# Volume 2

## Native Vegetation Retention Controls

## Regional Guidelines for the Goulburn Broken Catchment

GOULBURN
BROKEN
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY



Prepared by Goulburn Broken Biodiversity Committee on behalf of
Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
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# Foreword

We have known for many years that our economic and social prosperity has come at a huge cost to the environment, impacting dramatically on our native flora and fauna.

However, we have only started to really appreciate just how critical the environment is to our whole future. Protecting and enhancing the environment enables it to continue delivering ecosystem services, such as the purifying of water, upon which our economy and society depends.

Recognising that we have gone too far in clearing our native vegetation, our Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy, released as a Draft in 1999, has as its theme "Helping Communities Rebuild the Landscape". The public consultation process of the Draft Strategy showed that the community expects remnant native vegetation to be retained unless exceptional circumstances prevail. Land managers now generally acknowledge this changed expectation and are actively reversing the decline of native vegetation, with large areas being protected, enhanced or revegetated every year.

There are some cases where removal of native vegetation is unavoidable and we need to ensure that the environment does not suffer consequently. This prompted the development of a system to quantify the losses and potential gains of actions so that we can choose the most appropriate option. The Goulburn Broken Catchment Community led the state in operationalising the Victorian Government's principle of 'Net Gain' in partnership with VicRoads and the former Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action, released in 2002, takes us a huge step towards what we all want – consistency, certainty and fairness with issues concerning removal of native vegetation. Following Victoria's Framework, these Guidelines for Native Vegetation Retention show that the quantification of native vegetation and application of the methodology has come a long way.

Thankyou to the former Goulburn Broken Biodiversity Committee members and the former Vegetation Plan Steering Committee members for your efforts in developing the Draft Guidelines that were released in 2000. Particular thanks to Paul Ryan for co-ordinating production of the Draft Guidelines, Kate Bell for preparing these Final Guidelines and Rod McLennan for his advice throughout the process.

We like to continually improve how we manage our natural resources, so if you have any comments on these Guidelines or on the way they have been applied, please let the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority know.

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Chair, Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee, 1997-1999
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The Goulburn Broken Biodiversity Committee was used as a reference group during formulation of these Guidelines during 2001-2002. This Committee included representatives from local government, United Dairyfarmers of Victoria, Victorian Farmers Federation, Environmental Alliance, Northern Victoria Fruitgrowers Association, Trust for Nature, Greening Australia, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (Board and Implementation Committees), Department of Natural Resources and Environment (Forests Service, Parks Flora and Fauna and Catchment and Agricultural Services).

The Draft Guidelines were compiled by Paul Ryan (GBCMA) with significant contributions from Rod McLennan, Brian Garrett, Karen Barton (NRE), David Parkes (NRE), other NRE and local government planning staff. ID&A produced important background information that has been used in this document. Hayley Rokahr (DPI) provided GIS support.

These final Guidelines have been prepared by Kate Bell (GBCMA) with contributions from Rod McLennan, Marion Howell (GBCMA) and Rhonda Day (DPI) and feedback from Sue Berwick (DSE), Andrea Smith (GBCMA), Gaye Furphy (DPI), Mark Sheahan (DSE), Adam Muir (DSE), Colin Kalms (City of Greater Shepparton) and other relevant DSE/DPI staff.

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# Appendices

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Guidelines scope and objectives

These Native Vegetation Retention Controls - Regional Guidelines for the Goulburn Broken Catchment (Guidelines) are designed to provide landowners, local government, referral agencies and other stakeholders with a consistent regional interpretation of the Native Vegetation Retention Controls (1989) (NVR), that were developed under the Planning and Environment Act (1987), and Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action (2002) (Victoria's Framework).

These Guidelines are aimed at anyone who needs to understand the application of NVR in the Goulburn Broken Catchment. Victoria's Framework provides further context to this document and covers all issues relating to native vegetation. Operational Guidelines for Achieving Net Gain in Planning Decisions (DSE in prep) will provide the additional detail necessary to fully implement the Net Gain approach to planning decisions. Please note that there may possibly be a need to revise some aspects of particular offset provisions during the life of the Regional Native Vegetation Plan as a result of new information becoming available and through experience gained in the application of Net Gain policy.

The objectives of these Guidelines are to:

- Provide a uniform decision-making process that is simple and transparent to planning permit applicants, agency staff and the wider community;
- Ensure there is a rigorous and equitable system for assessing and managing applications to remove native vegetation;
- Improve land manager awareness of the values of native vegetation and their responsibilities to maintain these values; and
- Provide a framework that can be built upon and improved over time.

In circumstances where clearing for development is unavoidable, these Guidelines ensure that losses of vegetation are balanced against adequate gains in the extent and quality of vegetation elsewhere. The Guidelines aim to balance the rights of landholders with those of the community. The Guidelines enable Net Gain outcomes to be achieved by identifying options to offset the impacts of clearing and providing recommendations on compensatory actions.

The Guidelines provide information specific to the Goulburn Broken Catchment including:

- The map of Bioregional Conservation Status (Appendix 6);
- The list of all ecological vegetation classes in the Catchment (Appendix 7); and
- Offsets for scattered trees (Appendix 4) and timber harvesting on private land (Appendix 5).

Local government is the responsible authority for the majority of NVR cases and should be the first point of contact. An exception is the removal of roadside vegetation and in this case DSE should be the first point of contact.

Note that these Guidelines do not provide specific information for individual sites. Further information will be found in the Operational Guidelines: Applying Net Gain in the Planning System, the Habitat Hectare Field Manual, other technical documents and through field assessment of individual sites.

## 1.2 Consultation process

These Guidelines were produced as a draft by the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee, on behalf of the Catchment community, and released for consultation in 2000. Comments received during the consultation process have contributed to the finalisation of the Guidelines. Refer to Appendix 8 for information about the status of the issues raised during the consultation process.

## 1.3 Policy context

### 1.3.1 Victoria's Framework (2002)

Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action (Victoria's Framework) establishes the strategic direction for the protection, enhancement and revegetation of native vegetation across the State.

The primary goal identified for native vegetation management in Victoria's Framework is:

'A reversal, across the entire landscape, of the long-term decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation, leading to a Net Gain.'

Net Gain is the outcome for native vegetation and habitat where overall gains are greater than overall losses and where individual losses are avoided where possible. Losses and gains are determined by a combined quality-quantity measure and over a specified area and period of time. Gains may be either required offsets for permitted clearing actions or as a result of landholder and Government assisted efforts that are not associated with clearing.

In simple terms Net Gain means that all land managers responsible for losses in the extent and/or quality of native vegetation, by for example clearing, are also responsible for redressing these losses by producing gains in the extent and/or quality of vegetation elsewhere.

### 1.3.2 Goulburn Broken

The Goulburn Broken Catchment community started developing these Guidelines seven years ago. As part of a State-wide process major stakeholders interpreted NVR and developed preliminary draft guidelines for the Catchment.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment community recognised the need for a broad strategic approach to native vegetation management and with the support of predecessors of DSE and Land and Water Australia, the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee was established by the GBCMA in August 1997.

The final Volume 1 - Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy (GBNVMS), which was a pilot for Victoria, had undergone exhaustive community consultation. Having prepared the broader context for native vegetation management in the GBNVMS the community was ready to refine how NVR was applied and, with other Catchments in Victoria, released Draft Volume 2 – Native Vegetation Retention Controls Regional Guidelines for the Goulburn Broken Catchment in 2000.

Finalisation of the Guidelines was delayed during preparation of the Statewide standardised context in Victoria's Framework (2002). Regional Native Vegetation Plan Finalisation Guidelines were provided by the State Government in January 2003. We have produced an Addendum for the GBNVP and updated this document, Volume 2, to comply with these guidelines.

Refer to Appendix 9 for further information about the planning context for Native Vegetation Retention Controls in Victoria.

## 1.4 Ecological and land use context

The development of agricultural industries, towns and infrastructure in the Catchment has resulted in vegetation clearing directed more towards particular vegetation types, especially those that occur on flatter and more fertile land. Consequently some areas of the catchment, such as on the foothills and plains in the north of the catchment and the valleys in the southern areas of the catchment, have been extensively cleared.

Many of the types of vegetation that occur in these areas are now 'endangered' and many of the species that depend on these vegetation types are threatened with extinction.

These vegetation types are not well protected in conservation reserves such as National or State Parks and, since they do not occur widely on public land, there are few opportunities to increase their reservation status.

The small remnant patches of vegetation and scattered trees that occur on private land play an important role in the ongoing environmental wellbeing of the Catchment and are under particular threat.

There are often conflicts between the community's desire to protect native vegetation and to continually develop infrastructure and expand and diversify regional industries, especially agricultural industries. This highlights the potential for conflicts to arise between the vision of communities for their local environment, particularly where a strong Landcare ethic has developed, and the aspirations of individual landowner to develop their own property.

The cumulative impacts of incremental losses of individual patches or stands of scattered native vegetation are significant. Losses are occurring from intensive pressure, such as over-grazing and waterlogging and from direct clearing. These impacts are not confined to the individual sites or properties where clearing occurs, but extend across the landscape.

Retention of scattered trees is particularly important in heavily cleared landscapes. In these areas, scattered trees are often the last remnants of native vegetation remaining in an otherwise cleared landscape. These trees provide important habitat for native fauna, facilitate the movement of fauna through the landscape, provide shelter and shade for stock and assist in controlling water tables.

Particular attention should be given to retaining larger trees that, due to the presence of hollows and the production of greater habitat resources such as nectar, typically have greater habitat value for fauna.

Over the last decade, the Catchment community's expectations of its land managers have changed. These Guidelines address these changing community expectations. Land managers are increasingly expected to retain and manage native vegetation for a range of benefits on behalf of the wider community. There are a range of incentives available to landholders to assist them to manage native vegetation on their properties where the benefits are significant for the community.

These Guidelines provide a uniform method for assessing permit applications and outline responses for local government to adopt for NVR permits in line with Victoria's Framework. These responses have been formulated to ensure the NVR protects areas of native vegetation that have significant nature conservation and sustainable land management values, while still allowing for continued development of the Catchment's important industries.

For references to sources of information about the values of native vegetation refer to Appendix 11.

# 2. Decision Making Process

Note: information is continually being improved to assist local government staff and referral agencies in the decision-making process, including detailed Operational Guidelines for Achieving Net Gain in Planning Decisions, and a Habitat Hectare Field

Manual. Ecological Vegetation Class mapping and landholder self-assessment forms are available from each municipality and DPI/DSE office in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Local government are the responsible authority for planning permits and NVR and should be the first point of contact for any development which may impact on native vegetation. Referral authorities also have a key role to play. Refer to Appendix 10 for further information about roles and responsibilities in regards to NVR.

