Department of Sustainability and Environment

Creekline Grassy Woodland

Endangered in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

84% of Creekline Grassy Woodlands have been cleared. 32% of what remains is on private land

Sue



Figure 1. Creekline Grassy Woodland near in moderate condition, with good grass cover of Common Tussock-grass, and Weeping Grass.



Figure 2. A healthy example of Creekline Grassy Woodland near Costerfield.



Figure 3. An example of an ephemeral stream with Creekline Grassy Woodland in good condition in March.



Creekline Grassy Woodland

Endangered in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Description

Creekline Grassy Woodlands occur along the banks of many of the smaller ephemeral (seasonal) streams on the plains and lower slopes of foothills at elevations of 100-200m with an annual rainfall of 400-700mm.

These open woodlands have an overstorey usually dominated on the plains by River Red Gum. Manna Gum may occasionally be found on the lower slopes of the foothills.

There is usually a medium open shrub layer of Silver Wattle, Blackwood, and Wirilda. Rough-barked Honey-myrtle may occur in some areas.

Seasonal inundation provides good moisture availability to fertile soils supporting a grassy ground layer of Common Tussock-grass, Weeping-grass and Common Wheat-grass with rushes and sedges. Herbs such as Common Sneezeweed also occur.

Species to Look Out For

Flora: Rough-barked Honey-myrtle. Fauna: Carpet Python (e), Barking Owl (e) and Brush-tailed Phascogale (v).



Figure 8. Carpet Python Photo: DSE/McCann Figure 9. Barking Owl Photo: Natasha Schedvin Figure 10. Brush-tailed Phascogale Photo: Jerry Alexander



Figures 4-7. River Red Gum, Blackwood, Silver Wattle, Common Tussockgrass

Photos: Mary Titcumb

Why Creekline Grassy Woodlands are Threatened

84% of Creekline Grassy Woodlands in the Goulburn Broken Catchment have disappeared since European settlement. Many of the remaining examples of this vegetation type are degraded. Many of the plants and animals that rely on this habitat are now also threatened, and some are extinct. Over 32% of what remains is on private land. The support of private landholders is essential for the ongoing conservation of Creekline Grassy Woodlands.

By its nature, riparian land is critical to the lifecycles of many native animals and plants, it provides wildlife corridors as well as being a refuge for animals in times of drought and fire. It is fragile, and its productivity also makes it vulnerable to over-use. It performs a vital link between land and water ecosystems.

Current threats include, **stock grazing** (erodes the bank, hinders native plant regeneration, increases nutrient levels, and causes loss of native species through selective grazing and trampling), lack of native **understorey** and **ground layer** (which attract insect eating birds helping keep the overstorey healthy, and improve soil health through fixing nitrogen), lack of natural **regeneration**, **weed invasion** and loss of **tree** and **ground habitat** (through timber harvesting, tidying-up of fallen timber and firewood collection).

Creekline Grassy Woodland

Endangered in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Management Tips

Encourage natural regeneration by: * controlling rabbits; * reducing competition from exotic grasses prior to seed fall and * removing stock at least until seedlings are well established

Revegetate around remnants to buffer from introduced pasture and link to other remnants

Establish off stream watering

Fencing is critical.

Retain access, since occasional pulse grazing for weed control or fire fuel reduction may be necessary. Pulse graze for short periods only, with long intervals between grazing events. Avoid stock access when soils are wet, to prevent pugging and in spring and early summer to allow flowering and seed-set of native plants.

#Restore native understorey by direct seeding and / or replanting, especially Silver Wattle, where it is absent install nest boxes (particularly fo Gliders

#Weed control - develop plan for action.

Spot spray using species specific herbicide suitable for waterways to prevent seed set of target weeds (commonly Phalaris and Paspailum).

Prevent chemical residue entering any waterbodies.

Leave fallen timber for habitat both instream and on banks

Figure 11. Creekline Grassy Woodland on private property in degraded condition, with lack of native understorey (including shrubs and native grasses).

May require expert input in decision making and planning. See your local DSE or CMA representative for further advice.



Figure 12. Creekline Grassy Woodland in degraded condition, with tree dieback, and lack of native shrub layer and native grasses.

Some additional tips for erosion control *Stabilise bed with rock or woody debris and allow beds and bank to be colonised by grass

*Use range of species - grasses, reeds, shrubs and trees

*Establish vegetation as far down bank as possible as well as on the bank top



Conservation Status

Creekline Grassy Woodland is Endangered in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Victorian Riverina bioregion :	Endangered
Murray Fans bioregion:	Endangered
Goldfields bioregion :	Endangered
Central Victorian Uplands bioregion	: Endangered
Northern Inland Slopes bioregion :	Endangered
Highlands Northern Fall:	Endangered

Figure 10. A representation of the pre-1750 and present day distribution of Creekline Grassy Woodland and its mosaics and complexes in the Goulburn Broken Catchment. The boundaries of the vegetation have been exaggerated to allow for the small scale of the map. The map was produced from Base Data from DSE Corporate Library. The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information on this map. Any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.

References:

Berwick, S. (unpublished) *Pre-1750 EVC mapping, Goulburn Broken CMA*, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Benalla Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2001) *Freshwater Ecosystems 3 Biodiversity Management Issues*, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Melbourne.

Department of Sustainability and Environment (2004) EVC Bioregional Conservation Status Table, a support document to: Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) Victoria's Native Vegetation Management - A Framework for Action Support Data, NRE.

Land & Water Australia (2002) River Landscapes Fact Sheets 1-13, Land & Water Australia, Canberra.

Martin, D. and Robinson, J. (2001) Chapter 10 Enhancing streams by revegetating & erosion control from: Earl, G. et al. (2001) *Revegetation Guide* for the Goulburn Broken Catchment, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Benalla.

Platt, S.J. (2002) How to Plan Wildlife Landscapes: a guide for community organisations, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Melbourne.

Viridans Pty Ltd. (2004) Victorian Fauna Display, Viridans Pty Ltd., Melbourne. Acknowledgments:



This project was a partnership between the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and Department of Sustainability and Environment, and funded by NAP: Australian Governments and local communities working together to prevent, repair and manage rising salinity and declining water quality across Australia. Thanks to comments from Alison Oates, Biodiversity & Natural Resource Division,

actionDSE and Glen Johnson, Water and Biodiversity Team, North East DSE; Jenni Nunan, GIS team, DSE, Benalla for producing the maps; for Salinity & Water feedback and comments from the Biodiversity Team in the Goulburn Broken and NorthEast, DSE; the DPI LINKS officers and CMOs, the AUSTRALIAGBCMA waterways and vegetation officers and to all who contributed photographs and support. Compiled by: Mary Titcumb, Department of Sustainability and Environment

For further information about this publication, contact:

Department of Sustainability and Environment or Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Benalla (03) 5761 1611

© The State of Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment, May 2005.

ISBN 1-920742-11-5

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.