

Keatings Lagoon 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 Keatings Lagoon Conservation Park

Table 1. Overview of Keatings Lagoon Conservation Park

Park size	Keatings Lagoon Conservation Park	46.7 ha
Bioregion	Cape York Peninsula	
QPWS region	Northern	
Local government area	Cook Shire Council	
State electorate	Cook	
Relevant legislation	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth) (EPBC)</i> <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 (NCA)</i> <i>Land Act 1994</i> <i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i> <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i> <i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)</i>	
Plans and agreements	<i>Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals</i> <i>China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i> <i>Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i> <i>Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i>	

3. Park values

All parks, forests and reserves contain a range of natural, cultural, social and economic values that contribute to Queensland's protected area and forest estate. The VBMF provides a framework for identifying and protecting the most important of these—referred to as *key values*.

Based on an evaluation, the values on Keatings Lagoon Conservation Park do not reach the thresholds required to be considered a key value. The park, however, continues to contribute to the state's comprehensive and representative reserve system, providing protection for biodiversity, ecosystem services and connectivity within the landscape.

Park management will focus on conserving the natural, cultural and social values that support its importance as a protected area, ensuring that management aligns with the legislative and custodial obligations in relation to these values.

Threats to values will primarily be managed through fire and pest management. Key actions will include:

- protecting life and property within and adjacent to the park
- managing fire to conserve and maintain regional ecosystems in line with the planned burn guidelines
- reducing the impacts of existing pest species on neighbouring land uses
- managing pest threats to preserve regional ecosystems and species of conservation significance.

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 2.