It is important that local government and referral authorities use a standard approach to NVR assessments across the Catchment.

The emphasis of the approach outlined in these Guidelines is on biophysical issues, particularly the:

- Protection and enhancement of threatened vegetation types;
- Protection of habitat; and
- Maintenance of catchment processes that contribute to sustainable production and management of land.

The Guidelines do not incorporate the full range of social, economic and environmental considerations that local government must take into consideration as part of their normal planning processes under the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs).

Further details relating to the approach outlined in this section are contained within the Operational Guidelines for Achieving Net Gain in Planning Decisions.

## 2.1 Application for a planning permit

Landholders need to contact local government to determine whether they need to apply for a planning permit.

## 2.2 Land holder self-assessment

Landholders are required to undergo a self-assessment as part of their application for a planning permit. The Native Vegetation Management Workbook – Your Responsibilities provides a template for this process and is available from local government offices. This process increases land holder awareness of the values of native vegetation and the importance of maintaining vegetation and provides local government and referral agency staff with sufficient information to make a preliminary assessment (using the appropriate maps and overlays) of the significance of the vegetation and the potential impacts of the development / proposal.

## 2.2 Referral process

Certain types of application to remove native vegetation must be formally referred to the Secretary of the DSE by the responsible authority, in accordance with Section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987). Referral requirements are further outlined in the local planning scheme.
The responsible authority must refuse to grant a permit if a referral authority objects, or must apply any permit conditions requested by a referral authority if it is proposed to issue a permit.

Even if not required to refer an application, local government may choose to seek comments and information from the referral authority in accordance with Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. In these circumstances local government is not obliged to take the objection or conditions into account.

## 2.3 'Best outcomes'

These Guidelines set out the minimum planning response for applications to clear native vegetation. Under many circumstances it may be possible to achieve a better conservation outcome through cooperation and negotiation between planning staff and the proponent.

## 2.4 Exemptions

Under Clause 52.17 of the Victoria Planning Provisions certain activities are exempt from the application process to local government. The existing permit exemptions do not adequately address many of the issues raised through the development phase of these Guidelines. In particular, exemptions for clearing regrowth less than 10 years old, the exemption of dead vegetation, the cutting of 'reasonable' amounts of firewood and the 'minimum extent' exemption for rural activities, particularly fence lines. These exemptions result in the ongoing incremental loss of native vegetation across the landscape and have not kept pace with current community attitudes.

We welcome the proposed review of the VPPs, including the exemptions at a State-wide level.

Note: 'Regional Guidelines for Fence Line Clearing' are being developed by DPI and DSE, in conjunction with local government.

# 3. Assessment Process

## 3.1 'Net Gain' assessment

In applying the Net Gain approach at the on-ground level the aims are:

1. To avoid adverse impacts, particularly through vegetation clearance.
2. If impacts cannot be avoided, to minimise impacts through appropriate consideration in planning processes and expert input to project design or management.

3. Only after these steps have been taken should offsets (actions undertaken to achieve commensurate gains) be considered.
4. To monitor performance.

The Net Gain approach:

- Has, as a priority, the avoidance of further permanent losses of native vegetation through clearing;
- Recognises that for native vegetation, although "natural is best", it is possible to partially recover both extent and quality by active intervention and thus to effect the net result;
- Identifies a quantitative approach to the "reverse the decline" pathway, allowing us to set targets and measure performance at the on-ground level, expresses the principle that where losses are directly permitted and/or incurred these must be balanced with commensurate gains in some way;
- At the regional level, facilitates establishment of a complete picture of the native vegetation assets against which incremental losses and emerging issues can be evaluated;
- Plays an important part in assessing ecologically sustainable development;
- Provides more consistency and certainty in planning by enabling proponents to calculate, at the feasibility stage, whether offset works are feasible and to estimate their cost;
- Has the ability to link across areas and scales and to provide a whole of landscape view; and
- Uses mechanisms that are simple to understand and to deliver by natural resource planners and managers that are typically not specialists in conservation ecology.

## 3.2 Assessing sites with scattered trees

The Native Vegetation Retention Controls (1989) were introduced primarily to reduce the rates of broad-scale clearing across the State, providing limited guidance for land managers and local government staff dealing with the issue of scattered 'paddock trees'. Despite this, the retention of scattered trees is a critical issue for our largely cleared catchment.

Through pre-planning and negotiation with landowners, emphasis should be placed on avoiding scattered trees during development. Where clearing scattered trees is unavoidable, every effort should be made to minimise the total number of trees to be removed. Every effort should be made to retain scattered trees where possible. This is particularly the case for older trees which generally have higher habitat values.

Table 4 - Appendix 4 outlines the offsets for scattered trees.

## 3.3 Steps in assessing an NVR application

### *Step 1: Determine the Vegetation Type*

Determine the type of vegetation proposed for removal using Ecological Vegetation Class maps as a guide. These are available at local government, DPI or DSE offices. Accurate identification will require a site inspection.

### *Step 2: Determine the Conservation Status*

Identify the conservation status of the vegetation proposed for removal.

Appendix 7 lists the conservation status of each Ecological Vegetation Class, mosaic and complex in the Catchment by bioregion. Appendix 2 describes the assessment process of the bioregional conservation status of Ecological Vegetation Classes. Appendix 6 provides a Catchment-scale map of bioregional conservation status.

### *Step 3: Determine Habitat Score*

Use the quality-quantity accounting system (habitat hectares), developed by NRE and further described in the Field Manual for Habitat Hectares (available from DSE and DPI), to determine the habitat score.

A habitat hectare is a site-based measure of quality and quantity of native vegetation that is assessed in the context of the relevant native vegetation type. This measure can be consistently applied across the State.

If it is assumed that an unaltered area of natural habitat (given that it is large enough and is within a natural landscape context) is at 100% of its natural quality, then one hectare of such habitat will be equivalent to one habitat hectare. That is the quality multiplied by the quantity. Ten hectares of this high quality habitat would be equivalent to ten habitat hectares, and so on. If an area of habitat had lost 50% of its quality (say through weed invasion and loss of understorey), then one hectare would be equivalent to 0.5 habitat hectares, ten hectares would equivalent to five habitat hectares, and so on.

Use of the habitat-hectares accounting system will facilitate the establishment of a complete picture of native vegetation against which incremental losses can be evaluated.

### *Step 4: Determine Conservation Significance*

Use Table 3 - Appendix 3 to determine the conservation significance of the vegetation.

Conservation significance is determined by a range of biodiversity attributes including extent and condition of vegetation, threatened species habitat or sites of national and international significance.

If threatened species are present it will also be necessary to be aware of the requirements of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988) (www.dse.vic.gov.au) and the

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (2000) (www.deh.gov.au).

Use Table 1 - Appendix 1 to determine the land protection hazard rating. This is not a prescriptive guide in terms of responses and offsets; however, it will assist in the decision-making process. The table will be particularly relevant in dryland parts of the Catchment and riparian zones.

### *Step 5: Determine Response (Refer Appendix 4)*

Determine the appropriate response using Table 4 - Appendix 4. For timber harvesting on private land refer to Table 5 - Appendix 5.

These responses aim to ensure the region can meet its legislative obligations and the objectives set out in various National, State and local strategic plans. They determine how the goal set out in the Victoria's Framework and the Resource Condition Targets (Goals) in Volume 1 - Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy (Net Gain Resource Condition Target) will be achieved at the regional scale and have been developed with advice from DPI and DSE.

Where relevant, permit rejection notices should refer to the decision guidelines for permits required under Clause 52.17 of the VPPs, which require the responsible authority to consider the Victoria's Framework and the regional Native Vegetation Plan, in this case the GBNVP, which specifies responses.

### *Step 6: Determine offsets*

Note: If application is rejected, finish at Step 4.

Determine appropriate offsets using Table 4 - Appendix 4. Offsets may involve protection and/or recruitment. Where a local government boundary encompasses more than one catchment, the local government authority and the relevant CMAs will consult on which vegetation plan they refer to for offsets. Refer to the Operational Guidelines for Achieving Net Gain in Planning Decisions, for details about offset requirements. Note that there may possibly be a need to revise some aspects of particular offset provisions during the life of the Regional Native Vegetation Plan as a result of new information becoming available and through experience gained in the application of Net Gain policy.

### *Step 7: Set permit conditions*

The conditions specified on the permit granted for vegetation removal will vary on a case-by-case basis. There are some common elements that should be incorporated into all conditions. Permit conditions that specify clearly the activities and management of the whole site in question are critical if the impacts of removal of native vegetation are to be minimised. Conditions must be relevant, reasonable and certain.

Permit conditions should clearly specify:

1. Time frames for compliance with all requirements.
2. The location and type of any vegetation to be removed. In the case of scattered trees, the number and location of trees to be removed.
3. The vegetation that is to be retained.
4. The type and location of the offset works to be under taken ie the area of remnant vegetation to be retained, fenced off and/or managed for conservation and specify a time-bound survival rate for any compensatory planting's (eg 80% survival rate of seedlings after 2 years).
5. Timelines for completion of offsets (every effort must be made to ensure offsets are undertaken prior to any removal of native vegetation).
6. Permit conditions should clearly specify any buffers or set-backs that are to be maintained between significant vegetation (eg. roadsides, waterways, wetlands or offsets) and any new land use which may impact on the quality or continued viability of that vegetation. Where possible a buffer of at least 30m, and preferably 50m or greater, should be applied between such land uses approved through the permit application process and any adjacent site deemed to be of 'Medium to Very High Conservation Significance'. This is to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Appendix 12 illustrates how buffers can be used to reduce the risk to native vegetation values.
7. The management of any retained areas eg, if the retained area is to be excluded from grazing or vehicle traffic.

# Appendix 1

## Land Protection Hazard for Net Gain Outcomes

### Table 1: Identifying land protection hazard for Net Gain outcomes

| Hazard rating | Waterway protection | Salinity control | Soil conservation | Soil/land quality | Productive capability of site |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Very high** | Riparian zone vegetation (ie adjacent to or within waterway, wetland or significant drainage line). | Vegetation on an area identified as having a high groundwater recharge potential OR Salinity discharge site and its immediately adjacent area | Very high erosion hazard associated with the proposed use and the activities needed to bring about the change in use (defined as land with >20% slope ) OR Salinity discharge site | Land highly susceptible to soil structure decline, water logging or landslips. | Land with restricted vegetative growth potential because of either moisture availability or the occurrence of low temperatures |
| **High** | Vegetation immediately adjacent to riparian zone | Vegetation on an area with moderately high groundwater recharge potential OR Vegetation slightly uphill of discharge site | High erosion hazard associated with the proposed use or the activities needed to bring about the change OR Potential salinity discharge site. | Land moderately susceptible to either soil structure decline, water logging or landslips | Land with low potential for reliable vegetative growth |
| **Medium** | Vegetation away from riparian zone | Vegetation on an area identified as having a moderate groundwater recharge potential | Moderate erosion hazard with proposed alternative use | Land of low susceptibility to either soil structure decline, water logging or landslips | Land with adequate potential for vegetative growth |
| **Low** | Vegetation not adjacent to or within riparian zone | Vegetation on an area identified as having a low groundwater recharge potential | Low erosion hazard associated with proposed alternative use | Well structured soil of depth greater than 150 mm | Land of high potential for vegetative growth |

# Appendix 2

## Assessment of the Bioregional Conservation Status of EVCs

Note. This information is adapted from Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – a Framework for Action.

