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# Bare Hill (Bunda Bibandji) Conservation Park Management Statement 2007–2017 Wet Tropics District, Northern Region

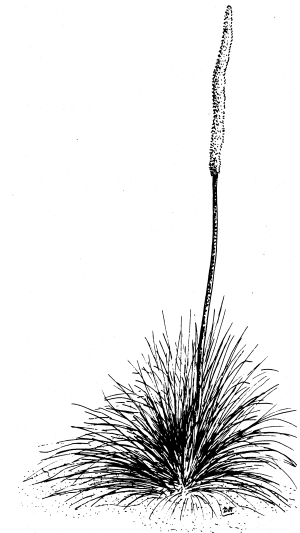
## Vision statement

*To protect, preserve and promote the unique cultural and ecological values of Bare Hill (Bunda Bibandji) while also enabling economic opportunities for Traditional Owners.*

## 1. Management objectives

The objectives of the Bare Hill (Bunda Bibandji) Conservation Park Management Statement are to:

- i. facilitate a collaborative approach with Traditional Owners and other stakeholders to ensure the integrity and diversity of the cultural and natural landscape is maintained, particularly from fire and visitor impacts;
- ii. ensure visitor opportunities encompass the presentation of cultural and natural values by Traditional Owners or a delegate, and ensure appropriate and accurate interpretive materials are available;
- iii. develop and maintain a framework for the sharing of scientific data between Traditional Owners, other stakeholders and the Environmental Protection Agency; and
- iv. promote the adoption of the [precautionary principle](#), where doubt exists regarding the impact of particular activities.



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## **2. Management intent**

### **2.1. Nature conservation**

To protect and maintain natural integrity through the preservation of biological diversity and the recognition and mitigation of threatening processes through appropriate management regimes and monitoring of environmental and social conditions.

### **2.2. Cultural values**

To protect and maintain cultural integrity in a manner that recognises the links between the land and its people, places, objects and cultural significance and to support the rights of Indigenous peoples to conserve, manage and present their heritage.

### **2.3. Recreation, tourism, education and science**

To present the natural and cultural values in a sustainable nature-based manner where appropriate

### **2.4. Community partnerships**

An adaptive and co-operative approach between the State, the community and the Traditional Owners will be developed to uphold the cardinal principle of protected area management while facilitating agreements and partnerships to encourage pride and ownership of protected areas.

## **3. Basis for management**

Aboriginal people, particularly the Traditional Owners, have a long association with the area. Oral stories associated with rock art have been handed down from generation to generation. Other physical remnants such as scars on trees, indicating removal of bark for shields, swords and the like, also indicate the use of the area by Indigenous people. Today, the involvement of Traditional Owner groups form an integral component of all management and interpretive activities.

Bare Hill (Bunda Bibandji) Conservation Park (BHCP) has been developed according to [management principles](#) for conservation parks defined under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#) and principles of the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*. It has also taken into consideration *Bama Bulurru* (traditional law) and requirements for listing on the [National Heritage List](#).

Some of the BHCP area also forms part of the [Wet Tropics World Heritage Area](#) (WTWHA). It maintains habitat for threatened species populations such as the [northern bettong](#) (*Bettongia tropica*), [northern quoll](#) (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) and [cassowary](#) (*Casuarius casuarius johnsonii*). Creeks feed into the [Barron River Catchment](#) and a major supply of electricity borders the area. Consequently, legislation and codes such as the Commonwealth [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#), [World Heritage Convention](#), Queensland Electricity Supply Industry Maintenance Code for WTWHA and the [Wet Tropics Regional Agreement](#) are also relevant.

