

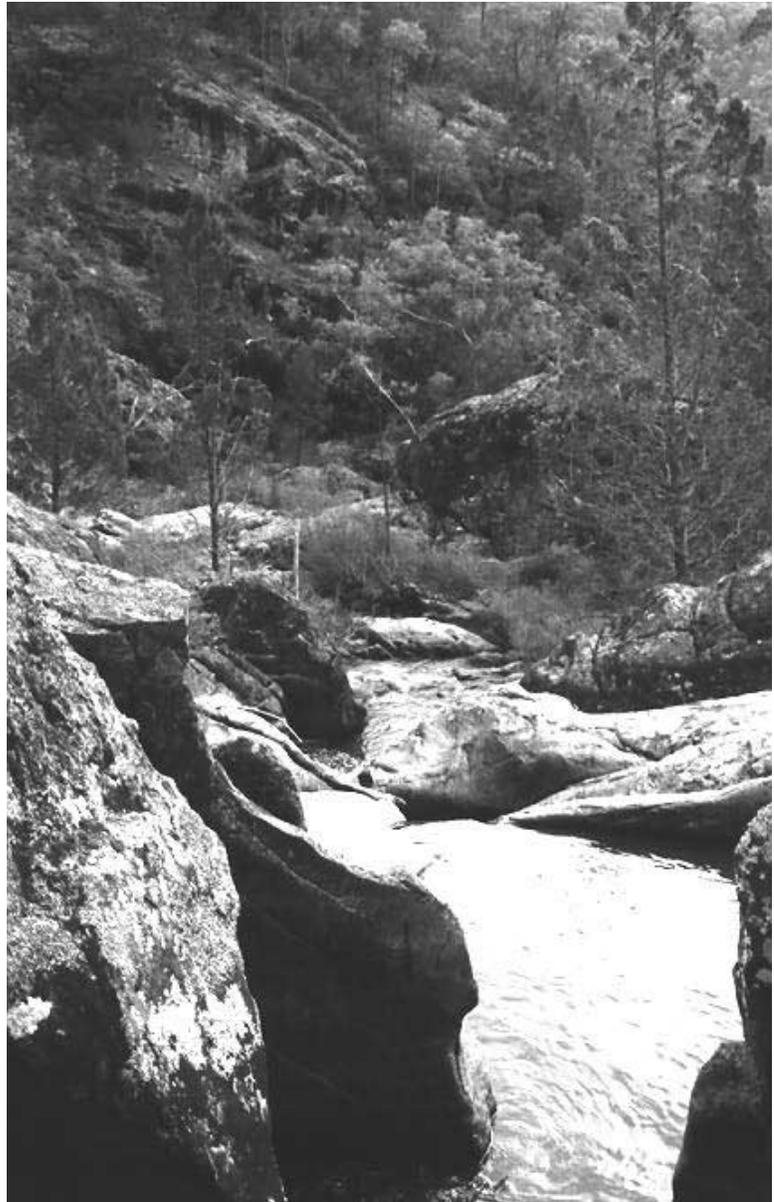
# Mt Lawson and Mt Granya State Parks

May 1998



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## Management Plan



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

This Management Plan for Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park is approved for implementation. Its purpose is to direct management of the Park until the Plan is reviewed. A Draft Management Plan was published in May 1997. A total of eight submissions were received.

Copies of the Plan can be obtained from:

Parks Victoria  
378 Cotham Road  
KEW VIC 3101

Parks Victoria Information Centre  
Vault 11  
Banana Alley  
Flinders Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000  
☎ 13 1963

NRE Information Centre  
8 Nicholson Street  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

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## FOREWORD

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Although Mount Lawson and Mount Granya State Parks in north-east Victoria are not widely-known parks, they have significant conservation values and allow for a range of visitor activities in scenic and remote settings.

Featuring slopes, ridges and plateaux with attractive waterfalls and cascades and rocky cliffs and bluffs, they protect areas of uncommon Black Cypress-pine Woodland and contain several rare or threatened plant and animal species.

The Plan proposes that the remote atmosphere and natural values of the Parks will be protected and that low key facilities for visitors will be provided.

The Parks have the potential to become an en-route attraction for travellers between Victoria and NSW, and a part of nature-based tourism opportunities in north-eastern Victoria.

I look forward to the community's support in managing these parks, which are important components of Victoria's outstandingly diverse park system.

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

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## APPROVED MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

The Plan provides the basis for the future management of Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park. It was finalised following consideration of eight submissions received on the Draft Plan.

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

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

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## SUMMARY

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This Management Plan covers Mount Lawson State Park (13 150 ha) and Mount Granya State Park (6140 ha). These Parks are separated by a small forested area including State forest and privately owned land. The Parks share many characteristics and management issues.

Extending from Lake Hume and the Murray River in the north to the Murray Valley Highway in the south, these Parks form a large tract of remote and undeveloped land. Both Parks contain a range of environments with significant conservation values.

The Parks are not highly visited but offer a range of opportunities for recreational activities, especially bushwalking, picnicking and self-reliant camping.

These Parks will be managed for conservation and recreation consistent with their State Park status. Management will aim to retain an undeveloped and remote character and to protect and enhance the largely undisturbed environments of each Park.

Visitors will be able to use low key visitor facilities while enjoying a sense of remoteness, pleasant scenery and interesting cultural features. As part of a series of similar Parks in the North East, these two Parks will play an important role in nature-based tourism in the Upper Murray area.

Major management directions for the Parks are outlined below.

- The remote character and scenic qualities of the Parks will be protected.
- Significant features, and flora and fauna will be given special protection.
- A pest plant and animal strategy will be prepared which identifies key sites, target species and methods of control.
- Visitation will be increased through the promotion of three key visitor contact points, located near major tourist routes.
- A new picnic and camping area will be established at 'The Kurrajongs' in Mount Lawson State Park within easy access of the Murray River Road.
- New walking tracks will be constructed to improve access for visitors.



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Location and planning area

Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park are in North East Victoria, about 400 km north-east of Melbourne and 50 km east of Albury-Wodonga.

The Parks are to the north-east of the Tallangatta township. They are bordered on the north by the Murray River and Lake Hume, and to the south by the Murray Valley Highway (figure 1).

At their closest point the Parks are separated by approximately 5 km of forested land consisting of State forest and freehold land.

This Management Plan covers the following areas:

- Mount Lawson State Park (13 150 ha) which includes the Bungil Reference Area (1750 ha) (figure 2);
- Mount Granya State Park (6140 ha) (figure 3).

## 1.2 Regional context

These Parks are two of a series of parks in the Upper Murray Region extending eastwards from Lake Hume to Corryong and across the New South Wales border into Kosciuszko National Park.

There is a variety of recreational opportunities on public land within the Upper Murray area including:

- Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park—a relatively undeveloped Park which offers opportunities for day visits, extended bushwalking and camping;
- Jarvis Creek Regional Park (proposed)—utilised for day use, 4WD touring and camping;
- Alpine National Park and Kosciusko National Park—both of these Parks provide for a diverse range of visitor experiences and attract large numbers of visitors;
- Murray River—attracts many visitors for fishing and camping;

- Lake Hume — one of the Region’s major attractions, popular for fishing, camping and water sports.

## 1.3 Significance of the Parks

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

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

The Parks are both listed on the Register of the National Estate, in recognition of their outstanding values and their importance as part of our heritage.

Two areas including Aboriginal art sites in Mount Lawson State Park are listed on the Register of the National Estate in recognition of their value as part of our heritage.

Significant features of the Parks are summarised below.

### Natural values

- Highly diverse vegetation, including Black Cypress-pine Woodland and Clay Heathland.
- The occurrence of several rare or threatened flora and fauna species.
- Natural rugged beauty including prominent mountain ranges, rocky outcrops and waterfalls.