Assessment of the conservation status of vegetation types is traditionally based on the broad concepts of inherent rarity, degree of threat (including consideration of historic and on-going impacts) and importance for supporting other significant features (for example, as a drought refuge for native fauna). These concepts have been expressed as more specific criteria in a number of processes at State and National levels. The Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) process undertaken in partnership by Commonwealth and State agencies used National Forest Reserve Criteria which included a number of biodiversity criteria for establishing a Comprehensive Adequate and Representative reserve system (outlined in JANIS 1997). Many of these criteria have been used as the basis for assessing conservation status of vegetation types in the Net Gain approach. However, there are inherent differences between the processes - RFAs focus primarily on establishing a reserve system for forests in largely natural landscapes across public land, while Native Vegetation Plans focus primarily on prioritising protection of all types of remnant vegetation in rural landscapes across private land. These differences necessitate a refinement of the criteria. The key refinements are as follows:

- Depletion and rarity of occurrence assessments are made within a Victorian bioregional framework which is more informative than the RFA study area framework.
- Combinations of depletion-degradation-rarity which give equivalent conservation status to depletion-only thresholds are more explicitly defined.
- A "depleted" category is added to allow identification of vegetation types which may become threatened if broad-scale depletion or degradation activities are not managed appropriately.

The criteria are detailed in Table 2 below and have been used to assign a provisional conservation status for each combination of EVC and bioregion. The status of each combination may be amended with time as more complete or better scale mapping of vegetation type and condition becomes available. Where an EVC is only a minor occurrence in a bioregion it is assigned the conservation status from an appropriate neighbouring bioregion, unless the occurrence is considered to represent a threatened floristic community.

Complexes / mosaics are assigned the conservation status of the most threatened component EVC. Similarly, where threatened EVCs / floristic communities are known to exist but mapping is not available at this level of discrimination, decision-making processes based on more generalised datasets (for example, Broad Vegetation Types at 1:250 000) should be driven by the conservation status of the most threatened component likely to be present in a mapped polygon.

## Explanation of terms used in Table 2:

| | |
|---|---|
| Subject to a threatening process | includes currently acting threats that will lead to degradation (moderate or severe) OR risk of significant rapid change (e.g. rising groundwater; change of land use) |
| Majority | greater than 50% of area |
| Minority | greater than 10% and up to 50% of area |
| Severely degraded | floristic and/or structural diversity is greatly reduced (and/or subject to a threatening process which will lead to an equivalent reduction) and unlikely to recover naturally in medium to long-term |
| Moderately degraded | floristic and/or structural diversity is significantly reduced (and/or subject to a threatening process which will lead to an equivalent reduction) but may recover naturally with removal of threatening processes |
| Little to no degradation | floristic and/or structural diversity is largely intact |
| Range | area of smallest concave polygon which includes all occurrences |

## Table 2. Bioregional Conservation Status of Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCS)

| Status | | Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| Presumed Extinct | X | Probably no longer present in the bioregion<br>(the accuracy of this presumption is limited by the use of remotely-sensed 1:100 000 scale woody vegetation cover mapping to determine depletion - grassland, open woodland and wetland types are particularly affected) |
| Endangered | E1 | Contracted to less than 10% of former range; or<br>Less than 10% pre-European extent remains; |
| | E2 | Combination of depletion, degradation, current threats and rarity is comparable overall to E1:<br>• 10 to 30% pre-European extent remains and severely degraded over a majority of this area; or<br>• naturally restricted EVC reduced to 30% or less of former range and moderately degraded over a majority of this area; or<br>• rare EVC cleared and/or moderately degraded over a majority of former area. |
| Vulnerable | V1 | 10 to 30% pre-European extent remains; |
| | V2 | Combination of depletion, degradation, current threats and rarity is comparable overall to V1:<br>• greater than 30% and up to 50% pre-European extent remains and moderately degraded over a majority of this area; or<br>• greater than 50% pre-European extent remains and severely degraded over a majority of this area; or<br>• naturally restricted EVC where greater than 30% pre-European extent remains and moderately degraded over a majority of this area; or<br>• rare EVC cleared and/or moderately degraded over a minority of former area. |
| Depleted | D1 | Greater than 30% and up to 50% pre-European extent remains; |
| | D2 | Combination of depletion, degradation and current threats is comparable overall to D1 and: greater than 50% pre-European extent remains and moderately degraded over a majority of this area; |
| Rare | R | Rare EVC (as defined by geographic occurrence) but neither depleted, degraded nor currently threatened to an extent that would qualify as Endangered, Vulnerable or Depleted |
| Least Concern | LC | Greater than 50% pre-European extent remains and subject to little to no degradation over a majority of this area |

# Appendix 3 Determining Conservation Signficance

## Table 3: Determining Conservation Significance

| | Biodiversity Attributes | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conservation Significance | Vegetation Types | | or species | or other attributes |
| | Conservation Status | Habitat Score | | |
| Very High | Endangered<br>Vulnerable<br>Rare | 0.4 - 1<br>0.5 - 1<br>0.6 - 1 | • best 50% of habitat for each threatened species2 in a Victorian bioregion | sites with unique National Estate values<br>sites identified as being of national significance as a relict, endemic, edge of range or other non-species values<br>• Ramsar Sites<br>• East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network sites<br>Other wetlands of international significance for migratory waterbirds<br>areas identified as providing refuges (e.g. during drought) for threatened species |
| High | Endangered<br>Vulnerable<br>Rare<br>Depleted | < 0.4<br>0.3 - 0.5<br>0.3 - 0.6<br>0.6 - 1 | • the remaining 50% of habitat for threatened species2 in a Victorian bioregion<br>• best 50% of habitat for rare species2 in a Victorian bioregion | sites with rare National Estate values<br>sites identified as being of state significance for relictual, endemic, edge of range or other non-species values<br>Wetlands listed in 'A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia'<br>Wetlands of national significance for migratory waterbirds<br>areas identified as providing refuges (e.g. during drought) for rare species<br>priority areas for the re-establishment of habitat for a threatened species (eg. as determined in a Biodiversity Action Plan) |
| Medium | Vulnerable<br>Rare<br>Depleted<br>Least Concern | < 0.3<br>< 0.3<br>0.3 - 0.6<br>0.6 - 1 | • the remaining 50% of habitat for rare species2 in a Victorian bioregion<br>• best 50% of habitat for regionally significant species2 | sites with uncommon National Estate values<br>sites identified as being of regional significance for edge of range or other non-species values<br>Wetlands of bioregional significance (based on application of National Land and Water Resources Audit criteria). |
| Low | Depleted<br>Least Concern | < 0.3<br>< 0.6 | | |

# Appendix 4 Responses and Offset Criteria – summary

## Table 4: Summary of Responses and Offset Criteria graded according to Conservation Significance

| Conservation Significance | Very High | High | Medium | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Expected Planning Response to proposal to clear & offset | In keeping with the principles in Section 4 (Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework) and in the context of the Net Gain approach which has, as a priority, the avoidance of further permanent losses of native vegetation through clearing: | | | |
| | Clearing not permitted unless exceptional circumstances apply (i.e. impacts are an unavoidable part of a development project with approval of the Minister for Conservation and Environment (or delegate) based on considerations of environmental, social and economic values from a statewide perspective) | clearing generally not permitted | | clearing may be permitted but only as part of an appropriate sustainable use response as determined by the responsible planning authority |
| If some clearing is to be permitted, the following offset requirements must be met | | | | |
| Net outcome | substantial net gain i.e. at least 2 X the calculated loss in habitat hectares[1] | net gain i.e. at least 1.5 X the calculated loss in habitat hectares[1] | equivalent gain i.e. at least 1 X the calculated loss in habitat hectares[1], [2] | equivalent gain i.e. at least 1 X the calculated loss in habitat hectares[1], [2] |
| *Formal agreement to achieve and secure offset* | *Requirements to achieve offsets must be identified in the associated management agreements &/or the permit conditions. Gains must be of an on-going and secure nature. Once achieved the offset must be maintained and the relevant planning authorities must maintain adequate and readily accessible records of agreed offset arrangements (ultimately on the Native Vegetation Permit Tracking system)* | | | |
| Like-for-Like | | | | |
| Vegetation or habitat type of offset | the same vegetation/ habitat type | the same vegetation/ habitat type OR a Very High significance vegetation/ habitat in the same Bioregion | Any EVC in the Bioregion OR a Very High or High significance vegetation/ habitat in an adjacent Bioregion | |
| Landscape role | Similar or more effective ecological function AND land protection function as impacted by the loss | Similar or more effective ecological function OR land protection function as impacted by the loss | Similar or more effective land protection function as impacted by the loss | |
| Quality objectives for offset | The existing vegetation proposed as the basis of an offset must be at least | | | |
| | 90% of the quality in the area being lost. | 75% of the quality in the area being lost | 50% of the quality in the area being lost | |
| | The proportion of revegetation included in the offset (in habitat hectares) is limited to | | | |
| | 10% | 25% | 50% | 100% |

[1] Gains can include active improvements of quality and/or avoiding potential losses of quality by agreement to forego permitted uses. Note that applying all of the following offset criteria (where relevant) may require more than the minimum habitat hectares specified by these multipliers.
[2] Where gains are achieved in vegetation/habitat of a higher significance than the vegetation lost, then the amount of the offset will be proportionally reduced (eg. offsetting losses in medium conservation significance with very high conservation significance gains will reduce the amount of the offsets required by half, i.e. the medium multiplier divided by the very high multiplier)

