

## Elkedra River floodout swamps

### Location and Description

The Elkedra River floodout swamps are located about 370 km north-west of Alice Springs. The Site consists of an aggregation of relatively long-lasting waterholes and swamps associated with the Elkedra River and its floodplain. The swamps are primarily elongated basins which are confined by low sand dunes, and are dominated by low open woodland of gum-barked coolabahs with an understorey of sedges, herbs and grasses. Blacksoil plains support grassland and acacia shrubland.

### Tenure and Land Use

The Elkedra River floodout swamps are situated on pastoral leasehold land within two pastoral leases (Annitowa Station and Elkedra Station). The main land use within the Site is pastoral operations.

### Significance Rating

National Significance

### Ecological Values

This Site is significant for its wetland values, comprising the largest aggregation of swamps in the Tanami Bioregion. After flooding, the swamps support waterbirds and wetland plants, and the largest known populations of the Northern Territory endemic legume *Cullen walkingtonii*. However, the Site is poorly surveyed and there is little information available on other environmental values that may also be of importance.

### Management Issues

This Site is poorly surveyed and little information is available on the factors affecting the conservation values of the river and floodout.

### Condition

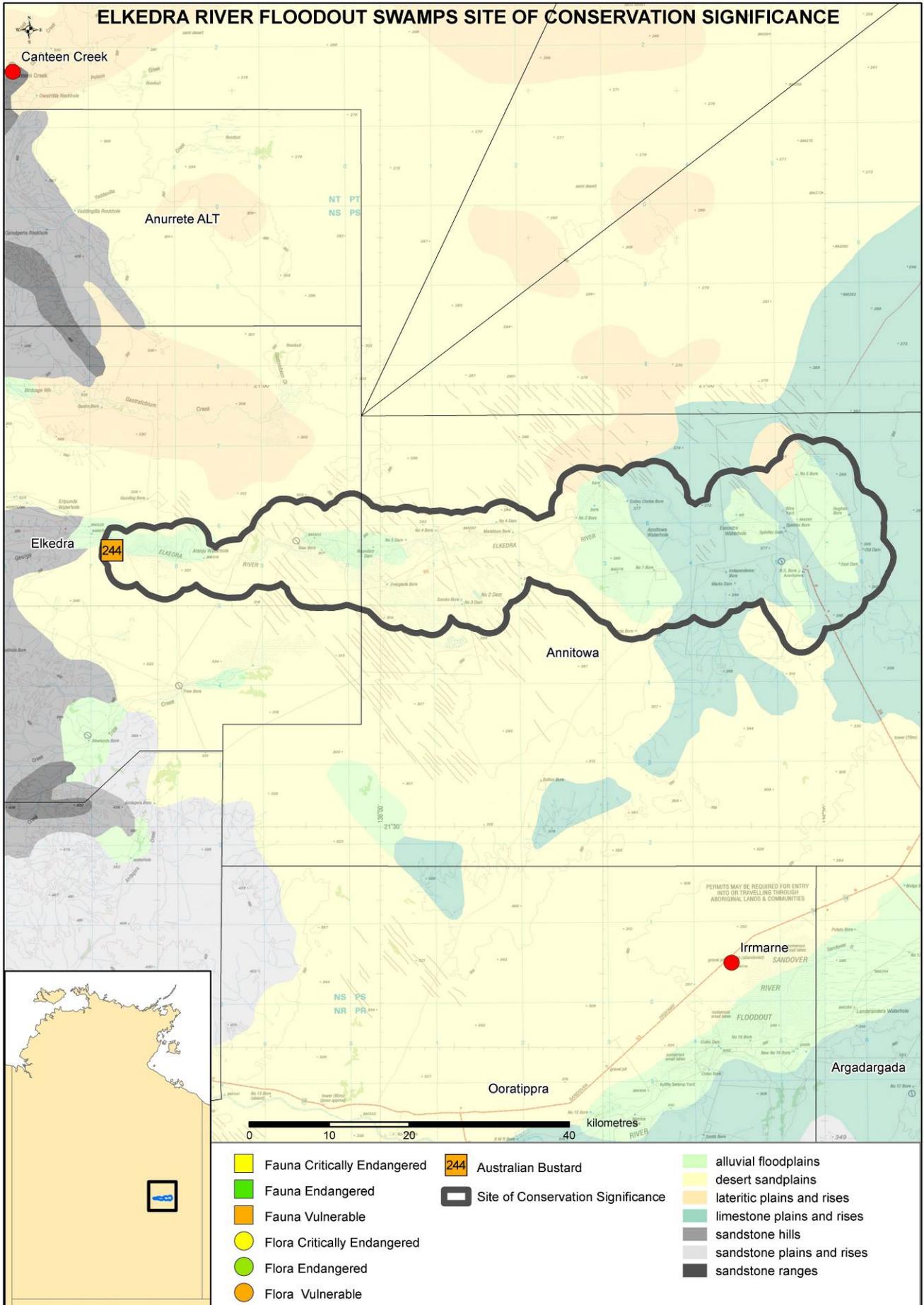
No information located.

