

# Forty Mile Scrub National Park



## Management Statement

2023

This management statement has been prepared and co-designed by Ewamian Limited and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of Environment and Science, with input from the Wakaman Aboriginal Corporation.

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# 1. Introduction

The Department of Environment and Science recognises, respects and values First Nations peoples and cultures. We recognise that First Nations people have rights and interests in the country on which we work. We are committed to progressing self-determination by working with First Nations peoples to incorporate their priorities and perspectives in decision-making and operations.

The DES *Gurra Gurra Framework 2020–2026* prioritises and accelerates this commitment. Throughout its development, it has considered what has worked well and what can be done better to improve the way we do business into the future.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service works with First Nations peoples to ensure the protection of Country and culture. We pay our respects to all peoples, and to the Elders past, present and future, for the land and sea on which we work, live and walk.

## 1.1 Approach to best practice management

Queensland's parks, forests and reserves are places we want to protect for future enjoyment and wellbeing. What makes these places special are the presence and diversity of natural, cultural, social and economic values. These areas experience natural cycles—they live and breathe—and therefore our management needs to be dynamic too. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) within the Department of Environment and Science (DES) applies a contemporary management process that is based on international best practice and targets management towards the most important features of each park: their **key values**.

The **Values-Based Management Framework** (VBMF) is an **adaptive management** cycle that incorporates planning, prioritising, doing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting into all areas of our business. This enables the agency to be more flexible and proactive and to improve management effectiveness over time. We want to keep our parks, forests and reserves healthy by:

- managing and protecting the things that matter most—our key values
- strategically directing management effort towards priorities
- delivering our **custodial obligations** as a land manager
- setting a **level of service** for all parks, forests and reserves
- building systems that support decision-making for adaptive management
- building support for what we do through accountability and transparency
- striving for improvement through structured learning and doing.

As a land manager, QPWS has a custodial obligation to ensure our estate is managed to provide appropriate and safe access, protect life and property, be a good neighbour and work cooperatively with partners across the landscape. The agency does this as part of setting a level of service for each park. Level of service is a management standard that considers an area's values, **threatening processes**, custodial obligations, risks and overall management complexity.

By assessing an area's key values and level of service, QPWS can prioritise management efforts, balancing the importance of values and threats with our custodial obligations. Each year, we track work programs, monitor the condition of values and evaluate our performance across all aspects of management. The evaluation process documents how efficiently and effectively we are working toward achieving the objectives we set for managing parks, forests and reserves, and how the condition of key values is changing in response to our management efforts. This evaluation supports transparent and accountable reporting, enabling us to continuously improve park management and demonstrate outcomes to the community.





## 2. First Nations peoples

Forty Mile Scrub National Park lies within the traditional homelands of several First Nations groups. Both the Wakaman People and the Ewamian (pronounced *You-a-min*) People share strong ties to the Forty Mile Scrub area. The Wakaman People and the Ewamian People have looked after their traditional homelands for millennia and continue to do so today. Forty Mile Scrub National Park is a significant part of Wakaman and Ewamian cultural heritage. Indigenous culture remains rich throughout both communities and includes the entire landscape (i.e. land and waterways, plants and animals), extending to the intangibles (e.g. spiritual connection).

### 2.1 Wakaman People

The southern boundary of the Wakaman People's registered native title claim (QUD178/2018) lies within Forty Mile Scrub National Park. For the Wakaman People, the landscape and the spiritual are connected and are essential to their identity (Map 1).

The Wakaman People welcome the opportunity to foster and strengthen partnerships with their neighbours the Ewamian People and QPWS in future co-stewardship opportunities.

