

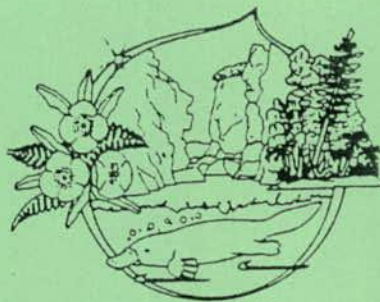
BARRINGTON TOPS NATIONAL PARK

DRAFT PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

JUNE 1989

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1. SUMMARY

Barrington Tops National Park was established in 1969. It was extended in 1976 and again in 1984. In 1986 it was accepted onto the World Heritage list as part of the New South Wales Rainforests World Heritage Area.

The rainforests of the Park are extensive and diverse and were the main reason for its acceptance onto the World Heritage list. The World Heritage listing also recognised the Barrington plateau as one of the major subalpine ecosystems on the Australian mainland and gave international recognition to the Barrington wilderness, most of which is within the Park.

This Draft Plan proposes the declaration of a wilderness area which reflects the most recent studies of Barrington's wilderness quality. It proposes the inclusion of the Barrington plateau within the wilderness area, a recognition common to all three reputable studies which have been carried out to date (Helman et al, 1976, Combined Environment Groups, 1982, Wilderness Working Group, 1986).

The Scotch Broom (Cytisus scoparius) infestation on the Barrington Plateau does not disqualify its inclusion in the area to be declared and managed as wilderness. Section 6 of the NSW Wilderness Act (1987) and Section 1.10.1 of the National Parks and Wildlife Service Wilderness Conservation Policy (1989) both provide for the inclusion of degraded areas in circumstances where restoration can reasonably be expected and where the inclusion is important to the integrity of the rest of the wilderness area.

The Plan provides detailed management proposals for the maintenance and, where applicable, restoration of the Barrington wilderness. Wilderness management can protect the full range of natural values present in the Park and can enhance the effectiveness of efforts to control the spread of the Park's principal management problem, Scotch Broom.

The Plan guarantees visitor access to every environmental setting in the Park. All existing facilities which are accessible by normal vehicles will be maintained. A number of new facilities will be established.

A central feature of the Plan is the extensive use of visitor education facilities. All facilities will be equipped with educational facilities which outline the values of the particular locations. A number of major visitor centres dealing with all aspects of the Park are proposed in popular locations outside the wilderness area.

The objectives, policies and actions for managing the Park meet the requirements of the World Heritage Convention, the Wilderness Act and the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE PREPARATION OF THIS PLAN

Barrington Tops National Park has never had a Plan of Management. Its future will in large measure be determined by how it is managed and whether any aspects of its management will be damaging or inadequate.

This Draft Plan of Management has been prepared by The Wilderness Society in response to a Draft Plan of Management released by the National Parks and Wildlife Service on 16 June 1989.

The Plan proposed by the Service will seriously compromise the subalpine and wilderness values of the Park by not managing the Barrington plateau to restore its wilderness value. Omitting this area from wilderness management is in direct conflict with the values which were recognised in the Park's World Heritage listing and therefore fail to meet the requirements of the World Heritage Convention.

The Service's Draft Plan proposes the construction of a road into the Barrington Plateau, the heart of the Barrington wilderness. The road will exacerbate the current infestation by Scotch Broom through creating disturbed areas into which the weed can spread. It will make control measures more difficult to achieve should a biological control be developed in the future.

Construction of the road will also be expensive, using scarce funds which should be used in other aspects of management, particularly in controlling Scotch Broom.

It will endanger the existence of a number of plant species which are endemic to the Barrington Plateau. It will result in there being no example of the sub-alpine ecosystem in a wilderness setting in the entire Barrington Tops and anywhere north of Kosciusko, which is 500 kilometres to the south.

Inclusion of the Barrington Plateau in the area to be declared wilderness is, despite the Scotch Broom infestation, necessary to maintaining the integrity of the whole Barrington wilderness. Legislative recognition of this consideration is contained in Section 6(2)(b) of the NSW Wilderness Act (1987) which provides for:

"whether, despite development which would otherwise render it unsuitable, the area of land is needed for the management of an existing or proposed wilderness area".

The inclusion of degraded areas which are likely to be subject to restoration work is also provided for in Section 6(1)(a) of the Act which identifies wilderness as:

"...in a state that has not been substantially modified by humans and their works or is capable of being restored to such a state".

Impacts which are considered acceptable for declaration as wilderness, subject to a commitment to their removal and the restoration of wilderness values, are defined in the National Parks and Wildlife Service Wilderness Conservation Policy (1989). They are:

- * four-wheel drive tracks, old logging or mining tracks;
- * fence lines, minor tanks and bores;
- * sparse or intermittent or seasonal grazing, past light selective logging in limited areas;
- * limited, more intensive developments, such as clearings;
- * intensive development/disturbance [eg. Scotch Broom] where the prospect of restoration in a reasonable time is considered acceptable;
- * a disturbed site the inclusion of which is important for the integrity of a wilderness area.