## Table 4 cont: Summary of Responses and Offset Criteria graded according to Conservation Significance

| Conservation Significance | Very High | High | Medium | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Large old tree[4] objectives for offset | For remnant patches of native vegetation that contain large old trees[4] for each large old tree removed as part of permitted clearing[3]: | | | |
| | 8 other large old trees to be protected AND 40 new trees to be recruited[5] | 4 other large old trees to be protected AND 20 new trees to be recruited[5] | 2 other large old trees to be protected AND 10 new trees to be recruited[5] | 1 other large old trees to be protected AND 5 new trees to be recruited[5] |
| | For parcels of land greater than 4 ha and with 8 or more scattered old trees[4] / ha for each large old tree removed as part of permitted clearing[3]: | | | |
| | 8 other large old trees to be protected AND 40 new trees to be recruited[5] | 4 other large old trees to be protected AND 20 new trees to be recruited[5] | 2 other large old trees to be protected AND 10 new trees to be recruited[5] | 50 new trees to be recruited[5] |
| | For each medium old tree removed as part of permitted clearing[3]: | | | |
| | 4 other medium old trees to be protected AND 20 new trees to be recruited[5] | 2 other medium old trees to be protected AND 10 new trees to be recruited[5] | 1 other medium old tree to be protected AND 5 new trees to be recruited[5] | 50 new trees to be recruited[5] |
| | For parcels of land greater than 4 ha and with less than 8 scattered old trees[4] / ha, Or for parcels of land less than 4ha with any number of scattered old trees/ha for each very large old tree (≥1.5 x benchmark) removed as part of permitted clearing[3]: | | | |
| | 6 other large old trees to be protected 30 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] – 400 new trees to be recruited) | 4 other large old trees to be protected 20 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] – 200 new trees to be recruited) | 2 other large old trees to be protected 10 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] – 100 new trees to be recruited) | 1 other large old tree to be protected 5 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] –50 new trees to be recruited) |
| | For each large old tree (≥1x benchmark) removed as part of permitted clearing[3]: | | | |
| | 4 other large old trees to be protected 20 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] – 200 new trees to be recruited) | 2 other large old trees to be protected 10 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] – 100 new trees to be recruited) | 1 other large old tree to be protected 5 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] –50 new | 50 new trees to be recruited) recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] –50 new trees to be recruited) |
| | For each medium old tree (≥ 0.75 x benchmark) removed as part of permitted clearing[3]: | | | |
| | 2 other medium old trees to be protected 10 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] – 100 new trees to be recruited) | 1 other medium old tree to be protected 5 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] –50 new trees to be recruited) | 1 other medium old tree to be protected 5 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] –50 new trees to be recruited) | 50 new trees to be recruited[5] (Recruit only[7] –50 new trees to be recruited) |
| Vicinity | Gains must be within the same bioregion, and within the same priority landscape zone[6] as the loss where considered appropriate by the planning authority | Gains must be within the same bioregion as the loss | Gains must be within the same bioregion as the loss OR an adjacent bioregion if offsets are in Very High or High significance vegetation | |
| Timing | Offsets to be initiated prior to the loss | Offsets to be initiated as soon as possible after loss occurs but no more than 1 year (seasonal requirements to be considered) | | |

[3] These offsets are only required as a consequence of native vegetation clearing which requires and receives a planning permit, and not where tree removal is exempt from the requirement to have such a permit.

[4] Old trees, large or medium, are defined as individuals of key long-lived tree species (as specified in the relevant EVC benchmark) that are greater than certain diameters (for large or medium) at 1.3 m above ground level.

[5] On a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the planning authority, this requirement to recruit new trees may be either through plantings to a prescribed standard (e.g. species composition, density, survivorship) and/or through regeneration associated with protection of other old trees. Recruitment should meet the timing criterion below. Any plantings that have been undertaken by the landholder since 1989 and that meet all the relevant offset criteria, can be used to meet this requirement.

[6] Identified in local landscape-scale biodiversity action plans.

[7] Protect and recruit is the highest priority and every effort must be made to use this option. Only when protection of other old trees is not possible should the recruit only option be used.

Note: The offsets don't currently include 'small' trees (<0.75x benchmark). This does not mean there shouldn't be any offsets for small trees but rather that the stated offsets should be used as a guide. Monitoring of losses of these smaller trees from the landscape, will take place and when this Plan is reviewed further prescriptions for offsets for 'small' trees may need to be considered.

# Appendix 5 Timber Harvesting Offset Criteria - summary

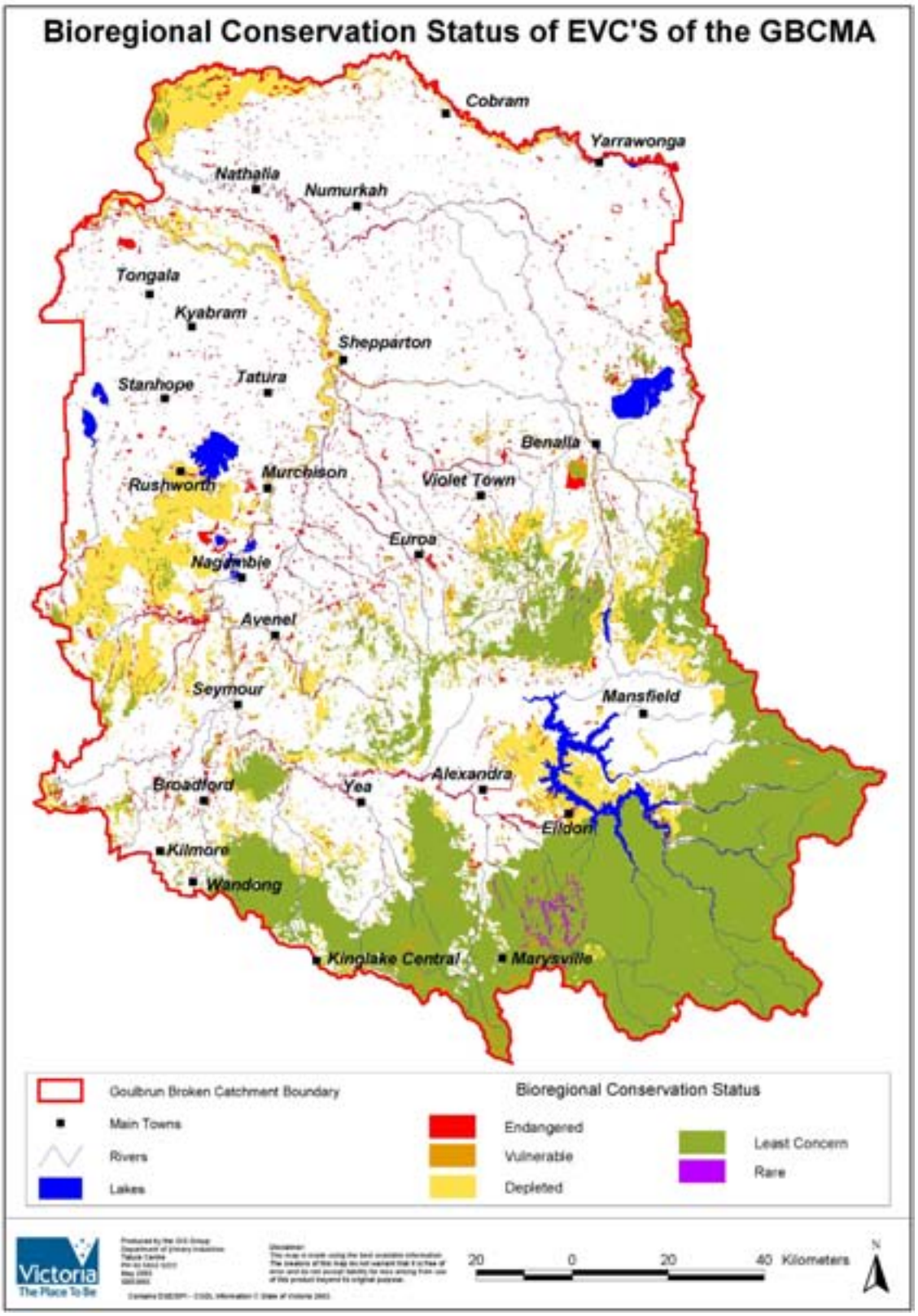
## Table 5: Summary of Offset Criteria for Harvesting Timber from Naturally-established Native Forest on Private Land

| Conservation Significance | Very High | High | Medium | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Response to proposal | Harvesting generally not permitted[1] | | Harvest and regeneration may be permitted as part of sustainable land use option. | |
| Net outcome of offset | | | Regeneration undertaken according to the following criteria will be considered to have achieved sufficient offset. | |
| Vegetation or Habitat Type of offset | | | same as harvested | |
| Landscape role | | | same as harvested | |
| Quality objectives for offset | | | For clearfell harvest & regeneration<br>Regeneration to be managed so that it has the best opportunity to reach a target of 50% of the quality of the vegetation that was harvested within 10 years and ultimately the same quality (minus large tree component) as required by permit condition. Where large old trees are included in the harvest area, mitigation will be determined on a case-by-case basis ensuring sufficient seed and habitat trees for regeneration of the forest values. Where private land forest is not substantially contiguous with the public forest estate, a higher level of mitigation will be required.<br>For selective harvesting<br>The quality score is to be equal, if not better than the original assessment, by the end of the rotation in a selective harvesting situation. | |
| Vicinity | | | same as harvested | |
| Timing | | | Regeneration to be initiated as soon as possible after harvesting but no more than one year (seasonal requirements to be considered by planning authority). | |
| Security of offset | | | Planning permit conditions to apply until the regeneration achieves the equivalent quality of the vegetation that was harvested (excluding the large old tree component). | |

[1] Unless harvesting is currently permitted on public land within the same bioregion for areas of vegetation which have equivalent conservation values.

