Riverine Grassy Woodland / Sedgey Riverine Forest
Threatened in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

71% of Riverine Grassy Woodland / Sedgey Riverine Forest have been cleared.

Figure 1. A healthy example of Riverine Sedgey Forest in Barmah State Park, during flood.

Figure 2. An example of Riverine Grassy Woodland. Note the presence of large old trees. The photograph was taken in June, and is near Wyuna.

Figure 3. An example of Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverine Sedgey Forest. The photograph was taken in June.
Description

Riverine Grassy Woodlands and Riverine Sedgey Forests occur on the riverine floodplain at elevations of 100-200m and receive an annual rainfall of 400-700mm. Riverine Grassy Woodland occurs on slightly elevated positions on the floodplain, on deposited silts and sands, and is less frequently flooded, or for a shorter duration than the adjacent Riverine Sedgey Forest.

The overstorey of both is dominated by River Red Gum, (occasionally with Black Box on the margins of Riverine Grassy Woodland).

Riverine Grassy Woodland has a grassy understorey including Common Wallaby-grass, Brown-back Wallaby-grass and Plains Spear-grass. In Riverine Sedgey Forest the ground layer consists of more sedges and wetter grasses such as: Rush Sedge, Common Swamp Wallaby-grass, Brown-back Wallaby Grass and Common Spike-sedge. Herbs include Bluebells and Slender Dock, and in wetter area, Water-ribbons, Yellow Twin-heads, and Burr-daisies.

Species To Look Out For

**Flora:** Small Scurf-pea (Ee) and Woolly Buttons (adjacent to Box ridges).

**Fauna:** Powerful Owl (v), Barking Owl (e), Tree Goanna (v) and Squirrel Glider (e).

Why Riverine Grassy Woodlands / Sedgey Riverine Forests are Threatened

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.

While more than 29% of Riverine Grassy Woodlands / Sedgey Riverine Forests in the Goulburn Broken Catchment still remain, the alteration of flooding regimes have impacted on the quality of these remnants. Many of the plants and animals that rely on this habitat are now also threatened. While only 7% of this remains on private land, private land is often adjacent, and impacts such as nutrient runoff mean that the support of private landholders is essential for the ongoing conservation of this vegetation type.

Current threats include, alteration to natural water flows and temperature regimes (causing loss of native species and disrupts the delicate balance of the system, threatening the viability of the remnant), poor timing of stock grazing and overgrazing (causing loss of native species through selective grazing and trampling, hinders native plant regeneration, disturbs the soil and increases nutrient levels), lack of natural regeneration, soil disturbance (eg. ploughing and pugging which favours weed species), weed invasion, pest animals and loss of tree and ground habitat (through timber harvesting, tidying-up of fallen timber and firewood collection).
Riverine Grassy Woodland / Sedgey Riverine Forest
Threatened In the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Management Tips

**Install nest boxes**

**#Weed control - develop an action plan.**

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

**Prevent chemical residue entering the waterway.**

Crash grazing while weeds are in flower (before seed-set) and while soils are dry over successive years may help control annual and perennial weeds.

**#Burning weedy, open areas in early summer immediately following exotic grasses set seed (many are too green to burn in spring), could be an option.**

Soon after fire spot spray weedy grasses with a

**Establish off stream watering**

**#Restore native understorey by direct seeding and / or replanting**

Leave fallen timber for habitat

**Maintain or restore the natural flooding and flow regimes.**

**Avoid driving vehicles through remnant to minimise disturbance**

Grazing: Fencing is critical. Avoid stock access when soils are wet, to prevent pugging.

Figure 11. An example of degraded Riverine Grassy Woodland which has been overgrazed. The inset image is adjacent to an grazing exclusion plot, showing Common Tussock-grass and New Holland Daisy.

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

Figure 12. An example of degraded Riverine Grassy Woodland which has been overgrazed and is showing soil disturbance.

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

Riverine Grassy Woodland / Sedgey Riverine Forest is threatened in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Victorian Riverina bioregion: Depleted
Goldfields bioregion: Depleted
Murray Fans bioregion: Vulnerable

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.

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, DSE and Glen Johnson, Water and Biodiversity Team, North East DSE; Jenni Nunan, GIS team, DSE, Benalla for producing the maps; for feedback and comments from the Biodiversity Team in the Goulburn Broken and NorthEast, DSE; the DPI LINKS officers and CMOs, the GBCMA water-ways 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.