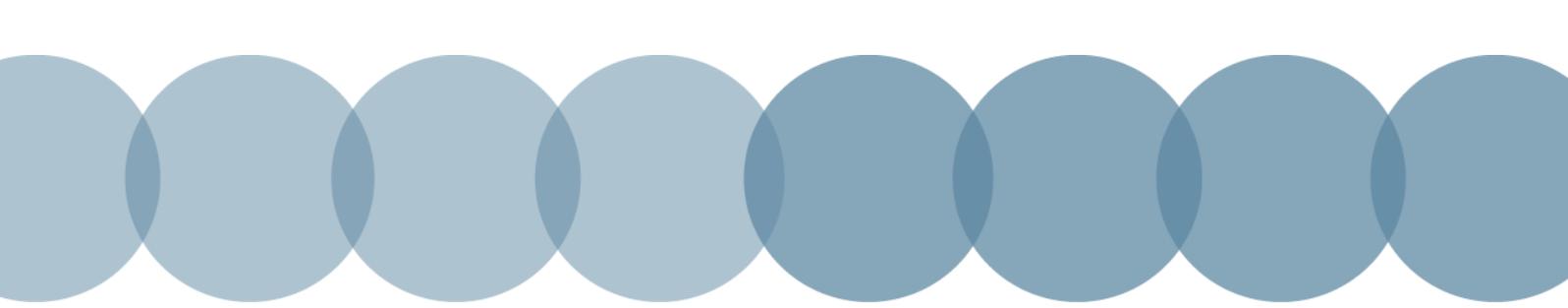


Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) Management Plan 2016

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Why do we need a new management plan?

The area was managed in accordance with the 1999 TWWHA management plan. The plan was out of date and did not include recently added areas, in particular the areas added through the 2013 minor boundary extension. A new, contemporary plan was required to reflect current understanding of key management issues, to provide management direction for the additional areas and to provide certainty for stakeholders.

What consultation was undertaken to support the development of the draft Plan?

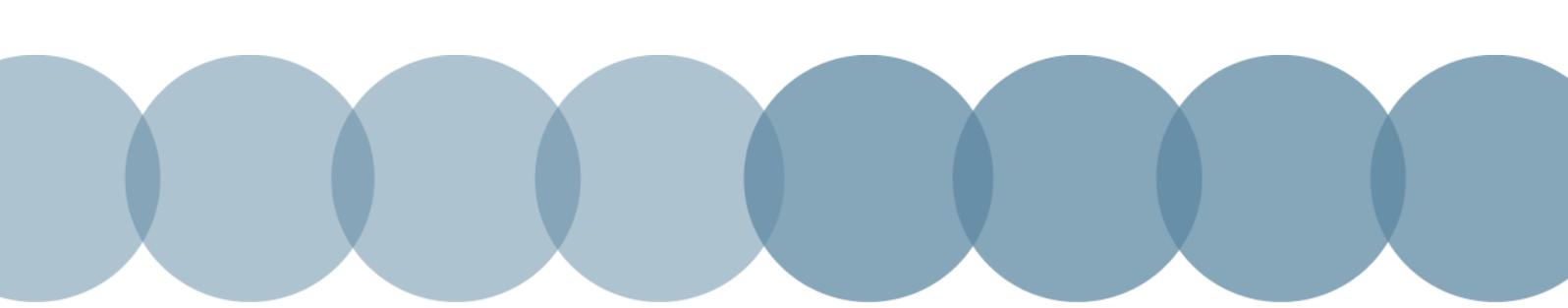
A series of public meetings was held by the Project Team tasked with developing the new draft management plan across Tasmania in November and December 2013. As part of this process, members of the public were encouraged to make informal written submissions. An extensive targeted consultation process was also undertaken involving key stakeholders identified by the Project Team, in addition to a range of individuals and organisations who came forward and wished to be involved. The Project Team also undertook a separate engagement process with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community overseen by the team's Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer. Key Tasmanian Aboriginal stakeholder organisations and individuals were identified in consultation with the Tasmanian Government's Office of Aboriginal Affairs and were provided with the opportunity to engage with the process. Another series of public meetings was held during the representation period in 2015 to provide opportunities for members of the public to understand the process of making a representation and to explain the role of the representations in the preparation of the final management plan and to explain the content of the draft plan. The representations received on the draft plan formed a central role in the process of developing the final management plan.

