

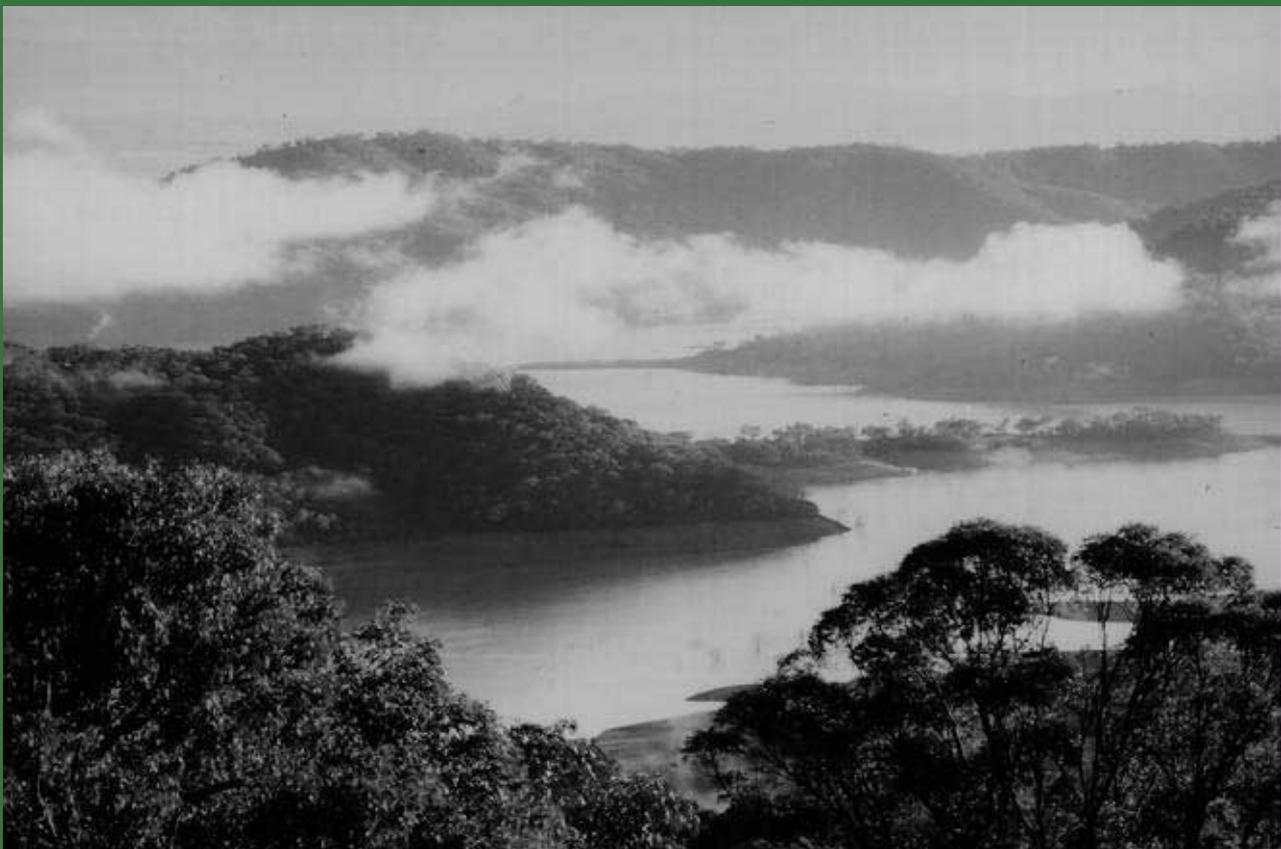
# Lake Eildon National Park

July 1997



## Management Plan

This 1997 plan was evaluated in 2009 and will continue to be implemented for a further five years.



This Management Plan for Lake Eildon National Park comprising the former Fraser National Park and Eildon 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 May 1996. A total of 22 submissions were received.

Copies of this Plan can be purchased from:

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378 Cotham Road  
KEW VIC 3101

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MELBOURNE VIC 3000

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240 Victoria Parade  
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For further information on the Plan, please contact:

Rocky Barca, Chief Ranger, Goulburn, PV Alexandra Office, (057) 720 200

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**LAKE EILDON NATIONAL PARK**

**MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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**JULY 1997**

**This 1997 plan was evaluated in 2009 and will continue to be implemented for a further five years.**

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This Approved Plan is based on a Draft Plan compiled by Biosis Research Pty Ltd under contract to the former National Parks Service.

Published in July 1997 by Parks Victoria  
378 Cotham Road, Kew, Victoria 3101.

**Note: In December 1996 Parks Victoria (PV) became responsible for the management of parks and other areas previously managed by the former National Parks Service (NPS) and Melbourne Parks and Waterways (MPW). For general information regarding Parks Victoria please call 13 1963, seven days a week.**

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## FOREWORD

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Lake Eildon National Park, comprising the former Fraser National Park and Eildon State Park, is a major nature conservation area, as well as a very popular destination for both Park visitors and visitors to the adjacent Lake Eildon.

As an important conservation reserve it incorporates a significant representation of remnant Box Woodland in North East Victoria.

Managed primarily for nature conservation purposes, the Park will continue to provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy the natural environment and magnificent adjacent lake and waterways.

The Collier Bay area will continue to serve as a focus for visitors. The camping areas will be maintained and facilities for boat-based visitors, groups and visitors with limited mobility will be improved.

This Management Plan establishes the long-term management framework to protect the important conservation and recreation values of the Park while recognising the important contributions the Park and adjacent Lake Eildon make to the local tourism industry.

As a result of the implementation of the Plan, I am confident that the Park's special features will be protected while visitors' enjoyment is enhanced.

I look forward to the community's support for the management of this important National Park, which is a significant part of Victoria's parks system.



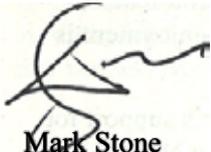
**Hon Marie Tehan MP**  
MINISTER FOR CONSERVATION  
and LAND MANAGEMENT

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## APPROVED MANAGEMENT PLAN

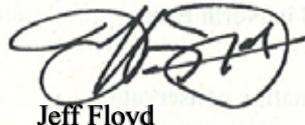
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This Draft Management Plan, has been prepared under Section 17 of the *National Parks Act 1975* (Vic.) and is approved for implementation.



**Mark Stone**  
**Director**  
**National Parks**

The Plan provides the basis for future management of Lake Eildon National Park. It was finalised following consideration of the 22 submissions received on the Draft Plan.



**Jeff Floyd**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Parks Victoria**

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## SUMMARY

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Lake Eildon National Park comprising the former Fraser National Park (3750 ha) and Eildon State Park (24 000 ha) has high scenic values. A range of flora and fauna not well reserved elsewhere is present, including box forests and woodlands, and a number of significant species of native flora and fauna. The Park is also rich in cultural history.

The Park provides a number of popular camping areas on the shores of Lake Eildon. Lake Eildon National Park provides recreational opportunities in a rugged setting, and offers an excellent base for boating activities. The Park is important in protecting the integrity of the catchment for Lake Eildon.

Park management will aim to protect the Park's natural values and at the same time enable recreational opportunities consistent with these values. High quality visitor experiences will be provided, building on the Park's proximity to Lake Eildon. The well developed facilities at Fraser camping area and Jerusalem Creek camping area will continue to cater for large numbers of visitors and provide a range of camping and accommodation opportunities.

Management directions for the Park are described below.

- Visitor enjoyment will be enhanced by expanding interpretation programs to include activities in more camping areas, designing interpretation programs to interest specific user groups (including water-based visitors) and developing a self-guided mining history tour.
- Significant flora and fauna and other natural and cultural features will be protected and where appropriate interpreted.
- Visitor attractions, facilities and programs will be co-ordinated with those provided elsewhere in the region.
- The Jamieson block will be managed as a semi-remote area.
- Revegetation of cleared areas of the Park will be continued to improve soil and water conservation, and habitat and natural values.



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Location and planning area

Lake Eildon National Park comprising the former Fraser National Park and Eildon State Park is situated in the northern foothills of Victoria's Central Highlands 90 km north-east of Melbourne and 100 km south-east of Benalla (figure 1).

The Land Conservation Council (LCC 1994) has proposed that the two Parks be managed as a single Park. Legislation to combine the two Parks to form Lake Eildon National Park was passed in 1997.

The Park abut the shores of Lake Eildon and falls entirely within the catchment of that major water storage. It is dominated by ridges and steep slopes.

The Park adjoins mainly private land in the west and State forest in the south, and Victorian Plantations Corporation (VPC) land or private land in the north.

This management plan covers the following areas:

- Lake Eildon National Park comprises the former Fraser National Park (3750 ha), which falls into two blocks – Fraser and Wappan – and the former Eildon State Park (24 000 ha), which falls into three blocks – Jerusalem, Jamieson and Enterprise;
- one area (about 165 ha) of adjacent Murray Goulburn Water land at Mt Pinninger under consideration for addition to the Park;
- the 200 m State forest buffer area between Lake Eildon (full supply level) and the Park, several small areas of State forest and Crown land that have been enclaved by the buffer, and the Eildon Water Reserve.

The nearby Delatite Arm Reserve and other adjacent Crown land are not included.

## 1.2 Regional context

The Park lies at the intersection of geographical areas. It is at the head of the Goulburn Valley, an area popular for its rural scenery, fishing and water-based recreation. The Park forms part of the northern boundary of the Central

Highlands, steep mountain country with rugged scenery, high natural values and outdoor recreational opportunities. To the north, the Park abuts the Mansfield region, one of the gateways to the Victorian Alps and a rural area with many attractions for visitors. Within this diverse regional context, the Park contrasts with nearby rural areas, and provides relatively easy access to the rugged scenery of the Centretal Highlands. The Park has particular value for visitors to Lake Eildon, both as a superb setting when viewed from the Lake and as an area providing campsites and offering an alternative to water-based activities.

Other destinations within these regions include:

- the towns of Eildon, Jamieson and Goughs Bay;
- Delatite Arm Reserve – a large summer camping area on the shores of Lake Eildon, adjacent to the VPC Delatite Pine Plantation close to the northern boundary of the Enterprise block;
- Natural and Scenic Features Reserves at Mt Torbreck and Mt Terrible – high peaks close to the Park; Mt Torbreck is used by bushwalkers and small numbers of cross-country skiers, while Mt Terrible is mostly visited by four-wheel drivers and trail-bike riders;
- Cathedral Range State Park – a popular venue for camping, walking and rock climbing;
- the Yarra Ranges National Park – a new park containing some of the best mature wet forests and cool temperate rainforests in Victoria and containing much of Melbourne's water supply catchment, it provides a range of recreational opportunities, including day and overnight walking, cross-country skiing, camping and picnicking;
- Alpine National Park (Wonnangatta-Moroka Unit) – east of the Park and connected by State forest, this park has many walking tracks, four-wheel drive

tracks and campsites in rugged mountain country;

- Big River – a series of campsites in State forest along the Big River adjacent to the Park, mainly used by vehicle-based campers.

### 1.3 Significance of the Park

Lake Eildon National Park is a valuable part of Victoria's park system, which aims to protect viable, representative examples of the State's natural environments occurring on public land. The Park represents Box Woodland and foothill forests within the National Parks system. The Park also provides opportunities for visitors to enjoy and appreciate natural and historical values, and make an important contribution to local and regional tourism.

The Park has high scenic values, combining open country, woodland and rugged forested ridges with superb vistas to Lake Eildon and the Alps. Because of its location on the edge of areas largely cleared for agriculture, a range of flora and fauna not well reserved elsewhere is present, including Box Woodland and several rare or endangered species of native fauna. The Park also contains large areas of foothill forests in good condition and areas of old-growth (identified by Natural Resources and Environment Central Highlands studies); these also support a range of rare and endangered fauna.

The Park is rich in history, with many gold mining relics, evidence of the area's pastoral history and connections to the development of Eildon Weir.

The Park provides recreational opportunities in a rugged setting that contrasts with the surrounding areas. These include camping, walking, vehicle-based touring, four-wheel driving, trail-bike riding and nature study.

The Park has a number of camping areas on the shores of Lake Eildon.

The Park is assigned to the IUCN Category II (National Parks) of the United Nations' List of National Parks and Protected Areas. Category II areas are managed primarily for ecosystem conservation and appropriate recreation.

The Park is listed on the Register of the National Estate in recognition of its outstanding values and importance as part of our heritage.

The significant features of the Park are summarised below.

#### Natural values

- The presence of areas of foothill forest in good condition that have been largely cleared or altered elsewhere, including large areas of long unburnt and minimally disturbed forest, and remnant box forests.
- The occurrence of many significant plant and animal species.
- The presence of important bat populations in several disused mine shafts.
- Rugged scenery, including several vantage points with panoramic views to the Alps.

#### Cultural values

- A range of sites, some of Regional significance, reflecting the gold-mining history of the area, including Wilsons Creek Mining Area, Robbs Reward Mine, Black Creek Mines, OK Mine, Solferino Mines and Italian Gully Mines.
- Relics of the area's pastoral development – a stone fence on Steep Track, Jerusalem Creek farmhouse sites, Bob Brier's home site and garden, Sunnyslopes Hut, Puzzle Range Spring and Stone's outstation and stockyards.
- Associations with the construction of Lake Eildon (e.g. the old high voltage powerline easement) and drowning of the valleys with submerged towns (e.g. Darlingford), buildings (e.g. Glen Hope/Benara homestead) and other features (e.g. Darlingford Road and bridges).

## Tourism and recreation values

- Vehicle-based camping in a natural environment with good access to Lake Eildon.
- Popular group camping areas.
- Cabins at Fraser camping area; these also have good access for people with limited mobility and the camping area generally has excellent opportunities for these visitors.
- A network of short walks and bike rides in Fraser camping area.
- A range of recreational opportunities including camping, four-wheel driving, trail-bike riding, cycling, deer stalking and fishing.
- Opportunities to experience a semi-remote environment within easy access of surrounding non-remote attractions.
- The diversity of park values and their location create good opportunities for educational and commercial outdoor activities.

