

GUNAIKURNAI AND VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN

THE LAKES NATIONAL PARK & GIPPSLAND LAKES COASTAL PARK — TATUNGALUNG COUNTRY



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this document may contain images, names, quotes and other references to deceased people.

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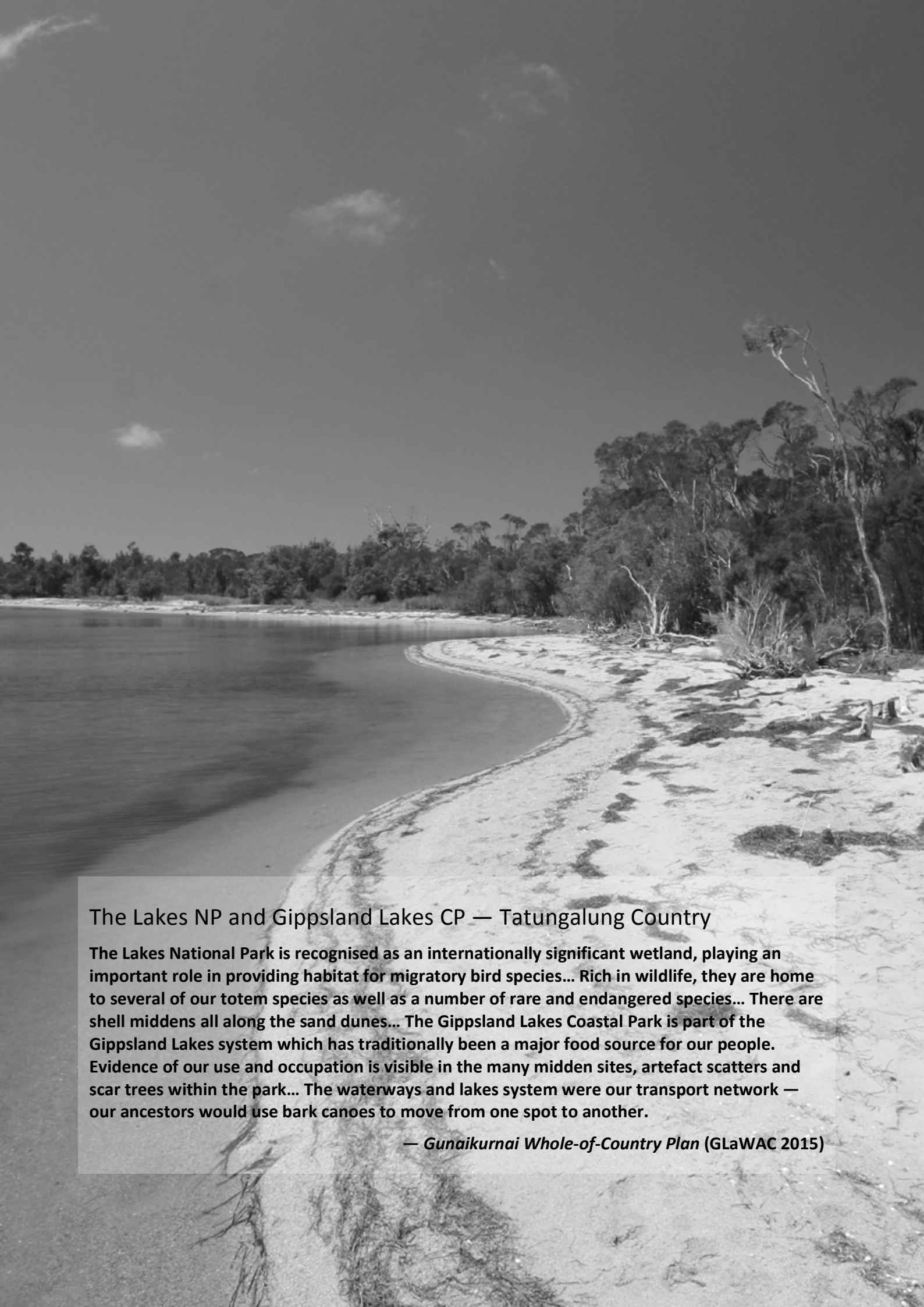
References to Parks Victoria in this plan should be read in the following context:

The *Parks Victoria Act 2018* (Vic.) will commence later in 2018. Under this Act, Parks Victoria will change from being an authority providing park management services by agreement to being an authority with park and reserve management responsibilities in its own right. It will continue to be a Committee of Management of particular reserves under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* (Vic.).

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The Lakes NP and Gippsland Lakes CP — Tatungalung Country

The Lakes National Park is recognised as an internationally significant wetland, playing an important role in providing habitat for migratory bird species... Rich in wildlife, they are home to several of our totem species as well as a number of rare and endangered species... There are shell middens all along the sand dunes... The Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park is part of the Gippsland Lakes system which has traditionally been a major food source for our people. Evidence of our use and occupation is visible in the many midden sites, artefact scatters and scar trees within the park... The waterways and lakes system were our transport network — our ancestors would use bark canoes to move from one spot to another.

— *Gunaikurnai Whole-of-Country Plan (GLaWAC 2015)*

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BASIS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

In a 2010 Native Title Determination, the Federal Court recognised that the Gunaikurnai hold native title rights over much of Gippsland. At the same time, the Victorian Government took additional steps to recognise Gunaikurnai peoples' traditional rights and ownership and entered into a Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* (Vic.) with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation. The Recognition Statement from the RSA is reproduced in full in the Introduction to the Joint Management Plan (JMP).

The Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) is the 'traditional owner group entity' for the purposes of the RSA. GLaWAC is also the Prescribed Body Corporate for the purposes of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth) and the Registered Aboriginal Party for the area for the purposes of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic.). As part of the RSA, The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park have been granted to the Gunaikurnai as Aboriginal Title by the Victorian Government.

These Aboriginal Title areas are to be jointly managed by Gunaikurnai and the Victorian Government. The Aboriginal Title grant is subject to the Gunaikurnai giving the State the right to occupy, use, control and manage the land for the same purpose as applied immediately before the grant. In the case of The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, the land continues to be managed respectively as a National Park and a Coastal Park under the *National Parks Act 1975* (Vic).

This management plan for The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park is prepared under Section 82 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987* (Vic.) and the provisions of the Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Agreement 2010. It is consistent with the objects and requirements of the *National Parks Act 1975* and the requirements of regulations made under that Act. (Additional legislation and policies which have been considered in the preparation of the Management Plan are listed in Appendix 4 of the Strategic Plan.) This plan replaces the previous management plan for the two parks (Parks Victoria 1998), which ceases to have effect on approval of this plan.

As these Aboriginal Title areas are within the area covered by the 2010 Determination and the RSA, the rights of the Gunaikurnai to undertake traditional activities apply to The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and the other eight Joint Management parks and reserves. Existing rights and interests in the parks, held by others, are not affected by the Agreement, but remain subject to management policies and regulation.

The Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB) has been established in accordance with the RSA between GLaWAC and the State with the statutory objective of enabling the knowledge and culture of the Gunaikurnai to be recognised in the management of the 10 Aboriginal Title areas, including The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park. The Board was responsible for preparing this management plan jointly with GLaWAC, Parks Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

There have been few opportunities in the past for Gunaikurnai to participate in the decision-making and management of public land. Through this plan, GLaWAC and the Victorian Government seek to:

- ensure that The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park are well managed, their values and assets are protected and conserved, and the statutory requirements for park management are fulfilled, through an equitable partnership between the Victorian Government and GLaWAC
- increase opportunities for Gunaikurnai people to connect with Country, foster employment and economic development opportunities and build their capacity and skills to take a central role in joint management with the other management partners
- benefit the Gunaikurnai and the State, by recognising, valuing, promoting and incorporating Gunaikurnai culture, knowledge, skills and decision-making into the parks.

The Lakes National Park and the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park are part of the 58,800 ha Gippsland Lakes Site of International Significance, listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (known as the Ramsar Convention) for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

The Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan provides direction for the site and is co-ordinated by the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (EGCMA) on behalf of regional agency partners (West Gippsland CMA, DELWP, Parks Victoria and GLaWAC).

The Victorian Government is committed to conserving habitats of birds listed in the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement 1974 (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement 1987 (CAMBA), the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement 2006 (ROKAMBA) and the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). Several listed species under these agreements regularly use Lake Reeve.

1.2 HOW TO READ THE PLAN

This Plan provides a description of joint management strategies and actions that are specific to The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park. The following sections provide:

- a description of values, uses and threats relating to the land, water and heritage of the parks, and goals and strategies to protect and conserve those values
- a description of Traditional Owner, visitor and community connections to the parks and their uses and activities; and goals and strategies for managing and enhancing those connections and uses
- identification of government and community relationships and partnerships that are key to managing the parks
- an integrated statement of the actions that will be undertaken over the next 10 years to achieve the goals and implement the strategies described in the plan.

In addition to the specific actions for The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park in this plan, the Strategic Initiatives for joint management described in the Strategic Plan may include actions that relate to The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.

The *Parks Victoria Act 2018* (Vic.) will commence later in 2018. Under this Act, Parks Victoria will change from being an authority providing park management services by agreement to being an authority with park and reserve management responsibilities in its own right. It will continue to be a Committee of Management of particular reserves under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* (Vic.).

1.3 THE PARKS

The Lakes National Park covers 2389 hectares and is located on the Gippsland Lakes, 63 km east of Sale. The park is bounded by Lake Victoria, Lake Reeve and the township of Loch Sport. It contains large areas of diverse and relatively undisturbed flora and fauna communities that are representative of the inner barrier of the Gippsland Lakes System.

Sperm Whale Head Peninsula, Rotamah Island and Little Rotamah Island are within the national park. Sperm Whale Head National Park (1451 ha) was first declared in 1927 and subsequently scheduled under the *National Parks Act 1956* (Vic.) as The Lakes National Park. Rotamah and Little Rotamah Islands were added to the park area in 1978 because of their coastal geomorphological significance.

The 17 688 hectare Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park stretches 90 kilometres along a narrow strip of coastline from Seaspray to Lakes Entrance. It was proclaimed in 1979 with additions in 1997, 2001, 2010 and 2012, and takes in extensive coastal dune systems, woodlands and heathlands.

The coastal park also includes a significant area of water, described in the plan as Waters of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, including Lake Reeve and Bunga Arm. Lake Reeve is a narrow, shallow waterbody adjacent to the coastal dune barrier, and often dries out. It has been listed under the Ramsar Convention as a wetland of international importance for its waterfowl habitat.

Large parts of waters and shorelines of the Gippsland Lakes lie outside the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and The Lakes National Park, and are managed under various other land tenures and ownership.

2 THE LAKES NATIONAL PARK & GIPPSLAND LAKES COASTAL PARK UNDER JOINT MANAGEMENT

The Lakes National Park and the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park are on the Country of the Tatungalung clan.

The core of The Lakes National Park around Sperm Whale Head is one of the earliest areas established as a national park in Victoria and has therefore been managed as a conservation landscape for many years. The Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park was proclaimed more recently and had a previous land-use history of farming, grazing, oil exploration and many other activities that have left their mark on the land.

Parks Victoria and its predecessor park management organisations have worked systematically over several decades to restore the park's natural environment and to establish sustainable recreational use by large numbers of land and water users.