Where does the Plan apply?

Within the TWWHA are a variety of land tenures and not all of those tenure types can be subject to the plan. The statutory management plan will only apply to reserves managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service which make up the vast majority of the TWWHA (over 97 per cent). It cannot apply beyond the boundaries of that reserved land, however a Strategic Management Statement is included in the plan that provides details on the management of other tenures, including Tasmanian Government policy positions with respect to the management of unreserved public land, in particular, areas of Future Potential Production Forest Land in the TWWHA.

How does it apply?

The plan is a statutory plan, as the contents and the application of the plan are set out in legislation, the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*, and the plan will become a legal instrument following its approval under that Act. The Act requires the managing authority for the reserved land subject to the plan, which is the Director of National Parks and Wildlife, to manage the reserves in accord with the plan and to give effect to it.



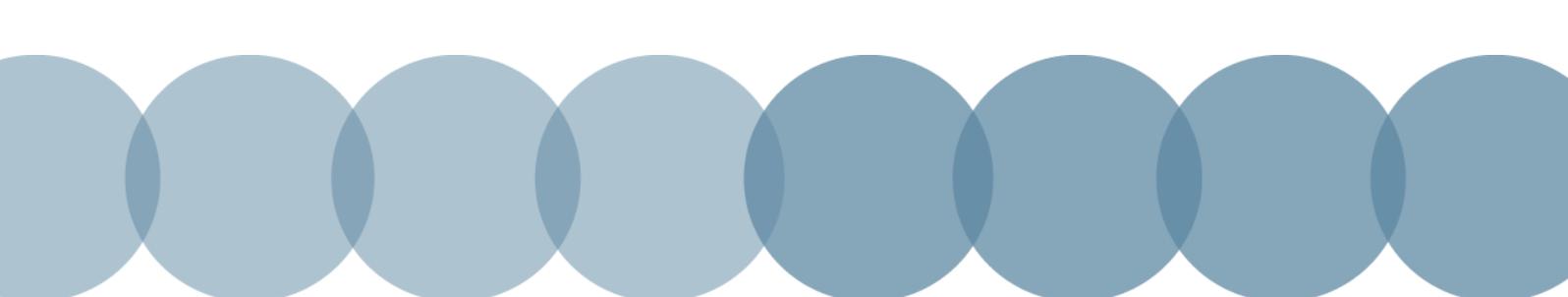
What's in the plan?

The plan is required to meet management objectives and obligations associated with each reserve type in the TWWHA and its overall status as a World Heritage Area. It identifies the cultural and natural values of the area, in particular those values that are recognised through the World Heritage listing as contributing to its Outstanding Universal Value. The plan identifies threats to those values and provides management recommendations and actions to mitigate those threats. The plan sets out management actions in support of the presentation of the TWWHA and community involvement in its management. The plan provides direction on a number of other areas of management such as fire management. The plan sets out what uses may occur and where they may occur, principally through the use of management zones and an associated Table of Use. The plan provides a framework for the systematic evaluation of management effectiveness.

What are the key changes in the new plan?

The plan builds on the previous management plan and on the considerable work undertaken in the management of the TWWHA since its inception. The new plan uses the management zone and management overlay approach utilised in the previous plan and has much the same approach to many issues and the overall management of the area. There are, however some key changes in the new plan compared to the previous plan. These are:

- **Cultural Heritage:** This section of the plan has been greatly elevated in prominence within the structure of the plan in line with three of the seven World Heritage listing criteria relating to Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural values. The plan adopts a contemporary view of cultural heritage values and their management that recognises both the tangible and intangible values of the TWWHA as determined by Tasmanian Aboriginal people through the consultation undertaken in support of the plan. The plan prescribes a process to be undertaken to establish joint management governance arrangements for the TWWHA, recognition of the TWWHA as a cultural landscape and the establishment of a dual name to reflect the Aboriginal heritage of the area as well as the current recognition of its wilderness values.
- **Air access:** While the previous plan did allow for helicopter and float plane access, the opportunities for aircraft access to the TWWHA have been increased subject to a number of restrictions and prohibitions that ensure this opportunity is compatible the enjoyment of the area by other users.
- **Built infrastructure:** The plan allows for an increased opportunity for the use of built infrastructure both for management purposes and for commercial tourism operations. In particular the current prohibition on built infrastructure within the Southwest National Park has been lifted.