# Appendix 6 Bioregional Conservation Status of EVC's in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

## Map 1



## Complexes in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

### Table 6: Ecological Vegetation Classes, mosaics and complexes in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| Victorian Riverina | | | | | | |
| 80 | Spring-soak Woodland | X | EVC | 5 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 291 | Cane Grass Wetland | X | EVC | 223 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 636 | Brackish Lake | X | EVC | 1,254 | 2 | 0.2 |
| 19 | Riparian Shrubland | E | EVC | 4 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 47 | Valley Grassy Forest | E | EVC | 1,155 | 25 | 2.2 |
| 55 | Plains Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 449,562 | 4,240 | 0.9 |
| 67 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland | E | EVC | 1,528 | 8 | 0.5 |
| 68 | Creekline Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 10,512 | 1,461 | 13.9 |
| 74 | Wetland Formation | E | veg group | 8,680 | 487 | 5.6 |
| 76 | Low Rises Grassy Woodland / Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 1 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 79 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Heathy Dry Forest Mosaic | E | mosaic | 676 | 475 | 70.4 |
| 81 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 104 | 2 | 2.2 |
| 103 | Black Box Chenopod Woodland | E | EVC | 245 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 125 | Plains Grassy Wetland | E | EVC | 6,880 | 221 | 3.2 |
| 127 | Valley Heathy Forest | E | EVC | 96 | 1 | 1.5 |
| 132 | Plains Grassland | E | EVC | 5,374 | 17 | 0.3 |
| 168 | Drainage-line Complex | E | complex | 6,504 | 192 | 3.0 |
| 175 | Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 21,732 | 780 | 3.6 |
| 186 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Floodplain Riparian Woodland Complex | E | complex | 184 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 234 | Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland / Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 259 | 1 | 0.4 |
| 235 | Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 28,016 | 1,389 | 5.0 |
| 241 | Valley Grassy Forest / Plains Grassy Woodland Complex | E | complex | 6 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 257 | Gravelly-sediment Broombush Mallee / Box Ironbark Forest Mosaic | E | mosaic | 4 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 260 | Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland / Shrubby Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland Complex | E | complex | 7 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 261 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 49 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 262 | Slopes Box Grassy Woodland / Box Ironbark Forest Complex | E | complex | 312 | 3 | 1.1 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 263 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassland / Plains Grassy Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 6,632 | 26 | 0.4 |
| 264 | Sand Ridge Woodland | E | EVC | 1,096 | 117 | 10.7 |
| 267 | Plains Grassland / Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 11,552 | 71 | 0.6 |
| 273 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassland / Gilgai Plains Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 10,628 | 23 | 0.2 |
| 274 | Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassy Woodland Complex | E | complex | 1,270 | 34 | 2.7 |
| 287 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Box Ironbark Forest Complex | E | complex | 81 | 33 | 41.5 |
| 292 | Red Gum Wetland | E | EVC | 3,905 | 664 | 17.0 |
| 294 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Gilgai Plains Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 66,692 | 707 | 1.1 |
| 297 | Lagoon Wetland / Red Gum Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 219 | 32 | 14.5 |
| 299 | Unclassified Lunette Woodland | E | no EVC id. | 2,132 | 1 | 0.0 |
| 321 | Black Box Chenopod Woodland / Lignum Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 91 | 1 | 1.4 |
| 333 | Red Gum Wetland / Plains Grassy Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 3,036 | 306 | 10.1 |
| 334 | Lagoon Wetland | E | EVC | 65 | 10 | 15.6 |
| 867 | Pine Box Woodland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 66,234 | 340 | 0.5 |
| 868 | Pine Box Woodland | E | EVC | 3,576 | 19 | 0.5 |
| 869 | Creekline Grassy Woodland / Red Gum Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 285 | 31 | 10.7 |
| 871 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 56 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 872 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland / Black Box Chenopod Woodland Complex | E | complex | 27 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 888 | Plains Saltmarsh Complex | E | complex | 343 | 6 | 1.7 |
| 3 | Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland | V | EVC | 211 | 17 | 7.9 |
| 56 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland | V | EVC | 11,711 | 2,269 | 19.4 |
| 61 | Box Ironbark Forest | V | EVC | 7,084 | 897 | 12.7 |
| 72 | Granitic Hills Woodland | V | EVC | 368 | 23 | 6.4 |
| 247 | Box Ironbark Forest / Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 31 | 0 | 0.6 |
| 250 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland / Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 220 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 256 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland / Floodplain Wetland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 307 | 63 | 20.5 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 293 | Riparian Forest / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 1 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 300 | Reed Swamp | V | EVC | 3 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 22 | Grassy Dry Forest | D | EVC | 380 | 40 | 10.6 |
| 255 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverine Sedgy Forest / Wetland Mosaic | D | mosaic | 7,892 | 5,679 | 72.0 |
| 20 | Heathy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 212 | 22 | 10.4 |
| Murray Fans | | | | | | |
| 55 | Plains Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 66,078 | 1,084 | 1.6 |
| 68 | Creekline Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 751 | 64 | 8.5 |
| 74 | Wetland Formation | E | veg group | 1,748 | 36 | 2.1 |
| 103 | Black Box Chenopod Woodland | E | EVC | 12,376 | 328 | 2.7 |
| 104 | Lignum Wetland | E | EVC | 260 | 50 | 19.0 |
| 125 | Plains Grassy Wetland | E | EVC | 1,502 | 25 | 1.7 |
| 132 | Plains Grassland | E | EVC | 71 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 168 | Drainage-line Complex | E | complex | 4,988 | 413 | 8.3 |
| 175 | Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 198 | 1 | 0.3 |
| 264 | Sand Ridge Woodland | E | EVC | 3,595 | 78 | 2.2 |
| 292 | Red Gum Wetland | E | EVC | 1,358 | 257 | 18.9 |
| 294 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Gilgai Plains Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 1,295 | 29 | 2.2 |
| 297 | Lagoon Wetland / Red Gum Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 32 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 299 | Unclassified Lunette Woodland | E | no EVC id. | 192 | 132 | 68.6 |
| 321 | Black Box Chenopod Woodland / Lignum Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 2,265 | 421 | 18.6 |
| 333 | Red Gum Wetland / Plains Grassy Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 1,275 | 114 | 8.9 |
| 334 | Lagoon Wetland | E | EVC | 506 | 44 | 8.7 |
| 867 | Pine Box Woodland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 47,064 | 378 | 0.8 |
| 868 | Pine Box Woodland | E | EVC | 10,867 | 117 | 1.1 |
| 870 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland Complex | E | complex | 5,295 | 215 | 4.1 |
| 871 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 11,377 | 669 | 5.9 |
| 872 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland / Black Box Chenopod Woodland Complex | E | complex | 14,898 | 858 | 5.8 |
| 300 | Reed Swamp | V | EVC | 461 | 395 | 85.6 |
| 873 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Black Box Chenopod Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 6,098 | 62 | 1.0 |
| 255 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverine Sedgy Forest / Wetland Mosaic | D | mosaic | 51,374 | 36,799 | 71.6 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 295 | Riverine Grassy Woodland | D | EVC | 16,455 | 2,344 | 14.2 |
| 289 | Moira Plain Wetland | LC | EVC | 2,295 | 2,039 | 88.8 |
| | Goldfields | | | | | |
| 19 | Riparian Shrubland | E | EVC | 13 | 3 | 26.0 |
| 55 | Plains Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 8,672 | 396 | 4.6 |
| 56 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland | E | EVC | 31 | 11 | 34.5 |
| 65 | Sedge-rich Woodland | E | EVC | 118 | 3 | 2.3 |
| 68 | Creekline Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 2,805 | 970 | 34.6 |
| 74 | Wetland Formation | E | veg group | 241 | 141 | 58.3 |
| 76 | Low Rises Grassy Woodland / Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 767 | 27 | 3.5 |
| 77 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 53 | 0 | 0.8 |
| 83 | Swampy Riparian Woodland | E | EVC | 4 | 1 | 28.9 |
| 125 | Plains Grassy Wetland | E | EVC | 7 | 1 | 9.7 |
| 127 | Valley Heathy Forest | E | EVC | 479 | 30 | 6.3 |
| 175 | Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 32,223 | 1,114 | 3.5 |
| 235 | Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 1,856 | 329 | 17.7 |
| 252 | Low Rises Grassy Woodland / Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland | E | c/m (Gmp) | 55 | 10 | 18.4 |
| 255 | Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverine Sedgy Forest / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 67 | 35 | 53.1 |
| 261 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 256 | 7 | 2.7 |
| 263 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassland / Plains Grassy Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 101 | 1 | 0.9 |
| 264 | Sand Ridge Woodland | E | EVC | 136 | 36 | 26.5 |
| 267 | Plains Grassland / Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 17 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 269 | Riparian Shrubland / Swampy Riparian Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 1 | 0 | 2.3 |
| 273 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassland / Gilgai Plains Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 125 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 292 | Red Gum Wetland | E | EVC | 174 | 42 | 24.3 |
| 294 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Gilgai Plains Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 10 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 333 | Red Gum Wetland / Plains Grassy Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 8 | 1 | 8.2 |
| 47 | Valley Grassy Forest | V | EVC | 2,861 | 247 | 8.6 |
| 48 | Heathy Woodland | V | EVC | 26 | 21 | 81.8 |
| 67 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland | V | EVC | 2,715 | 558 | 20.5 |
| 71 | Hills Herb-rich Woodland | V | EVC | 8 | 8 | 100.0 |
| 79 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Heathy Dry Forest Mosaic | V | mosaic | 4 | 0 | 4.5 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 81 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 783 | 45 | 5.8 |
| 257 | Gravelly-sediment Broombush Mallee / Box Ironbark Forest Mosaic | V | mosaic | 4,585 | 734 | 16.0 |
| 890 | Valley Grass Forest / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 655 | 27 | 4.1 |
| 22 | Grassy Dry Forest | D | EVC | 3,074 | 373 | 12.1 |
| 61 | Box Ironbark Forest | D | EVC | 96,702 | 53,842 | 55.7 |
| 69 | Metamorphic Slopes Shrubby Woodland | D | EVC | 21 | 21 | 100.0 |
| 70 | Hillcrest Herb-rich Woodland | D | EVC | 5 | 5 | 100.0 |
| 93 | Broombush Mallee | D | EVC | 1,265 | 1,209 | 95.5 |
| 20 | Heathy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 9,288 | 5,227 | 56.3 |
| Central Victorian Uplands | | | | | | |
| 3 | Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland | E | EVC | 5,657 | 437 | 7.7 |
| 19 | Riparian Shrubland | E | EVC | 450 | 167 | 37.1 |
| 55 | Plains Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 63,191 | 926 | 1.5 |
| 56 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland | E | EVC | 24,872 | 2,041 | 8.2 |
| 68 | Creekline Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 2,507 | 157 | 6.3 |
| 74 | Wetland Formation | E | veg group | 348 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 80 | Spring-soak Woodland | E | EVC | 38 | 10 | 26.8 |
| 81 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 254 | 28 | 11.0 |
| 82 | Riverine Escarpment Scrub | E | EVC | 1,499 | 19 | 1.3 |
| 83 | Swampy Riparian Woodland | E | EVC | 807 | 113 | 14.0 |
| 125 | Plains Grassy Wetland | E | EVC | 10 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 126 | Swampy Riparian Complex | E | complex | 5,100 | 509 | 10.0 |
| 127 | Valley Heathy Forest | E | EVC | 2,730 | 267 | 9.8 |
| 175 | Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 73,788 | 1,963 | 2.7 |
| 235 | Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 1,625 | 1 | 0.1 |
| 250 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland / Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 704 | 6 | 0.9 |
| 254 | Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland / Valley Grassy Forest Complex | E | complex | 152 | 7 | 4.3 |
| 261 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 273 | 17 | 6.1 |
| 262 | Slopes Box Grassy Woodland / Box Ironbark Forest Complex | E | complex | 1,391 | 71 | 5.1 |
| 263 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassland / Plains Grassy Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 173 | 1 | 0.8 |
| 269 | Riparian Shrubland / Swampy Riparian Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 140 | 17 | 11.9 |
| 271 | Grassy Woodland / Valley Grassy Forest Complex | E | complex | 157 | 0 | 0.0 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 272 | Swampy Riparian Woodland / Spring-soak Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 54 | 8 | 14.4 |
| 274 | Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassy Woodland Complex | E | complex | 51 | 0 | 0.2 |
| 7 | Clay Heathland | V | EVC | 1 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 18 | Riparian Forest | V | EVC | 3,690 | 978 | 26.5 |
| 47 | Valley Grassy Forest | V | EVC | 136,998 | 7,992 | 5.8 |
| 61 | Box Ironbark Forest | V | EVC | 14,238 | 1,004 | 7.1 |
| 72 | Granitic Hills Woodland | V | EVC | 4,732 | 1,259 | 26.6 |
| 84 | Riparian Forest / Swampy Riparian Woodland / Riparian Shrubland / Riverine Escarpment Scrub Mosaic | V | mosaic | 768 | 56 | 7.3 |
| 237 | Riparian Forest / Swampy Riparian Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 471 | 26 | 5.6 |
| 241 | Valley Grassy Forest / Plains Grassy Woodland Complex | V | complex | 738 | 4 | 0.5 |
| 244 | Granitic Hills Woodland / Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 172 | 22 | 12.5 |
| 245 | Granitic Hills Woodland / Heathy Dry Forest Mosaic | V | mosaic | 12 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 247 | Box Ironbark Forest / Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 210 | 7 | 3.4 |
| 268 | Valley Grassy Forest / Slopes Box Grassy Woodland Complex | V | complex | 47 | 4 | 8.6 |
| 293 | Riparian Forest / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 155 | 3 | 2.2 |
| 22 | Grassy Dry Forest | D | EVC | 113,164 | 45,599 | 40.3 |
| 23 | Herb-rich Foothill Forest | D | EVC | 39,154 | 17,630 | 45.0 |
| 48 | Heathy Woodland | D | EVC | 21 | 10 | 47.4 |
| 174 | Grassy Dry Forest / Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | D | mosaic | 1,016 | 185 | 18.2 |
| 248 | Grassy Dry Forest / Granitic Hills Woodland Complex | D | complex | 392 | 64 | 16.4 |
| 27 | Blackthorn Scrub | R | EVC | 103 | 27 | 26.5 |
| 20 | Heathy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 17,981 | 8,195 | 45.6 |
| 21 | Shrubby Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 1,772 | 1,049 | 59.2 |
| 29 | Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 829 | 687 | 82.9 |
| 73 | Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | LC | mosaic | 266 | 131 | 49.3 |
| 296 | Unclassified Foothill Forest | LC | no EVC id. | 36 | 1 | 1.9 |
| Northern Inland Slopes | | | | | | |
| 125 | Plains Grassy Wetland | X | EVC | 13 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 868 | Pine Box Woodland | X | EVC | 808 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 47 | Valley Grassy Forest | E | EVC | 671 | 254 | 37.9 |
| 55 | Plains Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 4,993 | 41 | 0.8 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 56 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland | E | EVC | 19 | 2 | 11.6 |
| 67 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland | E | EVC | 1,501 | 11 | 0.7 |
| 68 | Creekline Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 337 | 41 | 12.2 |
| 74 | Wetland Formation | E | veg group | 179 | 21 | 11.9 |
| 76 | Low Rises Grassy Woodland / Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 344 | 8 | 2.3 |
| 79 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Heathy Dry Forest Mosaic | E | mosaic | 81 | 59 | 73.2 |
| 80 | Spring-soak Woodland | E | EVC | 108 | 17 | 16.0 |
| 81 | Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland / Creekline Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 220 | 7 | 3.1 |
| 175 | Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 46,632 | 821 | 1.8 |
| 234 | Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland / Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 7 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 235 | Gilgai Plain Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 1,374 | 12 | 0.9 |
| 254 | Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland / Valley Grassy Forest Complex | E | complex | 23 | 4 | 16.5 |
| 291 | Cane Grass Wetland | E | EVC | 9 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 292 | Red Gum Wetland | E | EVC | 93 | 42 | 45.0 |
| 294 | Plains Grassy Woodland / Gilgai Plains Woodland / Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 871 | 1 | 0.1 |
| 333 | Red Gum Wetland / Plains Grassy Wetland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 2 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 867 | Pine Box Woodland / Riverina Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic | E | mosaic | 339 | 0 | 0.1 |
| 61 | Box Ironbark Forest | V | EVC | 24,082 | 2,262 | 9.4 |
| 247 | Box Ironbark Forest / Shrubby Granitic-outwash Grassy Woodland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 717 | 9 | 1.3 |
| 22 | Grassy Dry Forest | D | EVC | 427 | 318 | 74.4 |
| 73 | Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | D | mosaic | 167 | 83 | 49.7 |
| 93 | Broombush Mallee | D | EVC | 31 | 17 | 53.5 |
| 20 | Heathy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 2,532 | 2,310 | 91.2 |
| 72 | Granitic Hills Woodland | LC | EVC | 6,008 | 3,522 | 58.6 |
| 244 | Granitic Hills Woodland / Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | LC | mosaic | 139 | 119 | 85.3 |
| Highlands - Southern Fall | | | | | | |
| 31 | Cool Temperate Rainforest | V | EVC | 6 | 6 | 100.0 |
| 16 | Lowland Forest | LC | EVC | 8 | 9 | 111.2 |
| 22 | Grassy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 3 | 2 | 73.3 |
| 23 | Herb-rich Foothill Forest | LC | EVC | 159 | 145 | 91.1 |
| 29 | Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 511 | 505 | 98.8 |
| 30 | Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 175 | 169 | 96.3 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 36 | Montane Dry Woodland | LC | EVC | 4 | 4 | 100.0 |
| 38 | Montane Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 15 | 15 | 100.0 |
| 39 | Montane Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 2 | 2 | 99.9 |
| 45 | Shrubby Foothill Forest | LC | EVC | 87 | 48 | 54.6 |
| | | | | | | |
| Highlands - Northern Fall | | | | | | |
| 47 | Valley Grassy Forest | E | EVC | 2,879 | 553 | 19.2 |
| 55 | Plains Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 94 | 1 | 1.1 |
| 56 | Floodplain Riparian Woodland | E | EVC | 64 | 3 | 5.0 |
| 68 | Creekline Grassy Woodland | E | EVC | 1 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 127 | Valley Heathy Forest | E | EVC | 645 | 23 | 3.5 |
| 185 | Perched Boggy Shrubland Complex | E | complex | 548 | 95 | 17.3 |
| 7 | Clay Heathland | V | EVC | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 17 | Riparian Scrub Complex | V | complex | 39 | 15 | 38.8 |
| 31 | Cool Temperate Rainforest | V | EVC | 2,738 | 2,714 | 99.1 |
| 59 | Riparian Thicket | V | EVC | 855 | 555 | 65.0 |
| 83 | Swampy Riparian Woodland | V | EVC | 1,752 | 558 | 31.9 |
| 126 | Swampy Riparian Complex | V | complex | 3,842 | 354 | 9.2 |
| 191 | Riparian Scrub | V | EVC | ? | 5 | ? |
| 212 | Swampy Riparian Woodland / Perched Boggy Shrubland Mosaic | V | mosaic | 1,354 | 347 | 25.6 |
| 45 | Shrubby Foothill Forest | D | EVC | 4,618 | 2,291 | 49.6 |
| 48 | Heathy Woodland | D | EVC | 37 | 37 | 100.0 |
| 84 | Riparian Forest / Swampy Riparian Woodland / Riparian Shrubland / Riverine Escarpment Scrub Mosaic | D | mosaic | 633 | 309 | 48.9 |
| 175 | Grassy Woodland | D | EVC | 456 | 148 | 32.5 |
| 27 | Blackthorn Scrub | R | EVC | 204 | 185 | 90.6 |
| 73 | Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | R | mosaic | 377 | 259 | 68.6 |
| 16 | Lowland Forest | LC | EVC | 1,364 | 1,029 | 75.5 |
| 18 | Riparian Forest | LC | EVC | 19,625 | 15,907 | 81.1 |
| 20 | Heathy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 17,731 | 16,538 | 93.3 |
| 21 | Shrubby Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 44,187 | 33,520 | 75.9 |
| 22 | Grassy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 19,284 | 23,576 | 122.3 |
| 23 | Herb-rich Foothill Forest | LC | EVC | 280,723 | 184,556 | 65.7 |
| 29 | Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 73,824 | 69,701 | 94.4 |
| 30 | Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 30,375 | 29,919 | 98.5 |
| 36 | Montane Dry Woodland | LC | EVC | 3,406 | 3,406 | 100.0 |
| 38 | Montane Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 1,576 | 1,576 | 100.0 |
| 39 | Montane Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 864 | 864 | 100.0 |
| 41 | Montane Riparian Thicket | LC | EVC | 290 | 242 | 83.4 |
| 43 | Sub-alpine Woodland | LC | EVC | 14 | 14 | 100.0 |
| 72 | Granitic Hills Woodland | LC | EVC | 63 | 29 | 46.8 |