Joint management brings a continuing emphasis on nature conservation and recreation, but an increased focus on cultural values and site protection. The *Gunaikurnai Whole of country plan* sets out the following management priorities for The Lakes National Park and the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park:

- limiting further development and undertaking stabilisation works to protect the sensitive dunes
- looking at re-aligning the boundary of the park or management area to include cultural sites along the coast and out to sea
- strengthening our understanding of the area – researching and telling storylines and undertaking surveys
- research that looks into wildlife deaths in the area
- educating park users about significant places and culturally sensitive park use and ensuring tour operators and park workers undertake Gunaikurnai-run cultural awareness training
- establishment of a sea ranger program, including boats for monitoring and compliance
- restoration of middens and other significant sites
- building more boardwalks to protect the dunes from erosion and preserve cultural sites, and monitoring visitor compliance.

While recognising these priorities, this plan sets out actions that are consistent with and limited to the terms of the 2010 Recognition and Settlement Agreement.

The rich food resources of the Gippsland Lakes—fish, shellfish, birds and plants—and the transport routes on the sheltered lake waters led to intensive occupation of the two parks by Gunaikurnai people over many generations.

As a result, there are Gunaikurnai cultural sites throughout both parks. These sites are subject to disturbance from natural processes such as storms and wind erosion, as well as damage from development and recreational activity.

Future park operations under joint management will give much greater and earlier priority to cultural site protection and restoration in recognition of the change in land status arising from the grant of Aboriginal Title.

Historically State and regional land management policy for the Gippsland Lakes, including these two parks, has focused predominantly on environmental management including weed and pest control and water quality, and the substantial levels of recreation and visitor use have brought demands for visitor services and management of visitor pressures.

Investments in environmental and visitor management will continue in the future, under an approach that ensures that conservation of cultural values in the parks is an equally high priority.

Significant improvement in the condition of land and water in and around the Gippsland Lakes has been achieved over recent times.

The pattern of visitor use in The Lakes National Park and the area of Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park east of Loch Sport is generally sustainable and underpins the important tourism industry and educational operations of the Gippsland Lakes.

The western section of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, along the Ninety Mile Beach, is subject to very heavy visitor use in peak periods leading to unsustainable impacts on vegetation and cultural sites in the narrow dune strip around campgrounds.

Elsewhere the condition of the parks has improved in many respects but invasive animals, in particular, remain a major threat to the signature waterbird populations and habitats of the parks, especially on the Boole Poole Peninsula and along the Bunga Arm.

Joint management brings the additional knowledge of Gunaikurnai people together with the existing expertise and capability of Parks Victoria, DELWP, the West Gippsland CMA and others to the challenge of managing one of the most important landscapes in Victoria.

3 ZONING

A zoning scheme has been developed to provide a geographic framework to manage the parks. These zones will:

- communicate to the community and stakeholders which management aims have priority in different parts of the parks
- indicate the types and levels of use allowed
- assist in minimising conflicts between uses, or between those and the protection of conservation values
- provide a basis for assessing the suitability of future activities and use proposals.

The location of the zones is shown on Map 1 and their purpose is described in Table 1.

This plan maintains a similar zoning scheme to the previous 1998 park management plan, with several exceptions.

The Special Management Overlay is extended in this plan over the area of Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park between Barrier Landing and First Blowhole, to bring the whole of the Bunga Arm under this one overlay.

This change is made to enable this very exposed and fragile area of the park, and its natural and cultural heritage values, to be better protected, if impacts become apparent.

Visitor access and allowable activities within the zone remain the same. The change simplifies the zoning over the Bunga Arm for managers and the public, and signals that management action may be taken to control visitor impacts where necessary.

The former 'Land Use Designation – Hunting' is renamed 'Hunting (Designated species) Overlay' and continues to apply to the same areas of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.

Table 1: Management zones and overlays.

Zone	Description and purpose
Conservation Zone	Areas of high natural value including land, water and ecological values. Recreation and nature-based tourism are allowed subject to close management to ensure minimal impact and disturbance of natural values. Low-impact recreation activities are allowed; limited visitor facilities are provided, and are dispersed and small-scale.
Conservation and Recreation Zone	Areas where the management emphasis is on protection of land, water, ecological and cultural values while encouraging dispersed recreation and nature-based tourism. Low-impact recreation activities are allowed; dispersed, small-scale facilities are provided, without significant impact on natural processes and landscape character.
Recreation Development Zone	Relatively small areas with a high level of recreation or visitor use. Larger-scale visitor facilities are located in this zone, which is applied to the Rotamah Island homestead and adjacent area.
Special Management Overlay – Bunga Arm	Areas on the Bunga Arm with important recreational values where sensitive land, water and cultural heritage values also occur. Management may impose special controls on activities and uses to protect natural and cultural values and visitor experience. The area between Ocean Grange and The Entrance is included in this zone.
Hunting (Designated species) Overlay	Areas in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park where Hog Deer, Duck and/or Quail hunting may be allowed subject to restrictions or conditions.
Cultural Values Overlay (future)	Areas where the extent, nature or significance of Aboriginal cultural heritage and/or historic heritage is high. Specific protections and restrictions on use and activities may be applied.

Cultural heritage and cultural values in the parks need to be systematically surveyed and mapped. The zoning scheme therefore includes provision for a future 'Cultural Values Overlay' to be applied in the event that cultural values locations requiring conservation do not correspond to the conservation related-zones.

This overlay would be activated by means of a future amendment to the management plan. Implementation of this overlay may require amendment of the description or provisions of other zones and overlays, and integration with Aboriginal Heritage Act and the *Heritage Act 2017* (Vic.) provisions to ensure compatibility.

Under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, natural resource agreements can authorise activities such as the hunting of wildlife and game, fishing, and the gathering of flora and forest produce. No agreement over either of the two parks is currently in place but any future agreement may require variation to the zoning scheme and provisions of this plan.

4 CARING FOR COUNTRY

4.1 GUNAIKURNAI CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Gunaikurnai have a deep, longstanding connection with both parks and the adjacent waters. The lake waters in particular were abundant in food sources and in resources. Fishing, camping, hunting and gathering were daily activities of the Gunaikurnai. Bark canoes were used on the lakes system. People travelled to the open ocean from this area harvesting food and materials, and moving up and down the coast.

The towns of Lakes Entrance, Metung, Swan Reach and Paynesville were developed on the camping grounds of the Gunaikurnai ancestors (GLaWAC 2015). Talking Dog Rock (now known as Legend Rock) in Bancroft Bay adjacent to the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park is an important part of Gunaikurnai mythology. The story of the three fishermen turned to stone by the women as punishment for not sharing their fish, serves as a reminder of the laws of the land, and gathering and sharing.

Gunaikurnai people travelled between sites that are within The Lakes National Park. Evidence of use and occupation is visible in many locations throughout both parks. A number of currently used place names for this general area originate or are derived from traditional Gunaikurnai place names, such as Boole Poole, Bunga Arm and Nyerimilang.

The Gippsland Lakes were once part of a larger bay open to the sea. Sperm Whale Head, Little Rotamah Island, the Ninety Mile Beach, Boole Poole Peninsula and Rotamah Island were formed by sands deposited by the seas over thousands of years. These landforms now enclose the waters, some of the barriers being up to thirty-eight metres high.

The Gunaikurnai cultural values of the parks have not been systematically surveyed and mapped but key values are well-known. These include:

- a large number of middens in dune areas, containing the remains of shellfish and other food and resource material
- artefact scatters containing remains of weapons and tool-making activity
- fish and eel traps
- scarred trees where bark was removed for use in the manufacture of canoes and shields
- burial sites
- battle and massacre sites, a tragic but important element of Gunaikurnai history.

Protection of burial sites is particularly important to the Gunaikurnai. These sites, and the human remains they contain, are vulnerable to exposure by wind and coastal erosion and damage by works and visitor activities in the parks. They need to be inventoried and mapped. Where necessary, rapid rehabilitation of burial sites is needed when they become exposed. Redesign and relocation of visitor facilities may be required to pro-actively avoid damage.

A number of scarred trees in The Lakes National Park appear to be dying prematurely due to rises in the saline water table.

The area of Lake Reeve between The Lakes National Park and Bunga Arm (in the waters of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park) is very shallow and periodically dries out. The Gunaikurnai believe this area was traditionally used and occupied especially during drier climatic periods. It should be included in cultural mapping of the two parks.

4.2 LAND AND WATER VALUES

The parks contain sites of national, State and regional geological and geomorphological significance, mainly associated with the evolution of the sandy barrier system and the coastal lagoons that make up the Gippsland Lakes. These formations include Lake Reeve, Sperm Whale Head, Boole Poole Peninsula, Bunga Arm, the Outer Barrier and Ninety Mile Beach.

At the time of European settlement, the Gippsland Lakes were linked to the sea by an intermittent entrance. Sand deposition closed the entrance during low river flow until high river flow raised the level of the Lakes and breached the sand barrier.

An artificial entrance was opened in 1889 to improve boat access into and out of the Lakes system. This resulted in reduced fluctuations and a general lowering of the Lakes' levels, thereby changing the flooding regime of the bordering swamps. The salinity of the Lakes' water also increased, causing extensive dieback of Common reed beds along the shorelines. Without the protection of the reed beds, shoreline erosion became extensive and widespread.

Both parks support valuable examples of undisturbed and remnant vegetation communities that are representative of the inner barrier of the Gippsland Lakes system including Coast banksia woodland, Coastal saltmarsh, Estuarine wetland, Coastal dune scrub complex, Damp sands herb-rich woodland, Heath tea-tree heathland and Hairy spinifex grassland. Patches of littoral rainforest also occur in The Lakes National Park and near Entrance Bay in the Coastal Park.

Saltmarsh communities are the dominant vegetation community in the long shallow coastal lagoon of Lake Reeve. Dominant species include Samphire, and Chaffy saw-sedge. Other significant remnant vegetation includes Shining peppermints and Saw banksia in open woodland areas, Manna gum in the forests, and Succulent glasswort along the shoreline.

The Lakes National Park and the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park are part of the 58,800 ha Gippsland Lakes Site of International Significance, listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (known as the Ramsar Convention) for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. The listing recognises the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of the wetlands and their importance as habitat, particularly for migratory birds and other wildlife. The Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan sets out specific actions for management. There is a need to ensure co-ordination of the directions and implementation of the Ramsar Site Plan and this management plan for the parks. Eastern Boole Poole contains land of conservation and cultural significance that is currently in private ownership including private land that surrounds Hidden Lake which is part of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.

Table 2 describes significant land and water assets in the park in the park.

Table 2: Significant Ecological Vegetation Classes in The Lakes NP and Gippsland Lakes CP.