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- **Tourism opportunities:** In support of the Government's policy encouraging sensitive and appropriate tourism in the State's National Parks and reserves, the draft plan provides for increased opportunity for private investment in the presentation of the TWWHA and prescribes the development of a Tourism Master Plan to provide strategic guidance in the presentation of the TWWHA.
 - **Assessment and commercial tourism criteria:** The plan prescribes additional strict criteria for assessment of activities in the TWWHA and specifically for commercial tourism proposals in the TWWHA.
 - **New issues:** There are a number of new issues that have arisen that are addressed in the plan, particularly within the area of the 2013 minor boundary extension. Within this area is an extensive road network that will require a strategic approach into the future to determine its future use. Opportunities for presentation within this area will also need to be identified. Further work is required to identify the cultural values of this area and to develop effective management strategies for the protection of those values.
 - **Use and Development:** The plan provides an extensive Table of Use to allow for users of the plan to clearly see where and under what circumstances various activities may occur. The Table of Use is used in conjunction with a series of maps showing the management zones and management overlays described in the plan.

How is the plan implemented?

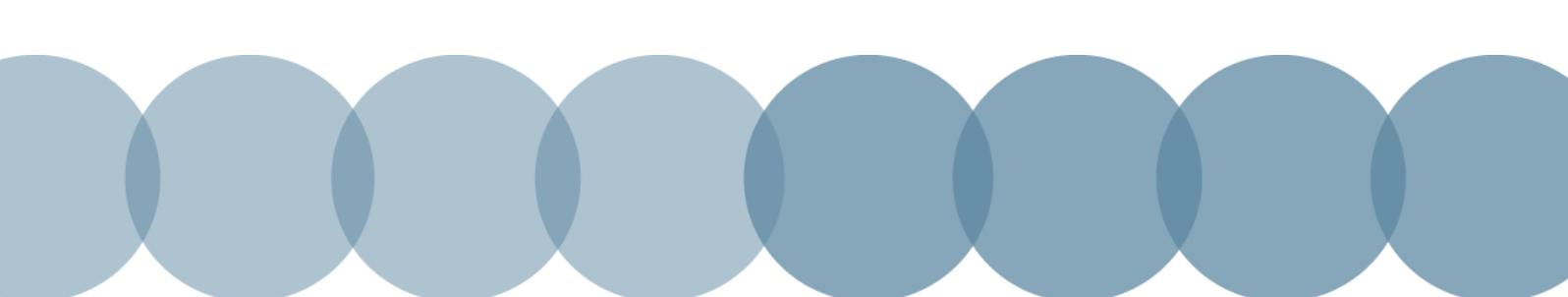
The Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) will be responsible for the operational implementation of the plan on a day to day basis. The PWS will be required to manage the TWWHA in accordance with the provisions of the plan. The plan is intended to allow for an adaptive approach to management: it provides for performance criteria against the management actions provided in the plan that will allow the PWS to track management performance.

What provisions are in place to ensure that the activities allowed for in the plan are sensitive and appropriate to the values of the TWWHA?

It is important to note that, in permitting certain activities to occur, the plan is simply providing for that opportunity. Proposals will be required to undergo one or more approval processes. Those processes will determine if the proposal is consistent with the protection of the areas values and meets any relevant legislation. Should a proposal be approved under those processes, it is likely that a set of conditions will be applied to the operation and, if applicable, to the construction of infrastructure.

Why does the plan allow for tourism infrastructure inside the TWWHA rather than beyond the boundaries?

It is expected that the majority of tourist and visitor infrastructure will continue to be provided at the boundaries of the TWWHA and in major visitor nodes such as the visitor centre area in the Mt Field National Park. The provision of opportunities in the plan for both commercial and public tourist and visitor infrastructure within the TWWHA recognises that sensitive and appropriate infrastructure can potentially be accommodated within the TWWHA without compromising the



area's values. Any proponents seeking to utilise those opportunities will be required to demonstrate this through the relevant approval processes that would apply to any specific proposal.

