

Roadside Vegetation Strategy

June 2012



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1. Introduction

The *East Gippsland Shire Council Plan 2009-13* is built on the corner-stones of Liveability, Sustainability, Productivity and Governance. This strategy is developed within the Council Plan's strategic objective for Sustainability. Identified in the Council Plan as a high priority action to enable greater control of roadside weeds, improve protection of remnant vegetation and re-vegetation of degraded areas, the strategy also reflects changing roadside vegetation control practices in regard to fire safety considerations.

A sustainable vision for the future of East Gippsland recognises that the environment underpins everything we seek to achieve for our community and its economy. In 2030, East Gippsland will be recognised – more than ever – as a special place. Building on the traditional Aboriginal owners' identification with 'country' and awareness of its natural rhythms, as well as on the appreciation and scientific understanding developed by later residents and visitors, we will have learned how to manage our environment to ensure that its use is sustainable in the long term. We will also have put that knowledge into effect. (East Gippsland Shire Council *Unlocking the Future – Long Term Community Vision 2030*)

1.1 A Strategic Statement for Roadsides

Roadsides are a significant part of the Shire's economic, social, and ecological resources. East Gippsland Shire Council will maintain the essential function of roads and will optimise the contribution of roadsides to the conservation of biodiversity.

1.2 Scope of the Roadside Vegetation Strategy

This strategy considers the legislation, policy and management practices applicable to the rural roadsides of East Gippsland Shire. It identifies Council's statutory obligations, advises on laws relating to the use of road reserves and guides activities to ensure that the roadsides are sustainably managed. Roadsides are a community resource and many people have an interest in their management. East Gippsland Shire Council seeks to utilise that interest and to manage the values in consultation with all stakeholders.

East Gippsland Shire Council has a number of inter-related responsibilities for the management of roadsides. Other plans and strategies work together with this strategy, under the guidance of the *East Gippsland Shire Council Plan 2009-13*. They include: the *East Gippsland Planning Scheme*, the *East Gippsland Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*, the *Road Management Plan 2004* and the *East Gippsland Fire Management Plan 2011*.

1.3 Strategic Focus

There have been a number of new legislative requirements introduced since the release of East Gippsland Shire Council's *Roadside Management Plan 2003*. Review and updating is required to adapt to changing legislation, community values and expectations.

The focus of this strategy is on management of the values of remnant native vegetation located on roadsides.

1.4 Key Definition

For this Roadside Vegetation Strategy, 'roadside' generally means the land between the formed road or defined track and the adjoining parcels of land. It applies to rural roads managed by East Gippsland Shire Council. Excluded are roads under the direct control of VicRoads or the Department of Sustainability and Environment. Roads within urban areas and unused road reserves are not included.

1.5 Key Issues and Desired Outcomes

The purpose of this strategy is to address competing demands with potential for conflicting objectives or actions within the road reserve.

Roadside vegetation continues to be exposed to both incremental and total loss of quality and extent. Therefore, the intent of this strategy is to lead to the following outcomes, benefits and changes:

- Roadside vegetation and conservation values are protected by ensuring that all works and activities that occur on road reserves are of best practice.
- The unnecessary loss of conservation value is halted through increased awareness of the role and value of roadside vegetation to the whole community.
- Partnerships and custodianship approaches to roadside management are built with the involvement of community groups and stakeholder organisations.

2. Consultation and Communication

2.1 Long Term Community Vision

This Roadside Vegetation Strategy is developed within the corporate planning framework, which sets out the relationship between community and Council. It is guided by the long term community vision created following a forum conducted by East Gippsland Shire in July 2008. The forum, *Unlocking the Future – East Gippsland*, brought together a wide range of community members to provide inspiration and information for Council. Supported by over 100 participants, the forum resulted in the creation of the following vision: *“East Gippsland Shire Council will work with the community to ensure a sustainable future through liveable and productive communities supported by a healthy environment.”*

2.2 Consultation

This strategy has been prepared in consultation with Council staff to ensure that the broad directions proposed are consistent with current Council intentions and practices. It is based on previously adopted strategy which was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholder groups, with a further targeted round of consultation with stakeholders in November and December 2011.

Input has been provided by the Council's Environmental Sustainability Advisory Board. Comment was sought from relevant government agencies and interested community groups, as well as the wider community. A stakeholder engagement plan in line with Council Policy ensured that all interested parties had the opportunity to provide feedback on a draft version of this strategy. Council has considered all comments prior to final adoption.

2.3 Monitoring, Evaluation, Review

Monitoring the progress and success of this strategy is the responsibility of Council's Sustainability Unit. East Gippsland Shire Council's Environmental Sustainability Advisory Board will be kept informed of the implementation progress. An evaluation of actions from the Roadside Vegetation Strategy will be presented annually to Council as a report against the *Council Plan*.

Council will regularly review the Roadside Vegetation Strategy. Triggers for review may include:

- Audit of roadside conservation values and evaluation of the results (Action 5.)
- Change in the legislative framework.
- Change in community or stakeholder expectations.
- On advice from the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Board.
- Or after a period of four years in line with review of the *Council Plan*.

3. The Legislative Framework for Management of Roadsides

There are many Acts, Statutory Regulations, Codes of Practice and Government Policies which govern the management of roadsides and define the responsibilities of Council and partner resource management agencies and groups; agencies and groups such as the Department of Primary Industries, Landcare or CFA. The legislative framework for Council is described to help understand the rules that surround the management of roadsides and their vegetation. Legislation is however subject to change. Some of the Acts listed here are currently under review and may soon be replaced or amended.

3.1 The Road Management and Road Safety Acts

The *Road Management Act 2004* (the Act) was established to improve road management legislation to provide a more efficient and safer road network for all road users. It prescribes the regulations associated with the management and maintenance of roads within Victoria. The effects of the *Road Management Act* are to:

- Confirm the right of members of the public to travel on roads, and the right of property owners or occupiers of adjoining land to have access to the road.
- Provide a more efficient and safer road network across Victoria.
- Minimise disruption to traffic and ensure the safety of road users as a result of service authorities and others undertaking works on roads.

The Act requires that a person must not conduct any works in, on, under or over a municipal road, including the roadside, without the written consent of Council. This does not apply if the person is required to conduct the works specified in or under any other Act and the works are conducted in accordance with these requirements. The movement of stock on roads is not considered 'works'. There are exemptions for mowing nature strips and driveway works. Council is not responsible for driveways and pathways on road reserves that provide access to land adjoining a road. Property owners are responsible for maintaining their own driveways and their immediate surrounds.

It is necessary to obtain a permit for all other works including those directly affecting the road and for activity occurring in the road reserve (for example, trading or display of goods, collections for charity, a street party, clearing for fence lines, erecting temporary fences, ripping rabbit warrens, tree planting or fuel reduction burning) and fees may apply. There is exemption from the need to obtain permission in the case of emergency, although Council must be advised of such as soon as practicable.

The Act states that authorised uses must be managed to protect and preserve existing significant roadside vegetation and sites of biological significance within the road reserve.

East Gippsland Shire Council keeps a register of the public roads for which it is the coordinating road authority. This forms part of the *Road Management Plan 2004* and can be viewed on Council's website.

The *Road Management Plan* is the primary management document for operation of the Shire's roads. Routines for periodic planned maintenance or unplanned emergency works are specified to ensure the safety of traffic and to sustain the serviceability and appearance of the road and its associated facilities.

Examples of these activities include:

- Grading.
- Pothole patching and crack sealing.
- Roadside slashing.
- Culvert cleaning and cleaning of open drains.
- Rubbish removal within road reserves.
- Minor bridge maintenance such as tightening of fixtures and cleaning scuppers.
- Grinding of footpath trip hazards.
- Removal of other hazards.

A Code of Practice for Management of Infrastructure in Road Reserves 2008 has been established. The purpose of this Code is to provide practical guidance and identify benchmarks of good practice for utilities and road authorities, who are expected to work together cooperatively to facilitate the installation, maintenance and operation of road and non-road infrastructure within road reserves.

The *Road Safety Act 1986* applies to all activities deemed to be works under the *Road Management Act 2004*. It states that “a person to whom this section applies must ensure that the works or non-road activities are conducted in a manner that is safe for road users and persons engaged in carrying out the works or non-road activities”. The Act requires that to undertake works there must be:

- A traffic management plan in operation.
- Appropriate warnings to road users.
- Appropriately trained and qualified persons to carry out the works or manage the non-road activities or direct traffic.

3.2 Cultural, Heritage and Environmental Legislation

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007* provide for the protection and management of Victoria’s Aboriginal heritage. The processes link to the Planning Scheme system. The objectives of this Act are:

- To recognise, protect and conserve Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria in ways that are based on respect for Aboriginal knowledge and cultural and traditional practices; to recognise Aboriginal people as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- To accord appropriate status to Aboriginal people with traditional or familial links with Aboriginal cultural heritage in protecting that heritage.
- To promote the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage as an integral part of land and natural resource management.
- To promote public awareness and understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria.
- To establish an Aboriginal cultural heritage register to record Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- To establish processes for the timely and efficient assessment of activities that have the potential to harm Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- To promote the use of agreements that provide for the management and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

- To establish mechanisms that enable the resolution of disputes relating to the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- To provide appropriate sanctions and penalties to prevent harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The discovery of Aboriginal cultural heritage places or objects on any public or private land in Victoria is required to be reported to Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. Anyone who proposes to undertake activities that may potentially damage Aboriginal cultural places or objects should be aware of this legislation. The legislation provides protection for all Aboriginal places, objects and human remains regardless of their inclusion on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register or whether they are located on public or private land. The Act also provides clear guidance to planners and developers about when and how Aboriginal cultural heritage needs to be considered, and in some situations work cannot proceed until compliance is met.

The federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) promotes the conservation of biodiversity by providing strong protection for listed species and areas of national significance. Under the EPBC Act an action will require approval from the Minister if the action has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance. The EPBC Act can be triggered even when there are exemptions under state legislation. Constructing substantial new firebreaks in a nationally threatened ecological community is likely to require federal approval; however, routine activities such as fence line maintenance or fuel reduction burns done in accordance with state laws are unlikely to require approval by the federal government.

Actions are defined very broadly and may encompass all project stages, works or activities that may impact on the environment. Self-assessment guidelines to determine whether an action is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance are available. Substantial penalties for breaches apply; civil penalties up to \$5.5 million or criminal penalties up to seven years imprisonment. In the case of emergency bushfire suppression and containment activities, protecting life and property is always the overriding concern.

Matters of national environmental significance currently listed which may be affected by the management of East Gippsland roads are:

- 81 listed threatened species and 6 ecological communities.
- 53 migratory species protected under international agreements.
- Ramsar wetlands of international importance, particularly the Gippsland Lakes.
- The Australian Alps Parks and Reserves; a National Heritage place.

Sections of the EPBC Act exempt certain actions from the need for assessment and approval. These exemptions allow for the continuation of activities that were fully approved by state and local governments before 16 July 2000, the date of commencement of the EPBC Act, or otherwise lawful activities which have continued without substantial interruption.

Victoria's Native Vegetation Management - A Framework for Action 2002 is a state government document incorporated into the Victorian Planning Provisions. The primary goal identified by state policy for native vegetation management is a reversal across the

entire landscape, of the long-term decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation, leading to net gain. Under the Native Vegetation Framework, three steps are applied to the decision on the protection or removal of native vegetation:

- Where possible avoid the removal of native vegetation.
- Minimise the removal of native vegetation through appropriate planning and design.
- Appropriately offset the loss of native vegetation.

East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority provides additional local context with development of its *Native Vegetation Management Plan*, currently awaiting Ministerial approval.

East Gippsland Shire Council has an *Agreement on the Removal of Native Vegetation for Maintenance of Public Roads 2008* with the Department of Sustainability and Environment for a public roads planning permit exemption and practical approach for minor clearing of vegetation for road maintenance and safety needs.

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) (FFG Act). A Protected Flora Licence or Permit is required for any activity on roadsides (or other public land) which might kill, injure or disturb protected flora. It is an offence to take, trade in, keep, move or process protected flora without a licence or a permit; penalties apply. This protection applies to plant material that is living, including for example, flowers, seeds, shoots and roots, and non-living such as bark, leaves and litter. These permits are separate and additional to other consents that may be required for clearing of native vegetation.

Protected Flora are native plants or communities of plants that have legal protection under the FFG Act. Plants may be listed for protection because they are rare, threatened with extinction, or require other protection. Wildflowers such as orchids, may not be threatened but are included on the protected flora list because they are highly sought after and their removal from the wild needs to be controlled. *Action Statements* under the FFG Act are developed to manage Protected Flora and Fauna.

Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (Vic) (CaLP Act), a person needs:

- To ensure they maintain vehicle hygiene when moving any equipment or machinery onto or along a roadway.
- A permit from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to remove or sell soil, sand, gravel or stone which could result in the transference of noxious weeds.
- A permit from DPI to deposit on land a noxious weed or the seeds of a noxious weed.

The Victorian Government is undertaking a reading of the CaLP Act to clarify who is responsible for the management of the various categories of declared noxious species on roadsides.

Declared noxious weeds are plants that cause environmental or economic harm, or have the potential to cause such harm. These weeds are classed under one of four categories:

- State Prohibited Weeds; to be eradicated from Victoria if possible or excluded from the State.

- Regionally Prohibited Weeds; are not widely distributed in a region but capable of spreading and must be managed with the goal to eradicate from that region.
- Regionally Controlled Weeds; are usually widespread and require on-going control measures.
- Restricted Weeds; trade in these weeds and their propagules, either as plants, seeds or contaminants in other materials is prohibited.

The declaration of weeds is made on a state-wide and regional basis given that a particular weed may have varying significance in different regions. East Gippsland Shire falls into two of 10 Catchment Management Regions in Victoria. Lists of every noxious weed and its declared category in each Catchment Management Region, along with the responsibilities of landowners in relation to these noxious weeds, can be accessed on the DPI website.

The term 'environmental weed' implies no legislative requirement for removal however the threat of certain environmental weed species to biodiversity may be a recognised issue.

The *Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework 2010* presents the overarching Victorian Government approach to the management of existing and potential invasive species within the context of the *Whole of Government Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria*. An important principle of this framework is to invest public money where it produces the most public benefit. East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority provides additional local context with development of its *Invasive Plants and Animals Plan*, currently awaiting Ministerial approval.

3.3 East Gippsland Planning Scheme

The East Gippsland Planning Scheme, under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)*, sets out policies and requirements for the use, development and protection of land. Planning Permits are issued in accordance with the East Gippsland Planning Scheme. Specific information about any proposed use or development is required to support planning permit applications. Fees apply to planning permit applications.

Under the East Gippsland Planning Scheme, a planning permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, however there are exemptions. A planning permit may also be required to remove non-native vegetation. Activities that are exempt from requiring a planning permit depend on the combination of zones and overlays that are applicable. Shire specific overlays to the Planning Scheme give guidelines to make decisions or form the conditions placed on many planning permits. Council's Statutory Planning officers are available for advice regarding these matters.

Vegetation Protection Overlays (VPO) aim to:

- Protect areas of significant vegetation.
- Ensure that development minimises loss of vegetation.
- Preserve existing trees and other vegetation.
- Recognise vegetation protection areas as locations of special significance natural beauty, interest and importance.
- Maintain and enhance habitat and habitat corridors for indigenous fauna.
- Encourage the regeneration of native vegetation.

Schedule 1 to the VPO within the East Gippsland Planning Scheme covers the area known as the Tambo-Bairnsdale Roadside Vegetation Protection Network and seeks to protect high conservation value roadside vegetation. The reference document for this Schedule to the Overlay is the *Roadside Management Plan, East Gippsland Shire Council 1995* and as updated from time to time. This strategy is an update and continues the intent and purpose of Schedule 1 to the VPO.

Environmental Significance Planning Overlays (ESO) reflect the occurrence of significant cultural or biodiversity features and incorporate the specific management needs of these sites into the Planning Scheme. The ESO requires updating. The current reference document for the overlay and schedules is *East Gippsland Sites of Biological Significance, Department of Natural Resources and Environment 1997*.

Significant biological sites protected by ESO that are on or near, or affected by roadsides include sites in the vicinity of:

- Flaggy Creek (with Powerful Owl, Sooty Owl and Warm Temperate Rainforest being features of biological significance. One specific management practice guideline for this area is to “Design a roads maintenance strategy which avoids damage to roadside vegetation.” Other guidelines are for pest plant and animal control and ecologically appropriate fire regimes.).
- Nicholson River and Corridor.
- Holes Road Wildlife Corridor.
- Raymond Island.
- Goonnure Wildlife Corridor.
- Tambo Upper Corridor.
- Rodericks Road Wildlife Corridor.
- North of Moormung.
- Lindenow.
- Bengworden.
- Rosherville Road Corridor.
- Burn Rd at Newmerella.
- Loch End-Wat Wat.

3.4 Council Local Law

Local Law relating to roadsides is made under the *Local Government Act 1989*. Local Law applies throughout the Shire however, does not apply where any act or thing is authorised by any Act, Rule, Regulation or Planning Scheme.

Without a permit, a person must not:

- Take, damage, deface or interfere with any timber, tree, shrub, plant, wildflower or other vegetation.
- Plant or knowingly introduce any seed, tree, shrub, fern or other vegetation or any part of any tree, shrub, or other vegetation.
- Allow livestock to graze.
- Occupy or fence off part of a road.
- Carry out any building works.

- Occupy a road for the purpose of carrying out building works.
- Erect a hoarding or overhead protective awning.
- Install, remove or alter a temporary or permanent vehicle crossing.
- Use a mobile crane, travel tower, lift or tackle on or above a road.
- Make a hole in or excavate in a road.
- Tap into or interfere with any Council drain.
- Dig up, damage or remove part of any road pavement.

Fees for a local law permit may apply. Penalties for infringement of local law are set by Council. Interference with vegetation on Council land currently carries a fine of 5 penalty units.

Community Laws Officers are authorised to enforce local law and other legislation which relates to the functions and powers of Council, such as the Impounding of Livestock Act 1994 (Vic). This Act provides for the impounding of livestock that has been abandoned or found trespassing on any land or roads.

3.5 Fire Protection

The *Country Fire Authority Act 1958 (Vic)* (CFA Act) aims to prevent and suppress fires and protect life and property in the case of fire. Overall responsibility is assigned to the Country Fire Authority; however, local government is responsible for the preparation of plans and the issuing of notices.

