)
  - over 3,000 hectares is listed as an endangered ecological community.
  - 50 threatened species are expected to occur, including mammals, birds, reptiles and plants
  - expansive Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Located next to Narriearra-Caryapundy Swamp National Park, national parks now protect a near-contiguous area of almost one million hectares stretching 240 km to the South Australia border.
- Boasting spectacular scenery, the property will become a must-see destination in a network of national parks in far western NSW.
- Once Thurloos and other secured lands are reserved, the national parks estate will expand to more than 8.2 million hectares and over 10% of the state – a growth of 15% over 4 years.



Map: Thurloos Downs / NSW national parks estate

## Spotlight on threatened species

Around 50 threatened species are expected to occur at the property, including flock bronzewing (pictured at Thurloo), grey grasswren, black falcon, plains wanderer, pink cockatoo, eastern grass owl and white-fronted chat, as well as stripe-faced dunnart, little pied bat, sandy inland mouse (pictured), crowned gecko, and several threatened plants.



Flock bronzewing. D Stowe/DPE



Sandy inland mouse. J Val/DPE

## Spotlight on Bulloo Overflow

The acquisition, along with Narrierra Caryupundy Swamp National Park, ensures the protection of 90% of the iconic Bulloo Overflow in NSW – a large wetland complex at the end of the Bulloo River (one of Australia's last free-flowing rivers). After rains, these wetlands support hundreds of thousands of birds, fish and other animals, including mass communal nesting events for pelicans, egrets and terns.



Bulloo overflow. A Pike/DPE

## Visitor opportunities

The property boasts spectacular scenery including a complex network of arid zone rivers, salt lakes and vast floodplains, fringed with coolabah, lignum and cane grass and decorated with billabongs and waterholes. Long parallel sand dunes overlook a mosaic of woodlands (bloodwood, poplar box, blackbox) and shrublands, transitioning into mulga-dominated sandplains and gibber country.

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) will invest \$4 million in capital works to support park management and visitor infrastructure such as campgrounds, day-use areas, observation points and outback driving routes. The park will open to visitors from 2025–26.

## Park management

In addition to the investment in infrastructure, NPWS will employ 5 full-time equivalent staff to manage the property. Thurloo will transition to a national park over the next 2 years as the pastoral operation winds down. During this period, NPWS will deliver targeted feral animal and weed control, undertake ecological and cultural heritage surveys and plan visitor infrastructure.

## Aboriginal cultural heritage

The land lies in the traditional country of the Karenggapa and Parundji people. The property has extensive Aboriginal cultural heritage with evidence of artefacts, including hearth remains, flakes, grinding plates and other items of significance across the property. NPWS will work with the Aboriginal community to protect important cultural sites.



Trees grow along inland waterway. A Pike/DPE

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