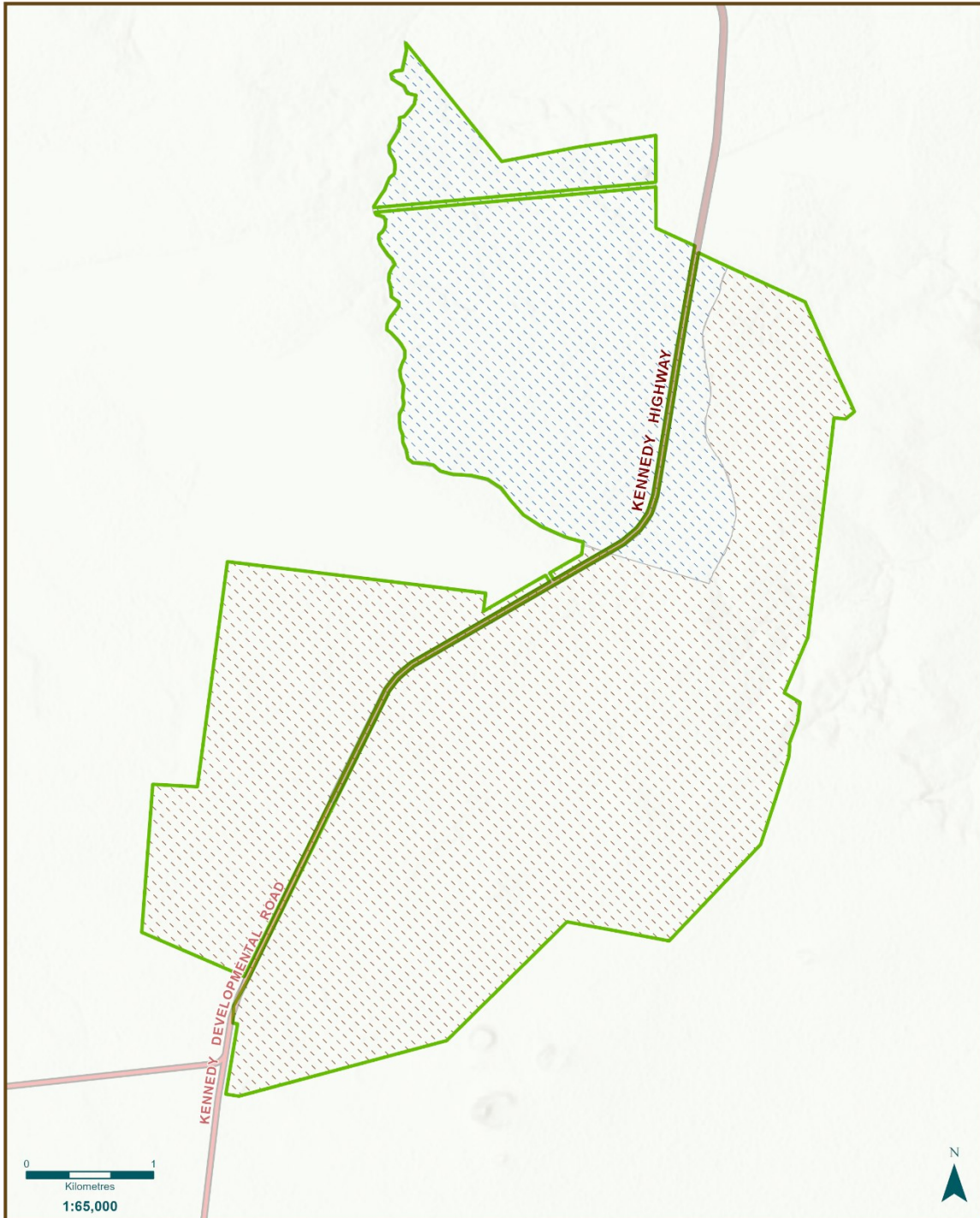
### 2.2 Ewamian People

The Ewamian People have a non-exclusive native title determination (QCD2013/007) over the majority of Undara Volcanic National Park, which is located approximately 40 kilometres south of Forty Mile Scrub National Park. The Ewamian People have communicated their aspirations to expand their native title determination to incorporate the southern portion of Forty Mile Scrub National Park in the near future. The ancestors of present-day Ewamian People were born, lived and hunted in this area before the arrival of Europeans. The Ewamian People, and their native title interests, are represented by the Ewamian People Aboriginal Corporation (EPAC), a registered native title body corporation established in 2013 and registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*. EPAC is supported by Ewamian Limited, the administrative entity of the Ewamian corporate group, which provides a range of services to the Ewamian People, with the vision of enhancing Ewamian People's culture and connection to Country through positive change and promoting partnerships with key stakeholders.

### 2.3 Co-Stewardship: First Nations peoples and the QPWS

To foster and strengthen partnerships, the Ewamian People and the Wakaman People were invited to participate in the planning process for Forty Mile Scrub National Park, and furthermore, to contribute to the Forty Mile Scrub National Park Management Statement.

QPWS works collaboratively with the First Nations across several protected area estates to ensure both cultural and environmental values are conserved. A variety of works occur between the partners with the aim of progressing a collaborative partnership arrangement.



**Forty Mile Scrub National Park First Nations Map**

**Key Values**

- Connection to country, Ewamian Aboriginal people
- Wakaman People #5 Registered Native Title Claim
- Highway
- Main Road
- Protected Areas of Interest
- National Park

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 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service  
 Department of Environment and Science.

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**Map 1. Forty Mile Scrub National Park First Nations map**

## 3. Forty Mile Scrub National Park

### 3.1 Management statement and thematic strategies

The Forty Mile Scrub National Park Management Statement provides the strategic management direction for managing its keys values (Section 4) and meeting our custodial obligations across eight **management themes** (Section 5). The statement is supported by the Forty Mile Scrub National Park Resource Information document, a compendium of park information that tells the story of the park.

The strategic management direction set out in this management statement links to a set of thematic strategies that detail management objectives, providing the connection between high-level strategies and on-ground operations. The complexity of a park's values and custodial obligations determine the requirements for specific strategies. Forty Mile Scrub National Park has three thematic strategies:

- fire
- pest
- monitoring and research.

### 3.2 Park overview

Forty Mile Scrub National Park is located on either side of the Kennedy Highway, approximately 60 kilometres south of Mount Garnet. The park lies within the state electorate of Hill and is located on the boundary of Mareeba Shire and Tablelands Regional Council local government areas (Map 2).

Forty Mile Scrub National Park was gazetted in 1970 to protect excellent examples of semi-evergreen vine thicket growing on basalt-derived soils. The park also protects open grassy woodlands, as well as the headwaters of the Lynd River, and Barwon and Cleanskin creeks.

Forty Mile Scrub National Park is part of the extensive Einasleigh Uplands biogeographic region. The southern part of the park overlies olivine basalt from the McBride lava province. Nearly continuous volcanic activity in this geological province over the last 2.7 million years, and particularly the last 190,000 years, has formed much of the geology of the park (The State of Queensland, Department of Environment and Resource Management, 2010).



Map 2. Forty Mile Scrub National Park location map



## 4. Key values

All parks, forests and reserves have an array of natural, cultural, social and economic values that are important and contribute to the state’s comprehensive and representative protected area and forest estate. The VBMF supports a process for identifying and protecting the most important values, the key values, and this directs the allocation of resources.

In this section, a **key value statement** is provided for each key value, identifying the current **condition and trend**, and a desired condition. The main threatening processes are identified and rated from high to low. A strategic management direction provides a broad strategy to address the threatening process to achieve the **desired outcome** over time. Each strategic management direction is prioritised according to the need for action to prevent further decline, stabilise current condition, or restore and enhance the value (refer to **priority rating** in Appendix 1).

The condition of all key values is (or will be) assessed through regular **health checks** or other monitoring. The monitoring and research strategy outlines opportunities and needs for scientific monitoring and research programs that will enhance our knowledge. Any change to a key value’s condition will be identified through health checks or monitoring, enabling QPWS to act quickly, applying best practice adaptive management.

