

# ROCKY CREEK DAM

## ROUS RAINFOREST & WATER RESERVE

Discover a hidden jewel, the source of the water we use every day. Enjoy spectacular views over pristine waterways and relax in a setting of breathtaking natural beauty.



ROUS  
COUNTY COUNCIL

# WELCOME TO WIDJABUL COUNTRY

*"Jingi walla blagganmirr  
Widjabul na Jogun ba la."*

The water catchment of Rocky Creek Dam is located in the land of the Widjabul people who are a part of the Bundjalung Nation. Widjabul people have lived in this area for many thousands of years and cared for the country. This land, and the water that flows through it, is sacred to them.



# WELCOME TO ROCKY CREEK DAM

Rocky Creek Dam and the Rous County Council Rainforest & Water Reserve are surrounded by the Whian Whian State Conservation Area and Nightcap National Park in northern New South Wales. The dam has visitor facilities and is easily accessible by sealed roads from the surrounding towns of Lismore, Ballina or Byron Bay.

A day trip to explore the dam and the Rainforest & Water Reserve provides the opportunity to discover magical waterfalls, shaded creeks and spectacular views. Come and enjoy our facilities and learn about our most valuable resource... water.

Rocky Creek Dam is a key source of drinking water to the Northern Rivers region. To assist Rous County Council in protecting water quality in the dam recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, boating and camping are not permitted.

*Enjoy your visit.*

# BUNDJALUNG COUNTRY

*We belong this country  
We look after this country  
Don't do wrong around here this country  
We don't harm this country here  
We belong to it this country*

BUNDJALUNG ELDERS



# ABOUT ROCKY CREEK DAM

Rocky Creek Dam is owned and operated by Rous County Council. Rous County Council is the regional water supply authority supplying bulk water to a population of approximately 100,000 within the local government areas of Lismore, Ballina, Byron and Richmond Valley.

Rocky Creek Dam has a capacity of 14,000 megalitres at full supply level. The elevation, 187 metres above sea level, allows high pressure gravity supply to most areas within the system. The dam wall is 28 metres high and 220 metres long and is made of about 80,000 tonnes of rock, soil, clay and concrete.

The spillway is designed to discharge water at more than 1,000 cubic metres per second under probable maximum flood conditions.

Sixty years after its construction Rocky Creek Dam continues to provide over 85% of the water supply for our region, demonstrating that the Rocky Creek water supply system remains a "scheme to be proud of."



*"The Rocky Creek Water Supply will be a scheme of which every citizen can be justly proud... The scheme... in the most part is being built by local contractors... every time that a tap is turned on... will good clean water issue forth".*

ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL, OCTOBER 1951

# HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

**1891**

Rocky Creek was identified as a water source.



**1937**

Engineering investigations and surveys of the dam location, catchment area, pipeline routes and reservoir sites were completed.

**1940**

Rous County Council was constituted and authorised by the NSW Government to investigate a scheme to supply water to Lismore, Byron, Bangalow, Evans Head, Woodburn, Broadwater and Coraki.

**1949**

Land was purchased from local farmers and construction commenced.