### Current Conservation Initiatives

No information located.



ELKEDRA RIVER FLOODOUT SWAMPS - SITE OF CONSERVATION SIGNIFICANCE



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LOCATION	<b>SOCS Number</b>	50 (NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan Map Number 69)
	<b>Latitude/Longitude</b>	21° 11' South, 136° 12' East (at centre)
	<b>Bioregion</b>	Tanami (94%) Davenport Murchison Ranges (6%)
	<b>Description</b>	<p>The Site includes the aggregation of relatively long-lasting waterholes and swamps associated with the Elkedra River and its floodplain.</p> <p>The boundary of the site follows that described by White <i>et al.</i> (2000) in identifying the area as a Site of Botanical Significance, with the addition of a wetland area defined by Duguid <i>et al.</i> (2005), and a 2 km buffer applied to the whole site. The site has an area of 1342 km<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>The swamps are dominated by low open woodland of gum-barked coolabahs <i>Eucalyptus victrix</i> with an understorey of sedges, herbs and grasses on the margins of receding flood waters (Duguid 2005). Other major vegetation communities include soft spinifex <i>Triodia pungens</i>, feathertop spinifex <i>T. schinzii</i> hummock grassland with acacia tall sparse-shrubland overstorey, and mixed species sparse-grassland or herbland (White <i>et al.</i> 2000). Areas of <i>Astrebla</i> grasslands and gidyea <i>Acacia georginae</i> shrublands occur on areas of heavy clay soils (White <i>et al.</i> 2000).</p> <p>This site shares a section of its western boundary with the Davenport and Murchison ranges site of conservation significance.</p>
THREATENED SPECIES	<b>Significance Rating</b>	<b>Not Significant</b>
	<b>Threatened plants and animals</b> (Listings at National/NT level <b>CR</b> - Critically Endangered, <b>EN</b> - Endangered, <b>VU</b> - Vulnerable, <b>NT</b> - Near Threatened, <b>LC</b> - Least Concern, <b>DD</b> - Data Deficient)	<p>One threatened species is reported from this site.</p> <p><b>Vertebrates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Australian Bustard <i>Ardeotis australis</i> (-/VU)</li> </ul>
ENDEMIC SPECIES	<b>Significance Rating</b>	<b>Not Significant</b>
	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Endemic to the NT:</b> Two plant species recorded from this site are NT endemics ( <i>Cullen walkingtonii</i> and <i>Stemodia</i> sp. <i>Manners Creek</i> ) and the site encompasses the largest known populations of <i>Cullen walkingtonii</i> .
WILDLIFE AGGREGATIONS	<b>Significance Rating</b>	<b>Not Significant</b>
	<b>Marine turtles</b>	Not applicable
	<b>Seabirds</b>	None known
	<b>Waterbirds</b>	None known
	<b>Shorebirds</b>	None known
	<b>Other aggregations</b>	None known
WETLANDS	<b>Significance Rating</b>	<b>National Significance</b>
	<b>Ramsar criteria met</b>	Not assessed
	<b>DIWA criteria met</b>	The Elkedra River floodout swamps are not listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands Australia (DIWA), but assessments by Duguid <i>et al.</i> (2005) found that they met DIWA Criteria 1 and 2, and possibly Criterion 3.
	<b>Notes</b>	This is the largest aggregation of freshwater swamps in the Tanami bioregion and they can hold water for more than six months after inundation (Duguid 2005).
	<b>Rivers</b>	The Elkedra River originates in the Davenport Range, flows east and then floods out into numerous long lasting swamps. Some water flows further east along unmarked floodways, and finally dissipates into a sandplain to the north-east of Annitowa Homestead (Duguid <i>et al.</i> 2002).
FLORA	<b>Significance Rating</b>	<b>Not Significant</b>
	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Relictual species:</b> <i>Fimbristyllis velata</i> is a relictual plant species recorded from this site.