### Cultural values

- Aboriginal rock shelters and art sites.
- Historic mine sites and relics.

## Tourism and recreation values

- A variety of attractions and recreational opportunities in remote settings without significant intrusion by developments or high visitor numbers.
- Visitor attractions adjacent to major tourist routes in the Upper Murray.
- Opportunities for self-sufficient walking and camping in rugged and remote areas.
- A network of 4WD touring tracks with spectacular views of the Parks and the Murray River Valley.
- Several short walks to some of the Parks' interesting features.

### 1.4 Creation of the Parks

Mount Lawson State Park was included on Schedule Three of the National Parks Act on 21 June 1988 as a result of the *National Parks (Amendment) Act 1987* (Vic.) and was transferred to the new Schedule Two B (State Parks) in 1989.

Mount Granya State Park was included on Schedule Two B (State Parks) on 3 August 1995 as a result of the *National Parks (Yarra Ranges and Other Amendments) Act 1995* (Vic.).

Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park were created following Government decisions on the following recommendations from the Land Conservation Council (LCC):

- Mount Lawson State Park: North-Eastern Area (Benalla-Upper Murray Review) (LCC 1986);
- Mount Granya State Park: North Eastern Study Area District 1 (LCC 1973) and North-Eastern Area (Benalla-Upper Murray Review) (LCC 1986).

### 1.5 Legislation and guidelines

Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park are reserved and managed under the provisions of the National Parks Act. The Act requires the Director to preserve and protect the natural environment of the Parks, and their natural and other features and, subject to this, to provide for the use of the Parks by the public

for enjoyment, recreation and education. The Act also provides for appropriate research.

Specific LCC recommendations for Mount Lawson State Park include phasing out grazing unless considered necessary for management purposes, and permitting apiculture (LCC 1986).

The Bungil Reference Area in Mount Lawson State Park has been proclaimed under the *Reference Areas Act 1978* (Vic.) and is managed in accordance with Ministerial directives and the relevant park guideline. Within this area, which forms a reference for comparative study purposes, natural processes are to be allowed to continue undisturbed.

The Parks are managed in accordance with park guidelines for the management of parks and LCC recommendations, and other park plans and guidelines, including the North East Region Regional Fire Protection Plan (DCE 1990).

### 1.6 Park management aims

Sections 4 (Objects) and 17 of the National Parks Act provide the main basis for management of the Parks. The following management aims are derived from those sections and as such 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 Parks and adjacent lands from injury by fire.
- Eradicate or otherwise control introduced plants, animals and diseases.

#### The Park visit

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

**Other**

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

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## 2 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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### 2.1 Park vision

A future visitor to Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park finds well managed and relatively undeveloped Parks. The Parks are being managed with an increasing understanding of their diverse natural environments.

A number of interesting short walks, including walks to Granya Falls and Mount Lawson Summit, are popular with day visitors. Many visitors also enjoy car-based sightseeing and 4WD day tours and picnicking at pleasant locations such as Cotton Tree Creek and 'The Kurrajongs'.

Rugged gorges and rock outcrops, a semi-remote atmosphere and panoramic views present popular and challenging opportunities for adventurous bushwalkers, cyclists and 4WD tourists.

The Parks and their attractions are well known in larger population centres like Albury-Wodonga, and by people in Melbourne and Sydney, and are appreciated by the local community and adjoining landholders for their important conservation values.

Highly successful control programs have virtually eradicated pest plants and animals from the Parks. Native plant communities have recolonised areas once heavily infested with weeds.

In conjunction with Lake Hume, the Murray River and other nearby parks and reserves, the Parks are increasingly valued as an important part of the nature-based tourism opportunities in the area, facilitated by the popular tourist routes of the rail trail along the former Cudgewa Railway and the Murray Valley Highway.

Visitor facilities are low key and restricted to a minimal number of sites, mostly near Park boundaries. A quality visitor experience is facilitated by high standard interpretation of the values of both Parks.

Careful and sensitive management by Parks Victoria, with some input from volunteer and

community groups, ensures that the parks values will be maintained for future generations.

### 2.2 Management directions

Major management directions for the Parks are outlined below.

#### Resource conservation

- Significant species and communities will be monitored, and threats to these species and communities identified and managed.
- Cultural features will be monitored and protected from visitor impacts, management activities and other threats.

#### Park protection

- Fuel reduction burning will be managed to protect particular assets and adjacent land.
- A pest plant and animal strategy which identifies key sites, target species and methods of control will be prepared.
- Roads and tracks will be maintained, and closed on a seasonal basis as required to prevent erosion.

#### The Park visit

- Visitor information and day use facilities will be provided at key attractions near major tourist routes.
- The experience of relative remoteness will be retained at the same time as access to several semi-remote areas through the development of walking tracks is improved.

### 2.3 Zoning

A park management zoning scheme has been developed to:

- provide a geographic framework in which to manage the Parks;
- indicate which management directions have priority in different parts of each Park;

- 
- indicate the types and levels of use appropriate throughout each Park;
  - assist in minimising existing and potential conflicts between uses and activities, or between those and the protection of park values;
  - provide a basis for assessing the suitability of future activities and development proposals.

Two principal management zones apply to the Parks—Reference Area, and Conservation and Recreation.

In addition, Special Protection Areas are used to summarise requirements additional to those of the underlying primary management zones.

### **Special Protection Areas**

Special Protection Areas have been designated surrounding the following locations:

- Black Cypress-pine Woodland—occurs in both Parks on the dry north-western slopes, and is particularly fire sensitive;
- three Aboriginal art sites in Mount Lawson State Park—the cultural significance of these sites warrants protection from visitor impacts and management activities;
- Clay Heathland—occurs near Thologolong Track in Mount Lawson State Park. This Ecological Vegetation Class is poorly represented in parks and reserves.

Table 1 specifies management zone and overlay characteristics, and figures 2 and 3 show the location of these areas except for the Aboriginal art sites.

**TABLE 1 PARK MANAGEMENT ZONES AND OVERLAYS**

AREA/ ACTIVITY	MANAGEMENT ZONES		MANAGEMENT OVERLAY
	REFERENCE AREA	CONSERVATION AND RECREATION	SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS
AREA/LOCATION	Mount Lawson State Park: Bungil Reference Area (1750 ha, 13% of the Park).	All of Mount Lawson State Park except for the Bungil Reference Area (11 400 ha, 87% of the Park).	Black Cypress-pine Woodlands, Aboriginal art sites and Clay Heathland.
		All of Mount Granya State Park (6140 ha, 100% of the Park).	
VALUES	Relatively undisturbed land types and associated vegetation.	Important natural values and scope for low impact recreation opportunities.	Discrete significant areas requiring special attention.
GENERAL MANAGEMENT AIM	Protect viable samples of one or more land types that are relatively undisturbed for comparative study with similar land types elsewhere, by keeping all human interference to the essential minimum and ensuring as far as practicable that the only long term change results from 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.	Protect specific natural or cultural values in specific areas and sites where a special management focus is required.

## 3 RESOURCE CONSERVATION

### 3.1 Geological and landform features

The landforms of Mount Granya State Park and the southern section of Mount Lawson State Park are similar in appearance. Montane slopes rise from valley floors to form prominent ridges and plateaux at elevations of approximately 240 – 610 m. Mount Granya (870 m) and Mount Lawson (1041 m) are the highest points in the respective parks.

Soils range from friable red gradational soils on the plateaux of both Parks to granite-derived soils in the northern portion of Mount Lawson State Park. These granite soils are particularly susceptible to erosion.