The important considerations relating to inclusion of the Scotch Broom infested area in the Barrington wilderness are twofold. Firstly, the known ability of Broom to invade disturbed areas suggests that wilderness management, with access by the Service for control purposes, will safeguard the area from further spread and ensure the effectiveness of future control measures.

Secondly, the prospect of finding a successful biological control is greater than it has ever been. University studies have established a reasonable understanding of the Broom's ecology. The CSIRO have committed \$400,000 to finding a control and the State Government have stated funding will also be made available through the forthcoming budget. The National Parks and Wildlife Service have an ongoing control program and increased public awareness makes the likelihood of Broom being spread by Park users somewhat less.

Under these circumstances, there exists a clear obligation on the part of the National Parks and Wildlife Service to direct management of the Barrington Plateau towards restoring its central place in the Barrington wilderness area and to maximise the natural values of the other parts of it.

3. MANAGMENT OBJECTIVES - BARRINGTON TOPS WILDERNESS AREA

Barrington Tops National Park forms the major part of the Barrington wilderness area. Major advances in the identification, protection and management of wilderness have been made in recent years. These include:

- * the enactment of wilderness protection legislation in NSW;
- * the recognition of several wilderness areas in northern NSW, including Barrington, in the World Heritage listing of New South Wales rainforests;
- * the initiation by the Commonwealth Government of an ongoing series of wilderness inventories aimed at establishing a national register of wilderness areas;
- * adoption by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature of wilderness as a conservation category.

One of the principal values of wilderness is its ability to encompass the full range of conservation values present in such areas. It is, for example, possible to protect the rainforest values of Barrington Tops National Park by protecting its wilderness value. Similarly, the necessary task of restoring the sub-alpine values of the Barrington plateau can be achieved by directing management towards restoring its wilderness value. It is not, however, possible for an area's wilderness value to be maintained its principal qualities of remoteness and naturalness are maintained free of human impact.

The primary objective of the Barrington Tops National Park Draft Plan of Management should therefore be to maximise the protection and proper management of the full extent of land which is of wilderness quality in the Barrington area.

This Plan of Management is predicated on recognition of the fact that the level of protection of substantial land of wilderness quality outside Barrington Tops National Park is inadequate and that secure protection must ultimately be put in place if the entire Barrington wilderness is to be fully protected.

This Plan is therefore directed towards:

- (i) management of the existing Barrington Tops National Park primarily as wilderness in order to maximise all the natural values present in the area; and
- (ii) ensuring no management actions are adopted which will jeopardise the wilderness value of those parts of the Barrington wilderness which are not protected as National Park.

3.1 MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING NATIONAL PARK - OBJECTIVES

Consistent with the primary objective of maximising the full extent and proper management of land of wilderness quality in the Barrington area, management of the existing National Park should be directed to satisfying the following objectives:

- * to restore (where applicable) and protect the unmodified state of the area
- * to protect its plant and animal communities
- * to preserve the capacity to evolve in the absence of human interference
- * to maximise the natural values recognised in Barrington's acceptance onto the World Heritage list, particularly those which contribute to its outstanding universal value under criteria (i) - (iv) of Article 2 of the World Heritage Convention
- * where consistent with the primary objective of maximising the extent and proper management of the Barrington wilderness, to foster the education and appreciation of the public of wilderness and of the other natural values of the Barrington Tops
- * to permit research which will contribute to the implementation of the primary objective of wilderness management, which will not adversely affect wilderness quality, and which cannot be carried out elsewhere
- * to protect and restore (where applicable) catchment values
- * to preserve and protect Aboriginal sites
- * to protect against damaging effects of environmental pollution and of fire, erosion and other disturbances whose source is external to the Barrington Tops wilderness area
- * where compatible with the points above, to permit appropriate levels of visitor usage and access

3.2 PROTECTION OF WILDERNESS OUTSIDE NATIONAL PARK

The international status afforded Barrington's rainforests through World Heritage listing highlighted their importance. However, acceptance of this status and the criteria used in evaluation leave no doubt that areas of at least equal status were not included in the Park as part of the extensions made under the Wran Government's Rainforest Policy. Areas such as Whispering Gully in the Karuah River satisfy the criteria for sites to be included for nomination when considered in the context of the whole area.

The importance of these rainforests also highlights the need for official recognition that the Rainforest Policy restricted its assessment to the Chichester Management Area. The Gloucester and, to a lesser extent, Mount Royal Management areas have never been assessed by the National Parks & Wildlife Service for either their rainforest or National Park values.