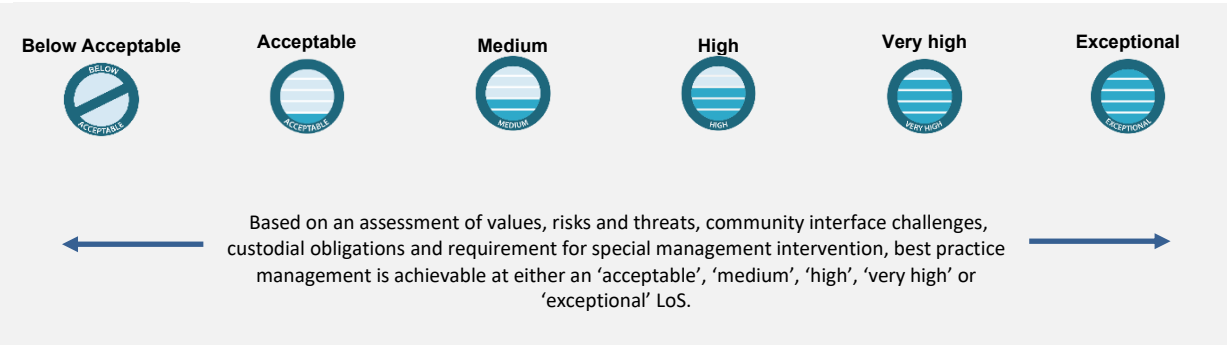


Figure 2. Description of LoS icons

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.	2
			Improve knowledge of fire management and mitigation zone mapping through development of a fire strategy in FLAME.	3
			Maintain current level of consultation with neighbours, fire agencies and relevant stakeholders to support a shared responsibility approach to fire management.	2
			Maintain current priority of fire management to protect life and property and improve the condition of natural values.	3
			Improve current approach to fire management by supporting Buubu-Nuupin Aboriginal Corporation to undertake fire management associated with joint park management transition.	3
Pest management			Maintain contemporary knowledge of pest species that might threaten park values.	2
			Improve knowledge of pest species, their impacts and management priorities through development of a pest strategy in FLAME.	3
			Maintain relationships and consultation with key stakeholders, including South Cape York Catchments, Cape York NRM and South Cape York Water Partnerships, to develop and implement annual pest programs to achieve pest management outcomes.	2
			Maintain the current level of engagement with stakeholders to mitigate the potential impacts of pests on neighbouring properties.	2
			Maintain relationship with Ergon Energy to effectively manage pest species along the power line corridor.	3
			Improve current approach to pest management through partnering with community and natural resource groups to undertake weed control and natural values management.	3
			Improve current approach to pest management through working with neighbours to manage protected area margins and interface.	3
			Improve the coordination of cross-landscape pest management programs with relevant stakeholders.	3
			Improve current approach to pest management by supporting Buubu-Nuupin Aboriginal Corporation to undertake pest management associated with joint park management transition.	3
Natural values management			Maintain contemporary knowledge of natural values and their management requirements, particularly for the improvement of ecosystem health.	2
			Improve knowledge of natural values management requirements, and fauna and flora species through targeted surveys and monitoring programs and incorporating scientific research into on-ground management.	3
			Maintain current level of consultation and engagement with regional and centric units to support natural values management.	3

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Post-contact cultural heritage management			Maintain consultation with Buubu-Nuupin Aboriginal Corporation, South Cape York Catchments, Cape York NRM, South Cape York Water Partnerships, research institutions and local community natural resource groups to support natural values management and develop monitoring programs.	2
			Maintain the current management effort to improve the condition of park values through fire and pest management.	3
			Maintain a contemporary knowledge of the park's post-contact cultural heritage and management requirements.	4
			Maintain the current level of consultation with heritage groups and stakeholders, and the QPWP Principal Heritage Officer to guide post-contact cultural heritage management.	5
Visitor management			Maintain current approach to post-contact cultural heritage management.	4
			Maintain contemporary knowledge of visitor use and impacts.	3
			Increase level of engagement with local birdwatching interest groups regarding the wildlife viewing experience at the bird hide.	4
			Maintain current approach to visitor management.	3
			Improve visitor safety through improved facilities by ensuring assets are listed in Loc8 and maintenance schedules are up-to-date.	2
Community, partnerships and other interests			Improve the overall approach to visitor safety by ensuring assets are weather resilient and located in the most appropriate areas to facilitate safe access.	2
			Maintain contemporary knowledge of all stakeholders and management requirements.	2
			Improve staff knowledge and capabilities in cultural heritage management and cross-cultural engagement through training opportunities.	2
			Maintain current consultation and engagement with key stakeholders.	3
			Maintain relationship and communication with Buubu-Nuupin Aboriginal Corporation for on-ground park management as required.	3
			Improve engagement with Queensland electricity supply industry representatives on pest management along power line corridors.	4
			Maintain current approach to management of partnerships, community and other interests.	3
			Maintain current approach to the management of Buubu-Nuupin Aboriginal Corporation identified cultural heritage areas.	2
Field management capability			Increase the priority for informed management of Buubu-Nuupin Aboriginal Corporation identified cultural heritage areas through collaborative efforts with centric and regional support units.	3
			Maintain a contemporary knowledge base to deliver required management.	3
			Enhance field management capacity by developing staff skills in management operations through training and information sharing.	3

Management theme	Current	Desired	Strategic management direction	Priority (1–5) *
Operational planning and management support			Maintain current levels of consultation with regional support units regarding field management capacity.	3
			Enhance field management capacity by increasing the strategic use of regional and centric teams as needed.	5
			Maintain operational capacity to actively manage the values of Keatings Lagoon Conservation Park and maintain the current site inspection regime.	3
			Improve current field management capability and capacity by working with other work units to prioritise work programs and undertake education and compliance activities during high visitation periods.	3
			Maintain knowledge of available operational planning and management support and engage with technical support staff to provide advice and support and guide operational programs.	3
			Maintain relationships with regional and centric support units to inform and support delivery of on-ground operational actions and park values management.	4
			Maintain levels of operational planning for key management priorities including fire, pest and visitor asset management.	3

*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.