



ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

FOR

**PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO APPROVED
WESTERN RAIL COAL UNLOADER**

AT

**PIPERS FLAT
NSW**

Prepared for: **Lycopodium Infrastructure Pty Ltd**
 On Behalf of Energy Australia

Revision 1 – August 2018

AEP Ref: 1725



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Rail Loop, Coal Dump Station and Overland Conveyor was approved via a project approval granted under Part 3A Assessment under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*. The project is known as the Western Rail Coal Unloader (WRCU). The purpose of the WRCU is for coal supply to Mt Piper Power Station which is owned and operated by Energy Australia. Coal trains will access the rail loop via the Wallerawang-Mudgee Railway Line.

It is proposed to modify the approved development as a Section 75W modification under the Transitional Arrangements. The modification is to realign the rail loop and location of the dump station to allow for construction and operational efficiencies. The modification included:

- A redesign of the rail loop to better optimise the natural land contours, reduce the maximum height of the rail embankment by 7m and provide two mainline connections;
- Repositioning the coal unloader approximately 250m to the west, to line up with the overland conveyor;
- Removal of the approved transfer conveyor and immediate transfer station (given the realignment and direct connection of the overland conveyor and coal unloader); and
- Removal of certain approved ancillary infrastructure such as the wagon maintenance area, locomotive provisioning area and diesel storage area.

This report provides an ecological assessment report (EAR) associated with the modification to the rail loop alignment component of the development. It is understood that the location of the overland conveyor is as per the original approval and as such is not included in this EAR.

It is proposed to construct a rail loop that will be approx. 4.5km in length. The loop will require areas of cut and fill to achieve design grades. A dump station will be constructed to transfer coal from the trains to the overland conveyor. The loop will include the construction of three bridges and a culvert. There will also be two creek crossings and extensions of bridges and culverts within the rail corridor where the loop joins the main line. Other proposed infrastructure includes a settling pond and an access road. The modified rail loop has a similar area footprint to the approved loop, however the changed alignment impacts on an additional 1.6ha of native vegetation.

The proposed modified alignment of the rail loop crosses Pipers Flat Creek twice as well as three other lesser order water courses. At present the majority of the lands surrounding Pipers Creek, in the vicinity of the rail loop, are completely modified and cleared of vegetation with a long-history of cattle grazing. It is anticipated that about 1.6ha of remnant



vegetation will be cleared and/or disturbed in the area north of Pipers Flat Creek adjoining a large area of intact vegetation that extends well beyond the study area. The vegetation type to be impacted was found to be commensurate with PCT 732 *Broad-leaved Peppermint - Ribbon Gum grassy open forest in the north east of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion* with reference to the BioNet Vegetation Classification database. Reference to the database indicated that the PCT may form part of *Tablelands Snow Gum, Black Sallee, Candlebark and Ribbon Gum Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands, Sydney Basin, South East Corner and NSW South Western Slopes Bioregions* Endangered Ecological Community listed under the BC Act. While a number of canopy species encountered within the study area were a match for the EEC and a number of species encountered are not described in the final determination, the precautionary principal has been adopted in this case and it is assumed that the vegetation community identified on site is commensurate with the EEC.

No threatened flora species were identified within the proposed impact footprint of the rail loop and dump station.

Hollows were encountered within the remnant vegetation at a low to moderate density and it is anticipated that around 15 hollow bearing features will be removed or disturbed as part of the proposed modified development.

Threatened fauna identified on site by previous and current investigations included Eastern Bentwing-bat, Flame Robin and Scarlet Robin.

Assessment under Section 5A of the EP&A Act (the '7-part test') determined that no significant impacts upon threatened entities listed under the NSW TSC Act (now the BC Act) are likely to occur, and consideration of the EPBC Act revealed that no impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance are expected.

Assessment under the FM Act indicated that the site was unlikely to provide habitat for any threatened aquatic species.

Assessment under SEPP 44 – 'Koala Habitat Protection' revealed that the site constitutes 'Potential Koala Habitat' as defined within the policy, however there are no records within 10km of the site and there was no signs of Koala during the previous or current assessment, as such no further provisions of the policy apply to the site.

General recommendations are included for consideration to minimise localised impacts on biodiversity in general as a result of the development of the site. The specifics of the mitigation measures should be detailed where appropriate in Construction Environmental Management Plan required under the conditions of the Project Approval



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1.0 Introduction

A Rail Loop, Coal Dump Station and Overland Conveyor was approved via a project approval granted under Part 3A Assessment under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*. The project is known as the Western Rail Coal Unloader (WRCU). The purpose of the WRCU is for coal supply to Mt Piper Power Station which is owned and operated by Energy Australia. Coal trains will access the rail loop via the Wallerawang-Mudgee Railway Line.

It is proposed to modify the approved development as a Section 75W modification under the Transitional Arrangements. The modification is to realign the rail loop and location of the dump station to allow for construction and operational efficiencies.

This report is specifically intended to indicate the likelihood of the proposed modified development having a significant effect on threatened species, populations or ecological communities. In this regard, the report aims to recognise the relevant requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EPA Act), *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2017* (BC Act) (formerly the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*), the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the *Fisheries Management Act* (1994). Consideration of other relevant policies such as State Environmental Planning Policy No. 44 (SEPP 44) – “Koala Habitat Protection” are also included.

The purpose of this EAR is to:

- Describe ecological values of the site;
- Explore the potential for threatened species to utilise the site;
- Assess ecological impacts associated with the proposed modified development against relevant legislation.

Potential ecological impacts on native species in general are also considered, as are recommendations for minimising environmental impacts arising from the proposal.

For the purposes of referencing, this document should be referred to as:

Anderson Environment & Planning (2018). *Ecological Assessment Report for Proposed Modification to Approved Western Rail Coal Unloader, Pipers Flat, NSW*, June 2018.



2.0 Site Particulars

- **Address** –708 Pipers Flat Road, Wallerawang.
- **LGA** – Lithgow City.
- **Title Details** – Lot 1& 2 DP 800003 and Lot 2003 DP 1221830.
- **Zoning** – Development is proposed within land zoned SP2 – Infrastructure : Electricity Generating Works
- **Current Land Use** – The site is predominately cleared and the site has a long history of cattle grazing. The proposed modified alignment of the rail loop crosses Pipers Flat Creek twice as well as three other lesser order water courses.
- **Surrounding Land Use** – The site is bounded to the south-west by the Wallerawang-Mudgee Railway Line which runs parallel to Pipers Flat Road. Land to the north-west and south-east have similar land use to that of the subject site in that the land is predominately cleared for grazing. Land to the north is controlled by the proponent and contains woodland vegetation. An overland conveyor has previously been approved to connect the rail loop and dump station with the power station.

Figure 1 depicts the extent of the site as it occurs within the Lot.

Disclaimer: While all reasonable care has been taken to ensure the information shown on this map is up to date and accurate, no guarantee is given that the information portrayed is free from error or omission. Please verify the accuracy of all information prior to use.

Legend

Overland Conveyor

Proposed Rail Loop

Cadastre

Indicative - subject to detailed design



AEP

Title: Figure 1 - Site Location

Date: June 2018

Location: Mount Piper

Client: Lycopodium Infrastructure Pty Ltd

Our Ref: 1725



3.0 Proposed Development

A Rail Loop, Coal Dump Station and Overland Conveyor was approved via a Part 3A Assessment under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*. The project is known as the Western Rail Coal Unloader (WRCU). The purpose of the WRCU is for coal supply to Mt Piper Power Station which is owned and operated by Energy Australia. Coal trains will access the rail loop via the Wallerawang-Mudgee Railway Line.

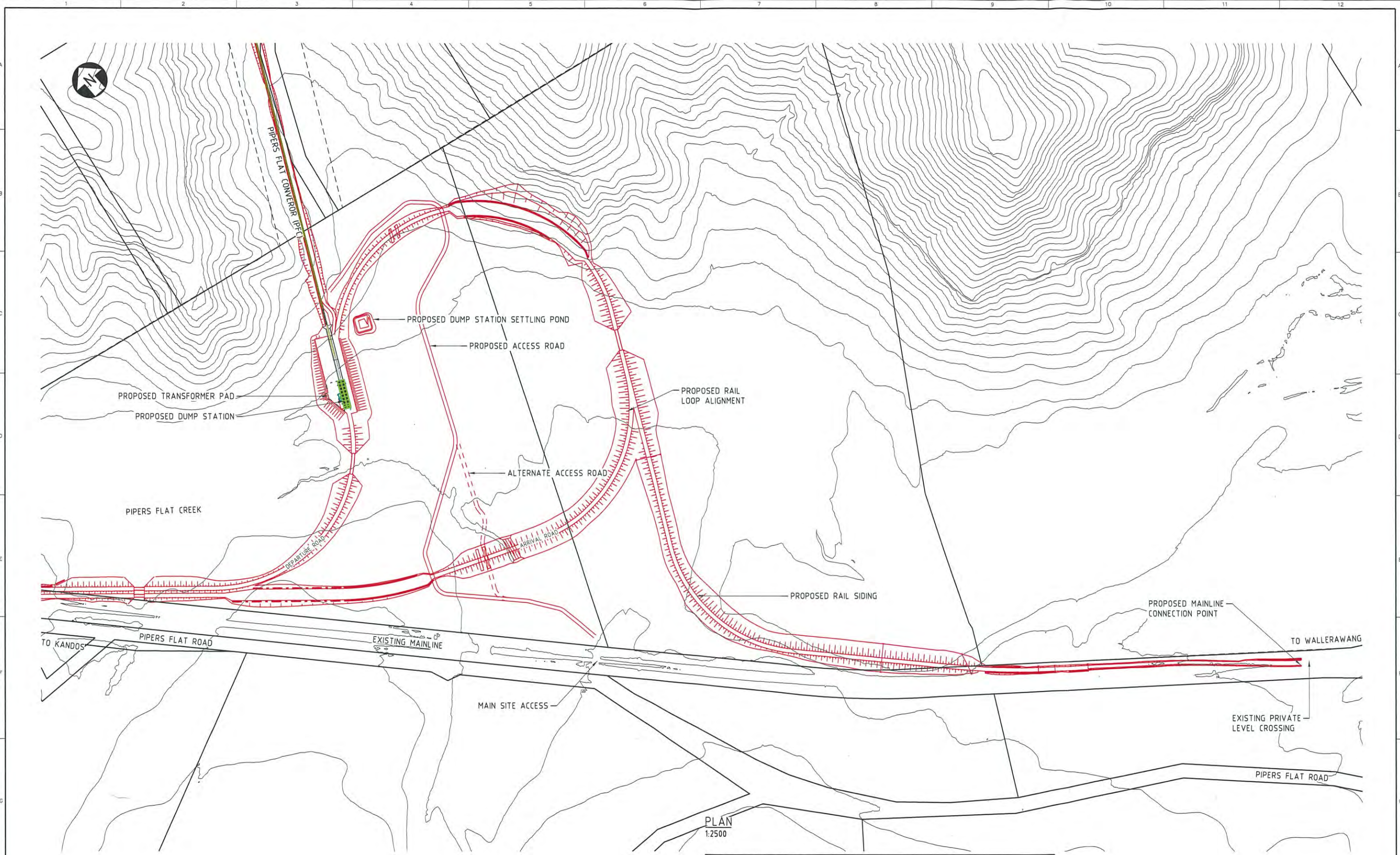
It is proposed to modify the approved development as a Section 75W modification under the Transitional Arrangements. The modification is to realign the rail loop and location of the dump station to allow for construction and operational efficiencies. The modification included:

- A redesign of the rail loop to better optimise the natural land contours, reduce the maximum height of the rail embankment by 7m and provide two mainline connections;
- Repositioning the coal unloader approximately 250m to the west, to line up with the overland conveyor;
- Removal of the approved transfer conveyor and immediate transfer station (given the realignment and direct connection of the overland conveyor and coal unloader); and
- Removal of certain approved ancillary infrastructure such as the wagon maintenance area, locomotive provisioning area and diesel storage area.

A rail loop will be constructed that will be approximately 4.5km in length. The loop will require areas of cut and fill to achieve design grades. A dump station will be constructed to transfer coal from the trains to the overland conveyor. The loop will include the construction of three bridges and a culvert. There will also be two creek crossings and extensions of culverts and bridges within the rail corridor where the loop joins the main line to the east and to the west. Other proposed infrastructure includes a settling pond and an access road. The modified rail loop has a similar area footprint to the approved loop, however the changed alignment impacts on an additional 1.6ha of native vegetation.

This report provides an ecological assessment report (EAR) associated with the modifications to the rail loop alignment component of the development, including the east and west junctions with the main rail line, as stated above.

Figure 2 depicts the plan of proposed modified development within the site.



CLIENT ENERGYAUSTRALIA

PROJECT PIPERS FLAT - RAIL COAL UNLOADER



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DRAWING TITLE
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
RAIL LOOP SITE LAYOUT
SHEET 2 OF 2

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|------|---|
| SCALE | 1:10000 | JOB No. | 6207 | DRG No. | 050-CIDRG-032 | REV. | A |
| DRAWN | PT | DATE | 15MAR18 | | | | |

| DRG No | REFERENCE DRAWINGS | REV | DATE | DESCRIPTION | DRN | CHK'D | DESIGN ENG. | LEAD ENG. | DESIGN APP'D | PROJ. APP'D | CLIENT APP'D |
|--------|--------------------|-----|---------|-------------|-----|-------|-------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | A | 17APR18 | PRELIMINARY | | | | | | | |



4.0 Scope and Purpose

Investigations were carried out in the study area and via literature / database searches to gather information required to adequately address Section 5A of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (known as the "7 part test"). The 7 part test is still applicable for Section 75W modifications as per the Transitional Arrangements.

Also afforded consideration were the Commonwealth *Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the Fisheries Management Act 1994 (FM Act), and relevant State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), namely *SEPP 44 – 'Koala Habitat Protection'*.

The assessment approach was tailored to undertake sufficient works to ensure that legislative requirements were met relating to threatened species and native species in general for the proposed specific development. This was achieved by background research and literature review, database searches, consultation, targeted ecological fieldwork and mapping, detailed habitat assessment, and ultimately impact assessment consideration against the type and form of development proposed.

