

# Tully Gorge National Park

## Management Statement

2013



Prepared by: **Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation**

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*The department is committed to respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights, and our obligations under the Human Rights Act 2019.*

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The Tully Gorge National Park Management Statement 2013 has been extended in 2024 in line with the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (s120G). Minor amendments have been made. There has been no change to the statement's original management intent and direction.

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Park size:	Tully Gorge NP	59,861ha
	Tully Gorge NP (Recovery)	374ha
Bioregion:	Wet Tropics	
QPWS region:	Northern	
Local government estate/area:	Cassowary Coast Regional	
State electorate:	Hinchinbrook	

### Legislative framework

✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>
✓	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i>

### Plans and agreements

✓	Bonn Agreement
✓	China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Draft recovery plan for the spotted-tail quoll (northern sub-species) <i>Dasyurus maculatus gracilis</i> 2011
✓	Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	National recovery plan for the spectacled flying-fox <i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i>
✓	Recovery plan for the southern cassowary <i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i> 2001–2005
✓	Recovery plan for the stream-dwelling rainforest frogs of the Wet Tropics biogeographic region of north-east Queensland 2000–2004
✓	Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement 2005

### Thematic strategies

✓	Level 2 fire strategy
✓	Level 2 pest strategy

## Vision

Tully Gorge National Park continues to protect the outstanding geological and natural values.

White-water rafting continues to thrill visitors and the Traditional Owners continue to care for country.

## Conservation purpose

Tully Gorge National Park was first gazetted on 6 July 1963. It was 502ha in area and designated to protect the Tully Falls themselves, even though the Koombooloomba Dam project upstream had already limited the flow of water over these impressive rock walls.

Cannabullen Falls, Elizabeth Grant Falls, Mount Major and Beatrice River national parks were amalgamated to form the Tully Gorge National Park with an area of 2,210ha on 22 June 1995.

On the 16 December 2005 the adjacent Alcock State Forest was gazetted as a forest reserve and was amalgamated with the Tully Gorge National Park. The park is now 59,861ha in area.

Tully Gorge National Park (Recovery) is located along the Tully Gorge Road and Culpa Road.

## Protecting and presenting the park's values

### Landscape

Tully Gorge National Park is part of a continuous area of forested lands connecting Wooroonooran National Park in the north, Koombooloomba National Park to the west and the Girringun National Park in the south. The entire eastern perimeter is adjacent to intensive agricultural production including grazing, banana and cane growing.

The park is totally within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

Tully Gorge National Park includes areas of Permian granite and basalt as well as Carboniferous/Permian granites with the Tully River itself often following the boundary between these primary geological features. This landscape includes the Table Top Range as well as sections of the Walter Hill Range and the Kirrama Range. The park spans an altitudinal range from 20m to 1,145m at the protected area's highest point. These rainforest covered ranges and mountains form the backdrop to some of the highest rainfall areas of Australia. The landscape plays a significant role in water quality and scenic amenity.

Much of Tully Gorge National Park is steep and mountainous thus only a small component of the Tully River Murray River Floodplain, which is listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia, is within Tully Gorge National Park.

### Regional ecosystems

Of the 40 regional ecosystems mapped in Tully Gorge National Park, 33 are endangered or of concern (Table 1).

### Native plants and animals

Tully Gorge National Park is known to protect native plant and animal species listed as conservation significant (Table 2). Eight bird species are listed in international agreements (Table 3).

### Aboriginal culture

The Jirrbal people have lodged a native title application (QC04/004) over the area west of the H-Road and south of the Tully River. Aboriginal cultural values and places are known to exist within the park. Stories indicate that the Tully Falls is an important place in Aboriginal traditional society.

The Echo Creek Walking Trail is used by the Aboriginal community for walking tours to Echo Falls. Rock art sites are said to be in the area.