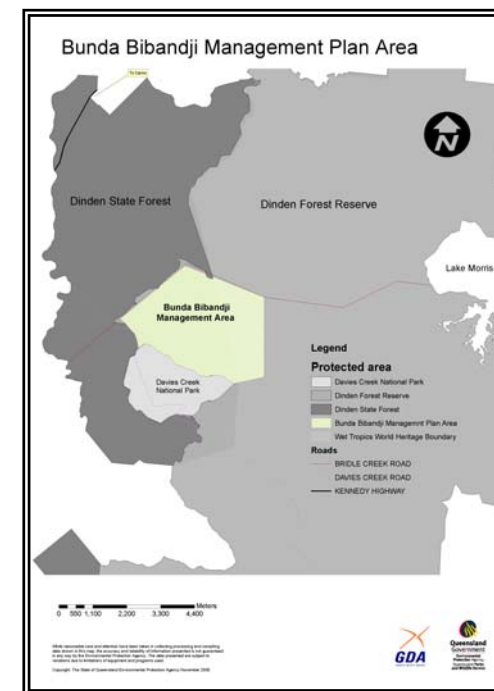
## 4. Location and context

The Bare Hill Conservation Park is located 30km west of Kuranda and 20km east of Mareeba. The total area managed by this statement is 1150ha. Access is gained via the Kennedy Highway, Davies Creek Road and Bridle Creek Road through the Dinden State Forest and Dinden Forest Reserve.

Particular granite outcrops in the area display continually overworked rock art by local Indigenous people. They are potentially the most accessible rock imagery sites within the Cairns region. Oral stories associated with art and other physical remnants, such as foothold scars and shield trees, confirm traditional use of the area.

Traditional Owners still assert their rights and obligations in managing this area, including land management issues, custody of story places, meeting grounds and burial sites. These principles are playing an increasingly important role in the community, enabling Traditional Owners the opportunity to preserve and promote this special place.

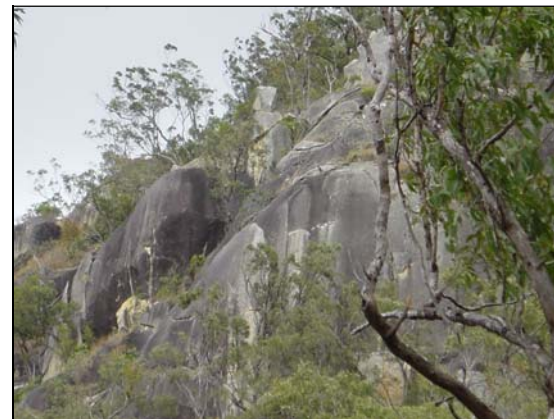
Europeans first noted this art in the 1940s and 1950s, with accurate recordings made in 1967. Nevertheless the archaeologists' original tracings (1967) were mislaid and photographs now only date from 1978.



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This unique cultural place also supports a varied landscape, with a divergent wet/dry margin or ecotone and outstanding geological features. The dominant rock parent materials, include metamorphics and the Hodgkinson Formation, support a number of [Regional Ecosystems](#) (RE's).

Notable RE's include 7.3.22, 7.3.25, 7.3.26 and 7.3.28. These communities are associated with creeks and stream banks and are all currently listed as endangered communities. Species include the weeping tea-tree (*Melaleuca leucadendra*) and Moreton Bay ash (*Corymbia tessellaris*). Forest type 7.12.22 is also a notable community, providing habitat for the endangered [northern bettong](#).



## 5. Protecting and presenting the park

### 5.1. Landscape

Weathering and erosion over time has left spectacular granite outcrops covered with open woodland on this site. Eucalypts, cycads and grass trees are common here. This floristic community provides a stark contrast to the rainforest-lined streams, where red cedar (*Toona ciliata*) and kauri pine (*Agathis robusta*) emergents are seen. These distinct ecosystems also provide habitat for several important endangered species including the [northern bettong](#) and [northern quoll](#).

