

Mount Leura 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 relating to the park including locality, legislative framework and applicable plans/agreements.

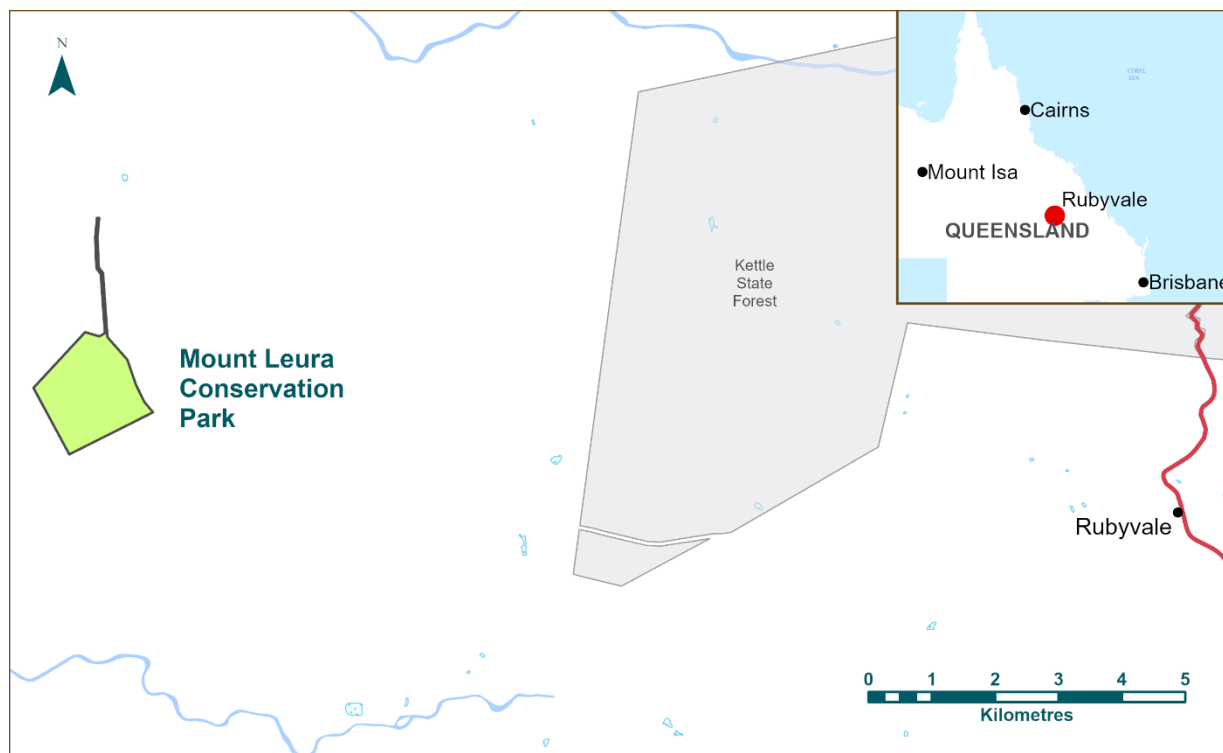


Figure 1. Locality of Mount Leura Conservation Park

Table 1. Overview of Mount Leura Conservation Park

Park size	Mount Leura Conservation Park	196.5 ha
Bioregion	Brigalow Belt North	
QPWS region	Central	
Local government area	Central Highlands Regional	
State electorate	Gregory	
Relevant legislation	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	
	<i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i>	
	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cwlth)	
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	
	<i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Cwlth)	
Plans and agreements	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	
	Japan Australia Migratory Bird Agreement	

