COORABAKH NATIONAL PARK

PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

Part of the Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW

October 2007

This plan of management was adopted by the Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water on 16th October 2007.

FURTHER INQUIRIES

For additional information or inquiries on any aspect of the plan, contact the National Parks and Wildlife Service Mid North Coast Regional office at 152 Horton St, Port Macquarie or by phone on (02) 6586 8300.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan of management is based on a draft plan prepared by staff of the Mid North Coast Region of the NPWS.

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FOREWORD

Coorabakh National Park is located approximately 22 kilometres north of Taree on the mid-north coast of NSW. The park, which covers an area of 1,840 hectares, is situated on the Lansdowne escarpment which is an important landscape feature of the Manning Valley.

Coorabakh National Park contains impressive rock formations and a number of scenic lookouts that provide views over the Manning Valley and to the Bulga and Comboyne Plateaus. Eighteen forest ecosystems have been recorded in the park. It is important at a regional level because it contains a number of rare, threatened and significant plant species. It also supports a diverse array of fauna, including the endangered bush stone curlew.

The park is visited by the local Biripi people for educational and spiritual purposes. It also contains remnants of the old Langley Vale tramway built in the 1930s. The tramway is considered to be one of the earliest logging tramways in eastern Australia.

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* requires that a plan of management be prepared for each national park. A plan of management is a legal document that outlines how the area will be managed in the years ahead.

A draft plan of management for Coorabakh National Park was placed on public exhibition from 29th November 2002 until 10th March 2003. The submissions received were carefully considered before adopting this plan.

This plan of management establishes the scheme of operations for Coorabakh National Park. In accordance with section 73B of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, this plan of management is hereby adopted.

Phil Koperberg
Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water

1. NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

1.1 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The management of national parks in New South Wales (NSW) is in the context of the legislative and policy framework, primarily the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act), the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act) and the policies of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The policies arise from the legislative background and internationally accepted principles of park management. They relate to nature conservation, Aboriginal and historic heritage conservation, recreation, commercial use, research and communication.

Other legislation, international agreements and charters may also apply to management of the area. In particular, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* requires the assessment and mitigation of environmental impacts of any works proposed in this plan.

A plan of management is a statutory document under the NPW Act. Once the Minister has adopted a plan, it must be implemented and no operations may be undertaken except in accordance with the plan. This plan applies both to the land currently reserved and to any future additions. Where management strategies or works are proposed for the park or any additions that are not consistent with this plan, an amendment to the plan will be required.

1.2 MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

General Objectives

National parks are reserved 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 and inspiration and sustainable visitor use.

Under the Act, national parks 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 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; and
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

Specific objectives for Coorabakh National Park

- manage the park as part of a regional network of protected areas and as a wildlife corridor between the coast and the Great Dividing Range;

- protect the geological and natural scenic values of the park such as the Lansdowne escarpment, Newbys Creek caves and the volcanic plugs known as Big Nellie, Flat Nellie and Little Nellie;

- conserve native vegetation including threatened and regionally significant species, sclerophyll forests and rainforest communities, and in particular the endemic *Dracophyllum macranthum*;

- conserve the diverse native fauna including threatened species in the park such as the endangered bush stone curlew (*Burhinus grallarius)* and the giant barred frog *(Mixophyes iteraus)*;

- preserve and record historic heritage from past timber harvesting and forestry operations such as relics from the Langley Vale tramway;

- manage the park in consultation with the Biripi people, the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council, and relevant Elders groups;

- control and where possible eliminate feral and exotic species in the park, in consultation with relevant authorities and neighbouring landholders;

- educate the community on the natural and cultural heritage values of the park; and

- provide opportunities for day use recreation activities such as sightseeing, walking, car touring and hang gliding, which have minimal impact on the environment and which complement other surrounding recreational facilities.

2. COORABAKH NATIONAL PARK

2.1 LOCATION, GAZETTTAL AND REGIONAL SETTING

Coorabakh National Park (referred to herein as 'the park') is located about 22 km north of Taree near the villages of Hannam Vale, Waitui, Coopernook and Moorland on the mid north coast of NSW. The park covers an area of 1,840 hectares and was dedicated as a national park on 1 January 1999. Previously the park was part of the Lansdowne State Forest and the Big Nellie Flora Reserve. The Big Nellie Flora Reserve was dedicated in 1988 to preserve landscape values and significant plant species. Coorabakh is an Aboriginal word which means bloodwood tree *(Corymbia sp.)* and / or white cedar *(Melia azedarach)*.

