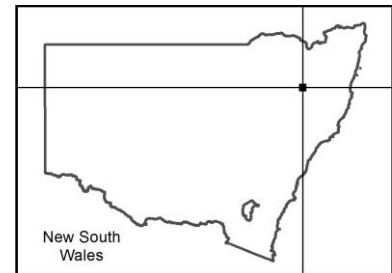


Statement of Management Intent



Watsons Creek National Park Community Conservation Area Zone 1

1. Introduction

This statement outlines the main values, issues, management directions and priorities of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for managing Watsons Creek Community Conservation Area Zone 1 National Park. This statement, together with relevant NPWS policies, will guide the management of the park 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 1 community conservation areas are reserved as national parks under the NPW Act to protect and conserve areas containing outstanding or representative ecosystems, natural or cultural features or landscapes or phenomena that provide opportunities for public appreciation, inspiration and sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment. Under the NPW Act ([section 30E](#)), Zone 1 community conservation areas 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 and understanding of the park's natural and cultural values
- provide for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with conservation of 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
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

The primary purpose of Zone 1 community conservation areas is to conserve nature and cultural heritage. In doing so, opportunities are provided for appropriate and sustainable recreation.

3. Context

Reservation details: Watsons Creek National Park was reserved on 1 January 2011.

Size: 335 hectares.

Watsons Creek National Park is located approximately 45 kilometres north of Tamworth. It falls within the New England Tablelands Bioregion and lies within the administrative areas of Tamworth Regional Council, North West Local Land Services and Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council.



Watsons Creek National Park is a long, narrow reserve that surrounds Watsons Creek, protecting a section of the creek and riparian habitats located between grazing properties. Watsons Creek National Park was reserved under the *National Park Estate (South-Western Cypress Reservations) Act 2010* as an addition to the existing Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area (established under the *Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area Act 2005*).

4. Values

- Watsons Creek National Park protects important riparian and wetland habitats in an area dominated by grazing land.

- The park contains dry sclerophyll forest and woodland communities that include Blakely's red gum (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*), red stringybark (*E. macrorhyncha*) and a range of native orchids.
- The park protects habitat for a variety of threatened species including the square-tailed kite (*Lophoictinia isura*), little lorikeet (*Glossopsitta pusilla*), brown treecreeper (eastern subspecies) (*Climacteris picumnus victoriae*), diamond firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*) and greater broad-nosed bat (*Scoteanax rueppellii*).

5. Issues

- Feral cats (*Felis catus*), feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*), foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) and rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) have been recorded within Watsons Creek National Park.
- Weed species recorded within the park include blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), St John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) and cockleburs (*Xanthium* spp.).
- Boundary fencing for the park is not stock-proof. Fencing needs to be repaired or installed to exclude sheep grazing in the park.

6. Key management directions

- Fire is managed in accordance with the Watsons Creek National Park [Fire Management Strategy](#).
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the [NPWS Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Northern Tablelands Region. Current priorities for the park include controlling cats and foxes, with the focus on protecting native animals and livestock on adjacent land.
- Neighbouring landowners will be consulted regarding issues of straying stock and boundary fencing. Subject to available resourcing, assistance may be provided to neighbours to install stock-proof park boundary fencing in accordance with the NPWS Boundary Fencing 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 park. 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 park by promoting and raising public awareness of its special values.

For additional information or enquiries about any aspect of this park or this statement, contact the NPWS Armidale Office on (02) 6738 9100 or 145 Miller Street, Armidale, NSW 2350.

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

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