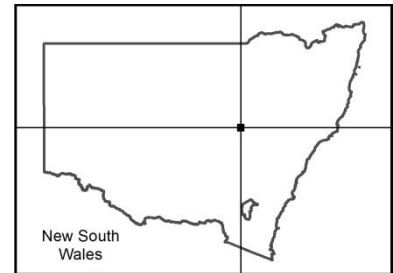


Statement of Management Intent



Beni 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 Beni Community Conservation Area Zone 3 State Conservation Area (Beni 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](#)), state 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

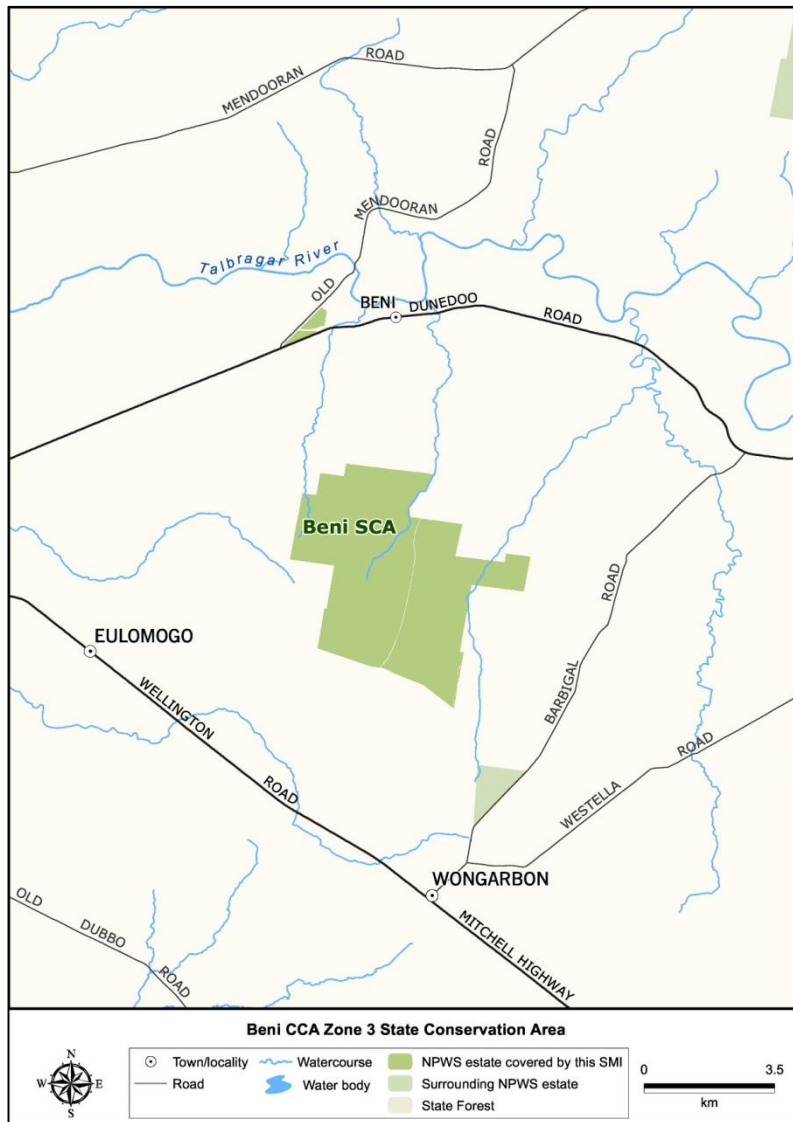
- provide for appropriate research and monitoring.

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: Beni SCA was reserved on 1 December 2005.

Size: 1847 hectares.



Beni SCA comprises three separate portions arranged in two main sections. These are referred to separately as Big Beni: the southern section, 1820 hectares; and Little Beni: the northern sections, 27 hectares.

Big Beni is located at the end of Whitewood Road approximately 10 kilometres east of Dubbo in the NSW central west. It is bounded by Beni Forest Road to the south and surrounded by private agricultural properties. It lies in close proximity to Wongarbron Nature Reserve, 2 kilometres to the south-east towards Wongarbron village.

Little Beni is located 12 kilometres north-east of Dubbo and comprises two adjacent portions of land divided by the Boothenba Road and the Dubbo–Merrygoen railway line. The southern portion is bounded by Boothenba Road to the north, Old Mendooran Road to the west and the Golden Highway to the south-east. The northern portion is bounded by Boothenba Road to the south, Old Mendooran Road to the west and private property to the east.