The park lies within the Greater Taree City Council (GTCC) local government area. It borders Lansdowne State Forest to the south and Comboyne State Forest to the north. Other surrounding land uses are cattle grazing, dairy operations, private forestry plantations and small hobby farms.

The park is well recognised for its scenic and geological values. The park is situated on the Lansdowne escarpment, which is an important landscape feature of the Manning Valley. The escarpment is clearly visible from many surrounding villages, as well as from the Pacific Highway and Taree. A number of scenic lookouts in the park provide views over the Manning Valley and to the Bulga and Comboyne Plateaus.

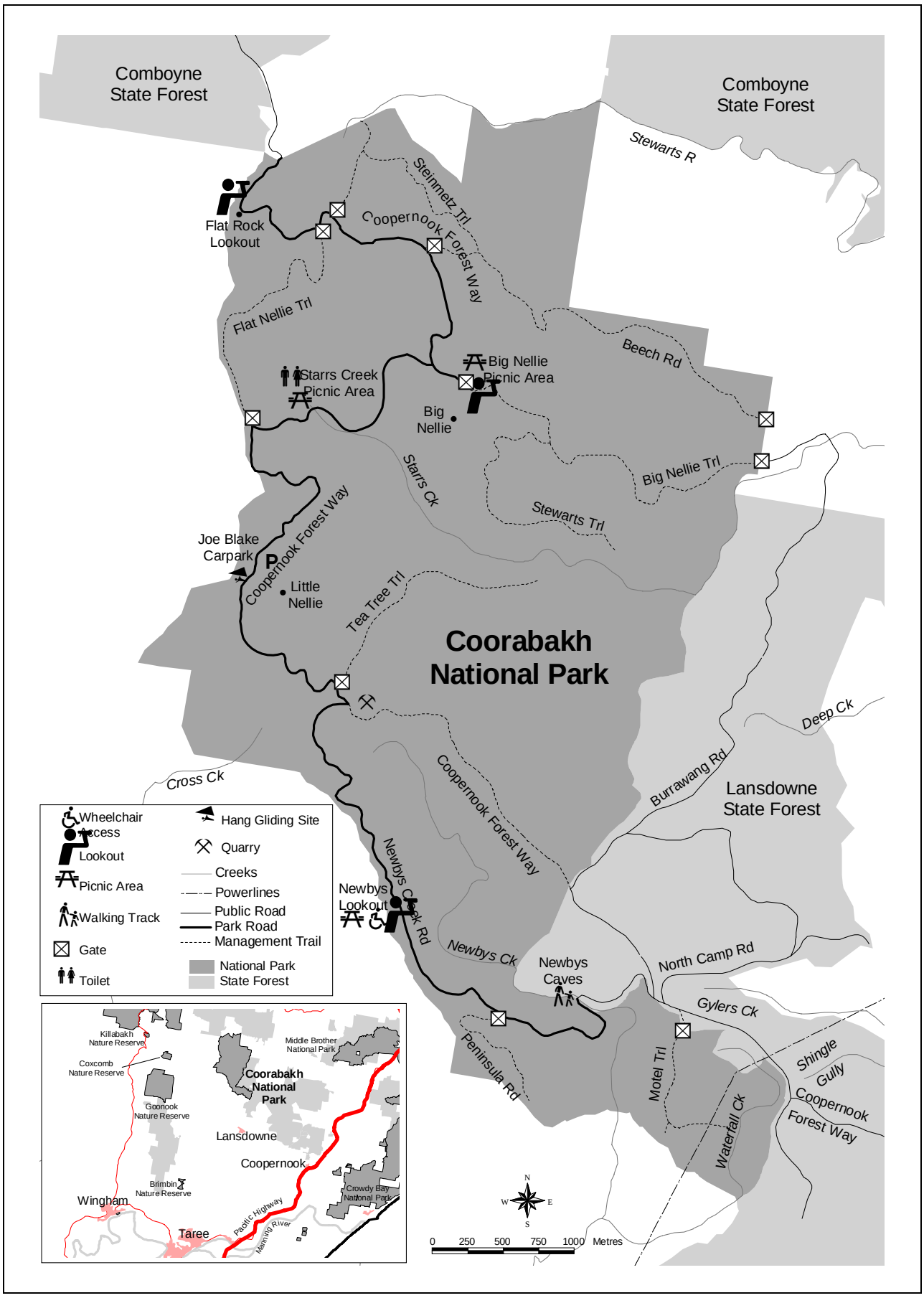
2.2 LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

Natural and cultural heritage and on-going use are strongly inter-related and together form the landscape of an area. Much of the Australian environment has been influenced by past Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal land use practices, and the activities of modern day Australians continue to influence bushland through recreational use, cultural practices, the presence of pest plants and animals and in some cases air and water pollution.

