

# Holey Plains State Park

August 1998



## Management Plan

This 1998 plan was evaluated in 2009 and will continue to be implemented for a further five years.



This Management Plan for Holey Plains State Park is approved for implementation. Its purpose is to direct all aspects of management of the Park until the Plan is reviewed. A Draft Management Plan was published in August 1997. A total of 11 submissions were received. Copies of this Plan can be purchased from:

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## FOREWORD

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Holey Plains State Park is an important area for the conservation of native flora and fauna, and protects significant vegetation communities. This relatively small Park is floristically one of the most diverse parks in the State system.

Future developments in the Park will be sensitive, giving visitors a variety of recreational opportunities while still allowing the Park to remain in a relatively undeveloped state.

This Approved Plan provides for the protection of the Park's important natural and cultural features as well as ensuring a quality visitor experience.

I thank those individuals and organisations who made submissions on the Draft Plan and I look forward to the community's support for management of this important State Park.

**Marie Tehan MP  
Minister for Conservation  
and Land Management**

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## APPROVED MANAGEMENT PLAN

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This Approved Management Plan, prepared under section 17 of the *National Parks Act 1975* (Vic.), is approved for implementation.

The Plan provides the basis and direction for the future management of Holey Plains State Park. It was finalised following consideration of the 11 submissions received on the Draft Plan.

Rod Gowans  
**A/Director**  
**National Parks**

Mark Stone  
**Chief Executive**  
**Parks Victoria**

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## SUMMARY

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Holey Plains State Park contains one of the widest ranges of vegetation types in the Victorian parks system. The Park is also close to one of the State's major rural population centres, the LaTrobe Valley. These factors combine to present a Park with distinctive natural attributes to people in the region who will increasingly value the environment and experience it provides.

The Park will be managed as a high value protected area for conservation and recreation. Protecting and enhancing its floristic communities and improving knowledge through research will be major management goals.

Visitors will be able to enjoy a range of recreation opportunities in a largely undeveloped setting. The Park makes an important contribution to recreation in a region where much of this bushland has been converted to other uses.

Friends, neighbours and volunteer groups will be encouraged to participate in its care and management.

Significant management directions are summarised below.

- An ecologically based burning plan to maintain the vigour and diversity of Park ecosystems will be developed.
- There will be liaison with neighbouring land owners and community groups on park management, especially fire management.
- A co-operative pest animal management strategy concentrating on foxes and feral cats will be developed.
- Tertiary institutions and other educational groups will be encouraged to undertake research into and monitoring of park ecosystems.
- High quality information on the Park's natural values will be made available.
- A 'through Park' access route between the Princes Highway and South Gippsland Highway corridors will be promoted to encourage day visitor and tourist use of the Park.



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Location and planning area

Holey Plains State Park is an outstanding area of rich and diverse vegetation in Gippsland. It is about 190 km east of Melbourne and is south of Rosedale and Sale.

The management plan covers an area of 10 742 ha, which includes:

- the Holey Plains State Park (10 641 ha) including 25 ha added in 1997;
- proposed additions (101 ha) (section 7.2).

## 1.2 Regional context

Holey Plains State Park is close to the large regional centres of the LaTrobe Valley and to the city of Sale and reserves a significant area of eucalypt and banksia woodland in a region where much of this type of forest and woodland has been converted to other uses.

Other public land reserves are some distance from the Park, with the exception of Mullundung State Forest, to the south, which has a similar bushland environment.

Sale Common, to the east, allows visitors to experience wetland environments by means of boardwalks and viewing areas. Reserves in the foothills of the Dividing Range, such as Tyers Park and Glenmaggie Regional Park, are also bushland areas. The western extremity of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park contains ecosystems similar to Holey Plains State Park. Tarra-Bulga National Park lies within the Strzelecki Ranges to the south-west.

## 1.3 Significance of the Park

Holey Plains State Park makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks system, which aims to protect viable representative samples of the State's natural environments occurring on public land. Parks also provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy and appreciate natural and cultural values, and many make important contributions to tourism.

Holey Plains State Park is assigned the IUCN Category II (National Parks) of the United Nations' List of National Parks and Protected Areas. Category II areas are managed primarily for conservation and recreation.

Significant features are summarised below.

### Natural values

- Botanical values of National significance (Gullan 1982) including a number of significant species. Over 530 species are recorded for the Park (about one-fifth of the total number of species of Victorian native flora recorded in the State), making it one of the most floristically diverse parks in Victoria.
- A series of wetlands, one of regional geomorphological significance, located in swales between sand ridges, which also contain significant plant species such as Dwarf Kerrawang.
- High fauna values, with a total of 120 bird species, 18 mammal species and 16 species of reptiles and amphibians recorded, including several threatened species.

### Cultural values

- A number of Aboriginal sites including artefact scatters.
- Northern sections of the Park area formed part of the Holey Plains grazing run in the 1840s.

### Tourism and recreation values

- Spacious opportunities for pleasure driving, nature study, picnics, bush camping with few facilities, and horse riding, within easy reach of the main regional population centres of the LaTrobe Valley and Sale.
- Interesting wetlands such as Clear Water Lake and The Long Swamp.

## 1.4 Creation of the Park

Holey Plains was first reserved as a site for a State Park under the *Land Act 1958* (Vic.) in May 1977, following earlier recommendations by the Land Conservation Council (LCC 1972). It was reserved under the National Parks Act on 16 May 1978, as a result of the *National Parks (Amendment) Act 1978* (Vic.). More recent small additions include Clear Water Lake Water Reserve (126 ha) at the eastern end of the Park in 1986, an inlier of forested freehold land, 'Whites Block' (40 ha) in 1995, and parts of Crown Allotments 35 and 35A, Parish of Holey Plains (25 ha) in 1997.

## 1.5 Legislation and guidelines

Holey Plains State Park is reserved and managed under the provisions of the National Parks Act. The Act requires the Director to preserve and protect the natural condition of the Park and its natural and other features, and subject to this, to provide for the use of the Park by the public for enjoyment, recreation and education. The Act also provides for appropriate research.

Holey Plains State Park is managed in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines and LCC recommendations (LCC 1973), and with other plans and guidelines, including:

- Central Gippsland Region Fire Protection Plan (CNR 1990);
- Holey Plains State Park Fire Protection Plan (CFL 1987) (currently under review).

## 1.6 Park management aims

Section 4 (Objects) and Section 17 of the National Parks Act provide the main basis for management of the Park. The following management aims are derived from these sections of the Act and as such broadly govern all aspects of park management.

## Resource conservation

- Preserve and protect the natural environment.
- Allow natural environmental processes to continue with the minimum of interference.
- Maintain biodiversity.
- Conserve features of archaeological, historical and cultural significance.

## Park protection

- Protect wetland areas and water catchments.
- Protect human life, the Park and adjacent lands from injury by fire.
- Eradicate, or otherwise control, introduced plants, animals and diseases.

## The Park visit

- Provide opportunities for appropriate recreation and tourism.
- Promote and encourage an appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the Park's natural and cultural values and its recreational opportunities.
- Encourage appropriate park use and visitor behaviour and foster a conservation ethic in visitors and an understanding of minimal impact behaviour.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of visitors.

## Other

- Provide for and encourage scientific research, surveys and monitoring that will contribute to better understanding and management of the Park.
- Co-operate with local, State and interstate government authorities, the community and other interested organisations to assist in the management of the Park.

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## 2 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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### 2.1 Park vision

A future visitor to Holey Plains State Park finds a Park with diverse and vigorous native vegetation communities. The Park is noted for its high standard of ecological management and the successful use of fire as a major management tool.

Visitors from the urban areas of the LaTrobe Valley and Sale continue to enjoy the uncrowded natural settings of Holey Hill, Merriman Creek and Harrier Swamp picnic areas. Educational use by tertiary and secondary institutions is well established and associated research and monitoring programs which support ecological management in the Park are undertaken by these groups.

The wetlands within the Park are well protected following comprehensive studies.

The threat of fire to surrounding farmlands and plantations is reduced following the implementation of the ecological burning program within the Park. A route from Limestone Quarry Road to Stradbroke is well signposted and access through the Park is good.