The adoption of the NSW Wilderness Act in 1987 extended legislative protection for wilderness areas beyond (and within) existing National Parks, introducing new considerations which highlight the need and obligation of the relevant authorities to carry out additional assessment of the whole of the Barrington area in order to ascertain the extent and nature of its wilderness values. The Helman-defined (1976) Barrington wilderness was recognised in Barrington's World Heritage listing, yet large parts of it are outside the National Park and are under threat. More recent studies have identified a significantly larger area as possessing the essential wilderness qualities of remoteness and naturalness.

There is no doubt as to the need to extend the level of protection provided by wilderness management to include other areas not presently protected. Management objectives needed to satisfy these criteria are:

- * re-assessment of the Chichester Management Area for its wilderness, rainforest and other conservation values
- * assessment of the Gloucester and Mount Royal Management Areas for their wilderness, rainforest and other conservation values.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT

The approximate extent of the Barrington wilderness is indicated on the attached map. The delineation of this area is the result of a historical series of events which commenced in the 1950s with proposals for the dedication of a number of Tourist Parks, Watershed Reservations and Sanctuaries (Wilderness or Primitive Areas).

The first scientific study aimed at identifying wilderness in the Barrington area was published by Helman et al in 1976. Helman also identified the Chichester, Wangat and Paterson Rivers and Boonabilla Creek as "Wild and Scenic Rivers" in 1981. With the exception of the Wangat River, the combination of these areas was identified as the Barrington wilderness in the National Park proposal put forward in 1982 by the National Trust, Nature Conservation Council, National Parks Association, Colong Committee and Newcastle Flora and Flora Protection Society. This area, along with the inclusion of the Wangat River and Whispering Gully (the upper Karuah River) was in large measure substantiated in the Report of the Wilderness Working Group in July 1986, which led to the adoption of the NSW Wilderness Act (1987).

In November 1986, the Helman-defined wilderness area and wild rivers were given international recognition as part of the natural values of Barrington which contributed to its World Heritage qualities when the NSW Rainforests were accepted for World Heritage listing. Preparation of the World Heritage nomination was, however, completed in 1985, and delineation of the wilderness area therefore predates the work of the Wilderness Working Group. The map presented is a refined version of that produced by the Wilderness Working Group, and has been arrived at through consideration of the necessary management requirements, in particular the need for management to be consistent across complete catchments. It is intended to be indicative rather than definitive.

As there are parts of the Park which are not of value as wilderness, a system of describing the management requirements and proposals has been developed to serve both types of area, allowing easy comparison between the different styles of management. However, the provision of visitor and educational facilities in the area to be declared wilderness is incompatible with maintaining the principal values of remoteness and naturalness. Limited educational facilities are proposed in the wilderness area as part of the Scotch Broom control program. Management proposals in terms of:

- (1) Visitor facilities
- (2) Visitor management
- (3) Educational facilities
- (4) Rehabilitation

4.1 VISITOR FACILITIES

The provision of visitor facilities in any part of the National Park should only be made under condition that their impact is not unacceptable. Visitor facilities are inappropriate within a declared wilderness area.

There is scope within the Park, however, for the provision of a number of access facilities of different sizes and serving every major environmental setting in the Park.

In the proposals outlined, all facilities which are accessible by normal vehicles will be maintained and, in a number of cases, either expanded or new ones established.

4.2 VISITOR MANAGEMENT

Whether within a declared wilderness area or not, the effective management of visitor use is widely recognised as essential to maintaining the natural values which visitors come to appreciate. This is all the more important in Barrington as use of non-wilderness areas is concentrated in certain localities and, in keeping with the need to maintain wilderness overwhelmingly free of human impact, major routes within the wilderness area are relatively few.

The proposals provide for the monitoring of sensitive environments. In a small number of cases specific proposals are made to aid in restoration caused by past overuse and abuse.

An important aspect of visitor management which has been built into the proposals for educational facilities is the need for visitors to respect a code of minimum impact. Garbage bins are to be removed from the Park to ensure visitors take responsibility for their own rubbish. The use of portable stoves is to be generally encouraged to reduce the effects on ground material at popular sites. The use of stoves in some locations is essential.

4.3 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

In order to facilitate appreciation by the public of the natural values of Barrington Tops National Park, educational facilities should be available wherever carparking and camping areas exist. The facilities should display information relevant to the environmental values of each particular location.

The construction of educational facilities within the wilderness area is inappropriate. However, there is a need for information to be made available on the values of the wilderness area and the care which visitors should treat it. Signs should be erected at the most likely points of entrance to the declared wilderness area instructing users to respect a code of minimum impact and outlining the values of wilderness.