The Bungil Land System covers the majority of Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park, but the northern portion of Mount Lawson State Park is different. This area is a northern extension of the Koetong uplands and contains an intrusion of Devonian grey granite. This has resulted in the rocky ridges, cliffs and prominent bluffs characteristic of Mount Lawson State Park.

Both Parks feature scenic cascades and seasonal waterfalls. Granya Falls in Mount Granya State Park is a pleasant destination for day visitors. Flaggy Creek Gorge in Mount Lawson State Park is a more remote feature with an impressive and rugged atmosphere. Koetong Creek in Mount Lawson State Park flows throughout the year and is popular with campers.

#### Aims

- Minimise impacts from visitors and management on significant geological features, including waterfalls and rock outcrops.
- Prevent and control soil erosion caused by visitors and management activities.

#### Management strategies

- *Monitor the impact of visitors at Granya Falls and develop management guidelines as required.*

- *Prevent erosion of vehicular and walking tracks during wet weather by closing roads and tracks, particularly those on granite soils, on a seasonal basis as required.*
- *Ensure adequate drainage of all tracks to minimise erosion, particularly on granite soils.*

### 3.2 Vegetation

A feature of both parks is the wide diversity of vegetation types.

The uplands of Mount Lawson State Park support open forests dominated by Narrow-leaf Peppermint, whereas ridges and drier sites have open forests of Broad-leaf Peppermint. Other species including Candlebark, Manna Gum, Blue Gum and Brittle Gum also occur in these open forests.

A small isolated Clay Heathland community occurs in Mount Lawson State Park. This community is not well represented in existing parks and reserves.

The northern portion of Mount Lawson State Park contains large areas of the Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) known as Granitic Hills Woodland. This EVC is characterised by Black Cypress-pine Woodland with a sparse shrubby understorey. Shrubby Dry Forest, Heathy Dry Forest and Herb-rich Foothill Forest are common EVCs in the remainder of the Park.

Vegetation in Mount Granya State Park is dominated by open forest of Red Stringybark and Long-leaf Box on the dry steep north and north-eastern slopes. The plateaux and southern slopes are dominated by Broad-leaf and Narrow-leaf Peppermint. The understorey varies throughout the Park but is dominated by distinctive open tussock grass areas or low shrubs. Shrubby Dry Forest and Heathy Dry Forest are the predominant EVCs present. A small area of Black Cypress-pine is also present on the dry northern slopes of Mount Granya State Park (section 4.1).

Some 235 native plant species have been recorded in Mount Granya State Park,

including two significant species, Crimson Grevillea and Grey Rice-flower (appendix I). Approximately 278 native plant species have been recorded in Mount Lawson State Park, including two additional significant species: Mountain Dampiera and Cupped Bush-pea (appendix I).

### Aims

- Protect native plant communities in their natural condition, and maintain genetic diversity.
- Enhance the long-term survival prospects of threatened or significant plant species or communities.

### Management strategies

- *Manage Flora and Fauna Guarantee listed plants according to approved action statements.*
- *Encourage surveys and research on significant flora and plant communities in the Parks to improve knowledge of their management requirements.*
- *Ensure that significant plants and communities are adequately protected from management activities, including fire protection works.*
- *Survey and investigate management requirements for the Clay Heathland Special Protection Area.*
- *Increase knowledge of fire regimes required for the conservation of vegetation communities within the Parks. Use ecological burning in accordance with fire management policies and guidelines where necessary to ensure the conservation of plant communities (section 4.1).*

## 3.3 Fauna

The range of vegetation, topography and climates within the Parks creates a variety of faunal habitats. There are three main habitat types: wet open eucalypt forest, dry open eucalypt forest and dry rocky Black Cypress-

pine Woodlands. A comprehensive fauna survey of the Parks has not been undertaken.

Common species in both Parks include the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Black Wallaby and Common Wombat. The Parks also provide habitat for many species of bats, birds and reptiles.

The Barking Owl, a rare species in Victoria, has been recorded in Mount Lawson State Park (appendix II). These Parks contain significant areas of rarely visited habitat suitable for the Spot-tailed Quoll and Tree Goanna. These species previously inhabited these Parks but have not been sighted in them in recent years.

Trout Cod were released in Mount Lawson State Park at Koetong Creek in 1990 as part of a statewide re-introduction program (CNR 1994). Trout Cod are listed on Schedule 2 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic.) as a threatened species. Koetong Creek was identified as a suitable release site, but preliminary surveys indicate that the release was unsuccessful.

### Aims

- Protect native fauna from management and visitor activities, and maintain genetic diversity.
- Enhance the long-term survival prospects of threatened or significant fauna.

### Management strategies

- *Undertake an extensive faunal survey of the Parks and identify any significant species and their habitats. Encourage university groups to participate.*
- *Increase knowledge of the management requirements of the Park's fauna, and develop management actions for their protection as required.*
- *Continue to implement the Trout Cod Research and Recovery Plan in accordance with the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Trout Cod Action Statement.*

- *Manage any Flora and Flora Guarantee Act listed species according to approved action statements.*

### 3.4 Landscape

Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park are dominant features in the Upper Murray landscape. The steep forested slopes of the Parks rise dramatically above Lake Hume and the surrounding valleys of cleared farmland, creating a spectacular and contrasting landscape.

The landscape of the northern part of Mount Lawson State Park is particularly distinctive. The steep dry slopes, cliffs, gorges and rocky bluffs in this area enhance the Park's remote and rugged character. Developments on land adjoining each Park have the potential to impact on landscape values.

Panoramic views of the Parks, Lake Hume, the Australian Alps and the surrounding landscape can be obtained from lookouts on the summits of Mount Lawson and Mount Granya.

Views from Mount Granya Summit are potentially outstanding but are largely restricted by surrounding vegetation and the lack of a suitable vantage point. The Mount Granya Fire Tower currently has an adverse visual impact on the site.

There are pleasant waterfalls in each of the Parks: Granya Falls in Mount Granya State Park, and Flaggy Creek Falls within the Flaggy Creek Gorge in Mount Lawson State Park.

#### Aim

- Protect and preserve the landscape values of the Parks, especially areas of greatest scenic quality and viewer interest.

#### Management strategies

- *Ensure that maintenance, developments and fire protection works are designed to have a minimal impact on the landscape values of the Parks.*
- *Liaise with the Towong Shire and adjoining land owners to minimise impacts on landscape values from developments proposed on adjoining freehold land,*

*particularly near the northern boundary of Mount Lawson State Park.*

- *Maintain the view from the Mount Granya summit viewing area through the slashing of regrowth as required.*
- *In consultation with the Forests Service and licensees, seek to minimise the visual impact of the Mount Granya Fire Tower and telecommunications facilities on the Park (section 7.1).*
- *Investigate the construction of a viewing platform on the Mount Granya Fire Tower. Seek the involvement of licensees in construction.*

### 3.5 Cultural heritage

Aboriginal people are said to have inhabited the area and are thought to have used the rock shelters and rock outcrops overlooking the Murray River for shelter and lookouts.

Three art sites are recorded in Mount Lawson State Park at two separate locations. These sites have been surveyed and recorded by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. Two areas totalling 620 ha around these sites have been entered on the Register of the National Estate. These areas have been designated Special Protection Areas (section 2.3).

These sites are of particular significance given the lack of known artefacts or other links with Aboriginal culture in the area. One of these art sites is occasionally visited by the general public and has been the subject of some vandalism. Many parts of these Parks are inaccessible and rarely visited and may contain further archaeological sites.

The Shepparton Aboriginal Arts Council Co-operative Ltd is the relevant authority for cultural heritage in these Parks. All Aboriginal sites and relics are protected under the *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972 (Vic.)* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Cwlth)*.