The geology, landform, climate and plant and animal communities of the area, plus its location, have determined how it has been used by humans. The past history of timber harvesting and forestry operations have had a major impact on the park.

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people place cultural values on natural areas, including aesthetic, social, spiritual, recreational and other values. Cultural values may be attached to the landscape as a whole or to individual components, for example to plant and animal species used by Aboriginal people. This plan of management aims to conserve both natural and cultural values. For reasons of clarity and document usefulness natural and cultural heritage, non-human threats and on-going use are dealt with individually, but their inter-relationships are recognised.

Map: Coorabakh National Park



2.3 NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Hydrology, Geology and Soils

The park lies between the Manning River and the Watson Taylor Lake catchment, with tributaries feeding into Starrs Creek, Stewarts River and the Camden Haven River to the north and Newbys Creek and Lansdowne River to the south.

The park has a number of impressive rock formations including the dramatic rocky outcrops known as Big Nellie, Flat Nellie and Little Nellie which are composed of tertiary rhyolite, and the sandstone cliff line known as the Lansdowne escarpment. At Newbys Caves, there are large overhanging conglomerate rock formations. The remainder of the park consists generally of sedimentary geology which contain tuffs, tuffaceous sandstones, conglomerates, sandstone and shales. Soil in the region is primarily derived from sedimentary rock and consists of yellow earths, lateritic red earths and lateritic podsols (Forestry Commission of NSW, 1985).

The topography of the park is moderately steep with sharp ridges to the west of the park along the Lansdowne escarpment and to the north into the Stewarts River valley. Elevation ranges from 90 m in the east of the park to 600 m in the northwest. The summit of Big Nellie is 548 m above sea level.

Native Plants

Eighteen forest ecosystems have been identified in the park with the most predominate type being wet foothills blackbutt *(Eucalyptus pilularis)* / turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) and mid elevation wet blackbutt. Other notable forest ecosystems present include coastal tallowwood *(Eucalyptus microcorys)*/ Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*), turpentine, open coastal brushbox *(Lephostemon confertus)* and central mid elevation Sydney blue gum. In the sheltered gullies, there are areas of subtropical rainforest dominated by figs *(Ficus sp.)* and giant stingers *(Dendrocnide excelsa)*. The subtropical rainforest at Starrs Creek is dominated by coachwood *(Ceratopetalum apetalum)* with an understorey of bangalow palm *(Archontophoenix cunninghamiana)*.

The park is important at a regional level for a number of rare, threatened and significant plant species. The endangered plant *Hibbertia hexandra* has been recorded and extensive areas for this species are predicted throughout the park. The vulnerable plant *Hakea archaeoides* has been recorded at a number of locations in the park, and has a restricted range from Wauchope to the Lansdowne area. *Goodenia fordiana, Gahnia isignis* and *Callistemon acuminatus* listed as rare under ROTAP (Rare or Threatened Australian Plants) (Briggs and Leigh, 1996) have been recorded in the park and the area represents the southern limit for *Gahnia isignis.* The ROTAP list is an important reference list for the national status of threatened species, particularly rare and poorly known species which are not formally recognised under species protection legislation such as the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act).

A number of other species have been recorded at the their southernmost range including red carabeen *(Geissois benthamii)* and Macleay laurel *(Anopterus macleayanus)* (Williams, 1993). A new species of epacrid, *Dracophyllum macranthum,* which is thought to be endemic to the park has been recorded. Potential habitat for the vulnerable *Parsonia dorrigoensis* and *Sarcochilus fitzgeraldii* is also predicted for the park.

The vegetation at Big Nellie (previously within the Big Nellie Flora Reserve) supports three Eucalypt species of unusual occurrence: Blue Mountain ash *(Eucalyptus oreades)* and Blue Mountain mahogany *(Eucalyptus notabilis)* which would normally only occur at altitudes greater than 820m in the Blue Mountains region; and the blue-leaved stringybark *(Eucalyptus agglomerata)* which is near the northern limit for this species.

Due to past timber harvesting and forestry activities, the park contains extensive areas of regrowth forest, with few areas of old growth forest remaining. Models developed as part of the comprehensive regional assessment process (CRA) predicted the occurrence of old growth forest areas over approximately 9% of the park. The largest predicted patches are located along the northern and eastern catchment of Newbys Creek in stands of wet foothills blackbutt/turpentine, mid elevation wet blackbutt and turpentine.

