

White Blow Conservation Park

Management Plan
2011



Einasleigh Uplands Bioregion

Prepared by:

Planning Services Unit

Department of Environment and Resource Management

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This management plan has been prepared in accordance with the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

This management plan does not intend to affect, diminish or extinguish native title or associated rights.

Note that implementing some management strategies might need to be phased in according to resource availability.

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Vision statement

White Blow Conservation Park will be managed to conserve the 'White Blow', a unique quartz outcrop. The park will also be managed to retain its existing natural state and provide for low-impact, self-reliant visitor opportunities.

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1. Management intent

The purposes of management for White Blow Conservation Park will be to ensure that:

- geological landforms are conserved and interpreted
- the natural ecosystem on the park is conserved
- Indigenous cultural heritage values have been identified and protected, where appropriate, and Indigenous involvement in park management and decision making is encouraged
- visitors are provided with low-impact, self-reliant opportunities
- visitor information about the park's natural and cultural values is available
- pest plants and animals will be eradicated or reduced, where possible, and control methods have no or minimal adverse impacts.

2. Basis for management

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is responsible for the day-to-day management of White Blow Conservation Park. The park is primarily managed in accordance with the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and associated regulations to protect land, wildlife and cultural values.

Indigenous people have affiliations with this park and involving Traditional Owner groups forms an important component of management. Native title claim applications have been lodged by the Birri people over lands, including White Blow Conservation Park, and await determination. This plan does not affect these claims.

Cultural heritage places in Queensland are legislatively managed under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* and the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*. The Burra Charter and the Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage provide detailed guidelines for the management of cultural heritage places.

Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems are described under the DERM biodiversity status and endangered and vulnerable species are listed under the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006. DERM has a responsibility under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* to control declared pest plants and animals on protected areas.

3. Location and regional context

White Blow Conservation Park is two kilometres north-north-east of the historical township of Ravenswood on the Ayr–Ravenswood Road and 122 kilometres south-west of Townsville (Map 1). The park is 1.96 hectares and was dedicated in 1974 to conserve a unique quartz outcrop named 'White Blow', the largest of several irregular masses of quartz in the area.

The area was first settled by Europeans following Bowen's establishment in 1861. Pastoral runs were soon set up in the hinterland, including the area where Ravenswood Township and mining fields developed, following the discovery of gold in 1868.

The park is visited often, primarily due to its proximity to Ravenswood and the Burdekin Dam (a popular recreation area). The wet season is from December to April and local flooding can occur around the park.

There are two other protected areas close to White Blow Conservation Park: Dalrymple National Park and Bowling Green Bay National Park. Dalrymple National Park provides opportunities for walking, bird-watching and vehicle-based camping. Bowling Green Bay National Park also provides varied recreation, such as hiking, camping, bird-watching and fishing.

4. Protecting and presenting the park's values

4.1 Landscape

The large quartz outcrop is 15 metres in height with a diameter of 45 metres and is the largest of several irregular masses of quartz associated with the granitic rocks in the area. It is considered to be an outstanding and unusual geological formation. The outcrop itself occurs on a hill.

The 'White Blow' quartz rock outcrop is hosted by the Jessop Creek Tonalite (a type of granitic rock) that is dated at about 400 million years. This quartz is estimated to be 300 million years old. Large quartz outcrops (or blows) are common in some parts of Queensland, particularly in the Mt Isa area and near Georgetown. Smaller ones occur elsewhere in the Charters Towers and Ravenswood area.

White Blow is a particularly large outcrop and easily accessible, making it a site of particular scenic interest. Bodies of quartz like this form where tension during earth movements opens up fractures, allowing mineral-bearing fluid to pass through the rock. With a lowering of pressure or temperature, the minerals (in this case silica), come out of the solution and eventually fill the fracture. In this instance, the quartz blow may have formed at the intersection of two fracture zones, allowing a larger opening to form. Such large outcrops are commonly not mineralised and therefore have no mining potential (I Withnall [Mines and Energy] 2009, pers comm., 6 May).

