

BASKET SWAMP NATIONAL PARK

PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

Part of the Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW)

October 2005

This plan of management was adopted by the Minister for the Environment on 28th October 2005.

Acknowledgments

This plan of management was prepared by Kevin Parker of the Glen Innes office of the Northern Tablelands Region of NPWS with assistance from the Northern Directorate Planning Group.

In preparing the plan, reference was made to Hunter, J. T. (2002) *Vegetation and Floristics of Basket Swamp National Park*.

Cover photograph of Basket Swamp by Shane Ruming.

Further Inquiries

Inquiries about this draft plan of management for Basket Swamp National Park should be directed to the ranger at the NPWS Tenterfield Area Office, 10 Miles Street Tenterfield, NSW, or by telephone on (02) 6736 4298.

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FOREWORD

Basket Swamp National Park is located on the eastern fall of the northern section of the New England Tablelands of New South Wales, approximately 15 kilometres to the north east of Tenterfield. With an area of 2,820 hectares, Basket Swamp National Park is a significant reserve within the northern New England Tableland biogeographical region.

One threatened and nine rare plant species have been recorded from the seven vegetation communities in Basket Swamp National Park and there are a further twenty six plant species of significance in the park. The park also supports a multitude of wildlife, including the endangered brush-tailed rock wallaby and the vulnerable spotted-tailed quoll.

The park is part of the former Jukambal tribal grounds, and lies within the area covered by the Moombahlene Aboriginal Land Council. The adjoining Woolloomoolni Aboriginal Place holds great significance to local Aboriginal people.

Recreational use of the park is limited to scenic driving, bird watching and bushwalking due to its remote location and provision of other visitor opportunities in nearby national parks, state forests and the Woolloomoolni Aboriginal Place.

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

A draft plan of management for Basket Swamp National Park was placed on public exhibition from 4 June until 20 September 2004. The exhibition of the draft plan attracted 5 submissions which raised 7 issues. All submissions received were carefully considered before adopting this plan.

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

Bob Debus
Minister for the Environment

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1. MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

1.1 Legislative and Policy Framework

The management of national parks and nature reserves in New South Wales (NSW) is in the context of a 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). Section 72AA of the NPW Act lists the matters to be considered in preparation of a plan of 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* (EPA Act) 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, no operations may be undertaken within Basket Swamp National Park except in accordance with the plan. The plan will also apply to future additions to the national park. Where management strategies or works are proposed for the national park or any additions that are not consistent with the plan, an amendment to the plan will be required.

