



# Deep Creek National Park, Talisker Conservation Park and small parks of the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula

Management Plan 2026

Small parks include Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park,  
Waitpinga Conservation Park and Eric Bonython Conservation Park



Government of South Australia  
Department for Environment  
and Water

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## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and waters we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country. The department works in partnership with the First Peoples of South Australia and supports their Nations to take a leading role in caring for their Country. Deep Creek National Park, Talisker Conservation Park, Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park, Waitpinga Conservation Park and Eric Bonython Conservation Park are located on Ngarrindjeri Nation (land) whose Country spans the lower River Murray, Coorong and western Fleurieu Peninsula.





# Minister's foreword



Few places around the world provide the exceptional blend of rich biodiversity, abundant wildlife, pristine beaches, and access to world-class hiking trails that showcase stunning coastal vistas—all in close proximity to a major city. This brings a responsibility to safeguard these truly remarkable South Australian treasures, and I take immense pride in presenting this management plan, which is designed to do just this.

The Deep Creek National Park, Talisker Conservation Park and small parks of the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula Management Plan aims to protect biodiversity, guide accessible and inclusive nature-based tourism experiences, support fire management and celebrate cultural heritage within these parks. The plan outlines strategies that will guide the long-term protection, enjoyment and collaboration amongst partners and stakeholders associated with the parks.

I acknowledge the community interest and involvement in the management of this park and also the contributions from those who helped in the development of the plan. I now formally adopt the Deep Creek National Park, Talisker Conservation Park and small parks of the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula Management Plan under section 38 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*.



**The Hon. Lucy Hood MP**

Minister for Climate, Environment and Water

# Developing this plan

This plan provides management directions for the following parks:

- Deep Creek National Park
- Talisker Conservation Park
- Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park
- Waitpinga Conservation Park
- Eric Bonython Conservation Park

It's developed in collaboration with regional park managers, the Ngarrindjeri Nation, key stakeholders, and technical specialists. It also considers park and heritage assessments, research, park survey data and trends, and accessibility and inclusion.

This plan is intended to:

- Provide strategic direction to protect the high biodiversity value of the parks and their cultural and heritage significance
- Guide the provision of exceptional nature based tourism experiences connecting all people to nature
- Support fire management directives that will reduce the risk to people, property and the environment
- Celebrate and protect cultural heritage and community stewardship of the parks.



# Directions for management

South Australia's national parks, conservation parks and recreation parks are managed to achieve the objectives of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* (NPW Act). These objectives ensure that parks are managed primarily for conservation, while supporting public use, enjoyment and education about the parks purpose and significance. A park management plan is a legal document that outlines how a reserve will be managed in the years ahead. This plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the NPW Act.

The classification which a reserve receives is a general statement of the purpose for establishing it. National parks are reserves considered to be of national significance based on their wildlife or natural features. Conservation parks are managed primarily to protect the wildlife, natural or historical features which they contain. Recreation parks are usually sites conserved and managed primarily for public recreation and enjoyment.

In November 2021, the proclamation under Section 29(3) of the NPW Act was made to change the classification of Deep Creek from a conservation park to a national park. This reclassification better reflects the national significance of the wildlife and natural features of the park whilst providing greater opportunities for visitors to seek out nature based experiences.

Talisker Conservation Park was constituted in 1985 as a reflection of the sites high quality natural landscape that also contained a historic mining site. In particular, the native vegetation of Talisker Conservation Park supplements and extends that conserved within Deep Creek National Park, which lies 3km north west.

Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park was proclaimed in 2021 to provide for the development of new campsite facilities, 'Kurri Ngawanthi' (meaning creek campground in Ngarrindjeri language) for the Wild South Coast Way on the Heysen Trail, while conserving sites of environmental importance.

Both Waitpinga Conservation Park and Eric Bonython Conservation Park are managed for the conservation of small areas of remnant native vegetation among an otherwise disturbed landscape. The parks contain no public visitor facilities, camping or vehicle access. They are managed to protect important species, including species listed under the NPW Act and the national *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Many of the parks, such as Deep Creek National Park, in this plan of management also protect the Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps, a critically endangered ecological community under the EPBC Act. Few remaining Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps are included within the state's protected area system, and most have been subject to past activities resulting in a decline in swamp health. Changes in water regimes, incursions of pest plants, changes in land use, disturbance to vegetation, and inappropriate management practices could result in further decline. As a result, the sensitive native flora and fauna species within swamps will also be subject to further pressures.

This plan will replace the following plans and plan amendments:

- Deep Creek and Talisker Conservation Park Management Plan 1997
- Deep Creek and Talisker Conservation Parks Management Plan Amendment 2007
- Deep Creek and Talisker Conservation Parks Management Plan Amendment 2015
- Deep Creek and Talisker Conservation Parks Management Plan Amendment 2021

While each park in this plan will be managed to achieve different outcomes, this plan provides for the management of all five parks as they contain similar ecological and geographic features and share some similar threats. Establishing one management plan for five parks in close proximity supports a landscape approach to planning for biodiversity conservation as well as providing a framework for sustainable visitation.

The primary management focus for these parks will be biodiversity conservation, while also supporting public use and recreation within Deep Creek National Park, Talisker Conservation Park and Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park. The plan has been built around four key themes:

1. Protecting and enhancing natural values
2. Providing nature based tourism experiences
3. Managing fire
4. Celebrating and maintaining culture, heritage and community stewardship

These themes set the scene for the objectives and strategies that will guide long-term protection, enjoyment and collaboration with partners and stakeholders involved in the parks. The specific actions required to manage the parks in accordance with the plan will be developed and monitored at a park operations level. This approach ensures that the plan is flexible and able to guide a range of future management challenges.

From a cultural perspective, the parks are very important to the Ngarrindjeri Nation, who have maintained a connection to this Country for countless generations. Ngarrindjeri use the term Ruwe/Ruwar to capture the interconnection between Country, water, body and spirit. This interconnection is fundamental to wellbeing and it is for this reason that healthy lands and waters are critical for Ngarrindjeri people and culture. The plan recognises the important role Ngarrindjeri People can play in the management of the parks, in particular how traditional knowledge can guide its implementation.

No large-scale cultural heritage surveys have been undertaken in these parks, however it is highly likely that they contain Aboriginal archaeological sites,

objects or burials. Ensuring sites are protected from impacts associated with public visitation, conservation programs, or park maintenance activities will be done by working with Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation (NAC). All Aboriginal sites, objects and remains are protected from damage, disturbance or interference by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*, regardless of whether they are known in the Register of Aboriginal Sites and Objects.

The broader community is very passionate about this local environment. Local volunteer groups, such as Friends of Deep Creek and Friends of Heysen Trail, have helped to conserve and revegetate the parks and will continue to play a supporting role in conservation and public awareness.

Managing fire is a key objective of park management. This plan acknowledges that the parks' surrounding land uses, visitor use, the natural and cultural heritage values, and the difficult terrain for suppression activities requires pro-active fire management strategies. This is to protect both life and property and the conservation values of the parks. To this end, theme 3 of the plan outlines key approaches to deliver appropriate fire management strategies that are consistent with departmental fire management plans.

Western grey kangaroos (*Macropus fuliginosus*), fallow deer, (and to a lesser extent rabbits), are causing impacts on native vegetation and revegetation programs within the parks, reducing plant diversity and habitat quality for other important and endangered species such as the Mount Lofty southern emu-wren (*Stipiturus malachurus intermedius*). While control of pest animals is a priority, where evidence indicates that total grazing pressure is unsustainable and impacting the conservation values of the parks, strategic management will also be considered for native species such as Western grey kangaroos. Strategic

management should consider non-lethal management actions in the first instance. Where these actions are considered ineffective or not feasible, culling may be implemented where this remains the only practicable method of management. Any culling will follow strict procedures for the humane destruction of animals.