Native Animals

The park supports a diverse array of fauna, including a number of species listed under the TSC Act. The endangered bush stone curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) is recorded in the park and the endangered giant barred frog (*Mixophyes iteratus*) is predicted for the park. Table 1 lists the threatened species as listed under the TSC Act which are recorded or predicted for the park. The spotted-tail quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*), grey-headed flying fox *(Pteropus poliocephalus)*, giant barred frog (*Mixophyes iteratus*) and the stuttering frog (*Mixophyes balbus*) are all recorded in the park and are also listed as threatened species under the Commonwealth *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Most fauna surveys of the area were previously undertaken as part of State Forest pre-logging surveys, Regional Forestry Agreements and the North East Forest Biodiversity surveys.

Predicted areas of core habitat for threatened fauna and areas with high species diversity are located in the north western section of the park, extending north of Flat Rock in a south easterly direction towards Big Nellie. Other important habitats are located towards the headwaters of Starrs Creek, south of Little Nellie and patches along the escarpment near Newbys Creek Road.

A Draft Recovery Plan for the Koala (NPWS 2003) has been prepared which considers the conservation requirements of the species across its known range in NSW. It provides a framework for localised koala recovery efforts. Recovery plans or priority actions statements are being prepared for other threatened species.

Table 1. Threatened and significant species present or predicted to occur in Coorabakh National Park. (SFNSW, 2001; Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999; NPWS Wildlife Atlas).

Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal Status (TSC Act)	Recorded in (ǒ) or predicted (?)
Mammals			
Brush-tailed phascogale	*Phascogale tapoatafa*	V	ǒ
Common bent-wing bat	*Miniopterus schreibersii*	V	ǒ
Greater broad nose bat	*Scoteanax rueppelli*	V	ǒ
Grey-headed flying fox	*Pteropus poliocephalus*	V *	?
Koala	*Phascolarctos cinereus*	V	ǒ
Little bent-wing bat	*Miniopterus australis*	V	ǒ
Parma wallaby	*Macropus parma*	V	ǒ
Spotted-tail quoll	*Dasyurus maculatus*	V *	ǒ
Yellow-bellied glider	*Petaurus australis*	V	ǒ
Birds			
Bush stone curlew	*Burhinus grallarius*	E	ǒ
Glossy black cockatoo	*Calyptorhynchus lathami*	V	ǒ
Masked owl	*Tyto novaehollandiae*	V	ǒ
Square-tail kite	*Lophoictinia isura*	V	?
Wompoo fruit-dove	*Ptilinopus magnificus*	V	ǒ
Reptiles			
Stephen's banded snake	*Hoplocephalus stephensi*	V	ǒ
Amphibians			
Giant barred frog	*Mixophyes iteratus*	E *	?
Stuttering frog	*Mixophyes balbus*	V *	ǒ

Notes: V = vulnerable, E = endangered, ǒ = recorded in park or within a 1km buffer of the boundary,
* = also listed under the Commonwealth *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Aboriginal Heritage

Aboriginal communities have an association and connection to the land. The land and water biodiversity values within a whole landscape context are the centre of Aboriginal spirituality and contribute to Aboriginal peoples identity. Aboriginal communities associate natural resources with the use and enjoyment of valued foods and medicines, caring for the land, passing on cultural knowledge and strengthening social bonds. Aboriginal heritage and nature are inseparable from each other and need to be managed in an integrated manner across the landscape.

The area was traditionally used by the local Ngaamba (pronounced Namba) tribe and by surrounding clans as a major transport route between the coast and the Great Dividing Range. It is likely that the cliff lines and rugged topography of the park were used for cultural practises such as ceremonies and other social gatherings. No detailed Aboriginal heritage studies have been undertaken and there are no recorded Aboriginal sites in the park.

The park is visited by the local Biripi people for educational and spiritual purposes. The Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council, Elders groups, the Biripi people and other indigenous persons represent contemporary Aboriginal involvement in the park. It is NPWS policy to involve the Aboriginal community in the management of Aboriginal heritage in the park.

History Since European Occupation

The park has a long history of timber harvesting and forestry operations. In 1899, the area was set aside under the *Crowns Land Act 1884* as 'reserves for the preservation and growth of timber'. Timber harvesting occurred throughout the area, with an intensive logging period during World War I and II. Most accessible parts of the area were managed for timber production (Forestry Commission of NSW, 1985). Small sections of rainforest were also included in silviculture treatment, in an attempt to convert rainforest to flooded gum (*Eucalyptus grandis)*.