### 2.2 Management directions

Major management directions for the Park are outlined below.

#### Resource conservation

- An ecological burning program to maintain the vigour and diversity of the Park ecosystems will be developed and implemented.
- Research, survey and monitoring that will refine ecological management of the Park will be encouraged.

#### Park protection

- Authorised uses will be monitored and managed to protect park values.
- Introduced plants, animals and diseases will be eradicated or otherwise controlled, in co-operation with surrounding landholders.

#### The Park visit

- An additional camping area will be established near Merriman Creek picnic area.
- Park access will be improved by better signposting, including the through-Park route from Rosedale to Stradbroke.

#### Community awareness and involvement

- Educational institutions will be encouraged to use the Park and to participate in relevant research and monitoring programs.
- Liaison with community groups and neighbouring landowners will be continued and their involvement in relevant aspects of planning and management, such as fire management, will be encouraged.

### 2.3 Zoning

A park management zoning scheme has been developed to:

- provide a geographic framework in which to manage the Park;
- indicate which management directions have priority in different parts of the Park;
- indicate the types and levels of use appropriate throughout the Park;
- assist in minimising existing and potential conflicts between uses and activities, or between those and the protection of park values;
- provide a basis for assessing the suitability of future activities and development proposals.

One principal management zone applies to the Park—Conservation and Recreation.

In addition, Special Management Areas –Public Utility – are used to summarise requirements additional to those of the underlying primary zone.

Table 1 specifies zone and overlay characteristics and their locations are shown in figure 1.

**TABLE 1 MANAGEMENT ZONE AND OVERLAY**

	ZONE	OVERLAY
	CONSERVATION AND RECREATION	SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA - PUBLIC UTILITY
AREA/LOCATION	10 742 ha (all of planning area).	60 ha (0.6% of planning area).
VALUES	Important natural values and scope for recreation activities.	Strips of cleared land carrying oil and gas pipelines (slashed every two years or so).
GENERAL MANAGEMENT AIM	Protect relatively sensitive natural environments and provide for sustainable dispersed recreation activities and small-scale recreation facilities without significant impact on natural processes.	Highlight areas or sites where special management provisions are needed to provide for a particular non-standard use or activity.

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## 3 RESOURCE CONSERVATION

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### 3.1 Geological and landform features

The main landform features in the Park are Miocene limestone outcrops, which occur at Holey Hill (218 m), and sandy ridges of moderate relief (150 m) with Pliocene gravels in the west grading into Pleistocene and Miocene sands in the east.

Sites of regional significance (Rosengren 1981) include:

- The Long Swamp—a site displaying internal drainage systems on coarse sand and fine gravel;
- Holey Hill and associated ridge line—displaying the complex geomorphology of ridge formation, including a section of exposed gravel face within the Seldom Seen gravel pit;
- Merriman Creek—displaying alluvial deposition.

The Park is underlain by brown coal in the east and peats occur in some sections. The coal deposits have a high sulphur content. They are not suitable for use because of problems with air pollution control, and are unlikely to be developed.

Soils are nutrient-poor sands or duplex soils with a sandy loam surface and a block structure B horizon. Some areas of limestone bedrock underlie a brown clay soil in parts.

#### Aims

- Protect features of geological and geomorphological interest.
- Minimise impacts by management and visitors on significant geological and landform features.

#### Management strategies

- *Preserve a section of Seldom Seen gravel pit face to display geomorphological processes for educational purposes.*
- *Encourage research into the geology and landforms of the Park.*

### 3.2 Wetlands

There are no permanent streams in the Park. Merriman Creek abuts sections of the southern boundary (about 4 km of frontage).

A total of 26 wetlands occur in swales between sand ridges where drainage is impeded. Apart from Clear Water Lake, which is a deep water body, these wetlands are mainly shallow and covered with reeds. There is little scientific data on the wetland areas and their natural values are not well understood. At least one threatened plant, Dwarf Kerrawang, is associated with the wetlands.

Drainage lines have water flows after heavy rains and culvert blockages sometimes occur on access roads. Construction of the South Gippsland Highway has modified drainage in that area of the Park.

The population crash of the Growling Grass Frog in May 1979 (Lobert & Gell 1984) may indicate water quality problems.

#### Aims

- Minimise adverse effects on water quality of wetlands or intermittent stream systems in the Park.
- Facilitate the natural flow of surface water.

#### Management strategies

- *Monitor water quality and drainage within the wetland systems of the Park, especially the sections near the South Gippsland Highway.*
- *Encourage vegetation surveys in wetlands, particularly searches for further occurrences of Dwarf Kerrawang.*

### 3.3 Vegetation

The Park has 534 recorded vascular plant species, which makes it one of the most floristically diverse parks in the State system. There are 29 different vegetation alliances (Parr-Smith 1978), some of which are localised

to the Park or at their limit of distribution statewide.

The Park is a site of national botanical significance (Gullan et al. 1984) because of the high quality stands of rare or restricted native vegetation communities, the high number of species and the presence of a number of threatened and/or undescribed species including Small Pepper-cress, Holey Plains Mint-bush, Swamp Everlasting and Dwarf Kerrawang (appendix I).

Other notable species include Prickly Cryptandra and Western Furze Hakea (appendix I).

A botanical survey was completed prior to the lower frequency fire regimes of the last decade (Parr-Smith 1978). This change of burning regime might be significant in some vegetation alliances. Wetland vegetation alliances are a significant feature in the Park. Section 4.1 considers ecological burning issues.

#### **Aims**

- Maintain the diversity of species and communities.
- Conserve and protect indigenous vegetation communities and their dynamic processes, particularly significant species and alliances or sub-communities.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Protect and maintain wetland vegetation alliances in the Park (section 3.2).*
- *Manage species listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic.) according to approved action statements.*
- *Develop and implement management plans for significant species that occupy environments of limited extent.*
- *Encourage flora surveys as part of the ecological burning monitoring process (section 4.1).*
- *Encourage scientific investigation relating to conservation of Park vegetation,*

*especially the role of fire and the effects of changes to fire regimes (section 4.1).*

- *Create a database, of appropriate resolution, to manage data collected on flora and fire.*
- *Maintain a mosaic of vegetation age classes in the Park.*

### **3.4 Fauna**

The Park's diverse vegetation communities are reflected by a corresponding diversity in faunal assemblages typical of the heath woodland environment in southern Victoria (Lobert & Gell 1984; Mansergh & Norris 1982). Totals of 120 bird species, 18 mammal species and 16 species of reptiles and amphibians have been recorded in the Park. Threatened and significant species are listed in appendix II.

The inventory of fauna developed for the Park is a sound basis for monitoring future management activities (section 4.1).

Two species listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act – White-bellied Sea-Eagle and Powerful Owl – have been recorded in the Park. A third listed species typical of near coastal heaths, New Holland Mouse, may also occur but has yet to be recorded.

Wetlands of the LaTrobe River and The Long Swamp in the Park are identified as a site of Regional Zoological Significance (Mansergh & Norris 1982).

No comprehensive amphibian survey has been undertaken in the Park.

Koalas are relatively plentiful in the Park and might be approaching levels that cause defoliation of some species of eucalypts; augmentation of the population with introductions from elsewhere is not desirable.

#### **Aims**

- Maintain the diversity of species and communities of fauna.
- Conserve and protect significant species.

### Management strategies

- *Create an electronic database to manage the fauna inventory.*
- *Continue the systematic approach to the fauna inventory. Encourage participation by volunteers, especially from educational institutions.*
- *Monitor fauna as part of the ecological burning program (section 4.1).*
- *Do not use the Park as a release site for koala relocation programs.*
- *Survey for the New Holland Mouse to determine if it occurs in the Park. Undertake appropriate management strategies if it is recorded.*
- *Develop and implement management plans for significant species (appendix II), such as the Long-nosed Bandicoot and Southern Emu-wren, that occupy environments of limited extent. Minimise predation by cats and foxes in these locations (section 4.2).*
- *Manage species listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act according to approved action statements.*
- *Survey and monitor frog populations in wetlands.*

### 3.5 Landscape

The Park is classified as having low to moderate scenic quality (Leonard & Hammond 1984).