### 1.4 Creation of the Park

Following the purchase of grazing properties by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission in connection with the construction of the Lake Eildon project, some of the land that was not flooded was proposed as a national park. An area of 6600 acres (2670 ha) was declared as Fraser National Park on 18 December 1957 as a result of the *Fraser National Park Act 1957* (Vic.). Subsequent additions (and a very small excision) brought the area to 3750 ha. The Park was included on Schedule Two of the National Parks Act in 1975.

As a result of LCC (1977) recommendations and the *National Parks Act 1978* (Vic.), the former Eildon State Park (24 000 ha) was included on Schedule Three of the National Parks Act on 26 April 1980. It was transferred to the new Schedule Two B (State Parks) on 23 August 1989 as a result of the *National Parks (Amendment) Act 1989* (Vic.).

The two Parks were combined to form Lake Eildon National Park, which was proclaimed on

4 June 1997, as a result of the *National Parks (Amendment) Act 1997* (Vic.).

### 1.5 Legislation and guidelines

The Park is reserved and managed under the National Parks Act. The Act requires the Director to preserve and protect the natural environment 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.

The LCC (1977) recommended that Eildon State Park be established to:

- preserve and protect natural ecosystems;
- protect sites of cultural importance;
- supply water and protect catchments and streams;
- provide opportunities for recreation and education associated with the enjoyment and understanding of natural and cultural environments.

The LCC (1994) recommended that the two Parks, together with the Mt Pinninger area (see section 7.2), be combined to form Eildon-Fraser State Park. The Government subsequently decided that the area should be reserved as Lake Eildon National Park.

The part of the Big River Heritage River corridor located in the planning area is managed in accordance with the *Heritage Rivers Act 1992* (Vic.) and LCC recommendations (LCC 1991).

The Park is managed in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines for the management of parks and with other guidelines and procedures, including:

- Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995a);
- Alexandra Region Fire Protection Plan (CNR 1995b);
- Proposed Forest Management Plan for the Central Highlands (NRE 1996).

### 1.6 Park management aims

Sections 4 and 17 of the National Parks Act provide the main basis for management of the Park. The following management aims are derived from those sections 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 water catchments and streams.
- Protect human life, the Park and adjacent land 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.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of visitors.

### **Other**

- Provide for and encourage scientific research, surveys and monitoring that will contribute to a better understanding and management of the Park.
- Co-operate with local and State 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 Lake Eildon National Park finds a diversity of natural environments and recreational experiences within easy reach of Melbourne and major regional centres. The Park's scenic values are high, combining open country, woodland and rugged forested ridges with superb vistas to Lake Eildon and the Alps. Key conservation values include the large number of significant native fauna present, the presence of box forests that are largely cleared elsewhere, and large areas of foothill forests in good condition and containing major areas of minimally disturbed forest and old-growth. The Park is rich in history, with many gold mining relics, evidence of the area's pastoral history and connections to the development of Eildon Weir. The diversity of park values and their location within the State makes the Park popular for educational and commercial outdoor activities, integrated closely with park values.

The Park is closely linked with Lake Eildon: it plays an important role in catchment protection, gives access to the Lake for many recreational users, allows for a range of recreational opportunities that add variety to the water experience, and forms much of the superb visual backdrop to the Lake. Strengthening these links are co-operative management of the lake shore in conjunction with Goulburn Murray Water, excellent recreational facilities that encourage use of both the Park and the Lake, and interpretation programs for water-based recreationists. Visitors to the Lake and to the region are aware of park values and regularly include it in their activities, assisted by the provision of good access to attractions within the Park. The Park is popular with day walkers (especially the former Fraser National Park area), and the former Eildon State Park to Mt Torbreck (outside the Park) walking circuit is one of the most popular weekend bushwalks in the Central Highlands. Four wheel drive touring within the Park remains a popular use in suitable areas, linked to touring routes in adjacent State forest.

The Park serves as a recreational resource to a broad range of users, including residents of the local townships, and shows a very high level of use by educational and commercial outdoor activities groups. These user groups are involved in Park management activities through volunteer programs related to their activities in the Park.

### 2.2 Management directions

Management directions for Lake Eildon National Park are outlined below.

#### Resource conservation

- A number of specific natural and cultural features will be given special protection, with priority given to mining relics, mineshaft-dwelling bats and minimally disturbed areas.
- The Jamieson block will be managed as a semi-remote area, with no development of tracks or campsites.
- Burning regimes will be designed to maintain and enhance natural diversity and retain the old-growth values of sections of the Park; they will be co-ordinated with the protection burning program to ensure that they also contribute to enhanced fire protection.

#### Park protection

- The Park's fire protection strategy will protect adjacent land and particular assets, especially towns, as well as the ecological values of the Park.
- Water catchments and water quality will be protected.
- A pest plant and animal control program will focus on key sites, target species and effective control methods.
- Seasonal restrictions on vehicle access will continue to protect some tracks, with monitoring, rehabilitation and closure if required.

#### The Park visit

- Visitor enjoyment will be enhanced by enlarging interpretation programs to include camping areas, designing interpretation programs to interest specific user groups (including water-based visitors) and developing a self-guided tour based on the area's mining history.
- Current camping opportunities will be maintained. A new boat-based camp at Taylors Creek will be developed, and a location for an additional group camping area will be investigated.
- The mix of accommodation opportunities at Fraser camping area will be maintained to ensure that its character remains unchanged.
- Commercial recreational activities and large group activities will be managed to ensure that their impacts on other Park visitors and on park values are acceptable and sustainable.
- Visitor attractions, facilities and programs will be co-ordinated with those provided elsewhere in the region.

### **Community awareness and involvement**

- A co-operative management approach will be sought with neighbours, public land managers, local government and private landholders to improve conservation management on adjacent land, and to ensure that their activities and developments do not degrade park values.

## **2.3 Zoning**

A park management zoning scheme has been developed for the Park 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 levels and types of use appropriate throughout the Park;
- assist in minimising existing and potential conflicts between uses and activities, or between these and the protection of park values;
- provide a basis for assessing the suitability of future activities and development proposals.

Three management zones apply to the Park: Conservation; Conservation and Recreation; and Recreation Development. In addition, two overlays, a Special Management Area – Public Utility and a Land Use Designation – Hunting, have been included to provide for non-standard uses. The Big River Heritage River corridor overlays the 200 m buffer.

Table 1 specifies zone and overlay characteristics, and their locations are shown on figure 2.

TABLE 1 MANAGEMENT ZONES AND OVERLAYS

		ZONE		OVERLAY	
	CONSERVATION	CONSERVATION AND RECREATION	RECREATION DEVELOPMENT	SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA - PUBLIC UTILITY	LAND USE DESIGNATION - DEER HUNTING
AREA/LOCATION	1305 ha, 4.7% of both Parks. Between Woolshed Creek and Stillmans Track in Enterprise block, and the Wilsons Creek historic mining area in Jerusalem block.	26 055 ha, 93.9 % of both Parks.	390 ha, 1.4% of both Parks. Main visitor destinations around Collier Bay in Fraser National Park and Jerusalem Creek in Eildon State Park.	PowerNet easement. Crosses Mt Enterprise Block of Eildon State Park and Mt Pinninger addition.	Big River Deer Hunting Area. Comprises Jamieson Block and part of Jerusalem Creek Block of Eildon State Park.
VALUES	Area of undisturbed (old-growth) vegetation of high conservation and scientific value.	Important natural values and scope for recreation opportunities.	Sites of existing and proposed facility development.	Strip of cleared and uncleared land carrying transmission line.	Forest areas of limited access utilised for Deer Stalking.
GENERAL MANAGEMENT AIM	Protect sensitive natural environments and provide for minimal impact recreation activities and simple visitor facilities subject to ensuring minimal interference to natural processes.	Protect less sensitive natural environments and provide for sustainable dispersed recreation activities and small-scale recreation facilities without significant impact on natural processes.	Provide primarily for high-use visitor nodes with a concentration of recreation and/or interpretation facilities.	Highlight areas or sites where special management provisions are needed to provide for a particular non-standard use or activity.	Provide for specific legislative requirements.

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## 3 RESOURCE CONSERVATION

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### 3.1 Geological and landform features

The Park is characterised by strongly dissected mountainous terrain that has developed on closely folded lower Devonian and Silurian sediments. Quartz dykes are intruded in some areas, notably Rocky Spur.

There are few sites of geological or geomorphological significance in or adjacent to the Park. The great Cerberean Caldera was a huge circular volcano about 27 km across. The ring fracture that marked its edges outcrops as Rocky Peak (other outcrops are near Thornton and Buxton). This huge volcano was active around 380 million years ago. The central section has filled with volcanic rocks up to 1500 m thick which now form the Cerberean Ranges, including Mt Torbreck and Lake Mountain (Birch 1994).

Most of the geomorphological features in the Park are not susceptible to damage by visitors.

#### Aims

- Protect areas of significant geological and geomorphological interest from damage.
- Provide opportunities for appropriate research into, education about and appreciation of geological and geomorphological sites.

#### Management strategies

- *Monitor known sites of geological and geomorphological significance.*
- *Provide general interpretive materials about the Park's geology and landforms, with specific interpretive materials on the Cerberean Caldera.*

### 3.2 Rivers and catchments

The Park falls totally within the catchment of Lake Eildon. The areas of forested land in the Park deliver high quality water with very low sediment and nutrient loads to the Lake, especially when compared with the run-off from the agricultural land to the north. The Park falls

within the Goulburn-Broken Catchment and Land Protection Region.

The Big River is a heritage river designated under the Heritage Rivers Act. Part of the heritage river corridor, outside the Park, overlays the adjacent 200 m buffer of State forest (see section 7.2). A separate management plan is currently being prepared for the heritage river.

#### Aims

- Protect and maintain the integrity of catchments within the Park.
- Protect and enhance the heritage values of the Big River.

#### Management strategies

- *Minimise the impact of management and visitor activities on streams and catchments in the Park.*
- *Liaise with the relevant Regional Catchment and Land Protection Board in regard to park management activities.*
- *Implement appropriate management actions from the Big River Heritage River Management Plan.*

### 3.3 Vegetation

The map of Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) prepared for the Central Highlands indicates that six EVCs occur in the Park. A notable feature is the large area of Herb-rich Forest and Grassy Dry Forest, much of which has been cleared where it once occurred on private land and which is poorly reserved in the region. Less common EVCs are Heathy Dry Forest (in the Enterprise block), Riparian Forest (especially along Whites Creek – much of the original riparian vegetation is under the waters of Lake Eildon), Damp Forest and Montane Dry Woodland (on ridge tops in the Jamieson block). Isolated examples of Box Woodland (not mapped) occur in the Park. The vegetation of the former Eildon State Park is

rated as being of State significance (LCC 1994).

Most of the forests in the Enterprise block were not burnt in the 1939 fires. Approximately 800 ha adjacent to the Delatite Arm Reserve were burnt in a wildfire in January 1997. The forests on the eastern slopes of the Jamieson block are little disturbed. Such undisturbed dry forests are very uncommon and are an important aspect of the values of the Park. Old-growth areas are scattered through much of the Park, mainly on the Enterprise Plateau, southern Jamieson block and in parts of the Jerusalem block. There are a number of widespread weeds in the Park, notably St Johns Wort, but many areas remain where the vegetation is in good condition with low levels of introduced plants.

Some areas have been cleared in the past for agriculture, including much of the former Fraser National Park and small areas in the Enterprise block. These areas are generally heavily weed invaded and show varying degrees of natural regeneration of trees and shrubs. There has been an active replanting program in parts of the former Fraser National Park.

There has been a lack of botanical survey in the Park, except for the brief reconnaissance of the former Eildon State Park by Smith (1980). He recorded 232 native species and 47 introduced species, with five species noted as being of conservation significance (appendix I). One significant species (FFG listed), the Leafy Greenhood, occurs in the 200 m buffer area between the Park and Lake Eildon.

The main factor that can influence the nature and condition of the native vegetation in the Park is fire. Fire management will need to take ecological factors into account to maintain park values, and further survey is required in some areas to determine the appropriate fire regime.

Firewood collection is a threat to native vegetation in the vicinity of heavily used visitor areas around Collier Bay and Jerusalem Creek. Collection elsewhere within the Park has minimal impact.

## Aims

- Conserve native plant communities and maintain their natural floristic diversity.
- Provide special protection for, and increase our knowledge of, significant plant communities and species.
- Maintain appropriate ecological fire regimes.

## Management strategies

- *Manage plant species, communities and potentially threatening processes listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic.) according to approved Action Statements.*
- *Develop a monitoring program which focuses on key communities or species, in particular the Leafy Greenhood.*
- *Undertake further flora surveys and encourage flora research in the Park.*
- *Undertake an assessment to define further botanical sites of significance in the Park, and include these on the Sites Register.*
- *Prohibit the collection of firewood from within Recreation Development and Conservation Zones.*
- *Develop a firewood supply strategy for the Recreation Development and Conservation Zones that:*
  - *minimises cost to Parks Victoria;*
  - *provides alternative supply methods;*
  - *encourages visitors to reduce their use of firewood and utilise low impact equipment.*

## 3.4 Fauna

Although little is known about the fauna of the bulk of the Park, it is clearly an area of considerable faunal diversity with a high number of significant species. This appears to be due to three factors: the presence of large areas of dry sclerophyll forest in good condition (much of it with no recorded disturbance), the presence of small areas of habitat that are more

typical of the fertile private land that is now mostly cleared, and the large numbers of old mine shafts that support cave-dwelling bats (see section 3.6). The Park is one of the most significant areas for bats in Victoria.