Impact assessment was undertaken with due reference to the "*Threatened Species Assessment Guidelines*" (DECC, 2007).

Specifically, the scope of this study is to:

- Identify vascular plant species occurring within the site, including any threatened species listed under the BC Act, FM Act or EPBC Act;
- Identify and map the extent of vegetation communities within the site, including any Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC's) listed under the BC Act, FM Act or EPBC Act;
- Identify any fauna species, including threatened and migratory species, and populations or their habitats, which occur within the site and are known to occur in the wider locality;
- Assess the potential of the proposed modified development to have a significant impact on any threatened species, populations or ecological communities (or their habitats) identified from the site; and
- Describe measures to be implemented to avoid, minimise, manage or monitor potential impacts of the proposal.

In addition to the survey work conducted within the site boundary and its immediate surrounds, consideration has been afforded to the wider locality, via database searches within 10km of the site and via appreciation of habitat areas that may be linked ecologically to the site.



5.0 Study Certification and Licencing

This report was written by Ian Benson BEng & GradDipSc (Ecology) and Craig Anderson BAppSc (EAM) of Anderson Environment & Planning.

Research was conducted under the following licences:

- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Scientific Investigation Licence SL101313;
- Animal Research Authority (Trim File No: 14/600(2)) issued by NSW Agriculture; and
- Animal Care and Ethics Committee Certificate of Approval (Trim File No: 14/600(2)) issued by NSW Agriculture.

Certification:

As the principal author, I, Craig Anderson, make the following certification:

- The results presented in the report are, in the opinion of the principal author and certifier, a true and accurate account of the species recorded, or considered likely to occur within the site and wider study area;
- Commonwealth, State and Local Government policies and guidelines formed the basis of project surveying methodology, unless specified departures from industry standard guidelines are justified for scientific and/or animal ethics reasons; and
- All research workers have complied with relevant laws and codes relating to the conduct of flora and fauna research, including the *Animal Research Act 1995*, *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.

Principal Author and Certifier:

CRAIG ANDERSON

Director

Anderson Environment & Planning

August 2018



6.0 Methods

The field surveys for the site have been prepared and performed with due recognition of the Threatened Biodiversity Survey and Assessment: Guidelines for Developments and Activities Working Draft (DEC 2004), and also more contemporary standards relating to Amphibians (DECC 2009) and Threatened Plants (OEH 2016).

The size of the site, the type of native vegetation and habitats remaining, the status of existing and proposed surrounding land use, and the level and type of habitat linkages to proximate bushland areas, and the previous reporting and approvals process were all considered in formulating the methodology employed and described below.

The assessment approach was tailored to undertake sufficient works to ensure that legislative requirements were met relating to threatened species and native species in general for the proposed modified development.

To ensure a robust impact assessment approach, where any potential doubt remained over species impact, presence within the site was assumed to ensure a conservative approach was employed.

6.1 Literature Review

Primary information sources reviewed included:

- Aerial Photograph Interpretation (API) of the site and surrounding locality;
- State survey guidelines (DEC 2004; DECC 2009; OEH 2016);
- *Project Approval – Section 75J of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* dated 27 June 2009 File No: S06/00519.
- *Statement of Commitments. Environmental Assessment, Western Rail Coal Unloader.* SKM 2007.
- *Appendix C Flora and Fauna. Environmental Assessment, Western Rail Coal Unloader.* SKM 2007.
- BioNet Vegetation Classification database;
- OEH Threatened Species, Populations and Ecological Communities website (<http://www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au/tsprofile/>); and
- Anecdotal records.

In addition, database searches were carried out, namely:

- Search and review of flora and fauna sighting records in the OEH Atlas of NSW Wildlife within 10km of the subject site (2018);



- Fish Communities and Threatened Species Distributions of NSW (July 2016);
- Protected Matters Search within a 10km radius of the study area held by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy, summarising Matters of National Environmental Significance that may occur in, or may relate to the study area (2018).

6.2 Field Survey

6.2.1 Survey Effort

Survey for the current assessment was used to supplement the previous assessment undertaken by SKM (2007). Fieldwork was undertaken on 18 May 2018 by two experienced ecologists and included flora transect of the complete alignment, bird survey, and detailed habitat assessment as well as incidental observations.

6.2.2 Vegetation Communities

Vegetation was surveyed utilising a variety of methods, as outlined below:

- Review of previous surveys by SKM (2007);
- Review of API to identify any obvious notable variations within the site;
- Consultation of 1:25,000 topographic map series for the area; and
- Site inspection to ground truth the unit(s) identified by API including walking transects and floristic inventory within identified unit(s).

The final derived vegetation map was based on dominant species present in the over-storey, shrub and ground layers; vegetation community names are as per BioNet Vegetation Classification database. The dominant species composition, structural and physical attributes were all considered when assigning the best fit community type.

Consideration was given to the potential for the derived vegetation communities to constitute Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC's) as listed under the BC Act and/or EPBC Act. The floristic composition, geomorphological characteristics and geographical extent were important considerations in this process.

6.2.3 Flora

A general flora survey was undertaken to produce a flora species list for the site, to conduct targeted searches within the site specifically for threatened flora species known from the wider area, and to gather data necessary to both derive vegetation community type and to meet the survey guidelines of relevant authorities. Survey works included a full traverse of the alignment given the linear nature of the development.



6.2.4 Habitat

An assessment of the relative habitat values present within the site was carried out. This assessment focused primarily on the identification of specific habitat types and resources favoured by known threatened species from the region. The assessment also considered the potential value of the study area (and surrounding areas) for all major guilds of native flora and fauna.

The assessment was based on the specific habitat requirements of each threatened fauna species in regards to home range, feeding, roosting, breeding, movement patterns and corridor requirements. Consideration was given to contributing factors including topography, soil, light and hydrology for threatened flora and assemblages.

In particular, focus was put on documenting the presence of key habitat features such as tree hollows. Hollows are an important resource utilised by a variety of forest fauna, and are particularly relevant for several of the likely key threatened species in this locality. Vertebrate and invertebrate species use hollows as diurnal or nocturnal shelter sites, for rearing young, feeding, thermoregulation, and to facilitate ranging behaviour and dispersal.

Hollow-bearing Trees (HBTs) were recorded and mapped within the study area utilising the methodology of tree hollow identification set by OEH in the BioBanking field plot methodology (Feb 2009), namely:

“A hollow is only recorded if: (a) the entrance can be seen; (b) the minimum entrance width is at least 5 cm across; (c) the hollow appears to have depth (i.e. you cannot see solid wood beyond the entrance); and (d) the hollow is at least 1 m above the ground (this omits hollows in cut stumps or at the base of trees)”.

Other important habitat elements for the site have been considered, including connectivity and the presence of Koala habitat. These considerations have been provided in further Sections.

6.2.5 Fauna

Fauna survey for the current assessment has relied upon the extensive fauna survey undertaken during the previous assessment as well as incidental observations and detailed habitat assessment during the current assessment. A copy of the previous assessment is included in **Appendix C**. Fauna survey work was undertaken with reference to relevant guidelines and to add additional information to the generated Expected Fauna Species List (**Appendix B**).

Incidental records of any fauna species observed during fieldwork were noted. This included opportunistic sightings of secondary indications (scratches, scats, diggings, tracks etc.) of any resident or migratory species. Searches were also conducted for whitewash, regurgitation pellets and prey remains from Owls, chewed (*Allo*) *Casuarina* cones from Black-Cockatoos, chewed fruit remains from frugivorous birds etc.



The above survey methodology is considered to provide sufficient understanding of the biodiversity of the site and wider study area, given the disturbed nature of the vegetation assemblages therein and the relatively small impact to remnant vegetation within the subject site.

In addition, by applying rigorous habitat assessment to more mobile species within OEH Atlas records within the locality, it was ensured that all possible use of the site and wider study area by notable species was considered, and hence accommodated within subsequent biodiversity assessment and management recommendations.

6.2.6 Aquatic Habitat Assessment

An assessment of the aquatic habitat was undertaken to ensure that the condition of the watercourses and aquatic habitat was as per the previous assessment by SKM (2007).



7.0 Results

7.1 Database Searches

Updated searches were undertaken of databases within a 10km radius of the site as per latest OEH (BC Act listings) & DoE (EPBC Act listings). (**Table 1**). Note that any records considered erroneous, historic only, or obviously of no relevance to the site in regards to habitat (e.g. seabirds, waders etc.) have been omitted.

The potential for the listed threatened species to occur within the site is considered below.

Detailed ecological profile descriptions of species can be found at:

<http://www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au/tsprofile/>

Table 1 – Threatened Species Appraisal

| Scientific Name | Common Name | BC Act | EPBC Act | Chance of Occurrence / Comment |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|----------|--|
| Plants | | | | |
| <i>Eucalyptus aggregata</i> (85) | Black Gum | V | V | No sign of this species during fieldwork on site. Considered unlikely to remain undetected. Considered unlikely to occur. |
| <i>Eucalyptus cannonii</i> (108) | Capertee Stringybark | V | | While the species was recorded along the overland conveyor alignment to the north (SKM 2007), the species was not identified in the area of the proposed rail loop. Considered unlikely to remain undetected. Considered unlikely to occur. |
| <i>Veronica blakelyi</i> (29) | | V | | Whilst survey was conducted outside of the known flowering period, no candidate specimens were identified within the area of the proposed rail loop. Considered unlikely to occur. |
| <i>Thesium australe</i> (4) | Austral Toadflax | V | V | Whilst survey was conducted outside of the known flowering period, no candidate specimens were identified within the area of the proposed rail loop. Furthermore, the distribution of Kangaroo Grass within the proposed rail loop was limited. Considered unlikely to occur. |
| Birds | | | | |
| <i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i> (3) | White-bellied Sea-Eagle | V | | The site does not provide foraging habitat for the species and there was no sign of a raptor nest in the vicinity of the proposed rail loop. The woodland vegetation to be removed provides marginal potential breeding habitat, however, habitat of similar potential is plentiful in the locality. Although a highly mobile species, the site does not contain foraging habitat or meaningful potential nesting habitat. |
| <i>Hieraaetus morphnoides</i> (4) | Little Eagle | V | | Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, the subject site provides potential foraging and breeding habitat for the species, albeit, part of a much larger home range. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development. SUBJECT SPECIES. |



| Scientific Name | Common Name | BC Act | EPBC Act | Chance of Occurrence / Comment |
|---|--|--------|----------|--|
| <i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i> (6) | Gang-gang Cockatoo | V, | | <p>Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, the subject site provides potential foraging and breeding habitat for the species, albeit, part of a much larger home range. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |
| <i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i> (2) | Glossy Black-Cockatoo | V | | <p>The species was not recorded during the previous or current assessments and Atlas records in the locality are sparse. The site does not contain preferred foraging habitat and no suitable large hollows were identified during the assessment. The species is considered unlikely to occur or be impacted by the proposed development.</p> |
| <i>Glossopsitta pusilla</i> (1) | Little Lorikeet | V | | <p>Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, the subject site provides potential foraging and breeding habitat for the species, albeit, part of a much larger home range. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |
| <i>Ninox strenua</i> (4) | Powerful Owl | V | | <p>Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, the subject site provides potential foraging for the species, albeit, part of a much larger home range. No suitable large hollows were identified within the proposed disturbance footprint during the assessment. Potential foraging habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |
| <i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i> (9) | Brown Treecreeper (eastern subspecies) | V | | <p>Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, there are multiple records in the locality. The site has the potential to form a significant part of a home range for a breeding pair. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |



| Scientific Name | Common Name | BC Act | EPBC Act | Chance of Occurrence / Comment |
|--|--------------------|--------|----------|--|
| <i>Chthonicola sagittata</i> (2) | Speckled Warbler | V | | <p>Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, there are a small number records in the locality. The site has the potential to form a significant part of a home range for a breeding pair. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |
| <i>Grantiella picta</i> (1) | Painted Honeyeater | V | V | <p>The species was not recorded during the previous or current assessments and Atlas records in the locality are sparse. The site does not contain preferred riparian foraging habitat including mistletoe. The species is considered unlikely to occur or be impacted by the proposed development.</p> |
| <i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i> (4) | Varied Sittella | V | | <p>Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, there are a small number records in the locality. The site has the potential to form a significant part of a home range for a breeding pair. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |
| <i>Artamus cyanopterus cyanopterus</i> (1) | Dusky Woodswallow | V | | <p>The species was not recorded during the previous or current assessments and Atlas records in the locality are sparse. The subject site provides marginal foraging and breeding habitat for the species, albeit, part of a much larger home range. The species is considered unlikely to occur or be impacted by the proposed development.</p> |
| <i>Petroica boodang</i> (19) | Scarlet Robin | V | | <p>The species was recorded on site during the previous and current assessments. The site has the potential to form a significant part of a home range for a breeding pair. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |
| <i>Petroica phoenicea</i> (2) | Flame Robin | V | | <p>The species was recorded on site during the previous and current assessments. The site has the potential to form part of the wintering range some individuals. The locality is unlikely to be breeding habitat for the species Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development.</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIES.</p> |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | BC Act | EPBC Act | Chance of Occurrence / Comment |
|--|--------------------------------|--------|----------|---|
| Mammals | | | | |
| <i>Petauroides volans</i> (1) | Greater Glider | | V | The species was not recorded during the previous assessment and habitat within the subject site is likely to be unsuitable given the preference for taller forests. The species is considered unlikely to occur or be impacted by the proposed development. |
| <i>Saccolaimus flaviventris</i> (4) | Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail-bat | V | | Whilst not recorded during the previous assessment, there are a small number records in the locality. The subject site provided breeding and foraging habitat. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development. SUBJECT SPECIES |
| <i>Chalinolobus dwyeri</i> (5) | Large-eared Pied Bat | V | V | Whilst not recorded during the previous assessment, there are a small number records in the locality. The site does not contain breeding habitat and provides foraging habitat only. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development. SUBJECT SPECIES |
| <i>Falsistrellus tasmaniensis</i> (4) | Eastern False Pipistrelle | V | | Whilst not recorded during the previous assessment, there are a small number records in the locality. The subject site provided breeding and foraging habitat. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development. SUBJECT SPECIES |
| <i>Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis</i> (8) | Eastern Bentwing-bat | V | | Species was recorded during the previous investigation. The site does not contain breeding habitat and provides foraging habitat only. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development. SUBJECT SPECIES |



| Scientific Name | Common Name | BC Act | EPBC Act | Chance of Occurrence / Comment |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|----------|--|
| Insect | | | | |
| <i>Paralucia spinifera</i> (54) | Purple Copper Butterfly, Bathurst Copper Butterfly | E | V | Whilst not recorded during the previous or current assessments, there are multiple records in the locality. Potential habitat will be removed by the proposed development. SUBJECT SPECIES. |
| Fish | | | | |
| <i>Macquaria australasica</i> | Macquarie Perch | V^ | E | Although some habitat elements suitable for Macquarie Peach are present within Pipers Flat Creek the highly degraded nature of the creek and the barriers provided by dams up and downstream, makes habitats of the study area unsuitable for this species, and therefore it is considered unlikely to be present. |

Table Key - Status (BC Act & EPBC Act):

CE: Critically Endangered

E: Endangered

V: Vulnerable

^: FM Act

(#) – Indicates number of Atlas Records within 10km of the subject site

From the above, the following species in **Table 2** are considered the key subject species / indicator species for this site due to either being recorded on site, potentially able to forage and roost on the site, or the site may potentially form an important part of a local home range for resident species and some potential habitat will be removed, or habitat may be impacted upon by indirect impacts of the proposal.

