GEORGE'S FIELD NOTES

LOCATION: DORRIGO NATIONAL PARK

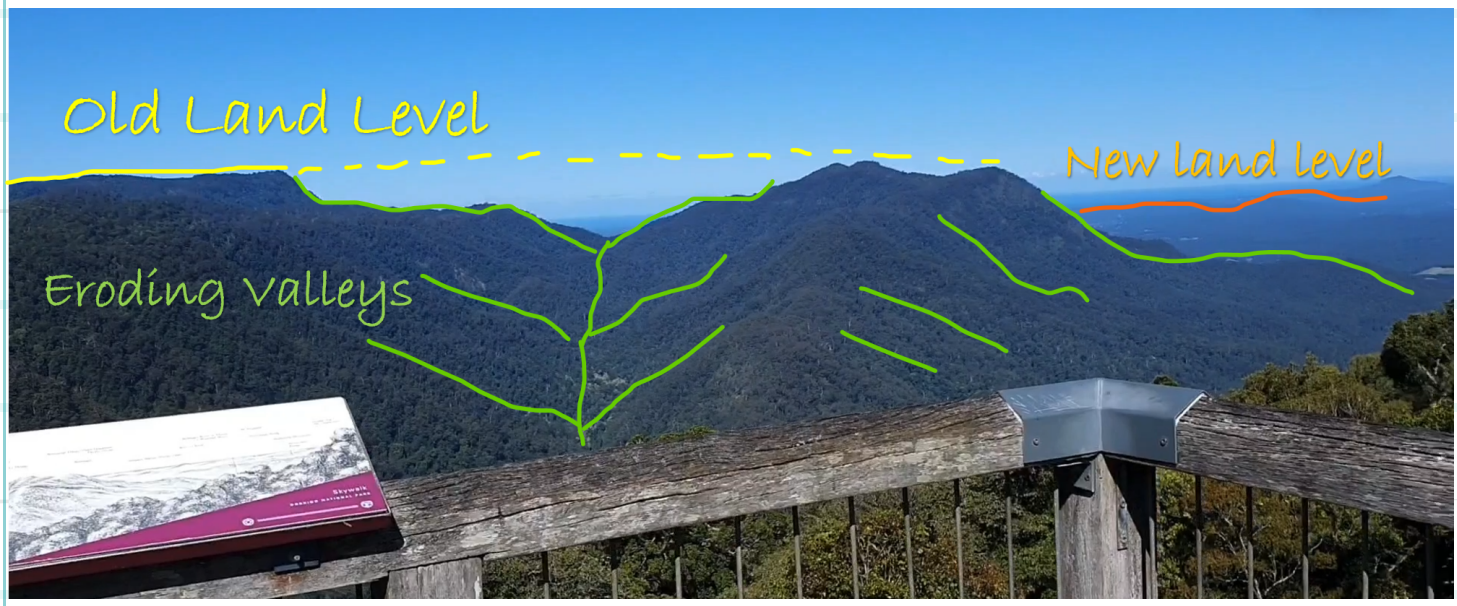
GEOLOGICAL FEATURE: EROSION

ROCK UNIT: EBOR VOLCANO - 17 MILLION YEARS OLD, MOOMBIL SILTSTONE - 359 MILLION YEARS OLD

Erosion is the process of breaking down rocks into sediment and moving the sediment away. This is most commonly done by water washing over the rocks, breaking the small mineral grains off, and washing them away.

Near Dorrigo a lot of erosion has occurred over the last few million years as a result of the eastern edge up Australia being tilted up and lifted higher. This has created a feature called the Great Escarpment; a series of very seep cliffs and valleys. Because these rocks are now so far above sea level, gravity is trying to pull them back down. The sea is also eroding the coastline and working its way further inland. All of these things working together power the very rapid erosion that we see around the Great Escarpment.

The tops of the hills around Dorrigo are capped by hard volcanic rock and are all about the same height; these hilltops represent the old land surface. These hard volcanic rocks sit on top of soft mudstones and siltstones which erode very easily. As a result, the bottoms of the hills and valleys erode away faster than the tops which creates very steep cliffs and valleys.



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