Holey Hill and the associated ridge, the Merriman Creek environs, and some wetland areas such as Clear Water Lake, are the significant landscape features. Any land/water interface is visually attractive to Park visitors.

Viewing points are an important component in day visits particularly along scenic routes.

Visual intrusions from access tracks, and authorised and adjacent uses such as pipeline easements, fire access, fire break clearing and pine plantation activity, are a concern.

### Aims

- Protect and enhance landscape quality in the Park.
- Minimise visual impacts on the natural landscape, especially from major park access roads and viewing points.

### Management strategies

- *Assess major park access routes and viewing points for visual intrusions. Consider ways to reduce viewed landscape impacts.*
- *Rehabilitate or minimise visual intrusions where possible.*
- *Maintain views from Holey Hill lookout.*
- *Liaise with Park neighbours to minimise visual intrusion on adjacent land.*

### 3.6 Cultural heritage

The Park area was within the territory of the Brayakaulung clan of the Kurnai tribe.

There are a number of Aboriginal sites in the Park, including two sites near Holey Hill (artefact scatters).

All Aboriginal sites, places and objects are protected under the *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972* (Vic.) and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (Cwlth).

The appropriate Aboriginal community organisation for cultural heritage in the Park is the Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Housing Co-operative Ltd.

An application for a native title determination has been lodged with the Native Title Tribunal, covering, among other areas, Holey Plains State Park.

The northern precincts of the Park area formed part of the Holey Plains grazing run in the 1840s. The map descriptions of that era show heathy scrub or heathy ranges for the Park area.

Clear Water Lake and other water reserves were gazetted in the 1900s at the request of local graziers for stock watering purposes.

Graziers frequently burnt the Park area to promote grass for sheep and cattle.

Bush grazing continued and minor timber cutting occurred until the 1960s, when large sections of the Holey Plains bushland were converted to pine plantations or agricultural land. The Park is now a remnant of what was once an extensive area of native vegetation.

There are no known significant sites of European origin in the Park.

**Aim**

- Identify and protect archaeological and historic sites of significance.

**Management strategies**

- *Investigate and document Aboriginal history and identify, protect and manage Aboriginal sites in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines in consultation with the Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Housing Co-operative Ltd and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.*
- *Encourage archaeological surveys within the Park and protect sites as appropriate.*

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## 4 PARK PROTECTION

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### 4.1 Fire management

The National Parks Act requires the Director of National Parks to ensure that appropriate and sufficient measures are taken to protect parks from injury by fire.

An ecological burning program will assist in reducing any broad acre fuel build-up in the Park. The ability to control wildfires during the fire danger periods will be assisted once the fuel levels are broken up by mosaics of burnt areas within larger blocks.

The Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995) sets out the framework for integrated management of fire on public land. The Code establishes appropriate reactions to wildfire and describes use of prescribed burning for fuel reduction and ecological purposes.

There is no program of prescribed burning for ecological purposes, but about 25% of the Park area has been burnt to reduce fuel during the last decade, particularly the fuel-reduced corridors (between pipeline easements for example) and near boundaries.

Current fire protection measures are in accordance with the Central Gippsland Region Fire Protection Plan (CNR 1990) and the Holey Plains State Park Fire Protection Plan (CFL 1987). These plans combine fire prevention and suppression measures to protect life, property and assets.

The Park accumulates elevated fine fuels and has low tree canopy levels. Wildfires can burn fiercely at any time of the year, depending on seasonal conditions.

Threats and ignition sources include lightning, deliberate lighting and escapes from prescribed burns. No major wildfire has occurred within the Park since 1987.

Road and track access to all areas of the Park is generally good.

The Park is surrounded by pine plantations and farmland. Australian Paper Plantations Pty Ltd (APP) and Country Fire Authority (CFA) brigades are key elements in fire suppression

effort and attend most fires in or near the Park. They have also provided assistance with the fuel reduction burning program.

Fires and wildfire suppression activities can compromise other park values such as landscape, threatened species, or sensitive wetland areas. However, current fire ecology research indicates that fire is also a key environmental component in the growth and evolution of lowland dry forests, their understorey and their associated fauna. To maintain or re-establish their vitality, most of the vegetation communities in the Park need a suitable fire regime. For example, some ecosystems, such as wetlands, may require long periods free of fire. Others, such as heathland, require more frequent burning.

There are adequate records of areas burnt either by wildfire or prescribed burning for the past 30 years. The distribution of present vegetation age classes can be reasonably well determined and integrated with vegetation classification data. Applied research can be used to determine frequency, timing and intensity of burning required for each vegetation type.

There is a need to examine the life history attributes of a range of flora and fauna species to determine the appropriate fire regime.

#### Aims

- Integrate ecological burning with fire protection objectives.
- Protect human life, property and park values from injury by fire.
- Minimise the adverse effects of fires and fire suppression methods.
- Prevent unplanned fire from human sources.
- Prevent fires originating in the Park from threatening neighbouring properties.

#### Management strategies

- *Review the Park's fire protection plan incorporating an ecological burning program.*

- *Prepare and implement an ecological burning program for the Park using relevant applied fire research, for example the Heathland Management Strategy (CNR 1993), to maintain the vigour and diversity of Park vegetation. The burning program should consider:*
  - *the optimal frequency, timing and intensity of burning for each vegetation type determined in consultation with NRE fire research staff and other experts;*
  - *the need to burn a proportion of each vegetation type each year (some years will not be suitable) to ensure both a mosaic of age classes and total coverage of that vegetation type subject to the overlay of the recommended frequency and the issue of ‘randomness’ discussed below;*
  - *natural control lines—planned burning should take advantage of natural fire breaks and the existing network of tracks and trails;*
  - *randomness—an element of randomness should overlie the burning program when choosing which area to burn (Commonwealth of Australia 1996). The random element should be introduced after discrete management areas have been defined and an optimal frequency determined. The optimal frequency determined for each vegetation type should be only the average frequency for burning that vegetation type in the Park. Burning every site at a set frequency is likely to have negative effects on the diversity of the vegetation type and consequently the diversity of fauna. Using a randomness overlay might result in some areas not being burnt at all.*
- *Monitor the effect of fire on each vegetation type, and on environmental weed species like Austral Bracken and Burgan (section 4.2) and incorporate the results in fire management planning.*
- *Undertake pre-suppression measures including prescribed burning in accordance with the Central Gippsland Fire Protection Plan and the Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995).*
- *Continue liaison with APP, CFA and NRE about fire prevention and suppression issues.*
- *Maintain the present track system for fire access purposes (including management vehicles only (MVO) tracks) and improve signage of tracks for fire suppression purposes.*
- *Monitor the effects of large or significant fires on flora and fauna, erosion, stream sedimentation and spread of environmental weeds and pests.*
- *Rehabilitate fire control lines, helipads and other disturbances resulting from fire suppression activities as soon as possible after fire incidents.*
- *Publicise and enforce fire regulations and restrictions on the use of fire (section 5.2.2), and interpret the role of fire within the Park.*
- *Give preference to using the following suppression methods when practicable and incorporate into the fire protection plan:*
  - *use of hand tools and aerial suppression;*
  - *use of existing roads and tracks as control lines;*
  - *backburning.*

## **4.2 Pest plants and animals, and diseases**

The level of pest plants in the Park is relatively low. Ragwort, the only noxious weed with the potential to spread through the Park, has infested several sites in the Park, particularly along Merriman Creek. A pulling and limited spraying program has had some success. Blackberry, another proclaimed noxious weed, is also present in the Park.

Radiata Pine wildings are growing in the Park from seeds originating in nearby plantations. An increased use of fire as part of vegetation management may help control pine wildings.

Burgan and Austral Bracken, although indigenous, have encroached in some sections of the Park, probably induced by favourable fire regimes and fire disturbance.

Exotic plants typical of agricultural land occur on boundaries of the Park and also along some tracks used for horse riding.

The West Gippsland Regional Catchment and Land Protection Board is currently reviewing the status of proclaimed noxious weeds in the region. Outcomes of this review may influence the emphasis placed on controlling some species of weeds.