**1953**

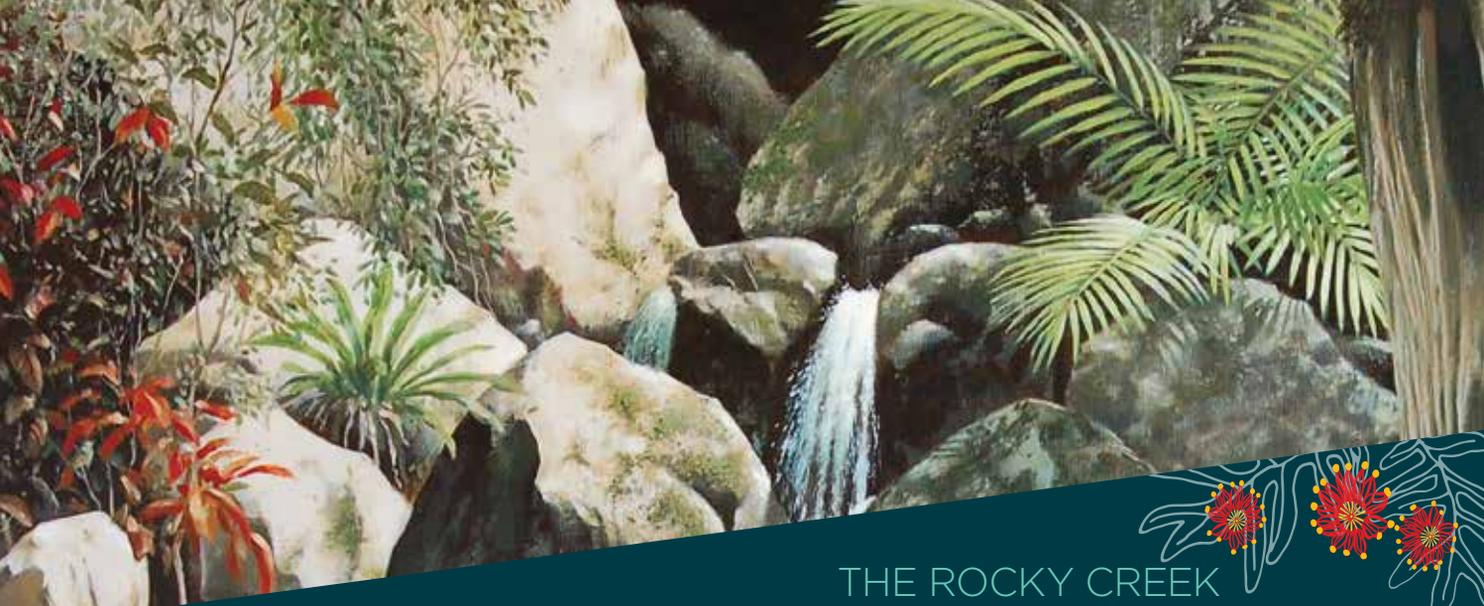
Construction was completed. At this time the population served by Rous County Council was 25,000 people.



**2010**

Dam strengthening works were completed to ensure that Rocky Creek Dam meets contemporary safety standards and is capable of safely passing a 'probable maximum flood' (the largest flood event that is likely to occur).





## THE ROCKY CREEK DAM CATCHMENT

### WATER FROM THE RAINFOREST

Water flowing to Rocky Creek Dam originates in the near pristine streams flowing off the Nightcap Range. This is the southern extremity of the Mount Warning Caldera which was formed by a large volcanic eruption approximately 20 million years ago. Spectacular basalt and rhyolite lava flows are responsible for the rugged landscape and elevated areas which receive substantial rainfall.

The subtropical and warm temperate rainforest communities within the Rocky Creek Dam drinking water catchment area have similar natural heritage values as the World Heritage Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves of Australia (CERRA).



The drinking water catchment is a healthy ecosystem of approximately 2,900 hectares (29 square km) in area. Water flowing into Rocky Creek Dam, from the well-protected native forests of the catchment, is of a very high quality. Through partnerships with landholders, the traditional custodians, government agencies and the community, water quality in the catchment area is protected.

Whilst most of the potentially significant drinking water risks are largely removed by the protection offered by the catchment, there is still a need for a high standard of treatment to address residual risks.

Water sourced from Rocky Creek Dam is treated and disinfected at the Nightcap Water Treatment Plant, ensuring that the water supplied by Rous County Council meets the requirements of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

For further information about exploring the catchment download Info Sheet 12 – Catchment Loop Drive and Walks from the Rous County Council website.

**NOTE:**  
*Prior to exploring the catchment, check with the National Parks and Wildlife Service for the latest information on accesses, closures and conditions.*



To Nightcap National Park



# ROCKY CREEK DAM RAINFOREST & WATER RESERVE

Woodford  
Scrub

Operational Area  
No Public Access

**Warning**  
Do not cross when water is  
flowing over the spillway.

**Warning**  
Take care at creek  
crossing. Do not cross  
when water is flowing  
over stepping stones.

Creek Crossing

Spillway

Rocky Creek Dam

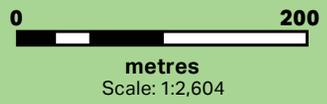
Dam wall

## Remember

- Stay on the walking track
- Take all your rubbish with you
- Use toilets provided in the Picnic Area
- Don't feed the wildlife