EVC	Description	Conservation status	Character species	High-impact weed species
Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland	Woodland with a grassy, heathy or bracken-dominated understorey and a ground layer rich in herbs, grasses, and orchids. Occurs mainly on flat or undulating areas on moderately fertile, relatively well drained, deep sand or sandy loam. Extensive in The Lakes NP.	vulnerable	Coast Manna Gum (<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> subsp. <i>pryoriana</i>) Shining Peppermint (<i>Eucalyptus willisii</i>) Narrow-leaf Peppermint (<i>Eucalyptus radiata</i>)	Spear Thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>)
Coastal Saltmarsh and Shorelines	Restricted to flats on low energy coastlines subject to the influence of daily inundation and exposure to salt water and poor drainage. It is most extensively developed immediately inland from the major ocean beaches in the Gippsland Lakes area. Ranges from a low succulent herbland to shrubland to rushland and sedgeland.	EPBC-listed	Beaded Glasswort (<i>Sarcocornia quinqueflora</i>) Australian Salt-grass (<i>Distichlis distichophylla</i>) Creeping Brookweed (<i>Samolus repens</i>)	African Boxthorn Boneseed

EVC	Description	Conservation status	Character species	High-impact weed species
Swamp Scrub (6% of GLCP, 2.5% of TLNP)	Closed scrub to 8 metres tall at low elevations on alluvial deposits along streams or on poorly drained sites with higher nutrient availability. The EVC is dominated by <i>Melaleuca</i> species. Occasional emergent eucalypts may be present. Where light penetrates to ground level, a moss-lichen-liverwort or herbaceous ground cover is often present. Dry variants have a grassy/herbaceous ground layer. A significant remnant occurs in GLCP west of Seacombe.	endangered	Swamp Paperbark (<i>Melaleuca ericifolia</i>) Woolly Tea-tree (<i>Leptospermum lanigerum</i>)	Yorkshire Fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>)
Littoral Rainforest (>0.1% of the 2 parks combined area)	A complex of rainforest and coastal vine thickets. Typically, occurs within two kilometres of the coast or adjacent to a large salt water body, such as an estuary and, thus, is influenced by the sea. Canopy species are well adapted to coastal exposure, and protect less tolerant species and subsequent cohorts in the understorey. The canopy height varies with the degree of exposure to extreme or persistent coastal conditions, ranging from < 1 m to 25 m high. Small occurrence on Bunga Arm near The Entrance.	EPBC-listed critically endangered nationally	Coast Banksia (<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>) Common Boobialla (<i>Myoporum insulare</i>) Seaberry Saltbush (<i>Rhagodia candolleana</i>) Bower Spinach (<i>Tetragonia implexicoma</i>) Coast Beard-heath (<i>Leucopogon parviflorus</i>)	Scrambling, climbing and ground cover weed species including Lantana (<i>Lantana camara</i>) Bridal Creeper (<i>Asparagus asparagoides</i>) Cape Ivy (<i>Delairea odorata</i>)
Coastal Dune Scrub/Coastal Dune Grassland Mosaic	Includes the vegetation succession from grasses and halophytes of the fore dune to the closed scrub on the secondary dunes behind ocean beaches.	depleted	Coast Tea-tree (<i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i>) Coast Wattle (<i>Acacia longifolia</i>) Long-hair Plume-grass (<i>Dichelachne crinite</i>)	Sea Spurge (<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>) Bridal Creeper (<i>Asparagus asparagoides</i>) Dolichos Pea (<i>Dipogon lignosus</i>) Spiny Rush (<i>Juncus acutus</i>)

Rare or threatened species

The parks contain a diversity of habitats and a large array of significant plant and animal species (Tables 3 and 4).

More than 190 species of birds have been recorded including the endangered Little Tern, the rare White-bellied Sea-Eagle and egrets. Twenty-six species of native mammals, 17 species of reptiles and 11 species of amphibians have been recorded.

Crescent Island, at the entrance to Bunga Arm, is an environmentally and culturally important breeding site within the Gippsland Lakes area for Pelicans, Little Terns and Fairy Terns and it

requires intervention to protect the breeding areas from erosion. Rigby Island and Pelican Island are also important bird breeding sites.

The saltmarsh and salt flats around Lake Reeve attract the largest concentration of migratory waders in East Gippsland and are one of the five most important areas for waders in Victoria such as the Little Tern, Fairy Tern and Hooded Plover.

The Gippsland Lakes and surrounding wetlands are an important drought refuge for many species of waterbirds in south-eastern Australia. Coastal Saltmarsh is relatively common within the Gippsland Plains Bioregion of Victoria due to its occurrences in South Gippsland but it is listed as a nationally vulnerable community under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth).

Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park is considered one of the most important sites in Victoria for the endangered New Holland Mouse. Fauna in the parks include rare shorebirds as well as Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Black Wallabies and the Common Brush-tailed and Ring-tailed Possums.

The waters of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park contain Bottlenose Dolphins. Small inshore populations of Bottlenose Dolphins in bays and estuaries are known to be genetically distinct and at risk of extinction. The Gippsland Lakes and Port Phillip populations have been proposed as a new dolphin species (Charlton-Robb et al. 2011), Burrunan (*Tursiops australis*), and were listed as endangered under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998* in 2014. Several instances of dolphin and wildlife deaths in Bunga Arm and The Entrance were recorded in recent years but there is no evidence of an ongoing problem.

Hog deer, an introduced species, defined as protected wildlife under the *Wildlife Act 1975* (Vic.), are valued for recreational hunting in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.

DELWP's 'NatureKit' biodiversity data products provide important information for conserving flora and fauna in the parks.

Table 3: Significant species, The Lakes National Park.

Scientific name	Common name	Conservation status	Relevant legislation	FFG Action Statement or Recovery Plan
<i>Anthochaera phrygia</i>	Regent Honeyeater	critically endangered	FFG, EPBC	—
<i>Commersonia prostrata</i>	Dwarf Kerrawang	endangered	FFG, EPBC	144
<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	Swift Parrot	endangered	FFG, EPBC	169
<i>Sternula nereis</i>	Fairy Tern	endangered	FFG, EPBC	—
<i>Caladenia tessellata</i>	Thick-lip Spider-orchid	vulnerable	FFG, EPBC	National Recovery Plan (DSE 2010)
<i>Litoria aurea</i>	Green and Golden Bell Frog	vulnerable	FFG, EPBC	—
<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	Grey-headed Flying-fox	vulnerable	FFG, EPBC	—
<i>Thalassarche cauta</i>	Shy Albatross	vulnerable	FFG, EPBC	—

Table 4: Significant species, Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.

Scientific name	Common name	Conservation status	Relevant legislation	FFG Action Statement or Recovery Plan
<i>Ardea intermedia</i>	Intermediate Egret	endangered	FFG	—
<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>	Great Knot	endangered	FFG	—
<i>Commersonia prostrata</i>	Dwarf Kurrumbidgee	endangered	FFG	144
<i>Egretta garzetta nigripes</i>	Little Egret	endangered	FFG	120
<i>Litoria raniformis</i>	Growing Grass Frog	endangered	FFG, EPBC	EPBC Policy Statement 3.14
<i>Pezoporus wallicus</i>	Ground Parrot	endangered	FFG	89
<i>Prasophyllum frenchii</i>	Maroon Leek-orchid	endangered	FFG	154
<i>Sternula nereis</i>	Fairy Tern	endangered	FFG, EPBC	51
<i>Thelymitra epipactoides</i>	Metallic Sun-orchid	endangered	FFG	156
<i>Tursiops australis</i>	Burrunan Dolphin	endangered	FFG	—
<i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>	Grey Goshawk	vulnerable	FFG	—
<i>Ardea modesta</i>	Eastern Great Egret	vulnerable	FFG	120
<i>Calamanthus pyrrhopygius</i>	Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	vulnerable	FFG	—
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	vulnerable	FFG	60
<i>Korthalsella rubra</i>	Jointed Mistletoe	vulnerable	FFG	—
<i>Lissolepis coventryi</i>	Swamp Skink	vulnerable	FFG	—
<i>Litoria aurea</i>	Green and Golden Bell Frog	vulnerable	FFG, EPBC	—
<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>	Fairy Prion	vulnerable	EPBC	—
<i>Pseudomys novaehollandiae</i>	New Holland Mouse	vulnerable	FFG	74
<i>Sternula albifrons sinensis</i>	Little Tern	vulnerable	FFG	51
<i>Thalassarche cauta</i>	Shy Albatross	vulnerable	FFG, EPBC	—
<i>Thinornis rubricollis</i>	Hooded Plover	vulnerable	FFG	9
<i>Cercartetus nanus</i>	Eastern Pygmy-possum	near threatened	FFG	—
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian Tern	near threatened	FFG	—
<i>Melanodryas cucullata</i>	Hooded Robin	near threatened	FFG	—
<i>Lachnagrostis punicea subsp. filifolia</i>	Purple Blown-grass	rare		—
<i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i>	Common Bent-wing Bat			—
<i>Phoebastria palpebrata</i>	Light-mantled Sooty Albatross		FFG	—

Landscape and catchment context

The catchment surrounding the parks is one of the most complex natural landscapes in Victoria.

The Gippsland Lakes receive water from six major rivers, are subject to dynamic hydrological and tidal processes and are surrounded by a complex mix of land use including agriculture, fisheries, urban development and tourism.

Several key plans co-ordinate the natural resource management and development across land categories and agencies within the catchment including the *East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy*, the *West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy*, the *Gippsland Lakes Priorities Plan*, the *Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan* and the *Gippsland Lakes Sustainable Boating Plan 2016–2018*.

The *East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy* sets out the following objectives for the ‘Gippsland Lakes and Hinterland’ landscape:

- targeted improvement of the condition, security, diversity and connectivity of native vegetation
- targeted improvement of the status of threatened species and communities
- targeted improvement of the water quality and freshwater flow regime of the Gippsland Lakes
- targeted provision of appropriate freshwater and salinity regimes for selected fringing wetlands of the Gippsland Lakes
- increased sustainability of land use, with development in appropriate nodes along the Gippsland Lakes coastline
- plan for adaptation of Gippsland Lakes communities to changing conditions along the coastline.

4.3 HISTORIC HERITAGE

The first European records of the Gippsland Lakes were by Angus McMillan in 1840, and of the seaward entrance to the Lakes by John Reeve in 1842. By 1845 pastoral occupation was well established around the Lakes (Billis and Kenyon 1932) and much of the area now covered by the Parks was cleared and grazed from this period.

A permanent entrance through the outer barrier, opposite Jemmeys Point, was opened in 1889 (Lennon 1975). From this time changes took place around the shores of the Lakes, including increasing numbers of agricultural selections, fishing establishments such as Paynesville, and holiday settlements such as Cunninghame (present day Lakes Entrance).

The recreational use of the Lakes was quickly promoted; opportunities for fishing and shooting were major attractions. Steamboat cruises were also popular for day tours and Ocean Grange became a popular destination.

Historic sites in the parks include the ‘Honeymoon Cottage’ on Boole Poole Peninsula, the homestead on Rotamah Island, a homestead site at Point Wilson, the blowhole sites on the outer barrier adjacent to Bunga Arm, the site of construction of the artificial entrance to the sea, and eel farming ponds near McLennan Strait. Pretty Jane Wreck at Stockyard Hill was recorded in 2009. Remains of more recent activity include survey lines and sealed bores left from petroleum exploration.

The New Works complex at Lakes Entrance is of scientific/technical significance as the site of a major engineering feat of the nineteenth century, and one of the biggest public works undertaken in the colony of Victoria until that time.

The remains of equipment and buildings used in the construction of the permanent entrance include steel rails on timber sleepers, a jetty, remains of a pier, the two buildings at Entrance Bay, and a three-legged crane. These are part of the New Works Historic Complex listed on the Victorian Heritage Register under the provisions of the Heritage Act.