Mining occurred in both Parks, particularly in Mount Lawson State Park. Alluvial tin mining occurred periodically around Flaggy Creek and Koetong Creek from 1872 until the early 1980s. Lukins Wolfram mine, later known as the Womoboi Wolfram Mine, operated near Flaggy Creek between 1939 and 1943. The mine produced fluorspar, bismuth and molybdenum as a by-product of wolframite. A number of interesting relics remain intact at the Womoboi Wolfram Mine. Gold mining also occurred in and around Mount Granya State Park.

The disused Wodonga to Cudgewa railway line adjoins the southern boundary of Mount Lawson State Park.

Grazing and small-scale logging for posts, firewood and sawlogs occurred in both Parks prior to their declaration.

A log hut constructed by the Granya Scout Group in 1937 is situated on the walking track between Cottontree Creek Picnic Area and Granya Falls.

Part of Bridle Track in Mount Granya State Park was a former access road for coaches travelling to Granya. Sections of the road's original stonework are still visible.

### **Aims**

- Protect cultural sites and significant historic sites from potentially damaging human activity.
- Improve appreciation and understanding, and where appropriate foster the use, of historic sites as a cultural, scientific and educational resource.

### **Management strategies**

- *Develop a Management Plan for the protection and management of Aboriginal art sites in consultation with the*

*Shepparton Aboriginal Arts Council Co-operative Ltd and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. Give attention in the Plan to fire management (particularly fuel reduction) in the vicinity of each art site (section 4.1).*

- *Investigate and document Aboriginal history and protect identified sites as appropriate in consultation with the Shepparton Aboriginal Arts Council Co-operative Ltd and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.*
- *Identify, assess and manage historic places in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*
- *Record and catalogue the location of relics at the Womoboi Mine and assess their significance. Identify any threatening processes and take appropriate action, in consultation with relevant experts, to ensure appropriate protection. Encourage university groups to participate.*
- *Develop a strategy for the conservation, management and interpretation of the Womoboi Mine and tin mining sites. Record and catalogue the location of relics at these sites. Encourage university groups to participate.*
- *Encourage the Granya community to maintain the Scout Hut near Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area.*
- *Monitor the condition of, and any threats to, significant historic places.*
- *Maintain an archive of historical records and records of relevant ongoing land management activities.*

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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.

Current fire protection measures are in accordance with the North East Region Fire Protection Plan (DCE 1990). This Plan provides for fire prevention and suppression activities in order to protect life, property, assets and natural and cultural values within the Parks and surrounding areas including Victorian Plantations Corporation plantations and farmland.

Wildfires in 1952 and 1985 burnt extensive areas within Mount Lawson State Park.

The fire protection strategy for the Parks will be reviewed in association with any review of the Fire Protection Plan, or as new information becomes available. Mount Granya State Park is virtually all designated as a priority 3 burning zone. Mount Lawson State Park is mostly designated as priority 3 and priority 4 burning zones but also contains significant areas which are not to be burnt. Priority 3 and 4 burning zones have a relatively low burning frequency in comparison with priority 1 and 2 burning zones.

The Bungil Reference Area is to remain unburnt. Black Cypress-pine communities are located in both Parks but are mainly concentrated in Mount Lawson State Park. Because of their fire sensitivity, these communities have been designated as Special Protection Areas and should not be burnt.

Research is required into the fire ecology of the flora and fauna in each Park, especially fire sensitive species and communities, threatened species and significant plant communities. Ecological and other controlled burning strategies may be necessary to ensure the conservation of certain plant communities.

#### Aims

- Protect human life, property and park values from injury by fire.

- Maintain fire regimes appropriate for the conservation of native flora and fauna and natural ecological processes within the Parks.
- Minimise the adverse effects of fires and fire suppression methods.

#### Management strategies

- *Undertake prescribed burning in accordance with the North East Region Fire Protection Plan (DCE 1990) and the Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995a).*
- *Review burning zones in conjunction with the review of the North East Region Fire Protection Plan.*
- *Ensure the continued exclusion of fuel reduction burning from the Bungil Reference Area.*
- *Where practicable, exclude intensive fire from Aboriginal art sites in the Special Protection Areas.*
- *Give preference to using the following suppression methods whenever practicable in the Bungil Reference Area:*
  - *use of hand tools and aerial suppression;*
  - *use of existing roads and tracks and natural features as control lines;*
  - *backburning;*
  - *allowing wildfires to burn out to appropriate control lines, outside the main fire danger periods and where conditions allow.*
- *Avoid, as far as practical, earthmoving and other suppression operations in sensitive areas including scenic areas, sites of significance and recreation areas, or exercise extreme care to minimise environmental disturbance if operations in such areas are essential.*
- *Rehabilitate any areas of the Parks which may be disturbed by control lines and*

*other suppression activities as soon as practicable following fire suppression operations, in accordance with the Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995a).*

- *Exclude Black Cypress-pine Woodlands within the Black Cypress-pine Special Protection Areas from prescribed burning.*
- *As research provides a better understanding of fire regimes, ensure that this information is included in any ecological fire management strategy, and in the review of the North East Region Fire Protection Plan.*
- *Incorporate information on fire regulations and the role of fire in the Parks into Park brochures, guides, display boards and interpretation programs.*
- *Slash grassed picnic areas regularly to protect visitors to the Parks.*
- *Minimise the use of earth-moving equipment in fire suppression operations on steep granite slopes within Mount Lawson State Park*

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

A number of pest plant species are present within the Parks. Blackberry, Patersons Curse and St Johns Wort are the major weed problems.

Although accurate numbers of pest animals have not been obtained, wild dogs, foxes, pigs, goats and rabbits are recognised as problem species. Feral cats and foxes are believed to have caused a significant reduction in the numbers of ground-dwelling native mammals. There are several wild dog fences on the boundary of Mount Lawson State Park.

A detailed study of pathogens within the Parks has not been conducted.

#### **Aims**

- Control, and where possible eradicate, non-indigenous plants and animals.
- Minimise the impact of control programs on native flora and fauna.
- Protect the Parks from other threats, in particular new infestations of non-indigenous plants and diseases.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Prepare and implement a pest plant and animal control strategy for the Parks which:*
  - *identifies key target species and locations;*
  - *identifies particular conservation areas where special efforts may be required to control pest plants and animals (e.g. rare or threatened species locations);*
  - *specifies appropriate control methods which ensure maximum protection of non-target species, in particular the Spot-tailed Quoll, and which minimise their impact on the natural environment;*
  - *gives initial priority to the control of Blackberry, St Johns Wort and Patersons Curse.*
- *Reduce the risk of new infestations by checking sites of potential weed sources (e.g. cleared areas, recent roadworks) and implementing an appropriate control strategy.*
- *Identify and record the presence of any pathogens which occur in the Parks, and take appropriate action.*

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## 5 THE PARK VISIT

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### 5.1 The Park visitor

Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park contain a variety of features in a semi-remote setting. Most day visitor sites are easily accessible, while other attractions are accessible to the more adventurous. The Parks offer a variety of quality recreational opportunities, including picnicking, 4WD touring and bushwalking.

Visitor use of the Parks is relatively low. Long travel times from major centres mean that most visitors to the region will be attracted by the better known features of the Australian Alps. Nevertheless, there is scope to promote the Parks as an en-route attraction for such travellers, or as part of a series of natural attractions in the Upper Murray area including nearby parks and the Murray River.

Promotion of the key attractions within these Parks is currently limited. Increasing tourism in the Upper Murray and the development and promotion of key visitor attractions in the Parks is anticipated to increase visitor numbers significantly.

Most Park visitors are local residents involved in recreational activities such as trail bike riding, 4WD touring and camping. Day visitors from Albury-Wodonga also use the Parks. Natural adventurers and Escape to Nature are the visitor segments most likely to display an interest in the Parks.