Introduced animals include rabbit, fox, cat, House Mouse, Black Rat, starling, sparrow, Blackbird and Common Mynah. Co-operative fox control programs on park perimeters, under the Good Neighbour Program, have met with some success.

Cinnamon Fungus was suspected to be causing dieback of banksias and grass-tree species in the Park (Parr-Smith 1978) but all tests proved negative. No signs of dieback have been recorded in the Park recently.

The use of the road network within the Park, especially by heavy vehicles, may increase the risk of introduction and spread of plant disease and weeds into the Park.

#### **Aims**

- Monitor, control, and where possible eradicate, pest plants and animals in the Park.
- Co-operate with adjoining landowners in control of invasive pest plants and animals.
- Prevent the introduction of exotic pest plants, animals and diseases into the Park.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Develop a pest animal control plan for the Park, concentrating on foxes and cats.*
- *Undertake fox poisoning in the known habitats of significant fauna species such as Long-nosed Bandicoot, and monitor the results.*
- *Assess and control the impact of invasive environmental weeds.*

- *Control the spread of non-indigenous flora in the Park, concentrating efforts along Park boundaries and tracks.*
- *Minimise the effect of control measures for pests on indigenous flora and fauna by using appropriate techniques such as low-pressure sprays and buried baits.*
- *Ensure that horse riding groups comply with the Park's guideline on seed-free horse feed when using the Park (section 5.2.4).*
- *Co-operate with adjoining landowners in control programs for foxes and Ragwort.*
- *Conduct tests for the presence of Cinnamon Fungus where dieback occurs, in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*
- *Establish a program to remove pine wildings from the Park, in co-operation with Australian Paper Plantations Pty Ltd (section 6.2 and 7.2), and monitor the effects of fire on pine wildings and subsequent regeneration.*
- *Liaise with West Gippsland Catchment and Land Protection Board.*

### **4.3 Soil conservation**

The soils of the Park are poorly structured sands which can be prone to erosion if disturbed. As soil drainage is high, water erosion is infrequent.

Recolonisation by native vegetation is usually rapid except on white leached sands. The Park is generally well vegetated, but there is some erosion on track edges and some firebreaks.

#### **Aim**

- Minimise erosion from tracks and from management and visitor activities.

#### **Management strategy**

- *Maintain tracks at appropriate standards (table 4) to prevent water erosion during heavy rainfall.*

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## 5 THE PARK VISIT

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### 5.1 The Park visitor

Holey Plains State Park offers visitors a variety of recreational opportunities including sightseeing, picnicking, pleasure driving, horse riding, cycling, nature study and camping in an easily accessed setting.

The Park receives approximately 7000 visits annually.

The Park is essentially a point destination accessed from the west because of the lack of well defined 'through' access routes, especially through the neighbouring pine plantations.

Clear Water Lake is a popular destination because of the scenic water body and the opportunity for fishing and picnicking.

Increased visitor use will depend to some degree on regional population pressures. Current regional growth for the Gippsland Statistical Division is 0.3% per annum.

Holey Plains State Park is part of the Phillip Island and Gippsland Discovery product region. A tourism development plan is currently being prepared for this area.

#### Providing for the visitor

Future management will encourage visits by providing and maintaining high quality facilities at picnic and camping areas, and maintaining semi-remote opportunities in a largely undeveloped Park.

The promotion of minimal impact techniques, codes of conduct and safe practices will ensure the long-term sustainability of recreational use of the Park, and enhance appreciation and visitor enjoyment.

#### Aim

- Provide for visitors in accordance with the above overview of future management for visitors.

#### Management strategies

- *Permit recreational activities in accordance with table 2.*

- *Provide and maintain facilities and services which highlight, but are in keeping with, the area's distinctive character (section 5.2 and table 3).*
- *Apply current market survey findings on visitor profiles, patterns of behaviour, expectations and preferences to assist in park management.*
- *Establish a program to determine appropriate levels of recreational activity consistent with protecting visitor experiences and park values.*
- *Encourage all visitors to adopt minimal impact techniques and to adhere to codes of conduct appropriate to their activity.*
- *Monitor visitor numbers and use to ensure adequate provision of facilities consistent with appropriate types and levels of use.*

### 5.2 Visitor recreation facilities and activities

#### 5.2.1 Vehicle access

A visitor typically enters the Park via the sealed Limestone Quarry Road from Rosedale and drives along the main ridge to Holey Hill, where expansive views combine with a pleasant picnic area and a walking track to The Long Swamp. A scenic drive from Limestone Quarry Road also leads to Harrier Swamp picnic area and rejoins Limestone Quarry Road further east. A third route leads to a picnic area on the banks of Merriman Creek in the southern part of the Park. Most visitors use these three routes, but there are over 15 points of access altogether.

The extensive track networks offer opportunities to explore the Park (figure 2). Some tracks are narrow, winding and sandy with adverse grades. A number are unsignposted and lead into pine plantation areas outside the Park boundary. APP has assisted with track maintenance.

**TABLE 2 SUMMARY OF RECREATION ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	OVERLAY
	CONSERVATION AND RECREATION	SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA – PUBLIC UTILITY
Picnicking	YES	YES
Camping (designated areas)	YC (section 5.2.3)	N/A
Walking	YES	YES
Bicycle riding	YC (section 5.2.7)	YC (section 5.2.7)
Horse riding	YC (section 5.2.4)	YC (section 5.2.7)
Orienteering/Rogaining	YES	YES
Firewood collection*	YC (section 5.2.2)	NO
Hunting	NO	NO
Pleasure driving	YC (section 5.2.1)	YC (section 5.2.1)
Trail bike riding	YC (section 5.2.1)	YC (section 5.2.1)
Dogs	NO	NO
Nature study	YES	YES
Fishing	YES	N/A

YES    Appropriate  
 NO     Not appropriate  
 YC     Conditional (refer to relevant section for details)  
 N/A    Not applicable  
 \*      For campfires only

**TABLE 3 EXISTING AND PROPOSED RECREATION FACILITIES**

SITE	CAMP SITES	TOILETS	PICNIC TABLES	FIRE PLACES	DRINKING WATER	CAR PARK	INFORMATION
Holey Hill	E	E	E	E	NA	E	E
Harrier Swamp	E	E	E	E	NA	E	NA
Merriman Creek	P	P	E	E	NA	E	NA
Clear Water Lake	NA	E	E	E	NA	E	NA

E    Existing  
 NA   Not available  
 P    Proposed

A well defined ‘through Park’ access route would encourage more park use, especially by itinerant tourists and local visitors from the Sale area.

The Limestone Quarry Road was constructed to a high standard and sealed to accommodate the need to transport lime from the Limestone Quarry to Traralgon.

This road is also used by heavy vehicles carting gravel from the Seldom Seen gravel pit. APP cart timber from neighbouring plantations and timber from south of Stradbroke via Taylors Lane and Limestone Quarry Road westwards (about 1000 loads per year) and other heavy traffic is from gravel cartage. Neither of these activities derives from the Park but the road is a major thoroughfare through the Park for heavy vehicles. Chessum Road is the major transport route to the east. Maintenance of Chessum Road (a Shire road) is normally a joint APP/Shire activity.

#### **Aims**

- Provide an appropriate track network for visitor and fire protection purposes.
- Improve the ease of driving navigation within the Park.
- Minimise the effect of heavy vehicle traffic on park values.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Manage and permit use of roads and tracks in accordance with table 4 and figure 2.*
- *Provide a ‘through Park’ access route by upgrading signposting of the section of Park road from Limestone Quarry Road via Merriman Creek to Taylors Lane and Stradbroke (figure 2).*
- *Liaise with VicRoads and local tourism groups to provide additional signs at Stradbroke on the South Gippsland Highway, at Taylors Lane on the Gormandale Road and in and near Rosedale (figure 2).*
- *Improve signposting of the visitor track system in accordance with signs manual.*

- *Liaise with APP to restrict public access within plantation areas to agreed defined routes only.*
- *Revegetate closed tracks within the Park (table 4).*
- *Allow heavy vehicles to use only Limestone Quarry Road, Chessum Road or Swamp Track.*
- *Install signs where appropriate to warn Park visitors about heavy vehicles on park roads.*
- *Liaise with the Shire of Wellington regarding maintenance of its roads in the Park, and encourage the improvement of Chessum Road.*

#### **5.2.2 Day visits**

Most visitors are involved in pleasure driving, sightseeing, picnicking and walking.