The known native fauna comprises 34 mammals, 89 birds, 17 reptiles, ten amphibians and three freshwater fish (NRE database 1997). Fauna surveys would undoubtedly expand these lists. A number of significant species occur in the Park (appendix II), including one bird of National significance (Regent Honeyeater), one amphibian of National significance (Spotted Tree Frog), four mammals of State significance (Brush-tailed Phascogale, Eastern Horseshoe Bat, Common Bent-wing Bat, Large-footed Myotis), two birds of State significance (Powerful Owl, Sooty Owl) and one freshwater fish of State significance (Mountain Galaxias). There are unconfirmed records of two further mammals of State significance (Spot-tailed Quoll, Smoky Mouse). One bird of National significance (Regent Honeyeater) and one mammal of State significance (Brush-tailed Phascogale) are recorded from the former Fraser National Park (appendix II).

Sambar are present within the Park. Little is known about the effects of deer on flora and fauna values. Deer stalking is allowed on a seasonal (winter) basis in defined sections of the Park (see section 5.2.12)

#### **Aims**

- Conserve native fauna and maintain the integrity of their habitats.
- Provide special protection for, and increase knowledge of, significant fauna species.
- Maintain appropriate ecological fire regimes in all habitat types.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Manage fauna species, communities and potentially threatening processes listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act according to approved Action Statements.*
- *Develop a monitoring program which focuses on key populations or species, in*

*particular species of National or State significance.*

- *Minimise habitat alteration processes, such as fire and vehicle access, especially in the Enterprise block and other little-disturbed or old-growth areas.*
- *Protect key bat roosting sites in mine shafts by prohibiting access. Monitor colonies (not during winter hibernation) and protect if visitor impacts become unacceptable.*
- *Conduct fauna surveys or encourage and support appropriately skilled volunteer groups to conduct surveys according to a prioritised survey plan. Priorities for survey include general area surveys (Jamieson and Enterprise blocks, Rocky Spur) and specific species (Smoky Mouse, Spot-tailed Quoll, Regent Honeyeater, Brush-tailed Phascogale, Spotted Tree Frog, bats in mine shafts).*

### **3.5 Landscape**

The Park has high scenic values, combining open country, woodland and rugged forested ridges with some superb vistas to Lake Eildon and the Alps. The open nature of the semi-cleared areas in the Fraser block is popular with visitors and provides a range of long views to the Lake and the hills beyond; the potential of revegetation programs to close off popular views should be monitored. Elsewhere, the dissected topography and the forest cover tend to restrict views to the short and middle distance except at key viewing points, which offer panoramic vistas to visitors. Relatively accessible viewing points include Merlo Lookout, Points Mead and Highett, Forsyth Point and several points along Taylors Creek Road. Other viewing points – The Pinnacle, Highett Point Track and several other locations in the Enterprise block – require access by four-wheel drive or moderately strenuous walks.

Mount Pinning provides one of the most easily accessible and impressive views; it is adjacent to the Park and was recommended for addition by the LCC (1994).

Areas of the Park that have a semi-remote nature often look directly onto Lake Eildon or to other non-natural areas. The use and development of these areas can significantly affect the visual experience of Park visitors. More generally, Park management activities and structures and activities on adjacent land have the potential to adversely affect landscape qualities.

There is a major PowerNet easement through the Park for the Eildon-Mt Beauty 220 kV line. Appropriate revegetation using low growing native species could reduce the visual (and ecological) impacts while maintaining access and safety needs.

### **Aim**

- Minimise visual impacts on the natural landscape, especially those visible from major viewing points and semi-remote areas.

### **Management strategies**

- *Minimise the visual impacts of management activities both inside and outside the Park by:*
  - *locating all facilities utilising best practice design, taking into account the need to protect landscape values;*
  - *improving the landscape qualities of degraded areas and monitoring the effects of revegetation programs on popular views;*
  - *encouraging public utilities and other service providers to minimise the visual intrusion of easements through careful siting and design, and sensitive vegetation management.*
- *Encourage local government to include appropriate visual management measures in their planning controls.*

## **3.6 Cultural heritage**

The rich valleys of the upper Goulburn supported an Aboriginal population of some hundreds of members of the Yauung-Illam-Baluk tribe at the time of European colonisation.

The flooding of the valleys by Lake Eildon has inundated the areas most likely to contain Aboriginal sites, since the steep dry ridges of the Park would have been used much less frequently. There do not appear to have been any archaeological surveys of the Park, and the Heritage Services Branch, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, does not record any sites for the Park.

Aboriginal cultural sites 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 Park is rich in sites relating to European heritage. These relate to three main themes: gold-mining, pastoral development, and the construction of Lake Eildon and drowning of the valleys. These sites are mainly found in the Fraser and Jerusalem blocks.

The gold-mining sites are of at least regional significance and most have a variety of features preserved. This, plus the number of mine sites in relatively close proximity, means that the associated heritage values are high and that the sites are a major feature of the Park. The Wilsons Creek Mining Area, Robbs Reward Mine, OK Mine and Solferino Mines have the potential to become major Park attractions through the development of appropriate access and interpretive facilities.

There are safety issues associated with mine shafts and access into shafts should be prevented where appropriate. Several of the mine shafts are known or likely to support important colonies of bats (see section 3.4). There is a further mining site at Mt Pinninger, an area that is a possible addition to the Park, which contains a highly significant bat colony. The site's historical significance has not been determined.

The pastoral sites are generally less well preserved. Stone's outstation and stockyards near Station Creek is a well preserved site of regional or State significance. The stone fences on Steep and Pinnacle Tracks are relatively difficult to access but are an interesting feature.

There is a range of historic sites affected by the construction of Lake Eildon, such as the Darlingford Road, which roughly follows the

full supply level contour and thus appears and disappears as it winds around the ridges and as water levels fluctuate, while the Jerusalem Creek site and the Glen Hope/Benara homestead are examples of the Lake forcing people off their land. The homestead only emerges at times of very low water level, when it is a popular attraction.

### **Aims**

- Identify, protect, and where appropriate interpret Aboriginal archaeological sites of significance.
- Encourage Aboriginal involvement in the management of the Park.
- Identify, record and assess the significance of historic places and artefacts.
- Protect all historic places and, if appropriate, conserve significant places.
- Use historic places, where appropriate, for the enjoyment of Park visitors and as a resource for education and recreation.

### **Management strategies**

- *Support further studies to identify Aboriginal heritage values requiring management and protection.*
- *Liaise with the Heritage Service Branch, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, in relation to identification and management of Aboriginal sites.*
- *Liaise with the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council with respect to management of Aboriginal heritage.*
- *Identify, record, assess, manage and interpret historic sites and features in line with Parks Victoria guidelines.*
- *Prepare conservation plans according to the guidelines of the ICOMOS Burra Charter in consultation with local communities to guide development and management actions at significant historic places.*

- *If consistent with conservation plans:*
  - *develop access and interpretive facilities at Wilson Creek mining area;*
  - *fence Deep Shaft;*
  - *protect the Eastern Horseshoe Bat colony by installing entrance grill;*
  - *construct access walking track (round trip);*
  - *prepare information sheet or include in other Park publications;*
  - *install appropriate signage or information shelter.*
- *Investigate developing safe access and interpretive facilities at Solferino Mines, Robbs Reward Mine and OK Mine; if appropriate develop sequentially in the order listed. Negotiate agreements with adjacent landowners to gain access to the whole of Robbs Reward Mine and OK Mine.*
- *Prepare a guide to the changes caused in the area by the flooding of Lake Eildon in consultation with Goulburn Murray Water, possibly using the Darlingford Road as a thematic link. Develop the guide for water-based visitors but include useful information for other Park visitors.*
- *Investigate the development of interpretive facilities at Stone's outstation and stockyards near Station Creek in conjunction with the development of an expanded day walk network in that block.*
- *Include basic information on the Steep Track stone fence in Park interpretive materials but do not provide signage or other interpretive facilities at the site.*

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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, and the *Forests Act 1958 (Vic.)* requires NRE to undertake fire prevention and suppression on public land. No major fires have occurred in either Park for about 50 years and much of the land escaped the 1939 fires. Small fires occurred in 1983 adjacent to the Park in the Delatite Pine Plantation, and in 1986 in the Jamieson block; both were rapidly controlled. Approximately 800 ha in the Enterprise block were burnt in 1997.

Current fire protection measures are in accordance with the Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995a) and the Draft Alexandra Regional Fire Protection Plan (CNR 1995b). The draft Fire Protection Plan aims to protect life, property and other assets, protect areas of natural and cultural value, and reduce the incidence and extent of wildfire. The main pre-suppression tool used to control the spread of wildfire is fuel reduction burning. Site protection is provided by small areas that are burnt frequently to maintain very low fuel levels (Priority 1 Burning Zones). Strategic corridors are regularly burnt to maintain low fuel levels (Priority 2 Burning Zones). Fire protection takes priority over ecological management in these zones, but both are considered. Less frequent burning on a mosaic basis is proposed in the bulk of the Park (Priority 3 Burning Zone). Priority 3 Burning Zones allow some flexibility to incorporate ecological management into burning regimes. Some areas are planned to be not burnt (Priority 5 Burning Zone).

The main features of the draft plan are:

- Priority 1 Burning Zones to protect Paradise Point and Goughs Bay;
- Priority 2 Burning Zone along Skyline Road and to protect Paradise Point and Jamieson, and the Jerusalem Creek camping areas;

- Priority 3 Burning Zone surrounding Italian Gully north to Station Ck, in the Enterprise block and along the north and east boundaries of the Jerusalem and Jamieson blocks;
- Priority 5 Burning Zones in the remainder of the Park.

Also relevant is a strategic burning corridor on the western and southern side of the Eildon-Jamieson Road between Eildon and Big River.

The plan includes provision for the maintenance of the Park's fire access tracks, and for liaison with private landholders and the CFA concerning fire management in boundary areas.

#### Aims

- Protect life, property and park values from injury by fire.
- Minimise the adverse effects of fires and fire suppression.
- Maintain fire regimes appropriate to the ecology of native flora and fauna.
- Promote public awareness of fire management within the Park.

#### Management strategies

- *Implement the relevant section of the Alexandra Regional Fire Protection Plan.*
- *Publicise and enforce fire regulations and restrictions on the use of fire within the Park. Rangers will patrol areas of high public use during periods of high fire danger.*
- *Undertake necessary fire pre-suppression works and burning in accordance with the draft Alexandra Regional Fire Protection Plan.*
- *Use least disturbance suppression strategies wherever practicable in the Park, including:*
  - *fireline construction using hand crews;*
  - *air attack;*

- *back burning from existing roads, tracks or breaks;*
- *using existing roads, tracks and topographic features as control lines.*
- *Rehabilitate fire control lines and other disturbed areas resulting from fire protection and suppression activities as soon as possible after the fire/burn.*
- *Document sites with significant flora, fauna and cultural values and seek to modify the Fire Protection Plan appropriately.*
- *Incorporate new research findings into fire management, including into the review of the Fire Protection Plan.*
- *Prepare sub-plans for the protection or ecological fire management of specific areas; i.e. undisturbed old growth forests in the Enterprise and Jamieson blocks.*

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

Pest plants in the Park can be placed into five groups in terms of management: those that are widespread in the regenerating pasture areas in the Fraser block (e.g. St Johns Wort, pasture grasses and weeds); those that are common and widespread in native vegetation (e.g. St Johns Wort, Tutsan); those that are widespread but restricted to disturbed areas (Blackberry, thistles); those that are uncommon and restricted (Horehound, English Broom, Gorse, Spanish Heath, Ivy); and those that are uncommon but widespread (fruit trees, pines, most other exotic species).

Some pest plants are now so widespread that it is very difficult to reduce their distribution within the Park, although further spread can be controlled. Others are currently localised infestations that could be effectively controlled by herbicides or other direct management techniques.

Pest animals in the Park includes feral cats and dogs, foxes and rabbits. Sheep can stray into the Park. Starlings, Blackbirds and Song Thrushes also occur but are not common.

Feral cats and dogs are most common near townships. Control of these species is likely to be ineffective and should only be considered where there is a specific need (e.g. a problem dog worrying campers, or a need to protect a specific rare species from cats). There are growing indications that foxes are the major problem predator of native fauna, so general control measures may be worthwhile. Fox control by baiting can have negative effects on native predators, such as Spot-tailed Quolls, a species that may occur in the Park. There is also evidence that the presence of Dingoes (but not dogs) reduces fox numbers.

Rabbits are generally not a problem in the Park in areas of native vegetation but are a problem elsewhere and continued control is needed to prevent major problems.

Cinnamon Fungus and other soil-borne pathogens are not known in the Park at present.

#### **Aims**

- Control, and where possible eradicate, weeds and other introduced plants.
- Minimise the introduction and spread of weeds into and through the Park.
- Control introduced animals.
- Prevent the introduction of Cinnamon Fungus into the Park.
- Minimise the impact of control programs on native flora and fauna.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Undertake, as a priority, control of localised infestations of invasive pest plants (e.g. Horehound, English Broom, Gorse, Ivy, Spanish Heath).*
- *Control widespread but uncommon woody weeds, such as fruit trees and pines, perhaps using volunteers.*
- *Prepare a pest plants management plan to monitor and treat target species that are present or threatening the Park to reduce or prevent major infestations from spreading, control minor infestations and eradicate new infestations.*

- *Minimise disturbance in native vegetation invaded by species such as St Johns Wort but make no other broad-scale control efforts unless a new and effective control technique is developed; control spot areas using herbicides where there is a specific need (e.g. to encourage regeneration or to maintain weed-free areas).*
- *Control cats and dogs where there is a specific problem or identified high population levels.*
- *Prepare and implement a fox control plan that aims for targeted and effective control.*
- *Do not use baits near any known or suspected Spot-tailed Quoll populations.*
- *Continue to control rabbits.*
- *Work with adjacent landholders, local government and other land managers to develop an integrated and co-operative approach to pest plant and animal management.*
- *Encourage local government to use local laws and the planning system to assist in the control of pest plants and animals on adjacent private land.*
- *Monitor for the presence of Cinnamon Fungus in the Park; if detected, manage Cinnamon Fungus infections in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*

## **Pines**

There is a small area at Stillmans Point which has been planted with pines by the former Forests Commission. The LCC has recommended that the area be replanted with native species (LCC 1977). The pines are an intrusion of exotic vegetation into an otherwise natural area of the Park and there is an ongoing problem with the spread of pine wildings into the surrounding Park areas. However, some of those who camp at Stillmans Point enjoy the pine forest environment. The area will have to be closed temporarily during rehabilitation.

