



Golden Gate Highlands National Park

Past

Present

Future

Significance



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Proclamation

- 13 September 1963 – Farms Glen Reenen, Wodehouse and Melsetter proclaimed as National Park – Size: 1 792ha.
- 1981 – Noord Brabant proclaimed and added to park – New size: 6 241ha.
- Set aside for the preservation of the mountain catchment area and its unique rock formations, as was stated then.



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Early Milestones

- 1963 – Glen Reenen rest camp developed by utilising old farm buildings as tourist accommodation –rondavels and camping area was soon added.
- Late sixties – Brandwag rest camp (Protea Hotel Golden Gate) construction began.
- 1968 – Brandwag chalets completed.
- 1972 – Brandwag main complex completed.



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Early Milestones (continue)

- Wilgenhof Environmental Education Centre was opened in the early eighties – New dormitories added in the late eighties.
- 1982 – Gladstone administration building and information centre completed – Lightning struck and the complex burned down, destroying all the park's archives – the new Gladstone administration building was completed in 1988.



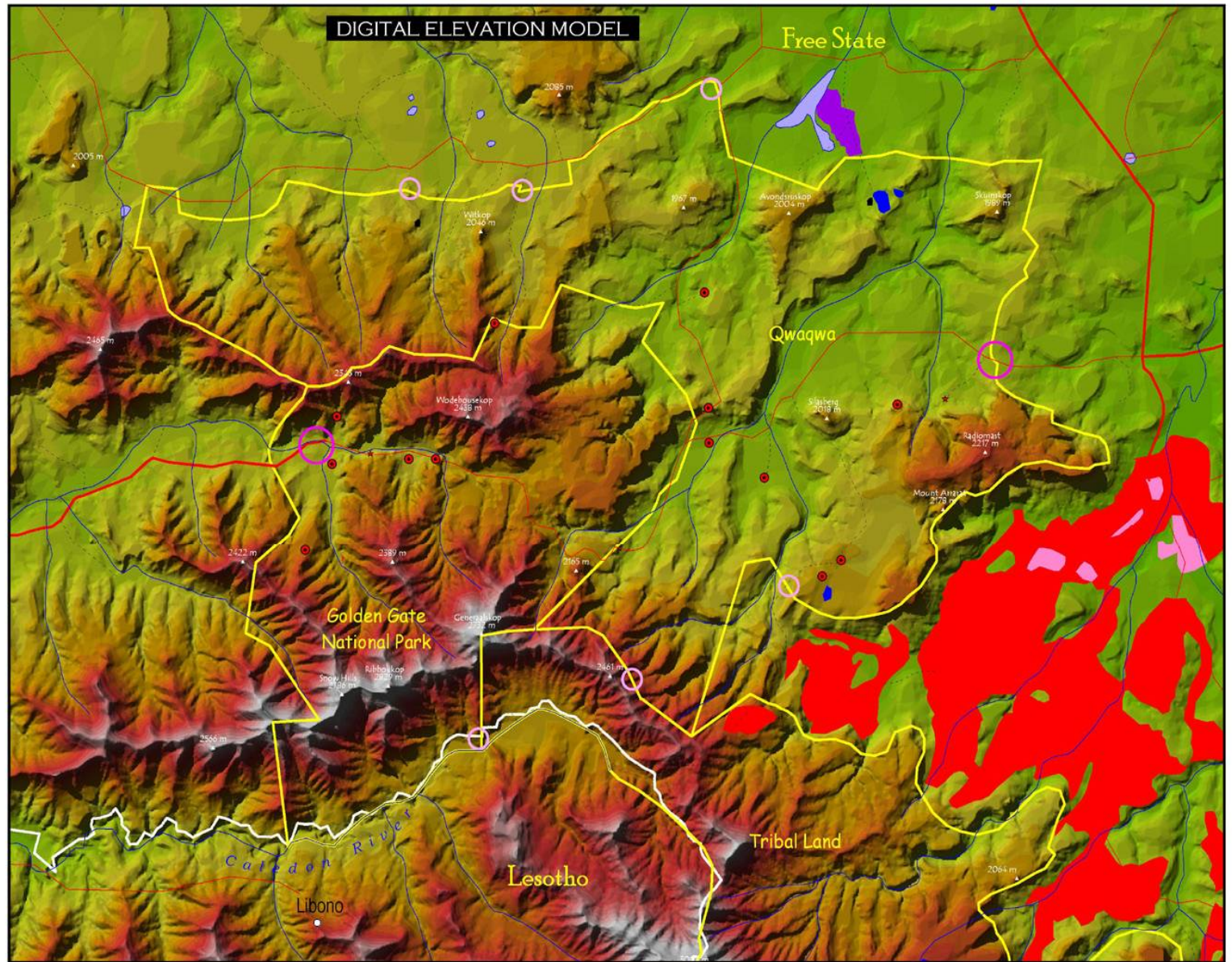
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Conservation Progress

- 1988-1989 – Addition and proclamation of another eight farms, extending the park's boundaries to border Qwa Qwa National Park and Lesotho – Present size: 11 630ha.
- 1994 – Fences between Qwa Qwa National Park and Golden Gate Highlands National Park were dropped – Enabling wildlife to move freely between the two parks.