Status and opportunities - 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
Scenic amenity is compromised in places by the large power line infrastructure including the clearing practices to maintain the power line.	<b>L1.</b> The natural and cultural importance of the area is reflected in its scenic amenity.	<p><b>L1a.</b> Ensure infrastructure development both adjacent to and within the planning area has minimal impact on the scenic values.</p> <p><b>L1b.</b> In association with Powerlink Queensland promote the re-vegetation of stream banks beneath electricity transmission lines.</p>
<p>Generally streams in the BHCP are clear flowing; however water quality is affected by upstream land uses including run-off from pesticide and herbicide application.</p> <p>Feral animals rummaging along stream banks contributes to increased turbidity, thus affecting water quality.</p>	<b>L2.</b> Water quality is maintained to internationally recognised standards.	<p><b>L2a.</b> Implement strategies outlined under the <a href="#">Barron River Catchment Strategy</a>.</p> <p><b>L2b.</b> Improve stream condition through reducing feral animal populations.</p>

## 5.2. Animals and plants

Status and opportunities 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
<p><b>Animals</b></p> <p>Grazing cattle have previously impacted the BBCP and incursions occasionally still occur.</p> <p>The greatest threat to cultural and ecological integrity of the BBCP is predominately the spread of pigs (<i>Sus scrofa</i>) and cane toads (<i>Bufo marinus</i>).</p>	<p><b>A1.</b> The integrity of the natural ecosystem has recovered and feral species have been eliminated.</p>	<p><b>A1b.</b> Implement strategies outlined under the <a href="#">Threat Abatement Plan for Predation, Habitat Degradation, Competition and Disease Transmission by Feral Pigs</a> (DEH) as relevant to this area.</p> <p><b>A1c.</b> Prevent new pest incursions into the BHCP through complementing <a href="#">NRW</a> and <a href="#">WTMA</a> educational programs.</p> <p><b>A1d.</b> Ensure domestic animals are not permitted in the planning area.</p>
<p><b>Plants</b></p> <p>Infestations of pest plants generally occur along the power line, road verges and walking tracks and disrupt scenic amenity as well as the natural systems.</p>	<p><b>P1.</b> Introduced pests and weeds are controlled within the management area and no new infestations are evident.</p>	<p><b>P1a.</b> Develop a site specific <i>Pest Management Plan</i> in accordance with the <a href="#">QPWS Pest Management Plan, July 2003-2008</a> and other inter-agency acts and strategies such as <a href="#">Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002</a>.</p>
<p><b>Ecosystems</b></p> <p>Biological diversity is very high with a distinct wet/dry ecotone, which provides a number of notable <a href="#">Regional Ecosystems</a> (REs), including endangered ecosystems.</p> <p>Impacts on these ecosystems through wildfire and the spread of weeds also have the potential to influence threatened species populations.</p>	<p><b>P2.</b> Fire management practices are used to protect cultural values and maintain biological diversity. Fire sensitive habitats are protected.</p>	<p><b>P1b.</b> Implement the WTMA Conservation Strategy as relevant to this area.</p> <p><b>P2a.</b> Develop a <i>Fire Management Strategy or Fire Statement</i> that considers traditional fire management practices and maintains the ecological diversity of the area, especially in relation to threatened species.</p> <p><b>P2b.</b> Assist trustee Indigenous rangers with appropriate training and resources to manage fire/s.</p>

### 5.3. Indigenous culture

Bare Hill or, as it is known by the Traditional Owners, Bunda Bibandji, is a distinctive cultural landscape providing an important link to the history and use of the area by the Traditional Owners. The Traditional Owners are actively involved in planning processes and day-to-day management assisting in the preservation and protection of scar trees, historical walking pads (tracks), rock art and cultural stories.

Status and opportunities - 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
<p>Natural processes such as weathering, lichen growth and salt deposit have damaged and obscured the ochre rock images.</p> <p>The frequency and intensity of fire could be better understood especially to protect cultural values.</p> <p>Pest pigs and change in land management practices have also disturbed items such as scar trees.</p> <p>The physical and spiritual items associated with the BHCP are inadequately documented.</p> <p>The cultural, historical, social and economic significance of the area is well understood</p>	<p><b>1i.</b> Cultural values are protected and preserved in accordance with Traditional Owner customs and best practice management principles.</p>	<p><b>11a.</b> Assist Traditional Owners in undertaking cultural heritage values assessment, mapping and monitoring programs to develop and implement a <i>Site Conservation and Heritage Plan</i>.</p> <p><b>11b.</b> Develop protocols and procedures in collaboration with Traditional Owners that maintain the confidentiality and integrity of cultural places, material and information.</p> <p><b>11c.</b> Register places, artefacts and stories in accordance with Traditional Owner wishes and relevant legislation, and where possible list them on state and national heritage registers.</p> <p><b>11d.</b> In partnership with Traditional Owners develop a <i>Fire Management Plan</i> that protects areas of cultural significance as well as the natural integrity of the area.</p> <p><b>11e.</b> In partnership with Traditional Owners review management practices where evidence of on-going damage to places of cultural significance is identified.</p> <p><b>11f.</b> Maintain Indigenous cultural practices by restricting general community access from time to time.</p>