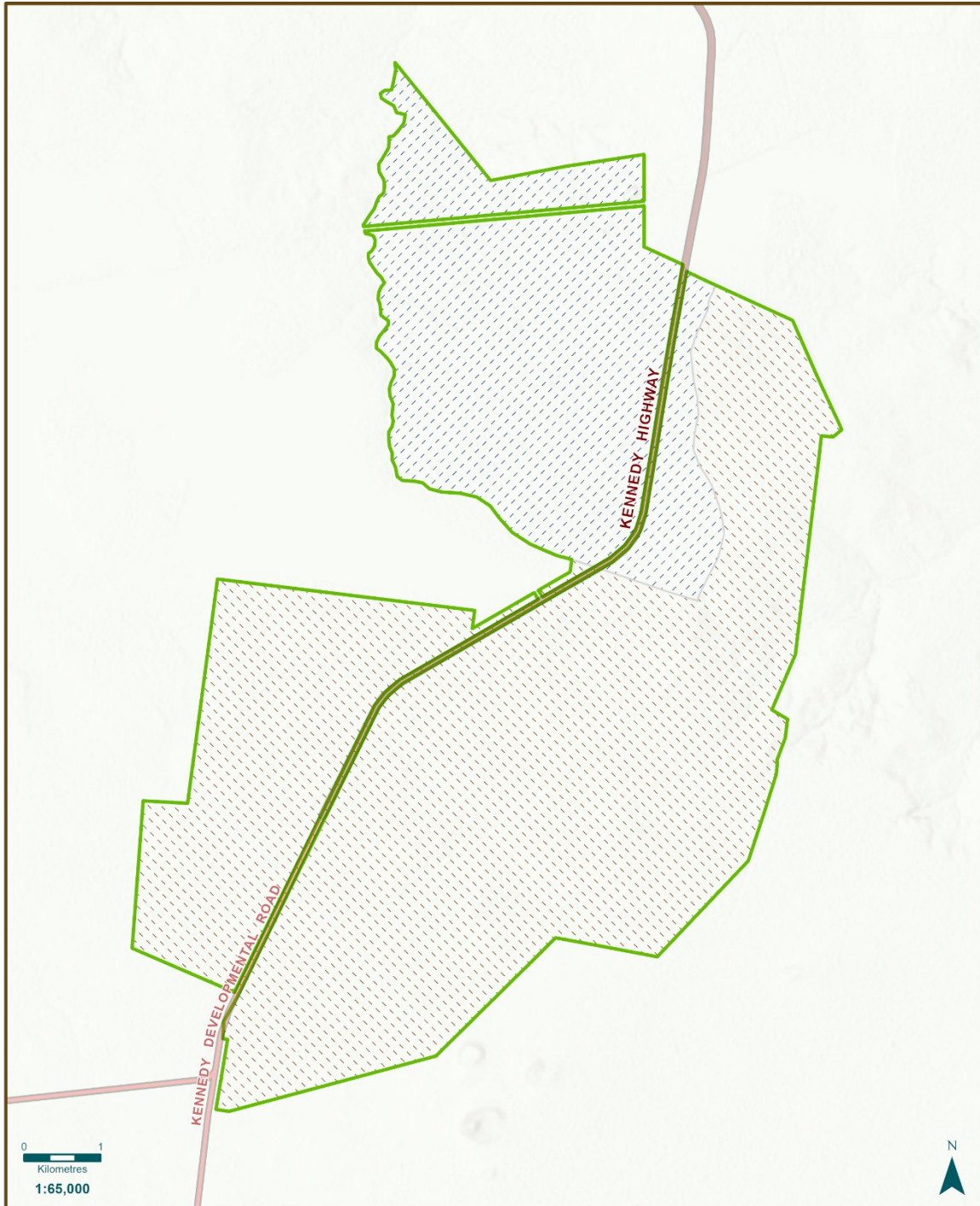
### Summary of key values

A summary of the key values for Forty Mile Scrub National Park is detailed below. The location of each key value is shown in Maps 3 and 4. Figure 2 provides a key to interpreting the condition and trend icons used in this section.

|  | Current condition | Confidence in condition assessment | Current trend | Confidence in trend assessment | Desired condition |
|--|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 4.1 First Nations peoples’ culture and connection to Country |                   | Limited                            |               | Limited                        |                   |
| 4.2 Semi-evergreen vine thickets                             |                   | Adequate                           |               | Adequate                       |                   |
| 4.3 Forty Mile Scrub National Park day use area              |                   | Inferred                           |               | Adequate                       |                   |






|                           |  |   |   |  |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Condition of key value    | <b>Good</b><br><br>The value is in good condition and is likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current measures are maintained | <b>Good with some concern</b><br><br>The value is likely to be maintained over the long term with minor additional conservation measures to address existing concerns | <b>Significant concern</b><br><br>The value is threatened by a number of current or potential threats. Significant additional conservation measures are required to preserve the value over the medium to long term | <b>Critical</b><br><br>The value is severely threatened. Urgent additional large-scale conservation measures are required or the value may be lost |
| Trend rating of condition | <b>Improving</b><br>   | <b>Stable</b><br>   | <b>Deteriorating</b><br>  | <b>No consistent trend</b><br>   |
| Confidence in assessment  | <b>Inferred</b><br>  | <b>Limited</b><br>  | <b>Adequate</b><br>   |  |

Figure 2: Key to condition, trend and confidence icons



**Forty Mile Scrub National Park Key Value Map 1**

**Key Values**

-  Connection to country, Ewamian people
-  Connection to country, Wakaman people
-  Highway
-  Main Road
- Protected Areas of Interest**
-  National Park

**MAP PRODUCTION**  
 10 November 2022  
 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service  
 Department of Environment and Science.

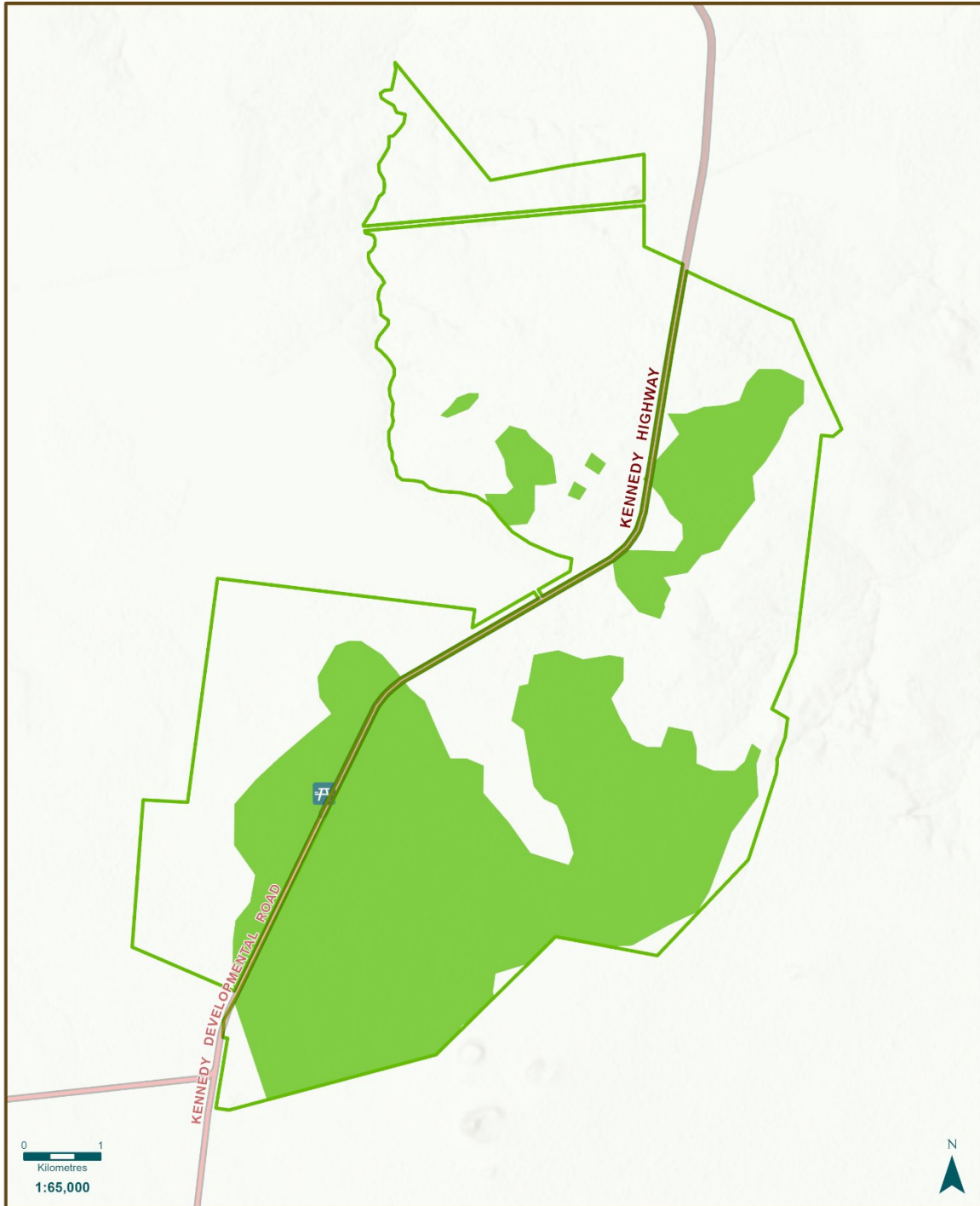
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