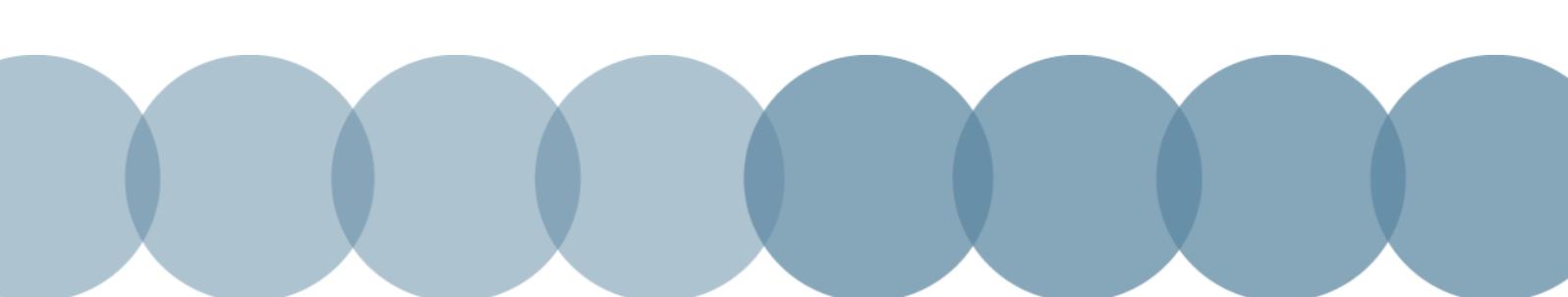
How does the Expressions of Interest process relate to the management plan?

The Expressions of Interest (EOI) process is a new process to implement the Government's policy of promoting sensitive and appropriate development in the state's national parks and reserves. The EOI process provides opportunities within Tasmania's natural areas for new tourism experiences that also contribute to the conservation of the natural environment. The *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002* requires commercial activities and infrastructure within reserves to be subject to a licence or lease granted by the Minister. In granting any lease or licence the Minister must have regard to the management plan. A number of proposals in the TWWHA have been assessed, with successful proponents invited to provide more detailed information in support of an assessment as part of consideration for the granting of a licence or lease. Most of those proposals were permitted under the previous plan. The EOI assessment process is the basis on which those proposals have been permitted under the new plan to undergo the assessment processes that apply.

How is fire management dealt with in the plan?

The PWS has considerable experience in fire management across reserved land and in other tenures and has developed highly regarded systems that allow for a risk management and strategic approach that considers sometimes competing priorities in planning for and responding to fire. The PWS has developed a risk assessment model and associated Regional Strategic Fire Management Plans. They allow for fire planning and operations to be based on actual risk rather than perceived risk and allow for adaptive management over time as new information comes to light and in response to ongoing review of fire planning and operations. The PWS also has developed fire management and planning policies and procedures. In addition to management of cultural and natural values, the PWS, as land manager, has additional responsibilities under both the *Fire Service Act 1979* and common law and has entered into a number of cross agency and tenure fire management procedures and protocols.

For this reason the management plan does not seek to impose rigid prescriptions in this dynamic area of management over and above a well-developed system that is regarded as very effective. The plan identifies key areas of ongoing research into planned burns for the protection of values, the impact of climate change on fire management and the protection of values, the improvement of the treatment of cultural values in the risk assessment model, improved communications with stakeholders and the general public on fire management, development of a visitor safety plan, and the development of a holistic fire plan for the TWWHA, which will consolidate all aspects of fire management into a single document. The approach to fire management in the plan also incorporates outcomes of the review of the 2016 fire season.



How are boundary issues with private land addressed in the plan?

The areas added to the TWWHA in the 2013 minor boundary extension resulted in an increase in the number of private properties that share a common boundary with the TWWHA, although many properties will not necessarily share a common boundary with the area of the TWWHA subject to the statutory management plan. The plan puts into place a number of strategies designed to provide a framework for communication between property owners and the Parks and Wildlife Service and to allow for the development of mutually beneficial and practical responses to boundary issues as they arise. The implementation of those strategies could form a model for those areas outside of the plan boundary. The management plan does not and cannot impose any additional obligations on neighbouring private property owners beyond those normally expected of any neighbour.