Vehicle access to both Parks is restricted because of inadequate signs, steep rocky terrain and complex access routes which pass through private property in many cases. Most tracks within the Parks are suitable for 4WD vehicles only.

#### Providing for the visitor

Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park offer opportunities for two distinct visitor types:

- day visitors who enjoy accessible attractions on the fringes of each Park such as Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area;

- self-reliant visitors seeking an ‘adventure experience’ in the more remote areas. These visitors may be involved in four-wheel drive touring, bushwalking and camping, particularly in Mount Lawson State Park.

Future management will focus on these visitor types. Most visitor facilities will be confined to existing sites near Park boundaries, ensuring that the semi-remote atmosphere of each Park is retained.

Two sites accessible to 2WD vehicles are proposed for promotion as key visitor contact points; Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area and the proposed ‘Kurrajongs’ picnic and camping area. A third site is at the Historic Bridge Picnic Area, south of Mt Lawson State Park.

The more isolated areas will remain undeveloped but will be promoted as ‘adventure’ destinations, with interesting features and a variety of recreational opportunities.

#### Aims

- Develop an understanding of visitor numbers, profiles, attitudes, expectations and needs.
- Provide for visitors in accordance with the above overview of future management for visitors.
- Ensure that visitor use of the Parks is not detrimental to their natural values.

#### Management strategies

- *Permit recreational activities in accordance with table 2.*
- *Provide facilities and services which highlight, but are in keeping with, the area’s distinctive character (section 5.3 and tables 3, 4 and 5).*
- *Promote the Parks as an en-route attraction for Victoria-New South Wales travellers and as part of a series of natural attractions in the Upper Murray area.*

**TABLE 2 SUMMARY OF RECREATION ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY	REFERENCE AREA ZONE	CONSERVATION & RECREATION ZONE	SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS
Picnicking	No	Yes	Yes
Camping—designated sites (with facilities)	N/A	Yes	N/A
Camping—dispersed (no facilities)	No	Yes	Yes
Horse riding	No	YC (5.2.4)	YC (5.2.4)
Camping—horse based	No	No	No
Walking	No	Yes	Yes
Bicycle riding	No	YC (5.2.1)	YC (5.2.1)
Orienteering and rogaining	No	YC (5.2.6)	YC (5.2.6)
Rock climbing and abseiling	No	YC (5.2.5)	YC (5.2.5)
Hunting	No	No	No
Trail-bike riding	No	YC (5.2.1)	YC (5.2.1)
2WD sightseeing	No	YC (5.2.1)	YC (5.2.1)
4WD touring	No	YC (5.2.1)	YC (5.2.1)
Fishing	No	Yes	Yes
Dogs	No	No	No
Firewood collection	No	Yes	Yes
Fossicking	No	No	No

Yes    Appropriate  
 No    Not appropriate  
 YC    Conditional—refer to relevant section for details  
 N/A    Not applicable

- *Investigate development of a regional touring guide in consultation with the Towong Shire.*
- *Conduct visitor surveys to assess visitor profiles, patterns of behaviour, expectations and preferences.*
- *Establish a program to determine levels of recreational activity consistent with protecting recreational experiences and park values.*
- *Encourage all visitors to adopt minimum impact techniques and to adhere to codes of conduct appropriate to their activity.*
- *Monitor visitor use to ensure adequate provision of facilities, consistent with appropriate types and levels of use.*
- *Monitor the impacts of visitor use at popular visitor destinations and take appropriate action as required to reduce visitor impacts.*

- *Liaise with the Towong Shire and tourist agencies to ensure that the Parks are included in any future tourist promotions for the region.*

## 5.2 Visitor recreational activities and facilities

### 5.2.1 Vehicle access

Vehicle access is important for park management and for enabling visitors to use and enjoy the Parks. The existing small network of 2WD and 4WD tracks (table 3, and figures 2 and 3) gives adequate access for management but visitor access is restricted, particularly during wet weather when seasonal closures are required on a number of tracks to prevent damage. All roads and tracks in the Parks are managed by Parks Victoria. There are opportunities in both Parks for 4WD touring, trail-bike riding and mountain bike touring.

Mount Granya State Park has 2WD vehicle access to two key visitor attractions: Mount Granya Summit and Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area.

Vehicle access is restricted in Mount Lawson State Park, particularly in the north of the Park. There is 2WD vehicle access to the Mount Lawson Summit, but the existing route through Victorian Plantations Corporation land is poorly signposted and is primarily used for plantation timber extraction. Flaggy Creek Gorge is potentially a popular attraction but requires the resolution of inappropriate access through private property before it can be effectively promoted as a visitor destination.

There are a number of legal access points into both Parks through private property. Many of these access points are infrequently used by the public and are an annoyance to adjoining landholders. Identification of appropriate 4WD access points will enable several public access points to be promoted.

The northern part of Mount Lawson State Park is relatively free of vehicle tracks. This area will remain relatively undeveloped to preserve its remote and natural values.

### Aims

- Provide an appropriate network of tracks for 2WD and 4WD vehicles for both recreation and management purposes.
- Minimise the impact of vehicle use on park values.

### Management strategies

- *Manage roads and tracks in accordance with table 3.*
- *Apply temporary or seasonal closures to tracks as required, to ensure public safety and minimise environmental disturbance (section 3.1).*
- *Liaise with the Victorian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs (VAFWDC) over temporary, seasonal and any necessary permanent public road closures.*
- *Permit cycling on all roads and tracks in accordance with table 3, but not on walking tracks.*
- *Permit cycling on Koetong Creek Track with prior approval from the Ranger in Charge.*
- *Investigate opportunities for improving public vehicular access to the northern end of each Park and in particular to Flaggy Creek Gorge.*
- *Investigate opportunities for the development and promotion of 4WD touring routes through each Park in consultation with adjoining landholders.*
- *Liaise with VicRoads and the Towong Shire to improve signs for both Parks in the surrounding area, and in particular along major tourist routes.*
- *Liaise with the Victorian Plantations Corporation to improve signage to Mount Lawson Summit through pine plantations.*

**TABLE 3 MANAGEMENT OF VEHICLE ROADS AND TRACKS**

ROAD/TRACK	CLASS	COMMENTS/USES	STATUS		MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
			CURRENT	PROPOSED	
<b>Mount Lawson State Park</b>					
Firebrace Track	3	Forest & Fire/PV management track. Park access.	O	O	Unchanged.
Firebrace Link Track	3	Forest & Fire/PV management track. Park access.	O	O	Unchanged.
Koetong Creek Track	3	PV management track. Fire access.	MVO	MVO	Undertake drainage work where necessary to minimise erosion. Investigate realignment of steep eroded sections. Permit horse riding and cycling subject to prior approval.
Mt Lawson Road	3	Shire/VPC/Forest & Fire/PV. Alternative access to Mt Lawson Summit.	O	O	Upgrade to Class 3 for 2WD summer access and establish signage in conjunction with VPC and Shire.
Mt Lawson Road/Hempnall Road	1	VPC/Forest & Fire/PV. Current access to Mt Lawson Summit.	O	O	Seek to establish signage in conjunction with VPC and Shire.
Boulder Track	3	PV management track. Park access.	O	O	Seasonal closure. Ensure maintenance does not impact on the Bungil Reference Area.
Thologolong Track	3	PV track. Park access through private property.	O	O	Seasonal closure. Ensure maintenance does not impact on the Bungil Reference Area.
Flaggy Creek Track	3	PV track/Private Property. Access to Flaggy Creek Gorge & freehold inlier. Park access through private property.	O	O	Undertake drainage work were necessary to minimise erosion. Continue to maintain and upgrade in conjunction with the owner of the freehold inlier (section 7.2). Part seasonal closure.
Houstons Track	3	PV track. Park access through private property.	O	O	Seasonal closure.