## 5.4. Non-Indigenous culture

Bare Hill also has a range of non-indigenous cultural heritage values. Tin and tungsten were mined chiefly around Tin Creek, though much of it was poor quality. ‘Old timers’ speak of mines and scrapings, including the search for gold. Although gold was not found in the BBMPA it was famed for the supply of ‘red gold’ — cedar (*Toona ciliata*); near the carpark entrance an old wagon wheel can still be seen. The area was also prized for cattle grazing. The Vievers family, long-term residents, held a grazing lease for over 100 years.

Status and opportunities - 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
The historical, significance of the area is not well documented.	<b>NI1</b> Important non-Indigenous values are identified, documented and protected.	<p><b>NI1a.</b> Non-Indigenous cultural values are identified, documented and presented in an appropriate manner.</p> <p><b>NI1b.</b> Preserve and protect historical items and where appropriate ensure they are listed on state and national heritage registers.</p> <p><b>NI1c.</b> Develop protocols to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of cultural places, material and information is maintained.</p>

## 5.5. Recreation, tourism, education and science

The area’s highly significant cultural and natural values provide a range of opportunities for presentation. Interpretive themes could include but are not limited to, the importance of rock art to Aboriginal cultures, specifically the Djabugay speaking people, past resource use such as cattle grazing, timber and mining, native biota and diverse biological communities. However, the presentation of the area and any proposed activities must not impact on the spiritual, cultural and natural values of the site.



Status and opportunities - 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
<p>Unmanaged access to the site such as the riding of motorbikes has caused erosion. This type of access also poses problems in regards to visitor safety, amenity and the protection of cultural values.</p>	<p><b>R1.</b> Access to the site is managed to ensure visitor safety and protection of the area's values.</p>	<p><b>R1a.</b> Bicycles, horses and vehicles are prohibited in the planning area except for vehicles used for management purposes.</p> <p><b>R1b.</b> Access along Bridle Creek Road complements the provisions of the BHCP enabling continued protection of the area's cultural and natural values.</p> <p><b>R1c.</b> Special events, group activities and commercial tours require a permit from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.</p>
<p>The boardwalk and other amenities may not support tourist demand during high seasons.</p> <p>There is also concern for visitor safety due to the large number of steps entering Gallery 1.</p>	<p><b>R2.</b> Infrastructure is developed to reflect a cultural theme and protect the site values.</p>	<p><b>R2a.</b> The BHCP is managed as a <a href="#">Landscape Classification Setting</a> of 4.</p> <p><b>R2b.</b> Carrying capacity must not to exceed 72 people per day with no more than 24 people at any one time on the conservation park.</p> <p><b>R2c.</b> Groups of more than 10 people must be broken into two separate groups, each with an interpretive guide.</p> <p><b>R2d.</b> Special events with a maximum capacity of 120 people at one time may occur four times a year.</p> <p><b>R2e.</b> All commercial operators must have support from Traditional Owners and the services of a traditional guide unless expressly agreed to by Traditional Owners in writing.</p> <p><b>R2f.</b> Review existing infrastructure and where necessary implement changes to ensure visitor safety and increased visitor demand standards are in place.</p> <p><b>R2g.</b> Rock imagery sites may only be photographed with permission from a Traditional Owner.</p> <p><b>R2h.</b> Rock-climbing, abseiling and other 'adventure' activities are not permitted.</p> <p><b>R2i.</b> Camping is not permitted on the conservation park.</p>

