

Mount Cooroy Conservation Park

Management Statement

2026



Queensland
Government

This management statement has not been co-designed with First Nations partners. This document has been prepared by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation to provide management guidance and adaptive management until such a time as the department can engage with First Nations partners in the co-design of a management instrument.

Management statements are prepared under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. These documents may also include management direction for other State tenure for which QPWS has management responsibility.

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1. Introduction

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), within the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI), 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. A glossary of VBMF terms and concepts used within this document is provided at the end of this document (Section 5 – Glossary).

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 the 'levels of service' for each park. Levels of service is a management standard that considers an area's values, threatening processes, custodial obligations, risks and overall management complexity.

This management statement has been prepared by QPWS to provide management guidance and adaptive management until such a time as the department can engage with First Nations partners in co-design of a management instrument.

2. Park overview

The following figure and table (Figure 1, Table 1) provide an overview of information related to the parks included in this management statement, including their locality, legislative framework and applicable plans/agreements.

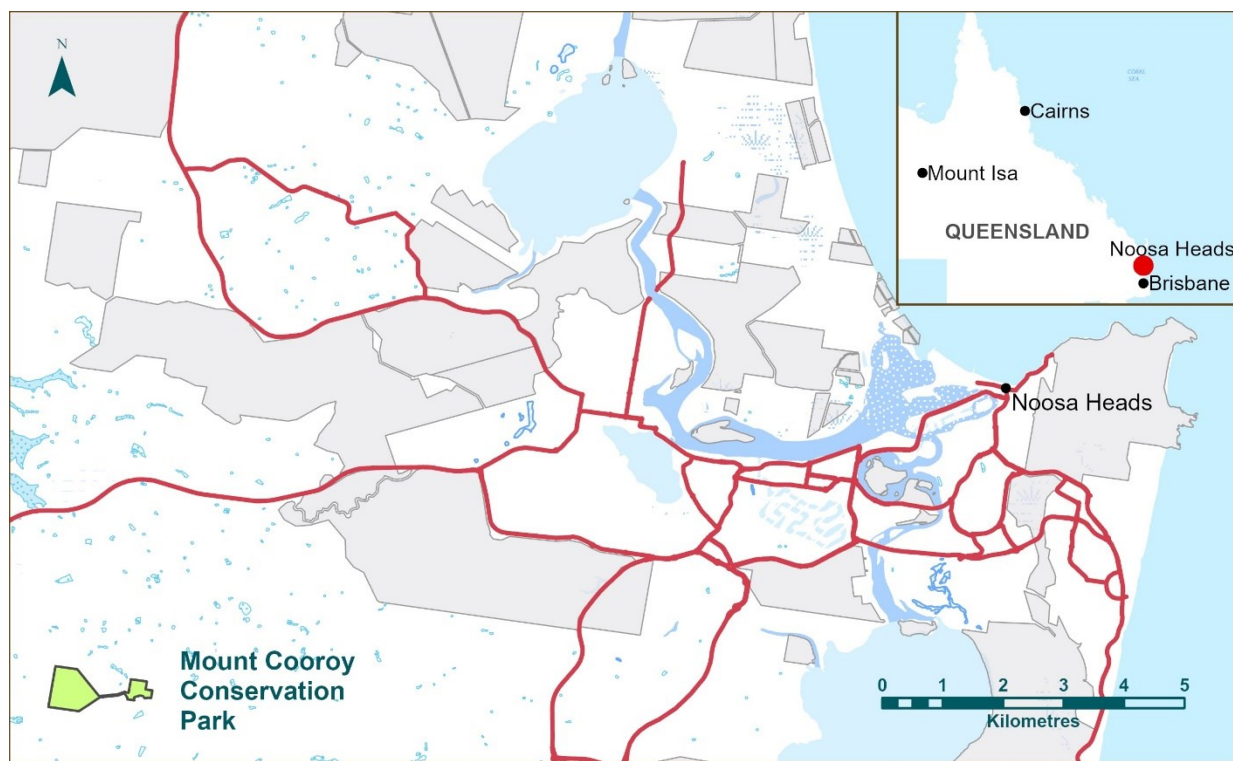


Figure 1. Locality of Mount Cooroy Conservation Park

Table 1. Overview of Mount Cooroy Conservation Park

Park size	Mount Cooroy Conservation Park	47.2 ha
Bioregion	South Eastern Queensland	
QPWS region	South East Queensland	
Local government area	Noosa Shire Council	
State electorate	Noosa	
Relevant legislation	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cwlth) (EPBC)	
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> (NCA)	
	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	
	<i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Cwlth)	
	<i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i>	
Plans and agreements	National Recovery Plan for Macadamia Species	
	Recovery plan for the angle-stemmed myrtle <i>Austromyrtus gonoclada</i> 2001–2005	
	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	
	Threatened Species Strategy Action Plan 2022–2032	

3. Key values

All parks, forests and reserves contain a range of natural, cultural, social and economic values that contribute to the state's comprehensive and representative protected area and forest estate. The VBMF provides a framework for identifying and protecting the most important of these—referred to as *key values*—which in turn guides the allocation of management resources.