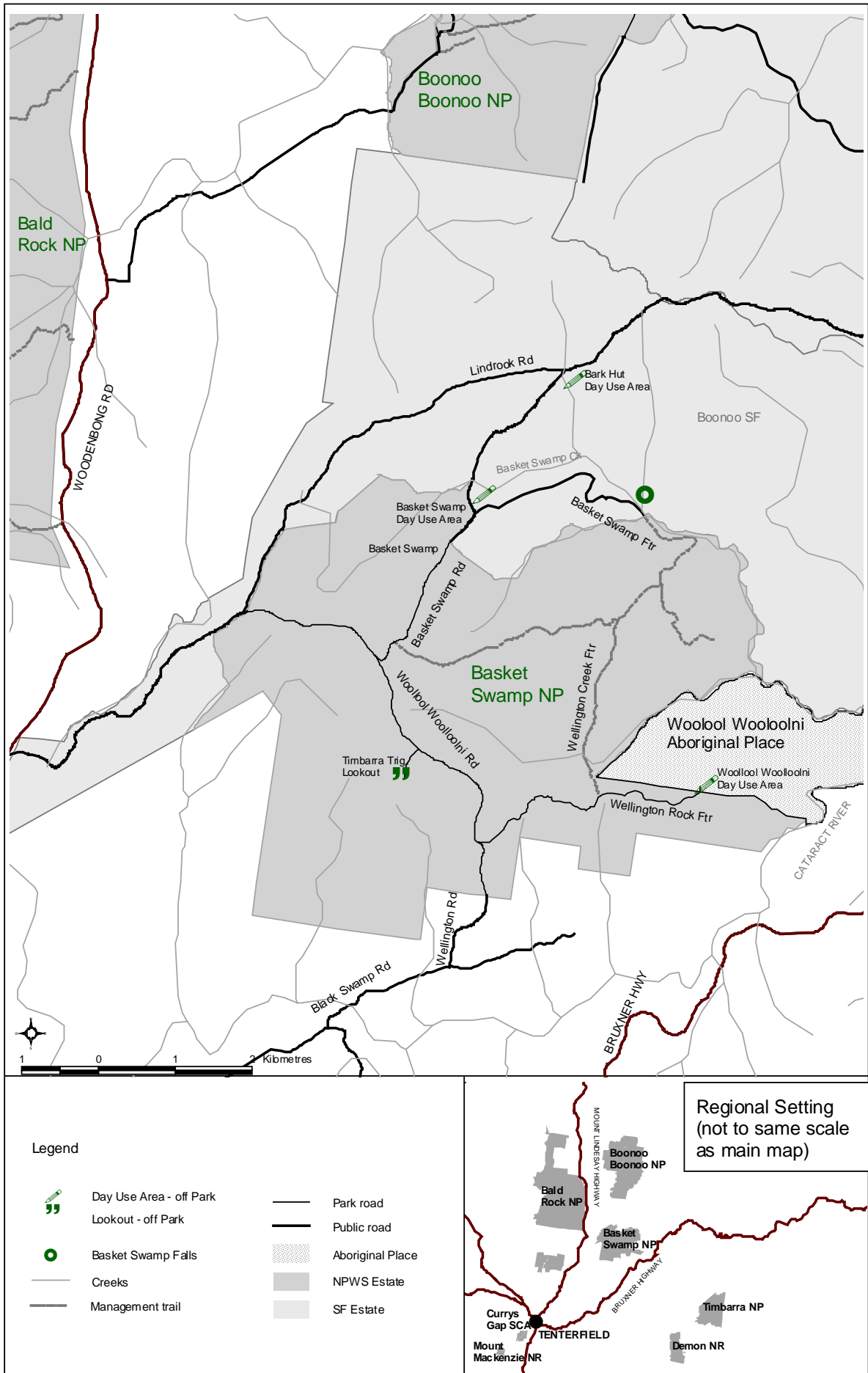
1.2 Management Purposes and Principles

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.

Map: Basket Swamp National Park and its regional setting



2. BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

2.1 Location, Gazettal and Regional Setting

Basket Swamp National Park (referred to as “the park” in this plan) is located on the eastern fall of the northern section of the New England Tablelands of New South Wales, approximately 15 kilometres to the north east of Tenterfield. With an area of 2820 hectares, Basket Swamp National Park is a significant bioregional reserve that was formerly part of the Boonoo State Forest, but was gazetted as a national park under the provisions of the *Forestry and National Park Estate Act No 163*, on 14th December 1998.

The park is named after Basket Swamp, a 200 hectare waterlogged area of heaths and sedges, in its western sector. The park is bounded by the Boonoo State Forest to the north, east and west, and by private holdings of grazing and agricultural lands to the south.

Woolloomooloolni Aboriginal Place is surrounded by the park on two sides (see the map). Woolloomooloolni is the spiritual name of an early Aboriginal ceremonial site. The high, spectacular rock outcrop within the Aboriginal Place is known as Wellington Rock. A smaller but equally outstanding rock outcrop slightly to the east is known as Little Wellington Rock. An Aboriginal Place is an area of special significance to Aboriginal culture and its declaration under Section 90 of the NPW Act provides recognition of the significance of the area and its heritage values which relate to traditions, observances, customs, beliefs or history of Aboriginal people. The Woolloomooloolni Aboriginal Place has been dedicated over Crown land.

Basket Swamp National Park is part of a system of parks and reserves in the Far Northern Tablelands Region, that include Bald Rock and Boonoo Boonoo National Parks to its north, and Timbarra Nature Reserve to the south-east of Tenterfield.

Two Queensland national parks, Girraween and Sundown, are located across the state border to the west, with Girraween adjoining Bald Rock National Park.

Basket Swamp National Park is located within the Tenterfield Shire Local Government Area, and is also within the area of the Moombahlene Local Aboriginal Land Council. The park is accessed by way of the Woodenbong Road, (formerly the Mount Lindesay Highway) which links Tenterfield with Beaudesert, in south-east Queensland.