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 	

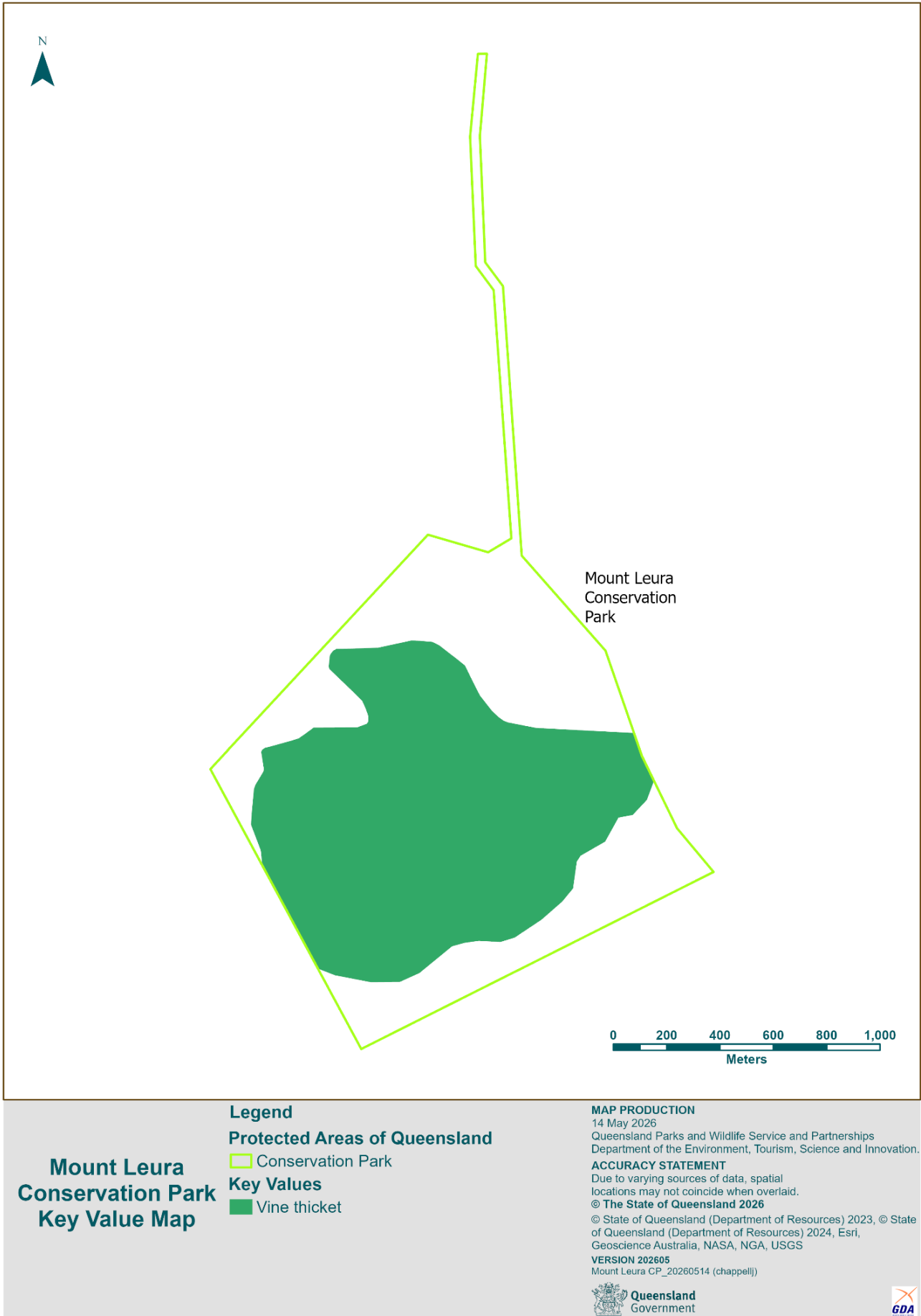


Figure 2. Mount Leura Conservation Park key values

3.1 Vine thicket

Key value category	Key value description	Current condition	Assessment confidence	Current trend	Assessment confidence	Desired condition (short term)	Desired condition (long term)
Natural ecosystem	Semi-evergreen vine thicket covers over half of the park and has of concern biodiversity status. The regional ecosystem that is present (11.8.3) is one of several regional ecosystems that form part of the 'Semi-evergreen vine thickets (SEVT) of the Brigalow Belt and Nandewar Bioregions', an ecological community that is listed as endangered under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC). Extensive clearing for cropping, grazing and pasture development across Queensland has led to a significant decline in SEVT communities. Only eight national parks/conservation parks support this regional ecosystem and Mount Leura Conservation Park has the fourth highest representation after Bunya Mountains National Park, Peak Range National Park and Carnarvon National Park. Regional ecosystem 11.8.3: Semi-evergreen vine thicket on Cainozoic igneous substrate, covers 115.23 hectares (58.83 per cent) of the park. This represents 0.46 per cent of the remaining extent of this regional ecosystem in Queensland and 2.88 per cent of that within the protected area estate. The park is ranked eighth out of 15 protected areas (includes nature refuges) that contain this regional ecosystem.	Good with some concern 	Inferred 	Stable 	Inferred 	Good with some concern 	Good 
Desired outcome The vine thicket is healthy, resilient, protected and effectively managed, supporting thriving biodiversity, sustaining natural processes, and providing long-term viable habitats for fauna species.							