### Shared history

Areas in Tully Gorge National Park are of cultural significance particularly in terms of non-Indigenous history, including The Tully Falls lookout (circa 1930s), Dave's Camp on the headwaters of Echo Creek and some World War II defence infrastructure (Jeep Track 5).

The forestry department considered timber from this area to be some of the best in the Wet Tropics (pers com L. May). The most significant shared-history cultural values relate to the building of the Kareeya power station and the Cardstone Village that supported this project.

## Tourism and visitor opportunities

Tully Gorge National Park provides a great range of passive and active nature-based recreation opportunities, including nature observation and bird watching.

The park is named after Tully Falls lookout which is located on the highland area above the Tully Gorge itself. Rafting and canoeing are popular recreational pursuits within the park. Various lookouts are located along the Tully River giving visitors picturesque views over the river and the forests surrounding it.

The Tully Gorge camping and day-use area accommodates visitors and is the pull-out site for rafts that have come down from the Kareeya put-in site. The Cardstone village site is now mostly within Tully Gorge National Park with a smaller, previously developed area purchased by the Cassowary Coast Regional Council to attract an ecotourism accommodation complex into the area.

Sections of the Misty Mountains walking trails are located in the northern section of the park.

Cochable Road is a presentation unrestricted road, open for public use without a permit. It provides vehicle access to day-use sites and picnic sites on Cochable Creek. The road is closed when conditions become difficult.

Trail bikers and mountain bikers use the gazetted roads that cut through Tully Gorge and Wooroonooran national parks.

Commercial operator permits use Tully Gorge National Park for various activities including rafting, canoeing, walking, rescue training exercises and helicopter scenic flights. White-water rafting companies use the Tully River from an entry point at Kareeya.

Freshwater fishing is permitted in the park in the Tully River and Koolmoon Creek, downstream of Elizabeth Grant Falls.

Day-use area facilities have been provided at Alligators Nest, a popular picnicking and swimming area close to Tully. The Mount Tyson walking track circuit also departs from Tully. The Echo Creek Walking Trail mid-park on the eastern boundary is used by the Indigenous community for walking tours to Echo Falls.

## Education and science

School groups appear to be the mainstay of education and science interest in the area.

## Partnerships

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is responsible for the day-to-day management of the national park. The Wet Tropics Management Authority regulates activity in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The goal of both agencies is to present the area's values while protecting its natural and cultural values.

The Traditional Owners are involved in cooperative park management.

Other significant partners include Ergon Energy, the military and the commercial rafting companies.

## Other key issues and responses

### Pest management

Phytophthora *Phytophthora cinnamomi* is not known to occur in Tully Gorge National Park; however, the reserve lies adjacent to areas of known phytophthora outbreaks and areas of high susceptibility. The Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy describes the issues associated with walking tracks in the Misty Mountains trails network and the possibility of walkers being one of the prime potential vectors of phytophthoramovement, along with vehicles and pigs, especially in wet and muddy conditions.

Feral pigs *Sus scrofa* and cane toads *Rhinella marina* have been recorded from the park. Their management is addressed in the Innisfail Aggregation level 2 pest management plan. Pigs threaten wetland regional ecosystems and it has been suggested that they compete with cassowaries for food.

There is a joint strategy for the management of Siam weed *Chromolaena odorata* between Biosecurity Queensland and QPWS that includes Tully Gorge National Park.

### Fire management

Fire in Tully Gorge National Park is managed by the Jalum, Djilgarin and Tully Level 2 Fire Management Strategy.

## **Other management issues**

The gazetted Tully Gorge National Park includes three areas that are isolated from Tully Gorge National Park but associated with Maalan National Park and Tully Falls National Park.

A small quarry located on the Tully River at the head of the H-Road provides a source of material for road and park maintenance activities and should be maintained for this purpose.

The Commonwealth of Australia have two term leases over the park for defence training. The lease areas include an airstrip, barracks, Land Command Battle School facilities, power line, a residence, Telstra and optic fibre cable on and to the site.