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 introduced 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. In the case of the Basket Swamp National Park, it was formerly part of the Boonoo State Forest and was

subject to logging for many years, particularly in its western parts. Access trails to the various logging compartments now serve as the park's fire trail mosaic. The area was also prospected for gold, although there are no records of significant amounts having been extracted from what is now the national park.

The Woollooll Woolloolni Aboriginal Place, that adjoins the park, is significant to Aboriginal people as a ceremonial site.

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.

2.3 Management Direction for Basket Swamp National Park

The primary management priority for Basket Swamp National Park will be to protect its natural landscape integrity and natural and cultural heritage values, whilst providing low key, ecologically sustainable nature-based recreation opportunities.

Specifically, Basket Swamp National Park will be managed to:

- Ensure the park remains an ecologically viable remnant of the far Northern Tablelands of New South Wales.
- Develop a cooperative working relationship with park neighbours, including State Forests of New South Wales, Tenterfield Shire, and private land holders to:
 - encourage conservation of adjoining natural areas, thus enhancing the ecological viability of the park;
 - encourage a coordinated fire management strategy for the park and the adjoining Boonoo State Forest and private properties; and
 - control feral animal populations in the park by establishing cooperative trapping and poisoning programs.
- Eliminate weed species where possible, and to prevent their spread elsewhere in the park.
- Provide low key visitor facilities for nature based recreation activities.

2.4 Natural and Cultural Heritage Values - A Summary

Geology, topography, soils and climate

Basket Swamp National Park is typical of the regional geology of the north-eastern part of the New England Tablelands. It is made up of shallow, meandering, swampy gullies characterised by a linear sequence of low stony ridges covered with outcrops of weather-worn boulders. The eastern and south-eastern parts of the park are made up of steep, heavily forested valleys that form part of the escarpment of the Great Dividing Range.

The park forms part of an extensive and interesting landscape unit, and its origin is closely related to the New England Batholith, a massive rock body underlying much of

the New England Tableland. The emplacement of the batholith began in the mid Permian Period (about 270 million years ago) and continued into the Triassic Period (about 225 million years ago).

Landforms of the park include rock outcrops and tor clusters, and occasional high residual granite domes such as Feather Rock and Timbarra Trig that are visually appealing features of the area. The topography of Basket Swamp is more subdued than that of nearby Bald Rock National Park to the north-west, and the rock outcrops and tors in Basket Swamp National Park are affected by the process of natural weathering and erosion.

The major rock type is Stanthorpe Adamellite, a pinkish form of granite.

Altitude within the park varies from about 1163 metres at Timbarra Trig in the centre of the park, to about 700 metres near the lower parts of the Cataract River gorge to the east. The majority of the park has an average altitude of about 1000 metres above sea level. Drainage through the park is essentially west-east, and is associated with Basket Swamp Creek that flows from Basket Swamp itself, Wellington's Creek, that flows into Basket Swamp Creek, and the Cataract River, that forms part of the eastern boundary.

The soils of Basket Swamp National Park tend to follow the topography of the park downslope. Skeletal soils have developed amidst the granite, and strongly weathered and leached rudimentary podzols and siliceous sands occur on the higher slopes, and among rock outcrop areas. Yellow and gleyed podzols occur on the lower slopes, and humic podzols and gleys are found in the swampy areas of the park. The soils of the park, generally, are shallow, sandy, coarse and porous, and are fairly low in nutrients.

The climate of the far Northern Tablelands is determined by temperate as well as tropical weather influences and a predominantly easterly airflow. Basket Swamp National Park receives an annual rainfall averaging 850-1000 millimetres in its western parts and up to 2500 millimetres along the escarpment to the east. The winter component of the annual rainfall is about 35% of the total, when the area is influenced by south-west and westerly winds. Great variability occurs in the park's rainfall patterns, and one in every five years on average is usually drought-declared.

Summer temperatures are not extreme, with the maximum not usually above 30 degrees Celsius, and in winter the mean daily temperatures vary between 3 and 15 degrees Celsius. Sleet and light snowfalls occur during most winters, but heavy snowfalls are seldom experienced.