An exception shall be made in relation to areas infested by Scotch Broom, where notices should indicate entry and exit from the infested area. These facilities shall be of a non-intrusive nature and shall encourage visitors to take responsibility for ensuring that they do not carry seeds into the uninfested areas and will also provide a means by which visitors can report any newly infested areas.

4.4 REHABILITATION

Where the environment has been damaged by human use it is necessary that appropriate rehabilitation work be undertaken. A number of damaging vehicle trails are proposed for rehabilitation along with some insensitively placed facilities, such as those at Careys Peak.

The problem of infestation by Scotch Broom is, however, a much longer term imperative and active management based upon vehicular access is necessary for the foreseeable future. Some vehicle trails within the wilderness area will therefore be retained to facilitate this management. As these are management trails only, and as vehicle use of them has been responsible for a considerable amount of the spread of Scotch Broom, they shall not be available for use by the public.

5. MANAGEMENT UNITS FOR BARRINGTON TOPS NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Management of Barrington Tops National Park can be divided into four units reflecting the nature of the environment and the management needs of the different parts of the Park. The management units, listed below, can be delineated on the basis of catchments, and further broken down to allow for the different management requirements of the parts of these areas which are to be managed for their wilderness value and those which are not.

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>WITHIN WILDERNESS AREA</u> | <u>OUTSIDE WILDERNESS AREA</u> |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Barrington Tops & Gloucester Tops | Beean Beean Creek Barrington River Kerripit River Upper Gloucester River | Gloucester Falls & Gloucester Tops Road |
| Lower Gloucester River Area | | Gloucester River Area |
| Northern Section | Moppy River Kholwha Creek | Polblue Swamp Adjacent Scone-Gloucester Road |
| Southern Escarpment | Boonabilla Creek Paterson River Allyn River Chichester River Wangat River | Fal Brook Mount Royal Mount Cabre Bald Burruga Swamp Lower Williams River |

5.1 BARRINGTON TOPS & GLOUCESTER TOPS

The Barrington Tops and Gloucester Tops section of the Park encompass most of the sub-alpine ecosystem in Barrington. A considerable part of this area is infested by the weed Scotch Broom, and its wilderness value reduced accordingly. The presence of Scotch Broom does not, as explained in Section 2, obviate the obligation to pursue wilderness management.

The Barrington Plateau is the centre of all studies which have delineated land of wilderness quality in Barrington. It contains a delicate system of subalpine swamps and woodlands, the largest such ecosystem north of Kosciusko. It is home to a number of plant species which are found nowhere else and whose continued existence is scientifically recognised as vulnerable.

Management of the bulk of this unit as part of the wilderness area is therefore necessary. The proposals detailed below provide safeguards and the ability to control the further spread of Scotch Broom. They provide for the long-term restoration of the plateau in accordance with the recognised problems of control of Scotch Broom.

The existing Gloucester Tops road access is considered too intrusive for the area to be included in that to be managed as wilderness. The proposals detailed below provide for the maintenance of all existing facilities in this area, along with the establishment of additional facilities.

5.2 LOWER GLOUCESTER RIVER

The Gloucester River section of the Park is a small unit of no value as wilderness and detached from the main body of the Park. Its management is therefore directed at providing a level of visitor use which will not cause unacceptable change to the environment. Major educational facilities are proposed.

5.3 NORTHERN SECTION

The Northern Section of the Park includes the Moppy River and Kholwha Creek, which separates it from the main body of the Park. The Moppy River, also known as Devils Hole, is a scenically spectacular part of the Park and marks the northern extent of the Barrington wilderness.

The wilderness value and ecological continuity of the Northern Section is threatened by the existing agreement between the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Forestry Commission. The agreement allows for Kholwha Creek, which is currently Vacant Crown Land, to be logged before being incorporated into the Park, and provision exists for the construction of a logging road through it. This road would facilitate the destruction by logging of the unprotected eastern escarpment of the Barrington wilderness.

The proposals provide for the addition of the land in an unlogged condition and the revocation of the Forestry Commission's unjustifiable right of access.

The proposals also provide for the addition to the Park of the Polblue Swamp and its associated visitor facilities. This small non-wilderness section is an important recreational facility which is to be expanded by the addition of a major educational facility.

5.4 SOUTHERN ESCARPMENT

The southern escarpment of the Park is the least modified by human activity of any of the management units. It possesses magnificent rainforests and river valleys. Rehabilitation of vehicle tracks is the only major management which needs to be carried out to ensure the area remains in a wilderness condition.

The proposals below do, however, provide for a considerable expansion in the level of visitor usage of the perimeter of this section. Two magnificent lookouts over Boonabilla Creek are proposed, along with new camping and educational facilities in the Williams River.

6. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS - AREAS OUTSIDE WILDERNESS AREA

6.1 BARRINGTON TOPS & GLOUCESTER TOPS

6.1.1 Visitor facilities:

(1) The existing visitor car-park, shelter and walking trails at Gloucester Falls and at the head of the Gloucester Tops Road shall be maintained.