Table 2 – Subject Species

| Scientific Name | Common Name | BC Act | EPBC Act |
|--|--|--------|----------|
| Birds | | | |
| <i>Hieraaetus morphnoides</i> (4) | Little Eagle | V | |
| <i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i> (6) | Gang-gang Cockatoo | V, | |
| <i>Glossopsitta pusilla</i> (1) | Little Lorikeet | V | |
| <i>Ninox strenua</i> (4) | Powerful Owl | V | |
| <i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i> (9) | Brown Treecreeper (eastern subspecies) | V | |
| <i>Chthonicola sagittata</i> (2) | Speckled Warbler | V | |
| <i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i> (4) | Varied Sittella | V | |
| <i>Petroica boodang</i> (19) | Scarlet Robin | V | |
| <i>Petroica phoenicea</i> (2) | Flame Robin | V | |
| Mammals | | | |
| <i>Saccolaimus flaviventris</i> (4) | Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail-bat | V | |
| <i>Chalinolobus dwyeri</i> (5) | Large-eared Pied Bat | V | V |
| <i>Falsistrellus tasmaniensis</i> (4) | Eastern False Pipistrelle | V | |
| <i>Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis</i> (8) | Eastern Bentwing-bat | V | |
| Insect | | | |
| <i>Paralucia spinifera</i> (54) | Purple Copper Butterfly, Bathurst Copper Butterfly | E | V |

Table Key - Status (BC Act & EPBC Act):

E: Endangered

V: Vulnerable

(#) – Indicates number of Atlas Records within 10km of the subject site

7.2 Vegetation Communities

At present the majority of lands surrounding Pipers Flat Creek, in the vicinity of the rail loop, are completely modified and cleared of vegetation with a long-history of cattle grazing. It is anticipated that about 1.6ha of remnant vegetation will be cleared to disturbed in the area north of Pipers Flat Creek. The vegetation type to be impacted was found to be commensurate with PCT 732 *Broad-leaved Peppermint - Ribbon Gum grassy open forest in the north east of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion* as per BioNet Vegetation Classification database. Reference to the database indicated that the PCT may form part of *Tablelands Snow Gum, Black Sallee, Candlebark and Ribbon Gum Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands, Sydney Basin, South East Corner and NSW South Western Slopes Bioregions* Endangered Ecological Community listed under the BC Act.

7.2.1 Cleared Areas

While the cleared areas that have been subject to grazing over a number of years comprised some native flora species including *Poa* spp, *Eragrostis leptostachya* (Paddock Lovegrass), and *Coronidium scorpioides* (Button Everlasting), it also comprised significant portions of introduced grass and weed species including *Phalaris aquatica* (Canary Grass), *Phalaris minor* (Lesser Canary Grass), *Dactylis glomerata* (Cocksfoot), *Cynosurus echinatus* (Crested Dogstail), *Plantago lanceolata* (Plantain), *Cirsium vulgare* (Scotch Thistle), *Hypochaeris radicata* (Flatweed) and *Hypericum perforatum* (St John's Wart). These cleared areas were not found to be commensurate with a plant community type or a derived native grassland.



Plate 1: Typical grazed/cleared paddock

7.2.2 Riparian Vegetation

The riparian areas lacked remnant riparian vegetation and the introduced *Salix babylonica* (Weeping Willows) were the dominant tree species with exotic pasture species such as *Phalaris aquatica* (Canary Grass) dominating the banks. The in-stream vegetation comprises mainly exotic grasses, however some native species are present including *Juncus usitatus* (Common Rush), *Carex appressa* (Tall Sedge) and *Limosella australis* (Austral Mudwort). The riparian vegetation lacked sufficient remnant vegetation to be commensurate with a notably discernible plant community type.



Plate 2: Typical exotic riparian vegetation associated with Pipers Flat Creek

7.2.3 Ribbon Gum – Apple Box – Snow Gum Woodland

The vegetated parts of the proposed modified rail loop alignment was found to be a grassy woodland structure with the canopy to about 15m in height. It typically had a native understorey, although there were areas of *Rubus fruticosus* (Blackberry) infestation.

Canopy species recorded included *Eucalyptus bridgesiana* (Apple Box), *E. pauciflora* (Snow Gum), *E. dives* (Broad-leaved Peppermint) and *E. macrorhyncha* (Red Stringy Bark). Shrubs included *Acacia dealbata* (Silver Wattle) and *Lissanthe strigosa* (Peach Heath). Where grasses were present, species included *Rytidosperma pallidum* (Silvertop Wallaby Grass), *Austrostipa pubescens*, *Poa* spp (Snow Grass). Herbs commonly found within the community included *Stellaria pungens* (Prickly Starwort), *Acaena novae-zelandiae* (Bidgee-widgee), *Dichondra repens* (Kidney Weed) and *Coronidium scorpioides* (Button Everlasting).

The Ribbon Gum – Apple Box – Snow Gum Woodland was found to be commensurate with PCT 732 *Broad-leaved Peppermint - Ribbon Gum grassy open forest in the north east of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion* with reference to the BioNet Vegetation Classification database. Reference to the database indicated that the PCT may form part of *Tablelands Snow Gum, Black Sallee, Candlebark and Ribbon Gum Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands, Sydney Basin, South East Corner and NSW South Western Slopes Bioregions* Endangered Ecological Community listed under the BC Act.

The final determination for the EEC lists a number of dominant canopy species that were not recorded in the subject site including, *E. aggregata*, *E. dalrympleana* subsp. *dalrympleana*, *E. ovata*, *E. radiata*, *E. rubida*, *E. stellulata* and *E. viminalis*. Likewise a number of canopy species recorded in the subject site were not included in the final determination for the EEC including *E. bridgesiana* and *E. macrorhyncha*. Only two of the four canopy species recorded in the subject site are listed in the final determination being *E. pauciflora* and *E. dives*.






Notwithstanding the above, the precautionary principal has been adopted in this case and it is assumed that the vegetation community identified on site is commensurate with the EEC.



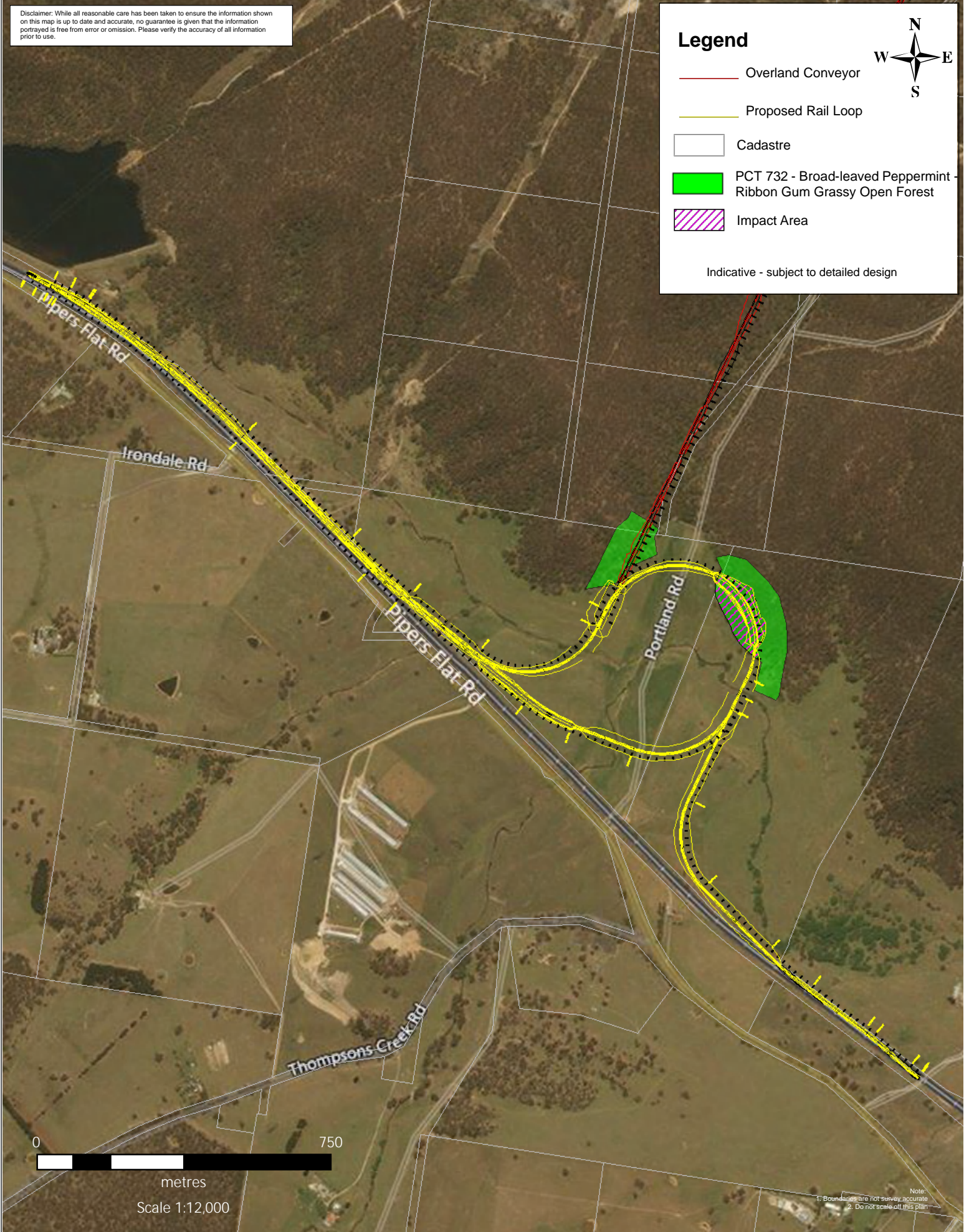
Plate 3: Typical remnant vegetation in the subject site

Disclaimer: While all reasonable care has been taken to ensure the information shown on this map is up to date and accurate, no guarantee is given that the information portrayed is free from error or omission. Please verify the accuracy of all information prior to use.

Legend

-  Overland Conveyor
-  Proposed Rail Loop
-  Cadastre
-  PCT 732 - Broad-leaved Peppermint - Ribbon Gum Grassy Open Forest
-  Impact Area

Indicative - subject to detailed design



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Title: Figure 3 - Vegetation Map

Date: June 2018

Location: Mount Piper

Client: Lycopodium Infrastructure Pty Ltd

Our Ref: 1725



7.3 Flora

Flora surveys have resulted in the identification of over 109 species within the site. Approximately 14% of these species are exotics, principally exotic pasture and invasive weed species associated with areas of previous disturbance and grazing.

A full list of flora species identified by surveys conducted within the site is included in **Appendix A**.

7.4 Threatened Plants

While *Eucalyptus cannonii* (Capertee Stringybark) was recorded along the alignment of the approved overland conveyor to the north, no individuals were encountered in the area of the proposed modified rail loop subject to this assessment.

No sign of any threatened flora species were noted during fieldwork, and they are considered unlikely to occur given the disturbed nature of the site and the small area of remnant vegetation to be removed or modified.

7.5 Habitat Assessment

The site offers habitat features for native fauna as outlined below.

- **Trees & Hollows** – The site contains extensive remnant woodland vegetation to the north of the proposed modified rail loop and dump station. The proposed modified development will remove approx. 1.6ha of this vegetation. The various Eucalypt species within the remnant woodland would provide seasonal foraging habitat for a wide variety of species. Outside of the remnant woodland, trees are generally absent from the proposed loop alignment within the cleared/grazed paddocks.

Vertebrate and invertebrate species use hollows, crevasses and peeling bark for a variety of reasons including diurnal / nocturnal shelter sites, rearing young, feeding, thermoregulation, and to facilitate ranging behaviour and dispersal. Hollows were encountered within the remnant vegetation at a low to moderate density and it is anticipated that around 15 hollow bearing features will be removed or disturbed as part of the proposed modified development.

- **Shrubs** – There is a moderately sparse and low shrub layer within the remnant woodland that has been infiltrated by Blackberry in parts. This shrub layer forms an important part of the habitat structure for woodland birds. The cleared/grazed paddocks are devoid of a shrub layer.
- **Groundcover** – the groundcover within the cleared/grazed paddocks was low and sparse, however, without grazing pressure this would be expected to improve over the spring and summer seasons. These areas of grazed paddocks can still provide foraging habitat for species such as *Petroica* robins and raptors. Groundcover in the form of exotic species was more prevalent around some of the riparian areas. Ground habitat was plentiful within the remnant woodland in the form of native grasses, leaf litter and fallen



timber. Groundcover habitat within the remnant woodland is important habitat for woodland birds.