The management of roadsides for fire prevention purposes is specifically referred to in the CFA Act. It states that, "It shall be the duty of every municipal council and every public authority to take all practicable steps to prevent the occurrence of fires on and to minimise the danger of the spread of fires on or from: any land vested in it or under its control or management, and any highway, road, street, lane or thoroughfare the maintenance of which is charged upon it," and directs that each municipal council must prepare and maintain a Municipal Fire Prevention Plan in accordance with the advice and recommendation of the Municipal Fire Prevention Committee.

The (fire prevention) Plan must identify areas which are at particular risk, specify how these are to be treated and specify who is responsible for treating those risks. The fire planning process is currently changing with increased analysis of risks and input from land and infrastructure managers.

Amendments have been made and new exemptions have been introduced for road managers to the Victorian Planning Provisions as a result of the recommendations of the *2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission*. Relating to vegetation management there are exemptions for:

Vegetation removal to the minimum extent necessary to reduce fuel loads on roadsides to minimise risk to life and property from bushfire of an existing public road. This must however be in accordance with the written agreement of the Secretary to DSE. Minimum requirements to implement the exemption include undertaking a roadside bushfire risk assessment using an agreed process and **recording appropriate vegetation treatments in an approved plan.**

- The 10/30 rule for vegetation clearing and the new 10/50 rule for within Bushfire Management Overlay areas, which apply to most existing buildings used for accommodation **These rules however only include clearing on the landholder's own private property.**
- Vegetation removal for a maximum combined width of four metres either side of an existing boundary fence. If there is already four or more metres of cleared land on one side of the fence, vegetation cannot be removed on the other side of the fence without a planning permit.

Clearing of vegetation on other properties including public reserves or roadsides needs the written consent of the landowner or relevant public land manager; i.e. Council for roads covered by this Plan, VicRoads for major arterial routes and highways or DSE for many unused roads. DSE has issued guidelines and administers an application for permission process for all public land. Other legislative requirements such as permits and consents under the FFG Act and EPBC Act, still apply.

4. Native Vegetation Management

Native vegetation is the primary contributor to roadside conservation value. It is an integral part of the landscape and an asset that is not always recognised. The reasons for native vegetation conservation may be of both an economic and ethical nature.

Native vegetation is required for a sustainable landscape and protects long term productive capacity and values of land and water resources. Remnant native vegetation performs basic ecological processes and services that are required for continued agricultural productivity, such as the prevention of dryland salinity, shelter for stock, provision of clean air and water and the absorption of greenhouse gases. Natural roadside vegetation adds to visual amenity, provides recreation opportunities for the community, increases the attractiveness of the region for tourism, harbours welcome insectivorous birds and bats and may provide products such as honey and seed.

Roadside vegetation is the home of many species of native plants and animals that are important for the conservation of Australia's biological diversity. Some of the most depleted and threatened vegetation types are found on roadsides. Roadsides provide corridors of connectivity. This may be habitat connectivity for individual species, spatial connectivity for physical connectedness of patches, or ecological connectivity for function of complex natural processes. Native vegetation on the roadside is an integral part of the surrounding landscape and wider ecosystem.

Rural roads managed by Council total about 1,800 km in length. Associated with these roads are roadsides covering an area in the order of 10,000 ha. About 1230 km of roadsides were assessed in the year 2000 to be of high conservation value, 1140 km of medium conservation value and 1020 km of low conservation value (Kelly 2001). Maps 1 to 7 show the location of roadside vegetation and this assessed conservation value. Changes in this conservation value over the last ten years are unknown. More recent information, systematic classifications or legislative protection of specific types of vegetation is not incorporated into this mapping system.

- High conservation value roadsides may include a relatively undisturbed vegetation community, the presence of a rare, vulnerable or significant flora species or fauna or a section of remnant vegetation not usually found locally.
- Medium conservation value roadsides includes areas of indigenous vegetation, modified vegetation with extensive regeneration and replanting, or a wide road reserve with patches of native vegetation.
- Low conservation value roadsides is substantially modified and is mostly exotic pasture grasses and weeds. Some indigenous vegetation of trees, shrubs and ground cover may remain as isolated specimens or in scattered clumps. There is generally an absence of natural regeneration.

Limited resources for effective management and compliance programs coupled with a degree of uncertainty regarding the roles and responsibilities of community or land managers in East Gippsland hinder protection of roadside vegetation.

4.1 Maintaining Biodiversity

Continued degradation of remaining native vegetation is considered the greatest threat to Victoria's biodiversity. Roadsides are subject to many pressures. Retention of vegetation on roadsides may not always be compatible with safe function of the road or other essential uses of the road reserve.

There are broad long-term threats such as global warming or more localised pressures from direct human activity. Roadsides by their very nature of being long thin areas are highly vulnerable. The intrusions of pest plants and animals, encroachment from urban development, removal of dead trees and fallen timber, prevention of natural regeneration, loss of understory, altered hydrology and erosion problems, are direct issues that can be addressed by action at a local level.

Key threats include:

- Inadvertent clearing.
- Deliberate clearing.
- Planned and unplanned inappropriate burning.
- Inappropriate use of herbicides.
- Legal and illegal removal of fallen and standing wood.
- Legal and illegal grazing.
- Legal and illegal inappropriate slashing.
- New and established pest plants and animals.

Victoria's Native Vegetation Framework is a regulatory document on how the State of Victoria protects native vegetation. East Gippsland Shire Council is committed to achieve reversal across the entire landscape of the long term decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation. Council will strive for best practice management of native vegetation on roadsides.

High conservation value roadsides will be managed where possible to protect the quality of the existing vegetation. They will also be managed for threatened vegetation communities, for rare or threatened species or for their habitat, following the actions and guidelines of Action Statements or Recovery Plans where they exist. Vegetation will be protected from unnecessary disturbance. Weed control is a priority on these roadsides. Natural regeneration of indigenous plant species is preferred. Fallen timber not obstructing the use, function or essential maintenance of the road is to be generally left on the ground.

Medium conservation value roadsides will be managed for native vegetation to be maintained. Where medium value vegetation forms links to high value vegetation or is important for management of sites of biological significance vegetation enhancement will be a priority. This may include replanting of gaps and weed control.

On low conservation value roadsides, opportunities will be sought to control or eradicate weeds and to enhance or revegetate identified strategic habitat links. Otherwise priority will be given to use of these roadsides for purposes such as fire protection, grazing under permit or for other social or economic benefits.

Actions already identified in the *East Gippsland Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*, and committed to by Council, which will also benefit roadsides are:

- Continue review process and improvement of Planning Scheme overlays and GIS data relevant to biodiversity enhancement and protection e.g. updating the ESO and VPO to recognise especially significant environments (such as those supporting threatened species) and significant areas of native vegetation.

- Lobby state and federal government for funding and legislative support for greater compliance and education efforts regarding the protection of East Gippsland's biodiversity.
- Undertake detailed flora and fauna survey as well as an assessment of vegetation quality and habitat values against Ecological Vegetation Class benchmarks, on Council-managed land, to ascertain the current state of species and habitat. Set targets and implement a management plan to protect and enhance biodiversity on Council-managed land.

Actions to Support Biodiversity Maintenance:

1. Ensure an effective permitting system that utilises the power of existing framework legislation. Establish in conjunction with the permitting system an effective path for enforcement in cases of deliberate unauthorised clearing of vegetation.
2. Provide to Council contractors and other roadsides works supervisors access to sufficient information to enable identification of environmental values that require protection or consideration.
3. Include into all contracts and works plans the obligations to protect conservation values, sites of biological or other significance and ensure that any environmental management plans for works reflect the aims and requirements of this Roadside Vegetation Strategy through use of appropriate methods and equipment.
4. Develop and distribute community information and educative materials on values and protection of roadside vegetation.
5. Audit the conservation value of Council managed roadsides and develop in partnership with other stakeholder agencies a long term monitoring program to detect and record any trends or changes in conservation value.
6. Identify and prioritise projects, facilitate funding and implementation including delegated management at specific locations through community and volunteer groups.

4.2 Protection of Significant Species and Communities

Rare or threatened species and vegetation communities such as rainforests, natural grasslands and some woodlands, that remain as isolated patches and on roadsides in agricultural areas need special protection, management and restoration.

Six nationally threatened ecological communities occur in East Gippsland. Three of these are known to occur on Council managed roadsides:

- Gippsland Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland, is widespread on roadsides managed by Council. It occurs in the otherwise largely cleared agricultural landscape from Swan Reach to Fernbank and Bengworden and beyond - Critically Endangered.
- Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets of Eastern Australia. This rainforest type of national significance or other types of state level significance can be seen in many gully areas, where road bridges cross - Critically Endangered.
- White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum, Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland is found on roadsides in the northern parts of the Shire - Critically Endangered.

The endangered community, Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southern Tablelands is mapped to occur on the Monaro Tablelands in New South Wales but may also occur on some roadsides within East Gippsland Shire.

Numerous species of plant and animal, listed for protection under both state and federal legislation, occur on or use roadside vegetation as habitat. To name but a few, plants include: Hairy Anchor Plant, Gippsland Stringybark, Coast Grey Box, Limestone Blue Wattle, Maidens Wattle, Spurred Helmet Orchid, Purple Diuris and Swamp Everlasting.