There are a few pine trees at Jerusalem Creek associated with the sites of early settlements. These appear to be of little historic value and are causing the spread of pine wildings into the Park which are degrading the Park's natural values. Native vegetation is well developed around them.

The Victorian Plantations Corporation (VPC) manages a large pine plantation at the Delatite Arm, between the Park and the Delatite Arm Reserve. This plantation is currently being harvested and will be replanted and managed as a productive plantation. There is considerable invasion of the adjacent Park areas by pine wildings. Control of wildings in areas adjacent to coupes has been undertaken as harvesting occurs; there are, however, some very widely dispersed wildings that will require further control.

### **Aim**

- Control and where possible eradicate pine trees in the Park.

### **Management strategies**

- *Remove the pines at Stillmans Point and replant with native species; plan removal to minimise negative effects on the camping area. Control wildings in adjacent areas.*
- *Remove pines at Jerusalem Creek.*
- *Prepare a program to control pine wildings in consultation with the VPC.*

## **4.3 Soil conservation**

### **Revegetation**

Revegetation effort in the Park has been concentrated in the Fraser block. The approach is to match species to topography and soils and utilise local seed, and it has achieved considerable success. Erosion control measures and soil ripping are undertaken prior to planting. There is also some natural seedling regeneration around existing remnant trees, but the rate of spread has generally been lower than that achieved from active revegetation.

Revegetation has proceeded in an incremental manner, working out from Collier Bay and

aiming to have high success in well prepared sites of limited size, rather than a broad scale approach with likely poor establishment rates. Tunnel and gully erosion is a problem in the Fraser block on cleared areas, and erosion control and revegetation proceed together. Plantings are only of tree species; as the trees become established, weeds such as St Johns Wort and pasture grasses decline around them and some native understorey species become established.

Plantings are generally undertaken by professional works crews. Some valuable volunteer contributions have been made. However, the extent of the works is such that the efficiency and experience of work crews results in much greater productivity and is vital to the completion of yearly targets.

The revegetation program also represents a fairly large input of time and effort that may have relatively small returns in terms of biodiversity conservation (although it may be that it will assist the nationally endangered Regent Honeyeater).

There is little need for revegetation in other blocks of the Park, although there is a large cleared area on the north-east side of Highett Ridge in the Enterprise block and some degraded areas around popular campsites. Natural revegetation is occurring only very slowly, so a revegetation program may also be appropriate there.

#### **Aim**

- Revegetate cleared areas of the Park where necessary for soil or water conservation or for habitat enhancement.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Prepare and implement revegetation plans for Fraser and Wappan blocks and the Highett Ridge area that set clear and justified goals for revegetation, set out a works program (5-10 years) and address visual and visitor experience issues.*
- *Document and publish successful revegetation techniques developed in the Park so that other managers can benefit from this knowledge.*

#### **Soil conservation**

The land systems in the Park has been mapped (Rundle 1977) and their erosion hazards assessed. The Eildon and Maintongoon land systems cover over 75% of the Park and have a high erosion hazard. Water erosion is generally not a problem where there is good vegetation cover, but it can rapidly occur when the soil is disturbed either by mechanical means (such as track construction or maintenance) or by natural processes such as fire. Of particular concern is track surface erosion on routes leading directly to the Lake Eildon foreshore

As the Park falls within a Special Area Plan under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (Vic.), all works within 200 m of Lake Eildon full supply level must be approved by the Upper Goulburn Catchment Co-ordinator.

#### **Aims**

- Prevent and control soil erosion caused by visitor and management activities.
- Use the erosion hazard mapping of the Park in planning and management decisions.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Prevent sedimentation inputs into Lake Eildon by:*
  - *rationalising the track network in susceptible locations, closing tracks which are either poorly located or duplicated;*
  - *undertaking regular maintenance and drainage works on remaining track network;*
  - *closing susceptible tracks seasonally.*
- *Use land capability analysis to determine the most appropriate sites for any future developments.*

- *Ensure appropriate measures are taken to minimise soil loss after fuel reduction burns and wildfires, including immediate barring and breaching of tracks and firelines.*
- *Liaise with, and seek approval from, the Upper Goulburn Catchment Co-ordinator when planning works within 200 m of Lake Eildon full supply level.*

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## 5 THE PARK VISIT

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### 5.1 The Park visitor

Lake Eildon National Park allows for a range of visitor experiences:

- the Park provides a diversity of opportunities created by the interface of land and water;
- the Fraser block has well developed camping facilities and cabins, combined with a network of short walks and bike tracks, which allow opportunities for recreation in a semi-natural setting for visitors not seeking challenging activities in remote or difficult terrain;
- the rugged and semi-remote terrain creates opportunities for four-wheel drivers and other recreationists seeking more adventurous activities, although a lack of walking tracks currently limits its appeal to bushwalkers;
- people primarily focused on boating activities can camp in a bushland setting adjacent to Lake Eildon in the Park.

There is limited information on segmentation of visitors. Recent surveys suggest that there may be some identifiable visitor activity groups: scout and school groups, family-based campers, water-skiers, day walkers, commercial adventure tourists, deer hunters, boat club/marina users, special events participants and spectators, and four-wheel drive and trail-bike users. The major camping areas appears to attract different groups at different times of the year.

Total annual visitor numbers for the Park are unclear, but in the period 1980-1994 ranged from 83 600 to 175 000 per year in the Fraser block and from at least 6700 to 24 000 at Jerusalem Creek. Both these figures are underestimates, being based on the use of specific camping areas. Visits to the Park are strongly seasonal and appear to be affected by the water level of the Lake, reflecting the high use of the Park by people visiting primarily for water-based activities on Lake Eildon. These seasonal lows could be partly overcome by co-operative marketing with other attractions, and

the development of appropriate special events and land-based outdoor educational opportunities.

The semi-remote areas of the Park is relatively little visited. This is surprising given that most other remote or semi-remote areas are considerably further from major population centres. It can be expected that use of these areas will increase. Their values and accessibility have already been recognised by a range of commercial operators, and this use will also increase. The management of these areas in relation to Lake Eildon, with its emphasis on motorised boating and the provision of relatively sophisticated boating facilities at some points, will become increasingly important.

The Park falls within the Goulburn Murray Waters Tourism Region, yet the strength of the Park is not related to the image of the broader region and the Park does not appear to benefit from the marketing or image of the region as a whole. The Park could turn this into a strength through developing a series of tourist themes that can be marketed both separately and within the regional strategy. The Park has a high tourism potential because of its high quality natural assets and closeness to Melbourne. There is considerable potential to package those natural assets with other parks and attractions of the region (e.g. food and wine) and with activities or special events.

#### Providing for the visitor

The visitor services strategy for the Park will aim at providing for the key experiences outlined above. Opportunities to participate in these experiences will be enhanced in several ways. Fraser camping area will be upgraded in a number of minor but important aspects to meet the needs of specific user groups better, to enhance their amenity and aesthetics and to reduce conflicts between user groups; and the walking track and bike track network will be extended and upgraded. There is considerable potential as a destination for visitors with limited mobility, and suitable facilities will be a feature of the enhancements. Water-based

visitors to the Park will be made aware of the Park's broader values through targeted interpretation programs and information.

Enjoyment of semi-remote areas will be encouraged through the development of day and overnight walks, including the investigation of a new walk linking the Park to the popular destination of Mt Torbreck in adjoining State forest. Boat-based campers, deer hunters and walkers will enjoy camping facilities developed at Taylors Creek. The Jamieson block will be managed as a semi-remote area with no facilities and limited public vehicle access.

### **Aims**

- Provide for visitors in accordance with the above overview of future management for visitors.
- Develop an understanding of the profiles and preferences of each user group.
- Provide a range of recreation opportunities, services and facilities that match these user profiles and preferences, consistent with park values.
- Provide opportunities for tourism activities based on the Park's distinctive qualities and competitive advantage.
- Support and complement broader tourism activities and opportunities within the region.
- Ensure that tourism within the Park is sustainable and consistent with park values.

### **Management strategies**

- *Permit recreational activities in accordance with table 2.*
- *Provide and maintain facilities and services which highlight, but are in keeping with, the Park's distinctive character (tables 3 and 4, and sections 5.2 and 5.3).*
- *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 recreational 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.*
- *Determine carrying capacities in sensitive areas, as necessary to ensure that the environment and the visitor experience are protected.*

## **5.2 Visitor recreation activities and facilities**

### **5.2.1 Vehicle access**

Primary access to the Park is via the Goulburn Valley Highway from the south and the Mansfield-Woods Point Road from the north. Important two-wheel drive access routes are Skyline Road (to Fraser block), Jerusalem Creek Road, Eildon-Jamieson Road (Jerusalem and Jamieson blocks), and Walsh Road (Enterprise block). The main access roads are maintained by the Shires of Murrindindi and Delatite. Parks Victoria maintains the minor roads and tracks in the Park.

Maintenance works have been recently undertaken on several tracks within the Jerusalem and Enterprise blocks, however many of the tracks within these blocks still provide potential sedimentation sources into the adjacent Lake Eildon as they fail to meet current road construction standards (see also section 4.3). Similarly, most tracks within the Jamieson block are both actively eroding and practically untrafficable. They need to be either brought up to currently utilised standards or closed.

**TABLE 2 SUMMARY OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY	MANAGEMENT ZONES AND OVERLAYS				
	1	2	3	4	5
Picnicking	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Camping	N	Y	Y	NA	Y
Walking	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Vehicle based touring	N	YC	YC	YC	YC
Bicycle riding	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC
Horse riding	N	N	N	N	N
Orienteering/Rogaining	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Rockclimbing/Abseiling	N	YC	YC	NA	YC
Fishing	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y
Firewood collection	N	Yes	N	Yes	Yes
Motor boating (including launching and mooring)	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hunting	N	N	N	N	YC
Dogs	N	N	YC	N	N

1	Conservation Zone	4	Special Management Area - Public Utility
2	Conservation and Recreation Zone	5	Land Use Designation - Deer Hunting
3	Recreation Development Zone		
Y	Appropriate	YC	Conditional; refer to relevant section for details
N	Not appropriate	N/A	Not applicable

The opportunity also exists to formalise the semi-remote characteristics of the Jamieson block by closure of tracks (except to management vehicles), enabling bushwalking and mountain bike riding to be encouraged.

All tracks in the Fraser block are management vehicles only, although bicycles are allowed on several.

A schedule of seasonal road and track closures is prepared each year to ensure that the tracks on highly erodible soils are not damaged by extensive wet weather use. Temporary road and track closures can also occur where public safety is at risk or where the road may be damaged. The Victorian Association of Four-Wheel Drive Clubs (VAFWDC) is consulted during the preparation of the schedule of seasonal road and track closures.

The Alexandra Motorcycle Club conducts a navigation rally annually in the Jerusalem block. Conflicts with other visitors have been reduced in recent years through prior notification of other Park users by the Club. The Club also contributes some volunteer

assistance to track upkeep. Trail-bike riding off tracks is a problem at the Delatite Arm Reserve that affects adjacent areas of the Park.

Four-wheel drive touring is becoming increasingly popular in the Enterprise block, adjacent to Delatite Arm Reserve. Several tracks within the block have been recently upgraded to cater for increased use and prevent active soil erosion. The track along the PowerNet powerline easement is well graded and leads to a superb viewing point. It is currently closed to vehicles but it would seem appropriate, after PowerNet approval, to consider formally linking it to the Park track network and opening it on a seasonal basis. Such opening should be undertaken with due regard to other potential touring route rationalisations in the block.

#### **Aims**

- Provide and maintain an appropriate network of roads and vehicle tracks for visitor use, management purposes and access to adjacent public land.

- Minimise the impact of vehicle use and track management on the Park's natural and cultural values, and on opportunities for semi-remote recreation.

### **Management strategies**

- *Manage and permit the use of roads and vehicle tracks in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines, table 3 and figure 3.*
- *Encourage adherence to the VAFWDC's Code of Ethics.*
- *Continue to implement seasonal road closures as necessary in consultation with the VAFWDC.*
- *Continue to liaise with trail-bike clubs to facilitate joint management of vehicle tracks and organisation of rally events; establish similar contacts with local four-wheel drive clubs.*
- *Liaise with the Shires to ensure a co-operative approach to the management of the roads they manage adjacent to the Park.*
- *Make all vehicle tracks except Lake Track, in the Jamieson block 'management vehicles only' tracks to minimise sedimentation inputs into Lake Eildon and to provide a semi-remote region within the Park. Consider increasing patrols of this area by boat.*
- *Investigate continued four-wheel drive vehicle access for approved clubs only, to tracks proposed to be closed to the public as 'management vehicle only' tracks, in consultation with the VAFWDC.*
- *Negotiate opening of the PowerNet powerline track in the Enterprise block to four-wheel drive vehicles.*
- *Rationalise access track networks within the Enterprise block to minimise sediment inputs into Lake Eildon.*

### **5.2.2 Day visits**

The scenic nature of parts of the Park, combined with its proximity to regional and local holiday areas and population centres, makes the Park an attractive location for the day visitor. Day visits from Melbourne also occur, many as part of coach tours.

Day visitor facilities in the Park are mainly in Fraser camping area, with a few at Jerusalem Creek. They include picnic areas, interpretive facilities, nature trails and walking tracks as well as facilities for people with limited mobility (see section 5.2.5). They are generally add-ons to the camping areas and there is no clear focus for day visitors. There is also little marketing of the Park to day visitors.

