



Annual Reserve Report

Lower Liffey WHA Reserve 2014-15



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Introduction

The Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) protects important natural areas as permanent reserves and aims to demonstrate excellence in reserve management for biodiversity conservation. To achieve this aim, the TLC has adopted an adaptive management framework – the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation. The framework comprises 5 key steps – planning, implementing, monitoring, reporting, review/adaptation and communication.

Lower Liffey Reserve was acquired by the TLC in 2010 and protects 14 hectares of wet eucalypt forest on the slopes of the Great Western Tiers in northern Tasmania. The Reserve adjoins Liffey Forest Reserve (WHA) and forms part of recent extensions to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The management of the Reserve is guided by the Lower Liffey Reserve Management Plan. The plan is implemented by TLC staff through an Annual Work Plan and Monitoring Plan. Details of ecological monitoring methods can be found in TLC’s Ecological Monitoring Procedures Manual.

This report describes progress made towards delivery of the management plan in 2014-15, and is divided into three sections:

1. Reserve Scorecard – a table summarising the results of management effectiveness and ecological monitoring to date;
2. Management Effectiveness Summary – providing details of the implementation of key management strategies and making recommendations for plan improvement;
3. Ecological Monitoring Summary – providing details of the status of conservation targets and trends of key ecological indicators

The recommendations made in this report are used to adapt and improve management of the Reserve, update the management plan, and revise work and monitoring plans for the coming year. Key findings of this report are communicated to TLC Board, supporters and other stakeholders.

Lower Liffey WHA Reserve Scorecard

Monitoring			
Target	Indicator	Status 2014-15	Trend
Wet eucalypt forest	Floristic diversity		Baeline data collection is scheduled for 2016
	Structural complexity		
	Canopy recruitment		
	Vertebrate fauna diversity		
Community connection to landscape	# volunteer days on the Reserve	1	Increase
Management Effectiveness			
Strategy	Indicator	Status	Trend
Community engagement	# of volunteer activities at the Reserve	1	Flat
	# research activities on the Reserve	0	Flat
Weed management	Weed extent (ha)		

Monitoring Summary

Wet eucalypt forest

The vegetation of Lower Liffey Reserve is regenerating wet eucalypt forest that is dominated by mature silver wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) over a sub-canopy of eucalypt saplings. As the forest continues to regenerate eucalypts will form the dominant strata. The understorey is dominated by broadleaved shrubs, rainforest species and ferns.

Goals

- Maintain the floristic diversity of vegetation within 25% of baseline (ongoing)
- Maintain the structural complexity of vegetation within 25% of baseline (ongoing)
- Maintain the extent of wet forest (ongoing)
- Maintain vertebrate fauna diversity (ongoing)



Tall eucalypt forest

Ecological indicator	Current status	Trend
Floristic diversity	Data collection scheduled for 2016	Unknown
Structural complexity	Data collection scheduled for 2016	Unknown

Key findings

- A history of logging has had a significant impact on the Reserve's vegetation
- Long-term conservation management should see the forest regenerate to a natural condition over time

Recommendations

- Establish long-term ecological monitoring program

Community connection with the landscape

Lower Liffey Reserve provides the community with a range of recreational, educational, research and volunteering opportunities. The upper Liffey River valley is a hotspot for private land conservation. The TLC Reserve adjoins protected areas managed by Bush Heritage Australia, and several other neighbouring properties are protected with conservation covenants.

Goals

- People visit the Reserve every year for recreation, education or volunteering



Lower Liffey Reserve is part of the TWWHA

Community indicator	Current status	Trend
Volunteer days	12 volunteer days	Increase
Research and education	0 projects	Flat

Key findings

- A team of six volunteers worked for two days on foxglove, blackberry weed control in December 2014

Recommendations

- Continue to encourage community connections to the reserve by providing research, education, recreation or volunteering opportunities

Management Effectiveness Summary

Community engagement and neighbour relations

The TLC provides opportunities for the community and individuals to achieve conservation. The local community, volunteers, the indigenous community and other stakeholders are encouraged to participate in planning and land management activities. TLC Reserves provide excellent opportunities for education and scientific research. Sustainable economic development may be supported at some reserves where appropriate.

Key objective(s)

TLC provides opportunities for the community to experience or benefit from the Reserve



Outcome 2014-15

Access to the Reserve was maintained.

No visitors were recorded

Progress in 2014-15

- Tracks and signs were checked.
- TLC maintained a good relationship with PWS

Key recommendations for future management

- Maintain access to the Reserve
- Continue to provide opportunities for people to connect with the Reserve.
- Continue to maintain relationships with neighbours

Weed management

The aim of this strategy is to eradicate existing infestations of weeds on the Reserve. Blackberry, foxglove and elderberry were widespread on the Reserve at the time of its acquisition, but ongoing weed control work has greatly reduced their extent. Weed mapping and control is continuing.

Key objective(s)

Weeds are eradicated from the Reserve by 2017

Outcome 2014-15

Scattered infestations of weeds were treated by volunteers across the Reserve

**Progress in 2014-15**

- Weed control is continuing and weeds have almost been eradicated from the Reserve.
- The weed control program continues to provide volunteers with opportunities to connect with the Reserve and be actively involved in its management

Key recommendations for future management

- Continue the successful weed control program