Native plants and animals

The vegetation of Basket Swamp National Park is typical of that growing at the high altitudes of the northern New England Tableland biogeographical region, and is similar to that of Boonoo Boonoo National Park a few kilometres to the north. The park conserves some major and widespread communities of the eastern escarpment. A recent survey of the park's vegetation identified a total of 417 vascular plants, with *Acacia* and *Eucalyptus* the richest genera.

Seven major vegetation communities are found in the park and include:

- Blackbutt-Stringybark Shrubby Open Forest
- Blackbutt-Stringybark Grassy Open Forest

- Tea-tree Riparian Scrub
- Tea-tree Rock Outcrop Heaths and Shrublands
- Coachwood-Brushbox Closed Forest
- Messmate-Blackbutt Tall Open Forest
- Heathy Sedgelands.

One plant species that is currently listed as vulnerable under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* and nine species that are listed as Rare or Threatened Australian Plants (ROTAPs) have been recorded from Basket Swamp National Park. There are a further twenty six plant species of significance in the park.

With the exception of Basket Swamp itself, much of the park has been lightly but selectively logged, although logging was heavier in the western and some north-eastern parts of the park. The most recent logging occurred in the south-east part of the park where logging took place after 1990.

Prior to its gazettal some of the park area was leased for light grazing by State Forests.

The floral communities of Basket Swamp National Park support a multitude of wildlife, with macropods being the largest marsupials occurring in the park. The eastern grey kangaroo, red-necked wallaby, and swamp wallaby are all quite common, and the wallaroo is sometimes observed.

A number of animals listed under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* occur or are predicted to occur in Basket Swamp National Park. The endangered brush-tailed rock wallaby is known to occur in the eastern sector of the park, and several shy and less common species, including the echidna and the vulnerable spotted-tailed quoll are also found. The koala and the rufous bettong, also vulnerable and once well known on the Northern Tablelands, may be incidental to the area.

Many birds, traditionally those inhabiting the forested areas of eastern Australia, are found in the park. It also provides potentially high-quality habitat and refuge for the vulnerable glossy black cockatoo, sooty owl and powerful owl.

Other threatened species that are known to occur, or likely to occur, in Basket Swamp National Park include the barking owl, the diamond firetail, square tailed kite, squirrel glider, common bent-winged bat, and the greater long-eared bat.

Numerous snakes and lizards are seen in the park. These include the red-bellied black snake and the brown snake, as well as several species of skink.

Cultural heritage

Aboriginal communities have an association and connection to the land. The land and water biodiversity values within a landscape are central to Aboriginal spirituality and contribute to Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal communities associate natural resources with the use and enjoyment of 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 park is part of the former Jukambal Aboriginal tribal grounds, and it is known that these people, as well as coastal and lowland tribes particularly the Bundjalung people who moved to the tablelands at certain times for ceremonial purposes, hunted and gathered in the area. The last traditional living Aborigines were seen in the area north of Tenterfield about 1911. Basket Swamp National Park lies within the area covered by the Moombahlene Aboriginal Land Council.

There has been no formal cultural heritage study conducted in Basket Swamp National Park, but it is possible that sites and places of significance to Aboriginal people and their culture remain to be recorded. As such, the park is important for future archaeological investigation. In addition, the adjoining Woolloomooloolni Aboriginal Place holds great significance to Aboriginal people.

Following European occupation of the area, practices such as bush grazing and logging had an impact on some parts of the natural landscape, particularly in the western part of the park, and bear testimony to early European use of the area.

Some areas of the park, particularly the creeks, have been prospected for gold by both European and Asian (Chinese) miners. In the adjoining Boonoo State Forest the remains of an early stamping battery and other old mining implements can still be seen. These past events provide potential for interpretation of the history of the area.

Visitor Use

Basket Swamp National Park attracts only a small number of visitors with specific interests in nature, such as bird watching and bushwalking, and offers remote recreational opportunities for self-reliant pursuits.

Conventional vehicles can easily gain access to the park, although wet weather may limit access for short periods.

This recreation focus complements the opportunities of the other nearby national parks-Bald Rock and Boonoo Boonoo, where day picnicking, overnight camping sites, parking areas, interpretive displays, and signposted walking track facilities have been extensively developed for visitor recreational comfort.