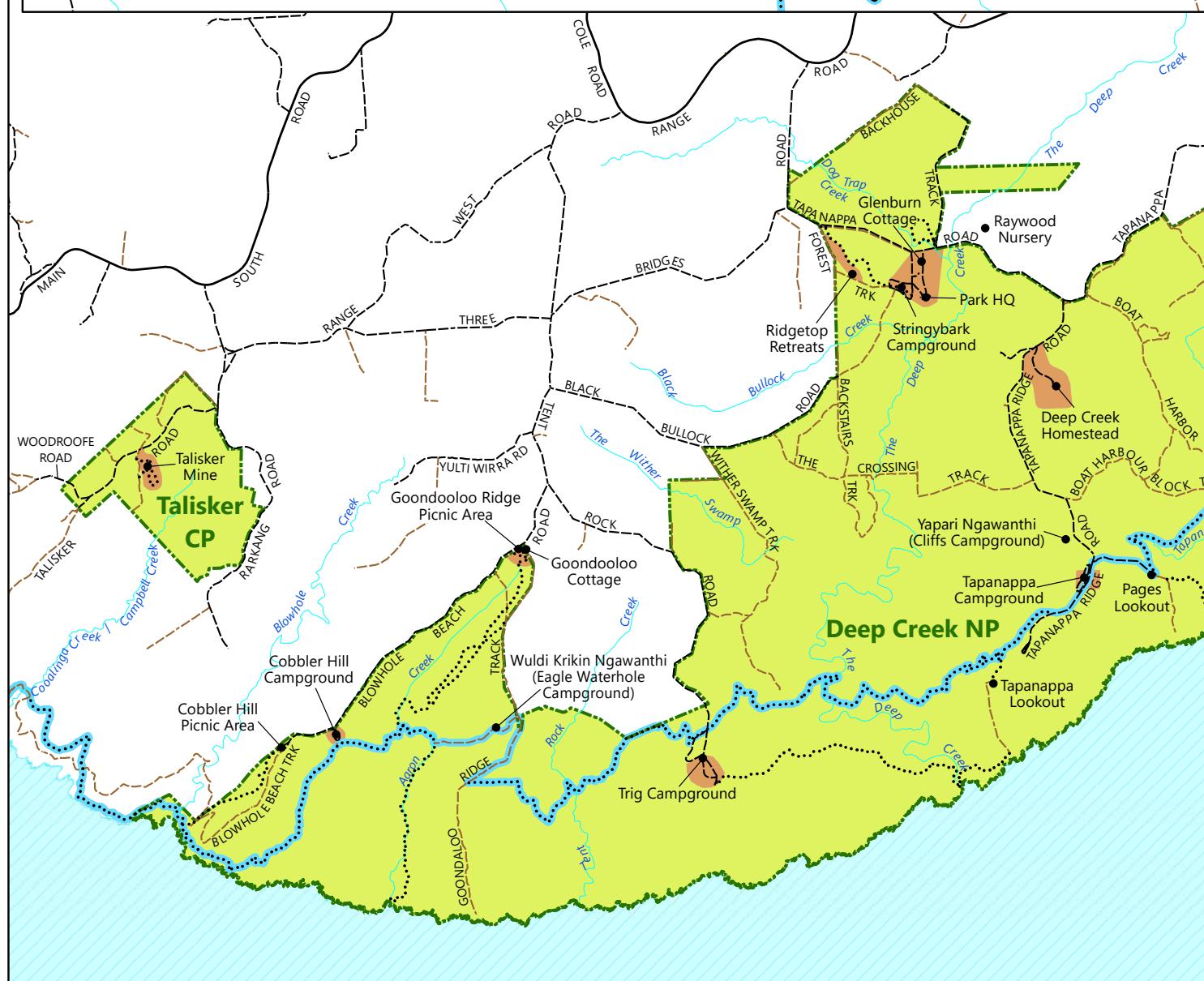
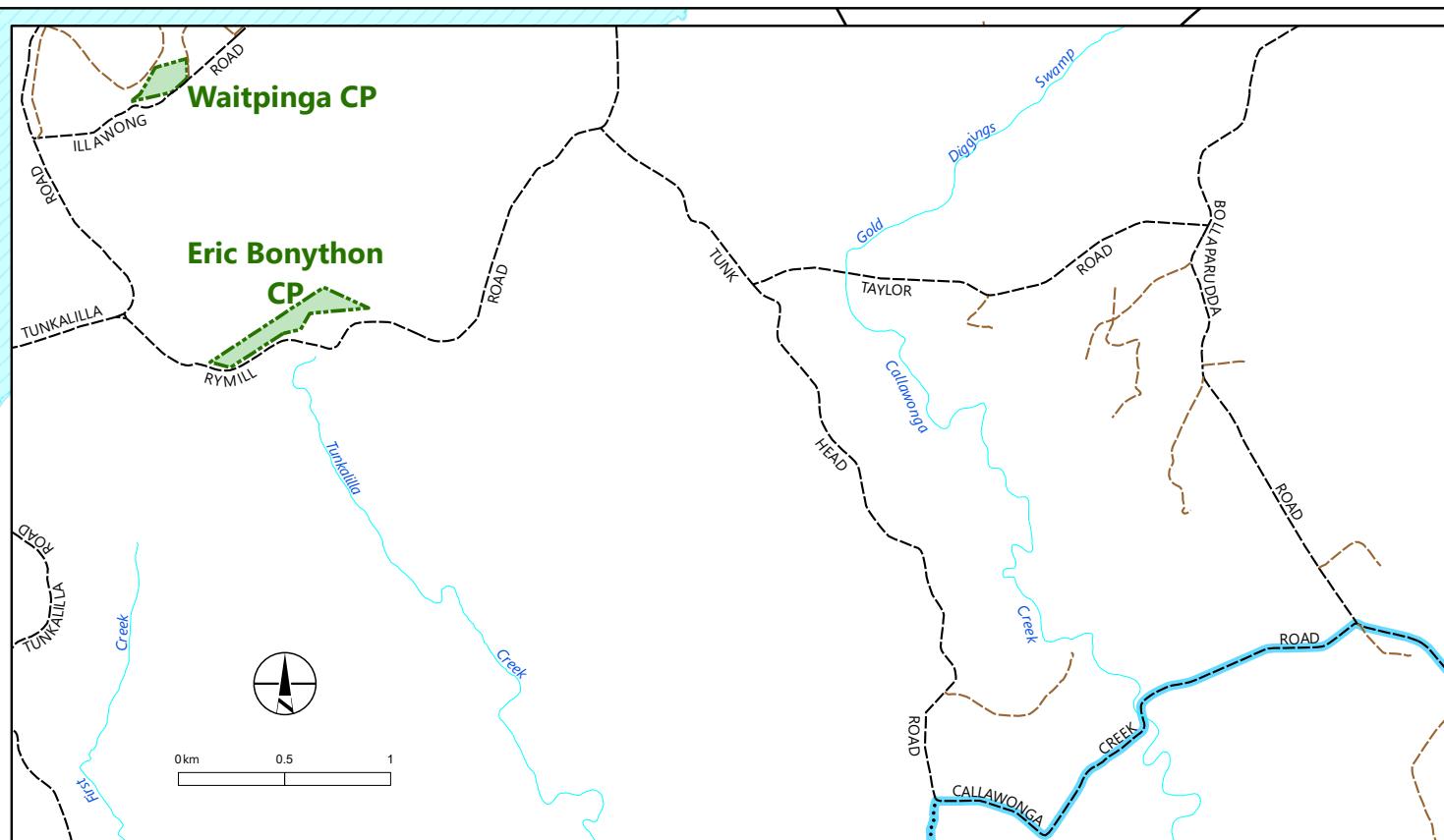
Balancing the preservation of native vegetation and vulnerable ecosystems while also enabling visitors to experience the natural wonders and wilderness qualities of the parks is a key priority for this plan. Section 39 of the NPW Act determines that a management plan may provide for the division of a reserve into zones. Where a zone is created in a reserve, the land must be kept and maintained in accordance with the conditions declared by the plan of management to be appropriate to that zone. The two zones set out in this plan are based on this section of the Act to articulate the management visions for the park and are not related to any zone or layers of the South Australian Planning and Design Code (under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*).

