

# MOUNT BOOTHBY CONSERVATION PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

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South East

South Australia



Department for Environment  
Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs  
Government of South Australia



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**This plan of management has been prepared  
and adopted in pursuance of section 38 of  
the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972-81**

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Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs

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## FOREWORD

This management plan sets out management objectives and actions for the Mount Boothby Conservation Park. It has been prepared in accordance with the *National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972*.

Located west of Tintinara in the South East of South Australia, Mount Boothby Conservation Park is the fourth largest area of remnant vegetation in the Region under the direct control of the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs (DEHAA). It is an important area of remnant vegetation as it contains a variety of habitats and supports at least two species of conservation significance, namely the metallic sun-orchid (*Thelymitra epipactoides*) and mallee fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*). Mount Boothby Conservation Park comprises 80% of the remaining native vegetation in the Hundred of Colebatch and is the only vegetation in this Hundred in the reserve system.

This plan of management was released in draft form for public review in December, 1996. At the close of the period for public consultation, four written submissions had been received. Those comments, and the draft plan, were subsequently reviewed by the Reserve Planning and Management Advisory Committee of the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Council, resulting in a number of changes being made to the plan text. These changes were subsequently endorsed by Council. Public involvement in the planning process makes a worthwhile contribution to better park management, and those who took the time to make representations are thanked for their efforts.

The management objectives and actions for the Mount Boothby Conservation Park have not been prepared in isolation, but rather in consultation with other agencies and community groups. The location of other DEHAA reserves and areas of remnant vegetation have also been considered to ensure that Mount Boothby Conservation Park is managed in a regional context.

The plan of management for the Mount Boothby Conservation Park is now formally adopted under the provisions of Section 38 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972.

**HON DOROTHY KOTZ MP**  
**MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE**



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## **PLANNING PROCESS**

There is a requirement under Section 38 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*, to prepare a management plan for each reserve constituted under the Act. Such plans set forth proposals to manage and improve reserves and the means by which the objectives of the Act will be accomplished. A management plan provides the framework for management of the park by stating the philosophy on which management should be based and by setting out objectives and actions for management. The objectives related to management of reserves are stated in Section 37 of the Act as:

- preservation and management of wildlife
- preservation of historic sites, objects and structures of historic or scientific interest within reserves
- preservation of features of geological, natural or scenic interest
- destruction of dangerous weeds and the eradication of disease of animals and vegetation
- prevention and suppression of bush fires and other hazards
- encouragement of public use and enjoyment of reserves and education in, and a proper understanding and recognition of their purpose and significance and
- generally, the promotion of the public interest.

DEHAA is obliged by legislation, current policy and at various times has agreed to invite comments from key agencies, groups and individuals before the draft management plans are formally released for comment from the general public.

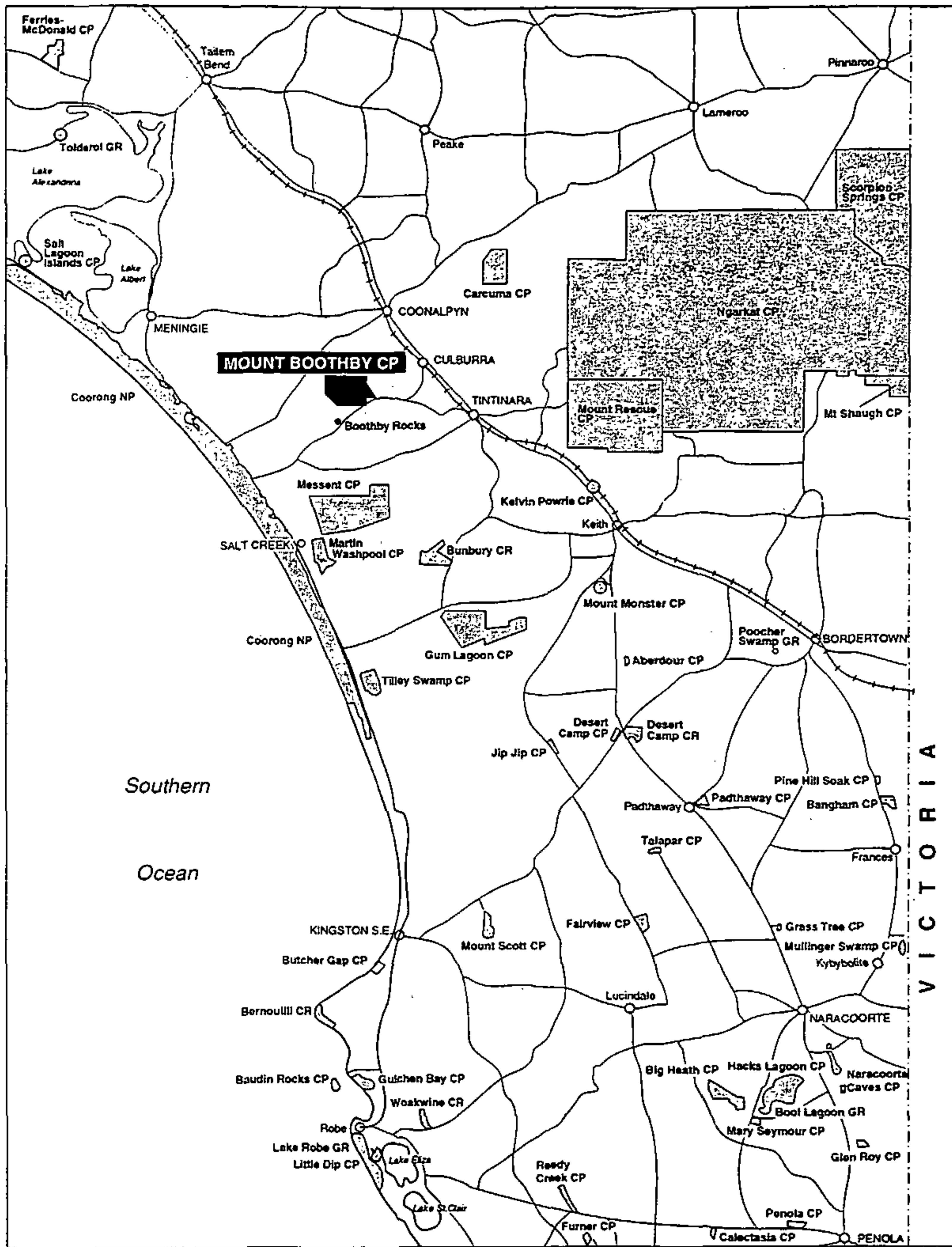
This internal review stage aims to gain a measure of understanding amongst various stakeholders, with a view to retaining that support before the subsequent public exhibition period.

Once a draft management plan has been prepared, an announcement is made in the *Government Gazette* and the plan is placed on public exhibition for at least three months. Any person may make submissions in relation to the plan.

The plan and submissions are then referred to the SA National Parks and Wildlife Council who may make further comments or recommendations to the Minister.

The Minister, after considering all representations, may then adopt the plan with or without alterations. Notice of adoption is published in the *Government Gazette* and copies of the plan are made available to the public.

Once a plan is adopted, the provisions will be carried out in relation to the reserve in question, and no activities are undertaken in conflict with the management plan. A similar process applies for any amendment proposed to a management plan.



**Mount Boothby CP**

**Other Parks in the South East**

CP Conservation Park  
 NP National Park  
 GR Game Reserve

Reserves under NPW Act.

Reserves under Crown Lands Act  
 CR Conservation Reserve

Location Plan

0 10 20 30 40 kilometres



Figure 1

**Mount Boothby Conservation Park**

**Location Map**

## **1.0 REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **1.1 Conservation**

Mount Boothby Conservation Park is the fourth largest area of remnant vegetation in the South East Region under the direct control of DEHAA (Figure 1). It is significant remnant vegetation as it represents 37% of the remaining native vegetation in the Cantana Environmental Association and the reserve is the largest block of native vegetation in the Hundred of Colebatch.

Considered endangered throughout its range from southern Eyre Peninsula to south eastern Victoria, the metallic sun-orchid has been recorded in the Mount Boothby Conservation Park. Despite being recorded in nine conservation parks and heritage agreement areas throughout South Australia, it is considered nationally endangered since the conserved populations are small and its habitat requirements poorly understood. The vulnerable mallee fowl is also known to breed in the park.

Management prescriptions for Mount Boothby Conservation Park and other areas of remnant vegetation do not occur in isolation. It is essential that each area of vegetation is managed in a regional context.

### **1.2 Fire Management**

Fire is recognised as a significant element for the maintenance of biodiversity in National Parks and Wildlife SA reserves. DEHAA is developing policy and operational guidelines on the planned use of fire for wildlife management. Select reserves will be scientifically assessed to determine the implications of current fire regimes on biological values and to establish priorities for the planned use of fire where it is considered necessary for the achievement of management objectives.

Fire management in parks is based on the guidelines and objectives contained in the Fire Management and Protection Manual (1989) which sets out objectives of fire management and DEHAA's fire policy and guidelines. The objectives of fire management as stated in the Manual are to:

- protect human life and the assets of properties adjacent to parks;
- foster sound land use planning in relation to fire hazards;
- maintain diversity of native plant and animal communities;
- protect special features of reserves including cultural sites and built facilities; and
- manage fire, thus protecting land from degradation by erosion and subsequent invasion by weeds.

In addition to the guidelines set out in the Manual, DEHAA has prepared fire prevention plans for individual parks within the state. A fire prevention plan



provides an inventory of existing and future strategies for fire prevention. It provides important logistic and historic information on the location and nature of resources both within and outside the park.

### **1.3 Visitor Use**

Recreational opportunities in Mount Boothby Conservation Park include bushwalking, bird watching and scenic views from the Mount Boothby summit. Limited visitor camping/picnicking facilities are provided in the park and Boothby Rocks a popular area to the south of the park is an excellent camping/picnic site.

Tourism in South Australia is being widely encouraged at both state and regional level as a means of stimulating economic activity and to provide local employment. It is important in the promotion of tourism that visitor use of the parks is directed to those parks which have some focus of interest and which can be adequately managed to both satisfy visitor demand and ensure that the parks' conservation values are not compromised.

In the early 1990's a community based organisation called "Heart of the Parks" formed to revitalise tourism in the mallee region. In consultation with NPWSA this concept developed further with the production of a brochure called "Tintinara - Heart of the Parks". This brochure highlights the settlement history of Tintinara and emphasises the recreational opportunities offered by NPWSA reserves in close proximity to this town and others in the mallee region. All of the reserves in this area are important tourist destinations, each offering different landscapes characteristic of the Upper South East mallee region (Figure 1).

## 2.0 PARK DESCRIPTION

Located 14 kilometres west of Culburra, Mount Boothby Conservation Park is found in Section 3 of the Hundred of Colebatch and comprises an area of 4,045 hectares (Figure 2).

### 2.1 Climate

The area experiences cool moist winters and warm to hot summers. The average annual rainfall at Culburra is 419mm. Most rainfall occurs during winter.

### 2.2 Topography

Topography within the park consists predominantly of undulating limestone ridges overlain with sand, varying in height from 20 to 120 metres above sea level. Granite outcrops occur on the dune sides. The most prominent of these is Mount Boothby which rises 129 metres above sea level.

There are a number of low-lying areas which stay damp throughout most of winter and only dry out during the latter part of summer.

Limestone caves have been reported in the park.

### 2.3 Vegetation

The park contains two major vegetation associations including:

- **Open Woodland.** The dominant overstorey contains *Eucalyptus diversifolia* in association with *Eucalyptus leptophylla* over a heath understorey. The understorey tends to be sparse and low.
- **Open Heath.** This formation is generally found on the sandy flats. The main plants are *Allocasuarina muelleriana*, *Leptospermum continentale*, *Xanthorrhoea australis*, and *Banksia omata*. Most plants are under two metres in height and are sparsely distributed. Plant density increases in the depressions.

Some grazing properties surrounding the park contain patches of similar vegetation. Generally the understorey has been removed, and replaced with grassland.

The metallic sun-orchid an endangered species is frequently found in sites which have been disturbed by fire, and also along track edges in mature vegetation. At Mount Boothby Conservation Park, the metallic sun-orchid has been recorded on several occasions, the greatest number being in 1983 after a fire when 40 individuals were counted.

## **3.0 MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION**

### **3.1 Nature Conservation**

The classification of Mount Boothby as a Conservation Park attaches a certain philosophy to the management of the area. Mount Boothby Conservation Park is to be managed primarily for the conservation of its natural resources.

The significant fauna in the reserve includes the short-beaked echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*), western grey kangaroo (*Macropus fuliginosus*), and the vulnerable mallee fowl which breeds in the park. The endangered metallic sun-orchid has been found in small numbers in the reserve. This significant plant species is also found in several other reserves in South Australia although its long term survival will depend on a management programme to create suitable conditions for the species.

Overall, the long term survival of the vegetation associations, fauna populations and/or the threatened species in the park will depend on improving the knowledge of their specific requirements. A detailed inventory of the fauna and flora found in the park, as well as manipulative experiments, may be undertaken to improve this knowledge and determine the most appropriate management prescription.

Visitor facilities at Mount Boothby Conservation Park are limited however a future visitor to the reserve is encouraged to also use the popular day visitor picnic/camping area at Boothby Rocks (Figure 1).

#### **Objectives**

- To protect the natural diversity of fauna and flora species, communities and successional stages.
- Ensure the long-term survival of the nationally threatened species that occur in the park.
- Ensure the management of Mount Boothby Conservation Park does not occur in isolation, but rather forms part of the management objectives for the region.

#### **Actions**

- Encourage and carry out, as resources permit, surveys to improve the knowledge of which species are present in the park.
- Encourage and assist as appropriate, surveys which determine the distribution and abundance of fauna and flora species, particularly threatened species.
- Monitor the metallic sun-orchid population.

- Design and undertake or encourage other groups to perform manipulative experiments which improve our knowledge of the habitat requirements of the species in the park.
- Modify management practices within the park as necessary to ensure the long-term survival of the threatened fauna and flora species.
- Seek funding and resources whenever possible to assist with the research and management of the species in the park.
- Continue liaison with relevant organisations to assist with management of species in the park.
- Maintain boundary fences to exclude stock.
- Investigate the conservation values of Boothby Rocks in consultation with the Coorong District Council and consider incorporating in park if appropriate.

### **3.2 Pest Plants and Animals**

Mount Boothby Conservation Park has been subject to a low level of intrusion and disturbance since dedication. As a consequence weed infestation is not widespread.

There are a number of small infestations of rabbits throughout the park. Their extent is unknown, but continual control programmes are required.

Control programmes for foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), cats (*Felis catus*) and brown hares (*Lepus capensis*) need to be established.

#### **Objective**

- Control pest plant and animal populations in Mount Boothby Conservation Park.

#### **Actions**

- Maintain liaison with research and field officers of the Animal and Plant Control Commission.
- Maintain weed control programmes that emphasise control of species of an invasive nature.
- Maintain rabbit control programmes using appropriate methods. Monitor results and introduce other measures as required.
- Establish fox, cat, and hare monitoring and control programmes.



## **3.3 Management of Visitors**

### **3.3.1 Access**

The main access to the Mount Boothby Conservation Park is via the Culburra-Woods Well road. This is an unsealed public road providing access to the park from the south east. Other access points exist along the northern boundary. There are no directional signs showing the distance or location of the park from either Culburra or Woods Well. There is also no directional signage within the park.

Several vehicle tracks exist in the park with a number of these tracks duplicating the function of other tracks. The only internal track open to the public is the summit track. This track begins at the gate in the south eastern corner of the park, and meanders to the summit. Four Wheel Drive vehicle access is available to the summit from the southern boundary fire access track. This is the only section of a boundary fire track open for public access.

#### **Objective**

- Review and rationalise the existing tracks within the park to provide access for visitors, fire management, and park management.

#### **Actions**

- Maintain access tracks required for fire management.
- Remove and rehabilitate tracks not required for management, and/or visitor access following consultation.
- Provide and designate vehicle parking areas commensurate with visitor use.
- Maintain direction and interpretative signage.

### **3.3.2 Visitor Use**

Due to the nature of the Mount Boothby Conservation Park and its lack of visitor facilities recreation opportunities are limited to activities such as bushwalking and bird watching amongst the undulating mallee-heath terrain. The park receives few visitors although user groups tend to be field naturalists, and friends groups.

Camping is limited in the park however the nearby Boothby Rocks reserve is a camping area. This is a popular visitor area which could be linked to the Mount Boothby summit by a walking trail.

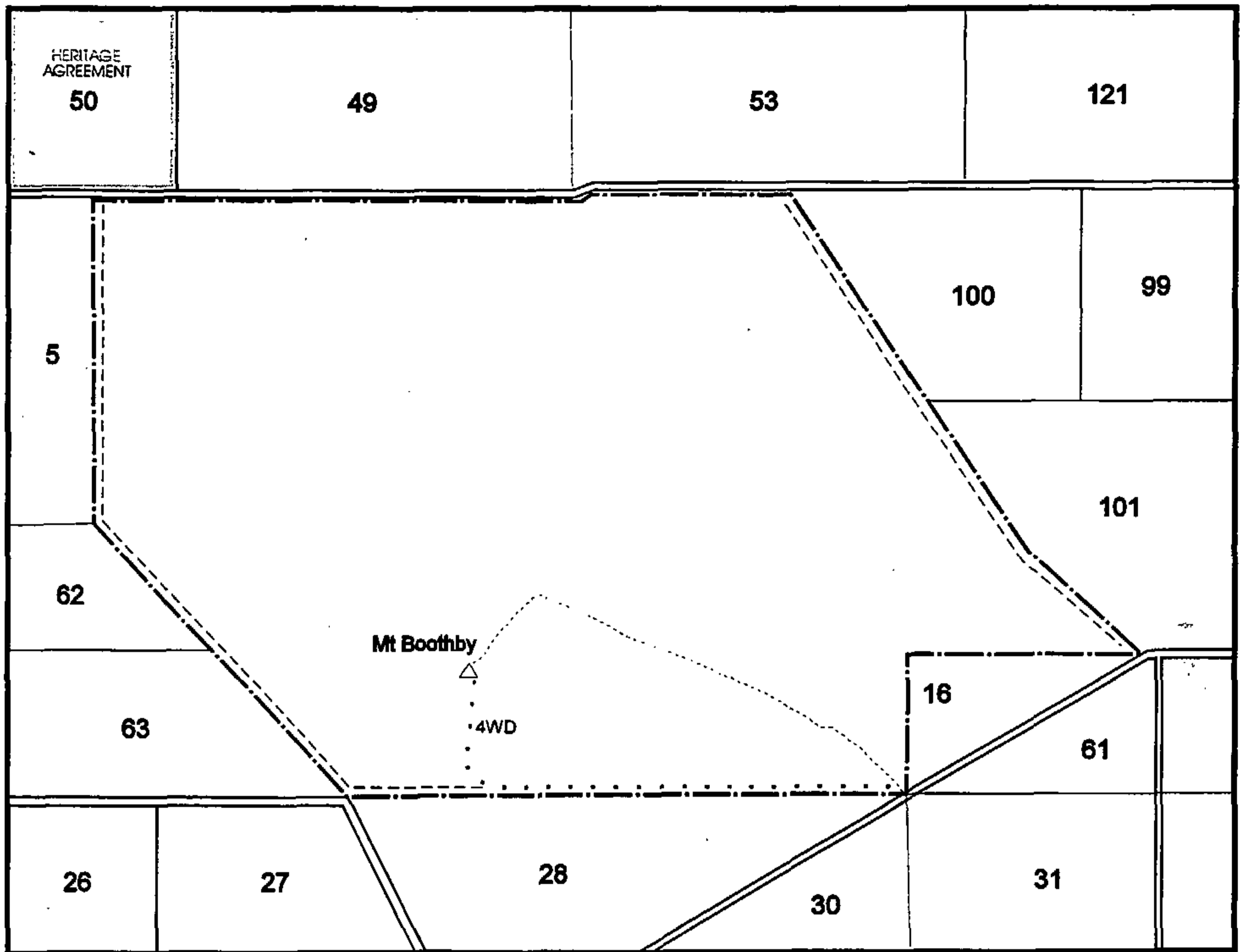
Visitors accompanied by the "Heart of the Parks" brochure can drive to all of the mallee reserves in the area (including the Mount Boothby Conservation Park) centred around the small town of Tintinara (Figure 1).

### **Objectives**

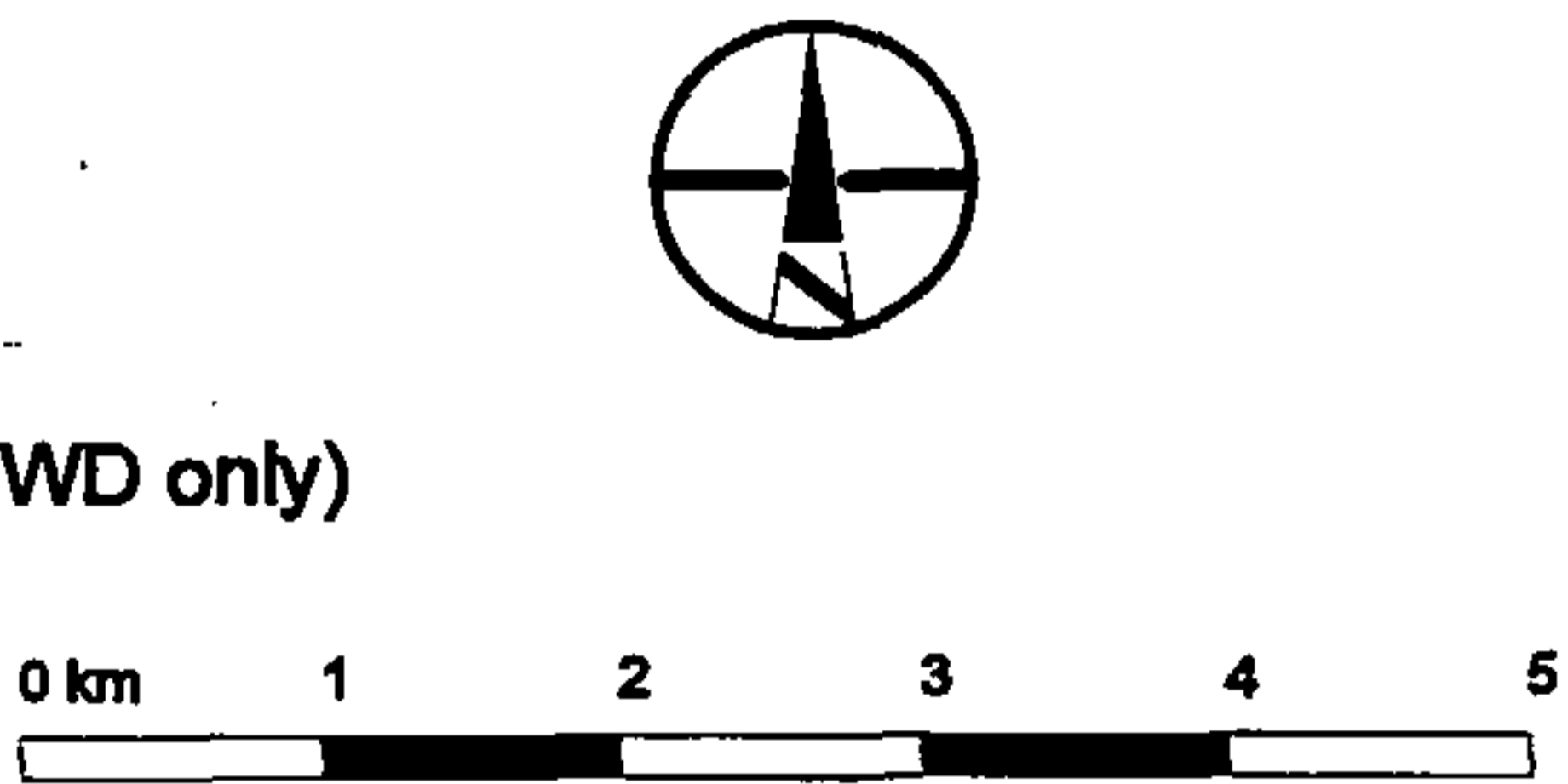
- Maintain existing bush camping opportunities in the park.
- Provide opportunities for ecological based recreational activities without compromising the values of the park.
- Reduce the possibility of wildfire caused by fires escaping from campsites.

### **Actions**

- Establish information for camping and nature based recreational activities in the park, as required.
- Make no provision for rubbish removal by visitors. Rubbish brought in by visitors is expected to be removed by them.
- Designate campsites. Permit camping in these areas only.
- Prohibit solid fuel fires in the park.
- Liaise with Local Government over the use of Boothby Rocks for camping and development of a walking trail and the feasibility of incorporating it within the park.



- Park Boundary
- Fire Access Track
- ..... Public Access Track
- ..... Public Access Track (4WD only)
- Section Boundary
- ==== Unsealed Roads
- 27 Section Number



**Figure 2**  
**Location Map**

**MOUNT BOOTHBY CONSERVATION PARK**