The major attractions in close proximity to Basket Swamp National Park are Basket Swamp Falls, Basket Swamp Picnic Area, and Woolloomooloolni Aboriginal Place (Wellington Rock), all of which are outside the park.

A low key camping/picnic area, known as the Basket Swamp Picnic Area, has been established for many years in the adjoining Boonoo State Forest. A toilet, tables and fireplaces are provided. Beyond the Basket Swamp Picnic Area, a gravel track leads to Basket Swamp Falls, also within the Boonoo State Forest. The falls are the main visitor attraction in the vicinity of the park.

Within the park is a short park road leading to Timbarra Trig (1164m), a granite outcrop affording spectacular views over the park and surrounding countryside. A metal ladder, which is currently closed to visitors due to safety concerns, provides access to a viewing area on the summit. A poorly constructed and maintained wire fence encloses the viewing area. The Timbarra Trig lookout is a significant, although little used, feature of the park and will need to be reconstructed before being safe for public access.

Another minor vehicular road leads through part of the park to the boundary of Woolloomoolni Aboriginal Place, which is outside the park, but adjoins its south-east corner. Although small in number, there is an increasing number of visitors to the Woolloomoolni Aboriginal Place. Day visitor facilities at the Aboriginal Place include a cooking galley and toilet cubicle provided by the NPWS to the Moombahlene Aboriginal Land Council who manage the area. There is a loop walking track around the perimeter of Woolloomoolni (also known as Wellington Rock) which affords spectacular views over much of the region.

The access roads within the park, Woolloomoolni and Basket Swamp Roads, were originally constructed by State Forests of NSW when part of Boonoo State Forest.

It is expected that visitor numbers to Basket Swamp National Park will remain relatively low during the period of this plan. Most visitors to the area prefer to go through the park, via Lindrook Road, Woolloomoolni Road, and Basket Swamp Road to the Basket Swamp Picnic Area, Bark Hut Picnic Area, and the outstanding Basket Swamp Falls, all of which are in the Boonoo State Forest. To a lesser extent, visitors use the Lindrook Road and Woolloomoolni Road as an access to Woolloomoolni Aboriginal Place (Wellington Rock).

It may benefit visitors to the area, and streamline management of Basket Swamp Falls, Basket Swamp Picnic Area, and Woolloomoolni Aboriginal Place (Wellington Rock) if the NPWS were to liaise with existing land managers to determine whether they would support either the incorporation of these sites into the park or enter into an agreement to cooperatively manage visitor facilities in these areas. This could allow for the re-development and upgrade of this infrastructure, improve day-to-day management, visitor contact and control, and obviate the need for the NPWS to provide amenities in the park.

The access track from the Basket Swamp Picnic Area to the falls is within state forest and is used by visitors, and Service personnel use the same trail to access the park/state forest boundary which is located to the east of Basket Swamp Falls. The park, however, is sometimes used by self-reliant bushwalkers, as a contrast to the more heavily visited Bald Rock and Boonoo Boonoo National Parks. These walkers traverse along some of the park's internal management trail system to access its eastern extremity and the numerous waterfalls in the tributaries of the upper reaches of the Cataract River.

2.5 Threats to park values

Given its history of early selective logging and grazing, up to about 1990, Basket Swamp National Park has, since then, remained relatively undisturbed. The eastern parts of the park, characterised by deep, wet gullies of relatively steep contour, and with difficult access, are somewhat pristine. Introduced species and fire, however, threaten natural park values.

Introduced species

Introduced animals including the pig and the European fox are sometimes observed in the park, and cause damage to the native plant and animal communities by predation, disturbing the ground surface, destroying native vegetation, and competition with native

fauna. These introduced animals may also harbour, and serve as a vector, for the spread of disease among native species.

A total of 15 introduced weed species were found in the park during a vegetation survey in 2002. They occur mainly along boundaries and trails where disturbance and the movement of vehicles have been conducive to their spread. None of the weeds currently present a significant threat to park values.

Fire

The NPWS acknowledges that fire is a natural phenomenon, and that it is a recurrent factor in the natural environment. Frequency, intensity, and the season in which fire occurs are factors influencing the dispersal and range of fauna populations and the structure of floral communities. Inappropriate fire management has the potential to cause disruption to the lifecycle processes in plant and animal communities and the local extinction of some species, and is identified as a key threatening process under the provisions of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. Fire can also be detrimental to the park's cultural heritage and recreational values, and threaten visitor safety and neighbours' infrastructure.