(2) A camping area shall be constructed east of the Gloucester Tops road near the junction with the Kerripit Road to augment the facilities available in the lower Gloucester River and to provide an environmentally acceptable alternative to camping at the Gloucester Falls area.

6.1.2 Visitor management:

(1) Camping at Gloucester Falls and in the vicinity of the end of the Gloucester Tops Road shall be prohibited in order to prevent damage to the sub-alpine environment and to the Gloucester River. The Mount Mackenzie camping area shall be encouraged as an alternative.

(2) The short Kerripit road connecting the Gloucester Tops Road with the Gloucester Tops link trail shall be closed at the junction with the Gloucester Tops road as it is unnecessary and encourages over-use and abuse of the Darby Munro Hut.

6.1.3 Education facilities:

(1) A small educational display shall be constructed at the car park at Gloucester Falls to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the Gloucester Falls;
- b) the Cool Temperate rainforest in the vicinity;
- c) the geological features visible in the Gloucester River;
- d) the presence of the endangered Rufous Scrub Bird in the area and its known habitat requirements; and
- e) the sub-alpine woodland and wildlife which occur in the vicinity.

(2) A small educational display shall be constructed at the existing facility at the end of the Gloucester Tops Road to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the adjacent upper Gloucester River and Wangat River sections of the Barrington wilderness and the need for visitors to these areas to respect the minimum impact code;
- b) the sub-alpine environment which occurs at that location; and
- c) the geological processes responsible for the plateau area.

(3) An educational facility shall be constructed at the Mount Mackenzie Camping Area to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the endangered rufous scrub bird and its known habitat requirements;
- b) the cool temperate rainforest in the vicinity and the values it possesses relevant to the World Heritage listing of New South Wales Rainforests;
- c) the wilderness value of the adjacent walking route to Barrington Tops, the safety requirements for visitors to the sub-alpine area, and the need for visitors to the Barrington wilderness to respect the minimum impact code; and
- d) the restriction to emergency use only of the Darby Munro Hut.

(4) Interpretive signs shall be included along the Gloucester Falls Walking Trail to provide visitors with information on the local environment.

(5) Interpretive signs shall be added to the Antarctic Beech Walking Trail, located close to the Mount Mackenzie Camping Area, to provide visitors with additional information on the cool temperate rainforest which occurs there.

6.1.4 REHABILITATION

(1) Closure of the Kerripit Road shall be accompanied by its rehabilitation to a low impact, no maintenance walking trail.

(2) Rehabilitation shall be carried out at the end of the Gloucester Falls road to remove the eroded section of the road which leads to the disused river crossing.

6.2 LOWER GLOUCESTER RIVER

6.2.1 Visitor facilities:

(1) The existing camping and picnic facilities in the Gloucester River section of the Park shall be retained.

6.2.2 Visitor management:

(1) Damage to the banks and vegetation of the Gloucester River shall be monitored owing to the seasonally intensive use of the area.

6.2.3 Education facilities:

(1) A major educational facility, with provision for seasonal staffing, shall be established in association with the existing visitor facilities in the Gloucester River to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the subtropical rainforests which occur in the area, their species and structure, and their interactions with Eucalypt forests;
- b) the differences which exist between rainforest in this area and those further west;
- c) the World Heritage status of the National Park; and
- d) background information on other parts of the National Park, including its wilderness area and the question of access.

6.2.4 Rehabilitation:

(1) None required at this stage.

6.3 NORTHERN SECTION

6.3.1 Visitor facilities:

(1) The existing visitor facilities at Thunderbolts Lookout and Devils Hole lookout will be expanded and access routes for the disabled constructed to both lookouts.

(2) Polblue Swamp and the adjacent camping and day-use facilities will be transferred from the Forestry Commission to the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The Polblue Swamp walking trails shall be retained.

6.3.2 Visitor management:

(1) Car parking on the southern side of the Scone-Gloucester Road will be set aside for disabled visitors to the Thunderbolts and Devils Hole Lookouts. Small additional car parks could be created on the northern side of the Road if necessary. The visual quality of the escarpment shall be retained in the construction of any facilities.

(2) Visitors to Polblue Swamp shall be discouraged from walking on the Swamp owing to its sensitivity to disturbance.

(3) Use of the Polblue Swamp Camping Area shall be monitored for damage to native vegetation in the area.

6.3.3 Education facilities:

(1) Educational displays shall be constructed at Thunderbolts and Devils Hole Lookouts to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the Moppy River section of the Barrington wilderness;
- b) the geological processes which have produced the spectacular eastern escarpment visible from the lookouts;
- c) the extensive Cool Temperate rainforests located in the vicinity; and
- d) the World Heritage status of the National Park.