**Map 3. Forty Mile Scrub National Park Key Values Map 1**



**Forty Mile Scrub National Park Key Value Map 2**

**Key Values**

-  Forty Mile Scrub National Park Day Use Area
-  Semi-evergreen vine thickets
-  Highway
-  Main Road
- Protected Areas of Interest
-  National Park

**MAP PRODUCTION**  
 31 March 2022  
 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service  
 Department of Environment and Science.

**ACCURACY STATEMENT**  
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**Map 4. Forty Mile Scrub National Park Key Values Map 2**

## 4.1 First Nations peoples' culture and connection to Country

### Key value statements

#### 4.1.2 Ewamian People

| Description   |                       | Current condition  | Current trend  | Desired condition   |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|---|
| Forty Mile Scrub National Park is part of the traditional lands of the Ewamian People and remains an important area for protecting and exploring cultural heritage. | Condition and trend   | 2020<br>    |             |  |
|   | Assessment confidence | Limited<br> | Limited<br> |   |

Very little cultural heritage has been surveyed and documented in relation to Forty Mile Scrub National Park, and consequently there are limited sites recorded. As there is a high probability that sites exist, this limited knowledge impacts on the ability to protect cultural assets. The vine thickets were known to be important sources of traditional foods and may have even been occupied by First Nations peoples (Ewamian Elders).

#### Threats

**Primary threat:** Barriers to access, management and connection to Country and lack of knowledge of cultural heritage sites. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Secondary threat:** Loss/deterioration of significant cultural heritage sites impacts on people's spiritual connection to Country. **Threat rating: Very high**


**Other threat:** Bushfires can negatively impact or destroy cultural values. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Other threat:** Feral pigs *Sus scrofa* digging, rooting and trampling negatively impacts cultural values. **Threat rating: High**

**Other threat:** The increase of fire and fire intensity may lead to a loss of cultural values such as scar trees and diversity of food trees around campsites. An increase in rain intensity can cause erosion of cultural sites, dispersing the fragments of habitation that remain (e.g. stone shards). **Threat rating: High**

**Other threat:** Visitors' inappropriate behaviour such as graffiti, unauthorised access, taking artefacts and arson. **Threat rating: Medium**

#### Desired outcome and strategic management direction

| Desired outcome   |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
|  | The condition of Ewamian People's culture and connection to Country will be improved to 'good' by increasing knowledge, improving cultural resource management, and progressing co-stewardship to manage threats to cultural values. |          |
| Threatening processes   | Strategic management directions  | Priority |
| Barriers to access, management, and connection to Country                           | Enhance Ewamian People's connection to Country by supporting the implementation of traditional burning practices.  | 1        |
|   | Improve knowledge of the location and significance of culturally modified trees in Forty Mile Scrub National Park.   | 1        |
|   | Protect cultural values through Ewamian People's participation in fire management throughout Forty Mile Scrub National Park.   | 1        |
|   | Increase knowledge of vegetation communities through ongoing monitoring with Ewamian People using established monitoring plots.  | 2        |



*Desired outcome and strategic management direction for Ewamian People continued*

| Threatening processes           | Strategic management directions  | Priority |
|---------------------------------|--|----------|
| Loss of connection to Country   | Improve knowledge of cultural values.  | 1        |
|                                 | Improve cultural resource management through Ewamian People led knowledge sharing.   | 1        |
| Fire                            | Protect known cultural sites through the application of appropriate fire regimes in surrounding ecosystems to reduce the risk of bushfire.                                       | 1        |
| Pest animals                    | Reduce impacts of pigs <i>Sus scrofa</i> on cultural values.   | 2        |
| Changes in habitat              | Monitor the condition of cultural values and adapt management where required to reduce climate change associated impacts.  | 4        |
| Inappropriate visitor behaviour | Minimise visitor impacts (specifically arson) on cultural values caused by inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour.  | 2        |
|                                 | Enhance the visitor experience at Forty Mile Scrub National Park by improving interpretive material to highlight the significance of the cultural landscape and cultural values. | 3        |

See Appendix 1. Glossary for priority rating definitions.

## 4.1.1 Wakaman People

| Description   |                       | Current condition  | Current trend  | Desired condition   |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|---|
| Forty Mile Scrub National Park is part of the traditional lands of the Wakaman People and is an important site for the continued preservation of cultural values. | Condition and trend   | 2021<br>     |              |  |
|   | Assessment confidence | Limited<br> | Limited<br> |   |

To keep Wakaman People and Country strong and healthy, it is important for Wakaman People to have access to their traditional lands to pass on cultural knowledge, stories, skills and practices. Wakaman People want to be on Country and involved in the day-to-day management of the park, ensuring conservation of its natural values and the preservation of its cultural values.

### Threats

**Primary threat:** Lack of access and connection to Country, lack of access to resources and partnerships that prevent Wakaman People demonstrating land stewardship, managing Country and creating opportunities.

**Threat rating: Very high**

**Secondary threat:** There is a growing presence of invasive weeds on Wakaman Country that out-competes bush food sources, reduces habitat for native wildlife, increases fuel loads for hot fires and impacts on sacred sites. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Other threat:** Pest animals have the potential to damage important cultural sites and sacred springs, spread weeds and compete with native animals for resources. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Other threat:** Loss of access to knowledge and lack of connection to Country threatens the ability of Wakaman People to maintain and hand down cultural knowledge to succeeding generations. **Threat rating: Very high**


**Other threat:** Poor land use, including road infrastructure and other developments, damages cultural sites and heritage. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Other threat:** Wrong people on Country – while Wakaman People welcome visitors, they want them to respect traditional laws and protocols. Increasing visitor numbers and inappropriate behaviour can impact on important story places, cultural sites and ceremony grounds, and cause damage to important cultural sites. **Threat rating: High**

**Other threat:** A changing climate increases threats of more severe weather events, which in turn impact on bush foods, animals and iconic species. Wakaman culture is intrinsically aligned with weather and the environment, therefore, it is important to monitor seasonal changes and stay informed of climate risks. **Threat rating: High**

**Other threat:** 'Wrong fire' and loss of cultural burning practices can impact and degrade natural and cultural heritage values important to Wakaman People. **Threat rating: High**