- **Connectivity and patch size** – The cleared/grazed areas are considered hostile for species not tolerant of open spaces. Likewise, the riparian areas are so heavily modified that they provide little in the way of habitat connectivity.

The remnant woodland vegetation, while connected to a much larger patch, does not form part of any specific habitat corridor given that it is located on the edge of the patch. Removal of the 1.6ha of remnant woodland vegetation will not sever any habitat connectivity in the locality.

The contiguous vegetation connected to the 1.6ha of remnant woodland that will be removed as part of the proposed modified rail loop totals about 1,400ha. The development will reduce this patch size by about 0.12%.

- **Aquatic** – No remnant riparian vegetation of note is present within any of the water courses on the subject site. Weeping Willows are the dominant tree species. In-stream vegetation generally comprises exotic grasses, however some native species persist including *Juncus usitatus* (Common Rush), *Carex appressa* (Tall Sedge) and *Limosella australis* (Austral Mudwort). The water courses are unlikely habitat for local threatened fish species due to the high level of disturbance and lack of adequate habitat attributes. Overall Pipers Flat Creek is considered to provide moderate to low value fish habitat.

In summary, the highly modified parts of the subject site including the grazed paddocks and the water courses, with a general absence of shrub layer and native groundcover, limits the potential value to native species that are less tolerant to disturbance. The areas of remnant vegetation provide a range of foraging, roosting and breeding habitat for a variety of species including some threatened species.

7.6 Fauna Species

Fauna surveys to date have identified 61 species within the site, consisting of two amphibians, 14 mammals and 45 bird species.

Threatened fauna identified on site by previous and current investigations included Eastern Bent winged Bat, Flame Robin and Scarlet Robin.

Other notable species, including some more mobile (flying) threatened species, are also considered to possibly utilise the site on an intermittent basis as part of a larger home range. Such species are considered further in following Sections.

An Expected Fauna Species List has been generated for the site and is included as **Appendix B**, and all fauna species recorded during fieldwork are noted therein.

8.0 Key Species Considerations

Following all of the works outlined in previous Sections, the species identified for further consideration have been categorised into guilds in **Table 3**. By considering these species and their lifecycle needs, many other species are also inadvertently considered as well in identifying key features. The analysis below considers key lifecycle features for each guild of species in more detail, and assists in informing the subsequent 7 part test assessment.

Table 3 – Key Species Analysis

| Guild / Species | Key Habitat Feature | Comment |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Little Eagle | Foraging Resources | The remnant woodland would provide suitable foraging habitat for the species, however the cleared areas of the site are unlikely to provide suitable foraging habitat for the species. |
| | Roosting & Nesting | The species typically builds a large stick nest within tall living trees. The trees within the remnant vegetation that are proposed to be removed, would be marginally suitable as breeding habitat for the species. There was no sign of the typically conspicuous nest within the remnant vegetation that is proposed to be removed. |
| | Connectivity | Given the high mobility of these species, the site is considered viably connected to other potential habitat areas within a wider landscape matrix. |
| Gang-gang Cockatoo | Foraging Resources | The locality is likely to provide foraging habitat for the species given the variety of eucalypts within the remnant woodland on the subject site. |
| | Roosting & Nesting | There were a small number of suitable sized hollows present within the remnant woodland that are proposed to be removed, however suitable hollows are moderately common in the locality. |
| | Connectivity | Given the high mobility of this species, the site is considered viably connected to other potential habitat areas within a wider landscape matrix. |
| Little Lorikeet | Foraging Resources | The locality is likely to provide foraging habitat for the species given the variety of eucalypts within the remnant woodland on the subject site. |
| | Roosting and Nesting | There were a number of suitable sized hollows present within the remnant woodland that are proposed to be removed, however suitable hollows are moderately common in the locality. |
| | Connectivity | Given the high mobility of this species, the site is considered viably connected to other potential habitat areas within a wider landscape matrix. |
| Powerful Owl | Foraging Resources | Forested parts of the site have been shown to contain suitable prey species such as possums and gliders, as evidenced by field survey results. |
| | Roosting & Nesting | No suitably large hollows were noted in the area of remnant vegetation to be cleared as part of the proposed development. |



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| Guild / Species | Key Habitat Feature | Comment |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| | | Roosting habitat within the site for Barking Owl and Powerful Owl is limited given a general lack of dense or riparian habitat. |
| | Home Range | Forest Owls have a large home range, foraging principally within 2km of their nest site to meet their hunting requirements. If utilised, the site would be a small component of a larger home range within the wider locality. |
| Woodland Birds Incl. Brown Treecreeper Speckled Warbler Varied Sittella | Foraging Resources | Suitable foraging resources are present for the Varied Sittella, Speckled Warbler and Brown Treecreeper in the area of the remnant woodland and immediate surrounds. |
| | Roosting and Nesting | Suitable breeding habitat is present for all species in the remnant woodland. |
| | Connectivity | Given the moderate mobility of these species, the site is considered viably connected to other potential habitat areas within a wider landscape matrix. |
| Petroica Robins Incl. Scarlet Robin Flame Robin | Foraging Resources | The entirety of the subject site is likely to provide potential foraging habitat for both species. |
| | Roosting and Nesting | Given the location of the subject site, Flame Robin would most likely only use the site as wintering habitat away from the upland areas where they breed. The remnant woodland may provide potential breeding habitat for Scarlet Robin. |
| | Connectivity | Given the moderate mobility of these species, the site is considered viably connected to other potential habitat areas within a wider landscape matrix. |
| Microbats , including Eastern False Pipistrelle, Eastern Bentwing-bat, Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail Bat Large-eared Pied Bat | Roosting & Maternity Habitat | While there are a number of escarpments, cliff faces (including potential caves) and disused mine shafts in the locality, none are in such proximity to the remnant woodland to be removed to impact upon any maternity colonies that utilise such habitat constraints. The presence of hollow bearing trees means that suitable micro-bat roosting habitat is available for species that utilise such features. |
| | Foraging | Whilst microbat species have differing micro-habitat preferences for foraging habitat, they all seek insects in and around forested areas, and may also at times forage in proximity of cleared and developed areas. |
| Purple Copper Butterfly | Resources | <i>Bursaria spinosa subsp. lasiophylla</i> was not recorded within the area of the proposed development. |
| | Connectivity | The subject site is approx. 4km from the nearest records for the species. It is not known if the subject site is viably connected to these areas of known records. |



9.0 7 Part Test Assessment

Section 5A of the EP&A Act lists seven factors that must be taken into account in determining the significance of potential impacts of proposed activities on threatened species, populations, ecological communities and/or their habitats as listed within the BC Act.

The 7 part test is used to determine whether there is likely to be a significant impact, and thus whether a Species Impact Statement is required to accompany a development application.

For the purposes of the 7 part test assessment, the **subject site** is the area within which direct impacts of the proposed modified development (the **disturbance footprint**) will occur and subsequent targeted survey efforts have been focussed. The **study areas** is the parent Lot that includes both the study area and adjacent habitat areas that may be subject to indirect impacts from vegetation clearing and construction works, but may also be subject to impact mitigation works in the form of revegetation /rehabilitation efforts.

(a) *in the case of a threatened species, whether the action proposed is likely to have an adverse effect on the life cycle of the species such that a viable local population of the species is likely to be placed at risk of extinction*

Little Eagle:

Although the area of the site with remnant woodland provides potential foraging and breeding habitat for the species, Little Eagle was not recorded during the previous or current assessments.

Given the absence of any specific evidence of utilisation or residence within the site and the relative abundance of habitat within the wider locality for this highly mobile species, it is considered unlikely that the Little Eagle will be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

Woodland Birds:

Although the area of the site with remnant woodland provides potential foraging and breeding habitat for the Varied Sittella, Brown Treecreeper and Speckled Warblers, no threatened woodland birds were recorded during the previous or current assessments.

Given the absence of any specific evidence of continued use of, or residence within the site, the small amount of suitable habitat to be removed and the relative abundance of suitable habitat within the wider locality, it is considered unlikely that the Varied Sittella, Brown Treecreeper and Speckled Warblers will be significantly impacted upon by the proposal. Given that the Brown Treecreeper nests in tree hollows, it is considered an important safeguard measure that pre-clearance surveys of hollow trees are carried out within areas proposed to be cleared, and that a supervising ecologist is on hand during clearing to rescue any potentially affected native fauna. Installation of nest boxes as compensatory habitat would also minimise the impact of hollow-bearing tree removal upon resident species.



***Petroica* Robins**

Both the Flame Robin and Scarlet Robin were recorded utilising the cleared areas within the site as foraging habitat. Flame Robin tends to breed in eucalypt forests in the mountains, which does not fit the characteristics of the subject site, therefore the site is likely to be winter foraging habitat only. Scarlet Robin may utilise the remnant woodland vegetation within the site as breeding habitat.

Given that extensive cleared areas will still be suitable as foraging habitat for both species post development and the large patch that will remain in the locality with extensive breeding habitat still available for Scarlet Robin, it is considered unlikely that either of the *Petroica* Robins will be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

Gang-gang Cockatoo:

While some potential breeding in the form of medium sized hollows the species tends to breed in tall moist eucalypt forests in the mountains, which does not fit the characteristics of the subject site, therefore the site is likely to be winter foraging habitat only.

Given the absence of any specific evidence of continued use of, or residence within the site and the relative abundance of suitable habitat within the wider locality, it is considered unlikely that the Gang-gang Cockatoo will be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

Little Lorikeet:

Given the absence of any specific evidence of utilisation or residence within the site and the relative abundance of habitat within the wider locality for this highly mobile species, it is considered unlikely that the Little Lorikeet will be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

Given that the Little Lorikeet nests in tree hollows, it is considered an important safeguard measure that pre-clearance surveys of hollow trees are carried out within areas proposed to be cleared, and that a supervising ecologist is on hand during clearing to rescue any potentially affected native fauna. Installation of nest boxes as compensatory habitat would also minimise the impact of hollow-bearing tree removal upon resident species.

Powerful Owl:

Given the absence of any specific evidence of use of, or residence within the study area, the lack of suitable breeding habitat, the small amount of habitat to be removed and the relative abundance of habitat within the wider locality for this highly mobile species, it is not considered likely that Powerful Owl will be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.



Microbats:

For the cave dwelling species, namely Eastern Bentwing-bat and Large-eared Pied Bat, the site is foraging habitat only. Foraging habitat will remain on adjacent lands post development. These species will not be significantly impacted by the proposed modified development.

For the hollow dwelling species, namely Eastern False Pipistrelle and Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail Bat, there is potential for individuals to be impacted upon by clearing of hollows in trees within the site. These species utilise open woodland and dry open forest habitat for foraging, and utilise hollows for roosting and breeding.

Given the abundance of woodland/open forest and grassland ecotonal habitat in the locality, and numerous hollow bearing trees in the contiguous bushland to the north, it is considered unlikely that the modified development as proposed will significantly impact any local population of these species.

As some species of microbats roost and breed in tree hollows, it is considered an important safeguard measure that pre-clearance surveys of hollow trees and that a supervising ecologist is on hand during all clearing works to rescue any potentially affected native fauna. In addition, the retention of hollow-bearing trees within the site is highly encouraged where practical. Installation of nest boxes as compensatory habitat would also minimise the impact of hollow-bearing tree removal upon resident species.

Purple Cooper Butterfly:

Given the absence of any specific evidence of use of, or residence within the study area, the lack of suitable foraging habitat, the small amount of habitat to be removed and the relative abundance of habitat within the wider locality, it is not considered likely that Purple Cooper Butterfly will be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

(b) in the case of an endangered population, whether the action proposed is likely to have an adverse effect on the life cycle of the species that constitutes the endangered population such that a viable local population of the species is likely to be placed at risk of extinction

No endangered populations were recorded, or are likely to be present.



(c) in the case of an endangered ecological community, whether the action proposed:

- (i) is likely to have an adverse effect on the extent of the ecological community such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction, or***
- (ii) is likely to substantially and adversely modify the composition of the ecological community such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction***

The modified development as proposed will likely lead to the loss of 1.6ha of *Tablelands Snow Gum, Black Sallee, Candlebark and Ribbon Gum Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands, Sydney Basin, South East Corner and NSW South Western Slopes Bioregions* Endangered Ecological Community.

The EEC is widespread in the locality and the small area to be impacted is unlikely to place the local occurrence at risk of extinction.

(d) in relation to the habitat of a threatened species, population or ecological community:

- (i) the extent to which habitat is likely to be removed or modified as a result of the action proposed, and***

The proposed modified development involves the removal of approx. 1.6ha of native vegetation, solely comprising Ribbon Gum – Apple Box - Snow Gum Woodland. All of the Ribbon Gum – Apple Box - Snow Gum Woodland remnant present on site is commensurate with the EEC.

This vegetation offers suitable habitat resources for many native species, including some of the threatened fauna species as discussed above.

- (ii) whether an area of habitat is likely to become fragmented or isolated from other areas of habitat as a result of the proposed action,***

The patch of vegetation is located at the southern edge of a larger patch. Removal of the vegetation therein does not remove any connectivity as there is no further vegetation to the south.



(iii) the importance of the habitat to be removed, modified, fragmented or isolated to the long-term survival of the species, population or ecological community in the locality

Although the habitat proposed to be removed may be of some local importance to resident threatened species, the habitat present is not considered of significance for long term survival of threatened species or the *Tablelands Snow Gum, Black Sallee, Candlebark and Ribbon Gum Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands, Sydney Basin, South East Corner and NSW South Western Slopes Bioregions* EEC in the locality.

(e) whether the action proposed is likely to have an adverse effect on critical habitat (either directly or indirectly)

No critical habitat is present.

(f) whether the action proposed is consistent with the objectives or actions of a recovery plan or threat abatement plan

No relevant Threat Abatement Plans have been developed that would apply to the site or proposed modified development.

(g) whether the action proposed constitutes or is part of a key threatening process or is likely to result in the operation of, or increase the impact of, a key threatening process

- Anthropogenic Climate Change

The modified development as proposed will contribute in a small way to the processes causing Anthropogenic Climate Change via the removal of forest vegetation which acts as a carbon sink. It is not considered the contribution to this KTP in this instance is of a notable magnitude.