(2) A major educational facility shall be constructed at Polblue Swamp, with provision for seasonal staffing, to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the adjacent plateau section of the Barrington wilderness, its sensitivity to disturbance, the responsibility of visitors to be adequately prepared for conditions, to prevent the spread of Scotch Broom and to respect the minimum impact code;
- b) the ecology and species of the sub-alpine environment, the rare plants and formative processes accounting for the swamps;
- c) the problems of Scotch Broom and feral pigs and horses;
- d) the Tertiary geology which has produced the Barrington plateau;
- e) the presence in the area of rare species such as the Hastings River Mouse and the Rufous Scrub Bird;
- f) general information on other sections of the National Park; and
- g) the World Heritage status of the National Park and the values relevant to its listing, ie rainforest, wilderness and sub-alpine environments.

6.3.4 Rehabilitation:

(1) Rehabilitation of damage caused by Scotch Broom is dealt with in Management of Declared Wilderness, Barrington Tops and Gloucester Tops.

(2) The accessibility of the non-wilderness sections of the northern section of the Park provides scope for proven labour-intensive methods of control of Scotch Broom which should be implemented wherever possible.

6.4 SOUTHERN ESCARPMENT

6.4.1 Visitor facilities:

- (1) A small car park, picnic facility and educational facility shall be constructed at the junction of the Upper Fal Brook Road and the Sneaky Pinch Road. This location provides both a watering point for visitors and keeps human impact remote from the Boonabilla Creek catchment, which is part of the declared wilderness area.
- (2) The Sneaky Pinch Road shall be closed to form part of a walking trail proceeding from the car park to the Sneaky Pinch saddle, thence descending through the rainforest of upper Fal Brook before returning to the starting point via the Upper Fal Brook Road.
- (3) A marked route shall ascend the northern ridge of Mount Royal in order to provide access to the spectacular views of Boonabilla Creek while avoiding the sensitive rainforest areas on the summit of Mount Royal.
- (4) A small car park, picnic facility and educational facility shall be constructed on the south-eastern side of Mount Cabre Bald. This location keeps human impact remote from the Boonabilla Creek catchment, which is part of the declared wilderness area.
- (5) A walking trail shall be constructed from the Cabre Bald car park leading to the summit through the rainforest on the southern side of the mountain. This route avoids the sensitive grass tree areas and will help ensure that no human impact is visible on the short but steep north and north-east faces of Mount Cabre Bald.
- (6) The existing car park, picnic facilities and walking trails at Burrage Swamp shall be retained.
- (7) A new camping area and picnic facilities shall be constructed on purchased freehold land east of Barrington House.
- (8) A walking trail shall be constructed from the Williams River Camping Area to connect with the existing walking trails on the lower Williams River. This route will prevent, in light of the increased usage associated with the camping area, access to the existing walking trails being through property associated with Barrington House.

6.4.2 Visitor management:

- (1) Fires shall be prohibited except at the car parking facilities at both Mount Royal and Mount Cabre Bald in order to prevent unnatural burning of these locations' grassy areas and adjacent rainforests.
- (2) Use of the marked route on Mount Royal shall be monitored to ensure no visible impact occurs from its use.

(3) Occasional monitoring of the rainforest on the summits of Mount Royal and Cabre Bald shall be undertaken to ensure no impact occurs as a result of the increased access provided by facilities in the vicinity.

(4) The grass tree area of Mount Cabre Bald shall be monitored as above, as well as to ensure visitor guidelines for non-use of the area are adhered to.

(5) Walking on the surface of Burrage Swamp shall be discouraged and any damage to the Swamp regularly monitored.

(6) Use of walking trails on the Williams River shall be monitored for damage to vegetation and erosion resulting from overuse.

6.4.3 Education facilities:

(1) An educational display shall be erected at the Mount Royal car park to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the unusual warm temperate rainforest on the summit of Mount Royal;
- b) the adjacent Boonabilla Creek section of the Barrington wilderness and the requirement for visitors to that area respecting the minimum impact code;
- c) the upper Fal Brook rainforest, its wildlife and the differences between it and others further east;
- d) the grassy balds which occur on Mount Royal, their origin and continuance;
- e) the Tertiary geology of the Mount Royal basalt cap; and
- f) the events leading to the addition of the Boonabilla Creek section to the National Park and the subsequent international recognition through World Heritage listing.

(2) The upper Fal Brook rainforest walk shall contain sensitively placed interpretive signs explaining the species of the rainforest, its structure and wildlife.

