

Background information on Myall Lakes National Park & the Mining Road fire trail

The Myall Lakes NP is over 45,000ha situated between Port Stephens and Forster on the NSW coast. The beautiful lakes, beaches and coastal dune systems conserve important natural and cultural heritage and provide wonderful opportunities for visitors. It is one of the most frequently visited national parks in northern NSW, with 23 camping areas, holiday accommodation at Myall Shores Holiday Park, Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse and Cutlers Cottage, boating access, 20km of beaches for 4WD driving, and over 200km of public roads and a ferry for 2WD and 4WD car touring.

Myall Lakes NP Plan of Management

The *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* requires every national park to have a plan of management. A plan of management outlines how a park will be managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The plan of management for Myall Lakes NP was adopted in 2002 and emphasises park conservation in combination with visitor use to promote enjoyment and understanding of the park's values. The plan is available at

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/publications-search/myall-lakes-national-park-plan-of-management>

Public interest and involvement during the preparation of the Myall Lakes NP Plan of Management was substantial. More than 1200 submissions were received during public exhibition of the draft plan of management. Plan preparation was supported by a community consultative group that included a range of stakeholder representatives (e.g. camping, boating, 4WD, fishing, environment, tourism, and commercial), and there were many well-attended public meetings. Visitor use and recreation was a major focus of the planning process. The planning process won an international award for community participation.

A fire management strategy also exists for Myall Lakes NP. It identifies key fire trails and fire management zones to protect life and property.

Recreation, visitor use and commercial tourism

Commercial tourism plays a key role in providing recreation opportunities in the park. An objective of the plan of management is to deliver positive, nature based experiences with minimal impact on park values. Guidelines for commercial activities include sustainability, education and consistency with recreation management zones.

There are over 20 commercial operators currently licensed in the Myall Lakes National Park and they offer many different adventure and nature-based activities.

Visitor use, including commercial tourism, is guided by recreational zoning of the park. Zones range from more intensive use with higher levels of facilities, such as Mungo Brush Road and Seal Rocks, through to zones with minimal infrastructure and more secluded or remote setting, such as the Moors and high dune areas of the park. A detailed explanation is included in the [plan of management](#).

The Mining Road fire trail

The Mining Road fire trail, a former rutile hauling road built during sandmining operations in the 1970s, has been managed as a fire trail since 2002, in accordance with plan of management.

Prior to 2002 the trail was open to public vehicle access but was in disrepair. To ensure its viability as an important fire trail, it was improved to support infrequent dry-weather traffic for park management and bushfire response by NPWS and the Rural Fire Service.

For visitors, the Mining Road fire trail is in an area of the park zoned for its secluded setting and minimal infrastructure. The trail offers a more remote and self-reliant experience, compared to other more developed areas of the park. Current use includes walk in camping, bush walking, cycling, bird watching and Duke of Edinburgh style activities. Since 2002 the area has become increasingly popular for activities by individuals, school and other groups, commercial tourism and adventure based events.

The Mining Road fire trail is in a high conservation value area of the park. This area, including The Moors, protects important and unique park values including native plants and animals, threatened species and internationally important Ramsar wetlands.

The current proposal

The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) is conducting a review of the potential use of the Mining road fire trail for vehicle-based commercial tours.

The Mining road fire trail is the route from the Mungo Brush Road to the Seal Rocks Road (see map attached).

Consultation:

You have been contacted as a person/group with a potential interest in this part of the park.

Stakeholder views are being sought during June 2018 to inform a review of the proposed use of the Mining Road fire trail.

Further information about the review can be obtained from Ms Kylie Yeend, NPWS Director Park Operations on kylie.yeend@environment.nsw.gov.au or 4927 3252.