Facilities for day visitors are quite adequate, apart from the need for a toilet at the Merriman Creek picnic area.

Short, constructed walking tracks near picnic facilities provide additional opportunities for day visitors.

In the past no fires were permitted even within fireplaces during the declared fire danger period. This was considered unnecessarily restrictive.

#### **Aim**

- Maintain existing picnic areas to enhance visitor experiences.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Provide a toilet at Merriman Creek picnic area.*
- *Develop and maintain walking tracks in accordance with table 5.*

**TABLE 4 MANAGEMENT OF VEHICLE ROADS AND TRACKS**

ROAD OR TRACK NAME	CLASS	COMMENTS/USES	STATUS		MANAGEMENT ACTION OR/RATIONALE
			CURRENT	PROPOSED	
Limestone Quarry Road	1	Wellington Shire road	O	N/A	Not applicable
Taylor's Lane	2	Wellington Shire road	O	N/A	Not applicable
Chessum Road	2	Wellington Shire road	O	N/A	Not applicable
Long Ridge Track	2	Access to Harriers Swamp Picnic/Camp Area	O	O	Unchanged
Holey Hill Track	2	Access to Holey Hill Picnic and Camp Area	O	O	Unchanged
Goanna Track	3	Recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Crooke Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Wildflower Track	2	Scenic Drive	O	O	Unchanged
Box Track	3	Recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Sandy Track	3	Alternative access via Jacks Track	O	C	Close and revegetate
Grass Tree Track	3	Alternative access via Sth Boundary Track	O	C	Close and revegetate
South Boundary Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Jacks Track	3	Access to Merriman Picnic Area	O	O	Unchanged
Merriman Track	3	Access to Merriman Picnic Area	O	O	Unchanged. Prohibit horses
Mowat Track	3	Link to Limestone Quarry Road	O	O	Unchanged
Swamp Track	2	Fire management and APP access	O	O	Unchanged.
Forester Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Coolungoolun Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Long View Track	3	Alternative access - Coolungoolun Track	O	C	Close and revegetate
Jackson Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
Birmingham Track	3	Alternative access - Honeysuckle Hill Road	O	MVO	Used for fire management. Prohibit horses
East Boundary Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged.
Emu Track	3	Alternative access - boundary tracks	O	C	Close and revegetate

Table 4 (cont.)

ROAD OR TRACK NAME	CLASS	COMMENTS/USES	STATUS		MANAGEMENT ACTION OR/RATIONALE
			CURRENT	PROPOSED	
Grevillea Track	3	Alternative access via Kelly Road or APP track	O	C	Close and revegetate
West Boundary Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Kelly Road	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
Wattle Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
Seldom Seen Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Plantation Track	3	Recreation and APP access	O	O	Unchanged.
Honeysuckle Hill Road	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Red Hill Track	3	Alternative access - Spring / White Tracks	O	C	Close and revegetate
White Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
Spring Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
Stringy Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
Telephone Track	3	Alternative access - Stringy Track	O	C	Close and revegetate
Hackett Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
North Boundary Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Pines Track	3	Fire management and recreation	O	O	Unchanged
Pipeline Track	3	Fire management	O	O	Unchanged
Fred Track	3	Fire management and apiary access	O	O	Unchanged

## Class:

- 1 - All weather 2WD road
- 2 - Single lane road suitable for 2WD vehicles in dry weather
- 3 - Single lane road suitable for 2WD vehicles for most of year, some sections steep/sandy

## Status:

- O - Open to public vehicles
- MVO - Management access only
- C - Close and allow to revegetate

**TABLE 5 MANAGEMENT OF WALKING TRACKS**

TRACK NAME	CLASS	COMMENTS
Harrier Swamp Walking Track	B	
Banksia Forest Walking Track	B	Upgrade to self-guided nature walk.
Long Swamp Walking Track	C	
Musk Duck Walking Track	B	
Walkway at Merriman Creek	D	Upgrade to B class walkway from the picnic area to the edge of the creek.

Class:

- B well defined track benched and drained but rougher and steeper than Class A tracks  
 C track, defined through use, which may be benched, drained and cleared in sections  
 D track defined through use but having no basic construction

- *Monitor visitor use of picnic areas, especially the interaction between visitor uses such as horse riding or orienteering and passive picnic activities.*
- *Allow wood fires only in fireplaces provided (except on days of Total Fire Ban).*
- *Encourage the use of portable non-solid fuel stoves.*
- *Permit firewood collection within 500 m of Holey Hill, Harrier Swamp, Merriman Creek and Clear Water Lake picnic areas, for use only in fireplaces provided.*

### 5.2.3 Camping

Camping with low-key facilities is available at Holey Hill and Harrier Swamp. Wood fires are permitted only in fireplaces provided and campers are encouraged to use portable non-solid fuel stores (section 5.2.2). A campsite area near the Merriman Creek picnic area would provide an alternative environment with a streamside focus.

Untracked sections of the Park, within a days walk of the existing and proposed camping areas, have a remote feel and appeal to visitors seeking solitude.

Non-vehicle based dispersed camping is not permitted to protect the Park's significant natural values.

### Aim

- Provide opportunities for camping consistent with park conservation objectives.

### Management strategies

- *Maintain the existing quality and level of camping facilities at Holey Hill and Harrier Swamp.*
- *Provide a new camping area adjacent to Merriman Creek picnic area (within suitable distance of the new toilet).*

### 5.2.4 Horse riding

The Park is popular for horse riding by individuals and groups, attracted by gentle terrain and network of tracks found within the Park.

Horse riding has the potential to spread weeds, impact on the Park's high value vegetation and cause track erosion and conflicts with other park users, especially at popular recreation sites.

### Aim

- Provide opportunities for horse riding in the Park while minimising the impact on park values and conflict with other users.

### Management strategies

- *Permit horse riding on all tracks open to public vehicles, other than Merriman Track. Do not permit horses off track or on walking or management vehicle only tracks.*
- *Allow horses in defined tethering areas but exclude from the defined day visitor and camping areas at Holey Hill, Harrier Swamp and Clear Water Lake. Allow horses to be tethered only at the hitching rails provided.*
- *Install hitching rails and signs at Holey Hill, Harrier Swamp and Clear Water Lake visitor areas.*
- *Encourage horse riders to remove horse manure from the vicinity of the day visitor and camping areas.*
- *Allow horse riding in groups of more than 10 horses by permit only.*
- *Monitor levels of use and impacts of horse riding on park values and visitors and take appropriate action.*
- *Liaise with local horse riding clubs as required.*

#### 5.2.5 Fishing

Clear Water Lake is a popular destination which offers opportunities for fishing. The only means of providing reasonable fishing success has been by re-stocking the Lake, which was generally with trout. Stocking with introduced species is inconsistent with the National Parks Act. Fisheries Victoria priorities in relation to stocking are to sustain viable stream populations elsewhere within the State. Trampling and shoreline degradation in the search for bait has also been a problem at the Lake's edge.

#### Aim

- Continue to permit fishing in Clear Water Lake consistent with protecting the values of the Park.

### Management strategies

- *Monitor impacts of fishing on the Lake environment.*
- *Do not restock Clear Water Lake with introduced fish species.*

#### 5.2.6 Dogs

Dogs have never been permitted in the Park. Native fauna is at risk from predation by domestic dogs and may be frightened away from an area by dog scent or noise. Dogs can also cause inconvenience and annoy other Park users.

#### Aim

- Protect fauna from disturbance by dogs.

#### Management strategy

- *Continue to prohibit dogs in the Park.*

#### 5.2.7 Cycling

The number of cyclists using the Park is low. Touring by mountain bike is increasing in popularity, and the Park vehicle track network offers an alternative way of experiencing the values of the Park.

#### Aim

- Provide appropriate access for cyclists.

#### Management strategies

- *Permit use of bicycles on all public vehicle roads and tracks.*
- *Do not allow cycling on walking tracks or management vehicle only tracks.*

### 5.3 Visitor information, interpretation and education

Information and interpretative services, and environmental education, help visitors to use the Park better, minimise their impacts on Park resources, reduce management problems and increase understanding of the Park's environment and the need for management strategies such as ecological burning.