## 5.6. Education and science

Status and opportunities - 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
<p>Traditional Owners take school and other education groups on guided tours of this culturally important area.</p> <p>Rock art sites are rare in this area, particularly so close to Cairns.</p>	<p><b>E1.</b> Education and science research and monitoring programs are carried out in partnership with the Traditional Owners.</p>	<p><b>E1a.</b> Ensure the Traditional Owners approve any visitor information that may be provided on QPWS website.</p> <p><b>E1b.</b> Develop protocols to ensure the confidentiality, ownership, dissemination and integrity of cultural places, material and information.</p> <p><b>E1c.</b> Support traditional guides in developing appropriate guiding operations within the BHCP.</p> <p><b>E1d.</b> Assist the trustees in developing appropriate educational and interpretative programs.</p> <p><b>E1e.</b> Oral histories and cultural stories are presented both on and off site where culturally appropriate.</p> <p><b>E1f.</b> 'Ganodoran' is the only image permitted for use in interpretive materials and other documents including web-based materials.</p> <p><b>E1g.</b> Support the development of a monitoring program to gain a better understanding of impacts posed by threatening processes.</p> <p><b>E1h.</b> Develop protocols for data collection, information exchange and storage.</p> <p><b>E1i.</b> Develop protocols to provide endorsement from Traditional Owners for all scientific, biotechnology and educational permits.</p>

## 5.7. Community partnerships

Status and opportunities 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
<p>Limited opportunities are available for the involvement of Traditional Owners in natural resource and visitor management.</p>	<p><b>P1.</b> Traditional Owners are involved in planning processes and natural resource management practices.</p>	<p><b>P1a.</b> Investigate options for more formal partnership arrangements with Traditional Owners, including but not restricted to a joint trustee agreement.</p> <p><b>P1b.</b> Support Traditional Owners in gaining skills through the availability of relevant and accredited training programs.</p> <p><b>P1c.</b> Develop an <i>Infrastructure Maintenance Plan</i> for the area.</p> <p><b>P1d.</b> Provide opportunities for Traditional Owners to minimise potential impacts to Indigenous cultural values.</p> <p><b>P1e.</b> Ensure a collaborative approach is adopted to implement the strategies outlined under the Wet Tropics Regional Agreement.</p> <p><b>P1f.</b> Develop a <i>Cultural Practices Agreement</i> in association with QPWS to determine appropriate practices (taking of wildlife, fire), group size and location for indigenous cultural events.</p>
<p>Protected areas in Queensland are owned and managed by the State Government.</p>	<p><b>P2.</b> The Traditional Owners own and manage an ecologically sustainable tourism business on Bare Hill Conservation Park.</p>	<p><b>P2a.</b> A whole-of-government approach is used to support the Traditional Owners' interests in economic development and the transmission of traditional values.</p> <p><b>P2b.</b> Encourage the sharing of information between major stakeholders, thereby allowing a consistent approach to decision making in tourism/promotion ventures and day-to-day management obligations.</p>
<p>Information supplied by various stakeholders is not always accurate, such as old contact details for Traditional Owners.</p>	<p><b>P3.</b> Communication pathways with all stakeholders are appropriate and accurate.</p>	<p><b>P3a.</b> Assist Traditional Owners to develop and maintain relationships with other stakeholders.</p>

## 6. Other key issues and responses

Status and opportunities 2006	Desired outcomes 2016	Actions and guidelines
Historically the area has been used for the collection of tin, timber and honey. The collection of these resources however, has impacted on the integrity of the area's cultural and natural values.	<b>K1.</b> Resource use will be managed to uphold the integrity of the area.	<p><b>K1a.</b> Resources will be used in a sustainable way, including that allowed under traditional cultural practice.</p> <p><b>K1b.</b> Develop a memorandum of understanding for the sustainable take, use and keep of species for customary practices.</p> <p><b>K1b.</b> Grazing, horse riding and bee keeping are not permitted.</p> <p><b>K1c.</b> Fishing is not permitted.</p>

## 7. Acknowledgements

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service staff prepared this management statement. The involvement and support of organisations and the public who contributed to the statement, the respective Aboriginal people and Land Councils, and adjoining landholders who contributed information and general assistance, is acknowledged and appreciated.