Similar relics are found on the eastern side of the entrance outside the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park that are managed by the Shire of East Gippsland. A World War II fighter plane crashed into Lake Reeve during a training flight in 1945. The wreck of a ship, the *Trinculo*, which was beached in

1858, is still evident west of Delray Beach. The historic Snapper Cottage situated on the eastern end of Boole Poole Peninsula is run down, unoccupied and contains asbestos.

4.4 THREATS TO COUNTRY AND HERITAGE

A range of environmental and human factors pose threats to Country and heritage values of the parks. The most recent assessments of the parks' environmental condition indicate that the parks are recovering from grazing and past land use. A range of government and volunteer agencies are focused on actively managing invasive plants and animals, foreshore erosion, salinity and recreational access in the Gippsland Lakes area.

Invasive plants and animals

The *Gippsland Lakes Invasive Species Strategy* sets out target threats, objectives and priorities for management of invasive plants and animals (Ethos NRM 2015).

Browsing and soil disturbance from introduced herbivores, particularly pigs and deer in the east of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and goats in the western part of the park, have a significant impact.

Hog deer are well established on the Boole Poole Peninsula. Sambar Deer have moved into the parks in relatively recent times and represent an emerging threat to its biodiversity. Pigs have been established for decades and are a particular threat to the biologically important coastal salt marsh communities on the Boole Poole Peninsula and Lake Reeve where they create significant soil disturbance whilst feeding.

The saltmarsh communities on Lake Reeve are particularly sensitive, and introduced mammals have an impact on sand dune vegetation, including Coast Wattle, Beach Spinifex and the introduced sand stabiliser Marram Grass on the Boole Poole Peninsula.

Rabbits occur in dune scrub in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and in parts of The Lakes National Park, particularly at Rotamah Island, Emu Bight and Point Wilson, hampering revegetation programs and reducing food availability to native herbivores.

Nesting, feeding and roosting water birds as well as small and medium mammals are at risk from foxes and cats. This predation is a critical threat to the function of the parks as internationally significant waterbird breeding sites.

Weeds have the potential to affect the significant vegetation communities and some of the parks important habitats. Bridal creeper (all areas), African boxthorn (Boole Poole Peninsula, Bunga Arm and The Lakes NP), Wheel cactus (Bunga Arm and Boole Poole), Sea spurge (ocean dunes), Dolichos pea and a number of garden escapees are displacing native vegetation species, reducing diversity of native wetland flora and reducing habitat for water birds such as nesting terns.

The Northern Pacific sea star, recently recorded near Lakes Entrance, is a significant threat to the whole lake system as it is a voracious predator that eats a wide range of native animals and has the potential to rapidly establish large populations in new areas. It can have a major impact on populations of native shellfish, which are important components of the marine food chain.

European wasps are a significant pest for visitors at Rotamah Island, Point Wilson and other sites, and may also be displacing native species.

Visitor impacts

Visitors seek recreational experience on or around the water and bush camping sites and facilities. The shoreline is also the most popular area within the parks where visitors go to fish, tie up boats/canoes/kayaks and camp.

Camping in some areas has resulted in problems such as destruction of vegetation, soil and bank erosion, and rubbish. Campfires can also pose a fire risk, and the collection of wood for campfires

can impact on the vegetation communities. Intertidal zones dominated by Sea Rush and other salt tolerant plant species are subjected to disturbance by visitors travelling by boat.

The action of berthing and the subsequent disembarking of passengers by large numbers of boats contribute to shoreline erosion at popular day visitor sites and adjacent to the Bunga Arm campsites which are at capacity during holiday periods.

The installation of mooring poles has reduced damage from tying up to trees. Camping on the primary dune along Shoreline Drive is a significant issue due to the sensitivity of the dune to erosion and the cultural significance of the area. Boat operators are required to empty sewage at designated pump-out facilities.

Some duck and quail hunters build hides in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park during hunting season. The impact of this is dependent on whether fallen or cut vegetation is used. Cutting of standing vegetation needs to be eliminated through hunter education in partnership with recreational hunting organisations, and enforcement.

Climate change

Climate change is a potential intensifier of existing and new threats. These include changes to hydrology, increased frequency and/or severity of extreme events, changes in vegetation arising from rainfall and evaporation changes. Climate change and severe weather such as drought and storms can alter freshwater inflows, create shoreline erosion, dune breaches and impact on cultural sites.

Extensive climate modelling and impact assessments have indicated a likely increase in sea level coupled with an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms in the Gippsland Lakes (EGCMA 2015). Changes such as sea-level rise are likely to be 'slow-onset' while more extreme events such as storms, floods and bushfires can occur at any time.

Potential impacts include physical damage to shorelines, vegetation and assets; as well as increased inundation. Studies indicate that there is a risk of increased inundation for Lake Reeve and potential erosion of the shoreline. Shoreline erosion affects the habitat for a number of threatened species including wading birds and important fish breeding and nursery areas.

Fire management

There have been relatively few bushfires in the Parks in the last two decades.

In 2013 substantial areas of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park near Spoon Bay and in the core of The Lakes National Park were burnt. A smaller bushfire burned an area of the Bunga Arm near Rotamah Island in 2014.

Bushfires burned parts of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park around Dutson Downs a number of times during the 1980s and 1990s. Planned burns have been undertaken on approximately half of the area of The Lakes National Park over the last twenty years. A substantial planned burn was carried out on the eastern end of the Boole Poole Peninsula in 2010. Much of this area of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park has not been burnt by either bushfire or planned burns for more than thirty years.

As a result, the vegetation composition and structure of parts of the Peninsula are changing, including areas that are senescing. Planned burning is logistically difficult on the Peninsula and much of the Bunga Arm, making it difficult to take advantage of suitable weather and fuel conditions.

The *Code of Practice for Bushfire Management on Public Land* (DEPI 2012) provides the framework for public land fire management across the State. Fire management on public land in non-urban areas is the responsibility of DELWP.

The *Alpine – Greater Gippsland Strategic Bushfire Management Plan* (DELWP 2015) sets the direction for fire management in and around the parks. These directions reflect the mix of assets

and values around the parks, including towns and residential areas, and the Bass Strait Gas Pipeline.

The detailed treatment of fuel risks and ecological fire requirements are considered in DELWP's Fire operations plan process. The natural, cultural and recreational values identified and prioritised in this plan will inform the Fire Operations Plan process so that burning and other fuel treatments are prioritised or modified where necessary. In particular, the planned burning strategy for the parks needs to be focused on identifying areas of Country that require burning and working with DELWP Forest Fire Management to prioritise burning in these locations.

Resourcing actions for the Gunaikurnai rangers are important in this strategy (see discussion of boat capability in '6. Working Together'). Increased planned burning on Boole Poole Peninsula will have implications for deer hunting (see '5. People in the parks').

Changes to hydrology

At the time of European settlement, the Gippsland Lakes were linked to the sea by an intermittent entrance. Sand deposition closed the entrance during low river-flow until high river-flow raised the level of the Lakes and breached the sand barrier.

An artificial entrance was opened in 1889, near Lakes Entrance, to improve boat access into and out of the Lakes system. This resulted in reduced fluctuations and a general lowering of the Lakes' levels, thereby changing the flooding regime of the bordering swamps. Algal blooms occur periodically in the Lakes system and have the potential to affect the natural and recreational values of the parks.

The salinity of the water in the lakes also increased, causing extensive dieback of Common reed beds along the shorelines. Without the protection of the reed beds, shoreline erosion became extensive and widespread.

A significant amount of management focus and action is now directed towards dealing with shoreline erosion. Substantial infrastructure has been established west of the entrance to transport sand for dumping offshore, and is maintained by Gippsland Ports (see 'Authorised uses').

Both Pelican and Crescent Islands experienced a loss in low-level beach areas over more than a decade. Sand from routine dredging of the Ocean Grange and Steamer Landing channels was used to renourish the islands in 2015 and 2016, increasing the habitable areas of the islands for pelican, black swan and fairy tern colonies.

Groynes have been established on some sections of shoreline to stabilise erosion and there are calls to construct more groynes in areas such as The Entrance where private land is eroding. The construction of groynes in the parks is expensive and may create consequential erosion or other effects elsewhere along a shore. Decisions regarding groynes or other shoreline infrastructure generally involve Parks Victoria, East Gippsland Shire Council, and the EGCMA as well as affected landholders.

The mouth of Merriman Creek at Seaspray was modified in 1987 to minimise flooding of the township arising from natural closure of the mouth by a sandbar. The modifications have altered flows of water from the creek into Lake Reeve.

Other threats

Illegal activity threatens land and water values of the area, primarily through vehicle entry when tracks are closed during the seasonal closure period.

4.5 CONSERVATION STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH THREATS

The key land, water and heritage values are identified in Tables 2–4. Conservation strategies for these values are detailed in Table 5.

Land and water values are identified primarily at the level of EVCs and threatened species, using state-wide datasets. However, often it is more practical and effective to take conservation action by targeting assets at an intermediate level, for example controlling weeds or undertaking planned burning to improve the health of an assemblage of ground-cover plants in a particular EVC or part of the area, rather than the EVC as a whole or a single threatened plant species.

An intensive conservation action planning process is required to identify the most critical assets given the present condition of the area and the ecological processes, such as predation or weed invasion, that are operating within it. The strategies in Table 5 should therefore be further evaluated through a conservation planning process that takes into account their feasibility, impact and priority in the broader landscape.

Management priorities for Gunaikurnai cultural heritage values are very dependent on completing current cultural mapping work to systematically identify the nature, extent and types of sites requiring protection and conservation.

Table 5: Land, water and heritage conservation strategies.

Threats	Priorities	Strategy
Waterbirds and critical habitat — low islands, shorelines, coastal marshes, and intermittent waters of Lake Reeve		
Predation by foxes, cats, and dogs; pig and deer disturbance and browsing; shoreline and island erosion; invasive plants	Australian Pelicans, Musk Duck, Little Tern, Fairy Tern, White-bellied Sea-eagle, Black Swan, pig and predator control (Ethos NRM 2015)	Control predators. Control pigs and deer, and invasive plants. Renourish breeding islands and sites with sand as required. Ensure compliance by visitors with access, navigation and activity restrictions.
Coastal Dune Scrub/Coastal Dune Grassland Mosaic and Swamp Scrub EVCs		
Invasive animals; fire regime (Boole Poole) Camping and visitor encroachments (Honeysuckles to Paradise Beach) Emerging weeds (Bunga Arm) Climate-driven storm surges	Feral Pigs, Hog Deer and Sambar Deer; encroachments around Camps 1 to 19; Bridal Creeper, Dolichos Pea, Wheel Cactus and other garden escape weeds (Ethos NRM 2015) Stabilising dune vegetation	Targeted pig control program on Boole Poole with aim of eradication; increased Sambar Deer control program with hunting groups. Planned burning on Boole Poole Peninsula. Campsite redesign and other strategies (see Section 5) along 90 Mile Beach. Targeted weed control. Maintain and restore native vegetation on vulnerable dunes
Littoral Rainforest		
Bushfire	Exclude fire	Work with DELWP Forest Fire Management to ensure adequate risk reduction on surrounding areas using burning and other measures. Exclude fire in EVCs that are fire sensitive. Prevent fires starting inside the parks through visitor education and regulatory enforcement.
Invasive plants and animals	Scrambling, climbing and ground cover weeds. Sambar Deer, Hog Deer.	Undertake intensive weed control. Increase control. Implement relevant actions (Ethos NRM 2015)

Threats	Priorities	Strategy
Rare or threatened species		
Various	New Holland Mouse, Hooded Plover, Little Tern, Fairy Tern, Orchids and others (Tables 3, 4)	Implement Action Statements, Guidelines and Recover Plans listed in Tables 3 and 4.
Gunaikurnai cultural heritage values		
Cultural sites and intangible heritage have only been partially surveyed and recorded Known sites exposed to disturbance or erosion	Cultural survey and mapping Protection and/or rehabilitation	Complete the current GKTOLMB cultural mapping project for the ten Joint Managed Parks and Reserves. Determine required management actions including implementation of a Cultural Values Overlay. Undertake protection and rehabilitation works on sites known to be at risk of damage
Culturally important plants and animals		
Lack of knowledge of species conservation requirements	Cultural knowledge and current conservation status	Obtain knowledge through Joint Management Plan Strategic Initiatives.
Historic heritage		
Deterioration of sites due to weather or vandalism.	New Works area, Honeymoon Cottage Rotamah Island homestead	Monitoring and required conservation works as appropriate. Work with lessee to improve condition of site and buildings.