Features of world, national or local significance that are on, near or affected by roadside management are many. The Gippsland Lakes are Wetlands of International Significance. Water quality in the Lakes depends on good land management practices throughout the whole catchment. Healthy intact vegetation on roadsides helps to stabilise soil and filter sediment and nutrients before it enters drains, streams and rivers and the Lakes.

East Gippsland Shire Council will manage sites of biological significance in cooperation and consultation with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Conservation Management Networks and other biodiversity specialists.

Actions already identified in the *East Gippsland Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*, and committed to by Council, which will also benefit roadsides are:

- Develop guidelines for identification or classification of ecologically and culturally significant and/or sensitive areas including the signposting or classification of important communities, species and sites of ecological and cultural significance in East Gippsland under threat by human activity.
- Provide plant identification and management training for relevant Council staff and contractors to increase awareness of indigenous species, pest plant species, sensitive habitat areas and protected species under state and federal legislation within the Shire.

Action to Support Protection of Significant Species and Communities:

7. Identify skills training needs of road management, maintenance workers and contractors, in awareness and recognition and management of native vegetation species, significant vegetation communities and habitat. Accreditation standards will be stipulated.

4.3 Managing Sites of Cultural and Heritage Significance

Cultural places and objects form an important part of Australia's heritage. East Gippsland has a rich and diverse cultural heritage that provides a link for contemporary people to the past. Some sites of significance can be readily identified in built relics or features left from mining and agriculture. Others are less tangible such as old travel and exploration routes. Individual trees may be significant due to physical characteristics such as age and size, or because they represent a meeting point or memorial. Patches of vegetation may be important for aesthetic reasons or associations with a past lifestyle. Both exotic and native vegetation, especially trees, have been identified as of significant value.

The vegetation on roadsides that has been identified as of historical or cultural significance in many locations throughout the Shire includes Aboriginal scar trees, individual rare or very large specimens, remnant stands of rare or endangered species, remnant strips along roads with high aesthetic appeal such as along the Mossiface-Swan Reach Road and entire landscapes such as Lake Bunga and Lake Tyers. Roadside vegetation is a significant element of the rural landscape and is an important consideration in roadside amenity. Roadsides may also contain sites of geological and educational importance.

East Gippsland Shire Council is involved in ongoing programs to identify and appropriately manage sites of cultural, historical or other scientific or environmental significance.

The rich culture and history of Aboriginal people of East Gippsland holds particularly strong links with native vegetation. Underpinning material aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage are intangible places where there may be no physical evidence of past cultural activities. These include places of spiritual or ceremonial significance, places where traditional plant or mineral resources occur, or trade and travel routes. Even in the most intensively developed regions, the landscape holds the imprint of thousands of generations of Aboriginal people.

East Gippsland Shire Council will include Aboriginal cultural heritage as an integral part of all land and natural resource management.

Actions already identified in the *East Gippsland Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*, and committed to by Council, which will also benefit roadsides are:

- Identify cultural heritage and cultural diversity as central goals when rethinking our approach to natural resource management.
- Formalise the relationship between Council and traditional owners to develop a holistic land ethic and deliver improved natural resource management and protection of local biodiversity.
 - Acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and ensure that Aboriginal people of the region are included (beyond the requirements of statutory obligations and legislative responsibilities) in the decision-making process, concerning land management, enhancement and protection.
 - Partner with Indigenous groups in natural resource management activities e.g. ecological burning and pest plant and animal control.

Action to Support Management of Sites of Cultural and Heritage Significance:

8. Identify skills training needs of road management, maintenance workers and contractors in awareness of heritage issues and recognition skills of indigenous artefacts such as mounds, middens, surface scatters, tools, stone quarries, burial sites and scar trees to assist in the identification and subsequent protection of new sites. Accreditation standards will be stipulated.

4.4 Pest Plant and Animal Management

Due to their narrow linear nature, road reserves are exposed to significant edge effects. Weeds spread to and from adjacent land, carried by wind, animals and by machinery. Vehicles and machinery that work within the roadside for road and services maintenance or construction may spread weeds over long distances. Any soil

disturbance arising from burning, clearing, grazing and fire break preparation can lead to weed problems. Roadsides may also harbour rabbits and foxes. East Gippsland Shire Council recognises that pest plants and animals on roadsides are a major issue and can have a severe impact on agricultural productivity and biodiversity.

The management of pest plants and animals on roadsides has principally been regulated by the *Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994)*; however, responsibility for weed control on local roads is presently under review following the identification of conflicting legal interpretation in respect to the allocation of responsibility for control activities.

Recently the Minister for Agriculture established a Working Party with membership from state and local government, the Municipal Association and the Victorian Farmers Federation, to examine and make recommendations for the most effective allocation of resources and responsibilities for funding pest plant and animal control activities on roadsides. East Gippsland Shire Council participated in the Working Party process. The Working Party has completed this work however, no announcement has been made as to the most appropriate approach. It is noted that the recommendations have been made in the context of the *Victorian Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework*, which provides an overarching approach to managing existing and potential invasive species across Victoria. This Roadside Vegetation Strategy has been developed understanding that requirements for pest plant and animal control are likely to be subject to change.

East Gippsland Shire Council will support the development of a risk management approach so that response is consistent with the risk posed and that early intervention will be provided to ensure cost effective control on roadsides. Council will continue to seek funding to assist in the development of strategic roadside pest control programs and projects.

Pest plant and animal management that is undertaken on roadsides will be in a manner that is effective and considers all aspects of site management including the conservation significance of the vegetation. The method selected for pest plant and animal control works will minimise the impact on the conservation significance of the roadside.

The following guidelines will be used:

- Pest control programs will be planned and implemented jointly with adjacent landholders and other public land managers.
- Control of weeds on high conservation value roadsides is a high priority.
- Early treatment of small outbreaks and isolated patches is a high priority.
- Methods will be selected that minimise soil disturbance and native vegetation removal.
- Community groups will be encouraged to be involved and gain funding through state and federal pest control or conservation programs.
- Monitoring will be undertaken of works or disturbance within High and Medium Conservation Roadsides and any requirements for follow-up weed control treatment identified.

Action already identified in the *East Gippsland Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*, and committed to by Council, which will also benefit roadsides is:

- Investigate the use of alternative weed control methods that will minimise the use of chemicals especially in ecologically sensitive areas such as identified high-value ecological habitat or adjacent to waterways, the stormwater system or along roadsides.

Actions to Support Pest Plant and Animal Management:

9. Identify current works or activities on roadsides that promote weed growth and develop the administrative process, to plan and contribute towards follow-up pest plant and animal control.
10. Seek funding to extend current programs of pest plant control by Council until responsibility for control is resolved.
11. Signpost known weed infestations where appropriate as special management zones and ensure compliance.
12. Identify skills training needs of road management, maintenance workers and contractors, in awareness and recognition and best practice management of pest plants and animals. Accreditation standards will be stipulated.

4.5 Vegetation Removal by Adjoining Landholders

Written consent from East Gippsland Shire Council is required to remove native vegetation on roadsides for fence maintenance or construction adjacent to road reserves. This includes dead standing or fallen timber, as well as trees, shrubs and grasses. Damage or removal of any native vegetation must be minimised. Wherever possible, fence-line construction and maintenance should be conducted from private land, off the roadside. Discarded fencing materials are not to be stored on the roadside.

East Gippsland Shire Council will generally only allow a maximum of one metre width of clearing on the road side of the fence.

A planning permit exemption may apply to some removal of native vegetation on a boundary with a road. Generally if there is already more than four metres of cleared land on one side of the fence, vegetation removal from the other side of the fence requires a planning permit. The *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act* is relevant to public land so a permit under this Act to remove listed species may be also required. The EPBC Act is relevant to both public and private land and some works may also trigger this Act.

“Tidying up” of roadsides is an activity that has potential to reduce the quality of native vegetation and destroy habitat. Some residents may not appreciate the significance or value of native vegetation. With urban expansion and rural residential development, the roadside vegetation is inadvertently, incrementally lost. Council will continue with statutory planning processes, strategic planning for future development, educational and enforcement activities which aim to minimise this loss of native vegetation from roadsides.

Subdivision proposals must consider roadside vegetation with a site analysis, documenting the site in terms of land form, vegetation coverage and the relationship with surrounding land. Roadside vegetation may be affected through provision of utilities, property access and road widening, and potential safety or fire prevention measures. Good design is required to avoid or minimise impacts on native vegetation.

Removal of, to the minimum extent necessary, of vegetation that presents an immediate risk of personal injury or damage to property is always exempt from needing written prior approval. Council should be notified as soon as possible after the removal. Property owners may apply for written consent from Council to manage vegetation on roadsides, at their own expense, that they deem to be a hazard to their own assets such as fences or dwellings. A qualified, practicing arborist's report can be used to determine risk and to gain consent.

Actions to Support Vegetation Removal Management:

13. Ensure that planning permits for new development include high quality, appropriate site analysis and design to prevent or minimise the loss of roadside vegetation and that offsets are at the cost of the developer.
14. Signpost as appropriate significant native vegetation in rural residential areas.