**Desired outcome and strategic management direction**

| Desired outcome   |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
| Threatening processes   | Strategic management directions  | Priority |
|  | The condition of Wakaman People's culture and connection to Country will be improved to 'good' by increasing knowledge, improving cultural resource management, and progressing co-stewardship to manage threats to cultural values. |          |
| Loss of access to Country   | Develop a partnership that delivers shared outcomes for the Wakaman People, QPWS and the Ewamian People.   | 1        |
| Loss of connection to Country   | Work with the Wakaman Corporation to progress co-stewardship that facilitates participation in day-to-day management of the park and enables Wakaman People to demonstrate land stewardship.   | 1        |
| Introduced weeds  | Reduce the impacts of introduced weeds at targeted places and important cultural sites.  | 1        |
| Problematic native plants   | Reduce the impacts of problematic native plants at targeted places and important cultural sites.   | 1        |
| Introduced animals  | Reduce the impacts of introduced animals that contribute to degradation of natural and cultural values.  | 1        |
| Problematic native animals  | Reduce the impacts of problematic native animals that contribute to degradation of natural and cultural values.  | 1        |
| Roads and railways  | Engage the Wakaman Aboriginal Corporation in decision-making for land use and development planning.  | 2        |
| Recreation  | Upgrade interpretive information to include Wakaman and Ewamian cultural perspectives for Forty Mile Scrub National Park.  | 2        |
| Extreme temperatures  | Monitor seasonal changes and stay informed of climate change risks, innovations and opportunities, and work collaboratively with Wakaman people to adapt and respond.  | 2        |
| Changed fire frequency or intensity   | Increase the capacity of Wakaman People to participate in fire prevention activities.  | 2        |
|   | Involve Wakaman People in post fire monitoring.  | 2        |

See Appendix 1. Glossary for priority rating definitions.

## 4.2 Semi-evergreen vine thickets

### Key value statement

| Description   |                       | Current condition   | Current trend   | Desired condition   |
|---|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Semi-evergreen to deciduous microphyll vine thicket | Condition and trend   | 2020<br>     |              |  |
|   | Assessment confidence | Adequate<br> | Adequate<br> |   |

Semi-evergreen vine thickets on a wide range of substrates (Regional Ecosystem (RE) 9.8.3 and RE 9.5.2, Broad Vegetation Group (BVG) 7a) include several floristic communities. This vegetation community is often characterised by emergent trees to 20 metres tall that include white siris *Ailanthus triphysa*, broad-leaved bottle tree *Brachychiton australis*, helicopter tree *Gyrocarpus americanus* and sometimes Port Jackson fig *Ficus rubiginosa* and *F. virens* (Queensland Government, Department of Environment and Science, 2022).

The semi-evergreen vine thickets of Forty Mile Scrub National Park offer regional refuge for a large number of plant and animal species, including rare and threatened species that are culturally significant. Forty Mile Scrub National Park is the only protected area estate in Queensland where the of concern regional ecosystems 'semi-evergreen vine thicket on Quarternary basalt soils' (RE 9.8.3) and 'semi-evergreen vine thicket on red kandosols on Tertiary plateaus' (RE 9.5.2) occur (Queensland Government, Department of Environment and Science, 2022). The national park contains the largest remaining patch of RE 9.8.3, conserving 89.35 per cent. The park's species-rich vine thicket communities are the primary purpose for its gazettal (The State of Queensland, Department of Environment and Resource Management, 2010).

### Threats

**Primary threat:** Pest plants such as *Lantana camara* negatively impact the health of semi-evergreen vine thicket communities by altering their structure and out-competing native species. An abundance of lantana may also contribute to an increase in the intensity of unplanned fire. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Secondary threat:** Bushfires can negatively impact the vine thickets, which are ordinarily fire sheltered ecosystems naturally protected from bushfire, if regular fire processes are not appropriately managed in adjacent ecosystems. **Threat rating: Very High**


**Other threat:** Feral pigs *Sus scrofa* digging, rooting and trampling may negatively impact semi-evergreen vine thickets. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Other threat:** Hotter, drier years with shorter, more intense wet seasons may affect germination and the growing cycles of plants, with the potential to create hotter, drier fire seasons. **Threat rating: High**

**Other threat:** High biomass grasses negatively impact the health of semi-evergreen vine thicket communities. An abundance of high biomass grasses may also contribute to an increase in the intensity of unplanned fire. **Threat rating: Medium**

**Other threat:** Introduced weeds such as horse gram *Macrotyloma axillare* can reduce diversity in the ground strata by smothering grasses and forbs. It creates ladders of fuel up into canopy trees, creating greater fire risks. **Threat rating: Low**

## Desired outcome and strategic management direction

| Desired outcome  |   |          |
|--|---|----------|
| Threatening processes  | Strategic management directions   | Priority |
|  The condition of the semi-evergreen vine thicket community is improved to 'good' by protecting it from unplanned fire events and introduced pests and weeds. |   |          |
| Pest plants  | Reduce the impacts of high biomass grasses in semi-evergreen vine thicket communities.  | 1        |
|  | Reduce the impacts of high biomass grasses in areas identified as 'high value semi-evergreen vine thicket' within this vegetation community.          | 1        |
|  | Contain high biomass grasses to the roadside to prevent spread into semi-evergreen vine thicket communities.  | 1        |
|  | Reduce the impacts of lantana <i>Lantana camara</i> in semi-evergreen vine thicket communities.   | 1        |
|  | Reduce the impacts of lantana <i>Lantana camara</i> in areas identified as 'high value semi-evergreen vine thicket' within this vegetation community. | 1        |
|  | Contain horse gram <i>Macrotyloma axillare</i> to existing/known locations in semi-evergreen vine thicket communities.                                | 3        |
| Bushfire   | Maintain healthy semi-evergreen vine thicket communities by implementing appropriate burn regimes in adjacent vegetation communities.                 | 1        |
| Pest animals   | Reduce the impacts of pigs on semi-evergreen vine thicket communities.  | 1        |
| Changes in habitat   | Monitor the condition of semi-evergreen vine thicket communities and adapt management where required to reduce climate change associated impacts.     | 4        |

See Appendix 1. Glossary for priority rating definitions.



## 4.3 Semi-evergreen vine thicket experience

### Key value statement

| Description  |                       | Current condition | Current trend | Desired condition |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| The Forty Mile Scrub National Park's day use area includes a walking track with interpretative signage | Condition and trend   | 2020<br>          |               |                   |
|  | Assessment confidence | Inferred<br>      | Adequate<br>  |                   |

The day use area located at Forty Mile Scrub National Park is a popular rest stop for many locals and visitors travelling along the Kennedy Highway (Savannah Way). The day use area was developed to promote the significance of the semi-evergreen vine thicket community.