The park contains remnants of the old Langley Vale tramway. Construction of the tramway started in the 1880s, and the section of the tramway in the park was built in the 1930s. The tramway is considered to be one of the earliest logging tramways in eastern Australia (Forestry Commission of NSW, 1985). The tramway was used to haul timber to the local sawmill at Langley Vale. The line ran approximately 21km, from Langley Vale to Old North Camp in the vicinity of Deep Creek (in Lansdowne State Forest), with spur lines to Little Nellie and Juhles Mountain (near Stewarts River). Initially, logs were hauled along the line by horses on the lower slopes, and later by steam engines. The old tramway turn-around point was located at the western end of Tea Tree trail. The line was eventually abandoned in the 1940s. Some relics of the timber bridges and the works associated with the line, such as cuttings can still be found throughout the area.

2.4 RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

The park provides a range of recreational opportunities including sight seeing, hang gliding, car touring and bushwalking. At Flat Rock and Newbys lookouts there are constructed platforms that offer impressive views over the escarpment to the Manning Valley and the Bulga and Comboyne Plateaus. At Starrs Creek day use area there is a wheelchair accessible circular boardwalk through the rainforest. At Newbys Caves there is a short walk up Newbys Creek to the cave overhang. There is a steep walking track up to Big Nellie, which has vertical drop offs and the public is discouraged from using this track due to safety concerns. Picnic facilities are located at Newbys Lookout, Big Nellie and Starrs Creek.

Visitors can drive through the park along Coopernook Forest Way and Newbys Creek Road, which includes features such as Flat Rock and Newbys Lookouts, Big Nellie, Starrs Creek and Newbys Caves. They can then link up with Hannam Vale Road at Hannam Vale and Forest Road at Moorland to complete a circuit drive.

The surrounding State Forests have a number of recreational facilities that are often used by visitors to the park. There is a camping area at the Coopernook State Forest Headquarters off Forest Road (in Lansdowne State Forest) which is accessible by two wheel drive vehicles. In the Comboyne State Forest there is a swimming hole at Waitui Falls.

Hang gliding occurs in the park at a site located on the Lansdowne escarpment near Little Nellie. This site is generally flown in south-westerlies and is used by hang gliders as a 'winter thermalling' site. Hang gliders launch from this location and land on private property at the base of the mountain. An agreement previously existed between SFNSW and the Mid North Coast Hang Gliding Association to maintain this area as a hang glider take-off area. The tree line below the take off ramp requires regular pruning

to ensure that the hang gliders have clean air when launching. Because of the small size of the hang gliding launching site and no parking opportunities along Coopernook Forest Way near the site, there is potential for overcrowding and safety issues on the road.

Horse riding will not be permitted in the park because Coopernook Forest Way is not suitable for shared access by horses and vehicles. The road is steep, narrow and winding with poor lines of sight in a number of locations. Management trails in the park are also steep and are unsuitable for vehicle access and horse riding. The park also has a limited history of use by horse riders. Most riders use the surrounding areas, such as State Forests, which have an extensive trail network and are located closer to settlement areas.

2.5 ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

The main access roads in the park are along Coopernook Forest Way and Newbys Creek Road. The park can be accessed from Forest Road at Moorland and Hannam Vale Road at Hannam Vale.

The planning area includes three 'Ministerial roads': Coopernook Forest Way, Big Nellie Trail and Flat Nellie Trail. These roads were vested in the Minister for the Environment to ensure the continuation of access arrangements which existed immediately before the park's creation. This primarily relates to use of these roads for timber hauling and private property access. Whilst Ministerial roads do not form part of the gazetted park area, the management of these roads is subject to the provisions of this plan, the NPW Regulations and the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

In addition to the Ministerial roads, there is a network of management trails in the park (see map). The primary purpose of the management trail system is for fire management. The trails also provide access for other essential management operations such as pest control, research and access for other authorities such as Forests NSW, Transgrid, and neighbouring landholders. These trails are for use by authorised vehicles only.

The park has two quartz based quarries located along Coopernook Forest Way near its intersection with the northern end of Newbys Creek Road. These quarries are used for the maintenance of roads and picnic areas in the park and along some sections of roads leading to the park. As assessment of the quarries has been undertaken in the mid north coast region and the quarries in the park will be managed in accordance with this planning document.

2.6 OTHER USES

Transgrid maintains an electricity transmission line traversing roughly north-south through the southern end of the park and the Lansdowne State Forest. This line is part of the Taree to Port Macquarie high voltage line. Prior to the area becoming a national park, the line operated under an occupational permit with SFNSW. It is now subject to a license with NPWS.