| Map Unit no. | Map Unit Description | EVC Bior. Cons Status | Map Unit Type | Pre 1750 Area (ha) | Total Extant Area (ha) | % remaining in the GBCMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 174 | Grassy Dry Forest / Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | LC | mosaic | 5 | 5 | 86.0 |
| 201 | Shrubby Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 104 | 105 | 100.0 |
| 296 | Unclassified Foothill Forest | LC | no EVC id. | 502 | 15 | 3.0 |
| Victorian Alps | | | | | | |
| 44 | Treeless Sub-alpine Mosaic | V | mosaic | 1,083 | 1,026 | 94.8 |
| 83 | Swampy Riparian Woodland | V | EVC | 9 | 9 | 100.0 |
| 31 | Cool Temperate Rainforest | R | EVC | 2,543 | 2,543 | 100.0 |
| 73 | Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland Mosaic | R | mosaic | 22 | 22 | 100.0 |
| 18 | Riparian Forest | LC | EVC | 143 | 143 | 100.0 |
| 20 | Heathy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 49 | 49 | 100.0 |
| 21 | Shrubby Dry Forest | LC | EVC | 808 | 804 | 99.6 |
| 22 | Grassy Dry Forest | LC | EVC | ? | 3 | ? |
| 23 | Herb-rich Foothill Forest | LC | EVC | 2,564 | 2,557 | 99.7 |
| 29 | Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 2,615 | 2,615 | 100.0 |
| 30 | Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 1,842 | 1,842 | 100.0 |
| 35 | Tableland Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 1 | 1 | 100.0 |
| 36 | Montane Dry Woodland | LC | EVC | 28,171 | 28,171 | 100.0 |
| 38 | Montane Damp Forest | LC | EVC | 23,179 | 22,914 | 98.9 |
| 39 | Montane Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 17,008 | 17,002 | 100.0 |
| 41 | Montane Riparian Thicket | LC | EVC | 1,145 | 1,145 | 100.0 |
| 43 | Sub-alpine Woodland | LC | EVC | 9,191 | 9,162 | 99.7 |
| 192 | Montane Rocky Shrubland | LC | EVC | 2 | 2 | 100.0 |
| 201 | Shrubby Wet Forest | LC | EVC | 9 | 9 | 100.0 |

Key to EVC Bioregional Conservation Status:
X Extinct
E Endangered
V Vulnerable
D Depleted
R Rare
LC Least Concern

See Glossary for a description of each map unit type.