The location of each key value is shown in Figure 2. An assessment of each key value—including its current and desired condition, trend, and the confidence level of the assessment—is presented in the following tables and can be interpreted using Table 2. The assessment also outlines the main threats to each key value and provides broad strategic management direction to address these threats and achieve desired outcomes over time.

Table 2. Description of condition and trend icons used in the key values assessment

Condition of key value	Good  The value is in good condition and is likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current measures are maintained	Good with some concern  The value is likely to be maintained over the long term with minor additional conservation measures to address existing concerns	Significant concern  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	Critical  The value is severely threatened. Urgent additional large-scale conservation measures are required or the value may be lost
Trend of key value condition	Improving 	Stable 	Deteriorating 	No consistent trend 
Assessment confidence	Inferred 	Limited 	Adequate 	

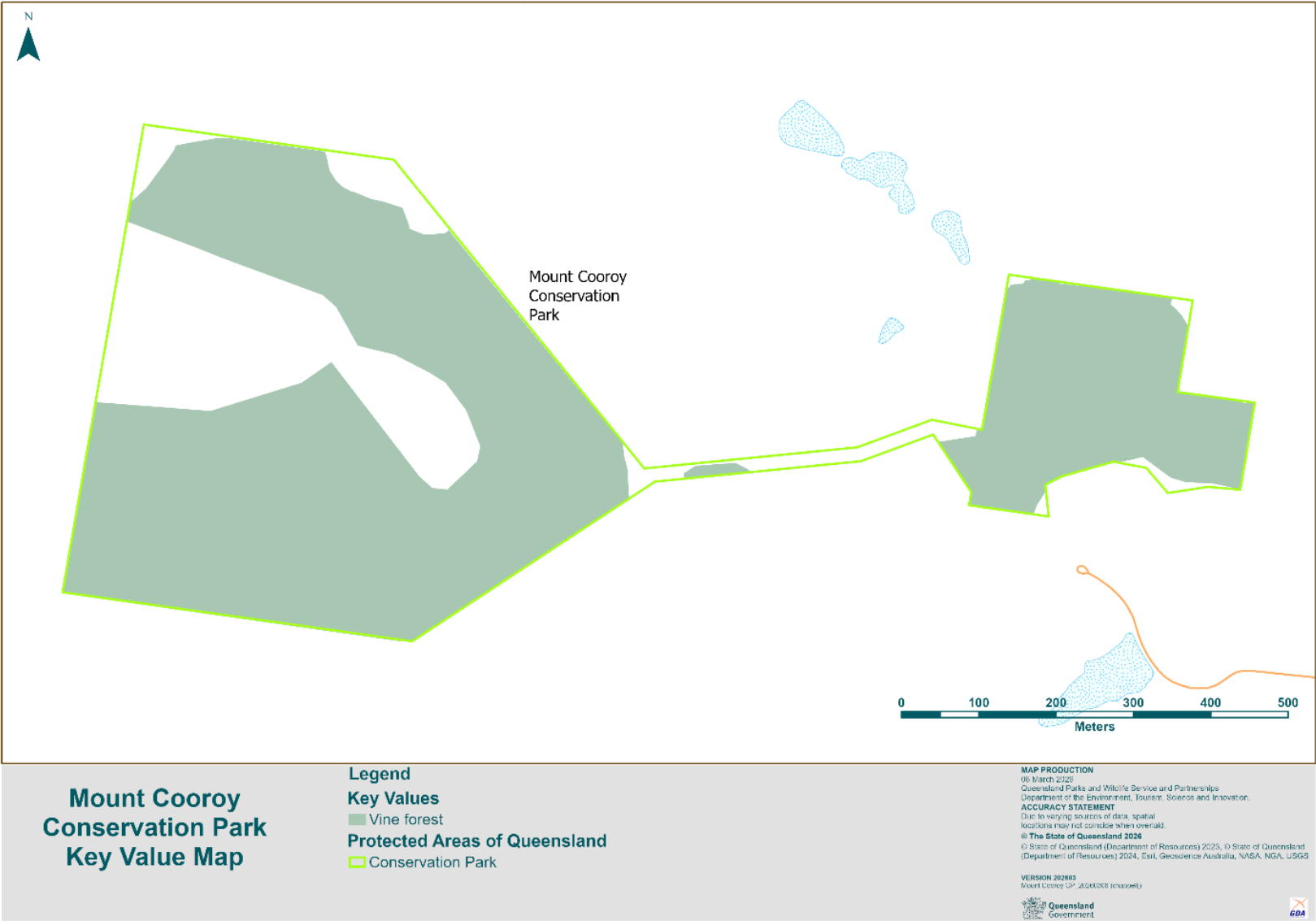


Figure 2. Mount Cooroy Conservation Park key values

3.1 Vine forests

Key value category	Key value description	Current condition	Assessment confidence	Current trend	Assessment confidence	Desired condition (short term)	Desired condition (long term)
Significant ecosystems (terrestrial)	Vine forest covers over three quarters of the park (78.29 per cent) and includes three regional ecosystems that should not be deliberately burnt. The Araucarian notophyll/microphyll vine forest comprises nearly 70 per cent of the park and has of concern biodiversity status. Endangered notophyll vine forest covers nearly eight per cent of the park, and a very small patch of notophyll vine forest with no concern at present status covers less than one per cent. All three regional ecosystems represent less than one per cent of that regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland or within the protected area estate. There are 47 plant species of conservation significance recorded from the park, many of which are found in the vine forests. These include critically endangered <i>Gossia gonoclada</i>, <i>G. inophloia</i> and native guava <i>Rhodomyrtus psidioides</i>; endangered <i>Mallotus megadantus</i>; vulnerable <i>Floydia praealta</i>, Queensland nut tree <i>Macadamia integrifolia</i> and Gympie nut <i>M. ternifolia</i>; near threatened <i>Nathoalsomitra suberosa</i> and <i>Pararistolochia praevenosa</i>; a further 37 species with special least concern status; and one species with least concern status. Angle-stemmed myrtle <i>G. gonoclada</i> and native guava <i>R. psidioides</i> are two of 30 priority plant species listed in the Threatened Species Strategy Action Plan 2022–2032. One of the plan's objectives is to reduce the risk of extinction for all priority species. The macadamia genus is endemic to coastal regions in south-east Queensland and north-east New South Wales, predominantly in subtropical rainforests. <i>M. integrifolia</i> and <i>M. ternifolia</i> are listed as vulnerable under the NCA, EPBC Act and IUCN Red List for Threatened Plants. Australia is a signatory to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, which requires that the genetic resources of macadamia species are conserved for food and agricultural purposes. The National Recovery Plan for Macadamia Species identifies Mount Cooroy as a medium priority population for Gympie nut <i>M. ternifolia</i>. It also mentions a site 'Cooroy' that is a high priority, and it is possible this is also in the park. The recovery plan also mentions that populations where there are two macadamia species would be a very high priority, but the plan does not identify Mount Cooroy as such, which may have been a deliberate decision or oversight. These three regional ecosystems correspond with a critically endangered ecological community 'Lowland Rainforest of Subtropical Australia' under the EPBC Act. Ground truthing would be required to confirm presence. BVG 5: Rainforest typically with hoop, bunya or kauri pine BVG 5a Araucarian notophyll/microphyll and microphyll vine forests of southern coastal bioregions — there is one RE in the park in this BVG. Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest on Cainozoic igneous rocks (12.8.13) has of concern biodiversity status and covers 32.99 hectares (69.87 per cent) of the park (ranked 8 of 17 parks with the RE). While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for threatened plant species including <i>Alectryon ramiflorus</i>, <i>Cossinia australiana</i> and <i>Sarcophilus weinthalii</i>, none of these species has been recorded from the park.	●●●●	ⓘ	↔	ⓘ	●●●●	●●●●