The Beni SCA land parcels are woodland island remnants surrounded by cleared grazing land. The land was formerly managed by Forestry Corporation of NSW and subject to logging, non-commercial thinning, ringbarking and grazing. Other impacts to the SCA that cause damage include motorbike riding, dog walking, illegal rubbish dumping and car burning.

Considerable restoration of natural values has been undertaken in Beni SCA with watercourse bank stabilisation and the removal of tonnes of rubbish. Additionally, a range of compliance operations and community engagement activities have been undertaken. Incidences of rubbish dumping at Little Beni have been substantially reduced in recent times with the boundary now having a stock-proof fence.

The lands to the west, south and east of Big Beni and surrounding Little Beni are managed predominantly for grazing and dryland cropping while to the north of Big Beni higher levels of subdivision occur that generally support higher intensity land use associated with smaller holdings.

Despite being small and quite degraded in parts, Big Beni SCA's proximity to Dubbo makes it an easily accessible and attractive location for bushwalking, cycling, horse riding and birdwatching.

4. Values

- Beni SCA provides an important patch of native remnant vegetation in a highly cleared landscape.
- The SCA potentially contains three endangered ecological communities listed under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act): White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland; Fuzzy Box Woodland on Alluvial Soils of the South Western Slopes, Darling Riverine Plains and Brigalow Belt South Bioregions; and Inland Grey Box Woodland in the Riverina, NSW South Western Slopes, Cobar Peneplain, Nandewar and Brigalow Belt South Bioregions. Two of these communities are also listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act): the critically endangered White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland; and the endangered Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-Eastern Australia.
- Beni SCA supports 11 threatened fauna species: barking owl (*Ninox connivens*), square-tailed kite (*Lophoictinia isura*), speckled warbler (*Chthonicola sagittata*), grey-crowned babbler (*Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis*), brown treecreeper (eastern subspecies) (*Climacteris picumnus victoriae*), diamond firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*), varied sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*), scarlet robin (*Petroica boodang*), hooded robin (*Melanodryas cucullata cucullata*), squirrel glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) and eastern false pipistrelle (*Falsistrellus tasmaniensis*) as well as one threatened plant, the pine donkey orchid (*Diuris tricolor*).
- While no comprehensive cultural survey work has been undertaken in Beni SCA, a number of Aboriginal sites are known including grinding grooves and artefacts.
- Beni SCA contains a number of historic sites indicative of the pastoral and forestry history.
- Beni SCA contains and protects the headwaters and upper tributaries of four separate catchments: Boundary Creek, Beni Creek and Sandy Creek catchments, all of which flow directly north to the Talbragar River, and Eulomogo Creek catchment which flows west to the Macquarie River.

- Beni SCA has over 45 kilometres of managed trails for cycling, horse riding, jogging and bushwalking.
- Beni SCA is also valued for its relaxing Two Dams Picnic Area.

5. Issues

- Ongoing trail bike use has created tracks throughout the SCA and along creek lines.
- There is interest from the local cycling community for development of a cycling track network.
- Other inappropriate activities that continue to damage park values include dog walking, rubbish dumping, car dumping, and firewood collection.
- Previous management of the SCA as a productive native forest has resulted in disturbed areas and a reduction in the number of large trees and hollows thus impacting upon habitat values.
- Pest fauna recorded within Beni SCA include European foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and feral cats (*Felis catus*).
- Weed species recorded in the SCA include African boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*), common prickly pear (*Opuntia stricta*), thistles (*Cirsium* spp.), and Paterson's curse (*Echium plantagineum*). These weeds have detrimental impacts on the quality of the Box – Gum Woodland endangered ecological community habitat in the SCA.
- Increased in-flows to drainage lines from vehicle activity and roading have resulted in areas of moderate to severe erosion along watercourses.
- There are a large number of active management trails within the SCA. A number of these are excess of NPWS management requirements, including for fire management purposes.
- Beni SCA is an isolated reserve in a highly fragmented landscape, making it prone to significant losses from a single, large, stochastic event such as fire and may limit opportunities for the movement of wildlife.

6. Key management directions

- Fire is managed in accordance with the Beni State Conservation Area [Fire Management Strategy](#).
- Pest management programs will be implemented in accordance with the NPWS [Regional Pest Management Strategy](#): Northern Plains Region.
- The plan of management process for the SCA will include prioritising the trails and roads required for management purposes.
- Opportunities for horse riding and cycling activities will continue to be promoted.
- 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, to protect 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 Coonabarabran Office on (02) 6842 1311 or 30 Timor Street, Coonabarabran NSW 2357.

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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