The Park offers opportunities to interpret themes related to natural environments, especially flora and fauna, and the interaction of fire with these values (section 4.1).

Information is supplied by an A4 brochure, available in brochure boxes at the main Park entrance, Holey Hill picnic area and local Parks Victoria offices.

The floristic diversity of the Park, combined with scope for further study of flora and fauna and fire related ecology, presents excellent opportunities for tertiary or other educational institutions to use the Park for education while making a significant contribution to park management.

There is also scope to encourage greater use of the Park by local schools as an educational resource.

#### **Aims**

- Increase public awareness of the natural and cultural values of the Park.
- Orientate visitors to the Park and its features.
- Enhance visitors' enjoyment and understanding of the Park's natural and cultural values.
- Foster nature study and research in the Park that will service educational and ecological management objectives.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Provide adequate visitor orientation information and safety messages at key visitor nodes.*
- *Continue to provide an A4 brochure with map at present locations.*
- *Regularly evaluate information and interpretative programs related to the Park.*
- *Improve signposting within the Park.*
- *Establish and implement monitoring and maintenance schedules for all interpretative facilities.*

- *Upgrade Banksia Forest Walking Track (at Holey Hill) to a self-guided nature walk (table 5).*
- *Encourage relevant institutions to use the Park as a teaching facility and to conduct research and monitoring programs, particularly in relation to ecological management of the Park (section 4.1).*
- *Encourage use of the Park for nature study by local schools.*

### **5.4 Commercial tourism operations**

The Park is an excellent venue for organised events and some commercial recreation activities.

Present use of the Park for commercial tourism is low.

There is potential for nature-based commercial activities (e.g. bird watching) as part of a regional package.

#### **Aim**

- Allow appropriate commercial tourism activities in the Park.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Encourage commercial operators to offer nature-based tourism activities.*
- *Encourage commercial tourism operators to understand, and assist in the protection of, park values.*
- *Ensure that commercial operators are licensed in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines and provide high quality services consistent with park management objectives.*

### **5.5 Public safety**

Although there are no major physical safety hazards in the Park, outdoor recreation activities pose inherent dangers, particularly in summer when wildfire may be a threat to Park visitors. Although the topography is undulating

and access is good, vehicle accidents have occurred on narrow and winding sandy tracks.

**Aim**

- Promote public safety in the use of the Park.

**Management strategies**

- *Encourage visitors to seek information on any activities they intend to undertake in the Park.*
- *Ensure that staff are adequately trained in emergency techniques and are available to assist in fire emergency situations.*
- *Maintain liaison with Victoria Police and State Emergency Service units in the area.*

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## 6 COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT

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### 6.1 Friends and volunteers

Several groups have undertaken volunteer work in the Park. Biological survey groups such as the Monash Ornithology Club, Monash Biology Society, Mammal Survey Group, LaTrobe Field Naturalists, Victorian Field Naturalists and Victoria Frog Group Inc. have assisted with survey and inventory of the flora and fauna of the Park. This survey work has been a crucial element in conservation management of the Park.

There is no current Friends group for the Park.

#### Aim

- Encourage volunteer involvement in the Park and the establishment of a Friends group.

#### Management strategies

- *Encourage the formation of, and support, a Friends group for the Park.*
- *Develop and evaluate a long-term volunteer strategy which incorporates the skills and interests of volunteer groups in park management activities, especially those related to flora and fauna management.*
- *Investigate measures to encourage research and survey activity, such as yearly school scholarships or organised Park nature activities.*

### 6.2 Community awareness and Park neighbours

Neighbours to the Park include Australian Paper Plantations and freehold grazing properties. Interest in the Park relates to the management of fire, pest plants and animals, and access standards.

Co-ordination of pest plant and animal control programs with Park neighbours is essential to the success of such programs.

There is little local use of the Park for recreation by neighbours (except for horse riding).

#### Aims

- Increase public awareness of management activities especially those relating to use of fire, and pest plant and animal control.
- Encourage conservation of natural values and sound land management practices on private land adjoining the Park.

#### Management strategies

- *Continue to liaise with local community groups and landholders, and involve them in relevant aspects of planning and management of the Park.*
- *Establish formal liaison between Park staff and Australian Paper Plantations staff to improve management of road access and fire management activities.*
- *Apply, and encourage the application of, the Good Neighbour Policy to management of Park boundary issues.*
- *Encourage an integrated pest plant and animal control program with Park neighbours (section 4.2).*
- *Encourage adjacent land owners to adopt conservation principles through programs such as Landcare and Land for Wildlife.*

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## 7 OTHER ISSUES

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### 7.1 Authorised uses

#### 7.1.1 Apiculture

In accordance with LCC recommendations, apiculture is permitted in the Park. A maximum of eight apiary sites can be used at any one time but only five sites have ever been defined and used (figure 1). There are up to 12 apiary sites on private land close to the Park boundary that also compete for the Park's nectar and pollen resources. It is doubtful that three additional sites could ever be accommodated in the Park. The value of the Park's flora and fauna warrants a conservative approach to apiculture.

There is concern that introduced domestic and feral bees may adversely affect native flora and fauna.

#### Aim

- Provide for apiculture in the Park, while minimising its impacts on park values.

#### Management strategies

- *Continue to provide five apiary sites in the Park and manage in accordance with Parks Victoria apiculture guidelines.*
- *Continue consultation with the Victorian Apiarists Association regarding identification and allocation of bee sites in the Park.*
- *Encourage apiarists to adopt good hive husbandry practices such as re-queening hives to reduce the likelihood of swarms leaving the hives and colonising tree hollows in the Park.*
- *Encourage research into the effect of introduced honey bees on native flora and fauna.*

#### 7.1.2 Pipeline easements

Two major oil and gas pipelines cross the Park from east to west on two easements of 25 km in length, cleared to a width of 24 m and separated

by a distance of between 250 and 700 m (figure 1). The easements are used by maintenance vehicles and are slashed every two years.

The cleared easements form convenient boundaries to a Priority One fuel reduction burning area across the Park.

An open section of the LaTrobe Valley Outfall Sewer (LVOS) runs along a northern boundary of the Park for about 4.5 km. The smell from this sewer section can make this northern section of the Park unpleasant for visitors.

#### Aim

- Minimise the effect of pipelines on park values.

#### Management strategies

- *Issue consents with appropriate conditions under Section 27 of the National Parks Act or other relevant legislation for the pipelines across the Park, in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*
- *Maintain liaison with the Gas Transmission Corporation and Esso and ensure compliance with consent conditions.*
- *Liaise with Gippsland Water regarding:*
  - *the possibilities for reducing odour from the open sewer section of the LVOS near the Park;*
  - *investigating the possibilities of covering the open sewer section adjoining the Park.*

#### 7.1.3 Trigonometrical reserve and fire tower

Holey Hill lies within a 2.8 ha first order Trigonometrical Reserve. Access and sight line clearings are required for survey purposes by State and Federal governments.

Australian Paper Plantations (AAP) maintains a steel fire tower at Holey Hill. The tower is about 50 m from the picnic area. Visitors can view the Park from the bottom level of this tower.

**Aim**

- Provide for appropriate use and maintenance of existing public utilities in the Park.

**Management strategies**

- *Permit essential survey activities at Holey Hill by relevant authorities. Monitor future use, and review the requirement for the Trigonometrical Reserve if new technology allows alternative locations.*
- *Issue a licence under the National Parks Act for occupation of the site and maintenance of the fire tower by APP in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*

**7.2 Boundaries and adjacent uses**

In accordance with LCC recommendations, several adjoining Crown land blocks, totalling 101 ha, are proposed for addition to the Park. These areas are currently managed by Parks Victoria as part of the Park. The blocks are Crown Allotments 38B, 46B and 54A Parish of Holey Plains (figure 2).

There are several unused road reserves in the Park, some parallel to existing tracks.

A total of 68 km of the 121 km of park boundary adjoins Australian Paper Plantations Pty Ltd (APP).