5 PEOPLE IN THE PARKS

5.1 TRADITIONAL OWNERS CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY

Cultural values and practices in the present, as well as the past, are fundamental to Gunaikurnai people. The parks provide opportunities for the Gunaikurnai to increase and strengthen their connection to country in an inspiring landscape, characteristic of country in its original and traditional condition.

Joint management provides a renewed opportunity for Gunaikurnai people to hold community gatherings on country, share lore, pass cultural skills and knowledge between generations, and meet cultural obligations to care for country through conservation and restoration work in the parks. As far as possible the Gunaikurnai should be the tellers of their own cultural stories. GLaWAC Joint management ranger team members undertake conservation and maintenance works, co-operatively with Parks Victoria and there is great scope to build capacity and expertise through this program.

Operational management of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and The Lakes National Park is logistically difficult. There is no public road access to many areas due to private landholdings and some areas require boat access - especially the Boole Poole Peninsula, Bunga Arm and Rotamah Island. Parks Victoria has several water craft and a small number of certified coxswains. The GLaWAC ranger team does not currently have any boats or coxswains. An adequate boating capability is essential for operation such as planned burning where numerous staff and prolonged patrols are required. Acquisition of boats and training of coxswains is a high priority.

In addition to taking a greater role in the management and conservation of the parks, Gunaikurnai people are seeking opportunities to gather in the parks, pass on lore and cultural knowledge between generations and undertake traditional practices.

5.2 VISITORS TO THE PARKS

The parks are the largest, relatively natural areas of public land on the Gippsland Lakes, providing for a range of activities such as camping, fishing, boating, swimming and walking in natural settings on the beach and lake shores.

Facilities available throughout the parks include picnic areas, toilets, and car parks and boat jetties. The eastern end of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park is an outstanding boating destination whilst the western end of the park provides road access for recreational use. Boating, fishing and beach recreation on the Lakes and in the parks is a mainstay of tourism in the East Gippsland region.

Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park has a large number of campsites with basic (unpowered) facilities and a natural setting close to beach and lake shores. The Lakes National Park caters mostly for day visitors. Camping is permitted only at Emu Bight on the shore of Lake Victoria. Both parks provide a variety of bushwalking opportunities, and limited opportunities for cycling due to sandy tracks. Horse-riding is only permitted on public vehicle tracks within the Coastal Park, west of Loch Sport near Spoon Bay and Red Bluff. Horse riding has not been permitted in The Lakes National Park in order to protect the sensitive coastal vegetation.

The Gippsland Lakes are one of the State's most popular locations for water-based recreation including motor boating, sailing, kayaking and fishing from boats and canoes. Most of this activity takes place outside the parks but some boating occurs within Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park primarily in Bunga Arm. Boating is the only method of access to some areas of the Coastal Park. It is also popular on sandy shorelines around Point Wilson and Rotamah Island where there are jetties, and around Trouser Point and Emu Bight where shallow draught boats can be safely beached.

Water-skiing is allowed on Bunga Arm between Steamer Landing and First Blowhole. The impact of this activity on breeding sites of waterbirds needs to be monitored. Local and private boat owners undertake boating activity as well as a substantial boat hire and charter industry operating from

Metung, Paynesville and other locations around the Gippsland Lakes, and licensed tour operator craft.

Hunting in Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park is permitted in designated areas for certain game animals. Species of proclaimed game (Hog Deer, Stubble Quail, and some duck species) may currently be hunted in season in that part of the Park west of Beacon Swamp Track, Track 10 Causeway and west of a line from the south end of the causeway to Long Point on Ninety Mile Beach and parts of Boole Poole Peninsula.

Dogs are allowed for the flushing or retrieval of game ducks during the duck season and for pointing, flushing, or retrieval of quail during quail season, subject to regulations. Cutting of vegetation for building hides needs to be controlled through education and enforcement (see Section 4 'Visitor Impacts'). Pest animals and other species may not be hunted in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park. No hunting of any kind is permitted in The Lakes National Park. Hunters are currently permitted to hunt in the woodland areas of the Boole Poole Peninsula, west of Bunga Arm Track, but are not permitted to hunt east of Bunga Arm Track.

Planned burning on the Boole Poole Peninsula (see 'Fire Management' above) is likely to temporarily affect the areas that can be accessed by Hog deer hunters under the annual ballot system. Deer are highly abundant and cause environmental damage outside the current ballot area. Planned burning for ecological and other objectives was carried out in the eastern area in 2010; burning in the area west of Bunga Arm Track is needed in the short- to medium-term for similar objectives.

To focus hunting on areas of deer abundance and damage, and to enable burning to be undertaken without major impacts on hunting access, the balloted area should be moved as needed within the area of woodland both west and east of Bunga Arm Track. Sambar Deer are not currently allowed to be hunted but the emerging population of this species and its impacts need to be monitored with a view to potentially allowing hunting in future if required as part of overall management control efforts.

Easy road access to Ninety Mile Beach enables many day visitors and campers to enjoy the long stretch of beach within the Coastal Park between Paradise Beach and Seaspray. This area is subject to very heavy visitor use in peak periods leading to unsustainable impacts on vegetation and cultural sites in the narrow dune strip around campgrounds. Camping in the park campgrounds west of Loch Sport has historically been free of charge. In 2013, camper registration and fees were introduced briefly before being removed under a state-wide change of government policy. During the fee-charging period, Parks Victoria staff and the Golden Beach community reported an observable improvement in camper behaviour and reduced impacts, with less enforcement problems for Rangers.

The south-western end of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park is accessible by two-wheel drive vehicles via sealed roads and tracks. The Boole Poole Peninsula area (eastern end of the park) is only accessible by boat, and access to the park near Loch Sport is limited by almost continuous freehold land along the outer barrier. Access by car within The Lakes National Park is provided by both the Lake Victoria Track (4WD only and subject to seasonal closure) and Lake Reeve Track.

There is no land access for management purposes to some key areas of the parks east of Ocean Grange. There are freehold blocks within Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park to which the only formed vehicle access is through the park and/or third party freehold land. There are also some private land inliers where access is limited to pedestrian paths through the park, such as at Ocean Grange, Boole Poole Peninsula, Barrier Landing and the New Works West area. Bitumen roads providing access to the Parks such as Shoreline Drive, Golden Beach Road, Seacombe-Loch Sport Road, Stockyard Hill Causeway and Paradise Beach Road, are maintained by the Wellington Shire Council.

The boundaries between the park and private residences are unclear in some areas, such as Ocean Grange, making it difficult for park visitors to be certain about which areas and tracks they can access. There are also a number of freehold properties adjoining Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park separated from Ninety Mile Beach by the park.

The Overstrand homestead at Rotamah Island has operated as an environmental education facility for some years, primarily for bird observing. The homestead and the nearby ‘Wardens cottage’ are leased to a community organisation (see ‘Authorised uses’), however the level of public use of this facility is relatively low. The homestead and its surrounds are in a deteriorating condition. Maintenance and repair is required under the lease conditions.

There are a number of private residences at Entrance Bay dating from the period of the construction of the artificial entrance to the Lakes and is part of the New Works Historic Area. Parks Victoria is required to maintain an emergency beach access point at Barrier Landing in a clear and accessible condition under the municipal emergency management plan.

5.3 VISITOR STRATEGIES

Visitor access, activities and facilities in the parks will be managed in accordance with the goals and strategies detailed in Table 6 for each of the broadly defined visitor experience areas in the two parks. Specific recreational activities and uses will be managed in accordance with Table 7. This table does not limit the operation or exercising of Native Title or Traditional Owner rights held by the Gunaikurnai people.

Table 6: Visitor experience goals and strategies.

Honeysuckles to Paradise Beach Visitor Experience Area – Gippsland Lakes CP

(Includes Shoreline Drive Beach Camps 1 to 19 and Paradise Beach Campground)

Goal

Provide accessible, sustainable beach camping experiences including fishing and beach walks.

Strategy

Improve visitor amenity through the provision of well-designed low-key facilities, prioritising Golden Beach and Delray Beach. Eliminate impacts on cultural and natural values by defining and controlling vehicle access and campsites. Increase information and interpretation of joint management and values of the park. Improve visitor compliance with regulations and low-impact camping behaviours through tools including camper registration/fees, education and enforcement. Progressively renew toilets and other facilities.

Loch Sport Visitor Experience Area — Gippsland Lakes CP

(Includes Spoon Bay and Red Bluff Campgrounds, and Stockyard Hill)

Goal

Provide vehicle-accessible lakeside bush camping and day visit experiences including kayaking/canoeing, fishing, swimming, horse-riding and bird observation.

Strategy

Maintain settings with simple low-key facilities. Ensure compliance with park regulations especially those relating to campfires, waste and dogs.

The Lakes NP Visitor Experience Area

(Includes Point Wilson, Emu Bight, Dolomite and other sites)

Goal

Provide highly natural day visit and overnight camping experiences consisting of short walks, picnicking cultural and environmental interpretation, bird observing, and fishing.

Strategy

Improve visitor amenity through the provision of well-designed low-key facilities, prioritising Point Wilson and Emu Bight. Develop Point Wilson as a major interpretive hub for Gunaikurnai values and cultural heritage, and joint management. Eliminate impacts on cultural and natural values by defining and controlling vehicle access and campsites, and preventing disturbance. Increase information and interpretation of joint management and values of the park. Improve visitor compliance with regulations and low-impact camping.

Bunga Arm and Rotamah Visitor Experience Area — Gippsland Lakes CP and The Lakes NP

(Includes sites between Ocean Grange and Second Blowhole, Barrier Landing, Entrance Bay, Rotamah Island)

Goal

Provide opportunities for secluded bush camping and day visits accessible by boat only while ensuring fragile natural and cultural values are protected.

Strategy

Maintain low-key facilities consistent with fee-based camping. Increase joint management and natural and cultural values information at western sites including Ocean Grange and Steamer Landing. Protect water quality by ensuring toilets are functional and well-maintained. Monitor vegetation and shoreline condition around sites and control high impact activities as necessary. Implement site design and activity controls if park impacts become apparent. Monitor water skiing activity in relation to disturbance of waterbird breeding sites.