#### **Aim**

- Maintain and improve existing day visitor facilities to provide a range of day visit experiences, consistent with protecting park values.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Provide day visitor facilities in accordance with figure 4 and table 4.*
- *Allow camp-fires only in fireplaces provided (see section 3.3).*
- *Monitor visitor use to ensure adequate provision of facilities and appropriate levels of use.*
- *Expand the network of day walking tracks in the Fraser block (see section 5.2.4).*
- *Investigate the feasibility of an integrated visitor facility, which could also serve as a focus for day visitors.*

### **5.2.3 Camping**

The Park has a number of main camping grounds with facilities (in Fraser camping area and Jerusalem Creek), in addition to boat-based camping areas with toilets only (Mountaineer Creek, Coopers Point and Big River Arm), and a hunting camping area with no facilities at O'Toole Flat.

The demand for camping is closely related to water levels. The campsites in Fraser camping area are mostly in coves rather than on points, so when the water level recedes the campsites are a considerable distance from the water. This is especially a problem at Candlebark when family campers need to drag their craft a considerable distance, often through mud, to the Lake. Space for boat trailers is a problem during the peak season, creating congestion in the camping areas. Many campers prefer to have their trailers close to their campsites, for security reasons, rather than at the parking bays; however, there are few campsites where there is additional space for a trailer.

The group camping areas at Devil Cove, Candlebark and Jerusalem Creek are popular and there appears to be enough demand for an additional group site.

There is a need to continue to revegetate areas surrounding campsites – especially around Fraser camping area – that receive heavy use (see section 4.3), and to create designated walkways through the camping areas and boardwalks to the Lake to reduce impacts.

There have been problems with boat-based camping, especially with fires in non-designated places and during restrictions, and with the impact of random camping on the foreshore. These activities mostly occur in the 200 m buffer and have therefore been difficult to police. Moreover, people have little understanding of the complexities of the regulations and control of the shoreline area.

The existing boat-based camping areas are popular, though there are not enough sites during peak times. Boat-based camping areas raise some management difficulties as they are generally only accessible by water and are remote from other park management activities.

At present there are five unserviced and two serviced cabins at Fraser camping area. These are popular in peak periods but under-used at other times. Year-round use of the cabins could be increased by improved marketing, and additional facilities, such as group lodges, could be developed or investigated.

Existing visitor facilities could also be upgraded. Commercial operators have been

invited to operate the commercial facilities in the Park. Their contract could also include the upgrading and managing of other, non-revenue producing visitor facilities in the camping areas.

There is an increasing demand for more sites suitable for caravans, especially in Fraser camping area. Caravans may compete directly with the existing cabins and if caravans were encouraged additional pressure for powered sites and other facilities could be created. Many existing sites are suitable for caravans. They should remain available to caravans but the development of more caravan specific sites is not considered appropriate in the Park.

There is currently little demand for dispersed camping in the Park except from deer hunters. O'Toole Flat and Taylors Creek have been designated as camping areas for deer hunters. Deer hunting is a winter activity and shared camping areas are unlikely to lead to conflicts with other users who visit mainly in summer. The demand for dispersed sites by bushwalkers can be expected to increase as walking tracks are constructed.

Some commercial operators are allowed to camp at sites not designated for general camping. While the impact on these sites is currently considered low, they should be carefully monitored and only made available under permit.

### **Aims**

- Provide opportunities for a range of camping experiences while minimising impacts on park values.
- Continue to charge appropriate fees for the use of vehicle-based camping facilities.

### **Management strategies**

- *Provide camping facilities as outlined in figure 4 and table 4.*
- *Allow camping only at designated campgrounds and camping areas.*
- *Redesign some campsites at Fraser camping area to provide places for boat*

**TABLE 3 VEHICLE AND WALKING TRACK MANAGEMENT**

NAME	CLASS	CURRENT STATUS	PROPOSED STATUS	MANAGEMENT/ ACTION RATIONALE
<b>Vehicle Tracks</b>				
Aird Inlet Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Allans Peak Track (from Fire Break 1a to Goughs Bay)	3	O	C	Very steep.
Allans Peak Track (to Fire Break 1a)	3	O	O	
Allans Peak Track Plantation Links Tracks (3)	3	O	C	Duplication of access.
Blowhard Spur Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Brians Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Cable Track	3	MVO	MVO	Overgrown
Devass Gully Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Devil River Track	2	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Dingo Track	3	MVO	MVO	Duplication of access.
Eagle Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Entrance Road	1	O	O	Unchanged
Estate Spur Tracks	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Ferny Creek Track	3	O	C	Duplication of access.
Forsyth Point Track	3	O	C	No through road.
Gap Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Highett Point Track (Highett Point to SEC Road)	3	O	O	Unchanged
Jeep Track Link	3	O	C	Duplication of access.
Jerusalem Track	2	O	O	Unchanged
Jimmy Spur Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Jims Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Keg Spur Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Lake Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Lake Track 1	3	O	MVO	Will be subject to Seasonal Closure. Make MVO to enhance remote setting.
Lake Track 2	3	O	MVO	Make MVO to enhance remote setting.
Lake Track 3	3	O	MVO	Make MVO to enhance remote setting.

Table 3 (cont.)

NAME	CLASS	CURRENT STATUS	PROPOSED STATUS	MANAGEMENT/ ACTION RATIONALE
Lake Track 4	3	O	MVO	Make MVO to enhance remote setting.
Lakeside Link	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Lavell Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Long Gully Link	3	O	C	Duplication of access.
M.W. Divide Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Magazine Spur Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Mallets Track (east)	3	O	O	Unchanged
Mallets Track (west)	3	O	O	Unchanged
Merlo Lookout Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Middle Spur Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Mountaineer Creek Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Pinnacle Track (Gap Track to Pinnacle)	3	O	O	Unchanged
Pinnacle Track (Pinnacle to Taylors Creek Track)	3	O	O	Unchanged
Rhonda Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Scott Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Sebastopol Creek Track	3	O	C	Close; duplicates access.
SEC Easement Road	2	MVO	O	Opening will require agreement of PowerNet.
Sheep Dip Link	3	O	C	Duplication of access.
Sims Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Sims Track (Gap Track link)	3	O	O	Unchanged
Steep Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Stillmans Track	3	O	MVO	Adjacent to Conservation Zone.
Taylors Creek Track	2/3	O	O	Unchanged
Wappan Track 1	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Wappan Track 2	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Water Track	3	MVO	MVO	Unchanged
Webb Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
Wilson Creek Track	3	O	O	Unchanged; subject to Seasonal Closure.
Wombat Track				
(i) to Rhonda Track	3	O	O	Unchanged
(ii) Rhonda Track to Lake	3	MVO	C	Very steep; alternative access to water available.

Table 3 (cont.)

NAME	CLASS	CURRENT STATUS	PROPOSED STATUS	MANAGEMENT/ ACTION RATIONALE
Woolshed Creek Track	3	O	C	Traverses Conservation Zone.
<b>Walking Tracks</b>				
Auriferous Spur Track	C	W	W	Unchanged
Bolte Bay Track	C	W	W	Unchanged
Candlebark Nature Walk	B	W	W	Unchanged
Lakeside-Devil Cove Track	B	W/Cy	W/Cy	Unchanged
Perfect Cure Creek Nature Walk	B	W	W	Unchanged
Pinnacle Walking Track	B	W	W	Unchanged
Rocky Spur Track	B	W	W	Unchanged
Sheoak Nature Walk	B	W	W	Unchanged
Wallaby Bay Track	B	W	W	Unchanged

**KEY:****CLASS**

1 = all weather road

2 = dry weather 2WD road

3 = 4WD track

B = well defined walking track with good but unmade surface

C = well defined walking track but rougher and steeper than class B tracks

**STATUS**

O = open to public vehicles

MVO = management vehicles, walkers and cyclists only

C = close and revegetate

W = walkers only

Cy = cyclists permitted (walking track)

*trailers; charge a boat trailer fee for such sites.*

- In conjunction with Goulburn Murray Water, develop a Code of Practice for boat-based camping and distribute widely to other agencies and commercial operators, and at boat launching areas.*
- Retain the group camping areas at Candlebark and Devil Cove, and consider a suitable location for a group campsite at Jerusalem Creek.*
- Investigate the development of group lodges and further cabins in the Fraser block, possibly by a commercial operator.*

- Maintain existing facilities for caravans at current level.*
- Investigate the provision of boardwalks at key locations to assist access to the water in times of low water levels.*
- Provide, under permit, designated campsites for commercial operators, and monitor impact.*
- Improve promotion and marketing of the cabins at Fraser camping ground to increase year-round use.*
- Encourage low impact camping practices.*
- Allow camp-fires only in fireplaces provided (see section 3.3).*

### 5.2.4 Bushwalking and cycling

Bushwalking (mainly day walks) is popular in the Park. There are six walking tracks in the Fraser block which range from 1.4 km to 13.5 km. Due to the size of the block the lengths of walks available is limited. There is potential to extend these tracks to create some round trips and, if access through intervening private land can be negotiated, to extend walking into the Wappan block. There is also a need to provide for dispersed camping.

Elsewhere in the Park there is a lack of walking tracks, forcing walkers to use four-wheel drive tracks which often have rough surfaces, steep grades and the potential for conflict with four-wheel drive vehicles and motor cycles. There is considerable potential to develop walking tracks in the Rocky Spur area and on the Stillman Plateau. A Rocky Spur walking track could connect to Mt Torbreck and the Torbreck Range outside the Park to create a superb weekend circuit. The proposed closure of the vehicle tracks in the Jamieson block has the potential to encourage bushwalking and cycling there (see section 5.2.1).

Cycling, especially mountain biking, occurs at relatively low levels outside the Fraser block but is gaining popularity.

The Fraser block currently has a 4.5 km cycling track along the foreshore between Lakeside and Devil Cove. This track could be extended to connect into a loop system providing cyclists with a round trip. This same path along the foreshore should also be extended up to the cabins, to link all campsites. Some maintenance works are required on the track to cater better for cyclists.

A number of tracks in the Fraser block are open to cyclists but this is not well known; cycling opportunities could be promoted more actively. The existing MVO tracks have the potential to be further developed into a better network for both cycling and walking.

#### Aims

- Provide a range of opportunities for walking, consistent with park values.

- Increase awareness of the opportunities for walking in the Park.
- Provide opportunities for cycling on roads and tracks consistent with maintaining park values and minimising conflicts with other users.

#### Management strategies

- *Maintain the existing network of walking tracks in accordance with table 3. Expand the walking track network in the Fraser block to create some round trips and to connect to the Wappan block.*
- *Improve selected tracks for bicycles.*
- *Seek the co-operation of the Forests Service to develop two new walking track circuits - Wilson Creek-Rocky Spur (with a connection to Mt Torbreck outside the Park) and on the Stillman Plateau - in consultation with bushwalking clubs.*
- *Develop improved maps and interpretative materials for walking and cycling in the Park.*
- *Encourage bushwalking clubs to develop semi-remote overnight walking routes in consultation with PV and consistent with maintaining park values.*
- *Permit cycling on all roads and vehicle tracks including management vehicle only tracks (unless specifically closed to bicycles for safety or soil conservation reasons), with seasonal closures to apply to bicycles also (table 3).*
- *Continue to allow cycling on specified walking tracks in the Fraser block (table 3).*
- *Encourage adherence to the Mountain Bike Code (CNR 1993a).*

### 5.2.5 Access for visitors with limited mobility

There are some facilities which cater for access by persons with limited mobility in the Fraser camping area but none elsewhere. The

**TABLE 4 EXISTING AND PROPOSED VISITOR FACILITIES**

SITE	DEFINED CAMPS	TOILETS	PICNIC TABLES	FIRE PLACES	WATER SUPPLY	WALKING TRACK	PARK INFO.	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND COMMENTS
Blue Gum Flat	E							Caters for organised groups only with permission.
Candlebark	E	E		E	E	E	E	Caters for group camping.
Coopers Point	E	E						Caters for boat-based visitors. Pines to be harvested and area to be revegetated with native species; site will be closed during harvesting.
Devil Cove	E	E		E	E	E	E	Caters for group camping
Forsyth Flat		E	E	E	E	E		Day visitor area.
Jerusalem Creek	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	Day visitor and camping area. Additional site for group camping to be investigated.
Lakeside	E	E	P	E	E	E	E	Camping area.
Mountaineer Creek	E	E		E		E		Boat-based camping.
O'Toole Flat	E			P				Caters for deer hunters; unloaded firearms to be allowed in deer season.
Stockyard Bay		E	E	E	E	E	E	Day visitor area (including Herb Fitzroy Shelter).
Taylors Creek	E	E		P				Cater for boat-based visitors, walkers and deer stalkers; unloaded firearms to be allowed in deer season.

**KEY:** E = existing; P = proposed

cabins were designed to give people with limited mobility the opportunity to experience Victoria's Parks. They have not been actively promoted and the facilities are not well used.

#### **Aim**

- Encourage visitors with limited mobility to experience the Park through provision of appropriate opportunities and facilities.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Promote Fraser camping area as a suitable destination for visitors with limited mobility.*
- *Investigate the provision of a range of activities suitable for adventurous people with limited mobility.*
- *Conduct an audit of all facilities in the Park, including park furniture, paths and bridges, to determine whether they are suitable for use by people with limited mobility.*
- *Design new facilities, and upgrade appropriate existing facilities and selected tracks used by people with limited mobility.*

### **5.2.6 Fishing**

Stream and lake fishing are popular in the Park. While fishing is generally compatible with park values, the effects of informal access tracks in riparian areas should be monitored. Concerns have been raised about the impact of illegal collection of frogs for bait on populations of threatened species.

#### **Aim**

- Provide fishing opportunities while minimising conflict with other park values.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Permit recreational fishing in the Park.*
- *Monitor access tracks to fishing sites and prepare a strategy to close and rehabilitate inappropriate tracks, provide alternative tracks where necessary and stabilise tracks that are to remain in use.*

- *Prohibit bait collection in streams. Provide basic on-site interpretive information regarding the conservation status of the species at streams found to support the Spotted Tree Frog.*

### **5.2.7 Water sports**

Many people use the Park to gain access to Lake Eildon for water sports including power boating, water skiing, jet skiing, sailing and canoeing. This has led to the development of infrastructure such as boat ramps, trailer storage and fuel storage areas.