2.7 THREATS TO THE PARK

Pest Species

Pest plant species recorded in the park are mainly confined to areas of previous disturbance, and along roadways and trails. Crofton weed *(Ageratina adenophora),* and red lantana *(Lantana camera)* are known to be in the park and are listed as noxious weeds in the GTCC area.

The park also has a number of pest animal species recorded including the fox *(Vulpes vulpes),* feral cat *(Felis catus)* and wild dog *(Canis familiaris)* (SFNSW, 2001). Predation by the feral cat and the fox are both listed as threatening processes to native wildlife under the TSC Act and the Commonwealth *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPB Act). The current population and distribution of pest species in the park is unknown. Wild dog baiting programs have previously been undertaken in the east and north west of the park near the Comboyne State Forest. These baiting programs have been undertaken in conjunction with Forests NSW and surrounding landholders. Wild dogs have been found in the surrounding environment, though to date no dogs have been found in the park during these control programs.

Fire

The NPWS regards fire as a natural phenomenon and one of the continuing physical factors influencing the Australian environment. Many native plants and animals of dry sclerophyll communities have adapted to particular fire regimes. Inappropriate fire regimes have been identified as a key threatening process effecting the biological diversity of NSW. Vegetation communities in the park, such as rainforests and wet sclerophyll forest, are sensitive to fire.

One of the most significant fires to date recorded in the park was the ‘Big Nellie’ fire, which took place in 1964-65, in the north western section of the then Lansdowne State Forest (Forestry Commission, 1985).

It is considered that there is a low risk of fire entering the park. The Lansdowne escarpment in the south and north west is likely to restrict fire from entering the park from this vicinity. Most fires in the park are expected to enter the park from the north and east direction and are generally caused by incendiarism and escaped rural burns.

Soil Erosion

Generally soil erosion is not a significant issue in the park, though there are some small sections along roads near drain outlets where erosion is occurring. The steep topography of the park contributes to the high velocity of water during rainfall events. It is possible that during these events, silt could enter the surrounding catchment.

2.8 REFERENCES

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3. MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Soil and water conservation Soil erosion is a minor issue in the park, but occurs at some drain outlets along roads. Erosion can cause localised damage during high rainfall events, and soil may enter the surrounding catchment.	• Any soil erosion occurring in the park is minimised. • The water quality in the catchment is maintained.	• Maintain roads to an appropriate standard and investigate options for the installation of erosion protection measures along sections of the road. • Undertake all works in the park in a manner that minimises erosion and water pollution.	Medium High
Native plant and animal conservation Eighteen forest ecosystems have been identified in the park. Some of these forest ecosystems are poorly conserved within NSW. The park contains a number of rare, threatened and regionally significant plant and animal species as well as species at their geographical limit. Wet sclerophyll forests, subtropical rainforests and potential old growth forests in the park have high conservation value and may be sensitive to fire. Past logging and timber production have disturbed some areas. The draft Recovery Plan for the Koala (NPWS 2003) considers the conservation requirements of the species in NSW and provides a framework for localised koala recovery efforts.	• Native plant and animal species and communities are conserved. • Natural processes such as succession of regenerating forest communities in the park continue. • Improved knowledge of threatened and significant plants, animals, ecology and habitat requirements. • Areas of previous disturbance are revegetated.	• Allow natural revegetation of disturbed areas. Undertake rehabilitation works where necessary. • Develop strategies for the conservation of koalas in the park in accordance with the approved Recovery Plan for the Koala. • Implement recovery plans and priority actions for other threatened species when prepared. • Exclude fire from fire sensitive communities such as rainforest and wet sclerophyll forests. • Undertake monitoring and surveys of threatened and significant species, and in particular for *Dracophyllum macranthum* and to ascertain the presence of old growth forest. • Liaise with neighbours to encourage the retention and appropriate management of key habitat and corridors adjacent to the park through Voluntary Conservation Agreements or other appropriate strategies.	Medium High Medium High Medium High

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Pest species Pest plant species are located in disturbed areas and along roadsides. Noxious weeds present in the park include crofton weed and red lantana. Pest animals recorded in the park include foxes, feral cats and wild dogs. Wild dog baiting programs have previously been undertaken in the park in conjunction with Forests NSW and surrounding landholders. The Regional Pest Strategy identifies the park for reactive pest animal species control rather than on going regular control programs.	• Introduced species will be controlled and if possible eradicated. • Appropriate pest management techniques are implemented. • The impact of introduced species on native species and neighbouring lands is minimised.	• Undertake pest species control and bush regeneration works in accordance with the Regional Pest Strategy. Target noxious weeds and areas of disturbance such as roadways, trails, quarries and the hang gliding site for priority weed control programs. • Encourage surrounding landholders and Forests NSW to be involved in joint weed maintenance programs. • Undertake wild dog baiting programs on a needs basis in cooperation with Forests NSW, RLPB and surrounding landholders. • Monitor pest animal species and implement control programs when necessary.	High High Medium High