## 8. Disclaimer

This management statement is not a statutory plan. It is a statement of policy which will be used as a basis for managing the Bare Hill (Bunda Bibandji) Conservation Park. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any actions taken by any other person on the basis of this document.

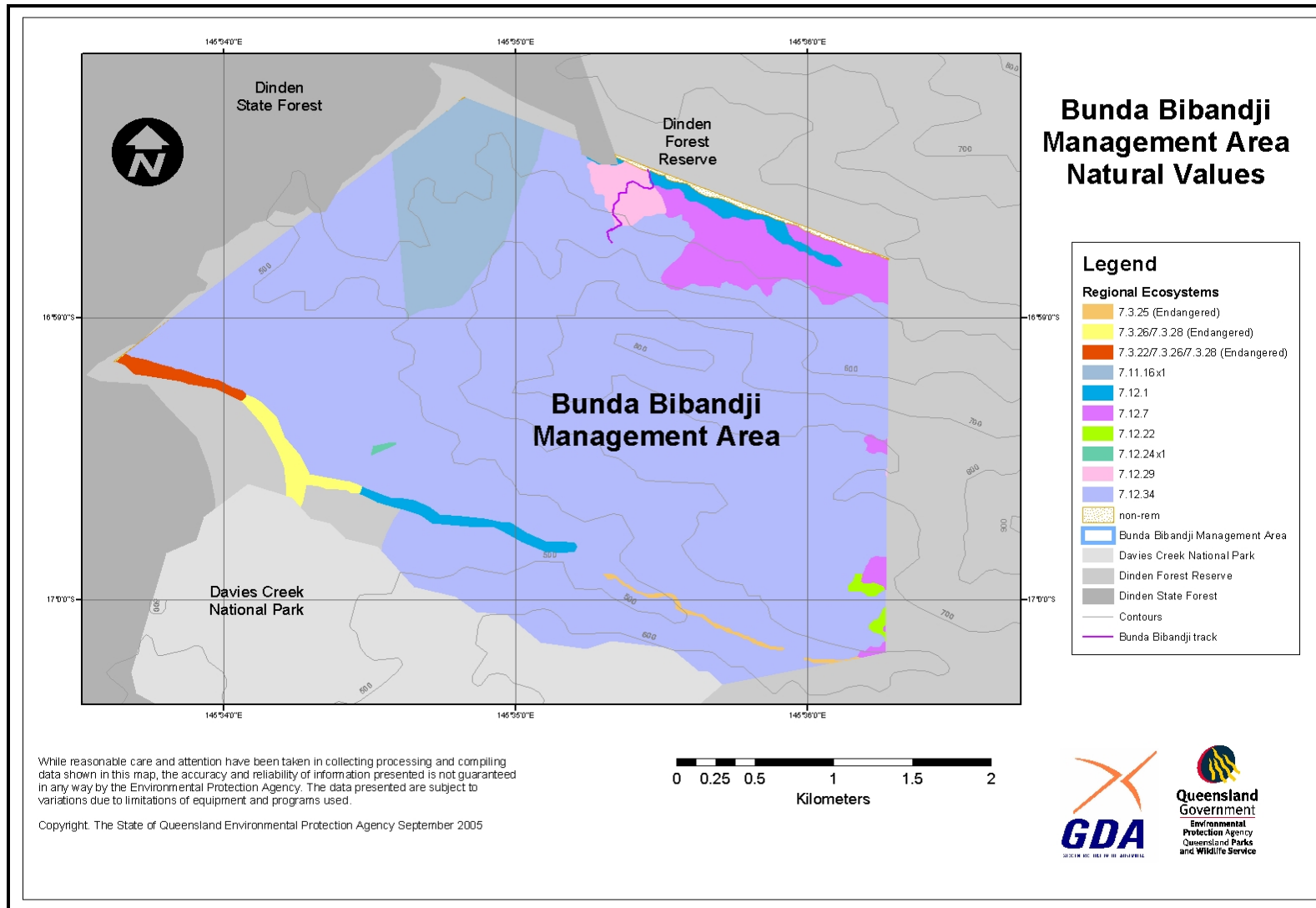
This statement does not intend to affect, diminish or extinguish native title and associated rights.