Table 3 (cont.)

ROAD/TRACK	CLASS	COMMENTS/USES	STATUS		MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
			CURRENT	PROPOSED	
Stockyard Creek Track	3	PV track. Park access through private property.	O	O	Unchanged.
<b>Mount Granya State Park</b>					
Mount Granya Road	1	PV management road. Access to Mount Granya Summit and Fire Tower.	O	O	Continue to maintain in conjunction with the Forests Service.
Webb Track	3	PV management track. Park access.	O	O	Unchanged.
Bridle Track	3	PV management track. Park access.	O	O	Unchanged.
Jurgies Track	3	PV management track. Park access.	O	O	Unchanged.
Jurgies-Wises Creek Link Track	3	PV management track. Park access.	O	O	Unchanged.
Wises Creek Track	3	PV track. Park access through private property.	O	O	Unchanged.
Pub Track	3	PV track. Park access through private property.	O	O	Unchanged.
Star Track	3	PV track. Park access through private property.	O	O	Unchanged.
Webb Lane	1	Shire road. Access to Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area.	O	O	Unchanged.
Sugarloaf Track	3	PV track. Steep fire access track.	O	O	Unchanged.

<u>Class</u>	1	All vehicle - all weather	<u>Status</u>	MVO	Management vehicles only
	2	All vehicle - dry weather		O	Open to public vehicles
	3	4WD - dry weather			

### 5.2.2 Day visits and camping

Mount Lawson State Park and Mount Granya State Park have many interesting features, some with adequate 2WD access.

Mount Granya State Park offers two main destinations for day visitors, Mount Granya Summit and Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area. Both sites have low key picnic facilities and short walks. A short walk from Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area leads past an old scout hut to Granya Falls.

Mount Lawson State Park has day visitor facilities at Koetong Creek and the Mount Lawson Summit. The Summit has a picnic area, and a short walk around the Mount Lawson summit with outstanding views and interesting rock outcrops.

There are currently no designated campsites in Mount Granya State Park. Dispersed camping is permitted in the Parks, but most camping occurs at designated sites on Koetong Creek in Mount Lawson State Park. These sites are popular during holiday periods but are generally only accessible to 4WD vehicles.

A site on the northern boundary known as ‘The Kurrajongs’ is proposed as the main camping and day visitor site in Mount Lawson State Park. This site is adjacent to the Murray River Road near a rehabilitated gravel pit. Development at this substantially modified site would have a minimal impact on park values.

This site is proposed as the starting point for walking tracks with spectacular views of the Parks and Lake Hume. It would be a key visitor contact point for visitors travelling along the Murray River Road.

The Historic Bridge Picnic Area, to the south of Mount Lawson State Park, is an existing day visitor area with picnic facilities and a short walking track to an historic railway bridge. Day visitor facilities at this site are currently managed by Parks Victoria. The site is adjacent to the Murray Valley Highway outside Mount Lawson State Park and is a key visitor contact point to the south of the Park. This area is proposed for consideration as an addition to the Park (section 7.2).

#### Aim

- Establish and maintain day visitor and camping facilities which enhance visitor enjoyment of the Parks and are consistent with protecting park values.

#### Management strategies

- *Provide and maintain low key, unobtrusive picnic and camping facilities in accordance with table 4, and figures 2 and 3.*
- *Permit dispersed camping in accordance with park guidelines in areas more than 50 m from a road or a designated picnic or camping area.*
- *Allow fires in designated picnic or camping areas only in fireplaces provided.*
- *Allow fires for cooking and heating throughout the Parks except within 50 m of a designated picnic or camping area or road.*
- *Design and construct a picnic and camping area at ‘The Kurrajongs’ in the north of Mount Lawson State Park.*
- *Monitor visitor use at Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area and establish camping areas as demand requires.*

### 5.2.3 Bushwalking

The Parks offer several short walking tracks but also provide opportunities for self-reliant walks to a variety of interesting features. Because of the remoteness of both Parks and the lack of vehicular access, walking is an ideal way to experience the features of the Parks.

The northern section of Mount Lawson State Park in particular has enormous potential as a destination for adventurous, self-sufficient walkers. Rocky outcrops, cliffs and bluffs overlooking the Murray River, a semi-remote atmosphere and a diversity of features make interesting and challenging conditions for walkers. In Mount Granya State Park there are short, easy walks at the Granya Summit (Lyrebird Walk) and from Cotton Tree Creek

**TABLE 4 EXISTING AND PROPOSED VISITOR FACILITIES**

SITE	CAMPING	TOILET	PICNIC TABLES	FIRE PLACES	CAR PARK	WATER	WALK TRACK	INFO BOARD	MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND COMMENTS
<b>Mount Lawson State Park</b>									
Mount Lawson Summit	-	-	E	E	E	-	E	-	Maintain.
Koetong Creek Camping Area (2 sites)	E	-	E	E	-	E	-	-	Maintain.
‘The Kurrajongs’	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	P	Design and construct. Establish a vegetative screen from Highway.
<b>Mount Granya State Park</b>									
Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area	-	P	E	E	E	E	E	P	Upgrade walking track to Granya Falls. Remove fencing and revegetate.
Mount Granya Summit	-	E	E	E	E	-	E	E	Revegetate and maintain weed control program.

KEY: E Existing facility  
P Proposed facility  
- Not available

Picnic Area to Granya Falls. In Mount Lawson State Park there are two short walks Summit Track and Explorers Track at the Mount Lawson Summit.

There is potential in both Parks for the development of several long walking tracks linking interesting and remote features.

#### Aim

- Increase the range of walking opportunities while minimising impacts on park values.

#### Management strategies

- *Develop new tracks in the more remote areas of the Parks and maintain the existing walking tracks in accordance with table 5 (section 3.1).*
- *Encourage the use of fuel stoves for cooking and heating by dispersed campers.*
- *Promote minimal impact practices for bushwalkers.*

**TABLE 5 MANAGEMENT OF WALKING TRACKS**

NAME	LENGTH (ONE WAY)	CURRENT STANDARD	FUTURE STANDARD	ADDITIONAL WORK REQUIREMENTS
<b>Mount Lawson State Park</b>				
Summit Track	1 km	D	D	Upgrade signage.
Explorers Track	1.5 km	D	D	Upgrade signage and link to summit track.
‘The Kurrajongs’ Loop Track	2 km	Proposed	D	Locate and construct a loop track starting at ‘The Kurrajongs’ and incorporating the nearby lookouts and rocky ridges.
Flaggy Creek Gorge Walking Track	10 km	Proposed	E	Locate and construct a track from The Kurrajongs to Flaggy Creek Gorge incorporating the Womoboi Wolfram Mine.
<b>Mount Granya State Park</b>				
Lyrebird Walk	400 m	C	B	Upgrade.
Granya Falls Walking Track	1 km	D	C	Upgrade and investigate a loop walk option.
Mount Granya Summit Walking Track	4 km	Proposed	D	Locate and construct a track, incorporating Jurgies Track, which links the Mount Granya Summit with Cottontree Creek Picnic Area.

Standard (Parks Victoria - guideline 17.5R)

Category B Track well defined and drained and surfaced where necessary.

Category C Track well defined, benched and drained where necessary.

Category D Track defined through use, usually drained and cleared.

Category E Track defined through use with no basic construction.

- *Seek the assistance of volunteers in constructing and maintaining walking tracks.*
- *Investigate the potential for the development of walking routes (particularly within Mount Lawson State Park) which create a walk linking 'The Kurrajongs' to the southern end of the Park.*
- *Investigate the development of a walking track along the Conic Range to Mount Lawson in Mount Lawson State Park.*

#### **5.2.4 Horse riding**

Horse riding is not a popular use of the Parks. Despite this, precautions must be taken to minimise soil erosion and the introduction of weeds. Areas suitable for camping with horses are available outside the Parks.