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Fire management Vegetation communities such as rainforests, and wet sclerophyll forest are fire sensitive. Fire has historically entered the park from the north and east. Most fires are generally caused by incendiarism and escaped rural burns. Fire can damage infrastructure and threaten neighbouring land. A fire management strategy has been prepared for the park.	• Fire frequencies are appropriate for conservation of native plant and animal communities. • Life, property including adjoining dwellings, and park infrastructure are protected from fire. • Fire is excluded from rainforest, old growth forest and wet sclerophyll forest.	• Manage fire regimes to protect biodiversity in accordance with the identified fire frequency thresholds for vegetation communities and any fire sensitive communities. This includes excluding fire from rainforest, old growth forest and wet sclerophyll communities. • Participate in Greater Taree District Bush Fire Management Committee. Maintain coordinated and cooperative arrangements with the Rural Fire Service Brigades, GTCC, Forests NSW and surrounding landholders with regard to fuel management and fire suppression. • Implement the Fire Management Strategy for the park. • Maintain a network of strategic trails and roads for fire management as shown on the map. • Install gates where necessary to reduce the incidence of incendiarism and to assist in the maintenance of management trails.	High High Medium High Medium

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Cultural heritage The Biripi people use the park for a range of cultural purposes. It is likely that the park was traditionally used by local tribes as a transport route and a place where cultural practices such as ceremonies and social gatherings were undertaken. No comprehensive surveys have been undertaken in the park for sites of indigenous or non-indigenous cultural significance. Remnants of the old Langley Vale tramway, including timber bridges and cuttings, have been recorded although the exact route of the tramway is unknown. Other cultural sites may exist in the park.	• Cultural heritage features are identified, conserved and managed in accordance with their significance. • The community and other relevant persons are involved in the consultation and preservation of cultural heritage sites and information.	• Undertake a cultural heritage assessment in areas where any new developments are proposed. • Encourage an Aboriginal cultural heritage study of the park in consultation with the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council. • Ensure that any information on Aboriginal cultural heritage in the park is provided to the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council and remains confidential where requested. • Discuss and encourage any opportunities for the interpretation of Aboriginal heritage values in the park with the Purfleet-Taree Local Aboriginal Land Council, Elders groups and other relevant Indigenous persons. • Install an interpretation sign at the top of Tea Tree Trail, at the tramway turn around site, to provide information on the historic tramway. • Undertake or encourage a survey to identify the location of any relics from the Langley Vale tramway in the area in consultation with Forests NSW and GTCC. • Continue to be involved in the GTCC Heritage Management Committee.	High High High High High Medium Medium

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Recreational opportunities The park provides opportunities for day use as well as a circuit drive through the park and neighbouring State Forests and local villages. The road network in the park is not suitable for large buses. Facilities in the park include scenic lookouts, picnic facilities and walking tracks. A park brochure provides information on park facilities and recreation opportunities. There are currently no toilets or camping facilities in the park but facilities are available in the nearby Lansdowne State Forest. The walking track up to Big Nellie is steep and there are safety concerns regarding public access. Walking access to Newbys Cave requires minor upgrading and consideration of a small car park. Hang gliding occurs from a launch site in the park but requires upgrading for safety purposes. The Mid North Coast Hang Gliding Association regularly trim vegetation and control weed growth at the site. The hang gliding platform is not suitable for large groups. Horse riding in the park is considered unsuitable due to the steep, winding and narrow roads which are considered unsuitable for shared access with vehicles. Horse riding opportunities are available in the surrounding State Forests.	• The park provides opportunities for day visitor use with minimal impact on natural and cultural heritage values. • Walking tracks provide opportunities not generally available elsewhere in the surrounding area and are maintained to an appropriate standard. • Hang gliding is maintained at existing low use levels and there is improved safety and management of the site.	• Promote the park as a day use destination with opportunities to undertake a circuit drive incorporating lookouts, picnic facilities and surrounding areas. • Camping facilities, barbeques and rubbish bins will not be provided. Fuel stoves only will be permitted. • Install a lookout, seats and interpretation bay at Big Nellie picnic area and upgrade the existing picnic table. Discourage public use of the existing walking route to Big Nellie and remove walking track sign at the base of the mountain. Install a sign highlighting the risks to public safety. • Maintain the existing walking track at Newbys Caves to the first overhang only and manage as a low use, short stay destination in a natural setting. No new facilities will be provided at Newbys Caves. • Assess the feasibility and demand for a circular walking track that would link Tea Tree Trail and Stewarts River Trail and provide the opportunity for a circular day walk in the park. • Construct toilet facilities at Starrs Creek picnic area. • Develop an agreement with the Mid North Coast Hang Gliding Association for maintenance of a hang gliding take off area, including removal of the timber platform, provision of a grassed ramp and clearing below the ramp at the summit of the hang gilding site in accordance with NPWS requirements and subject to appropriate environmental assessment. The Hang Gliding Association will be	High High High High Medium High High