Clearing of firebreaks between the Park and plantation areas is undertaken annually by AAP. Plantation harvesting operations along Park boundaries occasionally impinge on the Park (section 6.2). Park tracks are sometimes used for timber cartage (section 5.2.1).

Other adjacent uses include limestone quarrying (not operational), peat mining at Ben Winch Swamp (now complete), sand and gravel extraction and broad acre agricultural use. Rosedale rubbish tip is adjacent to the Park entrance at the western end.

There are significant areas of privately owned native vegetation adjoining the Park, especially to the east and west. The surrounding land, subject to Wellington Shire planning provisions, is in rural planning zones and potential for intensive subdivision is low.

A gravel reserve at Seldom Seen, completely surrounded by the Park, is still worked for gravel but is being phased out and revegetated. Other pits within the Park are now revegetated. Seldom Seen gravel reserve would be suitable for inclusion in the Park once revegetation is completed.

**Aims**

- Protect the Park from gravel extraction operations.
- Minimise conflict between Park management and surrounding land uses.

**Management strategies**

- *Seek to include in the Park the Crown land blocks described above (figure 2).*
- *Ensure that Seldom Seen gravel pit operations do not encroach on the Park. Following rehabilitation of the gravel pit reserve, seek to include it within the Park.*
- *Undertake regular inspections of Park boundaries to ensure that fencing, fuel reduction and control of pest plants and animals are adequate.*
- *Liaise with Wellington Shire on planning matters and other issues that may affect the Park.*
- *Review unused road reserves and seek to incorporate into the Park as appropriate.*

**7.3 Illegal uses**

The Park is difficult to patrol. The Park boundary is about 121 km in length with over 15 points of access, many away from main entry points. Some tracks enter via APP road networks open to the public. Many are marginal 2WD tracks known only to locals or venturesome visitors.

There have been problems with firewood removal, post cutting, shooting, vandalism and cannabis cultivation.

**Aim**

- Minimise illegal activities in the Park.

**Management strategies**

- *Target patrols when illegal activities are known or suspected to be occurring.*
- *Continue liaison with Victoria Police regarding illegal activities in the Park.*

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## 8 IMPLEMENTATION

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A three-year rolling implementation program will be prepared for the Park to ensure efficient implementation of the plan. Priorities for management are identified in table 6.

**TABLE 6 PRIORITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	SECTION IN PLAN
<b>Resource conservation</b>	
Develop and implement an ecological burning plan jointly with the fire protection plan review.	4.1
Encourage the active participation of educational institutions in research, survey and monitoring.	3.4, 5.3
Create an electronic database to improve management of flora, fauna and fire.	3.3, 3.4
<b>Park protection</b>	
Review the fire protection plan.	4.1
Develop and implement a pest animal control plan.	4.2
Undertake pest plant control.	4.2
<b>The Park visit</b>	
Provide through Park access from Limestone Quarry Road via Merriman Creek and Taylors Lane.	5.2.1
Improve signposting of the major tracks used by visitors.	5.2.1
Maintain views from Holey Hill lookout.	3.5
Provide a toilet at Merriman Creek picnic area.	5.2.2
<b>Community awareness and involvement</b>	
Develop a long-term volunteer strategy.	6.1
Formalise liaison with APP.	5.2.1, 6.2
<b>Other issues</b>	
Seek to add adjacent Crown land to the Park.	7.2
<b>Monitoring and research</b>	
Undertake surveys and encourage research on significant flora and fauna.	3.3, 3.4

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## APPENDIX I SIGNIFICANT FLORA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATUS/COMMENT
<i>Acacia howittii</i>	Sticky Wattle	R, r
<i>Astrotricha parvifolia</i>	Small-leaf Star-hair	R, r
<i>Austrostripa hemipogon</i>	Half-bearded Spear-grass	r
<i>Bedfordia arborescens</i>	Blanket Leaf	Three specimens known in Park
<i>Bracteantha</i> sp. aff. <i>subundulata</i>	Swamp Everlasting	v, FFG
<i>Cryptandra tomentosa</i>	Prickly Cryptandra	Isolated occurrence
<i>Cyathea australis</i>	Rough Tree-fern	Small populations
<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>	Soft Tree-fern	Small populations
<i>Eucalyptus bosistoana</i>	Gippsland Grey Box	Western limit of distribution
<i>Eucalyptus ignorabilis</i>	Green Scentbark	k
<i>Goodenia humilis</i>	Swamp Goodenia	Isolated occurrence
<i>Grevillea chrysophaea</i>	Golden Grevillea	r
<i>Hakea repullulans</i>	Western Furze Hakea	Isolated occurrence
<i>Hypsela tridens</i>	Hypsela	v
<i>Lepidium hyssopifolium</i>	Small Pepper-cress	E, e, FFG
<i>Leucopogon microphyllus</i> var. <i>pilibundus</i>	Hairy Beard-heath	r
<i>Pomaderris humilis</i>	Creeping Pomaderris	R, v
<i>Prostanthera</i> sp. aff. <i>linearis</i> (Holey Plains)	Holey Plains Mint-bush	v
<i>Pterostylis fischii</i>	Fisch's Greenhood	r
<i>Pterostylis X ingens</i>	Sharp Greenhood	r
<i>Rulingia prostrata</i>	Dwarf Kerrawang	E, v, FFG
<i>Sowerbaea juncea</i>	Rush Lily	r
<i>Spiranthes sinensis</i>	Austral Lady's Tresses	d
<i>Zieria veronicea</i>	Pink Zieria	r

Status (NRE database 1998):

d - depleted in Victoria

E - endangered in Australia

e - endangered in Victoria

k - poorly known in Australia

R - rare in Australia

r - rare in Victoria

v - vulnerable in Victoria

FFG - listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act

## APPENDIX II SIGNIFICANT FAUNA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATUS
<b>Mammals</b>		
<i>Macropus rufogriseus</i>	Red-necked Wallaby	lr
<i>Ornithorhynchus anatinus</i>	Platypus	lu
<i>Perameles nasuta</i>	Long-nosed Bandicoot	lu
<i>Sminthopsis leucopus</i>	White-footed Dunnart	lu
<b>Birds</b>		
<i>Aquila audax</i> *	Wedge-tailed Eagle	lc
<i>Biziura lobata</i>	Musk Duck	Vul
<i>Caprimulgus mystacalis</i>	White-throated Nightjar	lu
<i>Coturnix ypsilophora</i>	Brown Quail	DD
<i>Emblema bella</i>	Beautiful Firetail	lr
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	End, FFG
<i>Hylacola pyrrhopygia</i>	Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	DD
<i>Ninox strenua</i>	Powerful Owl	End, FFG
<i>Stipiturus malachurus</i>	Southern Emu-wren	lu
<b>Reptile</b>		
<i>Varanus varius</i>	Lace Monitor	DD
<b>Amphibians</b>		
<i>Litoria raniformis</i> <sup>+</sup>	Growling Grass Frog	lc
<i>Uperoleia martini</i>	Martin's Toadlet	DD

Status (Norris et al. 1983; NRE 1998):