# Appendix 8 Status of Issues Raised in Submissions on Draft Volume 2

Submissions on the Draft Volume 2 were received in December 2000. These were reviewed and compiled at the time however revisions to the Draft were not made until Victoria's Native Vegetation – A Framework for Action (2002) was finalised and released. This was to ensure the Regional Guidelines reflected current State policy. Since the release of the Draft a great deal of progress has been made on many of the issues raised as summarised below. Amendments have been made to Volume 2 based on the original submissions and other developments.

## Table 7: Status of issues raised in submissions on Draft Volume 2

| Major issue | Response |
|---|---|
| Net Gain/ Replacement Ratios<br>•Defining & quantifying<br>• Appropriate offsets<br>• Applying net gain | A consistent approach to replacement ratios has been in place across the Catchment since late 2000. The replacement ratios outlined in the Draft Volume 2 were endorsed by the three Implementation Committees as an interim arrangement until Volume 2 was finalised. Statewide Operational Guidelines for Achieving Net Gain in Planning Decisions are being developed by DSE. There is a Reference Group overseeing this process with representatives from VFF (2), Environment Victoria and five local governments (including the Shire of Campaspe from the Goulburn Broken Catchment). These are due to be finalised in 2004. |
| Monitoring & enforcement of vegetation clearing permits and offsets | Local government is responsible for monitoring and compliance of permit conditions (including offsets). DSE have developed a Native Vegetation Permit Tracking System for recording all NVR applications. This is being rolled out across DPI/DSE this year. A reduced version has been trialled in six local governments across the State. Funding and has been obtained for delivery to all local governments across the State. |
| More resources for local government in relation to vegetation issues<br>• Support<br>• Training<br>• Mapping | Funding to employ a Native Vegetation Officer (NVO) has been provided for each Catchment. The NVO is employed by DPI and a key part of their role is to provide training and support for local government in relation to native vegetation issues.<br>The broader issue of resourcing will continue to be worked on by local government with assistance from DSE, DPI and the GBCMA.<br>The Municipal Association of Victoria has received funding to run training for councillors on Native Vegetation Retention Controls (NVR).<br>Local government needs access to relevant vegetation mapping. EVC and tree cover mapping was sent to all municipalities across the State by DSE in 2003. |
| Native Vegetation Retention Controls need to be reviewed<br>• Exemptions<br>• Referral trigger | The State Government, through DSE, is planning a review of the Victorian Planning Provisions which will include the exemptions in relation to the Native Vegetation Retention Controls. The aim of the review is to better align the Victorian Planning Provisions with current Government policy relating to native vegetation. The review is underway. |
| Self Assessment process<br>• Knowledge gap in relation to vegetation issues | Local government and DPI training in Habitat Hectares is underway. The NVO is driving this training. Continual education process – DPI, DSE, GBCMA, local government involved. Self-assessment form (Native Vegetation Management Workbook) developed and in use. |
| Definition of roles/ responsibilities | Included in revised Volume 2. |
| Guidelines are required for assessment of applications | Operational Guidelines for Achieving Net Gain in Planning Decisions to be finalised in 2004. Field Manual for Habitat hectare is being developed. Native Vegetation Management workbook available. NVO working on consistent response in regards to conditions for permits, across Catchment. |
| Best Management Practices and Roadside Management Plans | Most local governments now have Roadside Management Plans. Those that don't are seeking funding. Some current ones being updated.<br>Native Vegetation Officer (DPI) is working with Local Government and has organised roadside vegetation management workshop. Pursuing options to develop further (requires funding). |
| General Community training/awareness | Ongoing. Joint effort by DSE, DPI, local government and the GBCMA. |

# Appendix 9 Further Planning Context for Native Vegetation Retention Controls in Victoria

### *Native Vegetation Management in Victoria*

Native vegetation plays a crucial role in the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of our community. By providing shelter for stock and crops, reducing salinity and erosion, contributing to clean water, providing habitat for native plants and animals, creating attractive settings for recreation and drawing tourists, native vegetation provides a range of services from which we all benefit. Native vegetation also provides many other benefits that are often difficult to see or measure. Native vegetation gives landscapes distinctive character and appearance, the 'bush' has important cultural significance and is part of our identity as Australians.

Through the development of institutional and strategic arrangements, Australia and particularly Victoria, now has a framework in which to plan and implement native vegetation management.

### *Victorian Planning Provisions and the State Planning Policy Framework*

The Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs) provide a standard format for all Victorian Planning Schemes. Within the VPPs the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) sets out principles for land use and development planning and policies for settlement, environment, management of resources, infrastructure, economic well-being, social needs and regional co-operation. Specific policies encompass objectives, generic implementation techniques applying across Victoria. The objective of the Conservation of Native Flora and Fauna Policy (15.09) is:

*'To assist the protection and conservation of biodiversity, including native vegetation retention and provision of habitats for native plants and animals and control of pest plants and animals.'*

The general implementation instructs the responsible authority to have regard to a range of National, State and regional strategies, particularly Victoria's Framework, Native Vegetation Plans and Roadside Management Strategies. It states that

*'If native vegetation is proposed to be removed as part of a land use or development proposal, planning and responsible authorities should achieve a Net Gain outcome, as defined in the Framework. This is achieved firstly, as a priority, by avoiding adverse impacts, particularly native vegetation clearance; secondly, if impacts cannot be avoided, by minimising impacts through appropriate consideration in planning processes and expert input into project design or management; and thirdly, by identifying appropriate offset actions.'*

The objective of the policy on protection of Catchments, Waterways and Ground Water (15.01) is *'To assist the protection and, where possible, restoration of catchments, waterways, water bodies groundwater, and the marine environment.'*

Under this policy, planning authorities must again have regard to relevant aspects of the Native Vegetation Plans.

The SPPF also states that decision making by planning and responsible authorities should:

- Assist the protection of conservation values of national parks and conservation reserves.
- Assist the conservation of the habitats of threatened and endangered species and communities as identified under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, including under-represented vegetation types such as native grasslands, grassy woodlands and wetlands.
- Address potential threatening processes identified under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.
- Assist re-establishment of links between isolated habitat remnants.

Planning and responsible authorities must take account of, and give effect to, both the general principles and the specific policies applicable to issues before them. The SPPF seeks to ensure that the objectives of planning as described in s4 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987) in Victoria are fostered. One of these objectives is:

*'To provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity'*

### *Municipal Strategic Statements*

The Local Planning Policy Framework contains the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Local Policies. The MSS contains the strategic planning, land use and development objectives of the Council and spells out:

- Strategies for achieving objectives.
- Opportunities and constraints which provide a context for local planning decisions.
- Demonstrated links between the municipality's strategic planning, the regional context and the SPPF.
- An explanation of the relationship between the objectives, strategies and controls on use and developments.

Local Policies provide detailed directions mainly regarding land use and sometimes regarding development. They either relate to specific areas or local issues and should have their origins in the MSS. The VPP has also introduced a standard set of Zones that control the use of land and Overlays that generally control development of land and sometimes use of land.

### *Native Vegetation Retention Controls*

The Native Vegetation Retention controls (NVR) were established under the provisions of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and introduced into the State Section of all Victorian Planning Schemes in 1989. The NVR were first introduced to limit broad-scale clearing of native vegetation.

The aims of the NVR are:

- The protection of native vegetation,
- The protection of habitat for flora and fauna,
- A reduction of the impacts of land and water degradation.

While the NVR were successful at reducing broad scale clearing at a State wide level, the incremental removal of small stands of vegetation and scattered trees, often the only native vegetation left on private land, continues to be a major issue.

In the decade since the NVR were introduced, there have been significant changes in community attitudes concerning environmental issues. Increasing community expectation necessitates the responsible management of all our natural resources, including native vegetation, to ensure their sustainable use for the benefit of the whole community. Over this period there has also been considerable development of the institutional, strategic and policy framework which underpins natural resource management.

Under Clause 52.17, a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation (subject to a range of exemptions designed to facilitate normal domestic and rural practices). "Native vegetation" is defined as all plants that are indigenous to Victoria, including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses.

These native vegetation provisions have the stated purpose

*'To protect and conserve native vegetation to reduce the impact of land and water degradation and provide habitat for plants and animals.'*

The decision guidelines for permits required under Clause 52.17 require the responsible authority to consider, among a range of other things, Victoria's Framework and the approved Native Vegetation Plan.

### *Catchment and Land Protection Act and Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy*

The Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 established the framework for communities and government agencies to work together to improve the quality and productivity capacity of natural resources on a regional catchment basis.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority was established in 1997 to integrate and deliver land and water management programs in the Goulburn Broken Catchment. It has statutory functions including waterway management, floodplain management and regional drainage.

In partnership with the State Government agencies and the community, it is responsible for implementing, monitoring and reporting on its Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). The RCS provides priorities and objectives for the quality of land and water resources in the region. The vision for the GBCMA is:

*A catchment recognised locally, nationally and internationally for quality agricultural produce and where community values contribute to the benefits of abundant and well-maintained environmental assets used for tourism and recreational activities.*

*The environmental footprint of irrigation and dryland farming will be significantly reduced, with farmers occupying less land and using less water whilst managing their resources more sustainably. New opportunities will arise for increasing the ecosystem services provided by the land retired from agriculture and by improved environmental flows.*

*The region's economy will be robust, with much of the agricultural produce processed within the region, generating employment and wealth creation opportunities for a regional community actively engaging in natural resource management programs.*

The RCS highlights important biodiversity assets and recognises that declining biodiversity is a high priority issue.

Volume 1 - Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy (2000) provides a strategic regional framework on which to base the future management of native vegetation in the Goulburn Broken Catchment. It sets out Resource Condition Targets (long-term Goals) for native vegetation management in the catchment. Resource Condition Target 1 (Goal 1) of the Strategy encompasses the principle of Net Gain

*'Maintain extent of all native vegetation types at 1999 levels in keeping with the goal of Net Gain listed in Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy (1997)'*

The Strategy states that the onus should be on the proponent for any clearing of native vegetation to demonstrate compliance with the principles of Net Gain.