There are accessible toilets, tables and shelters available for people visiting Forty Mile Scrub National Park and using the day use area. A walking track with interpretive material has also been constructed and offers the opportunity for visitors to view and learn about the semi-evergreen vine thicket communities. The Ewamian People collect fruit from the Burdekin Plum *Pleiogynium timorense* trees in the day use area (Ewamian Elders).

### Threats

**Primary threat:** Lantana *Lantana camara* negatively impacts the health of the semi-evergreen vine thicket community in which the day use area is situated. An abundance of lantana may also contribute to an increase in the intensity of unplanned fire. Introduced weeds detract from the visitor experience. **Threat rating: Very high**

**Secondary threat:** Inappropriate visitor behaviour such as vandalism, theft, arson and littering. Visitors travelling along the Kennedy Highway take the opportunity to let their dogs out for a run/stretch when they stop off at Forty Mile Scrub National Park day use area for a rest. **Threat rating: Medium**


**Other threat:** Feral pigs *Sus scrofa* digging, rooting and trampling is unsightly for visitors using this day use area. Feral cats *Felis catus* are present on Forty Mile Scrub National Park, but the threat severity they pose on semi-evergreen vine thicket communities is currently unclear. **Threat rating: Medium**

**Other threat:** Introduced high biomass grasses negatively impact the health of the semi-evergreen vine thicket community in which the day use area is situated. An abundance of high biomass grasses may also contribute to an increase in the intensity of bushfire. **Threat rating: Medium**

**Other threat:** Pest plants such as horse gram *Macrotyloma axillare* can smother vegetation, reducing diversity in the ground strata by smothering grasses and forbs. It also creates ladders of fuel up into canopy trees, creating greater fire risks. **Threat rating: Low**

**Other threat:** Bushfires can negatively impact or destroy existing infrastructure at the day use area, as well as the vine thicket community in which the day use area is situated. **Threat rating: Low**

## Desired outcome and strategic management direction

| Desired outcome  |   |          |
|--|---|----------|
| Threatening processes  | Strategic management directions   | Priority |
|  The condition of the semi-evergreen vine thicket experience at Forty Mile Scrub National Park day use area will be improved to 'good' by continuing to manage introduced weeds and animals, and undertaking regular compliance activities to reduce visitor impacts. |   |          |
| Pest plants  | Reduce the impacts of lantana <i>Lantana camara</i> at the day use area to reduce the potential fire risk.  | 1        |
|  | Reduce the impacts of pest plants within a 50 metre buffer from the walking track, and around the base of the iconic trees at the day use area.   | 2        |
| Inappropriate visitor behaviour  | Enhance the visitor experience at Forty Mile Scrub National Park by improving interpretive material to highlight the significance of the park's values, including First Nations peoples' cultural values. | 3        |
|  | Maintain the existing visitor experience by ensuring the day use area is appropriately presented to visitors, encouraging respectful visitor behaviour.   | 4        |
| Pest animals   | Reduce impacts of pigs <i>Sus scrofa</i> on the day use area.   | 3        |
| Bushfire   | Exclude fire from the day use area.   | 2        |

See Appendix 1. Glossary for priority rating definitions.

## 5. Management direction

QPWS manages protected areas and forests to protect their values and deliver our custodial obligations as a land manager. Level of service (LoS) assessment allows QPWS to consider the management of each park in a state-wide context and determine desired levels of management effort for each park in a consistent and equitable way. LoS assessment lets QPWS staff and the public know what type or level of management activity to expect on each park, forest and reserve. There are five LoS ratings ranging from 'acceptable' to 'exceptional': an acceptable rating is the minimum standard required to deliver good management and meet our legislative custodial obligations.

The key areas for management in Forty Mile Scrub National Park are fire, pest and natural values management. This section provides a **management direction statement** for each management theme, identifying its current LoS, desired LoS and the strategic management direction for management.

### Summary of management direction

A summary of the current and desired LoS for Forty Mile Scrub National Park is shown below. Figure 3 provides a key to the LoS icons.


















|  | Current LoS  | Desired LoS  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Fire management                             |  Medium     |  Very high  |
| 2. Pest management                             |  High       |  Very High  |
| 3. Natural values management                   |  High       |  Very high  |
| 4. Post-contact cultural heritage management   |  Acceptable |  Acceptable |
| 5. Visitor management                          |  Medium     |  Medium     |
| 6. Community, partnerships and other interest  |  Medium     |  Medium     |
| 7. Field management capability                 |  High       |  High       |
| 8. Operational planning and management support |  High       |  High       |

Figure 3. Key to condition, trend and confidence icons



## 5.1 Fire management


### Management direction statement

| Description  | Current level of service  |
|--|---|
| Fire management for Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

Fire management is core business for QPWS to protect life and property, mitigate wildfires and maintain natural diversity in accordance with the NCA; and the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* (Qld) for the control and prevention of fires. QPWS works cooperatively with First Nations peoples, state and local government agencies, rural fire brigades, adjoining landholders and local communities to manage fire across the landscape.

The strategic management direction in this management statement, combined with the knowledge of traditional burning practices and the Queensland Government's *Planned Burn Guidelines: Einasleigh Uplands Bioregion of Queensland*, will guide the formation of the *Forty Mile Scrub National Park Fire Strategy*. The strategy details QPWS's custodial obligations for protecting life and property, and fire management objectives for maintaining key values through the use of fire management zones.

### Desired level of service and strategic management direction

| Desired level of service  |   |
|---|---|
|  | Fire management for Forty Mile Scrub National Park will be managed to a 'very high' LoS through improved monitoring, management capacity and partnerships to protect key natural and cultural values. |

| Strategic management directions | Priority |
|---------------------------------|----------|
|---------------------------------|----------|

#### Custodial obligations

Protect life and property, visitor facilities and QPWS management infrastructure from fire impacts.

1

#### Level of service

Increase participation of First Nations peoples in fire management to better protect their cultural values.

1

Improve the current level of fire management knowledge and understanding of traditional burning practices and requirements of the semi-evergreen vine thicket community.

1

Improve the current level of knowledge of the impacts after any unplanned fire event.

1

Increase compliance to better manage and reduce the potential of arson events.

1

Improve current level of fire management consultation with park neighbours and stakeholders (three separate rural fire brigades).

1

Improve ranger confidence and experience to ensure they can make strategic and difficult decisions on the fire line in the absence of management.

1

Increase the capacity of QPWS and First Nations rangers to support one another during bushfire events.

1

Improve the current level of post fire monitoring.

2

\* **Priority ratings** Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)



## 5.2 Pest management


### Management direction statement

| Description  | Current level of service  |
|--|---|
| Pest management for Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

Pest management is core business for QPWS to mitigate the threats to biodiversity in accordance with the NCA. QPWS has a responsibility under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (Qld) to take all reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with plant and animal pests on lands under our control. Recognising that effective management of pests across the landscape is a shared responsibility, QPWS works cooperatively with First Nations peoples, other state and local government agencies, landholders and natural resource management groups.

