

Appendix 3: Other types of Crown land

Crown reserves

Crown reserves are areas of land set aside on behalf of the community for public purposes. Examples of Crown reserves include: State parks, beaches, caravan and camping grounds, cemeteries, racecourses, showgrounds, community halls, and sporting fields and parks. The Crown reserve estate ranges from familiar areas such as Hyde Park and Bondi Beach to small community halls and showgrounds. Underwater areas such as river beds, lakes, ports and the ocean floor up to three nautical miles out to sea are also classified as Crown reserves.

There are about 35,000 Crown reserves with a total area of 2.5 million hectares across New South Wales. Crown reserves are managed by the Department other state government departments, or reserve trusts (which can be a local council or a community group). Crown reserves are given allowed uses and changes to these must be consistent with the Act and approved by the minister. More than 6,000 volunteers help to care for Crown reserves as members of community trust boards.

Travelling stock reserves

Travelling stock reserves are areas of land that are set aside for farmers to move livestock around. The grazing industry still uses these reserves, mostly as supplementary or temporary grazing areas in times of drought, bushfire and flood. However, some are no longer used for their original purpose so the government is considering alternative uses for these. This may include longer term grazing leases, licensing for outdoor recreation groups such as fishing, or development of community recreation facilities including camp grounds and walking trails.

There are over 6,500 travelling stock reserves throughout New South Wales, covering an area of approximately two million hectares (about two and a half per cent of total land in New South Wales). All of these reserves are Crown land, with the majority being managed by reserve trusts and around 25 per cent managed by the Local Land Services division of the Department of Industry. Travelling stock reserves are subject to more than 5,000 Aboriginal land claims, covering about half of all the reserves.

The Western division

The Western division is a vast and sparsely populated region covering more than 32 million hectares, which is almost 96 per cent of all Crown land. The arid climate means that dryland agricultural production in the Western division is generally less intensive than in the rest of the state. The land is fragile and susceptible to land degradation if not managed appropriately. There are around 1,200 Crown Reserves in the Western division.

The area was originally settled for grazing and this remains the most widespread use of land in the Western division. Other uses include mining, agriculture, tourism and residences.

Nearly all of the land in the Western division is held under Western Lands Leases, most of which are perpetual and were granted under the *Western Lands Act 1901*. The minister is advised on the administration of the Western division by the Western Lands Advisory Council, a group made up of people who have an interest in the Western division (including lessees, environmental protection groups, and Aboriginal groups).

All of the Crown estate in the Western division is administered and managed by the Department. Around 9.4 million hectares of the Western division (more than ten per cent of New South Wales) is unincorporated, meaning it has no formal local government. In these areas, the Department assists in coordinating various community services.

Coastal areas and waterways

The submerged land of NSW waterways are Crown land, extending three nautical miles (five and a half kilometres) out to sea and including the ocean floor, most coastal estuaries, many large riverbeds and some coastal wetlands. These are generally reserved from sale and lease, but can be licensed for aquaculture and fishing.

The Department is responsible for the management and maintenance of 25 coastal harbours. In addition to being operational bases for the commercial fishing fleet, the coastal harbours are tourist destinations and departure points for charter boats and recreational boaters. The Department is also responsible for the built maritime assets along the coastline of New South Wales, such as harbours and river management infrastructure. The major maritime assets in New South Wales are worth a total of \$2 billion.

Crown roads

The Department is responsible for managing the Crown road network. Most Crown roads were established in the 1800s and only a small proportion have been developed as roads intended for regular use by vehicles; most remain as 'paper roads' (that is, they exist on maps but are actually tracks rather than roads or in some cases don't exist at all).

The Crown lands management review recommended giving control of Crown roads to local councils to reduce the administrative burden (e.g. applications from councils and individuals to work on Crown roads) and because the Department does not have the expertise to maintain public access roads.