

A statement for the purposes of approved conservation advice
(s266B of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*)

Approved Conservation Advice for
Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and
Associated Native Grassland

This Conservation Advice has been developed based on the best available information at the time this conservation advice was approved.

Description

The Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland is a type of eucalypt woodland. The tree canopy is dominated by Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) and the ground layer is dominated by grasses or grass-like plants. The ecological community occurs in two forms. The grassy woodland form is dominated by a tree canopy with a graminoid ground layer. In the grassland form, the tree cover is largely absent. The woodland and grassland forms now show a degree of divergence in their floristic composition due to differences in their long-term management history.

Conservation Status

The Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland is listed as **critically endangered**. This ecological community is eligible for listing as critically endangered because it has undergone a very severe decline in extent, has a very restricted geographic distribution coupled with demonstrable threat and has undergone a reduction in community integrity that is very severe. The Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland includes elements of two ecological communities listed as threatened under the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*: Central Gippsland Plains Grassland Community and Forest Red Gum Grassy Woodland Community.

Distribution

The Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland is endemic to Victoria. It is restricted to the eastern Gippsland Plain between the Strzelecki Ranges and the Tambo River valley. It is mostly within the South East Coastal Plain IBRA bioregion with some occurrences extending into the South East Corner IBRA bioregion. The relevant Victorian Government bioregions are the Gippsland Plain and East Gippsland Lowlands. This ecological community occurs within the West Gippsland and East Gippsland Natural Resource Management Regions.

Threats

The main identified threats to the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland include vegetation clearance, fragmentation of remnants, management regimes (fire, grazing, mowing) that are inappropriate to specific grassland or grassy woodland requirements, weed invasion, pest animals, infrastructure and maintenance works, and rural tree dieback.

Another potential threat to the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland is climate change.

Research Priorities

Research priorities that would inform future regional and local priority actions include:

- Identify the mechanisms involved in rural tree dieback and potential remediation measures to minimise its onset and spread; and
- Undertake survey work in suitable and potential sites to locate any additional remnants and to identify threatened flora and fauna that may require specific conservation measures.

Priority Actions

The following priority recovery and threat abatement actions can be done to support the recovery of the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland.

Habitat Loss, Disturbance and Modification

- Recognise and implement the appropriate management regimes to maintain distinctive biodiversity elements, such as threatened species, for the grassland and woodland forms of the ecological community, and to manage the biomass of the ground layer.
- Monitor known remnants to identify key threats.
- Monitor the progress of recovery, including the effectiveness of management actions and the need to adapt them if necessary.
- Ensure chemicals or other mechanisms used to eradicate weeds do not have a significant adverse impact on the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland.
- Ensure road widening and maintenance activities (or other infrastructure or development activities) involving substrate or vegetation disturbance in areas where the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland occurs do not adversely impact on known remnants.
- Apply ecological thinning to regrowth in woodland remnants, as appropriate.
- Investigate formal conservation arrangements, management agreements and covenants on private land, and for crown and private land investigate inclusion in reserve tenure if possible.

Invasive Species

- Manage sites to prevent introduction or further spread of invasive exotic weeds, which threaten the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland, using appropriate methods.
- Manage the spread of native shrubs into the ecological community, as appropriate.
- Control introduced pest animals to manage threats, especially to threatened species, at known sites

Trampling, Browsing or Grazing

- Develop and implement a stock management plan for roadside verges and other remnants which may be impacted by stock grazing.
- Manage known sites on private property to ensure appropriate stock grazing regimes are conducted to maintain and enhance native biodiversity.

Fire

- Develop and implement suitable fire management strategies for remnants of the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland that may have specific fire management requirements, for instance the grassland component of the ecological community.
- Negotiate appropriate standing procedures with local fire brigades.

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Diseases, Fungi and Parasites

- Monitor the extent and spread of rural tree dieback.
- Restore and revegetate degraded remnants of the ecological community, including replanting of Gippsland Red Gum and key ground layer species, to ameliorate the impacts of dieback.

Conservation Information

- Raise awareness of the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland ecological community within the local community, e.g. through active Conservation Management Networks, Landcare groups and other groups.

Enable Recovery of Additional Sites

- Investigate options to maintain and improve connectivity of remnants, including the protection of paddock trees, where possible.

This list does not necessarily encompass all actions that may be of benefit to the Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland ecological community, but highlights those that are considered to be of highest priority at the time of preparing the conservation advice.

Existing Plans/Management Prescriptions that are Relevant to the Ecological Community

Bramwell, M. 2004. *Biodiversity Action Planning. Red Gum Plain Landscape Zone, Gippsland Plain Bioregion*. Department of Sustainability and Environment, Bairnsdale, Victoria.

Department of Sustainability and Environment. 2004. *Action Statement No. 182. Central Gippsland Plains Grassland, Forest Red Gum Grassy Woodland, Northern Plains Grassland, South Gippsland Plains Grassland, Western (Basalt) Plains Grassland*. Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne, Victoria.

Robertson, H. and Fitzsimmons, J. 2005. *Swallow Lagoon Nature Conservation Reserve. Management Statement*. Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne, Victoria.

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority. 2003. *West Gippsland Native Vegetation Plan 2003*. West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Traralgon, Victoria.

Further guidance on the management of temperate grassy systems, in general, are available from the following sources.

Barlow, T. 1999. *Grassy Guidelines. How to Manage Native Grasslands and Grassy Woodlands on your Property*. Trust for Nature Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria.

Langford, C., Simpson, P., Garden, D., Eddy, D., Keys, M., Rehwinkel, R. and Johnston, W. 2004. *Managing Native Pastures for Agriculture and Conservation*. NSW Department of Primary Industries.

Ross, J. 1999. *Guide to Best Practice Conservation of Temperate Native Grassland*. World Wildlife Fund for Nature (Australia), Sydney, NSW.

These were the most current prescriptions at the time of publishing; please refer to the relevant agency's website for any updated versions.