There is a dry creek bed to the west of the outcrop. Undulating ground surface results in heavy run-off during wet weather. A water-directing device (a 'whoa boy') has been positioned to divert water and reduce erosion of the car park and access road. Vehicles are restricted to the access road and the defined car park. There are no internal tracks on the park.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
To maintain the current natural condition of the park.	<p>A1. Continue to monitor the water directing device (the 'whoa boy'), with an emphasis on reducing erosion to car park and access road.</p> <p>A2. Maintain the car park to accommodate 8–10 vehicles.</p> <p>A3. Maintain existing tracks and develop no new tracks.</p>

4.2 Native plants and animals

White Blow Conservation Park's vegetation is open woodland dominated by ironbark and bloodwood, with a grassy understorey. Only one regional ecosystem has been documented on the park (9.12.1 – *Eucalyptus crebra* and/or *Eucalyptus xanthoclada* and/or *Eucalyptus drepanophylla*), classified as not of concern under the DERM biodiversity status. White Blow Conservation Park is a habitat for the squatter pigeon (southern sub-species) *Geophaps scripta scripta*, which has a vulnerable conservation status under the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
The composition and extent of vegetation is maintained.	A4. Record incidental sightings of native plants and animals to improve data on species populations and distributions.
The abundance and diversity of native animals in the park is maintained.	A5. Manage habitats to protect vulnerable species.

4.3 Indigenous culture

Although no Indigenous cultural places have been identified on the park, the 'White Blow' is a prominent landmark and Traditional Owners may have had some association with the outcrop.

The Birri people have interests over lands that include White Blow Conservation Park. The area is subject to a native title claim (QC98/12). The claim has yet to be determined.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
Indigenous people with traditional affiliations in the area are involved in managing cultural heritage issues.	A6. Encourage Traditional Owners to help identify, document and protect Indigenous cultural heritage places on the park and provide advice on other cultural interests and concerns.

4.4 Shared-history culture

While no shared-history cultural places have been identified on the park, gold was discovered at Ravenswood in 1868, a few years after pastoral settlement of the area had begun.

Ravenswood was also one of several important goldfields that formed a major part of North Queensland's development.

4.5 Tourism and visitor opportunities

Low-key nature-based recreational opportunities on the park include bushwalking, picnicking and rock scrambling.

There is a walking track from the car park to the rock. Visitor facilities at the park include signs, a car park and an interpretive marker.

Camping and amenities are available in nearby Ravenswood.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
Opportunities are available for day-use in a natural setting with low-key facilities.	<p>A7. Maintain visitor opportunities to current level.</p> <p>A8. Encourage nature-based recreational experiences such as bushwalking and picnicking through DERM's website.</p> <p>A9. Direct any demand for camping to Ravenswood.</p> <p>See also A2.</p>

4.6 Education and science

While no regular education and interpretation programs exist for the park, there is potential for the 'White Blow' to be used for geological excursions by both high school and university students who visit the area.

There are three scientific permits currently in use on the park to cover obtaining specimens for study purposes.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
Park visitors are provided with appropriate information to allow them to understand their obligations and enjoy their visit.	A10. Develop a Statement of Interpretive Intent for the park, in line with DERM's 'Park Profile' and landscape classification system for visitor management policy. In particular, consider including interpretation of cultural and historical values and geological significance, along with the need for directional, orientation, safety and management signage.

4.7 Partnerships

QPWS currently has no formal partnerships regarding managing the park.

White Blow Conservation Park could be promoted as an attraction for Ravenswood by the Charters Towers Regional Council.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
To create a partnership that will further preserve, protect and present natural and cultural values.	<p>A11. Investigate appointing a trustee to manage the park.</p> <p>A12. Work with Charters Towers Regional Council to promote the area for sustainable, nature-based, recreational use.</p>

5. Other key issues and responses

5.1 Pest management

Declared Class 2 pest plants, parthenium *Parthenium hysterophorus* and rubber vine *Cryptostegia grandiflora*, and Class 3 pest plant lantana *Lantana camara*, have all been eradicated from the park. However, parthenium is known to occur in areas surrounding the park. Pest animals, such as pigs and cats, are very transient in the area; however, there are little to no signs of pest animal activity on the park.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
Pest plants and animals do not become established on the park.	<p>A13. Develop a pest management activity proposal for parthenium should it reoccur on the park.</p> <p>A14. Continue to monitor for the presence of pest plants in the park and maintain vigilance in preventing weeds spreading, to reduce the risk of pest plants entering the park.</p>