Key value category	Key value description	Current condition	Assessment confidence	Current trend	Assessment confidence	Desired condition (short term)	Desired condition (long term)
	BVG 4: Palm rainforests on alluvia, along streams and in swamps BVG 4b Evergreen to semi-deciduous mesophyll to notophyll vine forest, frequently with Archontophoenix spp. (palms) fringing streams — there is one RE in the park in this BVG. Gallery rainforest (notophyll vine forest) on alluvial plains (12.3.1) has endangered biodiversity status and covers 3.68 hectares (7.79 per cent) of the park (ranked 20 of 37 parks with the RE). This regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for threatened plants including <i>Xanthostemon oppositifolius</i>, <i>Fontainea rostrata</i>, <i>M. integrifolia</i> and <i>M. ternifolia</i>; and habitat for threatened animals including <i>Cyclopsitta diophthalma coxeni</i> and <i>Ornithoptera richmondia</i>. Both vulnerable <i>M. integrifolia</i> and bopple nut <i>M. ternifolia</i> have been recorded from the park. BVG 2: Complex to simple semi-deciduous to evergreen rainforest BVG 2a Complex evergreen notophyll vine forest frequently with <i>Araucaria cunninghamii</i> (hoop pine) from foothills to ranges. There is one RE in the park in this BVG. Notophyll vine forest +/- <i>Araucaria cunninghamii</i> on metamorphics +/- interbedded volcanics (12.11.10) covers just 0.30 hectares (0.63 percent) of the park and has no concern at present status.						
Desired outcome The Araucarian notophyll/microphyll vine forest is healthy, resilient, protected and effectively managed, supporting thriving biodiversity, sustaining natural processes, and providing long-term viable habitats for fauna species and protect the many threatened plants including the critically endangered <i>Gossia gonoclada</i>, <i>G. inophloia</i> and native guava <i>Rhodomyrtus psidioides</i>.							

Threats to key value

Threat process	Threat category	Description	Threat level	Threat rating
Recreation	Human intrusions and disturbance	Despite there being no road access to the park and no walking tracks or other visitor facilities, people access the park through private property to climb Mount Cooroy. (The Cooroy Mountain Climb is an event that has been held in the park). The park, and an unofficial summit route. Higher visitor numbers as part of previous events has caused informal trail development and trampling of vegetation, impacting soils and facilitating weed introduction.	Primary	Medium
Introduced weeds	Invasive and other problematic species, genes and diseases	Currently, most weeds are on the fringes. However, more are starting to establish along the unauthorised summit trail, including corky passionflower, lantana, Noogoora burr. Also some pine trees nearby.	Secondary	Medium
Bushfire	Natural system modifications	Most of the area immediately surrounding the park is peri-urban lifestyle blocks, so the risk of bushfires moving into the park is low. Threat of bushfire is most likely from lightning strike, particularly with a changing climate and threat of invasive grasses that can influence fire behaviour.	Other	Low

Strategic management directions

Strategic management direction	Priority*
Minimise visitor impacts on the vine forests through compliance and education with park visitors and setting limits and conditions on event permittees.	3
Prevent the establishment of invasive pest plants in the vine forest, including invasive grasses, vines, creepers and trees.	3
Protect the vine forest through appropriate fire management of adjacent fire adapted communities.	4

*Key value priority: 1 – Critical, 2 – Very high, 3 – High, 4 – Moderate, 5 – Desirable (see Appendix 1)

4. Management direction

QPWS manages protected areas and forests to protect their values and deliver our custodial obligations as a land manager. A levels 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. An LoS assessment lets QPWS staff and the public know what level of management activity to expect on each park, forest or reserve. There are six LoS ratings ranging from 'below acceptable' to 'exceptional', and an 'acceptable' rating is the minimum standard required to deliver good management and meet our legislative and custodial obligations.

This section provides a strategic management direction for each management theme, identifying its current LoS and desired LoS which can be interpreted using Figure 3.