Motorised water sports can lead to conflicts with other Park users, especially because of noise, and to safety concerns. Jet skiing in particular is seen by some Park users as a problem. There are currently restrictions on the speed and use of jet skis, and Goulburn Murray Water is able to apply further restrictions where necessary. The enforcement of regulations on the water can be difficult; education may assist in resolving current problems.

House boats often moor off the Park and occupants may come ashore to light camp fires or for camping. These activities affect both the Park and the 200 m buffer.

#### **Aims**

- Continue to provide access to Lake Eildon through the Park for water sports at appropriate sites.
- Minimise conflicts between Park users and water sports activities.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Continue to provide boat launching facilities at Fraser and Jerusalem Creek camping areas.*
- *Prepare a Code of Practice for boats, house boats and jet skis in conjunction with Goulburn Murray Water and relevant stakeholder groups, and publicise in conjunction with the proposed boat-based camping Code of Practice.*
- *Encourage and assist Water Police and Goulburn Murray Water in developing*

*water safety and interpretation programs in the Park at peak times.*

- *Investigate methods to simplify boat storage, fuel storage and fuel provision issues.*

### **5.2.8 Horse riding**

There is currently little demand for horse riding in the Park. The National Horse Trail runs close to the Park and there is a seldom-used horse camping area with no facilities in State forest at Big River. Horse riding is currently allowed on tracks open to public vehicles. The lack of appropriate facilities such as horse yards may be one reason why the Park is not utilised by horse riders; the closer proximity of other suitable areas to notable tourist use points is probably the main factor.

The steep terrain and erodible soils of the Park makes it unsuitable for horse riding. As more suitable areas exist near Lake Eildon, and as demand for horse riding within the Park is low, it is not considered appropriate to cater for horse riding in the Park.

#### **Aim**

- Provide recreation experiences consistent with protecting park values.

#### **Management strategy**

- *Protect soils by not permitting horse riding.*

### **5.2.9 Orienteering and rogaining**

Orienteering and rogaining are currently minor activities in the Park, although several major events have been conducted. The Park has suitable terrain for these activities but there is potential for damage to significant flora and to soils in some areas.

#### **Aim**

- Minimise the impacts of orienteering and rogaining on Park visitors and park values.

#### **Management strategy**

- *Allow orienteering and rogaining in the Park (except in the Conservation Zone) under permit as special events in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*

### **5.2.10 Dogs**

Dogs are not permitted in the Park. They are, however, allowed at Jerusalem Creek camping area and within several campsites adjacent to the Big River which are within the 200 m State forest buffer surrounding Lake Eildon. Dogs are not allowed for deer hunting in the Park.

#### **Aim**

- Minimise the impacts of dogs on park values.

#### **Management strategy**

- *Maintain current access for dogs in the Jerusalem Creek camping area and Big River campsites.*

### **5.2.11 Rock climbing, abseiling and adventure activities**

The Park does not provide good opportunities for rock climbing and abseiling. These activities can cause erosion, vegetation damage and loss, and disturb fauna (e.g. cliff nesting birds), and can create safety problems if rocks or other materials are dislodged.

Adventure activities are undertaken by a variety of organised groups and commercial operators. Most do not require facilities and occur away from tracks (e.g. survival courses, bush navigation). Such activities should only occur under permit and their impacts should be monitored.

#### **Aim**

- Provide limited opportunities for rock climbing, abseiling and adventure activities in the Park only where consistent with maintaining park values, minimising conflicts with other Park users and maintaining public safety.

### Management strategies

- *Prohibit rock climbing and abseiling except under permit conditions that protect park values and other Park users.*
- *Allow continued use of The Pinnacle ropes course by authorised commercial tour operators and educational groups, subject to permit.*
- *Ensure that adventure activities undertaken by groups and commercial operators are sustainable, in appropriate sections of the Park, and subject to a permit.*

#### 5.2.12 Hunting

Deer stalking without dogs is permitted on a seasonal basis in the Big River area. Stalking also occurs in the 200 m buffer and adjacent forest inliers surrounding the Enterprise block, as no PV/Forests Service management agreement has so precluded it (see section 7.2).

The Park is considered to be an important area for deer stalking because of the large numbers of Sambar present, and the Park's proximity to Melbourne. There is little conflict between deer stalkers and other users of the Park because the deer hunting season is in winter. Camping areas for deer hunters are discussed in section 5.2.3. Sambar are protected wildlife but little is known about their ecological impacts; stalking may exert some level of control but this is likely to be minor.

No other hunting is allowed in the Park.

#### Aims

- Provide opportunities for deer stalking without dogs where and when appropriate.
- Minimise the impact of deer stalking on park values.

### Management strategies

- *Continue to allow deer stalking without dogs on a seasonal basis only in the Special Management Area:*
  - *in the Jamieson block and part of the Jerusalem block (see figure 2);*

- *in the adjacent 200 m buffers subject to appropriate gazettal following formalisation of the Section 19C management agreement (see section 7.2).*
- *Encourage deer stalkers to adopt minimal impact practices and to be aware of park values.*

### 5.3 Visitor information, interpretation and education

Interpretation activities have traditionally been concentrated at Fraser camping area (publications, holiday programs, guided walks, Ranger talks, etc.), with relatively few activities or facilities elsewhere, other than the provision of Parknotes and some Ranger talks and activities at Jerusalem Creek during peak periods.

There are few interpretive facilities within the Park, other than the nature walks at the Fraser block and Jerusalem Creek. The provision of interpretative signs in the Big River area has run into problems with vandalism.

The Park does not have a focus for interpretation activities and information dissemination, and there is a lack of integrated information about the Park and the region. A visitor information centre serving the region has recently opened in Alexandra.

Interpretation has tended to be aimed at those who already have an interest in the natural environment. There are opportunities to enlarge the audience by targeting groups such as water-based visitors through such activities as boat-based interpretation tours. Many water-based Park users are not reached by the current Park information and interpretive material, especially those who do not launch from Fraser camping area. There is considerable potential to reach these groups via boat clubs and commercial hire operators. The involvement of other stakeholders (e.g. Water Police, Goulburn Murray Water) in some interpretation programs could both add to the interest for Park users and strengthen cross-organisational relations. Fraser camping area is visited by many school groups and there is value in becoming aware of the information

needs of these groups and providing tailored information to them. The bus tours that visit Fraser camping area, which tend to be for older visitors, may also benefit from a similar approach.

Potential interpretation themes include:

- mining history;
- the history associated with the flooding of the valleys (including what to see as water levels drop in dry years);
- flora and fauna;
- resource management issues (e.g. revegetation, weeds);
- Koori history;
- the Park as seen from the water (e.g. a self-guided boat tour based on the old Darlingford Road and both emergent and drowned features).

#### **Aims**

- Provide interpretation opportunities and facilities which enhance visitors' appreciation of the Park and provoke interest in the area's natural and cultural environment.
- Orientate visitors to the Park and its features.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Develop an interpretation plan for the Park. Consider the themes listed above in the development of interpretive information.*
- *Continue to provide interpretation programs during peak visitor periods and extend the interpretation programs to regularly include Jerusalem Creek camping area.*
- *Develop interpretation programs aimed at specific user groups: water-based users, school groups, scouts, service groups, older tour groups.*

- *Develop a self-guided tour around the mining history, ensuring that historic values are protected.*
- *Investigate the development of a boat-based self-guided tour, perhaps based around the old Darlingford Road, which follows the edge of the Lake, rising in and out of the water.*
- *Provide adequate visitor orientation information and safety messages at key visitor nodes.*
- *Establish and implement monitoring and maintenance schedules for all interpretive facilities.*
- *Undertake regular evaluation of information and interpretation programs related to the Park.*
- *Involve other stakeholders (e.g. Water Police, Goulburn Murray Water) in some interpretation programs to add to the interest for Park users and strengthen cross-organisational relations.*
- *Liaise with the operators of the visitor centre at Alexandra to promote the Park and disseminate Park information.*
- *Liaise with commercial operators and boat clubs to act as distribution points for interpretive material.*

#### **5.4 Commercial tourism operations**

It is likely that the image of Lake Eildon and water-based activities is stronger in the minds of most tourists than that of the National Park and the land-based opportunities on offer.

The Park is used as the venue for a range of special events, as is the adjacent Lake Eildon, including motor cycle navigation rallies, triathalons and rogaining. There is potential to further promote sections of the Park for special events, but impacts on other Park visitors and natural values will need to be carefully controlled.

The Park and its surrounds also has a competitive strength in the opportunities it offers for outdoor education and recreation leadership activities, for both private and commercial groups. A number of commercial tour operators use the Park and are licensed by PV; however, only a few use the Park regularly. The main types of tour operators are those running outdoor leadership courses or adventure activities, personalised fishing tours, and coach operators who may have a stopover or day trip to the Park.

Additional value may be realised by having a focus for their park activities, and by investigating their expectations and requirements further. This competitive advantage may also be better developed by co-operative marketing with other parks and natural attractions in the vicinity.

Commercial tourism operators can provide valuable assistance with promotion of the Park's National Park profile and improving visitor awareness.

There is considerable potential for commercial operators to further develop the use of the Park (see section 5.2.3). Tour operators do not generally conflict with the majority of uses as they mostly use the Park in off-peak seasons.

### **Aim**

- Provide opportunities for special events and commercial tourism services consistent with Park management objectives, and give appropriate assistance to operators.

### **Management strategies**

- *Allow appropriate and sustainable commercial tour activities subject to a permit and commercial user fees. Permits should specify performance criteria in relation to impacts on the Park and on other users.*
- *Liase with the operators of integrated visitor facilities in the region and assist with provision of information on the Park.*

- *Prepare an information package for commercial operators including permit requirements and fees, information on the Park's opportunities and values, and sustainable practices.*
- *Prepare in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines a special events strategy for the Park that sets out appropriate types of events, permit requirements, guidelines to control impacts and impact-related fee structure and liase with organisers and tourism authorities to ensure that they are aware of the strategy.*

## **5.5 Public safety**

The climate and topography of the Park and in particular mines and caves (section 3.6) presents inherent dangers and risks to Park visitors which may be increased by remoteness and limited access. Wildfire is a potential hazard during drier times of the year. Nonetheless, the semi-remote areas of the Park provides an opportunity for challenge and self-reliance which should be respected when planning for visitor safety.

PV has a responsibility to ensure that Park visitors are aware of safety issues and risks within the Park. The Victoria Police is responsible for search and rescue operations. Within the Park such operations would usually involve PV, the State Emergency Service and other groups under police supervision.

### **Aim**

- Promote and encourage safe practices among visitors and staff.

### **Management strategies**

- *Manage the Park in accordance with risk management guidelines.*
- *Contribute to Displan planning for search and rescue within the Park.*
- *Provide adequate training for staff in dealing with emergency situations.*

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## 6 COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT

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### 6.1 Friends and volunteers

Currently there is no Friends group for either Park, but Park staff are encouraging the formation of one. One difficulty in establishing such a group has been that the majority of Park users are from Melbourne; current efforts are concentrating on local people and groups.

Individual groups with specific interests in the Park have carried out single tasks in the Park related to their area of interest, and school groups have played a volunteer role in the Park, especially in undertaking monitoring studies. There are also a number of projects suitable for single volunteers, such as students.

The organisation and supervision of volunteer work can involve considerable Ranger time and is not always cost effective. Use of volunteers should concentrate on encouraging effective and knowledgeable groups with a long-term interest in the Park, who can make high value contributions at low organisational cost to the Park.

Volunteers need and deserve recognition for their work and may withdraw their work if they perceive that they are being exploited. They should be given worthwhile work to do and be made aware of its importance to the Park.

#### Aim

- Encourage volunteer involvement in management of the Park.

#### 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, including a register of suitable projects, e.g. volunteer guides program.*

### 6.2 Community awareness and Park neighbours

Freehold land abuts the Fraser block, the north end of the Jerusalem block and the east end of the Enterprise and Jamieson blocks, and there is a large area of pine plantation owned by the VPC along the northern edge of the Enterprise block. Although the Park is close to a number of towns and hamlets and abut areas of private land, there appears to be a lack of community 'ownership' of the Park by the neighbouring communities.

There is a management plan for the VPC pine plantation (CMPSF 1994). This plan does not mention any specific management actions to ensure that adjacent park values are not affected. There has been co-operation at the operational level between the VPC and PV on matters such as controlling pine wildings in the Park. The *Victorian Plantations Corporation Act 1993* (Vic.) does not allow for recreation management on its land.

#### Aims

- Increase public awareness and community 'ownership' of the Park, its values and management.
- Encourage conservation and sound management practices on adjacent private land.

#### Management strategies

- *Liaise with local instrumentalities, community groups and landholders and, as appropriate, involve them in relevant aspects of planning and managing the Park.*
- *Apply, and encourage the application of, the Good Neighbour Policy to management issues on or near the boundaries of the Park.*
- *Encourage the Shires of Murrindindi and Delatite to develop planning strategies for land adjacent to the Park, including*

- consideration of overlay controls in their planning schemes to protect park values.*
- *Ensure involvement in the preparation of amendments to Shire Planning Schemes, with the aim of minimising adverse effects of private land developments on park values, and ensure that permit applications that may affect the Park are referred to PV for comment.*
  - *Liaise with adjacent landholders to address issues that may affect the Park or adjoining land.*
  - *Encourage the use of instruments such as Conservation Covenants and conditions on planning permits to assist in ensuring appropriate management of adjacent private land.*
  - *Investigate the purchase of areas of adjacent private land which become available for purchase if they are critical to the integrity of the Park or have particularly high conservation values.*
  - *Continue to co-operate with the VPC and ensure that their management plans specifically address the maintenance of adjacent park values in the future.*

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## 7 OTHER ISSUES

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### 7.1 Authorised uses

#### 7.1.1 Gravel extraction

There are three gravel quarries within the Park, two on Taylors Creek Road and one in the Fraser block. They provide gravel for use within the Park. The two quarries on Taylors Creek Road are major visual intrusions adjacent to one of the prime access routes through the Jerusalem block. Current management practices are not consistent with best practice quarry management. Quarrying is generally an inappropriate activity in a Conservation and Recreation Zone, but there are cost implications in closing both quarries. The quarry in the Fraser block has a relatively low visual impact.

