

12. An action plan for Dandenong Ranges National Park

Aim

This activity draws together students investigations of the conservation issues facing Dandenong Ranges National Park and possible management solutions.

It builds on activity 6. Management issues for Dandenong Ranges National Park.

Materials

- Resource sheet 12: Issues for Dandenong Ranges National Park.

Activities

Scenario

1. The local council is attempting to 'minimize' the impact of residential activity on the Dandenong Ranges National Park. They want to produce a document called Dandenong Ranges National Park: Ensuring its Future.

Your task as an environmental consultant is to prepare this document. The document could be presented electronically or as hardcopy. Include a front cover.

2. The document will be divided into three major sections:

Section 1

An introduction explaining the aims of the document and the importance of local community support to protect and conserve the park.

Section 2

An information table illustrating how various residential activities impact on the park.

The table similar to the one below could be used:

Section 3

An individual action plan for residents focusing on what they can do under each of the following headings:

- Vegetation.
- Run off.
- Domestic animals.
- Construction, development, renovation.

For each heading suggest at least 2 actions. Remember that these have to be practical and easy for residents to adopt.

Links to Section 1

See also Section 1 of this education resource kit, in particular:

Parks and SOSE

9. Management issues in national parks.

12. Visitor impact and management strategies.

Residential Activity	Impact on the Park
Poorly maintained septic tanks.	
Wandering pet dogs and cats.	
Construction of properties on steep slopes.	
Removal of native vegetation.	
Garden plants and weeds.	

12. Issues for Dandenong Ranges National Park

Virtually all of the 80km boundary of Dandenong Ranges National Park abuts residential areas. The pressure of all these neighbouring residential properties and development is the greatest problem facing the protection and maintenance of the natural values of the park.

Although many residents support the park, some residents are not aware of the impacts of their presence and activities on the park and its wildlife.

The most obvious consequence of urbanisation is the change to the physical landscape. Residential development is progressively removing the native forest cover adjoining the park on the foothills of the western face of the Dandenong Ranges.

Invasive garden plants are changing the composition and structure of the park's plant communities, particularly in disturbed areas. Dumping of garden wastes also adds to the problem. Garden plants such as English Ivy that are adapted to wind and bird dispersal and are able to grow under low light conditions are also invading relatively undisturbed areas of native vegetation. Invasive garden species are inappropriate for gardens bordering the park.

The disturbance and predation of the indigenous fauna caused by wandering domestic dogs and cats is a serious problem.

Drainage problems are a major concern from some residential areas adjoining the park. Runoff from stormwater, particularly over areas of bare earth and paved surfaces can lead to erosion problems.

Poorly maintained septic tanks can lead to nutrient-rich runoff flowing into the park. These wastes create unfavourable conditions for native vegetation and encourage the growth of weeds.

Other problems arising from urban development include rubbish dumping, illegal removal of vegetation and environmental disturbances by trail bikes and 4W drive vehicles.

The conservation and enhancement of the flora and fauna of the park depend on halting and rehabilitating the degradation caused by urbanisation. Residents all around the park need to adopt practical actions to help achieve this. Suitable actions that residents could adopt include keeping pet cats inside at night or removing all weeds from their garden.