Note that implementation of some management strategies might need to be phased in according to availability of resources.

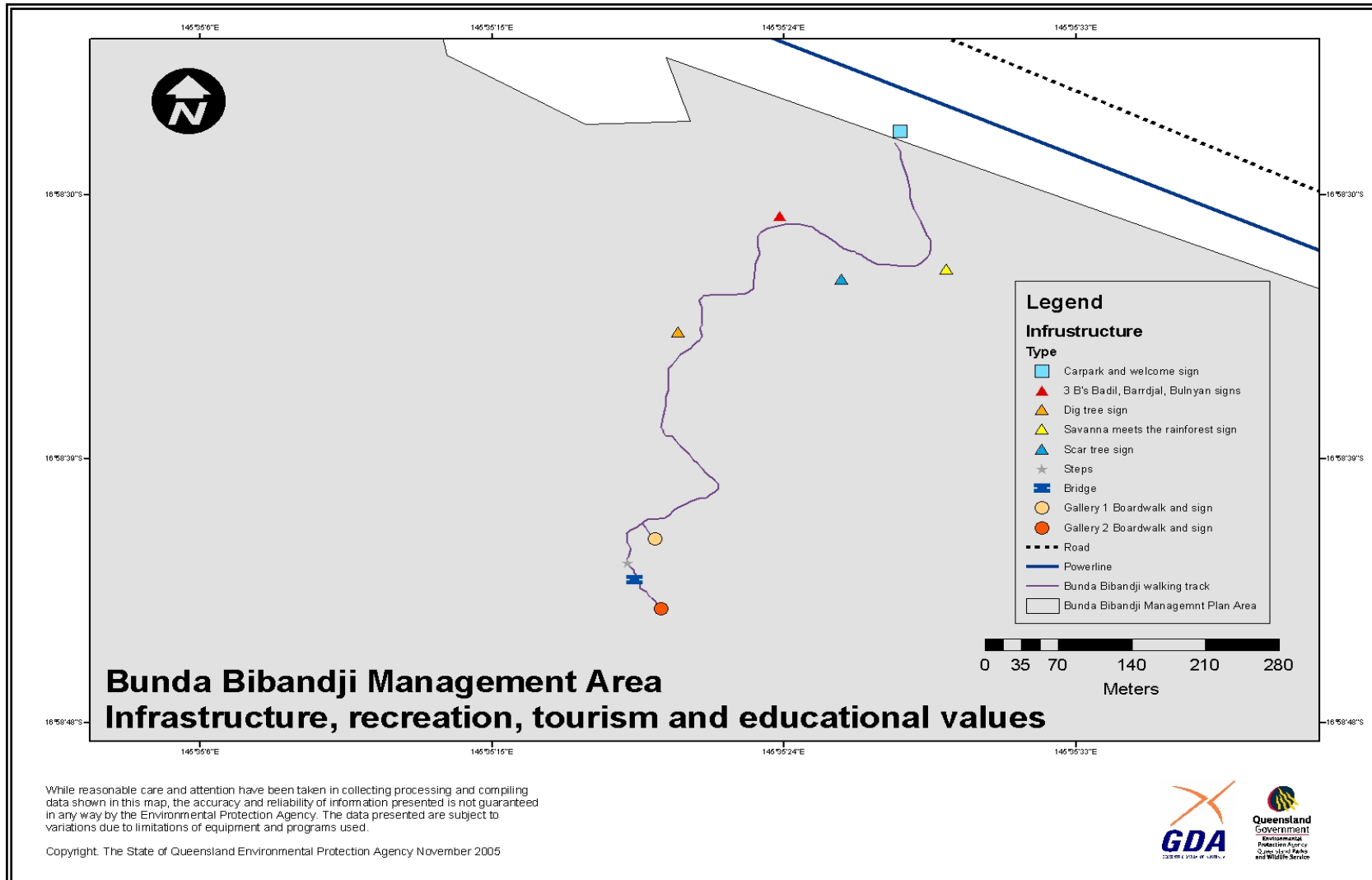
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## Appendix A – Map 2