One major cause of the spread of Cinnamon Fungus is the use of infected gravel on roads and tracks. Cinnamon Fungus is not known within the Park yet. One advantage of continuing to use the quarries within the Park is that potentially contaminated material from outside does not have to be imported.

There is a further quarry on private land adjacent to the Enterprise block that has encroached slightly into the Park. This quarry is managed by the Shire of Delatite. Revegetation and rehabilitation works for the area concerned have been agreed upon with the Shire and a rehabilitation plan is being prepared.

#### Aims

- Continue to provide material for road and facility upgrading and construction within the Park.
- Minimise the environmental and visual impacts of quarrying.

#### Management strategies

- *Retain the quarry in the Fraser block to provide gravel for use within the Park and upgrade site management, including weed control and control of runoff and sedimentation; review after five years.*

- *Rationalise the quarries on Taylors Creek Road by closing one after the existing stockpile is exhausted. Retain the other to provide gravel for use within the Park but upgrade site management, including weed control and control of runoff and sedimentation and screen the quarry using mounds and revegetation.*
- *Continue to liaise with the Shire of Delatite regarding the rehabilitation of the quarry site adjacent to the Enterprise block.*
- *Regularly monitor quarries for Cinnamon Fungus.*

#### 7.1.2 Apiculture

The effect of introduced bee species on indigenous flora, fauna and natural processes is not fully understood. There is currently no provision for apiary sites in the former Fraser National Park but there are ten sites in the former Eildon State Park. The LCC recommendations for the Park provide for continued existing use but no additional use.

#### Aim

- Allow apiculture in accordance with LCC recommendations and Parks Victoria guidelines.

#### Management strategies

- *Maintain availability of apiary sites in the former Eildon State Park.*
- *Review existing apiary site locations in the former Eildon State Park and provide alternative sites as appropriate.*

#### 7.1.3 Public utilities

The Park contains a number of utility easements including PowerNet powerlines and Telstra telephone lines. The telephone lines are underground and there is no necessity to maintain an easement. However, access may be required if a fault develops. The largest easement is the 220 kV Eildon-Mt Beauty

powerline that crosses the Enterprise block; this is a major visual intrusion into the Park.

Office of Surveyor General, NRE and private surveyors rely on a number of trigonometrical stations within the Park. Access to these markers is required by surveyors.

### Aims

- Provide for the appropriate use and maintenance of existing public utilities in the Park.
- Minimise the impacts of the construction and maintenance of utility corridors and installations on the Park.

### Management strategies

- *Liaise with the Office of Surveyor General, PowerNet, Telstra and other utilities and service providers with existing facilities in the Park to ensure that maintenance and new works are consistent with maintaining park values.*
- *Encourage a co-operative approach to minimising the visual impact of existing easements and to controlling erosion and weeds.*
- *Ensure existing public utilities are covered by an appropriate consent.*
- *Continue to liaise with PowerNet to allow public access along the 220 kV easement in the Park (see section 5.2.1).*

#### 7.1.4 Other uses

There is an unlicensed TV repeater station within the Jerusalem block. The Army occasionally carries out training in that Park also.

### Aim

- Allow other uses in the Park in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines only where they do not affect park values and alternative sites are not available.

### Management strategies

- *Investigate the appropriateness of the TV repeater station; license under Section 26 of the National Parks Act or remove, as appropriate.*
- *Continue to allow defence force training in the Park in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*

## 7.2 Boundaries and adjacent uses

The bulk of the public land adjacent to the Park is either State forest or the 200 m buffer along the shore of Lake Eildon. There is a large area of pine plantation owned by the VPC along the northern edge of the Enterprise block.

NRE manages the adjacent Big River State forest and there has been a history of appropriate management adjacent to the Park.

The management of the 200 m buffer is complex and administratively cumbersome. The current situation is that Goulburn Murray Water controls the water; the shoreline is generally controlled by Goulburn Murray Water but by the Eildon Water Reserve Committee of Management (PV on behalf of Goulburn Murray Water) adjacent to the former Fraser National Park (and there are special Goulburn Murray Water controls near the dam wall - outside the Park), while the 200 m buffer is State forest jointly managed by Goulburn Murray Water and PV staff but not part of the Park. In addition, there is a seasonal prohibition on the lighting of fires within 400 m of the water along the southern shore.

The LCC (LCC 1994) recommended that the 200 m area above full supply level should be reserved for water supply purposes and recognised that Goulburn Murray Water has ultimate responsibility for water quality. However, the LCC also recommended that Goulburn Murray Water and the NRE reach agreement regarding management policies for the buffer and that these policies should be implemented by PV and the buffer managed as part of the Park. The Action Statement under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act for Leafy Greenhood also commits the Department to reaching such an agreement.

An agreement between PV and Goulburn Murray Water has been proposed on these matters. This agreement is essentially that the Park Regulations apply to all land uncovered by water below the Park's boundaries and that this area would be managed by PV staff on behalf of Goulburn Murray Water. This is a generally appropriate and simple solution, but it requires modification in the Big River area and at the marina sites in Jerusalem Inlet. It is suggested that Park regulations should not apply on the eastern side of Big River between Dudleys Flat and the Big River Bridge on the Eildon-Jamieson Road, nor at the marina sites.

There are a number of boundary anomalies in the Enterprise block. There are several small enclaves of State forest between the Park boundary and the 200 m buffer.

A block of private land between the Fraser block and the Wappan block has been suggested for purchase in order to link the two blocks.

An area north-west of Mt Pinninger is freehold land owned by Goulburn Murray Water. The LCC has recommended that it should be added to the Park (LCC 1994). It is a popular lookout with excellent views; there is also a mine shaft in the area containing an important roost site for a large number of Common Bent-wing Bats.

### **Aims**

- Minimise conflicts between park values and surrounding land use.
- Clearly define the boundary of the Park.

### **Management strategies**

- *Continue negotiations with the Forests Service and Goulburn Murray Water to reach an agreement on management of the 200 m buffer and any area of the Lake exposed when the Lake is not filled to capacity and to rationalise applicable regulations.*
- *Prepare a management agreement (under the provisions of Section 19C of the National Parks Act) with the Secretary NRE and Goulburn Murray Water to ensure the 200 m buffer, enclaves of State forest between the boundary and the buffer and exposed Lake areas are managed by PV.*
- *Ensure through liaison with the VPC that their management plans specifically address adjacent park values.*
- *Continue to negotiate with Goulburn Murray Water for the transfer of land north east of Mt Pinninger for inclusion into the Park.*
- *Investigate linking the Park blocks when and if appropriate land becomes available for purchase.*

## 8 IMPLEMENTATION

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 5 as an initial step in this process.

**TABLE 5 PRIORITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	SECTION IN PLAN
<b>Resource conservation</b>	
Manage Leafy Greenhood populations according to approved Action Statement	3.3
Protect bat roosting sites in mine shafts	3.4
Prepare a conservation plan for Wilsons Creek mining area	3.6
Protect cultural sites	3.6
<b>Park protection</b>	
Implement Regional Fire Protection Plan within the Park, using least disturbance strategies where practicable	4.1
Control localised invasive pest plants	4.2
Control woody weeds	4.2
Prepare and implement a fox control plan	4.2
Remove pines at Stillmans Point and revegetate with indigenous species	4.2
Prepare revegetation plans for Fraser and for Highett Ridge	4.3
<b>The Park visit</b>	
Develop and maintain visitor facilities	5.1, 5.2, 5.3
Manage commercial tour operators in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines, and provide commercial tour operators with an information package	5.4
Explore the possibility of opening the PowerNet track in the Enterprise block to public vehicles	5.2.1
Develop new walking track circuits	5.2.4
Develop an interpretation plan for the Park	5.3
Develop access and interpretive facilities at Wilsons Creek mining area consistent with the conservation plan	3.6, 5.3
Develop interpretation programs for water-based users	5.3
<b>Monitoring and research</b>	
Undertake flora and fauna surveys	3.3, 3.4
Monitor visitor numbers and use	5.1
<b>Other</b>	
Negotiate management agreements with Goulburn Murray Water & Forests Service	7.2

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- Personal communications**
- White, M., former CNR Botanist

### APPENDIX I SIGNIFICANT FLORA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATUS	REF.
<i>Botrychium australe</i>	Austral Moonwort	vulnerable in Victoria	Smith (1980)
<i>Desmodium varians</i>	Slender Tick-trefoil	rare in Victoria	M. White, pers. comm.
<i>Hypsela tridens</i>	Hypsela	vulnerable in Victoria	Smith (1980)
<i>Pterostylis cucullata</i>	Leafy Greenhood	vulnerable in Australia and Victoria, FFG*	CNR (1993b)
<i>Wurmbea biglandulosa</i>	Glandular Early Nancy	rare in Victoria	Smith (1980)

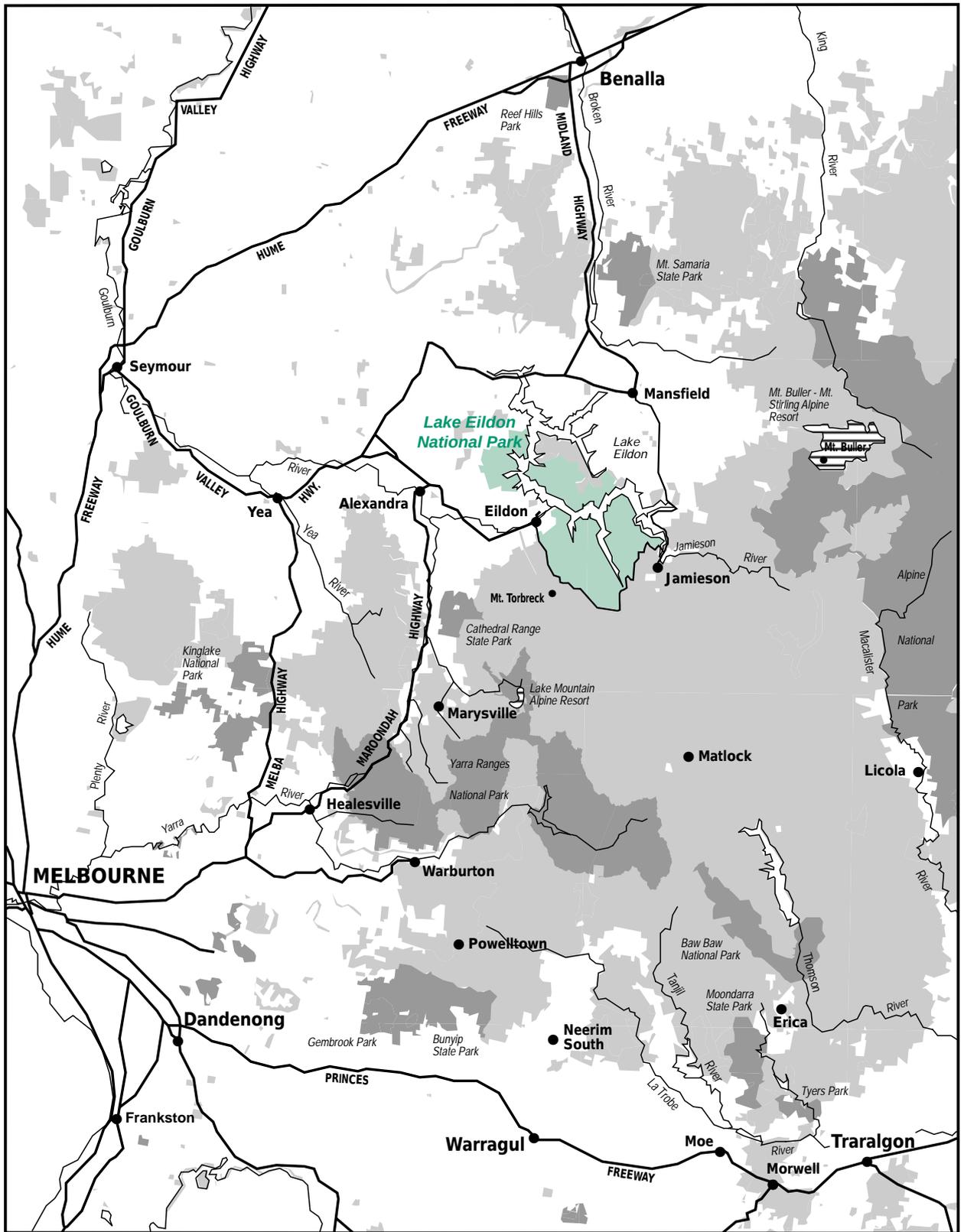
\* FFG = listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.