In this plan, Visitor Use Zones are defined on page 11 and used to identify zones in the parks (refer to Figure 1) that enable visitor services, facilities and development of commercial facilities (including by third parties). Outside these zones, activities and facilities will be restricted to low impact uses that can occur in a conservation zone such as sightseeing, hiking and picnicking with supporting ancillary facilities such as shelters, toilets, car parks and barbeques.

Deep Creek National Park in particular has seen consistent growth in visitation over time, leading to a change in visitor requirements including access to accommodation choices such as walk in campsites along the Heysen Trail. The challenge of managing changing visitor requirements while maintaining the natural values of this park is an ongoing priority. Part of meeting that challenge will be providing contemporary inclusive visitor services and infrastructure without diminishing the values of the park. To ensure the parks' conservation objectives are not compromised, thoughtful siting of facilities that support nature based tourism experiences and avoid disturbing areas of high conservation value will be subject to detailed planning and monitoring beyond the scope of this plan of management.

Climate change projections for the region indicate decreasing rainfall, increasing temperatures, rising sea levels and more severe fire danger days. Implications of climate change will include more time in drought, changes in native vegetation and increased risk of extinction to vulnerable species. Research and monitoring, undertaken by DEW, other agencies or research organisations, will be vital in developing an understanding of climate change impacts and implementing strategies to support ecosystems and vulnerable species to be resilient.





**Figure 1**

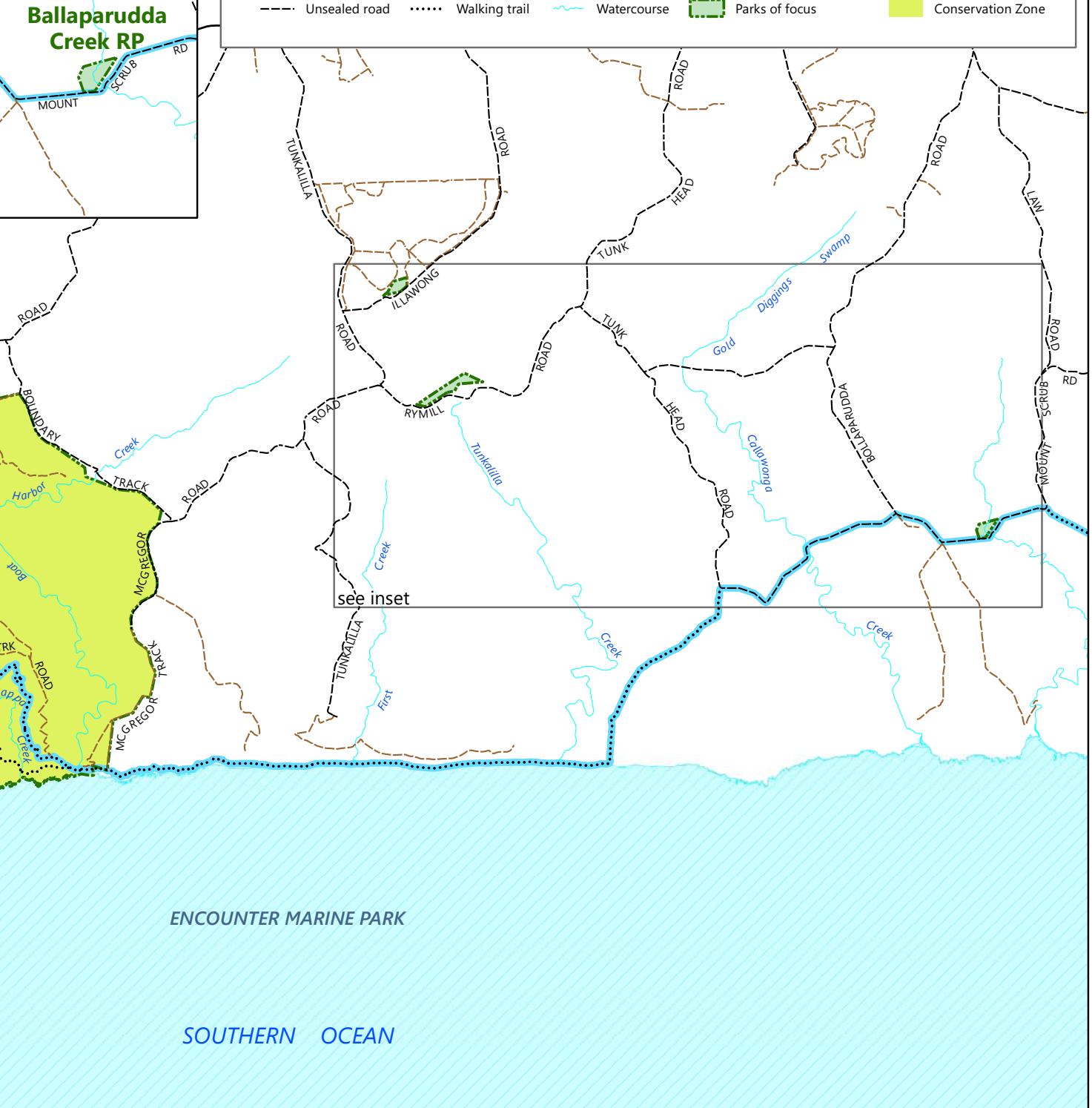
Zoning of Deep Creek National Park, Talisker Conservation Park and small parks of the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula  
(Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park, Waitpinga Conservation Park and Eric Bonython Conservation Park)



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**LEGEND**

Sealed road	Vehicle track	Heysen Trail	Encounter Marine Park	Visitor Use Zone
Unsealed road	Walking trail	Watercourse	Parks of focus	Conservation Zone



# Significance and purpose

The parks in this plan of management are of high biodiversity value. They comprise the largest remaining portion of remnant natural vegetation on the southern edge of the Mount Lofty Ranges preserving important habitat for many fauna and flora species under the NPW Act and EPBC Act. The parks also protect areas of the critically endangered Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula ecological community, and contribute to regional protected area networks.

The parks in this management plan are part of the traditional lands of the Ngarrindjeri People for whom the land, water, plants, and animals are central to their spirituality and identity. Ngarrindjeri People maintain a strong connection to the sites and features across these park landscapes which have cultural importance and are connected to Ngarrindjeri creation stories, that have been passed down over generations.

## Deep Creek National Park

Deep Creek National Park is located on the southern coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula, just over 100km south of Adelaide, and is one of South Australia's most visited parks. From spectacular coastal vistas, top quality camping experiences and world class walking trails, the park is instantly recognisable and beloved by many. Reclassification of Deep Creek to a national park in November 2021 recognised the importance of this park to both conservation and tourism.

Deep Creek National Park protects a unique and ecologically significant ecosystem known as the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula. These wetlands once thrived along watercourses from the catchment to the coast, but unfortunately, agricultural development has fragmented and diminished them. As a result, these isolated fragments of swamps have become increasingly rare and are now protected by both state and commonwealth legislation. Within these swamps

are several nationally and state listed threatened plant species which provide habitat for species such as the Mount Lofty Ranges southern emu-wren, and the southern brown bandicoot (*Isoodon obesulus*). The heath communities of the parks are also of high conservation importance, in their own right, but also because of the habitat they provide to a range of threatened species, such as the chestnut-rumped heathwren (*Hylacola pyrrhopygia parker*) and the western beautiful firetail (*Stagonopleura bella samueli*). Some threatened species, such as the Mount Lofty Ranges southern emu-wren, heavily rely on heath habitats that have reached an optimal age. However, it is crucial to recognise that as the heath grows older, their value as a suitable habitat for these species diminishes. Therefore it is important to consider prescribed burning as a suitable management approach for these parks, with the aim of preserving the conservation value of the heath habitats for threatened species like the Mount Lofty Ranges southern emu-wren.

The visitor experience at Deep Creek National Park has been enhanced and expanded to include new picnic areas, a universally-accessible walking trail, new walk-in only campgrounds, and an upgrade to the existing Trig Campground. Visitor experiences in Deep Creek should connect visitors with nature whilst ensuring that all tourism activities are delivered in a responsible and sustainable way without jeopardising the natural and cultural values of the park. Deep Creek National Park provides some of the most accessible, scenic and inclusive bushwalks available to visitors from Adelaide, contributing to its high visitation numbers. There are four campgrounds (refer to Figure 1) accessible by 2WD and three walk-ins (Yapari Ngawanthi-Cliffs campground, Wuldi Krik Ngawanthi-Eagle Waterhole Campground and Kurri Ngawanthi-Creek Campground) that are on the Heysen Trail.