DD - data deficient: more information required

End - endangered in Victoria

Vul - vulnerable in Victoria

FFG - listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act

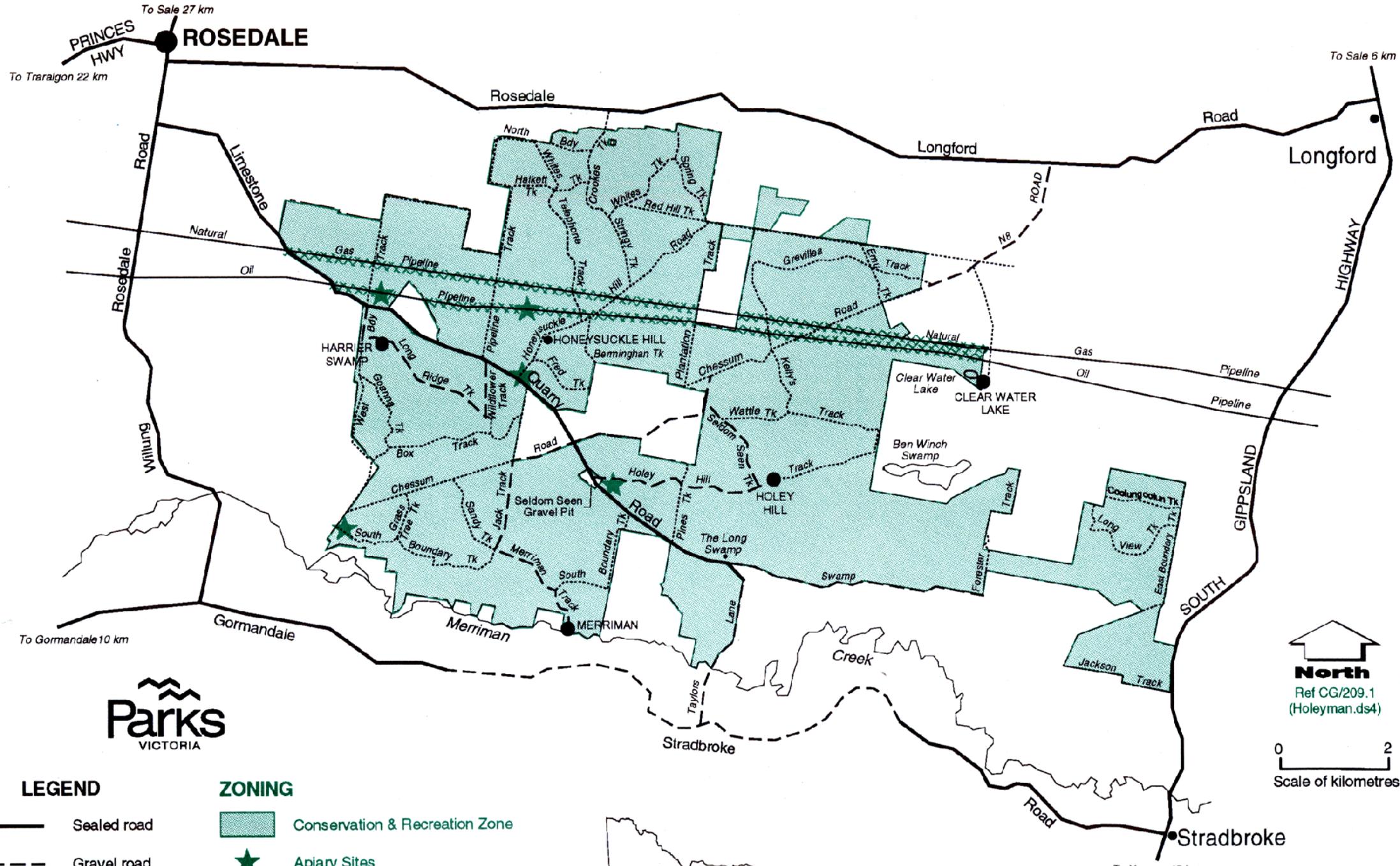
lc - locally common

lr - locally rare

lu - locally uncommon.

\* *Aquila audax* is listed here as notable because of breeding records within the Park. No breeding has been recorded since 1988 (NRE Files).

+ *Litoria raniformis* was observed to have suffered a population crash at Harriers Swamp in May 1979 (Lobert & Gell 1984).



To Sale 27 km  
 To Traralgon 22 km

To Sale 5 km

To Gormandale 10 km

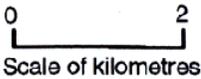
To Yarram 49 km



- LEGEND**
- Sealed road
  - - - Gravel road
  - ..... Vehicle track
  - — — Park boundary

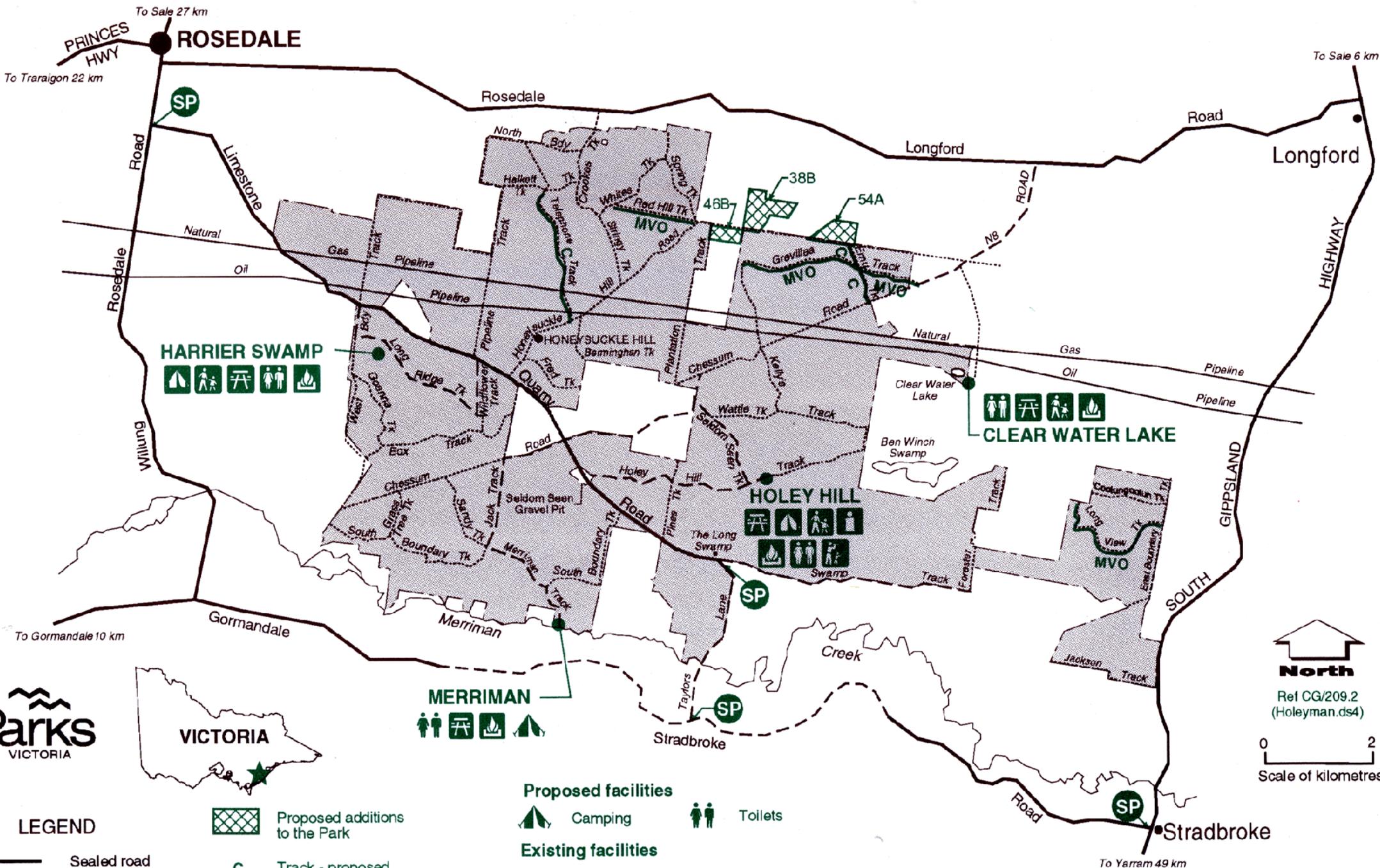
- ZONING**
- Conservation & Recreation Zone
  - ★ Apiary Sites

- OVERLAY**
- xxxxxx Public utility



Prepared by NRS Unit, Traralgon

**Figure 1**  
**MANAGEMENT ZONES**  
**HOLEY PLAINS STATE PARK**



**LEGEND**

- Sealed road
- Gravel road
- Vehicle track
- Park boundary

- Proposed additions to the Park
- Track - proposed to be closed
- Track - proposed Management Vehicles Only
- Signposting required

**Proposed facilities**

- Camping
- Picnic area
- Toilets
- Walking track

- Toilets
- Lookout
- Information
- Fireplace
- Camping

**Existing facilities**

**Figure 2**  
**VISITOR FACILITIES & ACCESS**  
**HOLEY PLAINS STATE PARK**