- Clearing of native vegetation

The modified development as proposed will involve the removal of approx. 1.6ha of modified native vegetation. This loss is a direct contribution to this KTP, and contributes to incremental habitat loss in the locality.



- *Infection of frogs by amphibian chytrid causing the disease chytridiomycosis*

There is potential for development of the site to inadvertently introduce chytrid into the site. It is recommended that appropriate hygiene controls are put in place for all construction related activity to limit such potential.

- *Infection of native plants by *Phytophthora cinnamomi**

There is potential for development of the site to inadvertently introduce *Phytophthora cinnamomi* into the site, which may lead to infection and degradation of retained and adjacent vegetation areas. As such, it is recommended that appropriate controls are put in place for all construction related activity to limit such potential.

- *Loss of hollow bearing trees*

Existing hollow-bearing trees would be lost as a result of the proposed modified development. To reduce impacts, retention of hollow-bearing trees within the development site wherever possible is highly encouraged, and a nest box and salvageable hollow tree installation program is recommended, dependent upon the availability of surrounding lands for such purposes.

- *Removal of dead wood and dead trees*

The modified development as proposed will remove areas that contain dead wood and dead trees. Consideration should be given to relocating larger and/or more significant habitat features such as hollow logs and likely den sites into retained areas.

- *Invasion and spread of aggressive weed species (several listed)*

Parts of the site already support numerous weed species. These areas will be developed, removing such weeds from the site.

- *Degradation of native riparian vegetation along New South Wales water courses*

The native riparian habitat within the subject site is already highly degraded. The modified project as proposed will not further degrade any native riparian vegetation. Mitigation measures proposed including rehabilitation of the riparian corridor will enhance the native riparian vegetation along the existing watercourses.

- *Installation and operation of instream structures and other mechanisms that alter natural flow regimes of rivers and streams*

The project includes the construction of three bridges and a culvert which have the potential to alter natural flow regimes. These structures should be constructed with due consideration to maintain natural flow regimes. This is further described in **Section 10** below.

10.0 Aquatic Habitat Assessment

10.1 Methodology

The aquatic habitat assessment for the current EAR was to supplement the results of the SKM 2007 report, a copy of which is provided in **Appendix C**. The assessment included inspection of the proposed crossing locations to ensure that the stream condition and vegetation within the stream and banks was as per the previous assessment. Updated Threatened Species distribution searches were also undertaken.

10.2 Results

As per SKM 2007, Macquarie Perch (*Macquaria australasica*) was the only species considered to potentially use Pipers Flat Creek as there are records of the species known from the Coxs River, of which Pipers Flat Creek is a tributary.

The site inspection from the current assessment confirmed that aquatic habitat was as per the SKM 2007 assessment and Pipers Flat Creek is considered to provide moderate to low value fish habitat at best.



Above: Bridge Crossing #1



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Above: Bridge Crossing #2
Below: Bridge Crossing #3





Above: Culvert #1.

10.3 Conclusion

Although some habitat elements suitable for Macquarie Peach are present within Pipers Flat Creek, the highly degraded nature of the creek and the barriers provided by dams up and downstream, makes habitats of the study area largely unsuitable for this species, and therefore it is considered unlikely to be present.

Bridges and culverts should be designed to minimise the impacts on fish passage and aquatic habitat and maintain as close to natural flow regimes as practical as per Fairfull, S. and Witheridge, G. (2003), NSW Fisheries (1999) and NSW Fisheries (2003).

To enhance the riparian corridor, riparian vegetation protection or restoration should concentrate on an area of 50m width along the creek bank as per the SKM (2007) recommendations. Further recommendations for riparian protection are listed in **Section 13**.

While the Pipers Flat Creek and other water courses on the site provide some aquatic habitat, the subject site is considered unlikely to provide habitat for species listed under FM Act. The project and its associated recommendations has the potential to improve riparian vegetation and aquatic habitat if fully implemented.



11.0 EPBC Act Assessment

A search was conducted in June 2018 of Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) as relevant to the *Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The following MNES are considered in this assessment.

World Heritage Properties:

The site is not a World Heritage area, and is not in close proximity to any such area.

National Heritage Places:

The site is not a National Heritage place, and it is not in close proximity to any such places.

Wetlands of International Significance (declared Ramsar wetlands);

The following Ramsar listed wetlands are proximate to the proposed development:

- Banrock Station Wetland Complex (800 – 900km upstream);
- Riverland (800 – 900km upstream);
- The Coorong, and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert Wetland (900 – 1000km upstream); and
- The Macquarie Marshes (300 – 400k upstream)

The proposal will not significantly impact upon any declared Ramsar wetlands with the implementation of appropriate erosion and sediment controls.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park:

The site is not part of, or within close proximity to, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Commonwealth Marine Areas:

The site is not part of, or within close proximity to, any Commonwealth Marine Area.

Threatened Ecological Communities:

The following Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) are predicted to occur proximate to the proposed development:

- Natural Temperate Grassland of the South Eastern Highlands (CEEC);
- Upland Basalt Eucalypt Forests of the Sydney Basin Bioregion (EEC)
- White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland (CEEC).

The vegetation on site is not commensurate with any of the above listed TECs or any other EPBC listed TEC.

**Threatened Species:**

No EPBC Act listed threatened species were identified on the subject site. Purple Copper Butterfly and Large-eared Pied Bat have records within the locality and were assessed as having some potential to use parts of the subject site, however, a significant impact to either species was not anticipated.

Records of Macquarie Perch have been recorded from the Cox's River catchment of which Thompson's Creek and Piper Flat Creek are included in. These records have occurred from tributaries in the lower catchment such as Little River which are considered to be in relatively pristine condition. Given the condition of the waterways in the study area (i.e. lack of riparian cover, high turbidity and bank erosion) populations of this species are unlikely to occur.

Migratory Species:

A number of EPBC listed migratory species have some potential to visit the site on an irregular basis. However, it is not considered that the development of this land as proposed is likely to significantly impact the potential habitat of such species, or disrupt migratory patterns.

EPBC Act Assessment Conclusion:

No MNES (specifically in this instance threatened species, threatened ecological communities or listed migratory species) are expected to be impacted upon significantly as a result of the proposal.



12.0 SEPP 44 Koala Assessment

Schedule 2 of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 44 – Koala Habitat Protection (SEPP 44) lists tree species which are considered indicators of potential Koala habitat as they are known to be utilised as feed trees by Koalas. The presence of any of these tree species on a site proposed for development triggers the requirement for an assessment of the site for 'Potential Koala Habitat' (PKH).

PKH is defined in the SEPP as:

“areas of native vegetation where the trees of the types listed in Schedule 2 constitute at least 15% of the total number of trees in the upper or lower strata of the tree component.”

Site inspection revealed the presence of the Schedule 2 feed trees *Eucalyptus viminalis*. Although in small numbers, applying a conservative approach, collectively these trees may constitute >15% of the remaining isolated trees.

As such, consideration of whether the site contains 'Core Koala Habitat' is required.

CKH is defined in the SEPP as:

“an area of land with a resident population of Koalas, evidenced by attributes such as breeding females (that is, females with young) and recent sightings of and historical records of a population.”

No sign of Koalas or their presence has been noted on the site during the recent inspections or during the previous surveys undertaken over the wider Mt Piper area.

Given the absence of any signs of Koalas or their presence, it is apparent that the site does not constitute CKH, and no further provisions of the policy apply to the site.



13.0 Recommendations

In addition to conditions 2.34 to 2.38 from the *Project Approval* as well as the *Statement of Commitments* from the Environmental Assessment, the following general recommendations are made to mitigate localised impacts on biodiversity in general as a result of the modified development of the site:

The specifics of mitigation measures should be fully detailed where appropriate in a Vegetation and Fauna Management Plan incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan for the project.

- Fifteen nest boxes of a variety of types and sizes should be installed in remnant vegetation adjacent to the rail loop as supplementary habitat prior to tree clearing to mitigate the removal of hollow-bearing trees; and
- No go areas for contractors will be established and clearly identified on the ground along creeks and treed areas to avoid unnecessary vegetation and habitat removal.
- During operations involving the clearing of mature trees, an ecologist or appropriately trained personnel will be present to check any trees felled for wildlife inhabiting those trees.
- Designated laydown and stockpile areas, compound sites and access routes will be identified and established in areas of cleared and degraded land, where practicable, to minimise the overall impact of the Project and avoid unnecessary vegetation and habitat removal.
- Appropriate weed management strategies will be implemented during construction to ensure they are not spread throughout the study area and particularly into areas of remnant vegetation adjacent to the proposal area.
- Fallen logs encountered within the proposed disturbance footprint and felled timber would be relocated to areas of retained remnant vegetation or other suitable long-term habitat areas.
- Creek crossing structures, where required, would be designed in accordance with *Why do Fish Need to Cross the Road? Fish Passage Requirements for Waterways Crossings*, 2003 so as not to impede fish passage. Where culverts are used the base of the culvert will be positioned at or below the creek bed.
- A section of Pipers Flat Creek, adjacent to the Project area, would be rehabilitated by reinstating riparian vegetation and providing connectivity along the creek for movement by terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna.
- Revegetation of Pipers Flat Creek and surrounding areas would use native flora which occur in the local area and are adapted to local conditions. Plants and seed used in revegetation works would be preferentially sourced from local provenance, where possible.



14.0 Conclusion

The modified rail loop has a similar area footprint to the approved loop, however the changed alignment impacts on an additional 1.6ha of native vegetation that is likely to be commensurate with an Endangered Ecological Community listed under the BC Act. Provided that recommended mitigation measures as outlined in this document, the *Project Approval* as well as the *Statement of Commitments*, the project as modified is considered unlikely to have a significant impact on any species or communities protected by the BC Act or the EPBC Act.



15.0 References

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Appendix A – Flora Species List



FLORA SPECIES LIST

The following list includes all species of vascular plants observed on site during fieldwork during the SKM Assessment in 2007 with supplementary records for the AEP Assessment in 2018. It should be noted that such a list cannot be considered comprehensive, but rather indicative of the flora present on the site. It can take many years of flora surveys to record all of the plant species occurring within any area, especially plant species that are only apparent in some seasons such as Orchids.

A number of species cannot always be accurately identified during a brief survey, generally due to a lack of suitable flowering and/or fruiting material. Such species are identified as accurately as possible, and are indicated in the list as thus:

- specimens that could only be identified to genus level are indicated by the generic name followed by the abbreviation “sp.”, indicating an unidentified species of that genus;
- specimens for which identification of the genus was uncertain are indicated by a question mark (“?”) placed in front of the generic, which is followed by the abbreviation “sp.” and;
- specimens that could be accurately identified to genus level, but could be identified to species level with only a degree of certainty are indicated by a (“?”) placed in front of the epithet.

Authorities for the scientific names are not provided in the list. These follow the references outlined below.

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Names of families and higher taxa follow a modified Cronquist System (1981).

Introduced species are indicated by an asterisk “*”.

Threatened species listed under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2017* (BC Act) or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) are indicated in **bold font** and marked as:

(V) = Vulnerable Species listed under the BC Act

(E) = Endangered Species listed under the BC Act

(EV) = Vulnerable Species listed under the EPBC Act

(EE) = Endangered Species listed under the EPBC Act



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| Family Name | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Apiaceae | <i>Daucus glochidiatus</i> | Native Carrot |
| Apiaceae | <i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i> | Stinking Pennywort |
| Apiaceae | <i>Hydrocotyle tripartita</i> | Pennywort |
| Apiaceae | <i>Platysace ericoides</i> | Heathy Platysace |
| Asteraceae | <i>Brachyscome spathulata</i> | |
| Asteraceae | <i>Cassinia aculeata</i> | Dolly Bush |
| Asteraceae | <i>Cassinia arcuata</i> | Sifton Bush |
| Asteraceae | <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> * | Spear Thistle |
| Asteraceae | <i>Coronidium scorpioides</i> | Button Everlasting |
| Asteraceae | <i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> * | Flatweed |
| Boraginaceae | <i>Cynoglossum australe</i> | |
| Boraginaceae | <i>Echium plantagineum</i> * | Paterson's Curse |
| Caryophyllaceae | <i>Stellaria pungens</i> | Prickly Starwort |
| Clusiaceae | <i>Hypericum gramineum</i> | Small St Johns Wort |
| Clusiaceae | <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> * | St Johns Wort |
| Convolvulaceae | <i>Dichondra repens</i> | Kidney Weed |
| Cyperaceae | <i>Carex appressa</i> | Tall Sedge |
| Dennstaedtiaceae | <i>Pteridium esculentum</i> | Bracken |
| Dilleniaceae | <i>Hibbertia obtusifolia</i> | Grey Guinea Flower |
| Epacridaceae | <i>Astroloma humifusum</i> | Native Cranberry |
| Epacridaceae | <i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i> | Daphne Heath |
| Epacridaceae | <i>Leucopogon virgatus</i> | - |
| Epacridaceae | <i>Lissanthe strigosa</i> | Peach Heath |
| Epacridaceae | <i>Monotoca scoparia</i> | Prickly Broom-heath |
| Ericaceae | <i>Leucopogon pilifer</i> | Thready Beard-heath |
| Euphorbiaceae | <i>Amperea xiphioclada</i> | |
| Fabaceae (Faboideae) | <i>Bossiaea buxifolia</i> | |
| Fabaceae (Faboideae) | <i>Daviesia leptophylla</i> | |
| Fabaceae (Faboideae) | <i>Hovea heterophylla</i> | |
| Fabaceae (Faboideae) | <i>Ulex europaeus</i> * | Gorse |
| Fabaceae (Faboideae) | <i>Vicia spp.</i> * | Vetch |
| Fabaceae (Mimosoideae) | <i>Acacia cultriformis</i> | Knife-leaved Wattle |
| Fabaceae (Mimosoideae) | <i>Acacia dealbata subsp. dealbata</i> | Silver Wattle |
| Fabaceae (Mimosoideae) | <i>Acacia gunnii</i> | Ploughshare Wattle |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Desmodium varians</i> | Slender Tick-trefoil |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Dillwynia phyllicoides</i> | - |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Glycine clandestina</i> | Twining Glycine |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Gompholobium minus</i> | Dwarf Wedge-pea |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Hovea linearis</i> | - |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Indigofera australis</i> | Native Indigo |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Mirbelia platylobioides</i> | - |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Podolobium ilicifolium</i> | Prickly Shaggy Pea |
| Fabaceae/faboideae | <i>Pultenaea foliolosa</i> | - |
| Fabaceae/faboideae/Mimosoideae | <i>Acacia buxifolia</i> | Box-leaf Wattle |
| Fabaceae/faboideae/Mimosoideae | <i>Acacia penninervis</i> | Mountain Hickory |
| Fabaceae/faboideae/Mimosoideae | <i>Acacia terminalis</i> | Sunshine Wattle |
| Fabaceae/faboideae/Mimosoideae | <i>Acacia ulicifolia</i> | Prickly Moses |
| Geraniaceae | <i>Geranium solanderi var. solanderi</i> | |
| Goodeniaceae | <i>Goodenia paniculata</i> | Swamp Goodenia |
| Haloragaceae | <i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i> | Poverty Raspwort |