## Talisker Conservation Park

Talisker Conservation Park, constituted in 1985, lies some 3km north west of Deep Creek National Park and has a proclaimed area of 212ha. The mine site, which extracted silver and lead, was discovered by the McLeod brothers and was worked up until 1872. The native vegetation of Talisker Conservation Park supplements and extends that conserved within Deep Creek National Park.

## Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park

Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park is a 2.5 hectare park located approximately 25 kilometres west of Victor Harbor. The land was proclaimed as a Recreation Park in 2021 to aid in managing campgrounds developed on site.

The park provides for hikers of the Wild South Coast Way on the Heysen Trail, and the infrastructure it contains is an important part of a premium trail experience between Cape Jervis and Victor Harbor. The park has been developed to include a shelter, toilet facilities and tent platforms.

Ecologically, the park also protects pink gum (*Eucalyptus fasciculosa*), which is rare in South Australia, and Deep Creek correa (*Correa eburna*) along its creek line, which is nationally endangered and listed as vulnerable under the NPW Act.

## Waitpinga Conservation Park

Waitpinga Conservation Park is approximately three hectares in area and is immediately adjacent land managed by the South Australian Forestry Corporation (Forestry SA), including both plantation forests and native woodlands. The park contains a low open forest of messmate stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) and pink gum, over an understorey of bracken, tea-tree, sedges and grasses.

The conservation park is within the extent of Illawong Swamp which is listed as a wetland of national importance and supports a number of threatened species including the Mount Lofty Ranges southern emu-wren.

The open woodland of the park provides habitat for a number of native bird species, including the nationally endangered chestnut-rumped heathwren and the South Australian Bassian thrush (*Zoothera lunulata halmaturina*). Threatened flora contained within the park includes the rare rough bush pea (*Pultenaea scabra*) and coral fern (*Gleichenia microphylla*).

## Eric Bonython Conservation Park

The Eric Bonython Conservation Park is a six hectare site, originally donated to the South Australian Government by the Bonython family. It contains dense native vegetation endemic to the southern Mount Lofty Ranges located in undulating terrain, mostly dominated by messmate stringybark forest. The park also protects Osborn's eyebright (*Euphrasia collina* subsp. *osbornii*), a perennial herb endemic to the region which is listed as endangered under both state and federal legislation.

### What are we looking after?

- The largest remaining natural vegetation on the Fleurieu Peninsula, that provides habitat to endemic and threatened species.
- Patches of remnant vegetation within a fragmented landscape, including nationally critically endangered Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps.
- Diverse habitats including open forests, woodlands, heathlands, swamps, riparian areas and waterfalls.
- 420 species of native flora, including the Nationally Vulnerable Deep Creek correa and Kangaroo Island spider-orchid (*Caladenia ovata*).
- Rare and endangered fauna such as the sooty oystercatcher (*Haematopus fuliginosus*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) and the state endangered white-bellied sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*).
- Landscape features and sites that are of cultural and spiritual significance to Ngarrindjeri People.
- Scenic landscapes with a diversity of wildlife and opportunities for people to connect with nature and enjoy the unique features of the local landscape, including the Heysen Trail.

# Challenges and opportunities

The vision for this plan of management is to protect and conserve the largest remnant area of native vegetation of the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula, and the fauna it supports, whilst providing appropriate opportunities for visitors to access and appreciate some of these unique environments.

## Key challenges and opportunities in the protection and management of the parks are:

- Managing the impacts of pest plants and animals, and cinnamon fungus (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) to protect native species and ecosystems
- Managing the effect of excessive total grazing pressure from western grey Kangaroos (*Macropus fuliginosus*) and deer (and to a lesser extent rabbits), which are having detrimental effects on native vegetation and revegetation programs within the parks
- Maintaining and enhancing the conservation value of some of the largest and best quality remnant plant communities on the Fleurieu Peninsula and Mount Lofty Ranges
- Protecting existing environmental assets, including listed species and communities under state and federal legislation
- Recognising the role of ecologically focussed prescribed burns to improve habitat quality
- Improving knowledge of fauna and flora through increased monitoring, mapping and reporting to better inform conservation management of the parks
- Establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relations with Ngarrindjeri people to increase understanding, value and recognition of culturally significant heritage sites in the parks
- Developing a better understanding of climate change and improving the resilience of ecological communities to temperature increases, catastrophic fires and decreasing rainfall
- Ensuring park infrastructure is sufficient to meet the demands of increasing visitor numbers, changing visitor preferences, potential for future development, and future climatic changes
- Continuing to provide immersive natural, cultural and heritage based experiences that are sympathetic to and protect the parks values
- Strengthening partnerships with lessees, adjoining landowners, volunteer organisations, researchers, and the wider community to foster collaboration and long term management benefits for biodiversity protection and restoration
- Improving restorative and interpretive signage for cultural and heritage sites, including the Talisker mine site.

# Park Management Zones

Section 38 of the NPW Act determines that a management plan may provide for the division of a reserve into management zones and that each zone must be kept and maintained in accordance with the conditions outlined in the management plan.

Two management zones are used in this plan of management (refer to Figure 1) to establish a framework for sustainable use of the park during the life of this plan. Over 90% of the parks in this plan are designated conservation zones, recognising their significant ecological, cultural and heritage values.

## Conservation Zone

The Conservation Zone protects land of high conservation value recognising the role of the parks' contributions to preserving the largest portion of remaining natural vegetation on the Fleurieu Peninsula. This zone also provides important habitat for a range of nationally, state and regionally threatened flora and fauna.

Priorities for the zone include restoring and improving habitats, managing weeds and impacts from climate change and monitoring total grazing pressure to avoid negative impacts to valued species and communities.

Unstructured recreation activities that utilise existing trails and other infrastructure, and have low environmental impacts such as walking, photography and bird watching are encouraged within the Conservation Zone.

Upgrades and installation of new visitor facilities within this zone will be limited to basic camping, trails, and day visitor areas incorporating picnic areas, shelters, toilets and car parks following a risk assessment to the natural values of this zone.

No further development is permitted in this zone.

## Visitor Use Zone

Visitor Use Zones (Figure 1) have been designated in Deep Creek National Park and Talisker Conservation Park where visitor services and park infrastructure are deemed to be of a higher environmental footprint. The Visitor Use Zones also allow for commercial tourism activities that are complementary to existing visitation and diversifies the range of experiences on offer within the park. Activities and development within these zones must be ecologically sensitive, ensure minimal impact to the natural, cultural and heritage values of the parks and be sympathetic to the aesthetic values of the site.

There are four campgrounds, with some surrounding land, that are zoned as Visitor Use:

1. Stringybark Campground
2. Cobbler Hill Campground
3. Trig Campground
4. Tapanappa Campground

The leased sites within Deep Creek National Park including Goondooloo Cottage, Glenburn Cottage, Deep Creek Homestead and Ridgetop retreats have also been identified as Visitor Use Zones to reflect their higher visitor loads and associated infrastructure. Talisker Mine site and the Deep Creek National Park Head Quarters are also identified within a Visitor Use Zone.

Envisaged uses for Visitor Use Zones in these parks include providing exceptional visitor experiences including low impact tourist accommodation and maintaining and improving park infrastructure.

All proposals for tourist accommodation and commercial ventures within the park will be assessed on their merits, including thorough analysis of risks to park management priorities, and a formal assessment and approval process under the provisions of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* and *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.