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OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES		<p>The site includes some of the area of the Davenport and Murchison Ranges which is listed on the Register of National Estate (Australian Heritage Council).</p> <p>The swamps of the Elkedra River floodout are considered to be highly significant for biodiversity conservation (Duguid <i>et al.</i> 2005).</p> <p>The Elkedra River floodout is identified as a Site of Botanical Significance in White <i>et al.</i> (2000). 20 waterbird species are recorded from this site but more detailed surveys are required to better understand waterbird usage of the site.</p>
MANAGEMENT ISSUES		<p><b>Fire:</b> No parts of the site were burnt more than twice in the period 1997-2005.</p> <p><b>Feral animals:</b> No information located.</p> <p><b>Weeds and invasive exotic plants:</b> Caltrop <i>Tribulus terrestris</i> (category B weed) and buffel grass <i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i> are recorded from this site. Couch grass <i>Cynodon dactylon</i> is also likely to be present and spreading in the site.</p> <p><b>Other:</b> Grazing pressure may be affecting the conservation values of the site (NRETA 2005). The full extent and nature of all threatening processes affecting the site cannot be defined because there has been insufficient biological survey in the area.</p>
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION	<b>NRM groups</b>	No information located.
	<b>Protected areas</b>	The site is not included within the NT system of protected areas.
	<b>Current management plans</b>	<p><b>Site-specific plans:</b> No information located.</p> <p><b>Other management plans:</b> Australian Weeds Strategy (NRMMC 2007)  <a href="http://www.weeds.gov.au/publications/strategies/weed-strategy.html">http://www.weeds.gov.au/publications/strategies/weed-strategy.html</a></p>
	<b>Monitoring programs and research projects</b>	<p>There are twelve Tier 1 rangeland monitoring points within this site (Karfs and Bastin 2001). Across the NT, fire is mapped continuously under the North Australia Fire Information Project  <a href="http://www.firenorth.org.au/nafi/app/init.jsp">http://www.firenorth.org.au/nafi/app/init.jsp</a></p>
	<b>Management recommendations</b>	Implement a survey of the conservation values of the Elkedra Floodout as part of a proposed joint survey program between the NT Herbarium, Biodiversity Conservation NRETAS, Northern Land Council, Central Land Council and community ranger groups (NRETA 2005).
KEY REFERENCES	<b>Papers and reports</b>	Duguid, A., Barnetson, J., Clifford, B., Pavey, C., Albrecht, D., Risler, J. and McNellie, M. (2005). <i>Wetlands in the arid Northern Territory. A report to the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage on the inventory and significance of wetlands in the arid NT.</i> Northern Territory Government Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts. Alice Springs.
	<b>Contributors</b>	Angus Duguid, Biodiversity Conservation, NRETAS, Alice Springs.