The Strategy places emphasis on protecting and managing existing vegetation as the most cost effective and practical action to protect the nature conservation values of the region.

# Appendix 10

## NVR Roles and Responsibilities

### *Local Government*

Local government in Victoria has relatively broad powers in relation to environmental control, protection and conservation. The primary mechanism for vegetation protection by local government is through its administration of the Victoria Planning Provisions. It has primary responsibility for the administration of Clause 52.17 - Native Vegetation (known as the Native Vegetation Retention Controls) which requires that a permit application be made to clear native vegetation.

Local government is responsible for developing, administering and enforcing its own planning scheme. The planning scheme sets out policies and requirements for the use, development and protection of land. Through the application of zones and overlays, the planning scheme also states which activities, development or uses of land require a planning permit. In assessing a planning permit application a council must consider, among other things, the environmental impact of a proposal.

### *Landholders*

Landholders must seek permission to clear native vegetation in accordance with the NVR.
Duty of Care: General duties of a landowner include those identified in Section 20 (1) of the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act):

"In relation to his or her land (where land includes soil, water, vegetation and fauna on land) a landowner must take all reasonable steps to -

a. avoid causing or contributing to land degradation which causes or may cause damage to another landowner; and
b. conserve soil; and
c. protect water resources; and
d. eradicate regionally prohibited weeds; and
e. prevent the growth and spread of regionally controlled weeds; and
f. prevent the spread of, and as far as possible eradicate, established pest animals."

As the CaLP Act does not contain a specific duty of care for native vegetation, Victoria's Framework has clarified that "Land managers have a responsibility to retain native vegetation" but that "public resources are to be directed to increasing the extent of native vegetation or to enhancing the quality of native vegetation through appropriate management".

### *Department of Sustainability and Environment*

- DSE is the main State Government department responsible for the administration and the management of Victoria's natural resources and public lands.
- It has policy responsibility for native vegetation management and oversees the implementation of the Government's native vegetation management programs. These programs are delivered through the direct management of public lands and through provision of technical advice and financial support programs for private land programs.
- DSE, through its administration of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988), is a referral authority for some categories of planning permit applications for the removal of native vegetation. This means that, in cases where this referral is triggered, Councils administering the NVR controls must follow the DSE's advice in determining a planning application.
- It has responsibility for the development of State planning policy, administration of the planning system in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
- It has responsibility for the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP), the set of standard planning provisions that provide the standard format for all planning schemes in Victoria.
- In the 'State Planning Agenda - a sensible balance' released by the Minister for Planning in December 1999, the Government indicated its commitment to reversing the decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation in Victoria. As part of this commitment, the Department of Infrastructure is reviewing the Victoria Planning Provisions as they relate to native vegetation retention to give effect to the principles in Victoria's Framework. A discussion paper will be released after the practical methods of application of the key concepts have been demonstrated.
- DSE has responsibility for administering the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988).

### *Department of Environment and Heritage (Commonwealth Government Department)*

- Department of Environment and Heritage has responsibility for administering the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999).

### *Department of Primary Industries*

- DPI is the principal government agency for delivering services to rural Victoria. As such, DPI has a service agreement with DSE to implement the Victoria's Framework and provide native vegetation assessment services to DSE.
- Enforcement of the CaLP Act (1994), in relation to pest plants and animals.

*Catchment Management Authority*

- Responsible for the development and implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategy which is designed to foster ecologically sustainable development of regions.
- A key component of the RCS is the Native Vegetation Plan.
- The Native Vegetation Plan provides detail to support implementation of Victoria's Framework, specifically in relation to offset requirements for some circumstances of tree removal.
- CMAs guide the implementation of catchment priorities through advice to the State and Federal Government and Regional Assessment Panels on regional priorities for funding.
- Responsible for reporting on the condition of the Catchment every five years.
- Development of Special Area Plans under the CaLP Act, 1994.

# Appendix 11

## Websites with Relevant Native Vegetation Information

*Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority*

www.gbcma.vic.gov.au
Includes Goulburn Broken Revegetation Guide, Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan – Volume 1 Native Vegetation Management Strategy & Volume 2 (this document) and Biodiversity Action Planning.

*Department of Sustainability and Environment*

www.dse.vic.gov.au
Includes Living Systems Project, Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action.

*Greening Australia*

www.greeningaustralia.org.au
Includes information on training and education for vegetation management.

*Trust for Nature*

www.tfn.org.au
Includes information on placing permanent protection covenants over areas of land.

*Victorian Resources Online*

www.dse.vic.gov.au/vro
Includes maps and natural resource asset information for the Victoria and the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

*Department of Primary Industries*

www.dpi.vic.gov.au
Includes landcare notes and information on managing native vegetation in agricultural enterprises.

*Department of Environment and Heritage*

www.deh.gov.au
Includes information on Nationally threatened species and communities and the EPBC Act.

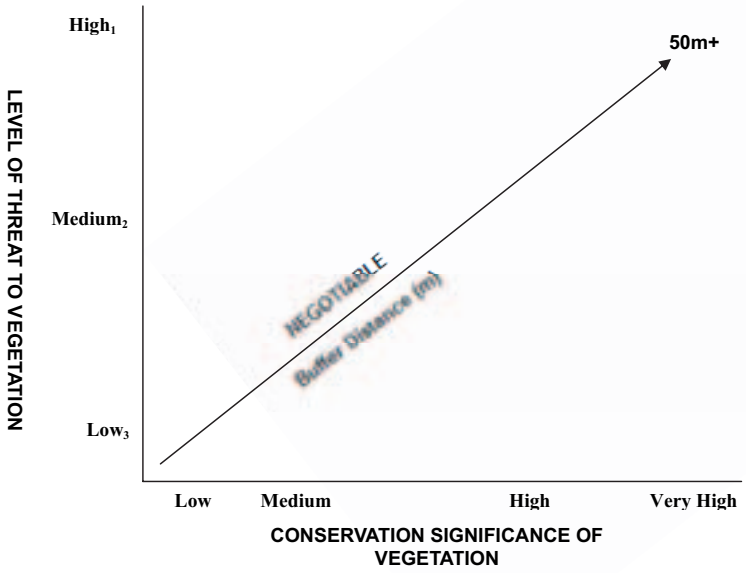
# Appendix 12

## Applying Buffers

This diagram illustrates how buffers can be used to reduce the risks to native vegetation values where there may be impacts from adjacent threatening activities.

The best way to protect significant vegetation adjacent to areas of development is to retain a buffer between the areas of at least 30 m width, and preferably 50 m or more, where possible.

It should be noted that there is no relationship between a potentially threatening activity and the conservation significance of vegetation i.e. a high threat activity may impact upon vegetation of any conservation significance.




1. High threats include:
   - Agricultural systems that have high inputs including high stocking rates, irrigation, fertiliser application, use of chemicals, insecticides or pesticides.
   - Use of plants known to be highly invasive environmental weeds such as Phalaris, Tagasaste or Olives.
   - Examples of a high threat system would be an irrigated orchard, dairy or vineyard.
2. Medium threats include:
   - Moderate input systems such as irrigated annual cropping or that which involves soil compaction.
3. Low threats include:
   - Low input systems such as dryland cropping or mixed grazing enterprises.

# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| Biodiversity (or biological diversity) | The natural variety of life forms: The sum of all our native species of flora and fauna, the genetic variation within them, their habitats, and the ecosystems of which they are an integral part. |
| Bioregions | Biogeographic areas that capture the patterns of ecological characteristics in the landscape, providing a natural framework for recognising and responding to biodiversity values. |
| Broad Vegetation Types (BVT) | A classification that provides a simplified view of vegetation based on land system or biophysical attributes (such as geology, rainfall, elevation, soil type and landform). Each Broad Vegetation Type will contain a mixture of EVCs, often in a recognisable pattern, however any one EVC can occur in more than one BVT. |
| CAMBA | Chinese-Australian Migratory Bird Agreement. |
| Complex | Areas in the landscape where the floristic components of different EVCs are unable to be distinguished accurately and therefore cannot be plotted accurately on maps as a specific EVC. |
| Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) | A type of native vegetation classification that is described through a combination of its floristic, life form, and ecological characteristics, and through an inferred fidelity to particular environmental attributes. Each EVC includes a collection of floristic communities (i.e. a lower level in the classification that is based solely on groups of the same species) that occur across a biogeographic range, and although differing in species, have similar habitat and ecological processes operating. |
| Habitat hectare | A site-based measure of quality and quantity of native vegetation that is assessed in the context of the relevant native vegetation type. |
| JAMBA | Japanese-Australian Migratory Bird Agreement. |
| Large trees | Trees that are ≥ 1 x benchmark of large trees in the benchmark for that particular EVC. |
| Medium trees | Trees that are ≥ 0.75 x benchmark of large trees in the benchmark for that particular EVC. |
| Mosaic | Refers to areas in the landscape where one EVC is broken up with smaller areas of another EVC. Due to the scale of current maps produced, these EVCs are unable to be distinguished and the whole area is referred to as a mosaic. |
| Net Gain | Is where, over a specified area and period of time, losses of native vegetation and habitat, as measured by a combined quality-quantity measure (habitat hectare), are reduced, minimised and more than offset by commensurate gains. |
| Native vegetation management scales | Regional (or catchment) scale management refers to areas ranging from tens to hundreds of kilometres across, and involves the co-ordination of processes to engage the broad range of landholders, organised interest groups and government agencies. A perspective at this level facilitates medium to long term strategic planning for sustainable land and water management, and for conservation reserve systems.<br>Landscape scale management refers to areas from several kilometres to tens of kilometres across, usually involving a number of properties and individual land managers. At this level, consideration can be given effectively to differences in native vegetation type, coverage and quality, including spatial configuration and connectivity of habitats, and other factors influencing biodiversity and land protection in the local landscape.<br>Patch (or block) scale management relates to a discrete stand of native vegetation usually within a single rural property, and focuses on the size, shape and location of the patch and on the type(s) of vegetation. This level permits useful insight into how to best protect or enhance the value of patches as habitat and/or for land protection.<br>Site scale management refers to highly localised activities that may influence the characteristics of vegetation occurring within or adjacent to a patch. Such activities include planting, direct seeding or regeneration of vegetation, as well as weed control or thinning in established vegetation. |

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| Old trees | Individuals of key long-lived dominant tree species (as specified in the relevant EVC benchmark) that are greater than certain diameters (for large or medium) at 1.3 m above ground level. |
| Victoria's Framework | Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action, 2002. |
| The Guidelines | Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan, Volume 2 - Regional Guidelines for Native Vegetation Retention Controls, 2003. |
| Victorian Planning Provisions | Standard format and controls for all Victorian planning schemes. |

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