- Water Walk 100m
- Water Dragon Walk 1.2km
- Platypus Walk 1.5km
- Cedar Walk 2.3km
- Scrub Turkey Walk 6km

- P** Parking
- Toilets
- Picnic shelter
- Barbecue
- Drinking water
- Playground
- Dogs on leash
- Viewing area
- Boardwalk
- Bridge
- Historical marker



Rocky Creek Dam Road

No Entry

Cabinet  
Timber  
Plantation

Operational Area  
No Public Access

# BUSHWALKING



There are five beautiful walks that you can do from the Picnic Area at Rocky Creek Dam. They are designed so that you can experience different aspects of the Rainforest & Water Reserve, managed by Rous County Council.

Each track is well sign posted and we suggest that you carry water, wear appropriate clothing and use sunscreen.

## Water Dragon Walk

**GRADE 4 / 1.2 KM RETURN / 20 MINUTES RETURN / SHORT STEEP HILLS / FORMED TRACK / SIGN POSTED / OCCASIONAL STEPS / NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**



Walk near the water's edge, across the dam wall up the hill to the lookout to view the spillway.

## Platypus Walk

**GRADE 4 / 1.5 KM CIRCUIT / 30 MINUTES / SHORT STEEP HILLS / FORMED TRACK / SIGN POSTED / OCCASIONAL STEPS / NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**



Walk through patches of forest across the pontoon bridge over Rocky Creek, along the elevated boardwalk beside the creek, through grassy glades, and back across the dam wall.

## Cedar Walk

**GRADE 4 / 2.3 KM CIRCUIT / 1 HOUR / STEEP HILLS / FORMED TRACK / SIGN POSTED / OCCASIONAL STEPS / EXPERIENCED BUSHWALKERS**



This is a longer walk through patches of forest and into areas of rainforest being regenerated by Rous County Council. Cross Rocky Creek, the spillway and the dam wall, as well as a visit to a small plantation of cabinet timbers. *(Possibility of getting wet feet at creek crossing or spillway)*

## Scrub Turkey Walk

**GRADE 4 / 6 KM RETURN / 2 HOURS / STEEP HILLS / ROUGH UNFORMED TRACK / SIGN POSTED / OCCASIONAL STEPS / EXPERIENCED BUSHWALKERS**



Walk through the Rainforest & Water Reserve to the Cedar Walk on the other side of Rocky Creek, into the mature Big Scrub rainforest of the Nightcap National Park, to the Catchment Loop Drive and back across the spillway and dam wall.

## The Water Walk

**GRADE 2 / 0.1 KM RETURN / 15 MINUTES / FLAT / FORMED TRACK / CLEARLY SIGN POSTED / NO STEPS / NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**



The Water Walk is a 60m wheelchair-accessible educational trail which takes you from the carpark to a lookout over the dam.

# FLORA AND FAUNA



The fertile volcanic soils and high rainfall in the catchment area promotes a high level of biodiversity in a relatively small area. The reserve is a mix of subtropical and warm temperate rainforest communities, regenerating forest and cabinet timber wood-lots. These healthy forest ecosystems provide habitat for an abundance of flora and fauna including thirty threatened species.

The dam's aquatic ecosystem supports a diverse range of plants, animals and algae including the Australian Bass and Eastern Cod.



Take a walk around the reserve and try to identify the native plants and animals on these checklists.

**E** ENDANGERED   **T** THREATENED   **V** VULNERABLE

## Native Animals

- Albert's lyrebird
- Azure kingfisher
- Bandicoot
- Carpet Python
- Eastern water dragon
- Echidna
- Fleay's barred frog **T**
- Giant barred frog **E**
- Goanna
- Green catbird
- Green tree snake
- Koala
- Little Bentwing-bat **V**
- Masked Owl **V**
- Mountain Brushtail possum
- Platypus
- Red-legged Pademelon **V**
- Satin Bowerbird