Boole Poole Visitor Experience Area - Gippsland Lakes CP

(Area available for Hog Deer hunting.)

Goal

Provide for restricted recreational hunting of Hog Deer under annual ballot.

Strategy

Review the arrangements for Hog deer hunting, with the aim of providing an annual hunting area equal in extent to the existing balloted area, rotated within a larger area of the park extending east of Bunga Arm Track. Engage agency and park stakeholders and neighbours in the review.

Table 7: Recreational activities allowed in Management Zones.

Activity	Recreation Development Zone	Conservation & Recreation Zone	Conservation Zone	Special Management Overlay — Bunga Arm	Hunting (Designated Species) Overlay
Boating — motorised, sailing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Boating — rafting, canoeing, kayaking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Boating — waterskiing	N/A	Yes, subject to Marine Act regulations	Yes, subject to Marine Act regulations	N/A	N/A
Camping — designated areas	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, during declared hunting season, subject to limits on duration and location specified by the park manager
Camping — dispersed vehicle based	No	No, except in 'Special Use Overlay-Hunting' area	No	No	Yes, during declared hunting season, subject to limits on duration and location specified by the park manager

Activity	Recreation Development Zone	Conservation & Recreation Zone	Conservation Zone	Special Management Overlay — Bunga Arm	Hunting (Designated Species) Overlay
Camping — dispersed other	No	No (except in Special Use Overlay — Hunting area)	No	No	Yes (during declared hunting season, subject to limits on duration and location specified by the park manager)
Campfires — solid fuel	Yes (only in designated campfires where provided and subject to regulations including fire bans)	Yes (only in designated campfires where provided and subject to regulations including fire bans. Not permitted on 90 Mile Beach)			Yes (during declared hunting season)
Campfires — liquid or gas fuel stoves	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Competitive events	Yes, with permit, if activity type is allowed		No	No	N/A
Cycling	Yes, on open public roads and Vehicle Only tracks. Not permitted on walking tracks		Management	No	N/A
Dogs	No, except on lead at: The Honeysuckles; Flamingo Beach; Paradise Beach Camping Area; Golden Beach Campgrounds 1 to 6 along Shoreline Drive; Ocean Grange within 100 metres of the private residential land; Barrier Landing no more than 300 metres east of the private land boundary.			No, including on boats in the Bunga Arm.	In designated duck and quail hunting areas, dogs used for the flushing or retrieval of game birds are allowed during and 48 hours prior to the commencement of the declared hunting season.
Education Activities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Firearms	No	No	No, except in the Special Use Overlay — Hunting area	No	Yes, during declared hunting season for Hog Deer, some Duck species and Quail depending on area and subject to restrictions and conditions
Firewood collection	Yes — for visitor use within the area where fires are allowed; not allowed for commercial or domestic use.				

Activity	Recreation Development Zone	Conservation & Recreation Zone	Conservation Zone	Special Management Overlay — Bunga Arm	Hunting (Designated Species) Overlay
Fishing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geocaching	Yes (no excavation allowed)	Yes (no excavation allowed)	Yes (no excavation allowed)	Yes (no excavation allowed)	N/A
Guided activities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Horseriding	No	Yes (only in the Gippsland Lakes CP on public vehicle roads west of Loch Sport)	No	No	N/A
Hunting	No	No	No	No	Yes (during declared hunting season for Hog Deer, some Duck species and Quail depending on area and subject to restrictions and conditions)
Orienteering and rogaining	Yes — subject to permit - except within The Lakes NP and Bunga Arm				N/A
Swimming	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Vehicle use (two-wheel drive, four-wheel drive, and trail bikes)	Yes — on open public roads; not allowed on MVO roads and tracks or on walking tracks				
Walking and hiking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

6 WORKING TOGETHER

6.1 THE JOINT MANAGEMENT PARTNERS – GLaWAC, PARKS VICTORIA, DELWP AND GKTOLMB

The parks are managed by Parks Victoria as part of Victoria's parks and conservation reserves system. Parks Victoria rangers operate from Loch Sport and Bairnsdale. Regional and state-wide technical specialist staff provide environmental, cultural and visitor expertise and services to manage the area from other locations in eastern Victoria and Melbourne. Parks Victoria and GLaWAC have an agreement for GLaWAC to undertake works in the two parks, and other jointly managed areas, which has been operating since 2013.

DELWP is responsible for fire management on non-urban public land and provides legislative and policy support to the GKTOLMB and Parks Victoria. The GLaWAC Joint management ranger team has recently commenced participation in DELWP's fire management program.

The GKTOLMB, Parks Victoria, GLaWAC and DELWP have identified the potential for these partnerships to expand and evolve significantly over time through mentoring, training, information sharing and employment and contractual opportunities. This process should operate in multiple directions with expertise and knowledge of park and public land management being shared by Parks Victoria and DELWP, and cultural and local knowledge and expertise being shared by GLaWAC. The GKTOLMB provides a central forum for coordinating these partnerships, and provides the strategic management directions for the partnerships through this joint management plan.

6.2 COMMUNITY AND OTHER PARTNERS

The communities of Seaspray, Golden Beach, Loch Sport, Paynesville, Metung, Ocean Grange, Lakes Entrance and Barrier Landing are very engaged in the management of the parks.

The Friends of the Gippsland Lakes Parks and Reserves aims to promote the values of the parks and to provide an avenue for the community to participate in the management of the parks.

The Gippsland Lakes User Group represents the interests of school camps and other camps on the Banksia Peninsula which frequently use The Lakes National Park and the Coastal Park for recreational and educational activities.

The Bairnsdale and District Field Naturalists Club and the Gippsland Environment Group are both active in surveying and monitoring the natural values and condition of the parks. The Gippsland Lakes Yacht Club based at Paynesville is an active user of the waters of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.

The Field and Game Association represents a large proportion of the hunters who hunt in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park. The Blond Bay Hog Deer Association administers the ballot for Hog deer permits on Boole Poole Peninsula. The Sporting Shooters Association Australia and the Australian Deer Association provide volunteers to assist with deer and invasive animal control programs in the joint managed parks.

The Golden Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association represents the interests of residents in the Golden Beach area in relation to park management. The Friends of Metung promotes Metung and its environs.

The parks have a substantial number of neighbours in the private landholdings around Seaspray, Glomar Beach, Golden Beach, Paradise Beach, Loch Sport, Ocean Grange, Barrier Landing, the New Works area. The interface between these areas and the parks needs to be managed in conjunction with landholders to ensure property boundaries and public/private access is clearly defined and encroachments are minimised.

The Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative—which provides health, family and cultural services to its clients—owns substantial land on Boole Poole Peninsula adjacent to the Coastal Park. A number of hunting lodges operate on private land on the Boole Poole Peninsula, servicing Hog deer hunters.

Other agency partners are important in the management of the parks. Aboriginal Victoria is the primary Government agency responsible for policy and regulation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. The West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority provides significant funding for conservation works on public land in the region and provides strategic co-ordination of catchment restoration investment. It is also responsible for implementing the *Victorian Coastal Strategy* in the West Gippsland region to achieve integrated management, conservation and sustainable use of the coastal zone.

The East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority provides executive personnel and support to the GKTOLMB.

The Victorian Fisheries Authority manages and regulates recreational fishing and fisheries stocks in the Gippsland Lakes.

The Lakes National Park, except for Rotamah Island and Little Rotamah Island, is located within the Shire of Wellington. The section of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park west of Rotamah Island is also located within the Shire of Wellington. The Shire maintains bitumen roads providing access to the parks, such as Shoreline Drive, Golden Beach Road, Seacombe-Loch Sport Road, Stockyard Hill Causeway and Paradise Beach Road.

The section of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park comprising Rotamah Island and areas to the East, including Bunga Arm and Boole Poole Peninsula, is located within the Shire of East Gippsland. Both Shires are responsible for local planning regulation and other municipal responsibilities.

The management of ports and public facilities in the Gippsland Lakes (including public jetties, moorings, navigational aids, dredging, rock walling and beach renourishment) is the responsibility of Gippsland Ports. This includes navigation aids in the waters of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and jetties and landings on the shoreline of the parks including jetties at Sperm Whale Head, Rotamah Island, Ocean Grange, Steamer Landing, Barrier Landing, Drews Jetty and Silver Shot Landing. Gippsland Ports operates a sewage pump-out barge in the waters of Bunga Arm over summer, in addition to standing pump-out facilities in township locations around the Lakes.

The Game Management Authority is the Victorian Government authority responsible for regulation of game hunting. Parks Victoria and the Authority collaborate in the on-ground management of hunting in the Coastal Park and regulatory enforcement.

Emergency management in the parks involves a significant range of agencies due to the potential for both land and water emergencies including bushfire, search and rescue, navigation accidents, oil spills and whale/dolphin strandings. Agencies include Victoria Police, DELWP, Parks Victoria, Country Fire Authority, the Coastguard, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Gippsland Ports and the Shires.

6.3 AUTHORISED USES

A large number of licensed tour operators conduct activities in the parks including scenic cruises around the Gippsland Lakes, dolphin watching, bird observing, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, and vehicle-based tours.

Rotamah Island Bird Observatory Inc. occupies the Overstrand homestead on Rotamah Island under a Crown lease. The lease applies to most of the homestead, the Wardens cottage, workshop and generator shed on the island. The lease over the Wardens cottage expires in several years and the lease over the remaining area continues for a longer period. The properties are deteriorating and require increasing maintenance, and the surrounding bushland is in poor condition.

There are a number of other residences at Entrance Bay dating from the period of the construction of the artificial entrance to the Lakes which are part of the New Works Historic Area. Ten licences

have been issued for apiary sites in Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park. The park is a relatively minor source of honey for apiarists, although some of the vegetation in the area can be important at times to apiarists.

Gippsland Ports has complex infrastructure in the New Works Area of Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, to transport sand dredged and pumped from channels in and around The Entrance. An underground sand pipeline runs approximately one kilometre through dunes in the park from The Entrance and then seaward to the offshore 'Western Outfall' of the system. Gippsland Ports requires ongoing maintenance access to the pipeline and its inspection pits. Gippsland Ports is responsible for vegetation slashing, weed control and erosion management along the pipeline track.

There are a number of utilities located in the parks such as Gippsland oil and gas pipelines servicing the Bass Strait oil/gas fields cross the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park that are maintained by private companies.

6.4 PARK BOUNDARIES

There is no land access for management purposes to some key areas of the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park east of Ocean Grange.

There are also freehold blocks surrounded by the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park to which the only formed access is through the park. Bitumen roads providing access to the Parks such as Shoreline Drive, Golden Beach Road, Seacombe-Loch Sport Road, Stockyard Hill Causeway and Paradise Beach Road, are maintained by Wellington Shire Council.

The *Gunaikurnai Whole of country plan* proposes that cultural sites along the coast and out to sea should be included in expanded park boundaries. This should be considered once cultural mapping is completed.

There are also a number of freehold properties adjoining Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park separated from Ninety Mile Beach by the Park. Opportunities to create more effective boundaries or to negotiate improved access, through acquisitions or landholder agreements, should be evaluated as they arise.