##### **Aim**

- Provide opportunities for recreational horse riders but minimise the impact of horse riding on park values and other users.

##### **Management strategies**

- *Permit horse riding on public vehicle roads and management vehicle only tracks (table 3) but not on walking tracks, or seasonally closed roads.*
- *Permit horse riding on Koetong Creek Track with prior approval from the Ranger in Charge.*
- *Do not permit horse camping in the Parks.*

#### **5.2.5 Rock climbing and abseiling**

Rock climbing is not a popular activity in the Parks, but some opportunities exist for rock climbers in Mount Lawson State Park.

##### **Aim**

- Provide for rock climbing and abseiling in the Parks but minimise impacts on park values.

##### **Management strategy**

- *Promote the use of minimal impact techniques for abseiling and rock climbing activities.*

#### **5.2.6 Orienteering and rogaining**

Both Parks have been used infrequently for orienteering and rogaining, although both are well suited to these activities.

##### **Aim**

- Provide for orienteering and rogaining in the Parks, but minimise impacts on park values.

##### **Management strategies**

- *Permit orienteering and rogaining in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*
- *Liaise with orienteering groups to minimise impacts on park values.*

#### **5.2.7 Dogs**

Dogs have never been allowed in the Parks and the area has not been used for walking or exercising dogs in the past.

Native fauna is at risk from injury or predation by domestic dogs and may be frightened away from an area by their scent or noise. Dogs can also cause inconvenience and annoyance to other Park users.

##### **Aim**

- Minimise disturbance to fauna and visitors by dogs.

##### **Management strategy**

- *Continue to prohibit dogs from both Parks.*

### **5.3 Visitor information, interpretation and education**

Information, interpretative services and environmental education help to orientate visitors, foster an understanding and appreciation of a Park's features and values, management problems and contribute to a broader understanding of natural environments encourage appropriate visitor use, reduce

and management objectives. Contact with the Parks by people travelling through the area is currently low because, although the Parks are highly visible from major roads, they are largely surrounded by cleared farmland and do not have adequate visitor information or good signs to key features. There is currently no interpretative program for the Parks.

A general information board outlining all parks of the Upper Murray is situated on the Murray Valley Highway at Bullioh, and there is a visitor information board at the Mount Granya Summit. There is a need to improve visitor information for both Parks.

Key visitor contact points will be established at Cotton Tree Creek Picnic Area and 'The Kurrajongs' (proposed) providing information about the Parks. A third point is south of Mt Lawson State Park at the Historic Bridge Picnic Area. These points are within easy access of major tourist routes.

#### **Aims**

- Provide visitors with information and knowledge about the values of the Parks.
- Provide educational opportunities for schools, tertiary institutions and community groups.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Develop a signs plan for the Parks covering roads, walking tracks and other visitor destinations, including the three key visitor contact points.*
- *Install information boards giving information about Mount Lawson State Park at the Historic Trestle Bridge Picnic Area and at 'The Kurrajongs'.*
- *Install an information board about Mount Granya State Park at the Cottontree Creek Picnic Area.*
- *Develop a Park Interpretation Plan, in conjunction with other Parks in the area, to guide Park managers and staff in developing, supporting and evaluating interpretative and education services in the Parks.*

- *Ensure that information on the need for minimal impact practices by Park visitors is incorporated into Park information and interpretative material.*
- *Establish and implement monitoring and maintenance schedules for all interpretative facilities.*
- *Provide Park information for tourism outlets in the region.*
- *Update information boards and publications produced for the Parks as required.*
- *Upgrade publications for each Park.*
- *Investigate opportunities for commercial or volunteer-run holiday interpretative programs in each Park.*

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

The Parks are currently a 'low-level' attraction in the Upper Murray area but have potential for commercial tourism operations.

#### **Aims**

- Provide opportunities for sustainable commercial tourism.
- Realise the potential of the Parks as regional tourism attractions consistent with park management objectives.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Encourage applications from commercial tour operators to provide a range of tours compatible with park values.*
- *Assess the Parks to identify opportunities for new tourism experiences, itineraries, themes and services, and make these known to local tourism bodies and potential operators.*

## 5.5 Public safety

The climate and topography of the Parks present inherent dangers and risks to Park visitors and these are increased in parts of the Parks by their remoteness and lack of access. High cliffs, unstable rocky slopes, slippery rocks, large areas without roads or tracks, and exposed mining access tunnels, present potential hazards to visitors.

### Aim

- Promote and encourage safe practices among staff and visitors to the Parks.

### Management strategies

- *Encourage visitors to seek information on any activities they intend to undertake in the Parks, including the associated risks.*
- *Include appropriate information about potential hazards, such as water availability, mine shafts and dangerous topography, in relevant Park information.*
- *Ensure that staff are sufficiently trained to assist in emergency situations.*
- *Prepare and implement a strategy to ensure visitor safety at the Womoboi Mine.*

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## 6 COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT

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### 6.1 Friends and volunteers

Currently, Friends of Mount Lawson State Park or Mount Granya State Park groups do not exist, although several local community groups have been involved in volunteer projects and may be interested in developing a Friends group.

#### Aim

- Encourage volunteer involvement in managing the Parks.

#### Management strategies

- *Encourage and assist volunteers in forming a single Friends group for the Parks if interest arises in the local community, and support such a group once established.*
- *Develop and evaluate a long-term volunteer strategy for the Parks which makes use of the skills and interests of volunteer groups in undertaking appropriate park management activities.*
- *Encourage tertiary study which will assist in developing knowledge relevant to management of the Parks.*

### 6.2 Community awareness and Park neighbours

Most neighbours to the Parks are primarily involved in agriculture. Their main interest in the Parks relates to the management of fire and pest plants and animals.

Pine plantations managed by Victorian Plantations Corporation and private landholders are situated to the east of Mount Lawson State Park. State forests adjoin both Parks, particularly the eastern boundary of Mount Lawson State Park. Protection of these timber resources from fire is an important concern for Park neighbours.

Various illegal activities such as firewood collection, rubbish dumping and shooting occur, particularly in Mount Lawson State

Park. A lack of recognition within the community regarding the status and significance of these Parks is thought to be a contributing factor to these problems.

#### Aims

- Increase public awareness of park values, regulations and management activities including fuel reduction burning, and pest plant and animal control.
- Encourage adjoining landholders to participate in park management (including planning).
- Encourage conservation and sound land management practices on private land adjoining the Parks.

#### Management strategies

- *Liaise with local community groups and landholders and, as appropriate, involve them in relevant aspects of planning and management of the Parks.*
- *Apply, and encourage the application of, the Good Neighbour Policy to management issues on or near the boundaries of the Parks.*
- *Liaise with Victorian Plantations Corporation on mutual land management issues, including fire management and pest plant and animal control.*
- *Encourage a co-ordinated pest plant and animal control program with Park neighbours.*
- *Seek regular local media coverage of Park activities, such as improvement to visitor facilities, pest plant and animal control, results of research and surveys and other items of interest.*
- *Promote the importance of significant features in the Parks, including significant plants and cultural sites, through contact with community groups, schools and the general public.*

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## 7 OTHER ISSUES

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### 7.1 Authorised uses

#### 7.1.1 Utilities

Communications facilities currently exist on both Mount Lawson and Mount Granya in conjunction with existing fire towers.

Australian Newsprint Mills (ANM) operate a communications facility attached to the Mount Lawson Fire Tower. This facility predates the declaration of the Parks but is currently unlicensed.

Power is supplied to the Mount Granya communications facility by a single span power line on the western face of Mount Granya. A Statewide Mobile Radio facility including a mast and shed is adjacent to the fire tower.