# THEME 1: Managing threats to natural values

The five parks in this plan of management preserve the largest remaining natural vegetation on the Fleurieu Peninsula, providing significant habitat for a range of nationally, state and regionally threatened flora and fauna that are protected under the NPW Act and the EPBC Act. The parks include over 420 species of native flora, including the Nationally Vulnerable Deep Creek correa, Kangaroo Island spider-orchid and rare and threatened fauna such as the sooty oystercatcher, peregrine falcon and the state endangered white-bellied sea-eagle. It is home to an abundance of native wildlife including four nationally threatened fauna species; the endangered chestnut-rumped heathwren, Mt Lofty Ranges southern emu-wren, southern brown bandicoot and bassian thrush (*Zoothera lunulata halmaturina*). The endangered western beautiful firetail is also found in Deep Creek National Park, and has been declining in both range and abundance over the last 30 years. However, targeted revegetation programs, along with prescribed burns in the park, have improved the conservation prospects of threatened species such as this.

The parks have a variety of unique and diverse landscapes including uncleared sclerophyll open forests to messmate stringybark on the upper ridgetops and slopes and pink gums dominating the upper valley areas. Both of these forest formations provide nesting habitat for the yellow-tailed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*). Talisker Conservation Park differs where by some areas are dominated by rough barked manna gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis* spp. *cygnetensis*).

The Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula were once a wide-spread ecological community but as a result of land degradation practices across the peninsula, they are now critically endangered. They have undergone a substantial decline in geographic distribution, however have been protected within Deep Creek National Park and Waitpinga Conservation Park. The main threats to the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula ecological community include; clearance, physical disturbance and fragmentation, hydrological disturbance (e.g. draining of wetlands, changes in wetting and drying regimes), altered water quality (e.g. higher nutrient loads, pollution), invasion by exotic species (e.g.

weeds, pathogens), and inappropriate management practices for wetlands. The ongoing protection of these ecosystems is of high importance to preserving regional conservation. Of the approximately 170 native plant species that grow in Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps, almost half are either rare or threatened at the national, state or regional level.

Western grey kangaroos, rabbits and fallow deer are causing impacts within the parks by reducing plant diversity and habitat quality for other important and endangered species such as the southern emu-wren. Where evidence indicates that total grazing pressure, including by western grey kangaroos, is unsustainable and impacting the conservation values of the parks, herbivore population control strategies will be implemented. Any culling of kangaroos would only be considered where non-lethal options for control are considered ineffective or not feasible and that the management of kangaroos will not jeopardize their persistence in the region. Kangaroo control may include commercial harvest options noting that any culling programs within parks will follow strict procedures for the humane destruction of animals. Total grazing pressure in these parks should be monitored where required to determine impacts to plant diversity and habitat quality by both native and introduced fauna.

Phytophthora is a soil and waterborne fungus common throughout South Australia and is listed as a key threatening process under the EPBC Act. It has been detected across many parks on the southern Fleurieu Peninsula including Deep Creek National Park, Talisker Conservation Park and Waitpinga Conservation Park. The fungus is a significant threat, causing disease and death in a variety of native plant species. It can be easily spread with human movement on the treads of shoes and vehicle tyres. As visitor numbers increase due to the popularity of many of these parks, management will focus on containing infestations and minimising the risk of spread through managing public access, the application of hygiene practices, educating visitors, and modifying operational activities where necessary.

Many of the parks are surrounded by land that has been cleared and is now being used for agriculture,

particularly grazing. Occasionally stock stray into parks through damaged fencing which can lead to impacts including trampling of native vegetation, soil erosion, spreading of phytophthora and the introduction of pest plants. Continuing to develop and maintain good relationships with park neighbours will be crucial in working together to prevent stock entering the parks. Maintaining and enhancing the integrity of remaining habitats within the parks and, where possible, linking this to habitat on adjoining land is important in ensuring the long-term viability of the parks' biological values. Opportunities to expand the park, through the acquisition of neighbouring land parcels should be considered when they arise, in addition to establishing agreements with landholders to support the restoration of target species by management of remnant habitats on their properties.

There are a number of important recovery programs and threatened species recovery plans that guide conservation management within the parks. These include the Back from the Brink project which has implemented large scale revegetation work in key areas within the parks to reinstate habitat for threatened species such as the beautiful firetail.

Climate change projections for the region indicate decreasing rainfall, increasing temperatures, and more days of greater fire risk. Climate change is also likely to exacerbate threatening processes within these parks, such as bushfires, and add further stress to flora and fauna along watercourses and to the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula. This could manifest as a shift in vegetation composition in the swamps to more terrestrial species. Frequent and/or high intensity fires may have negative impacts on the swamps that support slow growing species with limited dispersal abilities. Although an absence of disturbance in the swamps leads to its own impacts i.e. dominance of only one or two native species and an increase in weeds, controlled burning is an important management strategy in some habitats to increase vegetation biomass and plant species richness. Ongoing monitoring and research into the impacts of climate change on key species should be undertaken to develop an understanding of how to best support these ecosystems into the future.





## **Objective**

Protect and restore habitats that support the parks' priority species and natural processes.

## **Strategies**

- Deliver further planning that guides habitat restoration, protection of species, threat abatement activities and species recovery, especially in Deep Creek National Park.
- Implement appropriate management regimes to restore long term ecological function and biodiversity, including for rare and threatened species that inhabit the ecological communities within the swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula.
- Create, maintain and restore wildlife corridors or linkages and ensure that areas of particularly high quality, connectivity or importance are carefully managed and considered for inclusion in reserve tenure, where possible.
- Develop a revegetation program at the Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park to enhance the environmental value of the site.
- Monitor impacts of priority pest plants, and implement control programs to improve habitat and reduce impacts in areas of high conservation value where impacts are significant.
- Monitor, maintain and improve the quality of vegetation for the provision of wildlife habitat for the parks' priority species.
- Continue to promote awareness of phytophthora and apply strategies to prevent spread of the pathogen through visitor activities and management actions.
- Implement western grey kangaroo management programs where total grazing pressure indicates adverse impacts on ecological values. Consider commercial management options in consultation with the kangaroo industry.
- Use monitoring and research to inform management and climate change adaptation options for key species and ecosystems.
- Use fire to conserve and enhance natural landscapes and maintain habitat that supports threatened species (see also Theme 3 Fire Management).

# THEME 2:

# Providing nature based tourism experiences

*The Ngarrindjeri Traditional Owners welcome visitors to their Country and want them to have a safe and enjoyable experience. Ngarrindjeri people ask that visitors respect their culture, Dreaming stories and the laws of their Country.*

Deep Creek National Park is one of South Australia's most visited parks and contributes to the local tourism sector by providing high quality accessible nature based experiences such as camping and world class bushwalking on the Heysen Trail. Between Deep Creek National Park and Newland Head Conservation Park lies Ballaparudda Creek Recreation Park, which also hosts a walk in camp ground that can be accessed using the Heysen Trail. The visitor experiences in these two parks have been enhanced and expanded through the Wild South Coast Way project to include new picnic areas and walk-in only campgrounds, an upgrade to the existing Trig Campground and a universally-accessible Class 1 walking trail along Tapanappa Ridge in Deep Creek National Park.

There are seventeen extensive trails within the parks in this plan of management showcasing a diversity of natural, heritage and cultural wonders. South Australians make up the large majority of visitors to the parks (90%) given their close proximity to Adelaide with camping and bushwalking experiences on offer. Visitor numbers and impacts must be managed to ensure the parks can meet growing demand while maintaining and improving the quality of experiences without diminishing the values of the parks.

A key objective for the department, and referenced in DEW's *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan*, is to improve accessibility to nature and offer inclusive opportunities for everyone. In Deep Creek National Park, sections of the trail networks and new facilities have been designed and constructed using universal design principles. As a result, the park now welcomes people of all ages and abilities, ensuring that everyone can enjoy its offerings. Any future facilities will also be designed to ensure all visitors have access to nature. To keep trail users safe, quality trail infrastructure and appropriate information (such as signage, websites, and maps) will be available for visitors before they access the trails. All visitor facilities in the parks will be designed to maximise sustainability and minimise impact on the natural landscape.

There are four campgrounds that are zoned as Visitor Use:

1. Cobbler Hill Campground
2. Trig Campground
3. Tapanappa Campground
4. Stringybark Campground

The other three campgrounds which have been named in consultation with Ngarrindjeri representatives (Wuldi Krikin Ngawanathi-Eagle Waterhole, Yapari Ngawanathi-Cliffs and Kurri Ngawanathi-Creek Campground) are located within conservation zones reflecting their walk in campsite status and minimal facilities i.e. shelters and toilets. Vehicle access to use these campsites is not permitted. Wood fires and solid fuel fires are permitted in designated fire pits in drive in campgrounds within Deep Creek National Park outside of the fire danger season.