4.6 Farming, Stock and Grazing

The movement of livestock on public roads is an issue that has been tested in the courts. In the 1999 Victorian case (*Jeffrey v Honig*), Justice Hedigan confirmed the traditional right of farmers to move stock down country roads in Australia. It was a normal, common activity, "coped with by sensible management of cattle and patient driving by motorists". On the other hand, he found that the right of farmers to move stock on roads should not unreasonably interfere with the right of other landholders to move into and from their property or to use a road.

The movement of stock on roadsides requires no permit or consent from Council. This stock movement on roadsides may be at permanent crossings or for temporary relocation. Movement of diseased stock (this now excludes Ovine Johne's Disease) requires a permit from the Department of Primary Industries. There is also the requirement to adhere to road safety principals and erect signage as appropriate.

Owners and occupiers of land must ensure that livestock kept or grazed on the land under their control does not cause a threat to public safety. Land adjoining Road Reserves should not be used for the grazing or keeping of livestock unless it is adequately fenced.

Grazing by stock on the roadside does require written consent from Council in the form of a permit. Droving livestock from outside or within the Shire to another destination either outside or within the Shire, with a consequence or purpose of feeding is considered grazing. The impact of livestock on native vegetation depends on the number of stock, duration of stay, type of livestock, seasonal conditions and the location, type and extent of native vegetation traversed. The impact of stock grazing on roadsides can be severe. Conditions issued with any consent will reflect the conservation value rating of the relevant roadsides.

Written consent in the form of a permit is required for cropping and haymaking on roadside. These types of activities will generally only be allowed on roadsides of Low Conservation Value. Roadside cropping and haymaking can remove native vegetation and may result in the spread of weeds. Storage of hay on roadsides is not permitted.

4.7 Fire and Fuel Management

Whilst fire is naturally occurring and vital in maintaining ecosystem ecology, extreme bushfire events are a serious concern for environmental, social, cultural, aesthetic and economic values.

There has been strong concern within the community about the role of roadside vegetation in bushfires. This has been expressed to the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission and to the review of Tostaree Fire by Fire Services Commissioner. Continuing research programs such as by the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre seek to understand the underlying risk exposure of the community and the things it values. This may provide planning and land management agencies with an insight of how the **community would like risk to be managed and a better understanding of the impediments involved in hazard mitigation so they can address these in their planning and decision making processes.**

As the result of recommendations of the Bushfires Royal Commission, East Gippsland Shire Council has adopted a risk-based framework for fire prevention with the development of the *East Gippsland Fire Prevention Management Plan 2011*. This Plan uses the *Victorian Fire Risk Register*, which is a systematic process used to identify assets at risk, level of bushfire risk to assets and records a range of measures to mitigate the risk. These measures, commonly called treatments, may include activities such as fuel reduction, community education programs and strategic fire breaks, to deal with the key tasks of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery from bushfire.

Fire planning priorities identified and committed to by the *East Gippsland Fire Management Plan 2011* are consistent with state and regional fire management policies and plans. They are:

- Protection of life.
- Protection of assets.
- Improved community resilience and community education participation; in line with the State Government's *Bushfire Safety Policy Framework*.
- Maintenance of major transport routes prior, during and after a fire incident.
- Maintenance of essential services prior, during and after a fire incident.
- Identify and review the existing fuel break systems and fire access road networks.
- Information sharing between agencies.

There are many aspects to the relationship between fire and native vegetation, including: the effect of native vegetation on the spread of bushfires and on the ease or difficulty of fire fighting and escape from a bushfire, the effect of bushfire or fuel reduction burn on sustaining or depleting biodiversity, and the effect of fuel reduction on the frequency and spread of bushfire. As fuel load is one of the major determinants of fire intensity and high fuel loads are often associated with natural vegetation, areas of high fire hazard are often of high environmental value.

The impacts of methods used for fire prevention works on roadsides vary. Research and information to guide best practice management is continually improving. Fire as a management tool can have beneficial effects on biodiversity. *Fire and Adaptive Management Report No 84, Growth Stages and Tolerable Fire Intervals for Victoria's Native Vegetation Data Sets* by David Cheal (2010), gives ecological information to

consider when planning roadside burns. Each works plan for individual sections of roadside should be developed individually taking into account both its conservation value and its fire prevention objective. The method selected for fire prevention works should be the one that minimises the impact on the conservation significance of the roadside yet achieves the planned fire prevention objectives. In some instances such as periodic burning of native grassland, the treatment may be beneficial for both conservation and fire prevention goals.

Traditionally fire protection effort has concentrated on modifying the environmental variables by measures such as fuel reduction burning or roadside slashing, to reduce the chance of a fire starting and the intensity with which it could burn. East Gippsland Shire Council supports programs that broaden the approach by targeting residents' behaviour and understanding of fire.

The following general strategies based on CFA's *Roadside Fire Management Guidelines 2001*, will be used:

- Written consent is required for removal of native vegetation for non-emergency fire fighting measures, periodic fuel reduction burning or any other fire protection works.
- Works must be planned using best practice principals.
- That the level of treatment is based on the level of risk. The level of risk is defined by the type of road on the basis of volume of traffic, the strategic importance of the road and areas with a documented level of high ignitions:
 - That the reduction of risk for existing dwellings and other assets may lead to targeted modification of nearby vegetation, including on adjoining roadsides.
 - Roadsides that are one road in, one road out for vulnerable communities and addressed in Township Protection Plans will be a high priority for fire risk treatment.
 - Slashing and mowing of grass on roadsides will continue to be a primary mechanism for fire risk treatment. On roadsides of high risk, the primary strategy is to provide a pull-over lane of adequate width (3m) to offer driver safety as well as separation from combustible fuel.
- The conservation values of roadsides are to be identified in the development of fire prevention plans. Planning and approval for fire protection works on roadsides identified as of high conservation value will include all major stakeholders and consult on all major issues or requirements.
 - The management of roadside vegetation and fire may vary according to the specific characteristics of the road and the risks addressed.
 - Work plans need to identify and include funding or processes for rehabilitation and maintenance, such as for weed control.
 - Fuel reduction burning should be carried out along ecological principles, in patches, or mosaics, within fire tolerable intervals for the vegetation type.
- In areas which are predominantly cleared for farming and the road reserve is heavily treed, the road reserve is likely to be the least suitable place to plan a control line. Ploughed or graded breaks which meander through treed areas are of minimal benefit in halting fire spread and can only be expected to be effective under low fire danger conditions:

- If the vegetation on the road reserve is environmentally significant and the adjacent land is cleared it is preferable, in consultation with land holders, to situate the break on the adjacent land.
- In the situation where fires may spread along the roadside through uninterrupted stretches of vegetation, breaks across the roadside reserve may assist with containing the spread of fire. Driveways or roads intersections may effectively act as such breaks.

Individual landholders may mow, without written consent, non-native grass recorded by Council as of low conservation value on the roadside immediately adjoining their property.

Actions already identified in the *East Gippsland Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*, and committed to by Council, which will also benefit roadsides are:

- Strengthen the partnership approach to environmental sustainability and open up new paths for active dialogue between natural resource management professionals, environmental groups, industry and community members establish processes for working together, clarifying roles and changing attitudes for an effective interactive system of environmental management.
- Work in partnership to advocate ecologically sensitive fire regimes provide information and advice on appropriate fire regimes and assist landholders in ecological burning activity.

Actions to Support Fire and Fuel Management:

15. Develop and maintain a spatial database of the roadsides identified with a fire management function as well as the annual plan for fire prevention works on roads so that they can be readily compared to other spatial data, particularly roadside conservation values and sites of significance.
16. Develop guidelines specific to East Gippsland roadside vegetation types for best environmental practice to achieve fire management works objectives.
17. Participate in fire management and ecology professional networks. Strengthen local consultation process with fire agencies and ensure early inclusion of biodiversity considerations and best practice options in works programming.

4.8 Firewood Collection

Fallen timber, hollow logs and dead trees on roadsides are a target for firewood collection. They are also extremely valuable for biodiversity. Retaining logs and stumps provides important structural variety to roadsides, necessary for the habitat for wildlife. It increases connectivity that enables both migration of fauna and interaction of populations.

The loss of roadside vegetation including dead or live trees with hollows and fallen timber, through firewood collection or other reasons for removal, will reduce conservation values. Some animal species may yet become extinct through habitat loss and fragmentation that occurred over one hundred years ago. Especially the species that depend on hollows face extinction because there is a predicted gap between the hollow trees and fallen logs of now disappearing and sufficient new hollows forming in

the future. Hollow trees, valuable for wildlife, are often viewed as dangerous to road user safety. Removal of only those parts of the tree that are assessed as dangerous allows retention of many hollows.

Collection of firewood from the roadside can present a high risk safety hazard. There is a need to ensure firewood is only collected from areas where it is safe to park off the road, that it is not permitted within vegetation types or habitats for threatened species listed under state or federal legislation, that appropriate traffic management plans are in place and that the firewood collector has adequate insurance cover. For these reasons it is not appropriate to collect firewood from roadsides except in specific, carefully managed cases such as with the removal of trees for road maintenance or creation of an approved fire break.

Firewood collecting will continue to be generally prohibited on East Gippsland Shire roadsides. In exceptions Council will first advertise the availability of firewood for specific sections of road and the process through which it can be collected. When determining whether removal of firewood from a roadside is appropriate, Council will take into consideration environmental values, fire fuel hazards and public safety.