5.2 Fire management

QPWS has developed a Statement of Fire Management Intent for White Blow Conservation Park, intended to:

- protect life and property, both on park and on neighbouring properties
- sustain species diversity and structure within the open eucalypt woodland community, through a pro-active burning program.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
Fire management has improved the condition of the park's ecosystems, while protecting life and property.	<p>A15. Review the Statement of Fire Management Intent, in accordance with DERM procedures, every five years.</p> <p>A16. Monitor the effects of fire on the natural resources of the park.</p> <p>A17. Maintain a fireline around the car park.</p>

6. References

Sattler, P. and Williams, R. (eds) 1999, *The conservation status of Queensland's bioregional ecosystems*. Environmental Protection Agency, Queensland Government, Brisbane.

7. Hyperlinks

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>

Biodiversity status <www.derm.qld.gov.au>

Bureau of Meteorology 2009, Commonwealth of Australia, viewed 3 March 2009 <www.bom.gov.au>

Department of Environment and Resource Management website <www.derm.qld.gov.au>

Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>

Nature Conservation Act 1992 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>

Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>

Queensland Heritage Act 1992 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>

Regional ecosystems <www.derm.qld.gov.au>

The Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage <www.icomos.org>

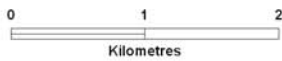
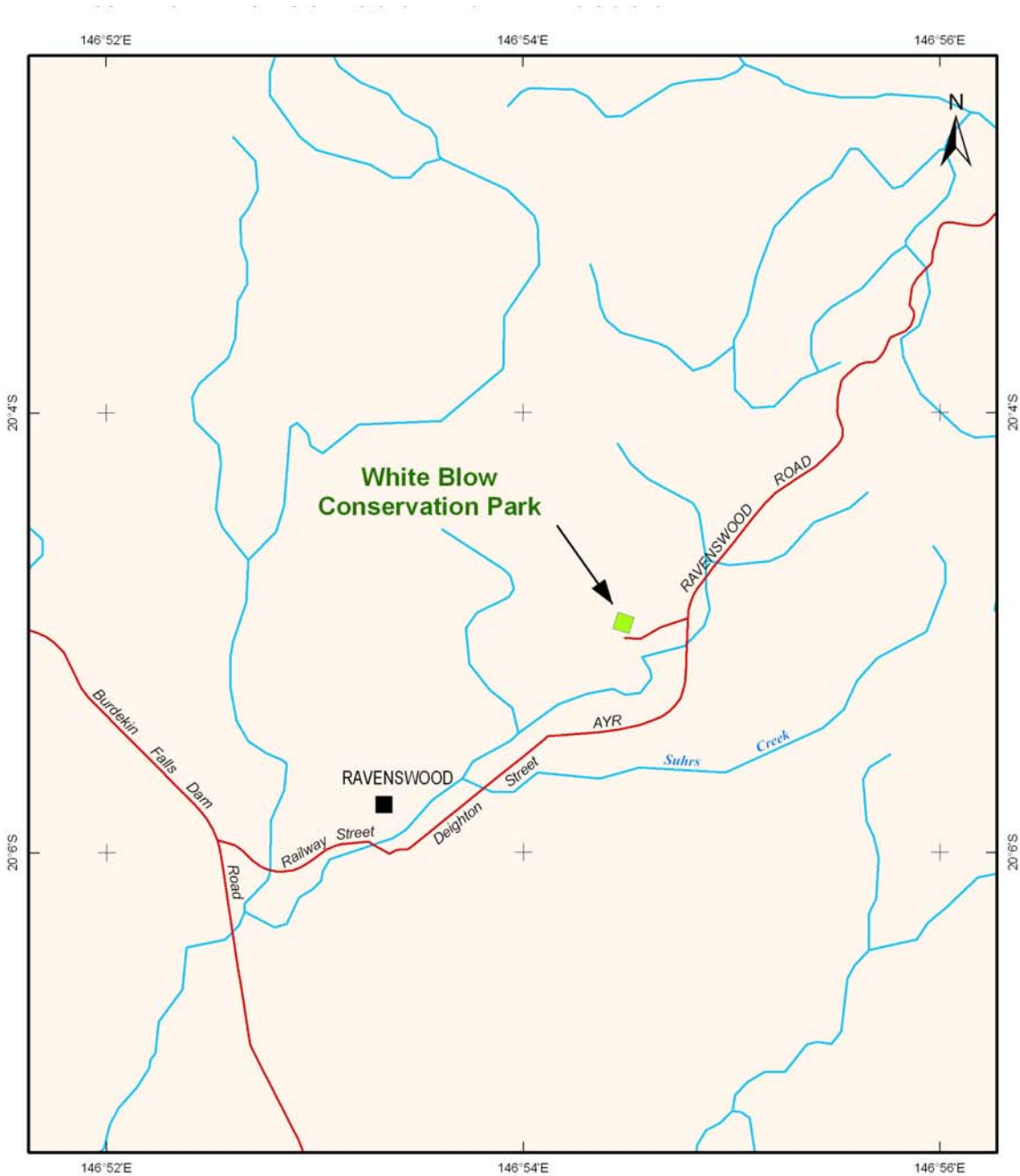
8. Appendixes