## Native Plants

- Black Booyong
- Blue Fig
- Celery Wood
- Crow's Ash
- Cudgerie
- Firewheel Tree
- Hoop Pine
- Kauri Pine
- Muskheart
- Peanut Tree
- Pencil Cedar
- Prickly Ash
- Purple Cherry
- Red Bean
- Red Carrabeen
- Silky Oak
- White Beech
- White Fig



# VISITOR INFORMATION

## Opening Hours

6:30am to 5:30pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time)

6:00am to 8:00pm (Australian Eastern Daylight Time)

## Facilities

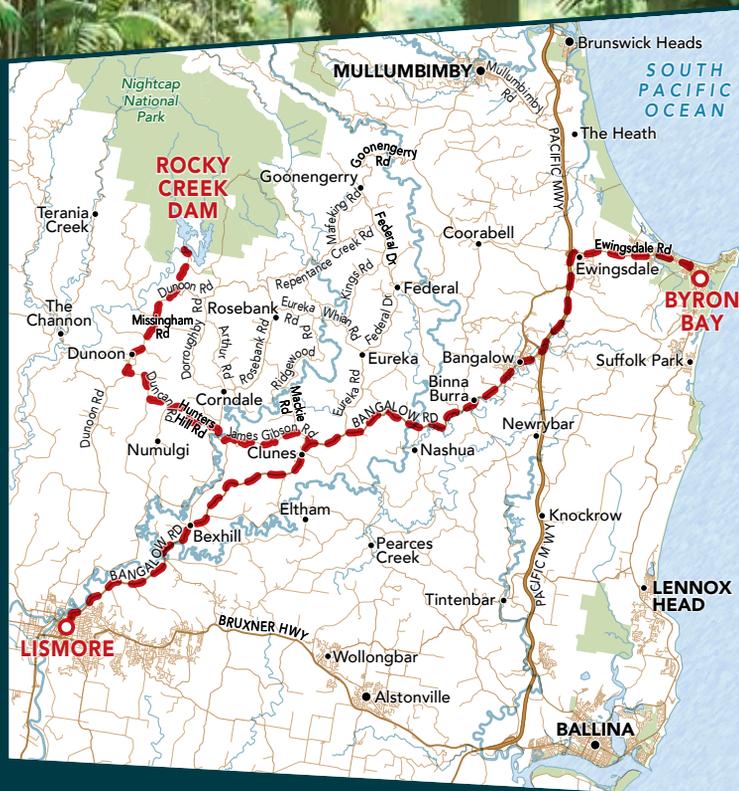


## Climate

Weather in the Northern Rivers region ranges from mild in winter to hot in summer. The region receives the highest annual rainfall in NSW. When planning your visit check local weather conditions and pack suitable clothes as well as a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent.

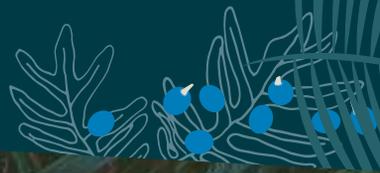
## Regulations

- Observe all signs
- **Swimming, boating and fishing is strictly prohibited as the dam is a public water supply**
- **Motor bikes, motor vehicles and horses are not permitted in the park outside designated parking areas**
- **Camping is strictly prohibited**
- **Dogs must be kept on a leash**
- **Dispose of all waste in the bins provided or take your rubbish with you**
- **Do not feed the wild animals or birds**



## Getting There

- Rocky Creek Dam is approximately 20km north of Lismore
- Take the Bangalow Road to Clunes
- On the Bangalow side of Clunes turn into James Gibson Drive
- Follow the signposts to Dunoon
- Drive through Dunoon for 3.5km
- The turn-off to Rocky Creek Dam is on the left





# ROCKY CREEK DAM... **THE SOURCE OF OUR REGION'S DRINKING WATER**

Relax and enjoy a picnic, take a bush walk in a rainforest and identify the local flora and fauna.

Take the Water Walk and learn about the water cycle and our valuable water resources.

Weddings, ceremonies and community events may be held at Rocky Creek Dam. Contact Rous County Council for booking information.

## **CONTACT US**

If you would like more information about Rocky Creek Dam or Rous County Council please contact us.

PO Box 230, Lismore 2480

Phone: 02 6623 3800

Email: [council@rous.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@rous.nsw.gov.au)

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