Action to Support Management of Firewood Collection:

18. Advocate development of a regional firewood strategy that identifies and produces long term sustainable sources of firewood or alternate fuels for the community of East Gippsland.

4.9 Public Liability and Safety

In many circumstances, activities or works on roadsides can pose a risk to public safety or property. Council has an obligation to minimise risks and to take precaution against litigation. It is strongly advised that anyone wishing to do any activity or works on roadsides has public liability insurance. It will be a condition of any permit or written consent for works or activities on a roadside to have public liability insurance to the value of at least \$10 million **and that the policy notes the interests of Council**. Contractors to Council must have public liability insurance as specified in contracts.

It is a requirement under law that all (non-exempt) works on roadsides have the written permission of Council as the Road Management Authority.

- It is the policy of East Gippsland Shire Council that any person who undertakes activities and works on roadsides does so on the understanding that they are personally liable for any claim against them arising from their activities.
- Any person wishing to undertake volunteer works on behalf of East Gippsland Shire Council must obtain written consent.

The East Gippsland Shire Council public liability insurance policy covers any person registered as an East Gippsland Shire Council volunteer but subject to the conditions contained in any issued permit or written consent.

5. Action Implementation Plan

Action	Time-frame	Priority	Responsible Council unit	Partners
Actions to Support Biodiversity Maintenance				
1. Ensure an effective permitting system that utilises the power of existing framework legislation. Establish in conjunction with the permitting system an effective path for enforcement in cases of deliberate unauthorised clearing of vegetation.	Set up in Short-term: Ongoing	1	Development- Statutory Planning Operations- various units including Maintenance, Road and Traffic, Fire Prevention and Community Law Planning and Community- Sustainability	Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Dept of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Community
2. Provide Council contractors and other roadsides works supervisors access to sufficient information to enable identification of environmental values that require protection or consideration.	Ongoing	1	Operations Planning and Community- Sustainability	Contractors DSE
3. Include into all contracts and works plans the obligations to protect conservation values, sites of biological or other significance and ensure that any environmental management plans for works reflect the aims and requirements of this Roadside Vegetation Strategy through use of appropriate methods and equipment.	Ongoing	1	Operations Development- Projects	Contractors
4. Develop and distribute community information and educative materials on values and protection of roadside vegetation.	Medium-term	2	Planning and Community- Sustainability	DSE
5. Audit the conservation value of Council managed roadsides and develop in partnership with other stakeholder agencies a long-term monitoring program to detect and record any trends or changes in conservation value.	Medium-term	1	Planning and Community- Sustainability Development- Assets Management	DSE Catchment Management Authority (CMA)

Action	Time-frame	Priority	Responsible Council unit	Partners
6. Identify and prioritise projects, facilitate funding and implementation including delegated management at specific locations through community and volunteer groups.	Ongoing	2	Planning and Community-Sustainability	DSE CMA Landcare Community
Action to Support Protection of Significant Species and Communities				
7. Identify skills training needs of road management, maintenance workers and contractors, in awareness and recognition and management of native vegetation species, significant vegetation communities and habitat. Accreditation standards will be stipulated.	Identify shortly. Ongoing	1	Corporate- HR Operations Development- Projects	External training organisation
Action to Support Management of Sites of Cultural and Heritage Significance				
8. Identify skills training needs of road management, maintenance workers and contractors in awareness of heritage issues and recognition skills of indigenous artefacts such as mounds, middens, surface scatters, tools, stone quarries, burial sites and scar trees to assist in the identification and subsequent protection of new sites. Accreditation standards will be stipulated.	Identify shortly. Ongoing	1	Corporate- HR Operations Development- Projects	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria External training organisation
Actions to Support Pest Plant and Animal Management				
9. Identify current works or activities on roadsides that promote weed growth and develop the administrative process, to plan and contribute towards follow-up pest plant and animal control.	Identify shortly. Ongoing	1	Operations Development-Projects	Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
10. Seek funding to extend current programs of pest plant control by Council until responsibility for control is resolved.	Short-term	1	Planning and Community-Sustainability	DPI

Action	Time-frame	Priority	Responsible Council unit	Partners
11. Signpost known weed infestations where appropriate as special management zones and ensure compliance.	Medium-term	1	Operations	DPI Contractors VicRoads Community
12. Identify skills training needs of road management, maintenance workers and contractors, in awareness and recognition and best practice management of pest plants and animals. Accreditation standards will be stipulated.	Identify shortly. Ongoing	1	Corporate- HR Operations	DPI External training organisation
Actions to Support Vegetation Removal Management				
13. Ensure that planning permits for new development include high quality, appropriate site analysis and design to prevent or minimise the loss of roadside vegetation and that offsets are at the cost of the developer.	Ongoing	2	Development- Statutory Planning Planning and Community- Strategic Planning	Developers DSE
14. Signpost as appropriate significant native vegetation in rural residential areas.	Medium-term	2	Operations	DSE VicRoads Community
Actions to Support Fire and Fuel Management				
15. Develop and maintain a spatial database of the roadsides identified with a fire protection function as well as the annual plan for fire protection works on roads so that they can be readily compared to other spatial data, particularly roadside conservation values and sites of significance.	Medium-term	1	Operations- Fire Prevention Services- GIS	Country Fire Authority (CFA)
16. Develop guidelines specific to East Gippsland roadside vegetation types for best environmental practice to achieve fire management works objectives.	Short-term	2	Planning and Community- Sustainability	CFA DSE

Action	Time-frame	Priority	Responsible Council unit	Partners
17. Participate in fire management and ecology professional networks. Strengthen local consultation process with fire agencies and ensure early inclusion of biodiversity considerations and best practice options in works programming.	Ongoing	1	Planning and Community- Sustainability Operations- Fire Prevention	CFA DSE Parks Victoria
Actions to Support Management of Firewood Collection				
18. Advocate development of a regional firewood strategy that identifies and produces long term sustainable sources of firewood or alternate fuels for the community of East Gippsland.	Medium-term	2	Planning and Community- Strategic Planning	DSE Community

References and Further Information

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Gippsland Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland Policy Statement 3.22

www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/gippsland-red-gum.html

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www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/littoral-rainforest.html

White Box – Yellow Box – Blakeley's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grasslands Policy Statement 3.5

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www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/pubs/bushfire-factsheet.pdf

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www.planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/eastgippsland/home.html

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Weeds

www.dpi.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/vrosite.nsf/pages/lwm_pest_plants

Department of Sustainability and Environment

Interactive Maps

www.dse.vic.gov.au/about-dse/interactive-maps

Advisory Lists of Rare or Threatened Species

www.dse.vic.gov.au/plants-and-animals/native-plants-and-animals/threatened-species-and-communities/threatened-species-advisory-lists

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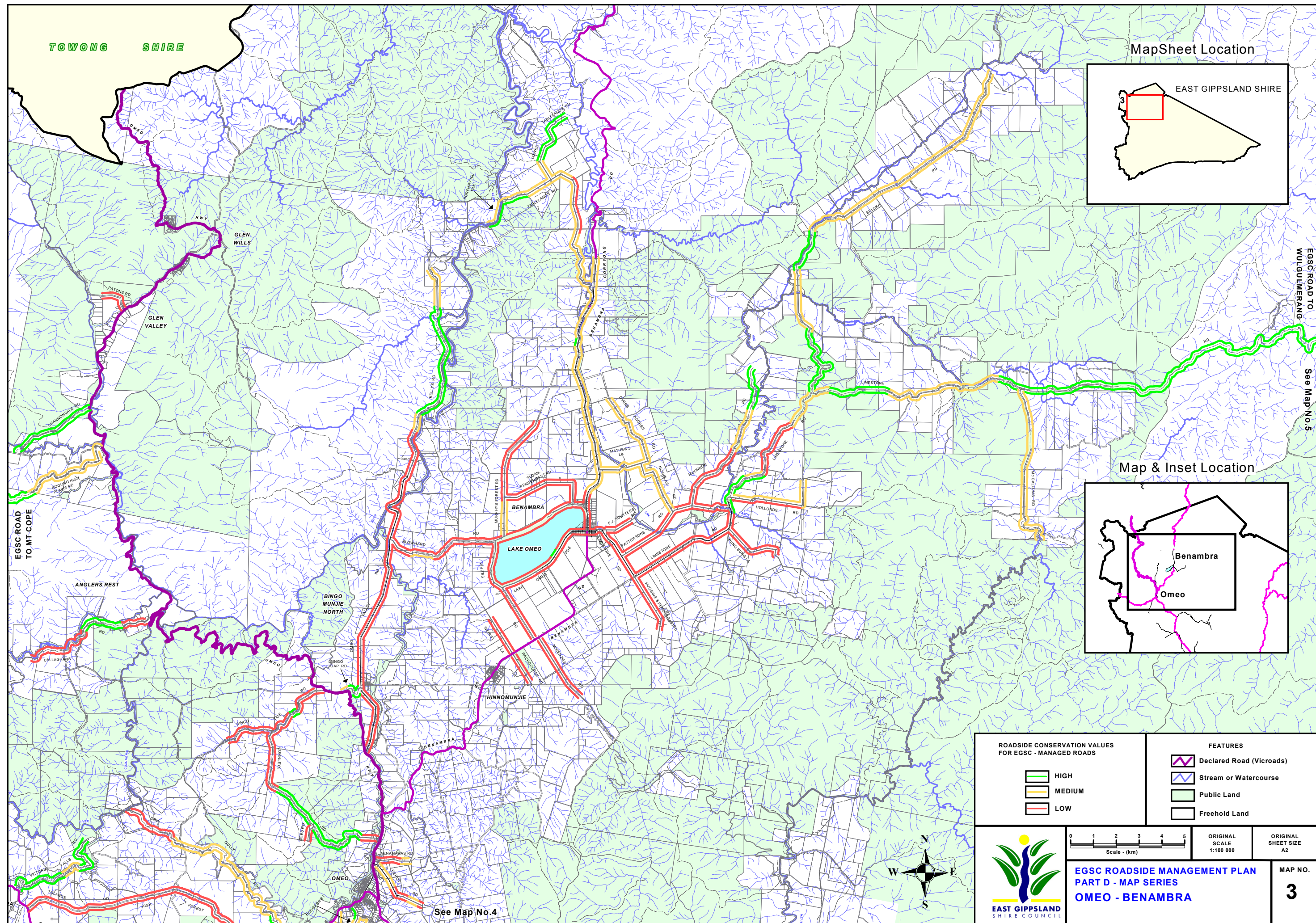
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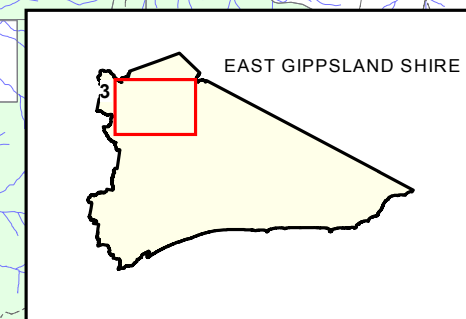
Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre
www.bushfirecrc.com