Basket Swamp National Park has been subjected to frequent wildfire, and almost all of it was burnt between 1988 and 1991, 1994 -1995, and in the Spring of 2002. This frequency exceeds that desired for the vegetation communities in the park.

Initial assessments of the park's vegetation suggest that a reduced incidence in the frequency of fire may be essential to maintain floristic diversity and to allow time for forest regrowth. Repeated burning has the potential to destroy the naturally occurring regrowth before it becomes fire tolerant.

Based on the seven major vegetation communities found in the park, the generally recognised frequency of fire for each community is listed in table 1 below:

Table 1: Indicative fire intervals for Basket Swamp National Park.

Vegetation community	Minimum fire interval	Maximum fire interval
Blackbutt-Stringybark Shrubby Open Forest	7 years	30 years
Blackbutt-Stringybark Grassy Open Forest	5 years	40 years
Tea-tree Riparian Scrub	7 years	35 years
Tea-tree Rock Outcrop Heaths and Shrublands	7 years	30 years
Coachwood-Brushbox Closed Forest	25 years	60 years
Messmate-Blackbutt Tall Open Forest	5 years	40 years
Heathy Sedgeland.	7 years	30 years

After Bradstock et al (1995)

The NPWS is an active member of the Tenterfield District Bushfire Management Committee through which prescribed general fire risk management strategies are developed.

3. MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
<p>Soil and hydrology</p> <p>There are no current erosion or water quality issues in Basket Swamp National Park. The park contains the upper catchments of several perennial creeks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality is maintained and erosion is minimised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement NPWS erosion and sediment control measures in all trail maintenance programs. 	<p>High</p>
<p>Native plant and animal conservation</p> <p>Basket Swamp National Park is a highly significant bioregional reserve. Three vegetation communities (messmate/blackbutt tall open forest, tea tree riparian Scrub, and coachwood/brushbox closed forest) are very restricted and are of great importance within the park.</p> <p>A number of threatened fauna species have been identified in Basket Swamp National Park in early surveys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All native plant and animal species and communities are conserved. An improved understanding and documentation of the park's biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake fauna surveys in the planning area. Undertake targeted surveys for threatened plant and animal species. Undertake fire ecology research into threatened plant communities. Implement measures included in recovery plans for threatened species. Monitor restricted vegetation communities. Work with neighbours and catchment management authorities to encourage conservation of remnant native vegetation in the vicinity of the park. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
<p>Introduced species</p> <p>The NPWS Northern Tablelands Regional Pest Management Strategy (NPWS 2002) recognises that pest species occur in Basket Swamp National Park.</p> <p>A pest management strategy for the planning area is yet to be prepared.</p> <p>Straying stock from neighbouring pastoral properties and adjoining forest leases occasionally stray into Basket Swamp National Park. Although the NPWS has no legal responsibility for boundary fencing it is its policy to assist neighbours where priorities and resources allow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pests are controlled and where possible eradicated. • Livestock do not enter the planning area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control, and where possible eradicate, introduced plant and animal species. • Prepare and implement a pest management strategy for the park. • Seek the cooperation of other authorities and neighbours in implementing weed and pest animal control programs. • Provide fencing assistance to neighbours where boundary fencing is a priority and resources are available. 	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
<p>Cultural heritage</p> <p>No Aboriginal site survey has been conducted in Basket Swamp National Park.</p> <p>Woolloomooloolni Aboriginal Place adjoins Basket Swamp National Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of the cultural heritage significance of Basket Swamp National Park. • Woolloomooloolni Aboriginal Place to be part of Basket Swamp National Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the preparation of a cultural heritage survey specifically for Aboriginal sites and artefacts in the park. • Consult and involve the Moombahlene Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) in all aspects of management of Aboriginal sites, places and values. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
<p>Fire management</p> <p>Unplanned fire is a major threat to biodiversity in Basket Swamp National Park.</p> <p>Basket Swamp National Park has limited access, making cooperative fire management with neighbours and other fire authorities integral to effective fire management in the park.</p> <p>A recent review of fire management throughout the Directorate by NPWS has resulted in a modified approach to fire planning based on the level of complexity involved. In regard to Basket Swamp National Park, the NPWS considers that the park requires that separate map based fire management strategies be prepared. Annual hazard reduction programs are also submitted to the district Bush Fire Management Committees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire regimes are appropriate for conservation of plant and animal communities. • Cooperative approach to fire management with neighbours and all fire authorities. • Cultural features are protected from damage by fire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare fire management strategies for the park that provide for the protection of life, property and the park’s natural and cultural values. • Due to recent wildfires, all unplanned fires in the park will be suppressed as soon as possible. • As far as practicable, fire will be managed in accordance with the fire frequencies listed in the table 1. • Provide assistance to other agencies in fighting fires that threaten to enter the park. • Maintain close cooperation with neighbours and the Tenterfield Shire Fire Control Officer, the Rural Fire Service, and local brigades, to manage and control fire in, and adjoining, the park. • Use prescribed burning techniques to achieve a variety of fire regimes in appropriate vegetation communities and maintain habitat suitable for species with specific requirements. • Encourage further research into the ecological effects of fire in the park. 	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
<p>Visitor Use</p> <p>Levels of visitor use are currently low and expected to remain so in the foreseeable future. The major attraction to the area is the Basket Swamp Falls that are just outside the park's northern boundary. The park affords scenic driving opportunities, linking to surrounding state forests. Most of the roads in the park are suitable for 2WD vehicles.</p> <p>The only visitor facilities in the immediate area are Basket Swamp and Bark Hut Picnic Areas, both managed by State Forests of NSW, which adjoin the northern boundary of the park. These facilities are minimal and in a poor state of repair.</p> <p>Timbarra Trig provides spectacular 360⁰ views but the viewing area is in need of repair and is currently closed to visitors.</p> <p>Developed visitor facilities are available nearby at Bald Rock and Boonoo Boonoo NPs as well as Girraween NP in Queensland. Consequently Basket Swamp NP will provide minimal facilities and principally cater for self-reliant visitors who seek solitude.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The park remains low key and retains its sense of solitude. • Adjoining visitor facilities areas, Basket Swamp Falls and its access road, are cooperatively managed with current land managers (or incorporated into the park). • Safe public access is provided to key features in the park, including Timbarra Trig. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the addition to the park, or joint management of, key visitor areas adjoining the park. • No new visitor facility areas will be constructed in the park, although existing picnic areas in adjoining areas could be upgraded (refer to the above strategy and section 2.4, Visitor Use). • Maintain the park roads available for public vehicular use to a 2WD dry weather road standard (see the map). • Public vehicular access will be provided (where possible to a 2WD dry weather road standard) to the park from roads linking to the Woodenbong Road to the west and the Bruxner Highway (via Wellingtons and Black Swamp Roads) to the south. • Public vehicular access will be provided to the base of Timbarra Trig (existing vehicle-turning area) after repairs are made to the viewing infrastructure on the trig. The ladder and viewing area on the trig will be reconstructed so as to provide for safe visitor access. Bollards will be provided at the carpark to prevent vehicles leaving the roaded area. • Management trails will be signed and/or gated to prevent public vehicular use. • Park roads may be temporarily closed to public use due to poor road conditions (such as in wet weather when vehicles could become bogged or damage the road surface) or for public safety reasons. • Bush camping will be permitted on the park more than 200m from park and public roads and visitor facility areas. 	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p>

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
<p>Research and Monitoring</p> <p>There has been little research undertaken in Basket Swamp National Park. The rare vegetation associations (Basket Swamp) provide scope for further research</p> <p>The park provides opportunities as a biodiversity reference area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of ecological processes to guide management decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage research. Priority topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire ecology of flora and vegetation communities of the park. - Ecological studies into threatened species. - Fauna survey. - Aboriginal cultural heritage survey. 	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Management operations</p> <p>There are several management trails in Basket Swamp National Park. No other management facilities are proposed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal trails to adequately serve the management needs of the park and to have minimal impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain management trails shown on the map to a standard suitable for NPWS and emergency access purposes. 	<p>High</p>

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 of the 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 be held over until resources become available.

4. REFERENCES

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