

Mallee Parks Landscape Conservation Action Plan

Overview

Achieving our conservation vision to:

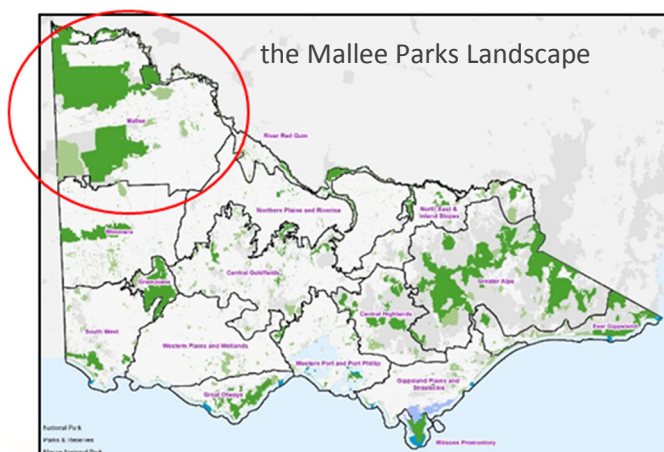
Increase the resilience of natural assets in the Mallee Parks Landscape and maintain ecosystem services in the face of climate change and other stressors

The Mallee Parks Landscape includes significant areas of remote wilderness consisting of mallee and heathland on sandy dunes, with saline soaks and remnant cypress-pine and buloke woodlands in lower parts of the landscape that connect ephemeral inland riverine and lake systems, including the Lake Albacutya Ramsar site.

Parks and reserves include:

- Murray-Sunset National Park (non-riverine part)
- Wyperfeld National Park
- Big Desert Wilderness Park
- Hattah-Kulkyne National Park (non-riverine part)
- Bronzewing Flora and Fauna Reserve
- Annuello Flora and Fauna Reserve
- Wathe Flora and Fauna Reserve
- 329 other reserves managed by Parks Victoria

The landscape is significant to several Traditional Owner groups who are traditionally and culturally associated with various areas. The Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and the First People of the Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation have legislated authority for the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage



Conservation Assets

Eight ecosystems have been identified as conservation assets in the Mallee Parks Landscape. Within each of these, a range of nested assets have also been identified, including threatened species and important ecological assemblages.

Condition

The plan identifies a range of key ecological attributes (components that are believed to best reflect the health of the asset). The plan describes their current condition (very good, good, fair, poor) and the trend (improving, stable, declining), and establishes a target for future condition of each key ecological attribute. These measures allow the condition of each asset to be assessed:

- Mallee Triodia, Sunset Plains and Swales, and Inlands Saline Soaks are in good condition.
- Heathlands and Mallee Heathlands, Lowan Broombrush and Swales, Semi-arid Woodlands, and Inland Riverine Forests are in fair condition.
- Albacutya Ramsar Site is in poor condition.

Threats

Seven priority threats to the conservation assets in the Park Landscape are identified:

- Extremes of weather and climate.
- Inappropriate fire regimes and fire management activities.
- Total grazing, browsing, trampling and wallowing pressure.
- Predation by introduced predators.
- Weed invasion.
- Specific competitive interactions.
- Habitat degradation from visitor activities.

The Conservation Action Plan identifies strategies that target our conservation efforts to achieve the best outcomes for ecosystems and species with the available resources.



Conservation strategies

The following strategies will be implemented to tackle the threats. They have been selected for their likely impact, feasibility and cost-effectiveness in achieving the desired conservation outcomes.

- **Collaborate on country with Traditional Owners, special interest groups, and researchers** — strengthen collaboration and partnerships to maintain long-term engagement and guide adaptive in environmental programs.
- **Manage fire for healthy conservation assets** — work in partnership with fire management agencies to maintain and improve fire regimes that diversify vegetation age-class mosaics and protect fire-sensitive values.
- **Manage total grazing pressure** — implement effective and integrated control of key herbivores to improve the regeneration and structural diversity of Semi-arid Woodlands.
- **Restore Semi-Arid Woodlands** — work with restoration partners to restore structural diversity to the woodlands, and provide habitat for the future.
- **Control introduced predators to support resilient populations of native fauna** — effectively manage introduced predators at priority locations to support the persistence, movement and increase of native fauna vulnerable to predation.
- **Manage environmental weeds using a biosecurity approach** — reduce the spread, establishment and impact of weeds, focusing on species that have, or are likely to have, significant impacts on conservation assets and ecological processes.
- **Reduce visitor impacts on natural and cultural assets** — work with park visitors to limit the impacts of recreational activities at priority locations.
- **Reintroduce locally extinct fauna** — support projects that will improve ecosystem functioning by reintroducing locally extinct native species.

Global Practice

Conservation action planning is an internationally recognised process developed by The Nature Conservancy, and used by many conservation managers around Australia. Adaptive management is a critical component of the model.

The Plan provides directions for environmental conservation management for the next 15 years. After 5 years, the plan will be reviewed, and progress will be evaluated against outcomes identified for conservation.

Performance measurement

For each strategy, component actions and monitoring indicators have been developed. These will be used to track the achievement of threat mitigation objectives and conservation outcomes defined for each of the assets.

Implementing the plan

The Conservation Action Plan will be implemented by the Northern Victoria regional team in partnership with Traditional Owners, and with detailed planning and design often assisted by other agencies, restoration partners, researchers, Friends groups, special interest groups, and volunteers.

10 Step Process:

Parks Victoria uses a ten-step process for conservation action planning: the Plan covers the first seven steps in the process



For more information

Copies of the plan may be downloaded from the Parks Victoria website www.parkweb.vic.gov.au