Victorian Law Today Library
www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino%5cweb_Notes%5CLDMS%5cpublawtoday.nsf

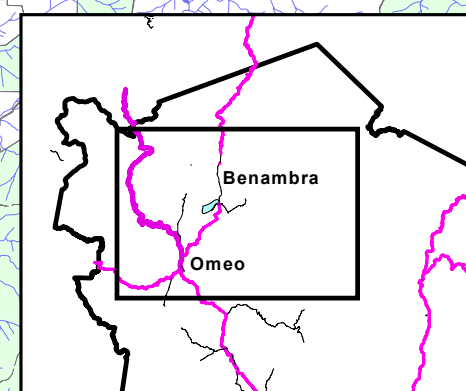
Rural Law Online
www.rurallaw.org.au



MapSheet Location



Map & Inset Location



ROADSIDE CONSERVATION VALUES
FOR EGSC - MANAGED ROADS



FEATURES



0 1 2 3 4 5
Scale - (km)

ORIGINAL
SCALE
1:100 000

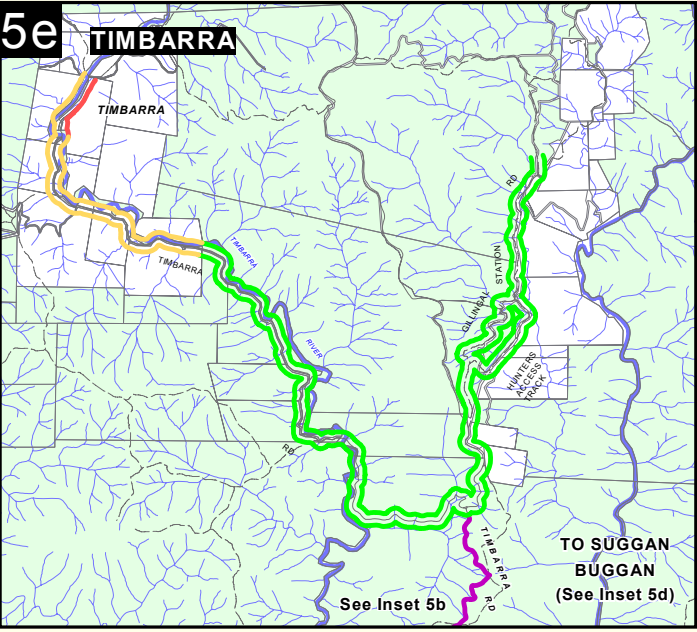
ORIGINAL
SHEET SIZE
A2

**EGSC ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN
PART D - MAP SERIES
OMEO - BENAMBRA**

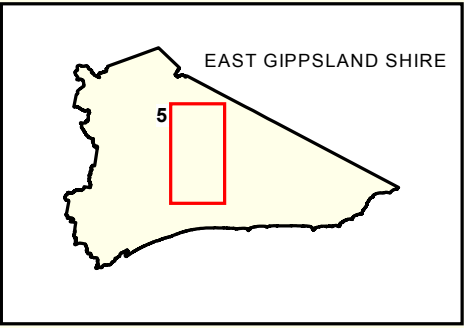
MAP NO.
3

See Map No.4

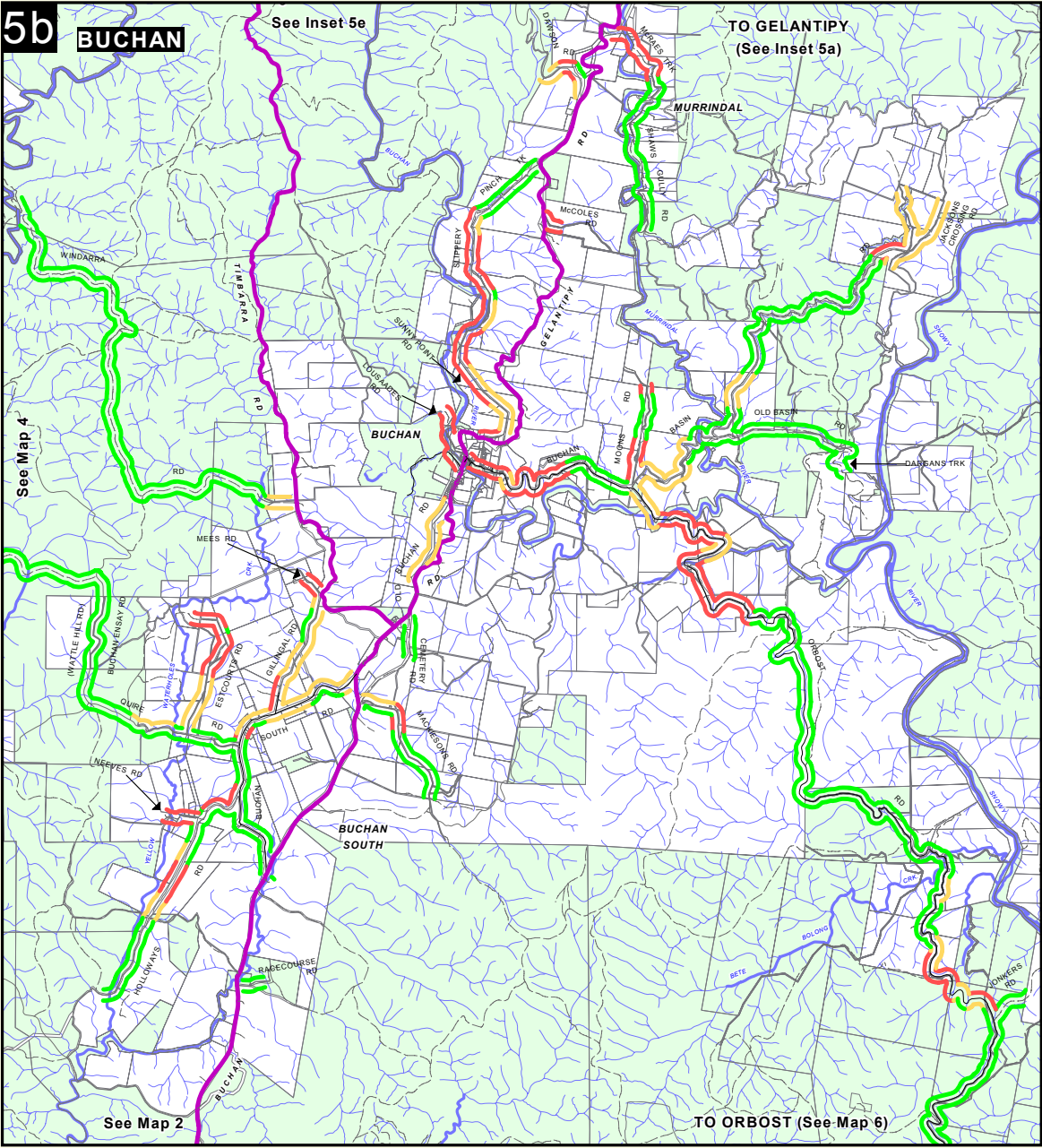
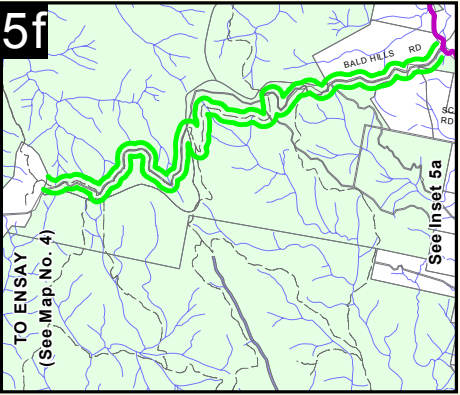