# Appendix A – Map 3



## **Appendix B – Hyperlinks list**

### ***Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003***

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/A/AborCultHA03.pdf>

### **Barron River Catchment**

[http://www.barronriver.com.au/publications/BRICMA\\_Catchment\\_Management\\_Plan\\_2004.pdf](http://www.barronriver.com.au/publications/BRICMA_Catchment_Management_Plan_2004.pdf)

### **Cassowary**

[http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature\\_conservation/wildlife/threatened\\_plants\\_and\\_animals/endangered/cassowary/](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature_conservation/wildlife/threatened_plants_and_animals/endangered/cassowary/)

### ***Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999***

<http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/>

### ***Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002***

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/L/LandPrPSRMA02.pdf>

### **Landscape Classification Setting**

<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/publications?id=1027>

### **National Heritage List**

<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/national/index.html>

### **NRW (Department of Natural Resources and Water) pest management pages**

<http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/pests/index.html>

### ***Nature Conservation Act 1992***

[http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/about\\_the\\_epa/legislation/nature\\_conservation](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/about_the_epa/legislation/nature_conservation)

### **Northern bettong**

<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/publications?id=178>

### **Northern quoll**

[http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature\\_conservation/wildlife/threatened\\_plants\\_and\\_animals/endangered/queenslands\\_quolls/](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature_conservation/wildlife/threatened_plants_and_animals/endangered/queenslands_quolls/)

### **Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Pest Management Plan**

<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/publications?id=1364>



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**Regional Ecosystem (RE)**

[http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature\\_conservation/biodiversity/regional\\_ecosystems/](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature_conservation/biodiversity/regional_ecosystems/)

**Threat Abatement Plan for Predation, Habitat Degradation, Competition and Disease Transmission by Feral Pigs**

<http://www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/tap/pig/pubs/feral-pig-tap.pdf>

**Wet Tropics Regional Agreement**

[http://www.wettropics.gov.au/rah/rah\\_pdf/regional\\_agreement.pdf](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/rah/rah_pdf/regional_agreement.pdf)

**Wet Tropics Management Authority**

<http://www.wettropics.gov.au/>

**Wet Tropics World Heritage Area**

[http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/parks\\_and\\_forests/world\\_heritage\\_areas/wet\\_tropics/](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/parks_and_forests/world_heritage_areas/wet_tropics/)

**World Heritage Convention**

<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/worldheritage/convention.html>

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## Appendix C – Definitions

### Acronyms

BHCP	Bare Hill (Bunda Bibandji) Conservation Park
NRW	Department of Natural Resources and Water
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
RE(s)	Regional Ecosystem/s
WTMA	Wet Tropics Management Authority
WTWHA	Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

### Management principles for Conservation Parks

Under Section 20, *Nature Conservation Act 1992*: - A conservation park is to be managed to:

- (a) conserve and present the area's cultural and natural resources and their values;
- (b) provide for the permanent conservation of the area's natural condition to the greatest possible extent; and
- (c) ensure that any commercial use of the area's natural resources, including fishing and grazing, is ecologically sustainable.

### Precautionary Principle

Where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation. In the application of the precautionary principle, public and private decisions should be guided by:

- (a) careful evaluation to avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment; and
- (b) an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options.

*(Taken from section 3.5.1 of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment)*

### Landscape Classification Settings (LCS)

A setting is a term used to describe the character of a place, which takes into account its physical, social and managerial features. Setting on parks range from highly developed sites with high-volume numbers, signs, toilets and carparks to low-impact, remote locations. (EPA 2001). A *Landscape Classification Setting* is used to describe the natural, social and managerial characteristics of a site. Settings range from 1 (most natural) to 6 (on protected areas) and to 9 (most urbanised). See QPWS Operational Policy [Landscape Classification System for Visitor Management](#).