Recreational opportunities (continued) There is currently limited information on the recreational use and the number of visitors to the park.		responsible for the installation of stairs and a pedestrian gate on the walking track leading to the site. Prior consent to use the site must be obtained from the Hang Gliding Association. Hang gliding group sizes will be determined for the site to ensure minimal impact on the environment.	
		• Hang gliders will be required to park their vehicles at the Joe Blake carpark near Little Nellie. Parking will be prohibited at the base of the walking track up to the hang gliding site along Coopernook Forest Way.	High
		• Discourage other visitor access to the hang gliding site because of safety concerns and conflicts between users.	High
		• Horse riding will not be permitted in the park and will be signposted accordingly.	High
		• Monitor visitor use to determine visitor numbers and satisfaction with park facilities. Methods may include provision of a visitor's book at Starrs Creek and/or a traffic counter along a section of Coopernook Forest Way.	Low

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Management operations There is a network of management trails in the park used by NPWS for fire management and other essential management operations. Flat Nellie Trail is a ministerial road to ensure ongoing access arrangements for the adjoining land holder that existed prior to the park's creation. There are two quarries in the park that are essential for park maintenance purposes, including maintenance of roads within the park boundary and some of the major roads leading to the park.	• Management trails are appropriately maintained and gated where necessary. • Quarries in the park have minimal impact on park values.	• Maintain roads and trails shown on map. Public vehicle access will not be permitted on management trails and trails will be gated as necessary. • Progressively close and rehabilitate other roads and tracks no longer required for management purposes. • Public vehicle access will be promoted though Newbys Creek Road in the vicinity of Newbys Cave and Newbys Lookout rather than along Coopernook Forest Way. • Flat Nellie Trail will be a gated management trail, but access will be maintained to the adjacent landholder. • Seek an agreement with Forests NSW about maintaining Coopernook Forest Way to a 2WD standard to ensure continued public access to Coorabakh National Park. • With prior consent, allow Forests NSW to access quarries for maintenance of roads that lead to the park. • Allow natural revegetation of areas in the quarries no longer required for extraction. If necessary undertake rehabilitation works. • Install a gate on Motel Trail to restrict unauthorised access	High Medium Medium Medium Medium Medium Medium

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Research Research is needed to improve understanding of the park's natural and cultural heritage, the processes that affect them and the requirements for management of particular species. The limited research undertaken has tended to focus on flora and fauna surveys of the area.	• Knowledge is increased on the park's natural and cultural heritage values and this information is incorporated into management decision making. • Research programs are conducted in a coordinated and sustainable manner.	• Encourage or undertake research into the following topics: i. knowledge of threatened species distribution and habitat requirements; ii. information on the historic values of the park including location of the old tramway; iii. information on the Aboriginal values of the park; and iv. visitor use patterns, preferences and impacts.	Medium
Other uses Transgrid maintains an electricity transmission line traversing through the park near Motel Trail. The transmission line is under license with NPWS and is maintained by Transgrid.	• Existing transmission lines are managed to minimise impacts on the natural, cultural and scenic values and park roads and management trails.	• Ensure vegetation management under power lines is undertaken in accordance with the agreement between NPWS and Transgrid for the inspection and maintenance of Transgrid infrastructure on NPWS areas. • Encourage any replacement, or upgrading of existing transmission lines to incorporate best environmental design such as bundled or underground cable.	High High

High priority activities are those imperative to achievement of the objectives and desired outcomes. They must be undertaken in the near future to avoid significant deterioration in natural, cultural or management resources.
Medium priority activities are those that are necessary to achieve the objectives and desired outcomes but are not urgent.
Low priority activities are desirable to achieve management objectives and desired outcomes but can wait until resources become available.