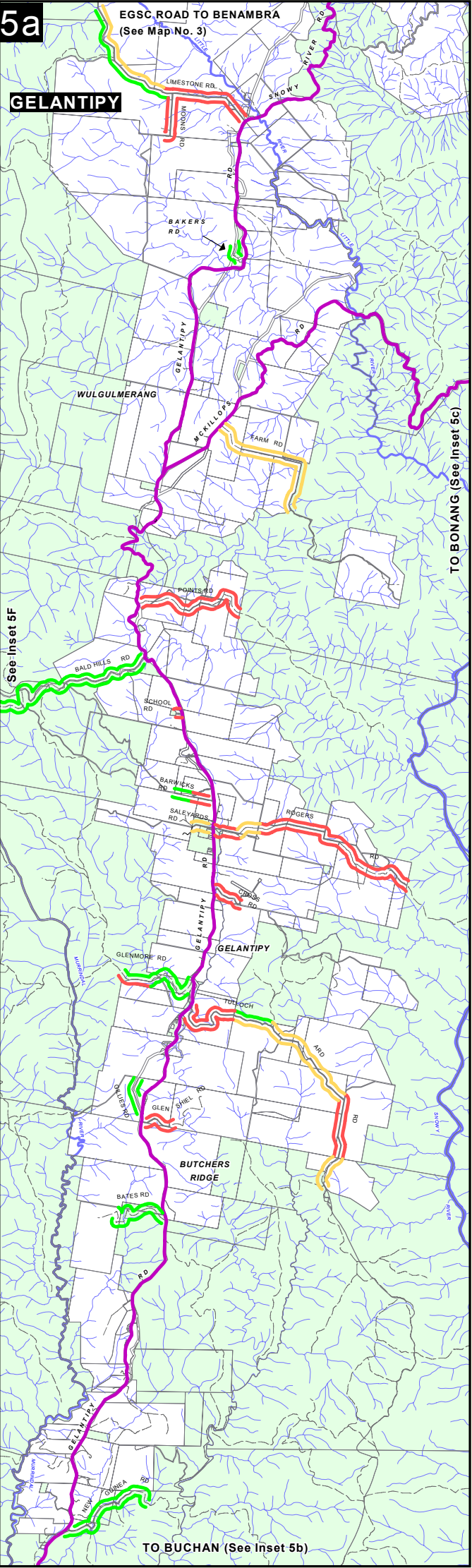
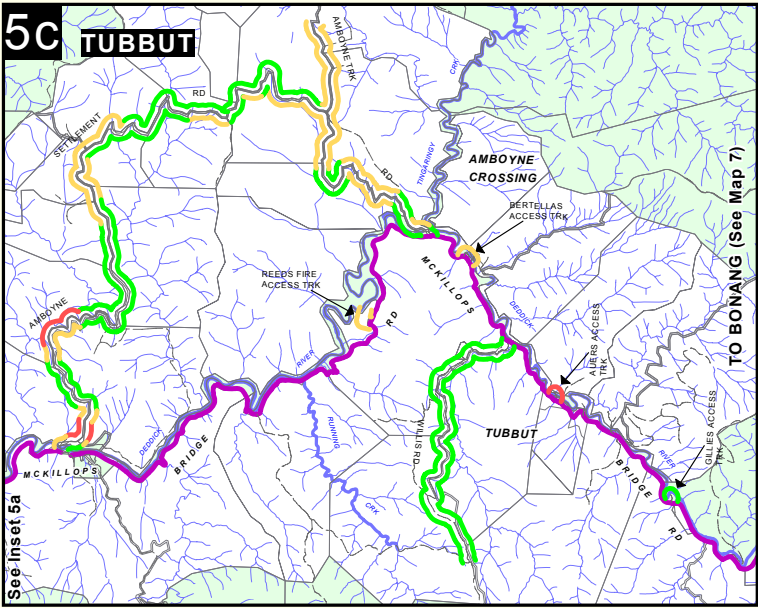
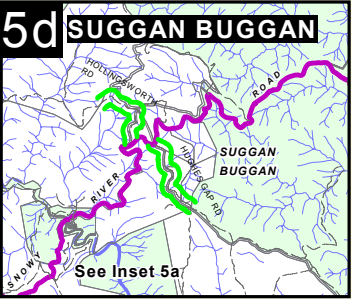
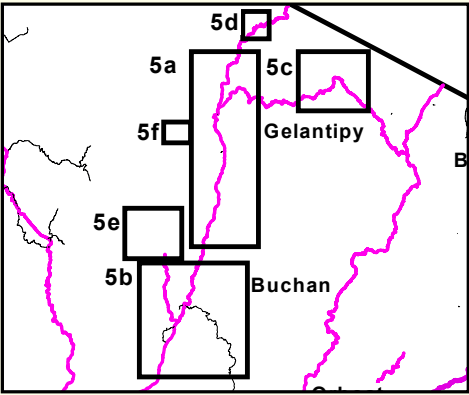
EGSC ROAD TO
WULGULMERANG
See Map No.5



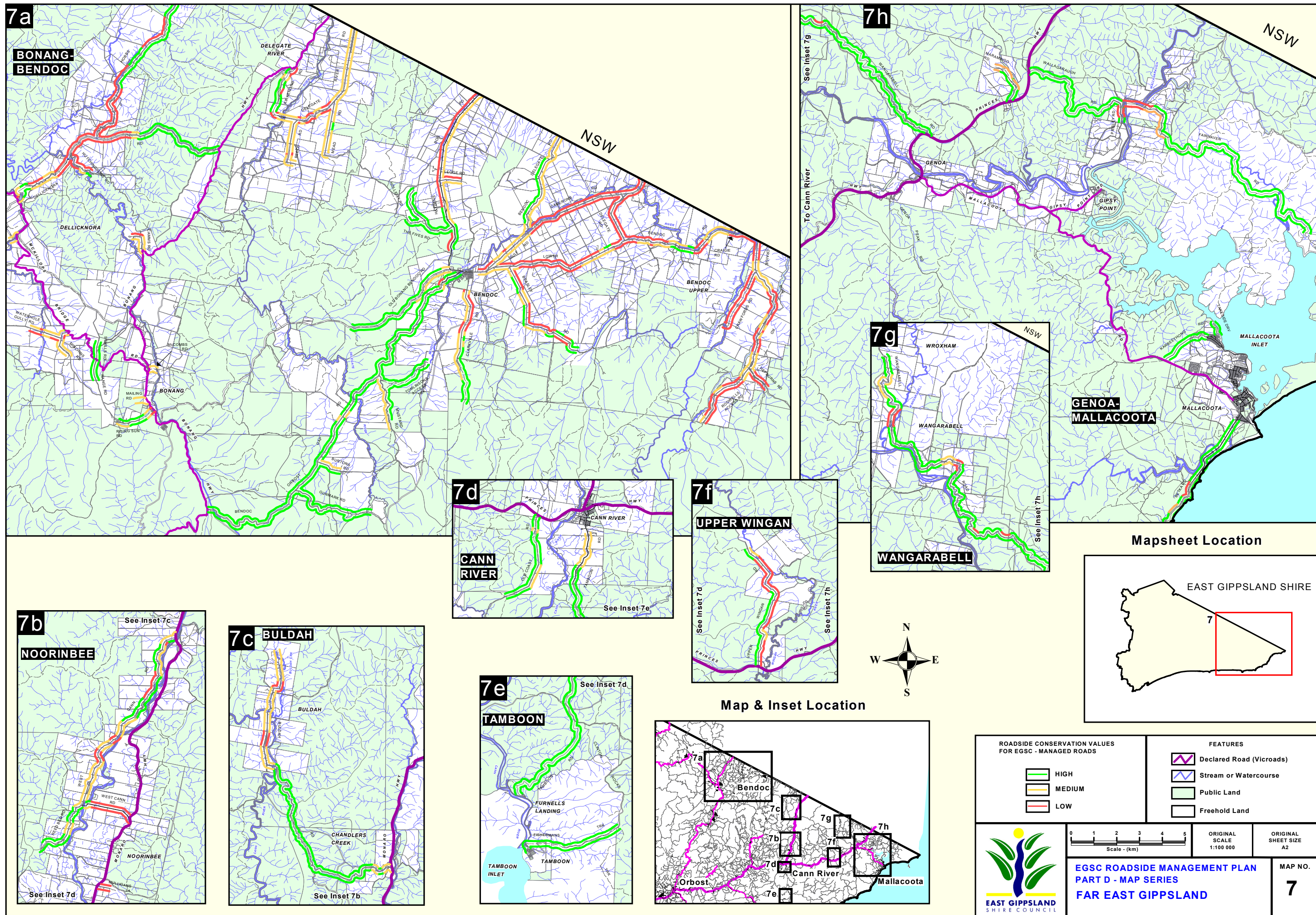
MapSheet Location



Map & Inset Location



ROADSIDE CONSERVATION VALUES FOR EGSC - MANAGED ROADS HIGH MEDIUM LOW		FEATURES Declared Road (Vicroads) Stream or Watercourse Public Land Freehold Land	
			ORIGINAL SCALE 1:100 000
EGSC ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN PART D - MAP SERIES TUBBUT - BUCHAN		ORIGINAL SHEET SIZE A2	MAP NO. 5



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