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| Family Name | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|------------------|---|--|
| Haloragaceae | <i>Gonocarpus teucroides</i> | Raspwort |
| Iridaceae | <i>Patersonia glabrata</i> | Leafy Purple-flag |
| Iridaceae | <i>Patersonia sericea</i> | Wild Iris |
| Juncaceae | <i>Juncus cognatus</i> * | - |
| Juncaceae | <i>Juncus usitatus</i> | Common Rush |
| Lomandraceae | <i>Lomandra filiformis</i> subsp. <i>filiformis</i> | Wattle Mat-rush |
| Lomandraceae | <i>Lomandra glauca</i> | Pale Mat-rush |
| Lomandraceae | <i>Lomandra longifolia</i> | Spiky-headed Mat-rush |
| Lomandraceae | <i>Lomandra multiflora</i> subsp. <i>multiflora</i> | Many-flowered Mat-rush |
| Loranthaceae | <i>Amyema miquelii</i> | Mistletoe |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i> | Apple Box |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus cannonii</i> | Capertee Stringybark, Cannons Stringybark (V, EV) |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus dives</i> | Broad-leaved Peppermint |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus eugenioides</i> | Thin-leaved Stringybark |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i> | Red Stringybark |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus mannifera</i> | Brittle Gum |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i> | Snow Gum |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus rossii</i> | Scribbly Gum, Inland Scribbly Gum |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus rubida</i> | Candlebark |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus sieberi</i> | Silvertop Ash |
| Myrtaceae | <i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> | Ribbon Gum |
| Phormiaceae | <i>Dianella revoluta</i> var. <i>revoluta</i> | Spreading Flax Lily |
| Pinaceae | <i>Pinus radiata</i> * | Radiata or Monterey Pine |
| Pittosporaceae | <i>Billardiera scandens</i> | Hairy Appleberry |
| Pittosporaceae | <i>Bursaria longisepala</i> | |
| Plantaginaceae | <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> * | Ribwort |
| Plantaginaceae | <i>Plantago varia</i> | - |
| Poaceae | <i>Aristida ramosa</i> | Purple Wiregrass |
| Poaceae | <i>Austrostipa pubescens</i> | Tall Speargrass |
| Poaceae | <i>Briza maxima</i> * | Quaking Grass |
| Poaceae | <i>Cynosurus echinatus</i> * | Rough Dog's Grass |
| Poaceae | <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> | Cocksfoot |
| Poaceae | <i>Echinopogon caespitosus</i> | Bushy Hedgehog-grass |
| Poaceae | <i>Echinopogon ovatus</i> | Forest Hedgehog Grass |
| Poaceae | <i>Eragrostis leptostachya</i> | Paddock Lovegrass |
| Poaceae | <i>Joycea pallida</i> | Silvertop Wallaby Grass |
| Poaceae | <i>Panicum effusum</i> | Hairy Panic |
| Poaceae | <i>Phalaris aquatica</i> * | Phalaris |
| Poaceae | <i>Phalaris minor</i> * | Lesser Canary Grass |
| Poaceae | <i>Poa sieberiana</i> var. <i>sieberiana</i> | Snowgrass |
| Poaceae | <i>Poa</i> spp.* | |
| Poaceae | <i>Themeda australis</i> | Kangaroo Grass |
| Proteaceae | <i>Persoonia linearis</i> | Narrow-leaved Geebung |
| Rosaceae | <i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i> | Biddy Biddy |
| Rosaceae | <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> sp. agg.* | Blackberry complex |
| Rubiaceae | <i>Galium gaudichaudii</i> | Rough Bedstraw |
| Rubiaceae | <i>Galium proquinqum</i> | Bedstraw |
| Rutaceae | <i>Boronia microphylla</i> | Small-leaved Boronia |
| Salicaceae | <i>Salix babylonica</i> * | Weeping Willow |



AEP

| Family Name | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|------------------|---|---------------------|
| Santalaceae | <i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i> | Native Cherry |
| Santalaceae | <i>Leptomeria acida</i> | Native Currant |
| Scrophulariaceae | <i>Limosella australis</i> | Australian Mudwort |
| Scrophulariaceae | <i>Veronica calycina</i> | Hairy Speedwell |
| Scrophulariaceae | <i>Veronica plebeia</i> | Creeping Speedwell |
| Sinopteridaceae | <i>Cheilanthes sieberi subsp. sieberi</i> | Poison Rock Fern |
| Stylidiaceae | <i>Stylidium graminifolium</i> | Grass Trigger Plant |
| Violaceae | <i>Viola betonicifolia</i> | Native Violet |



Appendix B – Expected Fauna Species List



EXPECTED FAUNA SPECIES LIST

The following list includes fauna species that could be reasonably expected to occur within the study area at some point, given site attributes and location.

“●” - species observed or indicated by scats, tracks etc. on, over or near the site during the various field investigations undertaken by SKM in 2007 with supplementary records from the AEP survey in 2018.

* - Introduced species

? - Unconfirmed record, anecdotal records etc.

A - NSW Atlas of Wildlife record of threatened species for the site.

Threatened species listed under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 1995* (BC Act) and/or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) are indicated in **bold font**.



AEP

| Family | Present | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|---------------------|---------|--|--------------------------------|
| Birds | | | |
| Anatidae | | <i>Anas gracilis</i> | Grey Teal |
| Anatidae | • | <i>Anas superciliosa</i> | Pacific Black Duck |
| Anatidae | | <i>Chenonetta jubata</i> | Australian Wood Duck |
| Columbidae | | <i>Ocyphaps lophotes</i> | Crested Pigeon |
| Columbidae | | <i>Phaps chalcoptera</i> | Common Bronzewing |
| Podargidae | | <i>Podargus strigoides</i> | Tawny Frogmouth |
| Caprimulgidae | | <i>Eurostopodus mystacalis</i> | White-throated Nightjar |
| Aegothelidae | | <i>Aegotheles cristatus</i> | Australian Owlet-nightjar |
| Apodidae | | <i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i> | White-throated Needletail |
| Phalacrocoracidae | | <i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i> | Little Black Cormorant |
| Ardeidae | | <i>Ardea pacifica</i> | White-necked Heron |
| Ardeidae | • | <i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i> | White-faced Heron |
| Accipitridae | • | <i>Accipiter fasciatus</i> | Brown Goshawk |
| Accipitridae | • | <i>Aquila audax</i> | Wedge-tailed Eagle |
| Accipitridae | • | <i>Elanus axillaris</i> | Black-shouldered Kite |
| Accipitridae | | <i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i> | White-bellied Sea-Eagle |
| Accipitridae | • | <i>Haliastur sphenurus</i> | Whistling Kite |
| Accipitridae | | <i>Hieraaetus morphnoides</i> | Little Eagle |
| Falconidae | • | <i>Falco berigora</i> | Brown Falcon |
| Falconidae | | <i>Falco cenchroides</i> | Nankeen Kestrel |
| Rallidae | | <i>Fulica atra</i> | Eurasian Coot |
| Rallidae | | <i>Gallinula tenebrosa</i> | Dusky Moorhen |
| Rallidae | | <i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i> | Purple Swampphen |
| Charadriidae | • | <i>Vanellus miles</i> | Masked Lapwing |
| Cacatuidae | | <i>Cacatua galerita</i> | Sulphur-crested Cockatoo |
| Cacatuidae | | <i>Cacatua sanguinea</i> | Little Corella |
| Cacatuidae | | <i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i> | Gang-gang Cockatoo |
| Cacatuidae | • | <i>Calyptorhynchus funereus</i> | Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo |
| Cacatuidae | | <i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i> | Glossy Black-Cockatoo |
| Cacatuidae | • | <i>Eolophus roseicapillus</i> | Galah |
| Psittacidae | | <i>Alisterus scapularis</i> | Australian King-Parrot |
| Psittacidae | • | <i>Platycercus elegans</i> | Crimson Rosella |
| Psittacidae | | <i>Platycercus eximius</i> | Eastern Rosella |
| Cuculidae | • | <i>Cacomantis flabelliformis</i> | Fan-tailed Cuckoo |
| Cuculidae | | <i>Cacomantis pallidus</i> | Pallid Cuckoo |
| Cuculidae | | <i>Chalcites basalus</i> | Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo |
| Cuculidae | | <i>Chalcites lucidus</i> | Shining Bronze-Cuckoo |
| Cuculidae | | <i>Eudynamys orientalis</i> | Eastern Koel |



AEP

| Family | Present | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|----------------------|---------|--|---|
| Cuculidae | | <i>Scythrops novaehollandiae</i> | Channel-billed Cuckoo |
| Strigidae | | <i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i> | Southern Boobook |
| Strigidae | | <i>Ninox strenua</i> | Powerful Owl |
| Alcedinidae | • | <i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i> | Laughing Kookaburra |
| Alcedinidae | | <i>Todiramphus sanctus</i> | Sacred Kingfisher |
| Menuridae | | <i>Menura novaehollandiae</i> | Superb Lyrebird |
| Climacteridae | • | <i>Climacteris erythroptis</i> | Red-browed Treecreeper |
| Climacteridae | | <i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i> | Brown Treecreeper (eastern subspecies) |
| Climacteridae | • | <i>Cormobates leucophaea</i> | White-throated Treecreeper |
| Maluridae | • | <i>Malurus cyaneus</i> | Superb Fairy-wren |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Acanthiza chrysorrhoa</i> | Yellow-rumped Thornbill |
| Acanthizidae | • | <i>Acanthiza lineata</i> | Striated Thornbill |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Acanthiza nana</i> | Yellow Thornbill |
| Acanthizidae | • | <i>Acanthiza pusilla</i> | Brown Thornbill |
| Acanthizidae | • | <i>Acanthiza reguloides</i> | Buff-rumped Thornbill |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Chthonicola sagittata</i> | Speckled Warbler |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Gerygone mouki</i> | Brown Gerygone |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Gerygone olivacea</i> | White-throated Gerygone |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Origma solitaria</i> | Rockwarbler |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Sericornis frontalis</i> | White-browed Scrubwren |
| Acanthizidae | | <i>Smicronis brevirostris</i> | Weebill |
| Pardalotidae | • | <i>Pardalotus punctatus</i> | Spotted Pardalote |
| Pardalotidae | • | <i>Pardalotus striatus</i> | Striated Pardalote |
| Meliphagidae | • | <i>Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris</i> | Eastern Spinebill |
| Meliphagidae | • | <i>Anthochaera carunculata</i> | Red Wattlebird |
| Meliphagidae | | <i>Anthochaera chrysoptera</i> | Little Wattlebird |
| Meliphagidae | • | <i>Caligavis chrysops</i> | Yellow-faced Honeyeater |
| Meliphagidae | | <i>Manorina melanocephala</i> | Noisy Miner |
| Meliphagidae | | <i>Meliphaga lewinii</i> | Lewin's Honeyeater |
| Meliphagidae | • | <i>Melithreptus lunatus</i> | White-naped Honeyeater |
| Meliphagidae | • | <i>Nesoptilotis leucotis</i> | White-eared Honeyeater |
| Meliphagidae | • | <i>Philemon corniculatus</i> | Noisy Friarbird |
| Meliphagidae | | <i>Ptilotula penicillatus</i> | White-plumed Honeyeater |
| Psophodidae | | <i>Cinclosoma punctatum</i> | Spotted Quail-thrush |
| Psophodidae | | <i>Psophodes olivaceus</i> | Eastern Whipbird |
| Neosittidae | | <i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i> | Varied Sittella |
| Campephagidae | • | <i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i> | Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike |
| Pachycephalidae | • | <i>Colluricincla harmonica</i> | Grey Shrike-thrush |