Legend:

- Spot Heights
- High Density Development Area
- Personnel accommodation
- ★ Picnic Site
- ⌘ Trail Hut
- ⌘ Access Control
- ⌘ Entrance Gate
- ✈ Airports
- Towns
- ~ Rivers
- ▬ FREEWAY
- ▬ ARTERIAL ROAD
- ▬ MAIN ROAD
- ▬ SECONDARY ROAD
- ▬ OTHER ROAD
- ▬ Conservation Areas
- DRY PAN
- NON-PERENNIAL
- PERENNIAL
- WETLAND
- Urban / built-up land: commercial
- Urban / built-up land: residential
- Urban / built-up land: Small holdings
- ▬ International Boundaries

Digital Elevation Model

2529 - 3000
2478 - 2529
2427 - 2478
2375 - 2427
2324 - 2375
2273 - 2324
2222 - 2273
2171 - 2222
2120 - 2171
2069 - 2120
2017 - 2069
1966 - 2017
1915 - 1966
1915
1864 - 1915
1813 - 1864
1762 - 1813
1711 - 1762
1660 - 1711
1608 - 1660



**GOLDEN GATE
HIGHLANDS
NATIONAL PARK**

GG_Dem_A3
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Maps Compiled by
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Distinctive Attributes

- Geology – Very visual textbook examples of Southern Africa's geological history, with the most spectacular Clarens sandstone formations that dates back to 195-210 million years ago.
- Palaeontology – Important contributions with regards to the Dinosaur era that dates back to 200-230 million years ago – specifically the oldest fossil eggs, with foetal skeletons, of the upper Triassic age.



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Distinctive Attributes (cont)

- Biodiversity – Most important contribution is the nationally protected representation of the grassland biome, specifically Wet and Moist Cold Highveld Grassland – boasting more than 50 grass species and a large variety of bulbs and herbs, as well as Afromontane forests and high-altitude Austro-Afro Alpine Grassland, a scarcity in South Africa. Birdlife includes rare Bearded Vulture and the Endangered Cape Vulture and Bald Ibis. Mammals (54 species) includes the endangered Oribi.



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Distinctive Attributes (cont)

- Cultural Heritage – Rich diversity spanning the Stone age people, San, Basotho and the early European settlers – Boasting the renowned Basotho Cultural Village and Klerksvly Living Cultural Museum that is in developing stage.
- Water catchment – Watershed between the Vaal and the Orange River systems is in the park, contributing quantity and quality water to the Gauteng region and into the Orange River system.



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Distinctive Attributes (cont)

- Wetlands – Patches of high-altitude wetlands exist in the park – wetland conservation is of international importance.
- Management Interventions to Counteract Major Threats – Alien infestation, Unregulated burning, Overgrazing, Erosion, Wetland degradation, Loss of biodiversity and cultural resources, as well as Security and Area integrity.



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Distinctive Attributes (cont)

- Utilisation – Diverse range of tourist facilities, Environmental interpretation and education opportunities and programmes, Adventure activities, Research opportunities, as well as Capacity building and Business opportunities.
- Economic Contribution – Through normal operations of the park and its concessionaires, poverty relief projects, WfW, WoW, WoF and Development Programmes, R40mil was paid out locally for wages and purchases.



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Distinctive Attributes (cont)

- Socio-Economic Importance – Strategically situated in-between the impoverished Qwa Qwa, a Presidential Nodal Point due to the levels of unemployment and poverty, and the prolific Clarens, listed as potentially the second best sustainable tourism growth point in South Africa – the park should become the mechanism to transfer opportunities from the West to the East.



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National Protection for ...

- Biodiversity & Cultural Resource Conservation
- Scenic Beauty
- Utilization – People Component
 - Enjoyment
 - Education
 - Research
 - Benefit
 - Etc
- Water Catchment



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Fitting into the Bigger Picture

- Maluti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project – SANParks is one of the four SA Implementing Agents and Golden Gate Highlands National Park is one of the protected areas in the project domain, and as such contributes and influences to ensure the success of this treaty at the highest level.



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Fitting into the Bigger Picture

- Qwa Qwa / Golden Gate Amalgamation process completed – One management plan for this already integrated ecosystem.
- World Heritage Site – Expansion of the World Heritage Site to include the Golden Gate complex with all its attributes, especially biodiversity and cultural, as well as catchment significance.



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Into the Future ...

- Key Result Areas should address:

Park Planning & Development

Park Resource Management

Park Partnerships

Park Visitor Facilities & Services

Environmental Education, Interpretation & Awareness

Effective Park Management



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