



Annual Reserve Report

Brown Mountain Reserve 2015-16



ScoutGuard

07.23.2015 09:15:52

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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.

Brown Mountain Reserve was acquired by the TLC in 2007 and protects 86 hectares of wet eucalypt forest on the slopes of Mount Field in southern Tasmania. The Reserve is surrounded by state forest and private land managed for forestry. The management of the Reserve is guided by the Brown Mountain 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 2015-16, 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.


Brown Mountain Reserve Scorecard

Monitoring			
Target	Indicator	Status 2015-16	Trend
Wet eucalypt forest	Floristic diversity		Baseline data collection is scheduled for 2016
	Structural complexity		
	Canopy recruitment		
	Vertebrate fauna diversity		
Community connection to landscape	# volunteer days on the Reserve	1	Increase
	# visitors to the Reserve	0	Flat
Management Effectiveness			
Strategy	Indicator	Status	Trend
Community engagement and neighbour relations	# of volunteer activities at the Reserve	1	Flat
	# research and education projects	1	Flat
Fire management	# of unplanned fires	0	Flat


Cover image: Superb Lyrebird captured on TLC's fauna cameras.


Monitoring Summary

Wet Eucalypt Forest		Status: Good	
Goal: The condition of the target is maintained or improved		Outcome: On Track	
<p>Target Description: The vegetation of Brown Mountain Reserve is wet eucalypt forest dominated by mature <i>Eucalyptus regnans</i> – the world’s tallest flowering plant. The understorey is dominated by broadleaved shrubs and rainforest species such as myrtle, sassafras and tree ferns. The forest is regenerating following selective logging in the 1980s. Lyrebirds have recently been observed and pose a potential threat to the Reserve’s values.</p>		 <p>Tall wet eucalypt forest. Credit: Denna Kingdom.</p>	
Ecological indicator	Current status	Trend	
Floristic diversity	Data collection scheduled for 2016	Unknown	
Structural complexity			
Canopy recruitment			
Vertebrate fauna diversity			
<p>Key findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline data collection is scheduled for 2017 			
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish long-term ecological monitoring program in the summer of 2016-17 • Determine the potential impact of lyrebirds on the Reserve’s flora and fauna • Encourage a student research project on lyrebird management 			

Community Connection with the Landscape		Status: Good
Goal: The community has opportunities to connect with the landscape through education, recreation, research and volunteering		Outcome: On Track
Target Description Brown Mountain Reserve provides the community with a range of recreational, educational, research and volunteering opportunities. The tall eucalypt forests of the Reserve are a focus of research interest.		
Volunteer Marie Brolev looking for lyrebirds. Credit: TLC		
Community indicator	Current status	Trend
# volunteer days on the Reserve	1	Increase
# visitors to the Reserve	0	Flat
Key findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A volunteer assisted TLC staff on a lyrebird reconnaissance mission • Bushwalkers occasionally access the Reserve on route to Manny’s Marsh. This group is interested in establishing a walking circuit. • A TLC volunteer is planning on doing a short research project on lyrebirds 		
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage community connections to the reserve by providing research, education, recreation or volunteering opportunities • Maintain relationship with the local bushwalking community • Consider removing this from individual reserve management plans and reporting all relevant TLC activities across Tasmania in a separate report. This approach will be easier to report, more reflective of changes over time, and is a goal of TLC’s Strategic Plan. 		

Management Effectiveness Summary

Community engagement		
Key objective(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TLC provides opportunities for the community to experience or benefit from the Reserve 		Status 2015-16 On Track
Strategy description 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.		 <p>Investigating lyrebird impacts. Credit: TLC.</p>
Indicator	Current status	Trend
# of volunteer activities at the Reserve	1	Flat
# research and education projects	1	Flat
Progress in 2015-16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the Reserve was maintained. Volunteers assisted staff to install monitoring cameras. No independent visitors were recorded. A volunteer student helped collect fauna cameras and score images for a certificate course. 		
Key recommendations for future management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain access to the Reserve. Ask the local bushwalkers to let us know when they are going there, so that TLC can monitor visitation. Continue to pursue right of way with Norske Skog. Consider dividing this strategy into “community engagement” and “visitor management”, with the community engagement section to be reported across all of TLCs activities across Tasmania in a separate report. This approach will be easier to report, more reflective of changes over time, and is a goal of TLC’s Strategic Plan. 		

Fire management		
Key objective(s)		Status 2015-16 On Track
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No unauthorised fires occur on the reserve (ongoing) 		
Strategy description		 <p>Tall wet eucalypt forest. Credit: Denna Kingdom.</p>
<p>An inappropriate fire regime will reduce the condition of the natural values at Brown Mountain Reserve. The impact of fire on local communities also needs to be considered.</p> <p>The vegetation at Brown Mountain Reserve and the surrounding area is wet eucalypt forest, which has an optimum fire interval of >100 years, and is negatively impacted by more frequent fires.</p> <p>A fire risk assessment has determined that the Reserve presents a low risk to local communities due to the distance from nearby communities.</p>		
Indicator	Current status	Trend
No. of unplanned fires	0 unplanned fires	Flat
Progress in 2015-16		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no unauthorised fires on the Reserve in 2015-16. A fire risk assessment was completed for all TLC reserves. A fire management policy for all TLC Reserves is being implemented. A fuel stove only policy is also being implemented. 		
Key recommendations for future management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain vehicle access to the nearest track junction. Continue to implement a fuel stove only policy for the Reserve. 		