The land located in leased sites within Deep Creek National Park including Goondooloo Cottage, Glenburn Cottage, Deep Creek Homestead and Ridgetop Retreats, have also been identified as Visitor Use Zones to reflect their higher visitor loads and associated infrastructure.

For the Department to collaborate with any future tourism proposals, assessment will be based upon demonstrated purpose, environmental impact and impact on the broader visitor use of the park. Any proposed developments that are supported by this plan of management will also be subject to requirements under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* in addition to formal planning and approval provisions under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*.

The former Talisker Silver Mine is of significant heritage value, as a largely intact example of historical silver mining practises that represent Cornish mining traditions and mine construction techniques. As a result, the mine site is recorded in the State Heritage Register as a significant representation of 19<sup>th</sup> century mining history. In comparison to the trails utilised in Deep Creek, the Talisker Silver Mine site is remote and only lightly visited. It should be noted that there are a number of mineshafts that exist in this park, some of which the locations are not fully known. The value of both the mine site and the natural setting of Talisker Conservation Park can be enhanced by regular maintenance and review to ensure the heritage, conservation and public safety issues of the park are addressed.

Waitpinga and Eric Bonython conservation parks both contain minimal visitor use infrastructure. While the visiting public may access these parks to experience a section of relatively high quality remnant vegetation, visitation is generally not promoted to assist in minimising impacts. No walking trails, cycling or vehicle access, or

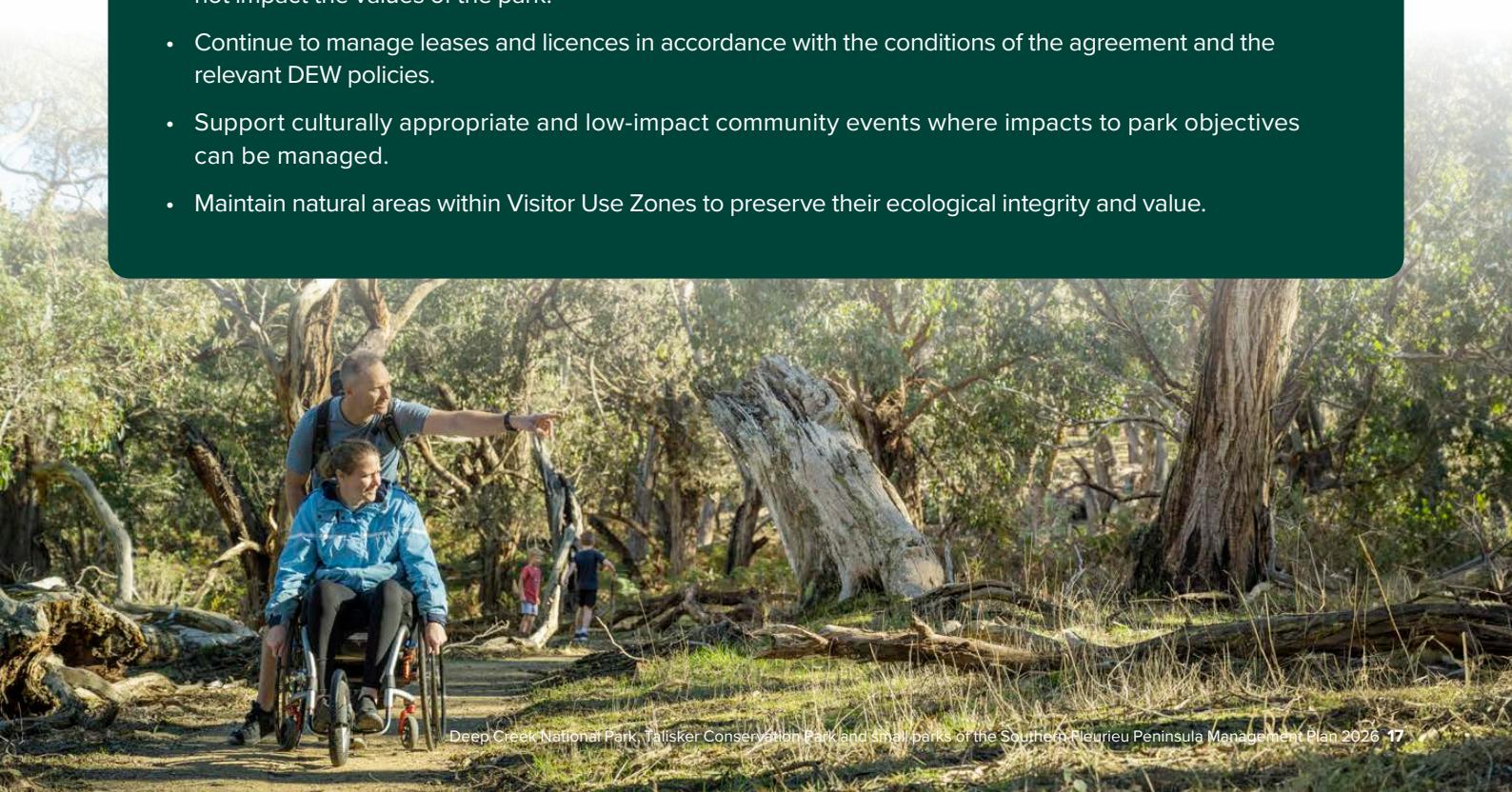
dedicated car parking is provided at these parks. Visitor numbers are low, and include those seeking to undertake research or bird watching. Maintaining minimal access helps prevent the spread of phytophthora and weeds in these parks.

## Objective

Facilitate exceptional and inclusive visitor experiences and facilities that connect all people to nature.

## Strategies

- Consider future commercial tourism opportunities in the parks with a particular focus on cultural tourism.
- Support the Wild South Coast Way on the Heysen Trail by providing a range of cultural, historical and environmental experiences for visitors.
- Provide quality day visitor facilities, such as picnic areas, toilets and shelters, within the parks outlined in this plan of management.
- Promote hikes in campgrounds to accommodate for growing visitation numbers accessing the Heysen Trail.
- Maintain the seventeen interlinked walking trails and signage to ensure all visitors have an immersive wildlife experience.
- Undertake environmental risk assessments for any new trails to ensure the design and construction does not impact the values of the park.
- Continue to manage leases and licences in accordance with the conditions of the agreement and the relevant DEW policies.
- Support culturally appropriate and low-impact community events where impacts to park objectives can be managed.
- Maintain natural areas within Visitor Use Zones to preserve their ecological integrity and value.



# THEME 3:

## Managing fire

Fire has been part of the Australian landscape for thousands of years. It has shaped flora and fauna and was part of the ecological processes that maintained a healthy ecosystem. However climate change projections for the region indicate decreasing rainfall, increasing temperatures and more heightened fire danger days. It is likely to exacerbate threatening processes such as impacts from pest plants and animals, changes in water flows and more frequent and higher intensity bushfires.