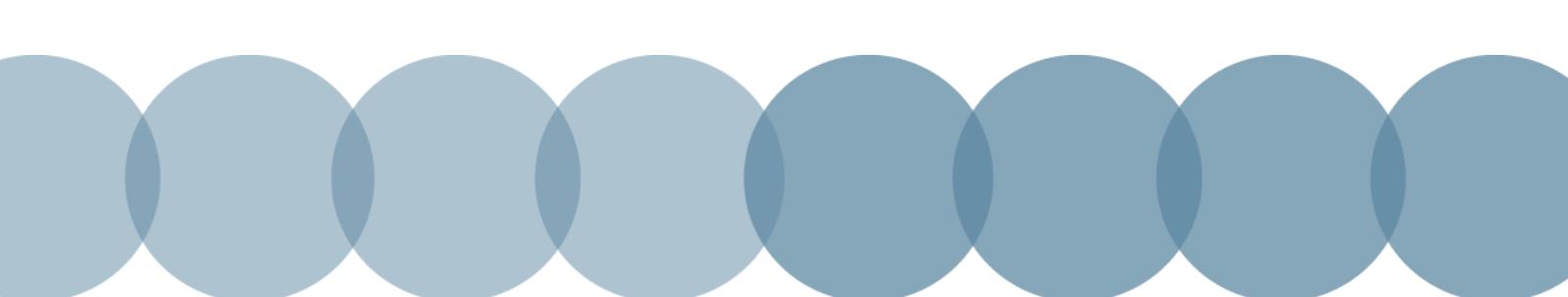
How does the plan provide for the inclusion of local communities in management of the TWWHA?

The plan explicitly acknowledges the importance of the TWWHA to local communities and the connections that many people have with it. Community involvement in its management is a key objective and the plan also recognises that the TWWHA should play an important role in the social and economic life of local communities. The plan requires consideration of local benefit in management decisions, including procurement, and implements a Communications Strategy that considers the needs of local communities. The plan provides for ongoing support to local community organisations and provides for a mutual process to allow for community involvement in management. The role of WILCARE Inc as the principal organisation facilitating community involvement is supported through the plan.

Won't increased development and the use of aircraft to access the more remote areas of the TWWHA pose a biosecurity risk?

The TWWHA is largely free from introduced plants and animals and retaining or improving this status is critical for the ongoing protection of its cultural and natural values as the dispersal of pests, weeds and pathogens is a major risk to those values. There is a direct relationship between the conservation and protection of cultural and natural values and the value of the TWWHA as a tourism drawcard for the State. If those values are diminished, the value of the TWWHA as a destination will also diminish.

Tourism activities and developments and air access within the TWWHA are regulated activities. They require the granting of a licence or lease and will be required to undergo an assessment process. That assessment process will consider any issues related to biosecurity and will identify what conditions or requirements will be required for a specific proposal to ensure that any biosecurity risk is avoided or minimised. From this perspective unregulated activities are more likely to have a greater biosecurity risk.



Does the plan restrict existing use within the 2013 boundary extension?

The plan acknowledges that previous use within the areas of the 2013 boundary extension has largely been compatible with the conservation of the area's natural values. The plan allows for existing use to continue and key areas of use within the 2013 extension have been zoned accordingly. The plan also acknowledges that there is some potential within these areas to provide for greater recreational opportunities.

The reservation of these areas does require particular management objectives to be met. However, depending on the reserve class, these would not preclude most existing activities from continuing as in most instances they would be consistent with those objectives. There are knowledge gaps regarding the nature of the values in the extension areas, particularly for cultural values. Where an activity is found to have an ongoing unacceptable impact on natural and cultural values a management response will be required to mitigate its impact.

How are wilderness values managed?

The plan protects the wilderness values of the TWWHA primarily through the prescription of a wilderness management zone over approximately 82 per cent of the area. Within the Wilderness Zone, built infrastructure and mechanical access (except for management purposes) are prohibited. Some specific areas have been excluded from the Wilderness Zone to ensure that opportunities for visitor experiences and facilities are not excluded over the life of the plan, particularly in the 2013 extension area. In a number of important areas the Wilderness Zone has been substantially increased. A comparison with the zoned area of the 1999 management plan shows that within this area the Wilderness Zone has been increased by over seven per cent or approximately 78,000 ha.

The plan recognises the TWWHA as an Aboriginal landscape and allows for Tasmanian Aboriginal people to access Country and undertake cultural practices in the TWWHA. Management of the wilderness values of the TWWHA will be implemented in a way that does not restrict this policy intent in the plan. Wilderness is to be managed in a manner that is compatible with this view of the TWWHA as a cultural landscape.

The expanses of remote country in the TWWHA are also an important recreational asset. Wilderness values will also be managed in a way that ensures that suitably equipped and experienced people can continue to enjoy experiences in these areas.

For further information contact:

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