The 132kv power line route through the park remains after the line itself was decommissioned. This access route is to be rehabilitated under agreements with the Traditional Owners.

## Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p><b>Aboriginal culture</b> Traditional Owners are involved in cooperative park management.</p>	<p>Support the involvement of the Traditional Owners in park management.</p>
<p><b>Management issues</b> The protected area boundary is revised and the protected area has been consolidated.</p>	<p>Transfer the components of Tully Gorge National Park associated with Maalan National Park and Tully Falls National Park to those parks.</p>
<p><b>Pest management</b> The threats posed by pest plants, animals and diseases are identified and managed.</p>	<p>Monitor the spread of phytophthora and chytrid fungus across the walking track and road networks and take action to mitigate threats where possible.</p>

## Tables – Conservation values management

**Table 1: Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems**

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
7.3.3	Mesophyll vine forest with <i>Archontophoenix alexandrae</i> on poorly drained alluvial plains	Endangered
7.3.4	Mesophyll vine forest with <i>Licuala ramsayi</i> on poorly drained alluvial plains and alluvial areas of uplands	Endangered
7.3.5	<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i> and/or <i>Melaleuca cajuputi</i> closed forest to shrubland on poorly drained alluvial plains	Endangered
7.3.10	Simple to complex mesophyll to notophyll vine forest on moderate to poorly drained alluvial plains of moderate fertility	Endangered
7.3.17	Complex mesophyll vine forest on well drained alluvium of high fertility	Endangered
7.3.19	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> or <i>C. tessellaris</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> open forest (or vine forest with these species as emergents), on well drained alluvium	Of concern
7.3.20	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> and <i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> , or <i>C. intermedia</i> and <i>Eucalyptus pellita</i> , or <i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> and <i>Allocasuarina</i> spp., or <i>E. cloeziana</i> , or <i>C. torelliana</i> open forests (or vine forests with these species as emergents), on alluvial fans at the base of ranges	Of concern
7.3.25	<i>Melaleuca leucadendra</i> +/- vine forest species, open to closed forest, on alluvium fringing streams	Of concern
7.3.28	Rivers and streams including riparian herbfield and shrubland on river and stream bed alluvium, and rock within stream beds	Endangered
7.3.49	Notophyll vine forest on rubble terraces of streams	Of concern
7.8.1	Complex mesophyll vine forest on well drained basalt lowlands and foothills	Endangered
7.8.2	Complex notophyll to mesophyll vine forest of high rainfall, cloudy uplands on basalt	Of concern
7.8.4	Simple to complex notophyll vine forest of cloudy wet highlands on basalt	Endangered
7.8.11	Closed vineland of wind disturbed vine forest on basalt	Of concern
7.8.18	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> and/or <i>Lophostemon suaveolens</i> +/- <i>Allocasuarina torulosa</i> open forest to woodland on basalt	Of concern
7.11.24	Closed vineland of wind disturbed vine forest, on metamorphics	Of concern
7.11.27	Simple microphyll vine-fern forest or microphyll vine-sedge forest of wet metamorphic uplands and highlands	Of concern
7.12.2	Notophyll or mesophyll vine forest with <i>Archontophoenix alexandrae</i> or <i>Licuala ramsayi</i> , on granites and rhyolites	Of concern
7.12.4	<i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus pellita</i> open forest of granites and rhyolites, on deep soils	Endangered
7.12.5	<i>Eucalyptus pellita</i> +/- <i>Corymbia intermedia</i> open forest, or <i>Acacia mangium</i> and <i>Lophostemon suaveolens</i> open forest (or vine forest with these species as emergents), on granites and rhyolites	Endangered
7.12.9	<i>Acacia celsa</i> open to closed forest on granites and rhyolites	Of concern
7.12.10	Notophyll vine forest with emergent <i>Araucaria cunninghamii</i> on moist and dry granite foothills and uplands	Of concern
7.12.22	<i>Eucalyptus resinifera</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus portuensis</i> +/- <i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i> tall open forest to tall woodland (or vine forest with these species as emergents), on moist to wet granite and rhyolite uplands and highlands	Endangered
7.12.23	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> and/or <i>C. tessellaris</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> medium to tall open forest to woodland (or vine forest with these species as emergents), on coastal granite and rhyolite headlands and near-coastal foothills	Endangered
7.12.37	Rock pavements and see areas of wet lowlands, uplands and highlands of the eastern escarpment and central range (excluding high granite areas of Hinchinbrook Island and Bishops Peak) on granite and rhyolite, with <i>Allocasuarina</i> spp. shrublands and/or sedgeland	Of concern



Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
7.12.39	Complex mesophyll vine forest on fertile, well drained granites and rhyolites of very wet and wet lowlands, foothills and uplands	Of concern
7.12.40	Closed vineland of wind disturbed vine forest, on granites and rhyolites	Of concern
7.12.48	Wind-sheared notophyll vine forest of exposed granite and rhyolite ridge-crests and steep slopes	Of concern
7.12.50	Simple microphyll vine-fern forest on granite and rhyolite, of wet highlands	Of concern
7.12.60	<i>Melaleuca viridiflora</i> +/- <i>Corymbia clarksoniana</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus platyphylla</i> woodland to open forest, on granite and rhyolite	Endangered
7.12.61	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> +/- <i>E. granitica</i> woodland to open forest of moist and dry foothills and uplands on granite and rhyolite	Of concern
7.12.66	Exposed rocky slopes on granite and rhyolite, with <i>Lophostemon confertus</i> low shrubland or low to medium closed forest	Of concern
7.12.68	Complex notophyll vine forest of cloudy moist to wet highlands on granite	Endangered

**Table 2: Species of conservation significance**

Scientific name	Common name	Nature Conservation Act 1992 status	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 status	Back on Track status
<b>Plants</b>				
<i>Endiandra dichrophylla</i>	coach walnut	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Phlegmariurus phlegmaria</i>	coarse tassel fern	Near threatened	-	High
<b>Animals</b>				
<i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>	grey goshawk	Near threatened	Least concern	Low
<i>Aerodramus terraereginae</i>	Australian swiftlet	Near threatened	Least concern	Low
<i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i> (southern population)	southern cassowary (southern population)	Endangered	Endangered	Critical
<i>Dasyurus maculatus gracilis</i>	spotted-tailed quoll (northern subspecies)	Endangered	Endangered	Critical
<i>Dendrolagus lumholtzi</i>	Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Hipposideros diadema reginae</i>	diadema leaf-nosed bat	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Litoria nannotis</i>	waterfall frog	Endangered	Endangered	Low
<i>Litoria rheocola</i>	common mistfrog	Endangered	Endangered	Low
<i>Litoria serrata</i>	tapping green eyed frog	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Nyctimystes dayi</i>	Australian lacelid	Endangered	Endangered	Low
<i>Pseudochirops archeri</i>	green ringtail possum	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Pseudochirulus herbertensis</i>	Herbert River ringtail Possum	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i>	spectacled flying-fox	Least concern	Vulnerable	High
<i>Taudactylus acutirostris</i>	sharp snouted dayfrog	Endangered	Extinct	Low

**Table 3: Species listed in international agreements**

Scientific name	Common name	BONN	JAMBA	ROKAMBA	CAMBA
<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	common sandpiper	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Coracina tenuirostris</i>	cicadabird	-	✓	-	-
<i>Monarcha melanopsis</i>	black-faced monarch	✓	-	-	-
<i>Monarcha trivirgatus</i>	spectacled monarch	✓	-	-	-
<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>	rufous fantail	✓	-	-	-

BONN: Bonn Convention

CAMBA: China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

JAMBA: Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA: Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement