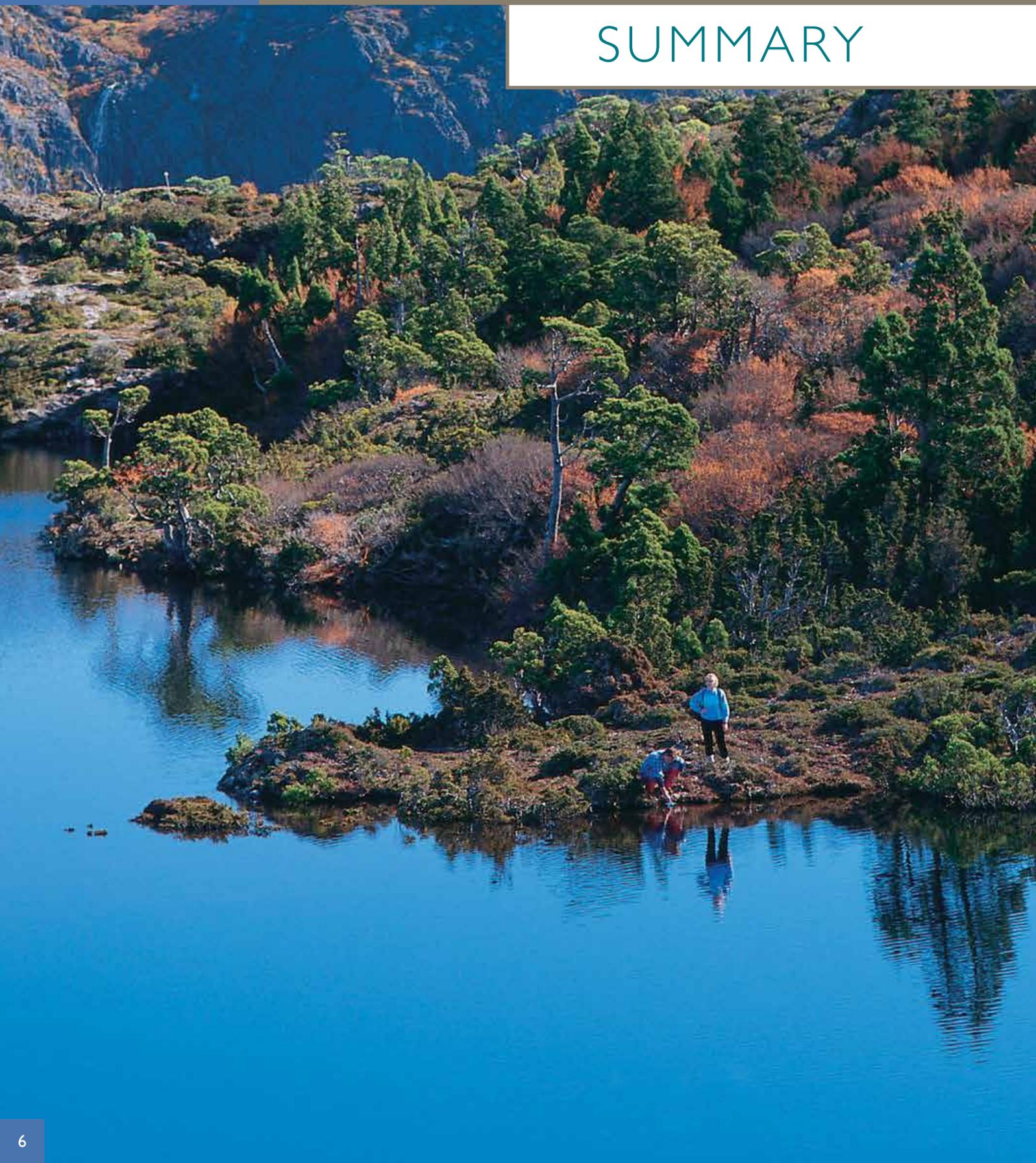




EXECUTIVE

SUMMARY



The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) is recognised through the World Heritage Convention (the Convention) as having both natural and cultural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)¹. This recognition is based on the TWWHA meeting four natural criteria and three cultural criteria, conditions of integrity and authenticity and the application of a robust system of protection and management, as defined in the *Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. It is one of only two World Heritage properties that meet this many listing criteria. The TWWHA is one of the Southern Hemisphere's largest temperate wilderness areas. It covers almost a quarter of Tasmania and encompasses more than 1.58 million hectares.

The listed cultural values of the TWWHA belong to and are part of the cultural heritage of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. For Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the landscape, seascape and skyscape of the TWWHA have deep spiritual meaning and significance.

The TWWHA's natural values include estuaries, wild rivers, lakes, dramatic and varied scenery, karst landscapes, rainforests, tall eucalypt forests, moorlands, glacial and periglacial features, patterned mires and alpine vegetation. The TWWHA provides secure habitat for the conservation of biodiversity, including many threatened species, and its extent and integrity allow for ongoing ecological and biological processes. The landscape contains within it outstanding examples of major stages of the earth's geological history including significant ongoing geological processes. The natural values are enriched by the extraordinary cultural achievement of Aboriginal people's long occupation of Tasmania.

The TWWHA makes a significant and valuable contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of all Tasmanians. Its landscapes, interwoven with the island's history, are an important part of the Tasmanian identity. It has important recreational, educational, health and aesthetic value, provides vitally important ecosystem services, and helps to drive the Tasmanian economy through such activities as tourism and energy generation. There is considerable potential to sustainably increase the contribution of the TWWHA to the prosperity of all Tasmanians while improving conservation of its values.

MANAGEMENT

A number of different land tenures are located within the TWWHA. The majority of the area comprises reserves declared under the State *Nature Conservation Act 2002*. The Management Plan is formulated as a Tasmanian State instrument in accordance with the State *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002* (NPRMA). The Management Plan has been drafted to also meet the requirements of the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, set out in the associated *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000*, with respect to management plans for World Heritage properties and the management obligations of the Australian Government arising from the World Heritage Convention. The TWWHA is a listed National Heritage Place, and the Management Plan also meets the relevant obligations that arise from this status. The Management Plan includes a Strategic Management Statement, a non-statutory component that sets out management arrangements for tenures in the TWWHA not subject to the statutory management plan. The Tasmanian Government has a policy position of not allowing commercial logging, including harvesting of special species timbers, and mining within the TWWHA. This commitment will be given effect through the Management Plan, the Strategic Management

¹ For a definition of OUV, see page 224.

Statement and other statutory measures.

The Management Plan identifies the natural and cultural values of the TWWHA, particularly values that underpin its World Heritage listing. It also identifies the key threats to those values and provides for their protection through management actions, monitoring and research priorities, and an adaptive management framework. Evaluation criteria associated with the management actions feed into a systematic framework to allow for the ongoing appraisal of the plan's effectiveness.

The Management Plan sets out what uses may occur within the TWWHA, where they may occur and under what circumstances, including the application of applicable assessment processes and criteria. Guidance is provided primarily through a zoning and

*A special place for Tasmanian Aboriginal people,
Southwest National Park
Photo Jillian Mundy*



overlay system with an associated Table of Use, as well as through a number of specific prescriptions. The plan is expected to provide a strategic direction for the management of the TWWHA for at least the next seven years.

The guiding Vision for management of the TWWHA through this plan is:

To identify, protect, conserve, present, and, if appropriate, to rehabilitate, the World Heritage, National Heritage and other natural and cultural values of the TWWHA and to transmit that heritage to future generations in as good or better condition than at present.

CULTURAL VALUES

The Management Plan identifies Aboriginal cultural values of the TWWHA from a broad perspective and elevates the significance of these values, as Aboriginal cultural values are the only cultural values recognised in the World Heritage listing of the TWWHA. The plan is formulated under the NPRMA, which allows for, and requires, management of a range of cultural values. These include historic heritage values and cultural values associated with post-European activities in the TWWHA. These values are considered in the Management Plan separately and are managed in a manner consistent with that of World Heritage values.

By identifying the Aboriginal cultural values from a broad perspective, the Management Plan has been developed to move beyond a restrictive view that would limit this heritage to one derived largely from evidence of Pleistocene occupation or other sites of material culture, to one that views the TWWHA as a cultural landscape in its entirety. Across its extent, the TWWHA reflects a tangible expression of the presence of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. However, it is also imbued with the intangible; that which gives cultural meaning to the landscape, seascape and skyscape. The plan acknowledges the continuing existence of this living, contemporary culture; one

that requires access to Country and a recognised and genuine management role for Aboriginal people.

From this perspective, a key threat to the effective management of cultural values in the TWWHA is the lack of understanding about both the nature of those values and their place in the landscape. In addition, Aboriginal cultural values have not been identified to the same extent as other values. In particular, they have not previously been the focus of management efforts and resourcing to the same extent as natural values. The resourcing of cultural heritage management has not reflected the importance of the cultural heritage criteria in the TWWHA listing. These values have been further threatened by the limited participation by Aboriginal people in this management, and by a lack of recognition and opportunity for cultural practice.

The Management Plan addresses these issues by providing for a range of measures that increase the

capacity of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, including through the establishment of a cultural management group for the TWWHA. The group will oversee implementation of Aboriginal cultural values management. In particular, it will establish links between the natural and cultural heritage aspects of Aboriginal interests, provide advice on matters pertaining to Aboriginal cultural values in the TWWHA, oversee project and policy development, and work closely with Aboriginal people and their organisations. Engagement with Aboriginal people will be a key task of the cultural management group, which will develop a stand-alone Community Engagement Agreement.

The cultural management group will also play a key role in providing cultural awareness training for TWWHA management staff; identifying values and associated management requirements in the 2013 minor boundary extension and across the

Pencil pines, Walls of Jerusalem National Park Photo DPI/PWE



TWWHA as a whole; revitalising approaches to the interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage; facilitating opportunities for access, use of resources and cultural practice; and developing a potential pathway for effective joint management. The cultural management group will also liaise with the Australian Government in the development of a dual name for the TWWHA and its recognition as a Cultural Landscape under the World Heritage Convention. Additionally, it will implement a timeframe and process for developing governance arrangements that provide a role for a non-government Aboriginal organisation in the joint management of the cultural values of the TWWHA.

NATURAL VALUES

The natural values of the TWWHA can be compared to the exceptional natural beauty of two other temperate wilderness areas in the Southern Hemisphere: south-west New Zealand (Fiordland) and western Patagonia in southern Chile and Argentina. All three areas display strong geological, floral and faunal links to the early supercontinent Gondwana. Together, they provide evidence of former continental configurations and environments. The TWWHA's complex and unusually complete geological history provides a valuable record of major evolutionary stages stretching back 1,300 million years, as well as the glacial legacies of three major periods stretching across 850 million years. Primitive and relict floral and faunal groups, with strong New Zealand and Patagonian affinities, provide evidence of the area's Gondwanan connections. Extensive outcrops of Jurassic dolerite provide evidence of the Gondwanan break-up that started about 180 million years ago.

The TWWHA's temperate rainforest, eucalypt forest, buttongrass moorland and alpine communities form a distinct mosaic of Antarctic and Australian elements. The moorlands and associated blanket bogs are key

parts of one of the Southern Hemisphere's most extensive organosol terrains. Isolation from the Australian mainland has led to very high levels of Tasmanian endemism. More than 65 per cent of species among some invertebrate groups, along with a high proportion of the flora and other fauna, are endemic to the TWWHA. Its temperate alpine ecosystems are among the most diverse in the world, with about 70 per cent of their flora endemic to Tasmania.

Several types of fauna in the TWWHA are closely related to species found in other land masses that were once part of the Gondwanan supercontinent. Additionally, the TWWHA is a refuge for a wide range of rare and threatened species, including carnivorous marsupials. They include the Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*), which is the world's largest carnivorous marsupial, the spotted-tailed quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*) and the eastern quoll (*D. viverrinus*). The area has diverse habitats, including seabird colonies on islands, high-energy coastlines, unique marine environments within Port Davey and Bathurst Harbour, extensive freshwater systems, Australia's most extensive glacially formed landscapes, deep karst systems and many different vegetation communities, including extensive stands of tall eucalypt forest.

The Management Plan identifies key knowledge gaps in the understanding of the TWWHA's natural values. In response, it provides for a systematic program of identification, inventory, assessment, mapping and documentation of these and other natural values. It identifies research and monitoring programs that provide an understanding of trends in the conservation status of priority natural values. It also identifies risks to those values, and provides management strategies and a rigorous assessment of management effectiveness.

The TWWHA's natural values are facing potentially rapid change. Climate change, fire and the incursions of invasive species are recognised as major threats to these values and the area's processes. The plan recognises

that strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change need to range from protecting refugia and increasing ecosystem resilience, to documenting systems and environments that are likely to be lost in the near future. There is a critical need for greater knowledge about optimal fire regimes for priority ecosystems and species, as well as the effectiveness of planned ecological burns to mitigate the effects of fire. These issues need to be addressed in the context of climate-induced change to soils, vegetation and conditions suitable for planned burning. The plan provides for a broad and strategic approach to biosecurity through management actions that prevent incursions into Tasmania, and the TWWHA itself, while establishing appropriate contingency plans, ongoing eradication, and the control of pests and diseases where feasible.

Some historical use has impacted parts of the TWWHA. For example, the 2013 boundary

*Russell Falls Track, Mount Field National Park
Photo Tourism Tasmania and Geoffrey Lea*



extension contains areas that are affected by their previous use for forest production activities, including roadworks, native forest harvesting and small-scale quarrying. The plan acknowledges that insufficient resources are available in the short to medium term to cover all of the areas that may require rehabilitation. As a response, it puts forward a strategic approach to identifying and implementing the area's rehabilitation needs.

PRESENTATION

Presentation is a key requirement of the World Heritage Convention. In addition, tourism and recreational uses that are consistent with the protection of natural and cultural values are management objectives for all classes of reserved land within the TWWHA. Management of presentation covers all aspects of the visitor experience, including information, interpretation, recreation opportunities, management presence and facilities. The visitor experience has many strands, ranging from types of engagement to the expectations and demands of visitor groups. The TWWHA is a vital cornerstone of Tasmanian and interstate tourism. Additionally, international tourists comprise a high proportion of visitors in some key locations. The recreational opportunities are also of great importance to many Tasmanians.

The plan prescribes criteria for the assessment of activities in the TWWHA to ensure the protection of World Heritage and other natural and cultural values of the TWWHA. The criteria ensure that indirect and cumulative impacts are considered in addition to social and economic impacts. Additional criteria are also prescribed for commercial tourism proposals in the TWWHA. These provide certainty for stakeholders and the tourism industry and provide for appropriate consideration of the sustainability of any proposal.

A strategic framework is needed to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to providing diverse presentation opportunities to the full

spectrum of users, and potential users, of the TWWHA. This framework, formulated as a Tourism Master Plan, will include the following key themes:

- a coherent marketing strategy that integrates the TWWHA's promotion and values with statewide and regional strategies;
- current and future visitor expectations, including demand analysis;
- Aboriginal cultural presentation;
- natural values presentation and conservation partnerships;
- historic heritage;
- prioritisation of investment in facilities and experiences;
- social inclusion;
- sustainable use;
- interpretation;

- commercial opportunities;
- opportunities for the support of management through tourism;
- strategic data collection and analysis;
- access;
- staff and operator training and accreditation;
- recreation opportunities and a recreation demand analysis; and
- strategic partnerships.

Access is a fundamental aspect of the visitor experience. However, it requires careful management practices that are consistent with the protection of the TWWHA's natural and cultural values:

Walking tracks: Considerable efforts have been made to develop and deliver the strategic management of walking tracks. These form the basis of track management over the life of the plan.

Cockle Creek, Southwest National Park/Recherche Bay Nature Recreation Area

Photo Tourism Tasmania & Dennis Harding



Boating: Motorised boating remains a recognised access option within suitable waterways.

Roads: Use of the road network is a key presentation issue associated with the 2013 minor boundary extension. It is not possible or desirable to retain the full extent of roads within the added areas, but the plan recognises the unique opportunity to fully consider the retention of those roads that would deliver a net benefit to the future presentation of the TWWHA.

Aircraft: The plan provides an appropriate and balanced approach to providing opportunities for aircraft access. Aircraft access is provided on a sliding scale across management zones, with landings in the Wilderness Zone limited to those required for management purposes. Aircraft access is prohibited or restricted in key recreational areas to avoid impacting the recreational experience sought by some visitors to those areas.

The Management Plan identifies where there is a need for more detailed management prescriptions and actions to ensure sustainable use for presentation. These areas, uses and activities include:

- Port Davey and Bathurst Harbour;
- Gordon and Franklin rivers;
- tracks and campsites;
- cave and karst features;
- climbing and canyoning; and
- snow skiing (Mount Field).

There is growing recognition of the potential to enrich the presentation of the cultural heritage of the TWWHA. In this respect, the Management Plan explicitly acknowledges Tasmanian Aboriginal people's custodianship over Aboriginal resources. This extends to the use of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the presentation of the TWWHA. Tangible and intangible elements of Aboriginal cultural values have been identified as key drivers of a revitalised approach

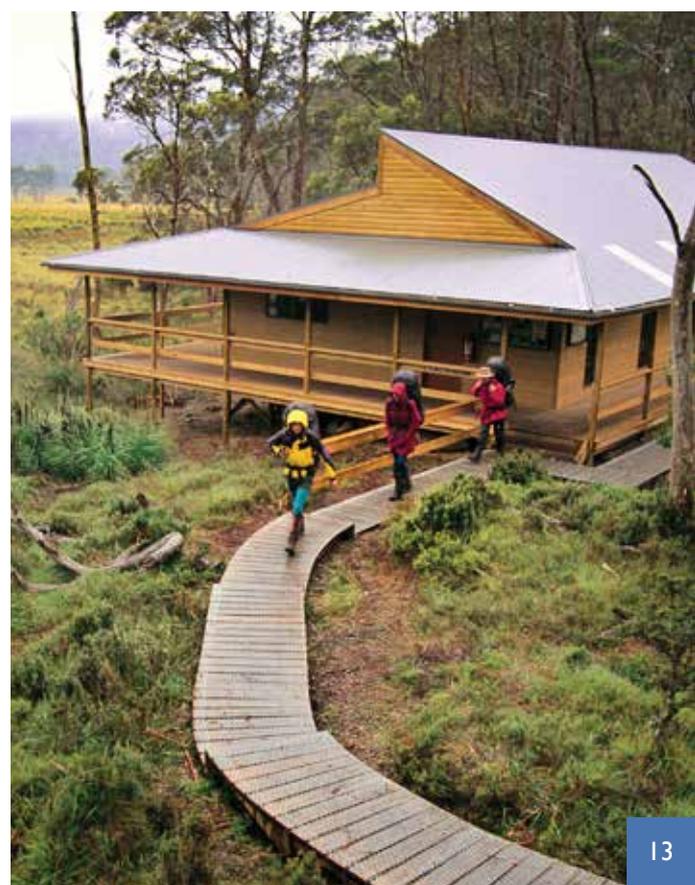
to presentation. Proper control of this use is a vital component of the TWWHA's contribution to the health and wellbeing of Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

A considerable wealth of historic heritage material and associated stories has been generated within the TWWHA since European settlement. This is derived from activities such as exploration, whaling, penal settlement, pining and timber getting, mining, grazing, snaring, early tourism, bushwalking and other recreational activities, hydro-electricity development and conservation protests. Historic heritage is an important and evolving feature of the TWWHA's interpretation and presentation. The Management Plan seeks to develop the presentation of historic heritage through partnerships with communities and the fostering of private investment.

The 2013 minor boundary extension included a

Overland Track, Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park

Photo Tourism Tasmania & Don Fuchs



number of areas where a range of recreational activities have been conducted (in some cases over several generations) and where the opportunity to continue these activities is of great importance to surrounding communities. It is acknowledged that this recreation has been, for the most part, consistent with the conservation of values that have led to the inclusion of the areas in the TWWHA. Continuation of these activities is an important aspect of presentation and is facilitated and supported within the plan. Furthermore, areas within the minor boundary extension include features that may provide unique opportunities for additional presentation options.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The World Heritage Convention requires the adoption of a general policy that aims to give natural and cultural heritage a function in the life of local communities. In seeking to meet this requirement, the plan presents the TWWHA as an integral part of social and economic wellbeing in these communities by providing several strategies. The legitimate right of local communities to participate in the ongoing management of reserved land is recognised.

The development of a TWWHA communications strategy will include a review of delivery methods for management information that is relevant to local communities and the wider public. The strategy will also develop a stakeholder register that identifies the consultation interests of registered groups and develops consultation agreements. WILDCARE Inc will continue to be supported as the primary pathway for encouraging and support of volunteers. Broader supporting processes will be implemented to enable meaningful and active community, business and local government involvement in the management of the TWWHA.

The Management Plan will ensure that the social and economic implications for local communities are fully considered and, consistent with protection of the TWWHA's natural and cultural values, seek

to maximise social and economic benefit in these communities. In response to the increased amount of adjacent private land after the 2013 minor boundary extension, the plan provides for the development of processes and procedures that support cooperative planning and action with owners of property that adjoins the TWWHA.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

A number of areas, such as fire planning and response and wilderness values, have broad implications for managing World Heritage values. The Management Plan incorporates existing strategic planning and policy direction that underpins the highly regarded fire management approach in Tasmania's parks and reserves while prescribing the development of an integrated fire plan for the TWWHA. The inclusion of the majority of the TWWHA into a Wilderness Zone with highly restricted use provisions ensures the protection of the integrity of the TWWHA and the highly valued wilderness recreational experience it provides.

The Management Plan also functions as the statutory plan under the State NPRMA for the various reserves in the TWWHA and includes provisions that set out how values, in particular historic heritage, that are not recognised as part of the Outstanding Universal Value of the TWWHA are to be managed.

USE AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Use and potential development in the TWWHA are primarily regulated and controlled through a system of four Management Zones and nine Management Overlays. The Management Zones (Visitor Services, Recreation, Self-Reliant Recreation and Wilderness) reflect the spectrum of current and anticipated use and their associated levels of infrastructure. The Management Overlays (Motorised Vessel, Hunting, Hunting Access,

Biosecurity, Karst Management, Forestry Research, Water Supply, Special Management and Remote Area Management) are intended to be more flexible spatial management tools that allow for an appropriate response to possible changes in circumstances (for example, novel biosecurity threats), or for identifying more specialised management regimes and other permitted uses within particular areas or locations.

A Table of Use is associated with the Management Zone and Management Overlay system. The table helps to clarify the types of permitted activities, the circumstances under which they may occur, and the spatial area where they may generally occur, including the application of assessment processes and criteria. Specific prescriptions are provided for limited primary production.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

The plan has been developed and structured to support adaptive management of the TWWHA through the Parks and Wildlife Service monitoring and evaluation framework. It articulates a Vision that is developed into Objectives for fundamental areas of management. Key Desired Outcomes (KDOs) are specific outcomes for priority issues within those key areas. KDOs have an associated set of Management Actions that are designed to achieve each KDO. Each Management Action has an Evaluation statement to determine or guide the subsequent evaluation of the Management Plan's effectiveness. The findings of that evaluation inform the review of future implementation actions and the outcomes they are expected to achieve.

Southern peaks of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park Photo Joe Shemesh