## APPENDIX II SIGNIFICANT FAUNA

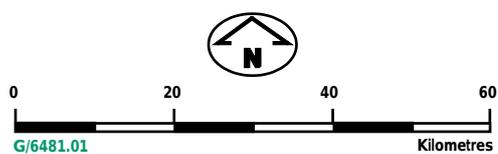
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATUS
<i>Galaxias olidus</i>	Mountain Galaxias	i
<i>Litoria spenceri</i>	Spotted Tree Frog	E, e, FFG
<i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i>	Common Bent-wing Bat	r/c, FFG
<i>Myotis adversus</i>	Large-footed Myotis	r
<i>Ninox strenua</i>	Powerful Owl	r, FFG
<i>Phascogale tapoatafa</i>	Brush-tailed Phascogale	r, FFG
<i>Phascogale tapoatafa</i>	Brush-tailed Phascogale	r, FFG
<i>Rhinolophus megaphyllus</i>	Eastern Horseshoe Bat	r/c, FFG
<i>Tyto tenebricosa</i>	Sooty Owl	r, FFG
<i>Xanthomyza phrygia</i>	Regent Honeyeater	E, e, FFG
<i>Xanthomyza phrygia</i>	Regent Honeyeater	E, e, FFG

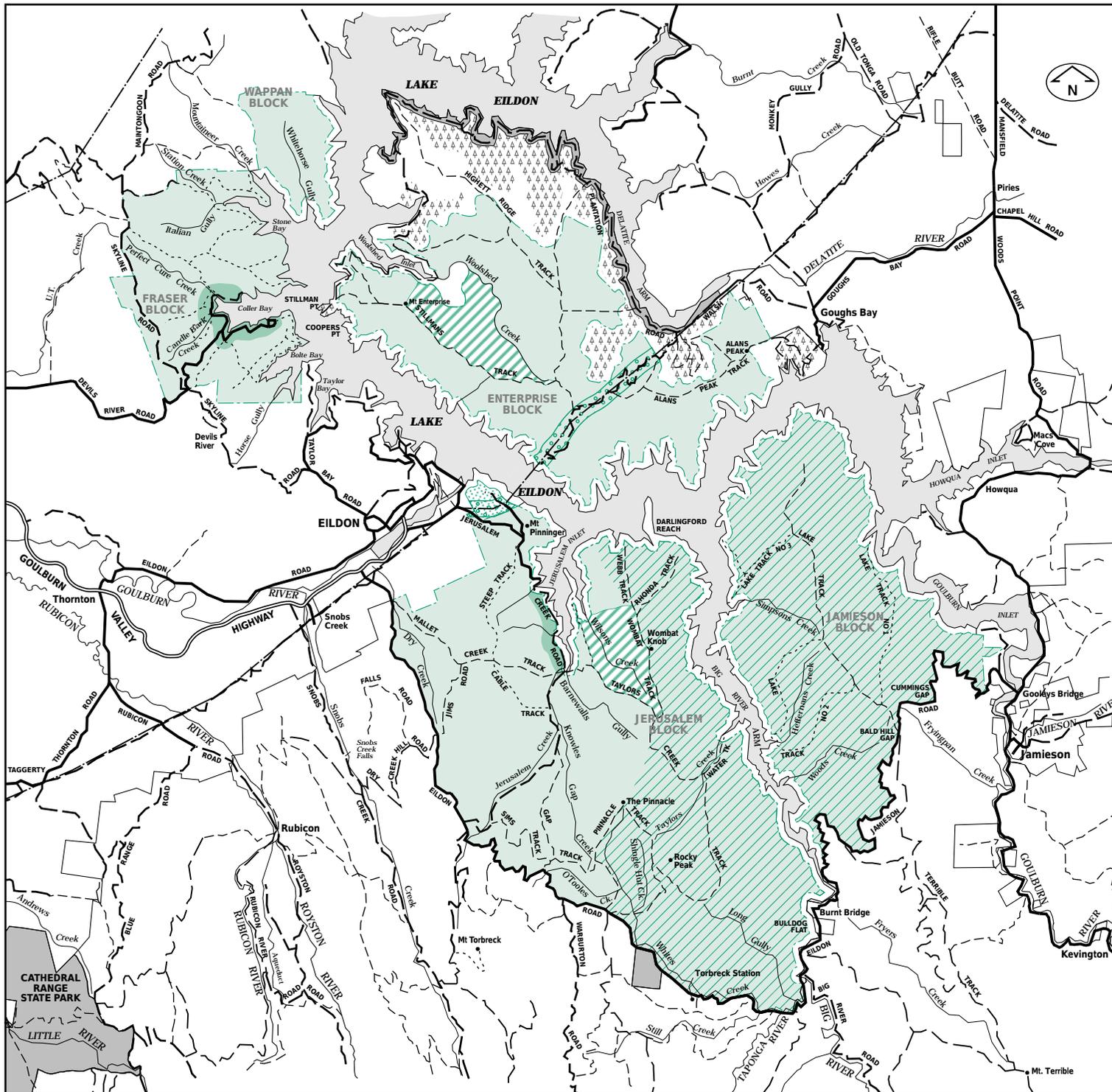
Status categories (CNR 1995c):

- E endangered within Australia
- e endangered within Victoria
- r rare within Victoria
- r/c restricted colonial breeding or roosting species within Victoria
- i insufficiently known within Victoria
- FFG listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.



**Figure 1 LAKE EILDON NATIONAL PARK REGIONAL LOCALITY MAP**





# LAKE EILDON NATIONAL PARK

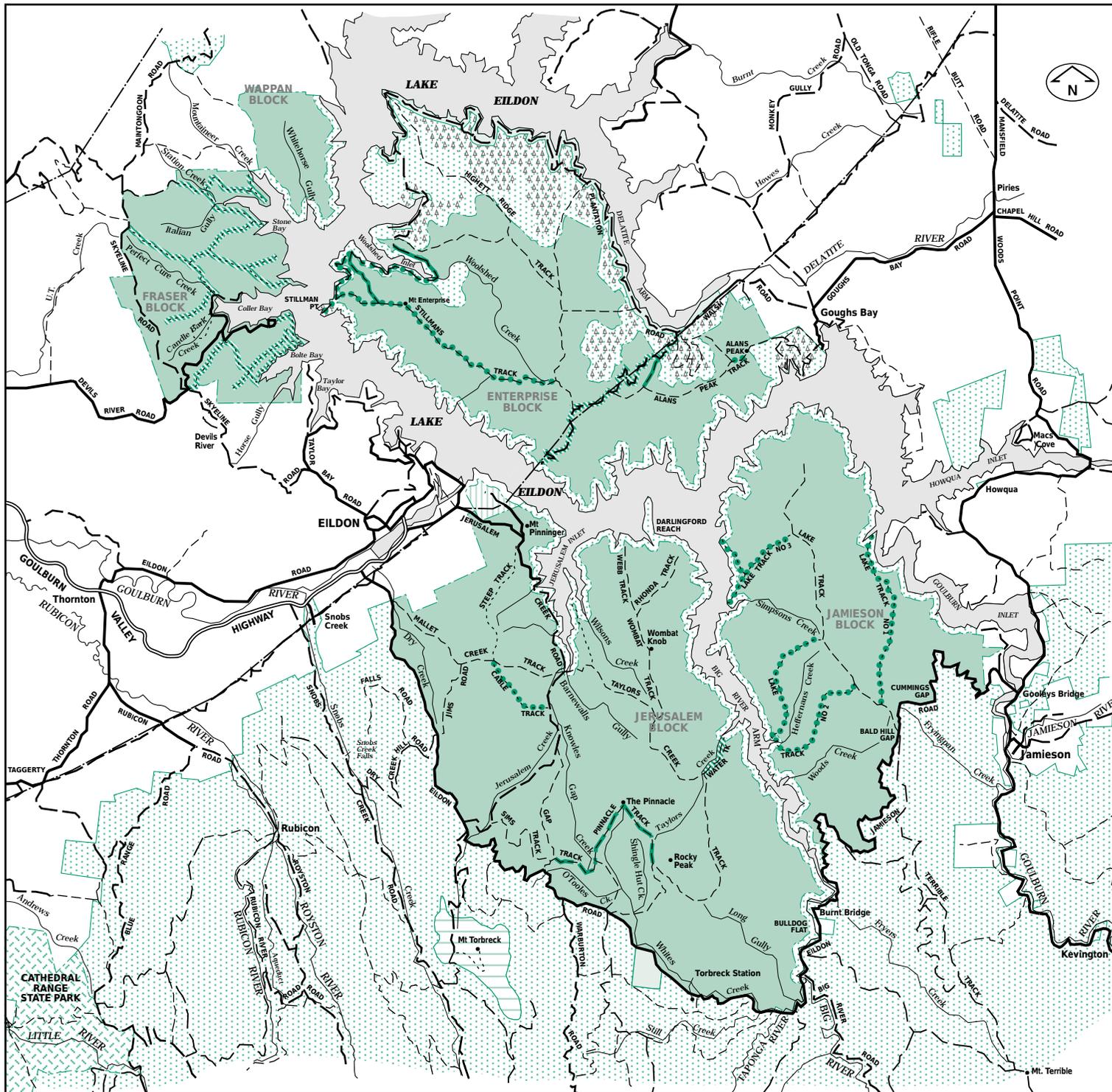
Figure 2 MANAGEMENT ZONES



- Highway
- Sealed road
- Major unsealed road
- Minor unsealed road
- Vehicular track
- Walking track
- Lake Eildon National Park boundary
- Other Parks & Reserves
- Public Land boundary
- PowerNet Transmission Line
- Softwood Plantations
- Conservation Zone
- Conservation and Recreation Zone
- Recreation Development Zone
- Special Management Area - Public Utility
- Land Use Designation - Deer Hunting
- Mt Pinnering proposed addition

Cartography by Natural Resource Systems 1997.



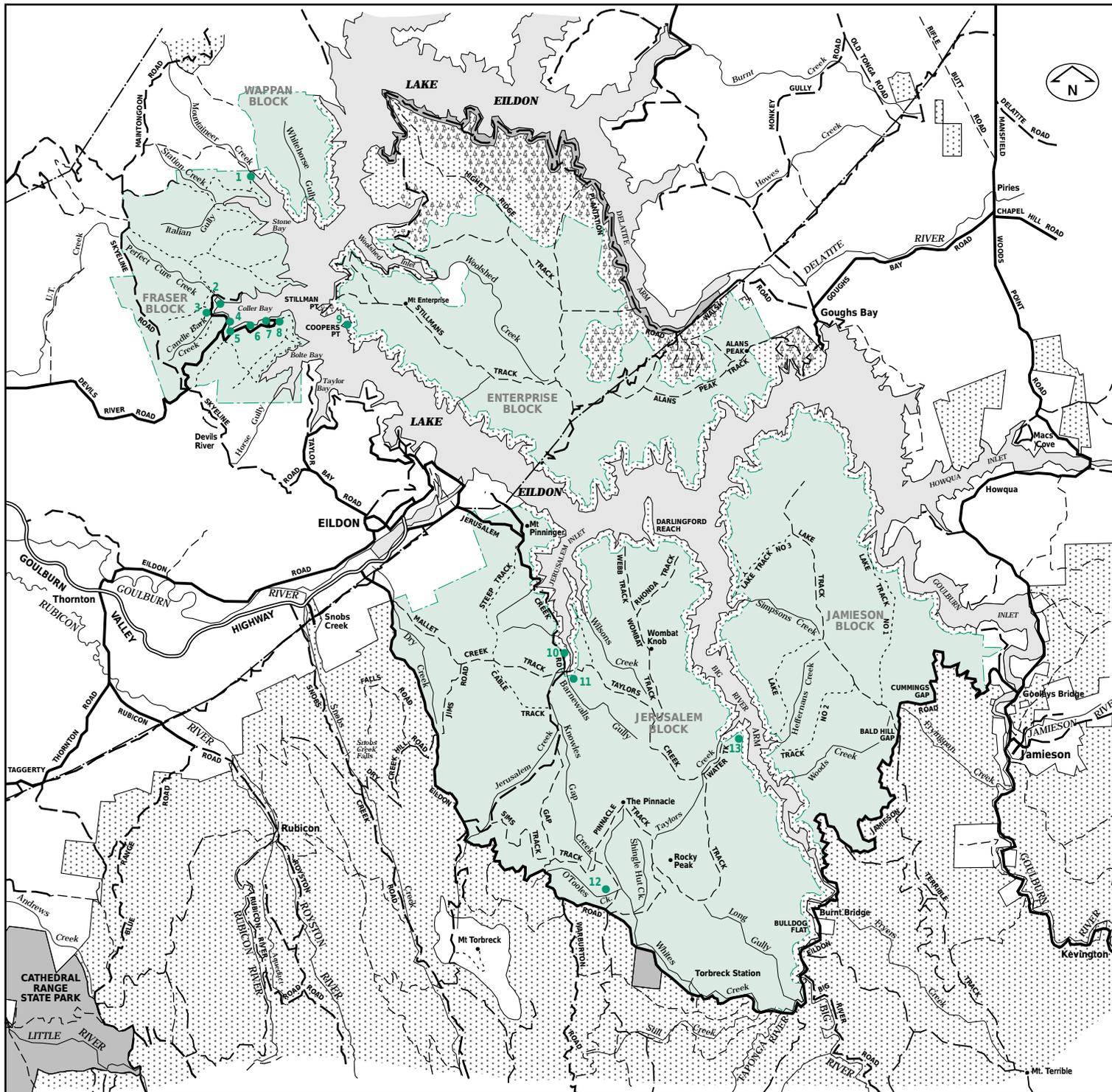


# LAKE EILDON NATIONAL PARK

Figure 3 PUBLIC LAND USE & ACCESS MANAGEMENT



- Highway
- Sealed road
- Major unsealed road
- Minor unsealed road
- Vehicular track
- Walking track
- PowerNet Transmission Line
- Softwood Plantations
- Lake Eildon National Park
- Other Park
- Proposed addition to Park
- State Forest
- Mt Torbreck Alpine Resort
- Reserve
- Public land boundary
- Proposed management vehicles & walkers only
- Existing management vehicles & walkers only
- Permanent closure
- Seasonal closure



# LAKE EILDON NATIONAL PARK

Figure 4 RECREATION MANAGEMENT



Highway	====
Sealed road	————
Major unsealed road	- - - - -
Minor unsealed road	- · - · -
Vehicular track	- · - · - ·
Walking track	- · - · - · - ·
Lake Eildon National Park	■ (light green)
Other Parks & Reserves	■ (grey)
Public Land boundary	— (dotted)
PowerNet Transmission Line	— (dashed)
Softwood Plantations	▲▲▲▲▲

Existing Recreation Facilities ● 1 - 13

1. Mountaineer Creek
2. Devil Cove
3. Candlebark
4. Boat launching ramp
5. Forsyth Flat (Day visitor area)
6. Stockyard Bay (Day visitor area)
7. Stockyard Bay
8. Lakeside
9. Coopers
10. Jerusalem Creek
11. Jerusalem Creek (Day visitor area)
12. O'Toole Flat
13. Taylors Creek



Cartography by Natural Resource Systems 1997.