The strategic management directions in this management statement will guide the formation of the *Forty Mile Scrub National Park Pest Strategy*. The strategy details pest management objectives for preventing and mitigating pest impacts on key values and QPWS's custodial obligations for managing pests and priority pest species.

### Desired level of service and strategic management direction

| Desired level of service  |  |
|---|--|
|  | Pests will be managed to a 'very high' LoS through improved monitoring, management capacity and partnerships to protect key natural and cultural values. |
| Strategic management directions   | Priority   |

#### Custodial obligations

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Align pest management activities to prioritise protection of key values consistent with <i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i> (Qld). | 1 |
|--|---|

#### Level of service

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Improve pest management capacity by improving knowledge and skills of staff to manage known and potential pests. | 1 |
|--|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Increase the current level of pest management work undertaken annually at Forty Mile Scrub National Park. | 1 |
|---|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Improve the level of pest management skills to better understand the threat of lantana, after the 2019 fires, by establishing appropriate monitoring. | 2 |
|---|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Improve the current level of pest management outcomes through exploring alternative methods of pest management (e.g. bio control, 1080 baiting). | 3 |
|--|---|


|   |   |
|---|---|
| Improve the current level of engagement with First Nations peoples and stakeholders to protect natural and cultural key values. | 3 |
|---|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Improve knowledge of feral cats and their impacts on semi-evergreen vine thicket communities. | 5 |
|---|---|

\* **Priority ratings** Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

## 5.3 Natural values management

### Management direction statement


| Description  | Current level of service  |
|--|---|
| Natural values management for Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

QPWS manages natural values in accordance with the NCA, *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (Qld), *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) and relevant international agreement guidelines.

Forty Mile Scrub National Park has significant values, including the near threatened rainforest species *Habenaria habenaria hymenophylla*, *Lepturus minutus* and *Ipomoea saintronanensis*, and the endangered koala *Phascolarctos cinereus*. The condition of natural values will be monitored through the implementation of the *Forty Mile Scrub National Park Monitoring and Research Strategy*.

Threatening processes will be managed through the implementation of Forty Mile Scrub National Park's fire, pest and monitoring and research strategies.


### Desired level of service and strategic management direction

| Desired level of service   |  |
|--|--|
|   | Natural values will be managed to a 'very high' LoS through improved knowledge and monitoring of natural values. |
| Strategic management directions  | Priority   |
| <b>Level of service</b>  |  |
| Improve the current level of knowledge of the cultural significance of semi-evergreen vine thickets at Forty Mile Scrub National Park. | 1  |
| Increase monitoring of natural values by establishing a health check program.  | 1  |
| <b>Health check monitoring</b>   |  |
| Monitor the condition of natural key values through health check monitoring.   | 1  |

\* **Priority ratings** Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

## 5.4 Post-contact cultural heritage management

### Management direction statement


| Description   | Current level of service  |
|---|---|
| Post-contact heritage management for Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

QPWS manages historic sites in accordance with the NCA and *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* (Qld).

No historic cultural sites are listed on the Queensland Heritage Register (Queensland Government, Department of Environment and Science, 2022) or Australian National Heritage List (Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment, 2022).

Threatening processes will be managed through the implementation of the Forty Mile Scrub National Park pest and fire strategies.

### Desired level of service and strategic management direction

| Desired level of service   |   |
|--|---|
|  | Historic cultural heritage will be managed to a 'acceptable' LoS. |
| Strategic management directions  | Priority  |

#### Level of service


Maintain the current level of knowledge of post-contact cultural heritage values at Forty Mile Scrub National Park.

**1**

\* **Priority ratings** Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

## 5.5 Visitor management


### Management direction statement

| Description   | Current level of service  |
|---|---|
| Visitor management for Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

Queensland's parks, forests and reserves provide local communities and visitors from around the world with opportunities to experience our rich natural and cultural heritage, as well as a diverse range of recreational and ecotourism opportunities. QPWS seeks a responsible balance between visitor needs and sensitive park resources in accordance with the NCA and government policies and procedures. Permitted commercial tour activities, agreements and events are administered in accordance with the NCA and other relevant legislation. QPWS will identify, assess and manage hazards to visitor safety in accordance with relevant safety obligations.

The condition of, and visitor satisfaction with, visitor experiences will be monitored through the implementation of the *Forty Mile Scrub National Park Monitoring and Research Strategy*.

### Desired level of service and strategic management direction


| Desired level of service  |   |
|---|---|
|    | Visitor values will be managed to a 'medium' LoS. |
| Strategic management directions   | Priority  |
| <b>Level of service</b>   |   |
| Enhance visitor signage to help mitigate landscape impacts and improve visitor experiences and behaviour.   | 2   |
| Support First Nations people led tourism (i.e. Ewamian People Aboriginal Corporation's tourism interpretive strategy).  | 2   |
| Incorporate cultural messaging in all park visitor interpretive material, including online, on-site signs and brochures.  | 3   |
| Incorporate educational messaging about appropriate visitor behaviour in all park visitor interpretive material, including online, on-site signs and brochures. | 3   |
| <b>Health check monitoring</b>  |   |
| Monitor the condition of visitor key values through health check monitoring.  | 1   |

\* **Priority ratings** Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)



## 5.6 Community, partnerships and other interests


### Management direction statement

| Description  | Current level of service  |
|--|---|
| Community, partnerships and other interests associated with Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

Queensland's parks, forests and reserves provide sustainable environmental, economic and social benefits. The agency is committed to working with the community and its partners to ensure activities and infrastructure are ecologically sustainable and continue to benefit Queensland's economic and social wellbeing, as outlined in the *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020–2030*. Permitted activities are administered in accordance with the requirements of the NCA and other relevant legislation.

Forty Mile Scrub National Park offers visitors an opportunity to learn about vine thicket ecology and threats, as its facilities and location adjacent to the Kennedy Development Road make it a convenient rest stop for travellers.


### Desired level of service and strategic management direction

| Desired level of service   |   |
|--|---|
|   | Community, partnerships and other interests will be managed to a 'medium' LoS through improved neighbour relationships. |
| Strategic management directions  | Priority  |
| <b>Level of service</b>  |   |
| Improve relationships with neighbours to ensure ongoing support and better communication during bushfire events.                                   | 1   |
| Increase the current level of knowledge of neighbouring land uses and the potential threats of these land uses.                                    | 2   |
| Improve partnerships with key tourism bodies (e.g. Savannah Way) to better coordinate interpretation and education material available to visitors. | 3   |
| Improve relationships with neighbours to ensure regular communication and a coordinated approach to tourism throughout the area.                   | 4   |

\* **Priority ratings** Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)


## 5.7 Field management capability

### Management direction statement

| Description  | Current level of service  |
|--|---|
| Field management capability for Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

Managing natural and cultural areas has varying degrees of complexity. Field management capability is a measure of this complexity and considers the significance of the planning area’s values, potential threats, intensity of visitor use and community expectations. It considers the required proximity, frequency and intensity of on-ground management that is needed to manage key values and meet custodial obligations. The rating provides QPWS with a means for gauging resource requirements and staff training needs.