7 GOALS AND ACTIONS

The following goals and actions should be read in conjunction with goals and strategic initiatives for the joint management area as a whole.

Caring for Country

Goal

The land, water and cultural values of the parks are protected and cared for using the combined values, knowledge and skills of the Gunaikurnai, Parks Victoria, community and partners.

Land and water

No.	Action
LGL1	Apply the zoning set out in Table 1.
LGL2	Protect and restore the area by implementing the land and water conservation strategies detailed in Table 5 including the implementation of relevant parts of action statements and recovery plans for threatened and endangered species in the area, ensuring integration with the implementation of the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Plan.
LGL3	Work with West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) to control pest plants and animals consistent with the East Gippsland Invasive Plants and Animals Plan including fox, cat and domestic dog threats to native birds and in particular Little Tern nesting sites, Hooded Plover and New Holland Mouse. Increase control of emerging threats including pigs and Sambar Deer, and priority weeds including Bridal Creeper, Box Thorn, Sea Spurge, Dolichos Pea and Wheel Cactus.
LGL4	Undertake stabilisation and restoration of marsh and dune areas affected by erosion, and renourish islands critical to water bird habitat as required.
LGL6	Work with the local government, WGCMA and affected landholders to control shoreline erosion in The Lakes National Park and the eastern Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park around private land while minimising the use of groynes and other infrastructure that may disrupt natural coastal processes elsewhere along the shoreline except where necessary.
LGL7	Work with DELWP to protect the area, assets and communities from bushfire through fuel management strategies that do not adversely affect migratory bird habitat and other fire-sensitive values.
LGL7	Identify areas where planned burning is required to achieve conservation objectives for park ecosystems and habitats and seek burns to be programmed and implemented as part of DELWP's fire operations planning process.
LGL8	Investigate means by which inflows of water from Merriman Creek can be restored to Lake Reeve, subject to preventing flooding risks to the Seaspray township.
LGL9	Include the parks in the development of a comprehensive conservation action plan aligned to the Gunaikurnai Whole-of-Country Plan and broader Gippsland park landscape conservation.

Cultural heritage

LGL10	Increase the priority given to protection and restoration of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and values in the parks, investing comparable focus and resourcing to that applied to environmental and visitor management.
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- LGL11 Increase the visibility of Gunaikurnai cultural values in the parks through *Welcome to Country* and other appropriate signage, based on the Tatungalung clan at entry points and visitor nodes. Consider establishing a totemic plant or animal emblem for the parks.
- LGL12 Undertake mapping and survey of Gunaikurnai cultural values in the parks, and consider the scanning of the intermittent areas of Lake Reeve near The Lakes National Park. Consider the need for any boundary amendments, and implementation of a park zoning Cultural Values Overlay, in light of mapping and survey outcomes.
- LGL13 Seek to rename places in the park using traditional Gunaikurnai names through the Naming Rules of the Office of Geographic Names.
- LGL14 Create opportunities for greater Gunaikurnai connection through visiting the parks, and undertaking community cultural activities, including partnering with tour operators, and development of Point Wilson as a hub of cultural information and activity for the community and visitors
- LGL15 Investigate use of Rotamah Island as a cultural education operation (see LGL26).
- LGL16 Explore opportunities with the Gippsland Lakes User Group for Gunaikurnai to provide education and guiding services to schools and camps based on Banksia Peninsula.
- LGL17 Seek opportunities to implement traditional cultural burning practices as part of planned burning programs through liaison and partnership with DELWP fire managers.
- LGL18 Upgrade the presentation of cultural information, joint management and other park information at the Parks Victoria Loch Sport Office.
- LGL19 Incorporate cultural values information into induction processes for contractors and others working in the area.
- LGL20 Ensure Gunaikurnai are included in the assessment and approval of research applications in the area in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act.
- LGL21 Implement relevant entitlements or obligations under the *Native Title Act 1993*, and any future Land Use Activity Agreement that is established under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, relating to Gunaikurnai rights to negotiate long-term and high-impact leases and comment on lower impact authorisations in the parks.

People in the Parks

Goals

Gunaikurnai increase their connection with the parks through management, operations and the opportunity to undertake cultural practices.

Visitor and community enjoyment, experience and understanding of the parks are enhanced by joint management

-
- | No. | Action |
|-------|--|
| LGL21 | Manage visitor experiences in the parks in accordance with the goals and strategy in Table 6 or each of the broadly defined visitor experience areas of the two parks. |
| LGL22 | Manage visitor activities in accordance with Table 7. Generally, maintain existing regulatory settings for activities and uses in the parks, apart from changes set out in this plan (including approved variations) or changes arising from statutory requirements. |

- LGL23 Continue current public access arrangements on roads and tracks in both parks.
- LGL24 Maintain education and enforcement to ensure that access, visitor activity, campfires, waste and other regulations are complied with, giving priority to hunting areas during hunting season, and the Bunga Arm Special Management Area. Work with hunting groups to eliminate cutting of standing vegetation for hides, through education and enforcement.
- LGL25 Seek policy approval to re-introduce camping registration and fees in areas between the Honeysuckles and Paradise Beach.
- LGL26 Explore the opportunity for Gunaikurnai-operated education and visitor services at the Rotamah Island Homestead as part of the current lease arrangements or at the end of the lease terms.
- LGL27 Control risks to visitor safety especially in relation to campfires, surf fishing and safe boating. Maintain emergency beach access point at Barrier Landing.
- LGL28 Extend the arrangements for Hog Deer hunting on Boole Poole Peninsula. Provide an annual hunting area equal in extent to the existing balloted area, rotated within a larger area of the Coastal Park extending east of Bunga Arm Track. Undertake further engagement with agency and park stakeholders and neighbours regarding detailed planning and implementation.
- LGL29 Improve the definition and signage of park walking tracks around Ocean Grange and other residential areas abutting the Coastal Park to clarify the public-private boundary for park visitors.
- LGL30 Ensure all tour operators undertake cultural awareness training conducted by Gunaikurnai, to enhance knowledge and protection of cultural heritage, and to improve interpretation of Gunaikurnai culture to visitors.

Working Together

Goal

Joint management of the parks operates as an effective partnership in which Gunaikurnai build their capacity to play a central role.

Community stakeholders support and contribute to the protection and conservation of the parks.

No.	Action
LGL31	Maintain close collaboration with the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and DELWP biodiversity and fire staff in relation to management programs and priorities in and around the parks. Ensure co-ordinated management of the parks and the broader Gippsland Lakes Ramsar site.
LGL32	Increase participation and input of Gunaikurnai in DELWP fire management programs in and around the parks.
LGL33	Work with Gippsland Ports to: ensure safe and sustainable boating access to the parks; provide maintenance access to the Barrier Landing sand pipeline and minimise effects on the Coastal Park and visitors of maintenance operations; retain provision of a sewage pump-out barge in the Bunga Arm.
LGL34	Collaborate with Destination Gippsland to market and promote the parks as part of regional tourism experiences and attractions.
LGL35	Work with local tourism, business and community groups to promote the parks and provide complementary services to visitors.

LGL36	Collaborate with Victorian Fisheries Authority and recreational fishing groups to ensure the sustainability of fish populations in the waters of the parks, and to manage shoreline impacts.
LGL37	Work with recreational hunting groups to achieve responsible hunting practices and expand existing volunteer partnerships to control feral animals, especially pigs and Sambar Deer.
LGL38	Provide opportunities for Parks Victoria rangers in the area to interact with other parks and partners in the Settlement Area to develop their understanding and knowledge of joint management approaches.
LGL39	Pursue opportunities to create more effective boundaries or to negotiate improved access to the parks through acquisitions or landholder agreements as they arise.
LGL40	Improve the on-water operational capability of the Gunaikurnai joint management ranger team through provision/access to watercraft and the necessary boat-handling training and certifications.

8 PLAN MONITORING AND REVIEW

An annual rolling plan will be used to implement the actions in Section 7. The progress and effectiveness in implementing these actions will be tracked by collecting two types of data:

- data on *activities* — what is being done under joint management
- data on *outcomes* — what changes are occurring as a result of what is being done.

Table 8 provides further detail on both types of data, and describes how they will be collected.

To minimise the burden of additional data collection processes, the methodology outlined below builds on existing project management processes and data wherever possible. Progress on actions that apply to more than one of the joint managed parks (for example, Gunaikurnai capacity building) will be reported under the Strategic Plan actions while tracking the initiatives in specific parks that contribute to that broader action.

Table 8: Data used to track progress in implementing the Joint Management Plan.

Data type	Description	Data source and method
Activities	<p>Activities are the things we are doing under joint management.</p> <p>Tracking activities is important for understanding whether the planned projects and activities are being implemented successfully. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the activities of each of the strategic initiatives documented in Table 5 in Section 4 of the Strategic Plan. • the actions described in this management plan for The Lake National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park. 	<p>Tracking the activities outlined in the Introduction and Strategic Plan of the JMP will be based on the project management tools that the partners use to guide implementation.</p> <p>Existing project management tools should provide sufficient evidence and information on how implementation is progressing, what has been completed, any bottlenecks or issues to be addressed, and the staff responsible.</p>
Outcomes	<p>Outcomes are the changes that occur as a result of what is being done.</p> <p>Tracking outcomes is important for understanding whether the intended changes are being achieved, and therefore whether the goals for the first five-year period are being achieved. Outcomes are documented in Tables 3 and 4 of the Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Some outcomes identified for the five-year goals can be tracked using existing project management tools, while others will require additional data collection.</p> <p>Appendix 2 of the Strategic Plan specifies potential indicators and timings for outcomes.</p>

Table 9 provides an example of the data that will be collected on the outcomes of joint management. It is an excerpt from the complete outcomes framework, which is contained in Appendix 2 of the Strategic Plan.

Table 9: Excerpt of outcomes framework from the Strategic Plan.

Theme	Example of outcome <i>The desired change</i>	Description <i>Further detail</i>	Indicators and frequency <i>How will the change be assessed?</i>
People	More visitors see, engage with, and learn from Gunaikurnai and non-Gunaikurnai staff on parks.	Gunaikurnai and non-Gunaikurnai rangers and other management staff will be more visible in parks, engaging with visitors and educating them about park values and Gunaikurnai heritage.	Number of rangers and other staff working in roles such as guides and educators. Detail on programs implemented to build capacity of rangers and staff as guides and educators (e.g. number of participants). <i>Annual</i>
Culture	Protections are in place for all identified cultural sites	Measures will be put in place to protect all culturally important sites from erosion, park use and other threats.	Percentage of identified cultural sites that have protections in place. <i>Annual</i>
Country	Rangers and management staff have the knowledge, skills and resources to implement sustainable, integrated land management practices.	Partners aim to continue capacity-building and training programs for rangers and other management staff in sustainable land management practices that integrate Gunaikurnai traditional practices with modern conventional practices.	Details on program (e.g. content, forms of capacity building implemented, number of rangers completing capacity building initiatives). <i>Annual</i>
Working Together	Decision-making processes are embedded.	The JMP specifies the decision-making processes in the governance structure. Partners will embed these by demonstrating they have put them into practice and are using them to make decisions.	Reflection on how decision-making processes and governance arrangements have been followed and complied with in the previous 12-month period, and lessons for the future. <i>Annual</i>

The monitoring regime, especially for Caring for Country and People in the Parks actions, will use measures and data specified in regional Conservation Action Plans and state-wide monitoring programs conducted across the broader park and reserve estate, including the *State of the Parks* and *State of the Forests*. This will be particularly important for monitoring outcomes, which are often complex and can only be monitored efficiently at selected locations rather than in every park.