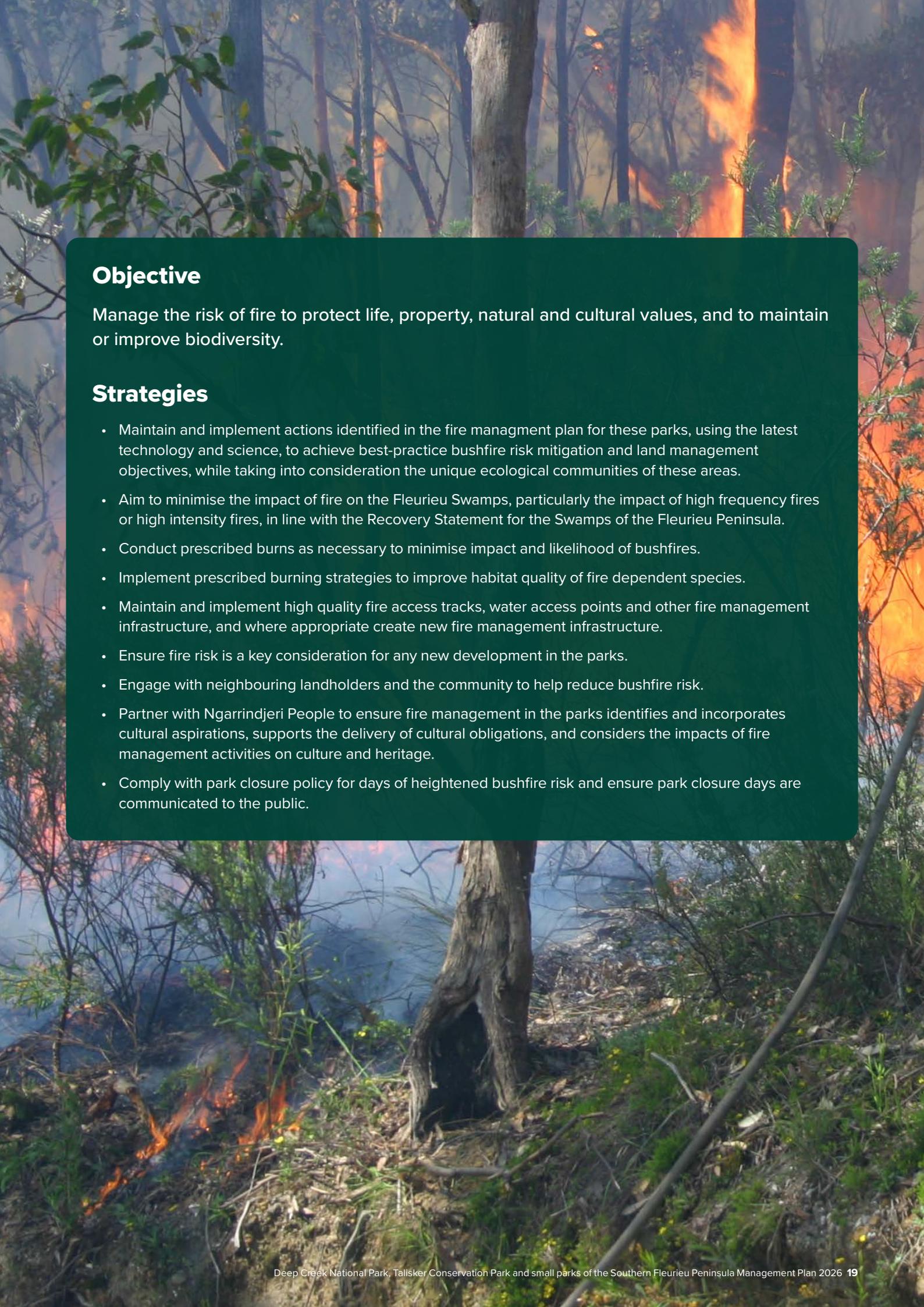
The parks included in this management plan contain a significant portion of the remaining native vegetation in the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula region. These parks have limited access to biological resources from outside their boundaries. Moreover, they house vulnerable ecosystems, such as the Fleurieu Swamps, which support species that grow slowly and have limited abilities to disperse. To address the risk of inappropriate fire regimes, the fire management activities in these parks are guided by fire management plans such as the South-western Fleurieu Peninsula Fire Management Plan, which is currently being reviewed at the time of this plan's development. Additionally, stakeholders and the wider community will be consulted to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the proposed fire risks and the actions being taken to mitigate them in these parks. With growing visitation in parks in the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula, especially Deep Creek National Park, the importance of robust fire management strategies is critical.

Visitor use of the parks, the natural and cultural heritage values of the parks, the difficult terrain for suppression activities, and surrounding land uses require the development of pro-active fire management strategies to protect both life and property and the conservation values of the parks. The department will, as part of its fire management program, use prescribed burns to help lessen the risk, intensity and spread of future bushfires, make suppression more achievable and safer, and as an ecological tool to maintain or improve floristic biodiversity while

consuming hazardous fuels. Prescribed burning can be used as a tool to manage fuel loads and protect built assets, including the state heritage listed Talisker mine site. It can also be an important tool for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, especially for species that depend on fire to survive such as serotinous nonsprouting plants like *Allocasuarinas*. Lack of fire can cause irreversible changes to the vegetation structure and composition which is also likely to have effects on the quantity and quality of habitat for threatened species including chestnut-rumped heathwrens, southern emu-wrens and southern brown bandicoots. Other fire management activities in protected areas may include modifying fuel loads (lopping, chipping, slashing, rolling or weeding vegetation) and maintaining fire access tracks.

Working with the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation (NAC) will also assist in the protection of significant cultural sites from the impact of fire and fire control activities. This plan also recognises NAC's cultural aspirations for the implementation of traditional fire management practices. Every effort must be taken to ensure that Ngarrindjeri heritage and geological features are not disturbed by vehicles or earthworks during fire readiness or response.

Areas adjoining the parks have a mixture of land uses including rural residential, grazing farmland, blue gum and pine plantations, a plant nursery, cropping and agriculture. There are some areas of native vegetation contiguous with Deep Creek National Park however the majority of the landscape outside the reserve in this area is fragmented, having been cleared for agriculture and forestry. All landholders are obliged to comply with the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*, which outlines responsibilities for fire preparedness. DEW will implement works for fire management on DEW managed lands within the plan's area, however adjoining landholders are also required to implement works on their own property to minimise the threat of fire.



## Objective

Manage the risk of fire to protect life, property, natural and cultural values, and to maintain or improve biodiversity.

## Strategies

- Maintain and implement actions identified in the fire management plan for these parks, using the latest technology and science, to achieve best-practice bushfire risk mitigation and land management objectives, while taking into consideration the unique ecological communities of these areas.
- Aim to minimise the impact of fire on the Fleurieu Swamps, particularly the impact of high frequency fires or high intensity fires, in line with the Recovery Statement for the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula.
- Conduct prescribed burns as necessary to minimise impact and likelihood of bushfires.
- Implement prescribed burning strategies to improve habitat quality of fire dependent species.
- Maintain and implement high quality fire access tracks, water access points and other fire management infrastructure, and where appropriate create new fire management infrastructure.
- Ensure fire risk is a key consideration for any new development in the parks.
- Engage with neighbouring landholders and the community to help reduce bushfire risk.
- Partner with Ngarrindjeri People to ensure fire management in the parks identifies and incorporates cultural aspirations, supports the delivery of cultural obligations, and considers the impacts of fire management activities on culture and heritage.
- Comply with park closure policy for days of heightened bushfire risk and ensure park closure days are communicated to the public.

# THEME 4:

# Celebrating and maintaining culture, heritage and community stewardship

Ngarrindjeri People have a connection to Country that incorporates an understanding and spiritual relationship with the landscape and species within it. There are many sites and features across the park landscapes that are connected to Ngarrindjeri creation stories that have been passed down over thousands of generations. The values and principles articulated in the narratives of Ngarrindjeri, the Creation Ancestor, give Ngarrindjeri People the knowledge to properly care for this Country. This responsibility of caring for Country is done with honour and with the intention of preserving traditional land and water for future generations. This plan will seek to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relations with Ngarrindjeri People to increase understanding, value and recognition of cultural and heritage knowledge into park management.

Sites of cultural and heritage significance within the parks outlined in this plan of management need to be preserved as they protect Ngarrindjeri culture and help tell the history of the area. All Aboriginal sites, objects, and remains are protected from damage, disturbance or interference by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*, regardless of whether they have been registered or reported.

Following European colonisation of the area in the 1850s, the settlement of areas in and around Deep Creek unfolded gradually as farms were established. It was during this time the McLeod brothers of Cape Jervis stumbled upon the Talisker mine in 1862, a valuable source of silver and lead. The mine operated continuously until 1872, contributing to the growth of the region. As the mid-1880s approached, land grants were issued, expanding the land uses beyond farming. Wattle bark stripping became a common practice, and during the years of economic depression, people turned to collecting yacca gum as a means of survival.