A powder magazine constructed by the former Forests Commission is located near the western border of Mount Granya State Park.

#### Aims

- Minimise the impact of fire towers and communications facilities and other utilities on Park and landscape values.
- Ensure that existing and proposed utilities are licensed where appropriate.

#### Management strategies

- *Investigate alternative options for the design and location of the Mount Lawson communications facility, in consultation with ANM and the Forests Service, which will minimise visual impacts on the Park (section 3.4).*
- *License the ANM communications facility under Section 26A of the National Parks Act if an alternative location cannot be found.*
- *Assess future proposals for additional telecommunications sites in accordance with relevant legislation, codes of Practice and guidelines.*

- *Ensure that all utilities are authorised and managed in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*
- *Manage the powder magazine in conjunction with the Forests Service.*

#### 7.1.2 Apiculture

In accordance with approved LCC recommendations (LCC 1986), apiculture is permitted on a maximum of 20 sites in Mount Lawson State Park, although they are rarely utilised. Apiculture is not permitted in Mount Granya State Park. No apiary sites are currently in use and none has been used in recent times in either Park.

#### Aim

- Provide for apiculture in accordance with LCC recommendations and park guidelines.

#### Management strategies

- *Permit up to 20 apiary sites within Mount Lawson State Park at suitable locations which will minimise impacts on the Park and visitors.*
- *Manage apiary sites in accordance with Parks Victoria apiculture guidelines.*
- *Encourage apiarists to use alternative apiary sites outside Mount Lawson State Park, and in consultation with the Victorian Apiarists Association, review the requirement for sites based on demand.*

#### 7.1.3 Defence Force and Emergency Service training

The Defence Force makes occasional use of the Mount Lawson State Park for small-scale adventure training exercises such as bushwalking. Similar uses by Emergency Services would be appropriate.

**Aim**

- Allow for appropriate training exercises by the Defence Force and Emergency Services.

**Management strategy**

- *Continue to allow level 1 Defence Force training and emergency services training in the Parks in accordance with Parks Victoria guidelines.*

**7.2 Boundaries and adjacent uses**

Many boundaries of the Parks are in steep rocky terrain. As a result, boundary fences often do not follow the correct alignment. Several areas near Park boundaries are currently occupied by adjoining landholders.

Both Parks adjoin State forest and agricultural land which is primarily used for grazing. Mount Lawson State Park is also near pine plantations managed by Victorian Plantations Corporation.

A 225 ha cleared freehold inlier known as 'Kings' land is situated within Mount Lawson State Park. The Park provides the only access to this farm.

An area included in Mount Lawson State Park in response to LCC recommendations (LCC 1986) links the main part of the Park (the former multi-purpose park) to the Murray Valley Highway. However, it does not include an occurrence of a significant EVC known as Swamp Riparian Woodland which had previously been intended for inclusion in the Park.

An adjoining area of State forest contains significant features including Swamp Riparian Woodland, an historic timber trestle bridge and a grassland adjoining the Koetong Creek.

**Aims**

- Minimise the impact of adjacent uses on park values.
- Rationalise Park boundaries.

**Management strategies**

- *Seek to address issues associated with the southern boundary of Mount Lawson State Park in conjunction with the Forests Service.*
- *Conduct a survey to determine accurate on-ground Park boundaries and boundary issues.*
- *Identify occupancies and formalise licence arrangements where appropriate, in conjunction with Park neighbours.*
- *Remove grazing from, fence and revegetate the area currently under occupation adjacent to Cottontree Creek Picnic Area (Mount Granya State Park), as appropriate.*
- *Continue to manage the historic trestle bridge in conjunction with Mount Lawson State Park.*
- *Prepare a written permission, for signature by the Director, which allows the owner of the freehold inlier within Mount Lawson State Park to continue to undertake the following activities within the Park:*
  - *transport and droving of stock along Mount Lawson Road, Flaggy Creek Track and Thologolong Track;*
  - *transport and use of working dogs along Mount Lawson Road, Flaggy Creek Track and Thologolong Track;*
  - *vehicular access to 'Kings' along Flaggy Creek Track and Thologolong Track at all times including during periods of seasonal road closure;*
  - *the carrying of firearms;*
  - *maintenance of firebreaks along park boundaries;*
  - *maintenance of Flaggy Creek Track.*

## 8 IMPLEMENTATION

A three-year rolling implementation program will be prepared for the Parks to ensure efficient implementation of the Plan. Priorities for management are identified in table 6 as an initial step in this process.

**TABLE 6 PRIORITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	SECTION IN PLAN
<b>Resource conservation</b>	
Undertake drainage works to prevent track erosion.	3.1
Survey and investigate management requirements for the Clay Heathland community.	3.2
Develop a Management Plan for Aboriginal Art Sites.	3.5
<b>Park protection</b>	
Undertake prescribed burning in accordance with the North East Region Fire Protection Plan.	4.1
Prepare and implement a pest plant and animal strategy for the Parks.	4.2
<b>The Park visit</b>	
Upgrade Mount Lawson Road and establish signs.	5.2.1
Design and construct a camping and day use area at 'The Kurrajongs'.	5.2.2
Develop walking tracks in accordance with table 5.	5.2.3
Establish information board at 'The Kurrajongs', the Historic Bridge Picnic Area and Cottontree Creek Picnic Area.	5.3
Prepare a signs plan and improve signs for both Parks on major tourist routes.	5.3
<b>Other uses</b>	
Liaise with the Forests Service to address boundary issues.	7.2
Remove grazing, fence and revegetate the area adjacent to Cottontree Creek Picnic Area.	7.2
<b>Monitoring and research</b>	
Continue to implement the Trout Cod Research and Recovery Plan.	3.3
Undertake an extensive faunal survey.	3.3

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## REFERENCES

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- CNR 1994, *Trout Cod, Maccullochella macquariensis (culvier)(pisces: percichthyidae)*, *Resource Handbook and Research and Recovery Plan*, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Victoria.
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- NRE database (1997) *Flora Information Systems*, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Melbourne.

## APPENDIX I RARE OR THREATENED FLORA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	VICTORIAN STATUS *
<b>Mount Lawson State Park</b>		
<i>Dampiera purpurea</i>	Mountain Dampiera	Rare
<i>Grevillea polybracatea</i>	Crimson Grevillea	Rare, FFG
<i>Pimelea treyvaudii</i>	Grey Rice-flower	Vulnerable
<i>Pultenaea vrolandii</i>	Cupped Bush-pea	Rare
<b>Mount Granya State Park</b>		
<i>Grevillea polybracatea</i>	Crimson Grevillea	Rare, FFG
<i>Pimelea treyvaudii</i>	Grey Rice-flower	Rare

\* Status NRE database (1997)

Rare: Taxa with small populations that are not at present Endangered or Vulnerable but are at risk.  
 FFG: Listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.

## APPENDIX II RARE OR THREATENED FAUNA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	VICTORIAN STATUS*
<b>Mount Lawson State Park</b>		
<i>Ninox connivens</i>	Barking Owl	Rare
<i>Pseudemoia rawlinsoni</i>	Glossy Grass Skink	Insufficiently known
<i>Galaxis olidus</i>	Mountain Galaxis	Insufficiently known
<b>Mount Granya State Park</b>		
<i>Gadopsis marmoratus</i>	Freshwater Blackfish	Insufficiently known
<i>Galaxis olidus</i>	Mountain Galaxis	Insufficiently known

\*Status CNR (1995b)

Rare: Taxa with small Victorian populations that are not at present Endangered or Vulnerable but are at risk.  
 Insufficiently known: Taxa in Victoria that are suspected but not definitely known to belong to any of the above categories.