This management plan has effect for 10 years and will be formally reviewed and renewed at the end of that period. After the five-year review of the Strategic Plan, any consequential variations to this management plan will be made at that time through a consultative process.

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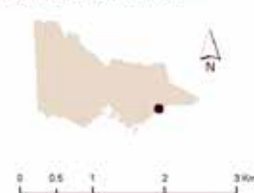
The Lakes National Park

Joint Management Plan

7/10/2018

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 VICCRD94

Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic



Disclaimer: Parks Victoria does not warrant the accuracy of the data or the results of the analysis. The data is provided for information only and should not be used for any other purpose.

- Walking track
- 4WD
- Unsealed road
- Sealed road
- Arterial road
- Management Vehicles Only
- Joint Management
- Public Land
- Park and Reserve

Management Zones and Overlays

- Conservation Zone
- Conservation & Recreation Zone
- Recreation Development Zone
- Special Management Overlay
- Ramsar Wetland



Map 1: Management zones and overlays, The Lakes National Park.

17/04/2018
Coordinate System: GDA 1984 MGA84
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic



- _____ Walking track
- _____ 4WD
- _____ Unsealed road
- _____ Sealed road
- _____ Arterial road
- Management Vehicles Only

Joint Management
Park and Reserve

Management Zones and Overlays

	Conservation Zone
	Conservation & Recreation Zone
	Ramsar Wetland Overlay
	Hunting Overlay (Ducks & Quail only)
	Hunting Overlay (Hog Deer, Duck & Quail excluding Boole Poole peninsula which is available for HOG DEER ONLY)



Parks & Recreation
Healthy Parks
Healthy People



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Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (Section 3) Joint Management Plan

24/03/2014
Coordinate System: GDA 1984 VIC08 694
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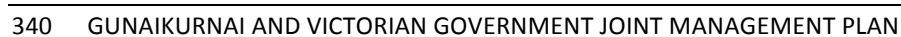
- Joint Management
- Park and Reserve

- ### Management Zones and Overlays
- Conservation Zone
 - Conservation & Recreation Zone
 - Recreation Development Zone
 - Special Management Overlay
 - Ramsar Wetland
 - Hunting Overlay (Hog Deer, Duck & Quail excluding Boole Poole Peninsula which is available for HOG DEER ONLY)

Note: Hunting of Hog Deer on Boole Poole Peninsula subject to ballot.

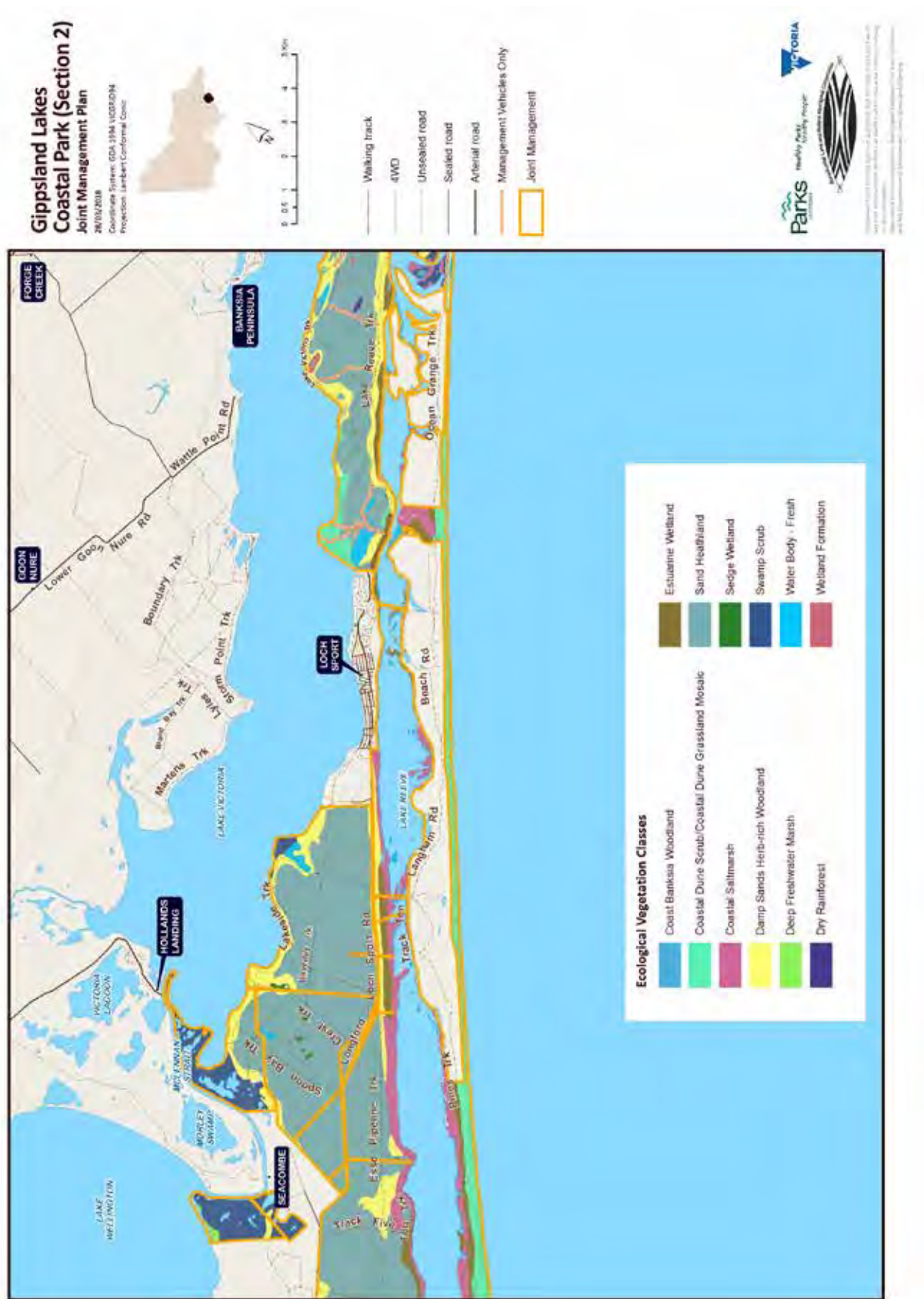


Map 4: Management zones and overlays, Gippsland Lakes CP (Section 3).





Map 6: Ecological Vegetation Classes, Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (Section 1).



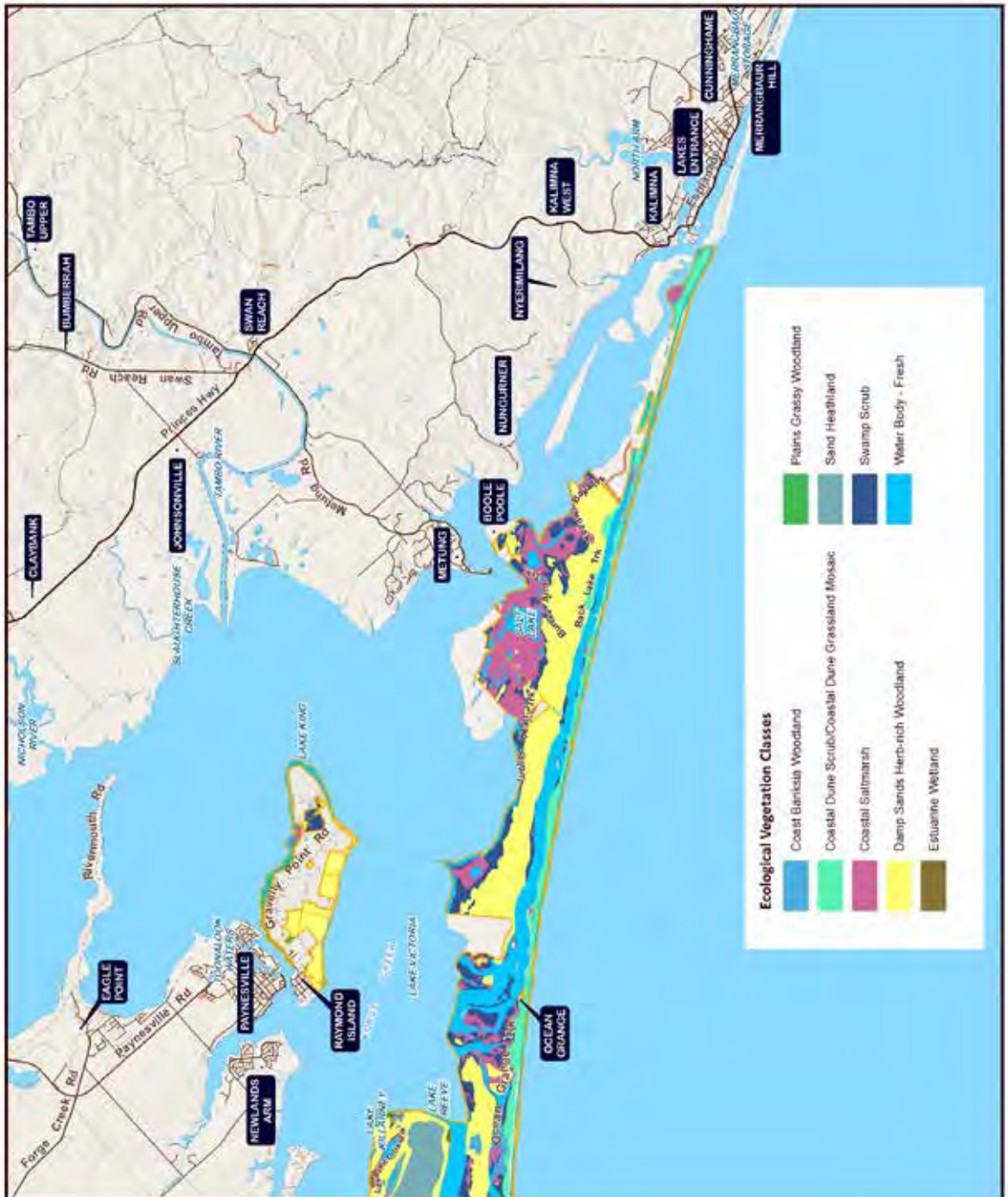
Map 7: Ecological Vegetation Classes, Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (Section 2).

Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (Section 3) Joint Management Plan

28/03/2024
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 UTM 50M
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic



- Walking track
- Shared path
- 4WD
- Unsealed road
- Sealed road
- Arterial road
- Highway
- Management Vehicles Only
- Joint Management



Map 8: Ecological Vegetation Classes, Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (Section 3).

The Lakes National Park Joint Management Plan

29/5/2018
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 VICGRID94
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic



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 This document is a joint management plan for The Lakes National Park and the surrounding area. It is a living document and will be updated as more information becomes available. The plan is a guide and should not be used as a substitute for professional advice. The plan is a guide and should not be used as a substitute for professional advice.

Map 9: Visitor sites and facilities, The Lakes National Park.

29/07/2018
Coordinate System: GDA 1984 (MGRS)94
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic



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