AEP

| Family | Present | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|--------------------|---------|---|---------------------------|
| Pachycephalidae | | <i>Falcunculus frontatus frontatus</i> | Eastern Shrike-tit |
| Pachycephalidae | | <i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i> | Golden Whistler |
| Pachycephalidae | | <i>Pachycephala rufiventris</i> | Rufous Whistler |
| Artamidae | | <i>Cracticus nigrogularis</i> | Pied Butcherbird |
| Artamidae | • | <i>Cracticus tibicen</i> | Australian Magpie |
| Artamidae | • | <i>Cracticus torquatus</i> | Grey Butcherbird |
| Artamidae | • | <i>Strepera graculina</i> | Pied Currawong |
| Artamidae | | <i>Strepera versicolor</i> | Grey Currawong |
| Rhipiduridae | • | <i>Rhipidura albiscapa</i> | Grey Fantail |
| Rhipiduridae | • | <i>Rhipidura leucophrys</i> | Willie Wagtail |
| Corvidae | • | <i>Corvus coronoides</i> | Australian Raven |
| Monarchidae | • | <i>Grallina cyanoleuca</i> | Magpie-lark |
| Monarchidae | | <i>Myiagra inquieta</i> | Restless Flycatcher |
| Monarchidae | • | <i>Myiagra rubecula</i> | Leaden Flycatcher |
| Corcoraciidae | • | <i>Corcorax melanorhamphos</i> | White-winged Cough |
| Petroicidae | • | <i>Eopsaltria australis</i> | Eastern Yellow Robin |
| Petroicidae | • | <i>Petroica boodang</i> | Scarlet Robin |
| Petroicidae | • | <i>Petroica phoenicea</i> | Flame Robin |
| Petroicidae | | <i>Petroica rosea</i> | Rose Robin |
| Alaudidae | | <i>Alauda arvensis</i> * | Eurasian Skylark |
| Acrocephalidae | | <i>Acrocephalus australis australis</i> | Australasian Reed Warbler |
| Megaluridae | | <i>Megalurus mathewsi</i> | Rufous Songlark |
| Timaliidae | • | <i>Zosterops lateralis</i> | Silvereye |
| Hirundinidae | • | <i>Hirundo neoxena</i> | Welcome Swallow |
| Hirundinidae | | <i>Petrochelidon ariel</i> | Fairy Martin |
| Turdidae | | <i>Turdus merula</i> * | Eurasian Blackbird |
| Sturnidae | | <i>Sturnus tristis</i> * | Common Myna |
| Sturnidae | | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> * | Common Starling |
| Nectariniidae | | <i>Dicaeum hirundinaceum</i> | Mistletoebird |
| Estrildidae | | <i>Neochmia temporalis</i> | Red-browed Finch |
| Passeridae | | <i>Passer domesticus</i> * | House Sparrow |
| Motacillidae | • | <i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i> | Australian Pipit |
| Fringillidae | • | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> * | European Goldfinch |
| Amphibians | | | |
| Myobatrachidae | • | <i>Crinia signifera</i> | Common Eastern Froglet |
| Myobatrachidae | | <i>Limnodynastes dumerilii</i> | Eastern Banjo Frog |
| Myobatrachidae | | <i>Limnodynastes peronii</i> | Brown-striped Frog |
| Myobatrachidae | | <i>Limnodynastes tasmaniensis</i> | Spotted Grass Frog |
| Myobatrachidae | | <i>Pseudophryne bibronii</i> | Bibron's Toadlet |



AEP

| Family | Present | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|-----------------|---------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Myobatrachidae | | <i>Uperoleia laevisgata</i> | Smooth Toadlet |
| Hylidae | | <i>Litoria dentata</i> | Bleating Tree Frog |
| Hylidae | | <i>Litoria ewingii</i> | Brown Tree Frog |
| Hylidae | | <i>Litoria peronii</i> | Peron's Tree Frog |
| Hylidae | • | <i>Litoria verreauxii</i> | Verreaux's Frog |
| Reptiles | | | |
| Chelidae | | <i>Chelodina longicollis</i> | Eastern Snake-necked Turtle |
| Chelidae | | <i>Emydura macquarii</i> | Macquarie Turtle |
| Gekkonidae | | <i>Amalosia lesueurii</i> | Lesueur's Velvet Gecko |
| Gekkonidae | | <i>Diplodactylus vittatus</i> | Wood Gecko |
| Scincidae | | <i>Acritoscincus platynota</i> | Red-throated Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Cryptoblepharus virgatus</i> | Cream-striped Shinning-skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Ctenotus robustus</i> | Robust Ctenotus |
| Scincidae | | <i>Ctenotus taeniolatus</i> | Copper-tailed Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Egernia striolata</i> | Tree Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Eulamprus quoyii</i> | Eastern Water-skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Hemiergis decresiensis</i> | Three-toed Earless Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Lampropholis delicata</i> | Dark-flecked Garden Sunskink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Lampropholis guichenoti</i> | Pale-flecked Garden Sunskink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Liopholis whitii</i> | White's Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Pseudemoia entrecasteauxii</i> | Tussock Cool-skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Pseudemoia pagenstecheri</i> | Tussock Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Saiphos equalis</i> | Three-toed Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Saproscincus mustelinus</i> | Weasel Skink |
| Scincidae | | <i>Tiliqua nigrolutea</i> | Blotched Blue-tongue |
| Scincidae | | <i>Tiliqua scincoides</i> | Eastern Blue-tongue |
| Agamidae | | <i>Amphibolurus muricatus</i> | Jacky Lizard |
| Agamidae | | <i>Rankinia diemensis</i> | Mountain Dragon |
| Elapidae | | <i>Austrelaps superbus</i> | Lowland Copperhead |
| Elapidae | | <i>Cryptophis nigrescens</i> | Eastern Small-eyed Snake |
| Elapidae | | <i>Drysdalia rhodogaster</i> | Mustard-bellied Snake |
| Elapidae | | <i>Pseudechis porphyriacus</i> | Red-bellied Black Snake |
| Elapidae | | <i>Pseudonaja textilis</i> | Eastern Brown Snake |
| Elapidae | | <i>Suta suta</i> | Curl Snake |
| Mammals | | | |
| Tachyglossidae | | <i>Tachyglossus aculeatus</i> | Short-beaked Echidna |
| Dasyuridae | • | <i>Antechinus stuartii</i> | Brown Antechinus |
| Dasyuridae | | <i>Sminthopsis murina</i> | Common Dunnart |



AEP

| Family | Present | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|------------------|---------|--|--------------------------------|
| Vombatidae | ● | <i>Vombatus ursinus</i> | Common Wombat |
| Petauridae | ● | <i>Petaurus breviceps</i> | Sugar Glider |
| Pseudocheiridae | | <i>Petauroides volans</i> | Greater Glider |
| Pseudocheiridae | ● | <i>Pseudocheirus peregrinus</i> | Common Ringtail Possum |
| Acrobatidae | | <i>Acrobates pygmaeus</i> | Feathertail Glider |
| Phalangeridae | ● | <i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i> | Common Brushtail Possum |
| Macropodidae | ● | <i>Macropus giganteus</i> | Eastern Grey Kangaroo |
| Macropodidae | | <i>Macropus robustus</i> | Common Wallaroo |
| Macropodidae | | <i>Macropus rufogriseus</i> | Red-necked Wallaby |
| Macropodidae | | <i>Wallabia bicolor</i> | Swamp Wallaby |
| Rhinolophidae | ● | <i>Rhinolophus megaphyllus</i> | Eastern Horseshoe-bat |
| Emballonuridae | | <i>Saccolaimus flaviventris</i> | Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail-bat |
| Molossidae | | <i>Austronomus australis</i> | White-striped Freetail-bat |
| Molossidae | | <i>Mormopterus ridei</i> | Eastern Free-tailed Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | | <i>Chalinolobus dwyeri</i> | Large-eared Pied Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | ● | <i>Chalinolobus gouldii</i> | Gould's Wattled Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | ● | <i>Chalinolobus morio</i> | Chocolate Wattled Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | | <i>Falsistrellus tasmaniensis</i> | Eastern False Pipistrelle |
| Vespertilionidae | ● | <i>Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis</i> | Eastern Bentwing-bat |
| Vespertilionidae | | <i>Nyctophilus geoffroyi</i> | Lesser Long-eared Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | ● | <i>Nyctophilus gouldi</i> | Gould's Long-eared Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | | <i>Scotorepens orion</i> | Eastern Broad-nosed Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | ● | <i>Vespadelus darlingtoni</i> | Large Forest Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | | <i>Vespadelus pumilus</i> | Eastern Forest Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | | <i>Vespadelus regulus</i> | Southern Forest Bat |
| Vespertilionidae | ● | <i>Vespadelus vulturnus</i> | Little Forest Bat |
| Muridae | | <i>Mus musculus</i> * | House Mouse |
| Muridae | | <i>Rattus fuscipes</i> | Bush Rat |
| Muridae | | <i>Rattus lutreolus</i> | Swamp Rat |
| Canidae | | <i>Canis lupus</i> * | Dingo, domestic dog |
| Canidae | | <i>Vulpes vulpes</i> * | Fox |
| Felidae | | <i>Felis catus</i> * | Cat |
| Leporidae | | <i>Lepus capensis</i> * | Brown Hare |
| Leporidae | ● | <i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i> * | Rabbit |
| Suidae | | <i>Sus scrofa</i> * | Pig |



Appendix C – SKM Flora and Fauna Impact Assessment (2007)

Western Rail Coal Unloader



FLORA AND FAUNA IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Final Report
- April 2007



Western Rail Coal Unloader

FLORA AND FAUNA IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Final Report
- April 2007

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1. Introduction

1.1 General Introduction

Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) has been commissioned by Delta Electricity to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Western Rail Coal Unloader (WRCU) with associated rail loop and conveyor located in the vicinity of the Mt Piper and Wallerawang Power Stations. This report provides an assessment of flora and fauna impacts associated with this extension, and forms a specialist component of the EA.

A map showing the locality of the study area is provided as **Figure 1** Locality Plan

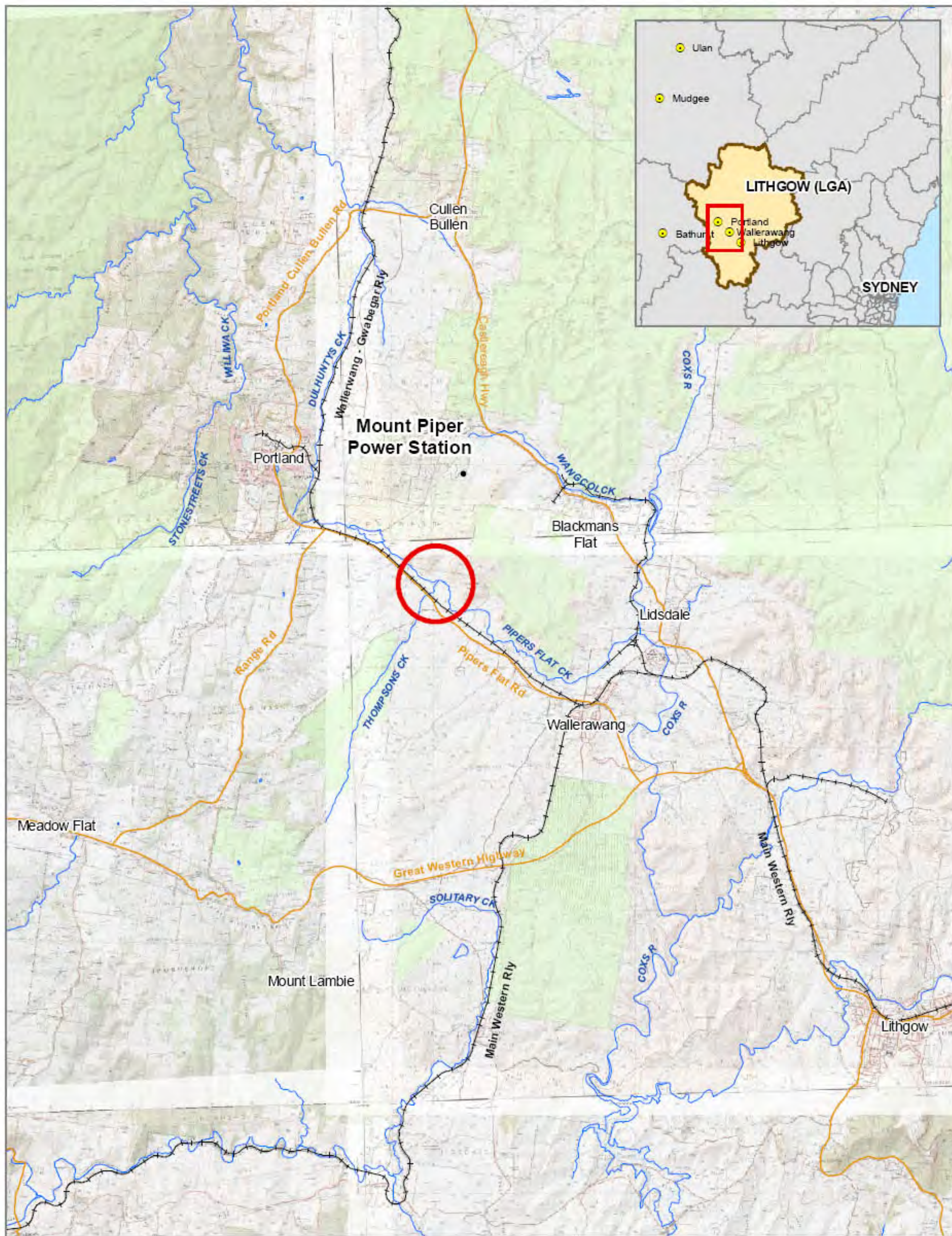
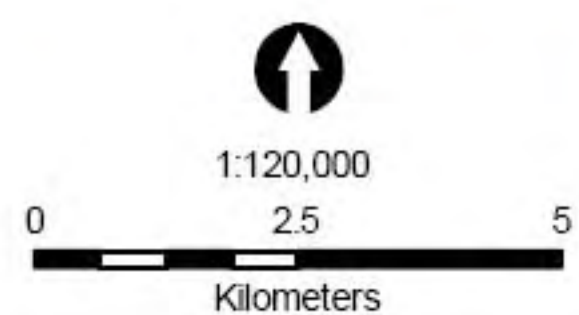


Fig 1: Regional Locality of Proposal

Delta Electricity Western Rail Coal Unloader

Legend

- Main Highways
- + + Rail
- Rivers
- State Forest
- Project Site





1.2 Project Appreciation

Delta Electricity operates two power stations, Mt Piper and Wallerawang, near Lithgow in the central west of New South Wales. Coal for these stations is currently supplied from a number of local coal mines via conveyor or road transport. Delta Electricity is proposing to construct a rail coal unloader facility in the vicinity of the stations to enable the supply of coal by rail from a wider selection of mines, predominantly north of the power stations.

This assessment addresses the project concept design at Piper's Flat which forms a loop connecting to the Mudgee rail line branch at two points south of Portland. The rail loop would be fully contained within the Piper's Flat area, bounded by the existing Mudgee branch to the south and by the ridge that rises to the north. The area is of disturbed land isolated by manmade and natural features. The rail track's initial connection with the Mudgee branch is located just east of a dammed reservoir. Coal received from the rail unloader would be transported to the power station via a conveyor as illustrated on **Figure 2**.

1.3 Study Objectives

This report documents the results of a flora and fauna assessment conducted by Sinclair Knight Merz to investigate the impacts of the proposed coal conveyor and rail loop. The information presented in the report is based on a review of available data and site investigations to assess the potential impacts of the proposal in relation to relevant State and Commonwealth environmental and threatened species legislation.