(3) An educational display shall be erected at the Mount Cabre Bald car park to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the upland subtropical rainforest in the vicinity of Mount Cabre Bald;
- b) the adjacent Boonabilla Creek section of the Barrington wilderness and the requirement for visitors to respect a minimum impact code;
- c) the rainforests of Boonabilla Creek, their differences between those in other parts of Barrington and the extensive areas of interaction between rainforest and Eucalypt forest; and
- d) the grass tree habitat of Mount Cabre Bald, its origin and continuance, and the desirability for visitors to avoid leaving the track in their vicinity.

(4) The walking trail to the summit of Mount Cabre Bald shall include sensitively placed interpretive signs explaining the species of the rainforest and its structure, as well as the grass tree area and the interaction of the rainforest with it.

(5) An educational display shall be erected at the Burruga Swamp car park to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the Cool Temperate Rainforest in the vicinity, the dominant species Antarctic Beech (Nothofagus moorei), and the interaction of Cool Temperate with Subtropical Rainforest;
- b) the adjacent Paterson River section of the Barrington wilderness and the requirement for visitors to respect a minimum impact code;
- c) the origin and nature of the Burruga Swamp and its sensitivity to disturbance; and
- d) the World Heritage values of the area's rainforests and their relation to the overall New South Wales Rainforests World Heritage Area.

(6) The walking trails in the vicinity of Burruga Swamp shall include interpretive signs explaining the species of the rainforest and its structure.

(7) A major visitor education centre shall be established at the Williams River Camping Area, with provision for seasonal staffing, to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the Carboniferous sedimentary geology visible on walks on the Williams River;
- b) the subtropical rainforest of the lower Williams River and its interaction with adjacent Eucalypt forests;
- c) the Chichester and upper Williams River sections of the Barrington wilderness and the need for visitors to respect the code of minimum impact;
- d) background information on other sections of the National Park;
- e) the World Heritage status of the National Park and the contribution of the rainforest values of this section of the southern escarpment to the overall New South Wales Rainforests World Heritage Area.

(8) Walking trails on the lower Williams River shall include interpretive signs explaining species of the rainforest, its structure and interaction with Eucalypt forest.

(9) An educational display shall be erected at the Forestry Commission's Lagoon Pinch Car Park to provide visitors with information on:

- a) the Careys Peak Walking Trail;
- b) recommended safety procedures and gear requirements for visitors to the plateau;
- c) the restriction to emergency use only of the Selby Alley Hut;
- d) the nature and role of the Barrington plateau as part of the Barrington wilderness;

- e) the Scotch Broom infestation on the plateau and the responsibility of visitors to not aid its spread and to report any new infestations appearing beyond signs marking its limits; and
- f) the requirement for visitors to respect the minimum impact code.

6.4.4 Rehabilitation:

- (1) The derelict fence on the northern ridge of Mount Royal shall be removed.
- (2) Eroded sections of the trail connecting Lagoon Pinch to Rocky Crossing shall be restored and the trail re-routed if necessary.

7. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS - BARRINGTON WILDERNESS

7.1 BARRINGTON TOPS & GLOUCESTER TOPS

7.1.1 Visitor facilities:

(1) The Gloucester Tops Walking Trail and existing walking trails on Barrington Tops shall be retained so long as they can be kept as minimum standard walking routes.

7.1.2 Visitor management:

(1) The Gloucester Tops Walking Trail shall be monitored to ensure that its use does not result in any damage or increase in its size beyond a low impact walking route. Its use by horses shall be prohibited as these have been shown in several studies to have an adverse affect on wilderness values.

(2) Use of the sites of the Big Hole, Junction Hole and Wombat Creek Camping Areas shall be monitored to ensure that the goals of rehabilitation are not restrained by over-use. Education facilities outside the declared wilderness area shall encourage the use of stoves in these areas as an alternative to fires.

(3) The Barrington Falls are a potentially popular area and so shall be monitored for any adverse impact caused by over-use or abuse.

(4) The Selby Alley and Darby Munro Huts shall be retained but shall not be replaced when no longer functional. Their use shall be restricted to emergency situations only. Environmental problems around the huts, such as litter and axe damage to trees, shall be monitored.

(5) Use of the existing walking trails on Barrington Tops shall be monitored to ensure their impact is kept to an absolute minimum.

7.1.3 Education facilities:

(1) The only education facilities compatible with the Barrington and Gloucester Tops section of the Barrington wilderness is the erection of small signs at exit routes from the area infested by Scotch Broom advising visitors to check their shoes and equipment for seeds and to advise the National Parks and Wildlife Service of any plants encountered beyond the existing infestation. Such signs would be placed on the Careys Peak and Gloucester Tops Walking Trails in the south-east and on the Moonan Brook Trail in the west.

7.1.4 Rehabilitation:

(1) Rehabilitation of parts of the Gloucester Tops Walking Trail will be necessary to remove damage caused by its past use by vehicles.