Appendix A – Map

Appendix B – Definitions

Appendix A – Map

Map 1 Location



Map Projection:
 Universal Transverse Mercator (MGA) zone 55
Horizontal Datum:
 Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94)
Map Production:
 Spatial Services - Brisbane,
 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service,
 Department of Environment and Resource Management,
 6 December 2010

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Accuracy statement:
 Due to varying source, accuracy or currency of data layers used in this map, the spatial locations of features may not coincide when overlaid.

Legend

- Conservation Park
- Towns (gazetteer)
- Road Network**
- Roads
- Drainage Network**
- Creeks

Source Material:
 •QPWS Estate - DERM; June 2010
 •Towns - DNRW, November 2008
 •State Digital Road Network (SDRN); September 2010
 • Pitney Bowes Business Insight 2010
 •Drainage network - Creeks QLD - GA;



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Appendix B – Definitions

Biodiversity status (regional ecosystems)

The biodiversity status is based on an assessment of the condition of remnant vegetation in addition to the pre-clearing and remnant extent of a regional ecosystem. The current biodiversity status of regional ecosystems is given on the Regional Ecosystem Description Database. See hyperlink – biodiversity status for further information including the specific criteria used to assess the biodiversity status.

Management principles for conservation parks

Under Section 20, *Nature Conservation Act 1992*:

A conservation park is to be managed to—

- (a) conserve and present the area's cultural and natural resources and their values
- (b) provide for the permanent conservation of the area's natural condition to the greatest possible extent
- (c) ensure that any commercial use of the area's natural resources, including fishing and grazing, is ecologically sustainable.

Regional ecosystems

Regional ecosystems were defined by Sattler and Williams (1999) as vegetation communities in a bioregion that are consistently associated with a particular combination of geology, landform and soil. Readers should refer to this publication for background information about regional ecosystems and the bioregional planning framework used in Queensland.

Compilation of the information about regional ecosystems presented in Sattler and Williams (1999) was derived from a broad range of existing information sources including land system, vegetation and geology mapping and reports. However, the framework is dynamic and is regularly reviewed as new information becomes available. During the past few years the Queensland Herbarium has developed a program for explicitly mapping regional ecosystems across Queensland. This has resulted, and will continue to result, in updates to the descriptions and status of regional ecosystems. Therefore updated regional ecosystem descriptions in the format of Sattler and Williams (1999) are maintained in the Regional Ecosystem Description Database.

Vulnerable

At the state level, vulnerable species are those species listed as vulnerable under schedule 3 of Queensland's Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006. At the national level, vulnerable species are those species listed as vulnerable under the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