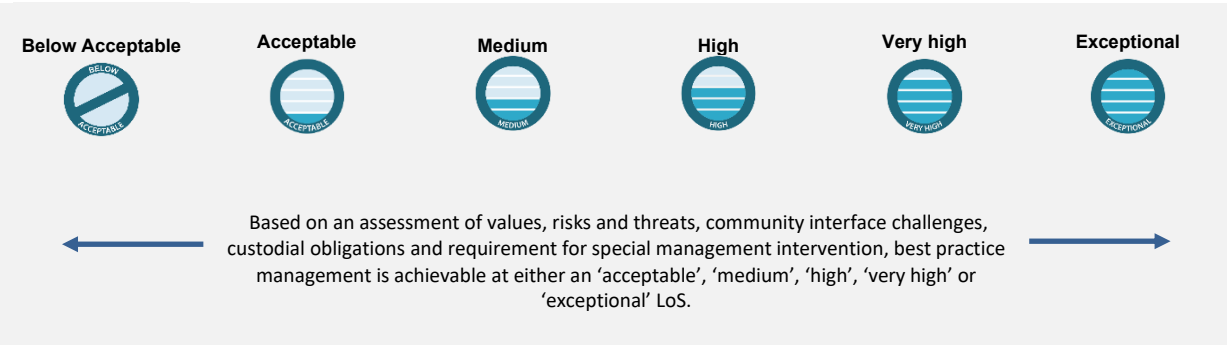


Figure 3. Description of LoS icons

4.1 Management directions

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Fire management			Maintain current approach to fire management based on broad regional ecosystems mapping, guided by the planned burn guidelines.	4
			Improve collaboration through increased engagement with the Area Bushfire Management Group, Kabi Kabi Rangers and neighbours to support a shared responsibility approach to fire management.	4
			Improve the current approach to fire management by increasing the priority to implement conservation planned burns that protect key values.	4
Pest management			Improve knowledge and understanding of current and emerging weeds and the impacts on natural values, including their distribution and extent.	3
			Improve consultation with neighbours to mitigate the threat of current and emerging pests.	3
			Improve current approach to pest management through working with Noosa Shire Council and neighbours to manage protected area margins and interface.	3
Natural values management			Maintain contemporary knowledge of natural values and their management requirements, particularly for the improvement of key value health.	4
Post-contact cultural heritage management			Maintain a contemporary knowledge of the park's post-contact cultural heritage and management requirements.	4
Visitor management			Maintain the level of engagement with surrounding neighbours to manage access to the park.	3
			Maintain current approach to visitor management.	3
Community, partnerships and other interests			Maintain contemporary knowledge of all stakeholders and management requirements.	4
			Improve current approach to community, partnerships and other interests through increased communication with Noosa Shire Council, neighbours and local community groups to manage visitors, pests and fire.	3
			Improve the existing relationship with the Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation by extending communication and on-ground park management for Mount Cooroy Conservation Park.	3
			Increase the priority for community, partnerships and other interests management through collaborative efforts with regional support units.	3

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Field management capability			Maintain a contemporary knowledge base to deliver required management.	4
			Maintain current site inspection regime.	4
Operational planning and management support			Maintain knowledge of available operational planning and management support within the region to guide and support park management operations.	4
			Increase operational planning for key management priorities including fire, pest and visitor management.	4

*Level of Service priority: 1 – extremely urgent and extremely necessary, 2 – very necessary and very urgent, 3 – moderately necessary and moderately urgent, 4 – somewhat necessary and somewhat urgent, 5 – optional and not urgent (see Appendix 1)

5. Glossary

The following glossary contains VBMF terms and concepts used within this document.

Term	Description
Adaptive management	The process of adjusting and improving how we manage parks, forests and reserves after assessing the outcomes of previous strategies and on-ground actions.
Condition and trend	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 and trend of key values is assessed with regular health checks, or monitoring and scientific assessment.
Custodial obligations	The legal and policy requirements QPWS has as a land manager to ensure that parks, forests and reserves are managed properly and lawfully. This includes protecting life and property, maintaining biosecurity, building positive relationships with adjacent communities and landholders, and safeguarding the values of the land.
Desired outcome	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.
Health check	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.
Key value	A natural, cultural, social or economic value that is most important, significant, unique or irreplaceable and helps define the essence of the area. If lost, it would diminish what makes the area distinct from others.
Level of service (LoS)	Management standards for maintaining an area based on its values, threats and the complexity of management. There are six LoS ratings ranging from 'below 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.
Management direction	An assessment of the current and desired LoS for each management theme, with prioritised strategic management directions.
Management instrument	A management plan or management statement.
Management theme	Common management themes across parks, forests and reserves, including fire management; pest management; natural values management; post-contact cultural heritage management; visitor management; community, partnerships and other interests; field management capability; operational planning and management support.
Strategic management direction	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.
Threat or threatening process and threat rating	Based on IUCN's classifications, QPWS has identified threatening processes that have the potential to affect Queensland's values (e.g. natural systems modifications, invasive species). Current and potential 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.

Appendix 1

Term	Description
Priority rating (key value SMDs)	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.
	Critical (1) – Loss or very significant decline in the condition of the key value is highly likely if action is not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of the key value is highly likely if action is taken.
	Very high (2) – Significant decline in the condition of the key value is likely if action is not taken OR significant improvement in the condition of the key value is likely if action is taken.
	High (3) – Decline in the condition of the key value is likely if action is not taken OR improvement in the condition of the key value is likely if action is taken.
	Moderate (4) – Some decline in the condition of the key value is possible if action is not taken OR some improvement in the condition of the key value is possible if action is taken.
	Desirable (5) – While decline in the condition of the key value is not likely in the short term, the action, if taken, would help build long-term resilience of the key value.
Priority rating (LoS SMDs)	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.