(2) The Barrington, Junction Hole and Wombat Creek Trails represent major intrusions to the Barrington plateau, the core of the Barrington wilderness, and their use has been responsible for damage to the subalpine environment and the spread of Scotch Broom. They shall be closed to public vehicle use. They will be retained for use by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the management of Scotch Broom and feral pigs and horses. They will be removed and rehabilitated after successful control methods have been implemented. Any maintenance done on these trails during this period shall be minimal and be sympathetic to the goal of their removal. The Water Resources Commission shall continue to have access via these routes to its Bobs Crossing Gauging station until removal is implemented.

(3) Major rehabilitation work is necessary at the Big Hole and Junction Hole camping areas, where overuse has led to damage to soils and vegetation, and to the depletion of ground litter through demand for firewood. Human artefacts such as fireplaces, garbage bins and railings shall be removed.

(4) Day-use facilities at Mount Barrington and Eremeran Point represent intrusions into Barrington's wilderness quality which can be easily rehabilitated by the removal of human artefacts such as railings, garbage bins and fireplaces and allowing them to recover.

(5) The short access road, decrepit hut and over-use of the Careys Peak area represent a major impact on the Barrington wilderness, at one of its major focal points. Removal and rehabilitation of the track and hut site would restore wilderness quality and increase visitor amenity. The unnecessary guard rails on the peak itself shall be removed and an attempt made to replant the summit with trees, to replace those cleared by the Central Mapping Authority.

(6) The old fence lines and other ruins in the vicinity of Bald Hill on the Barrington plateau shall be removed.

7.2--NORTHERN_SECTION

7.2.1--Visitor_management:

(1) The current agreement between the Forestry Commission and the National Parks and Wildlife Service allows for the addition to the Park of the Vacant Crown Land on Kholwha Creek only after it has been logged and provides for the construction of a logging road through this area. Both these operations would destroy the wilderness value of the northern section of the Barrington wilderness and would allow for the destruction by logging of the wilderness values of the unprotected eastern escarpment of Barrington. Both aspects of the agreement shall be revoked and the Vacant Crown Land added to the Park unlogged.

7.2.2--Rehabilitation:

(1) The Kholwha Trail and the currently closed Mount Carson Trail represent intrusions into the wilderness values of the northern section of the Barrington wilderness. Both Trails shall be closed to public vehicle use and their rehabilitation beyond areas infested or likely to be infested by Scotch Broom expedited. The remaining sections shall remain for the use of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the control of Scotch Broom and shall be rehabilitated when such control is effectively implemented. Maintenance during this period shall be minimal and be sympathetic to the ultimate goal of their removal.

(2) The Polblue Trail and the northern end of the Barrington Trail impinge on the northern section of the Barrington wilderness and are within an area badly infested by Scotch Broom. Their effective closure to public use is a necessity.

(3) The Little Murray Picnic Area shall be removed and rehabilitated as its existence is oriented to the degrading use of the Kholwha Trail. The existing facilities at Polblue Swamp are an environmentally acceptable alternative.

7.3--SOUTHERN_ESCARPMENT

7.3.1--Visitor_management:

(1) The four-wheel drive trails requiring rehabilitation are likely, by default, to continue to be used as walking routes. These routes will need to be monitored after the completion of rehabilitation to ensure that no adverse impacts occur as a result of their use.

7.3.2 Rehabilitation:



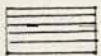

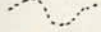





(1) The Carters Brush and Cabre Bald Trails represent unnecessary intrusions into the Boonabilla Creek section of the Barrington wilderness. They are unstable, have eroded badly and shall be closed and rehabilitated.

(2) The Mount Nelson and Glowang Trails are of no use in management and detract from the wilderness value of the Wangat and Chichester River sections of the Barrington wilderness. They shall remain closed and be rehabilitated.

(3) The Mountaineer Trail detracts from the Wangat River section of the Barrington wilderness and also from unprotected parts of the wilderness in the Gloucester River and Whispering Gully. It shall be closed and rehabilitated.

(4) The Careys Peak Trail has caused significant environmental damage along the watershed of the Williams and Allyn River watersheds and is of no value in management. Recent engineering works, including extensive bulldozing and the installation of culverts, have increased its intrusion into the Barrington wilderness at a time when it is closed to public vehicle access. The trail shall remain closed and major rehabilitation work will be undertaken aimed at converting it to a low impact, no maintenance walking routes.

KEY

-  Wilderness Area
-  Wilderness in Park to be declared
-  Vacant Crown land
-  Major access road
-  Walking route
-  Visitor facility
-  Camping facility
-  Visitor Education Centre
-  Disabled access
-  Emergency Huts

Scale
0 1 2 3 4 5 km

BARRINGTON TOPS NATIONAL PARK

DRAFT PLAN OF
MANAGEMENT

PREPARED BY THE
WILDERNESS SOCIETY