### Desired level of service and strategic management direction


| Desired level of service   |   |
|--|---|
|  | Field management capacity will be managed to a ‘high’ LoS through ongoing delivery of priority on-ground park management actions. |

| Strategic management directions   | Priority |
|---|----------|
| <b>Level of service</b>   |          |
| Maintain the capacity and skills of staff to deliver priority on-ground park management actions.                      | 2        |
| Establish and improve the level of external support provided to assist in the delivery of priority on-ground actions. | 3        |
| Improve the current level of protected area management skills by participating in plant identification training.      | 4        |

\* **Priority ratings** Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)


## 5.8 Operational planning and management support

### Management direction statement

| Description  | Current level of service  |
|--|---|
| Operational planning and management support for Forty Mile Scrub National Park |  |

Operational planning and management support covers all aspects of management direction, including information, assessments, systems, tools and monitoring. As with field management capability, the area’s values, potential threats, intensity of visitor use and community expectations are considered when determining the appropriate levels of service.

### Desired level of service and strategic management direction

| Desired level of service  |  |
|---|--|
|  | Operational planning and management support will be managed to a ‘high’ LoS through increased regional and contractor support. |

| Strategic management directions | Priority |
|---------------------------------|----------|
|---------------------------------|----------|

| Level of service   |   |
|--|---|
| Maintain regional and contractor support to assist with bushfires when needed. | 2 |

\* Priority ratings Scale 1 (extremely urgent and extremely necessary) to 5 (optional and not urgent)

## 6. References

Australian Government. Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment. (2022, March 11). *Australia's World Heritage List*. Retrieved from Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment: <https://www.awe.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/places/world-heritage-list>

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Queensland Government, Department of Environment and Science. (2022, March 10). *Regional ecosystem descriptions*. Retrieved from Queensland Government: <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/regional-ecosystems/>

The State of Queensland, Department of Environment and Resource Management. (2010, December). Draft Undara Volcanic, Forty Mile Scrub, Kinrara and Bulleringa National Parks Management Plan. Queensland, Australia.

The State of Queensland, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. (2000, February). Undara Volcanic and Forty Mile Scrub National Parks Management Plan. Queensland, Australia.

# Appendix 1. Glossary

## Interpreting key values-based management framework concepts

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Adaptive management</b>                             | The process of adjusting and improving how we manage parks, forests and reserves after assessing the outcomes of previous strategies and on-ground actions.  |
| <b>Condition and trend</b>                             | The condition of a key value is assessed as either good, good with some concern, significant concern or critical. Trend describes what is happening to the condition: is it improving, stable or deteriorating? A key value's current condition is determined during the planning process. A desired condition is a realistic goal for the future condition of the key value. The ongoing condition of key values is assessed with regular health checks, monitoring and scientific assessment.  |
| <b>Custodial obligations</b>                           | The requirements in legislation and government policies that we, as the land management agency, have to ensure QPWS's parks, forests and reserves are lawfully managed and good neighbours. Management provides for the protection of life and property, biosecurity and positive relationships with adjacent communities and landholders, as well as enhancing and protecting our values.   |
| <b>Desired outcome</b>                                 | A statement in the key value and management direction statements about moving from the current status (condition or LoS) to a desired status – the goal for management.  |
| <b>Health check</b>                                    | Basic form of monitoring that uses indicators and visual assessments to regularly evaluate the condition of key values. Regular health checks ensure QPWS can respond quickly to adverse change and redirect management priorities.  |
| <b>Key value</b>                                       | A natural, cultural or social value that is of most significance to that area. It is what makes the area special, and if lost, would diminish what makes the area distinct from others.  |
| <b>Key value statement</b>                             | A statement in the management plan/statement that is developed for each key value. It describes the key value, current condition, desired condition, current threats and threat ratings, strategic management direction and priorities for further thematic strategy planning and on-ground management action.   |
| <b>Level of service (LoS)</b>                          | A planning tool used to identify the acceptable management standard or level of resourcing that is required to maintain an area based on its values, threats and the complexity of management. There are five LoS ratings ranging from 'acceptable' to 'exceptional', noting that an acceptable rating is the minimum standard required to deliver good management and meet our custodial obligations under law as a land manager. A 'current' LoS rating is the level at the time of planning, the 'desired' LoS is where we want to be.  |
| <b>Management direction</b>                            | How we manage each management theme to protect and enhance our key values and meet our custodial management obligations.   |
| <b>Management direction statement</b>                  | A statement in the management plan/statement, developed for each management theme, that describes the current LoS, desired LoS, custodial obligations, strategic management direction and priorities for further thematic strategy planning and on-ground management action.   |
| <b>Management instrument</b>                           | A management plan or management statement.   |
| <b>Management theme</b>                                | QPWS has identified a number of management themes that are common to most of the parks, forests and reserves in our estate: fire management; pest management; natural values management; post-contact cultural heritage; visitor management; community, partnerships and other interests; field management capability; operational planning and management support.  |
| <b>Priority rating (key value SMDs)</b>                | <p>A rating given to a strategic management direction according to the need for action to prevent further decline, stabilise current condition, or restore and enhance values, with consideration given to legislative obligations, cost, and social, economic and political factors.</p> <p>Critical (1) – Loss or very significant decline in the condition of key value/s is highly likely if action not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of key value/s is highly likely if action is taken.</p> <p>Very high (2) – Significant decline in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is taken.</p> <p>High (3) – Decline in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is not taken OR improvement in the condition of key value/s is likely if action is taken.</p> <p>Moderate (4) – Some decline in the condition of key value/s is possible if action is not taken OR some improvement in the condition of key value/s is possible if action is taken.</p> <p>Desirable (5) – While decline in the condition of key value/s is not likely in the short term, the action, if taken, would help build long-term resilience of key value/s.</p> |
| <b>Priority rating (LoS SMDs)</b>                      | A rating given to an LoS or custodial obligation strategic management direction. A scale from 1 (extremely urgent) to 5 (not urgent or optional) is assigned, with consideration given to legislative obligations, cost, and social, economic and political factors.   |
| <b>Strategic management direction (SMD)</b>            | A broad strategy aimed at mitigating or removing a threat to a key value and maintaining or improving the condition of a park's value; or addressing the gap between the current LoS and desired LoS for a management theme.   |
| <b>Threat or threatening process and threat rating</b> | Based on International Union for Conservation of Nature classifications, QPWS has identified threatening processes that have the potential to affect Queensland's values (e.g. natural systems modifications, invasive species). Current threats to key values are identified and given a threat rating based on a combination of the extent of the impact, the severity of the impact and the urgency of action.  |