Threats to key value

Threat process	Threat category	Description	Threat level	Threat rating
Bushfire	Natural system modifications	The vine thicket is fire-sensitive and not adapted to withstand frequent fires. The regional ecosystem present (RE 11.8.3) requires protection from fire. Bushfires can be caused by lightning strikes and escaped burns originating from surrounding properties.	Primary	High
Introduced animals	Invasive and other problematic species, genes and diseases	While there are no pests recorded in the Department's Wildnet database, cattle from neighbouring properties are likely to be entering the park. The presence and condition of fencing to contain cattle is unknown. Feral cats and rabbits are present in the broader landscape and are likely to be present in the park. Pest animals can damage vegetation and spread weeds.	Secondary	Low
Introduced weeds	Invasive and other problematic species, genes and diseases	While there are no pests recorded in the Department's Wildnet database, invasive grasses, rubbervine, lantana and cactus are present in the broader landscape and may be present in the park. Introduced invasive grasses, particularly high biomass grasses can increase the bushfire risk, enabling fire to encroach further into fire-sensitive vine thickets.	Other	Low

Threat process	Threat category	Description	Threat level	Threat rating
Geological collection	Biological resource use	While there are five fossicking areas and six designated fossicking lands in the Central Queensland gemfields where people can fossick if they have a fossicking licence, including the Tomahawk Creek fossicking area northwest of the park, there is no road access to the park and fossicking is not permitted within its boundaries. Despite this, people may be attempting to access the park to fossick illegally, which may damage the vine thicket and spread weeds.	Other	Low

Strategic management directions

Strategic management direction	Priority*
Protect vine forest through appropriate fire management of adjacent fire adapted communities.	3
Maintain healthy vine thicket through collaborative fire management with park neighbours.	2
Reduce the impact of cattle on vine thicket.	5
Reduce the impact of pest plants on the vine thicket, particularly high biomass grasses.	3
Investigate visitor use of the park.	5

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.

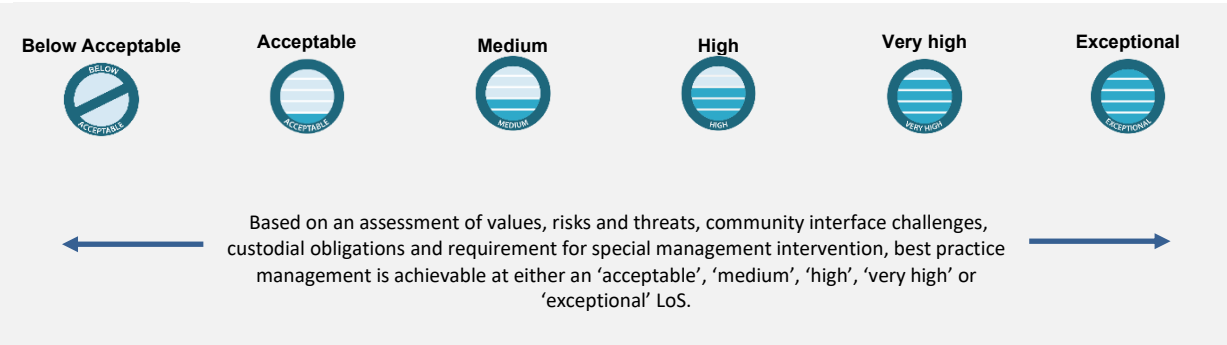


Figure 3. Description of LoS icons

4.1 Management directions

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Fire management			Improve understanding of fire dependent and affected values.	3
			Improve collaboration through increased engagement with the Bushfire Management Group and neighbours to foster a shared responsibility approach to fire management, focussing on access, fire preparedness, firebreaks, bushfire response and the implementation of planned burns.	2
			Improve fire management in the park through preparation of an area fire strategy.	4
			Improve the current fire management approach by increasing the priority to implement conservation-focused planned burns to protect key values.	4
Pest management			Improve understanding of the distribution, extent and impacts of current and emerging weeds on key values.	3
			Improve consultation with neighbours to reduce the risk of cattle entering the park.	2
			Improve pest management in the park through preparation of an area pest strategy.	4
Natural values management			Improve understanding of vegetation communities by ground truthing whether the vine thicket in the park is the endangered ecological community, semi-evergreen vine thicket of the Brigalow Belt (North and South) and Nandewar bioregions.	3
			Improve understanding of the condition of the vegetation communities through the health check program.	3
			Improve collaboration with regional and centric units to support natural values management and establish monitoring programs for the key value.	2
			Increase efforts and planning support to enhance the condition of key and other values.	4
Post-contact cultural heritage management			Maintain a contemporary knowledge of the park's post-contact cultural heritage and management requirements.	5
Visitor management			Maintain the current approach to visitor management.	5
Community, partnerships and other interests			Maintain relationships and communication with First Nations groups.	3
			Improve the current approach to community, partnerships and other interests through regular communication with neighbours and any relevant community groups.	2
Field management capability			Enhance field management capacity through the strategic use of regional and centric teams when needed.	4
			Improve current field management capability and capacity by working with Technical Support to improve knowledge of the park's vegetation.	4

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Operational planning and management support			Improve operational capacity by engaging with other regional and centric business groups to guide and support on-ground actions and key values management.	4
			Increase operational planning to address 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.