Additionally, timber cutting occurred in the parks, with stringybark being a popular choice for construction materials and fence posts around the Boat Harbor area. These activities further shaped the development and utilisation of the land in and around Deep Creek. In the 1920s, the area experienced a surge in settlement as dedicated effort was made to clear land for farming purposes. The surrounding regions of the parks also underwent progressive development, with some areas still retaining their original names given to them during this time such as Tapanappa and Goondooloo.

Proposals for new tourism experiences in the parks will be assessed for opportunities to support Ngarrindjeri aspirations and to ensure that they are compatible with park management objectives. Partnerships between Ngarrindjeri people and tourism operators, volunteer groups, environmental non-government organisations, and park user groups will be encouraged where benefits for Ngarrindjeri People are identified and cultural learning can be facilitated. The development of messages and approaches to help visitors understand the significance of the landscape from a Ngarrindjeri perspective and what the parks protect should be paramount in park visitor service assets.

Continued support will be provided to volunteers who have dedicated their time to these parks, aiming to foster a sense of community stewardship of the parks whilst achieving conservation goals. Promoting public participation in initiatives like citizen science will engage the community in monitoring and reporting activities, ultimately enhancing scientific knowledge and fostering a deeper understanding of ecosystems and wildlife populations in these parks. Collaborating closely with researchers and environmental organisations will further contribute to achieving positive outcomes.

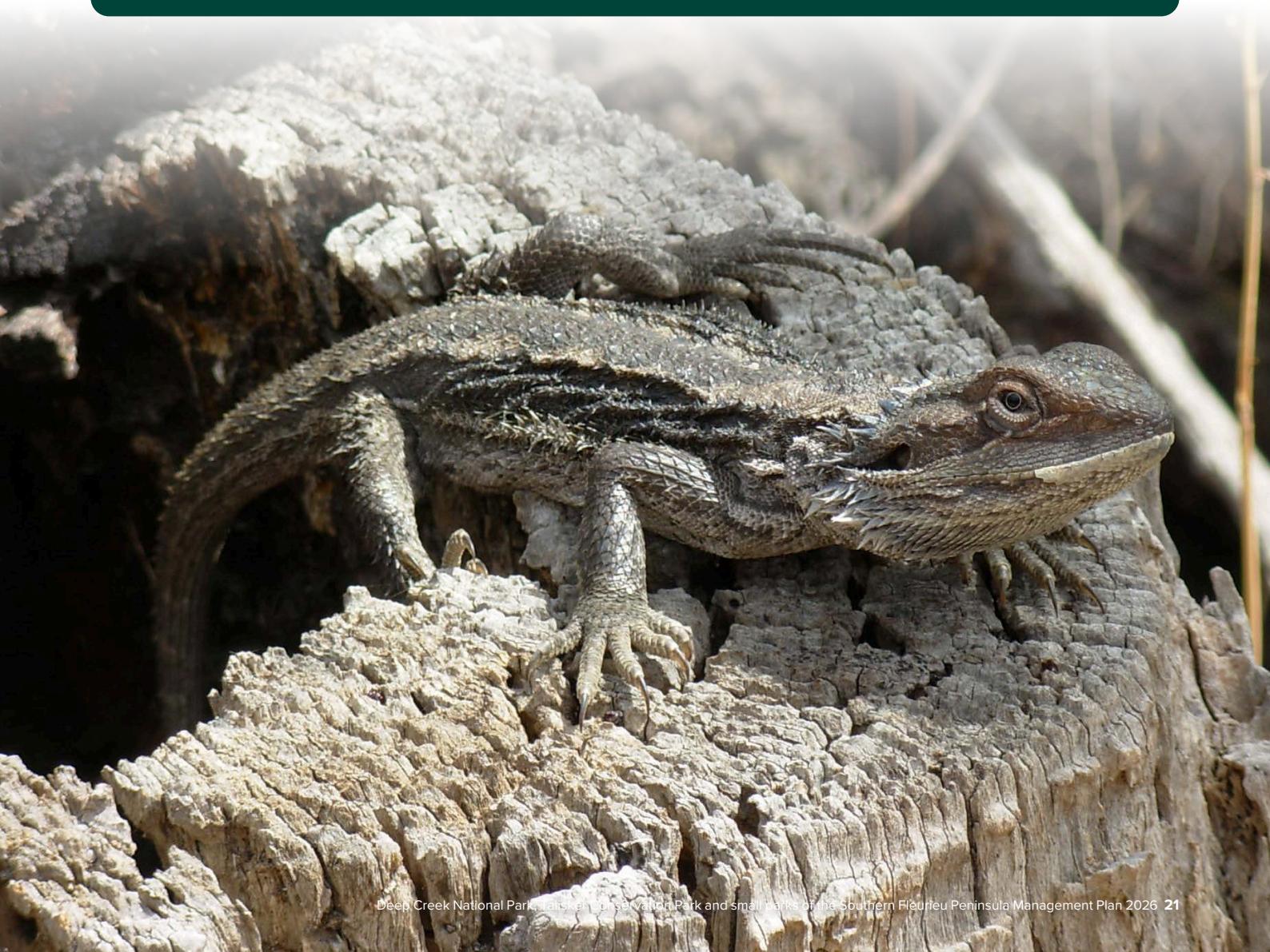
## Objectives

Work together with Ngarrindjeri People and stakeholders to celebrate and protect the cultural, environmental and heritage values of the parks.

Ensure that the parks promote community health and wellbeing.

## Strategies

- Partner with Ngarrindjeri to ensure protection of their culture and heritage and create economic opportunities for their community.
- Incorporate traditional knowledge, with consent from Ngarrindjeri People, in park management to support cultural learning and assist with the use and transfer of traditional knowledge.
- Support nature-based tourism operators to educate visitors on the values of the parks.
- Facilitate opportunities for community participation in park management activities for long-term stewardship of the parks.
- Support and encourage partnerships between schools, researchers, community groups, and the government, for the use of parks for education, and to undertake research and monitoring.
- Build relationships with adjoining land managers to limit the impact of neighbouring land uses on wilderness values, wildlife and ecosystems.







# Appendix 1: Rare or threatened fauna and flora referenced in this plan of management

Species	Common Name	EPBC Act	NPW Act
<b>Fauna</b>			
<i>Calyptorhynchus funereus</i>	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	V	
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine Falcon	R	
<i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>	Sooty Oystercatcher	R	
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	E	
<i>Hylacola pyrrhopygia parkeri</i>	Chestnut-rumped Heathwren (Mt Lofty Ranges)	E	
<i>Isoodon obesulus obesulus</i>	Southern Brown Bandicoot	Vu	V
<i>Mirounga leonina</i>	Southern Elephant Seal	Vu	
<i>Neophoca cinerea</i>	Australian Sea-lion	E	V
<i>Stagonopleura bella samueli</i>	Western Beautiful Firetail	E	R
<i>Sternula nereis nereis</i>	Australian Fairy Tern	Vu	E
<i>Stipiturus malachurus intermedius</i>	Mount Lofty Ranges (MLR) Southern Emu-wren	E	E
<i>Zoothera lunulata halmaturina</i>	Bassian Thrush	E	R
<b>Flora</b>			
<i>Caladenia ovata</i>	Kangaroo Island Spider-orchid	Vu	E
<i>Correa alba</i> var <i>pannosa</i>	White Correa		R
<i>Correa eburna</i>	Deep Creek Correa	E	V
<i>Eucalyptus fasciculosa</i>	Pink Gum		R
<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>	Messmate Stringybark	V	
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> subsp <i>cygnetensis</i>	Rough-barked Manna Gum		R
<i>Euphrasia collina</i> subsp. <i>osbornii</i>	Osborn's Eyebright	E	E
<i>Gleichenia microphylla</i>	Coral Fern		R
<i>Pterostylis bryophila</i>	Hindmarsh Valley greenhood	CE	E
<i>Pultenaea scabra</i>	Rough Bush-pea		R

NPW Act V= vulnerable, E=endangered, R= rare

EPBC Act Vu= vulnerable, E=endangered CE= critically endangered



**For further information please contact:**

Department for Environment and Water.  
Phone Information Line (08) 8204 1910, or see  
SA White Pages for your local Department for  
Environment and Water office.

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