The specific objectives of this report are to:

- Identify species, ecological communities and populations of local, regional, state and national conservation significance, and their habitats, which are known or considered likely to occur within lands affected by the proposal.
- Describe the biological environment of the study area in relation to terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna species.
- Assess the potential impacts of the proposed coal conveyor and rail loop on the ecological values of the study area.



Figure 2 - Site Layout



2. Preliminary Review

2.1 Existing Environment

A previous assessment reported on the terrestrial flora and fauna issues occupying the Mt Piper Power Station perimeter lands and the nearby Thompsons Creek Dam (Ecotone Ecological Consultants 1996). The data presented in the Ecotone report documents the results of comprehensive seasonal surveys and has been reviewed for this assessment.

The previous surveys were concentrated within the naturally vegetated perimeter lands of the power station including some former mining and state forest lands although avoided existing disturbed and regenerating lands adjacent to plant infrastructure. The Ecotone (1996) study covered a broader range of topography and habitat types and a considerably larger area than the surveys for this assessment including land surrounding the study area.

Surveys for terrestrial flora and fauna were undertaken over four seasons from autumn 1995 to the summer of 1995/1996. These surveys involved the identification and mapping of vegetation communities, transect and quadrat surveys for flora and targeted surveys for threatened plant species. Fauna surveys included live-trapping using Elliott, cage and pit traps as well as mist nests and harp traps for microchiropteran bats. Additional techniques included spotlighting, ultrasonic bat detectors, owl call playback, scat collection and analysis and searches for scratch-marks, tracks and other signs.

2.2 Biodiversity Databases

Data sources used in this review included the:

- DEC Atlas of NSW Wildlife;
- Database of the Royal Botanic Gardens PlantNET and Australian Museum FaunaNET;
- Records published in scientific journals, reports and general flora and fauna distribution texts;
- Results of local environmental studies, and studies done to support various environmental impact assessments (e.g. Ecotone 1996); and
- Other relevant databases including the National Herbarium, Department of Environment and Heritage (nationally threatened species, EPBC Act), and records published in the Birds Australia database.

All of the threatened flora and fauna species, endangered populations and ecological communities known to occur within the study locality have been tabulated. This information will be utilised in the preparation of lists of threatened species deemed potential inhabitants of the study area (i.e. potential subject species).

SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ



2.3 Threatened Flora

A total of 34 threatened flora species have some habitat attributes within the study area (**Table 1**). Of these species at least 6 have marginal habitat qualities and 28 have good habitat qualities. The total list of threatened flora species considered are listed in **Appendix A** along with the distribution and preferred habitat conditions for each species. Threatened flora records for the local area surrounding the study area are illustrated on **Figure 3**.

■ **Table 1 Threatened Flora Species of the Study Locality.**

| Threatened Flora | Status | | | Habitat quality in Study Area |
|---|--------|-----|-------|-------------------------------|
| | Cwlth | NSW | RoTAP | |
| <i>Acacia baueri</i> subsp. <i>aspera</i> | - | V | 2RC | Marginal |
| <i>Acacia clunies-rossiae</i> | - | V | 2RC-t | Marginal |
| <i>Acacia flocktoniae</i> | V | V | 2VC- | Marginal |
| <i>Calotis glandulosa</i> | V | V | 3VC- | Good |
| <i>Darwinia peduncularis</i> | - | V | 3RCi | Good |
| <i>Dillwynia tenuifolia</i> | V | V | 2RCa | Marginal |
| <i>Derwentia blakelyi</i> | - | V | 2K | Good |
| <i>Diuris aequalis</i> | E | V | 3VC- | Good |
| <i>Eucalyptus cannonii</i> | V | V | 2VCi | Good |
| <i>Eucalyptus pulverulenta</i> | V | V | 3V | Good |
| <i>Grevillea evansiana</i> | V | V | 2VC | Good |
| <i>Grevillea obtusifolia</i> | E | E | - | Good |
| <i>Hibbertia puberula</i> | - | E | - | Marginal |
| <i>Lepidium hyssopifolium</i> | E | E | 3ECi+ | Good |
| <i>Persoonia acerosa</i> | V | V | 2VC- | Marginal |
| <i>Persoonia hindii</i> | - | E | 2V | Good |
| <i>Persoonia hirsuta</i> | E | E | 3KCi | Good |
| <i>Persoonia marginata</i> | V | V | 2V | Good |
| <i>Prostanthera stricta</i> | V | V | 2V | Good |
| <i>Pultenaea glabra</i> | V | V | 3VCa | Good |
| <i>Zieria citriodora</i> | V | E | - | Good |
| <i>Zieria murphyi</i> | V | V | 2VC- | Good |

2.4 Endangered Ecological Communities

Of the eight vegetation communities identified from the Mt Piper power station perimeter lands in the Ecotone (1996) report, none of these are listed as an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) under the schedules of the Commonwealth *EPBC Act* or NSW *TSC Act*. The presence of EEC's in the study area is addressed in this study.



2.5 Threatened Fauna

Twenty-nine threatened fauna species have been recorded in the wider locality (10-kilometre radius) of the Mt Piper power station site (refer **Figure 4**); and these species are listed below in **Table 2**.

■ **Table 2 Threatened fauna species of the study locality**

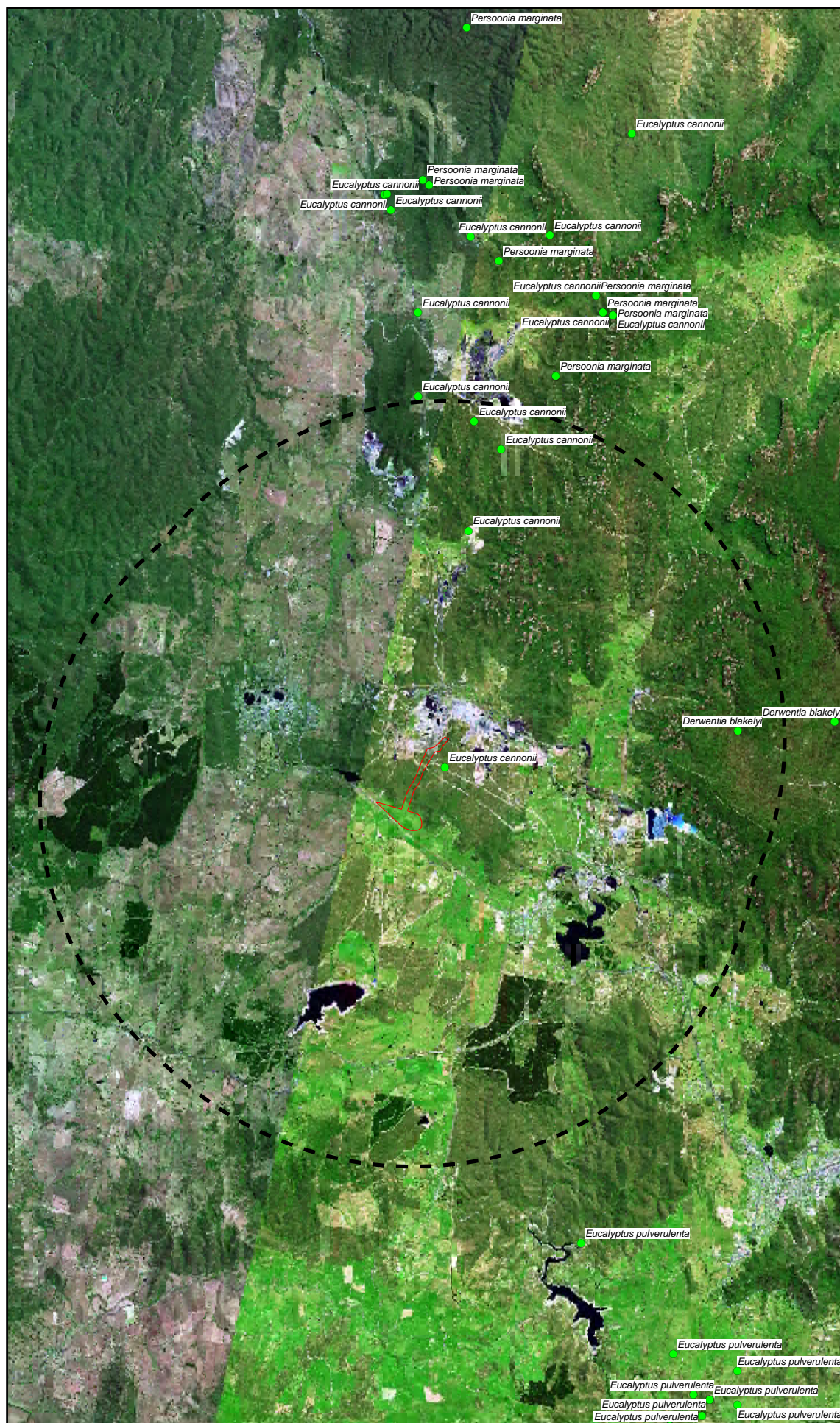
| Common name | Species | Status | | Recorded from Mt Piper perimeter lands* |
|----------------------------|---|--------|-----|---|
| | | C'wlth | NSW | |
| Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby | <i>Petrogale penicillata</i> | E | E | |
| Regent Honeyeater | <i>Xanthomyza phrygia</i> | E | E | |
| Spotted-tailed Quoll | <i>Dasyurus maculatus</i> | V | V | ✓ |
| Green and Golden Bell Frog | <i>Litoria aurea</i> | V | E | |
| Bathurst Copper Butterfly | <i>Paralucia spinifera</i> | V | E | |
| Large-eared Pied Bat | <i>Chalinolobus dwyeri</i> | V | V | |
| Blue Mountains Water Skink | <i>Eulamprus leuraensis</i> | | E | |
| Giant Dragonfly | <i>Petalura gigantea</i> | | E | |
| Stuttering Frog | <i>Mixophyes balbus</i> | | E | |
| Booroolong Frog | <i>Litoria booroolongensis</i> | | E | |
| Koala | <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> | | V | |
| Gang-gang Cockatoo | <i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i> | | V | ✓ |
| Powerful Owl | <i>Ninox strenua</i> | | V | ✓ |
| Eastern Bent-wing Bat | <i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i> | | V | ✓ |
| Glossy Black-Cockatoo | <i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i> | | V | ✓ |
| Yellow-bellied Glider | <i>Petaurus australis</i> | | V | |
| Brown Treecreeper | <i>Climacteris picumnus</i> | | V | ✓ |
| Grey-crowned Babbler | <i>Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis</i> | | V | |
| Black-chinned Honeyeater | <i>Melithreptus gularis gularis</i> | | V | |
| Hooded Robin | <i>Melanodryas cucullata</i> | | V | |
| Eastern False Pipistrelle | <i>Falsistrellus tasmaniensis</i> | | V | ✓ |
| Barking Owl | <i>Ninox connivens</i> | | V | |
| Diamond Firetail | <i>Stagonopleura guttata</i> | | V | |
| Greater Broad-nosed Bat | <i>Scoteanax rueppellii</i> | | V | ✓ |
| Squirrel Glider | <i>Petaurus norfolcensis</i> | | V | |
| Square-tailed Kite | <i>Lophoictinia isura</i> | | V | |
| Speckled Warbler | <i>Pyrrholaemus sagittata</i> | | V | |
| Pink-tailed Legless Lizard | <i>Aprasia parapulchella</i> | | V | |
| Turquoise Parrot | <i>Neophema pulchella</i> | | V | |



2.6 Threatened Aquatic Species

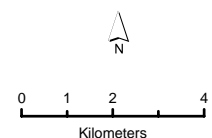
Searches for threatened aquatic species records from the regional area have been sourced from databases (CANRI) and previous investigations (Jones *et al* 1995). Records of Macquarie Perch (*Macquaria australasica*) a species listed under the EPBC Act and TSC Act have been recorded from the Cox's River catchment. Such records have occurred from tributaries in the lower catchment such as Little River which are considered to be in relatively pristine condition. Given the condition of the waterways in the study area (lack of riparian cover, high turbidity and bank erosion) populations of this species are unlikely to occur.

**Figure 3 Threatened
Flora Records**



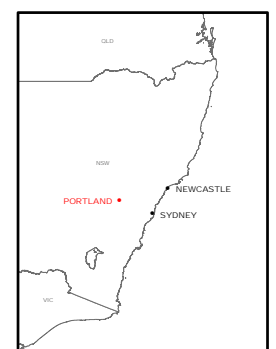
Legend

- Threatened Flora Record
- 10km Site Radius
- Study Area



Source:
Aerial photograph: NSW Dept Lands
Threatened Species Records:
NPWS Wildlife Atlas

File Name: MP_002a_ThrFlora.mxd
File Location: I:\ENVR\Projects\
EN02154\Technical\GIS\Template
Date: 25/9/2006
Revision: 1
Datum: GDA_1994_MGA_Zone_56



File Name: MP_003a_ThrFauna.mxd
File Location: I:\ENVR\Projects\
EN02154\Technical\GIS\Template
Date: 20/10/2006
Revision: 1
Datum: GCS_GDA_1994



3. Vegetation and Flora Survey

3.1 Methodology

Detailed flora field surveys were undertaken within the study area from 14-17 August 2006. Following changes to the proposal layout additional surveys were undertaken on the 13 February 2007 to determine additional locations of Capertee Stringybark and habitats which may potentially be impacted.

The survey effort was concentrated primarily on the sections of the proposed works site containing remnant native vegetation, particularly the proposed route for the coal loader conveyor. Land proposed for the rail loop is dominated by a modified and heavily grazed pasture and therefore was not surveyed as intensively. The survey effort in this area targeted creek crossings and isolated remnant trees. A handheld GPS was used to record the location of survey methods undertaken, vegetation community boundaries, rare and threatened flora species and any other items of interest.

The flora survey involved traverses on foot of all vegetation types present within the study area. More detailed surveys were undertaken in areas of native vegetation and included vegetation plots (20 x 20m quadrats) and numerous traverses across the entire study area. The surveys aimed to identify the floristics and structure of the vegetation, and the type and distribution of plant communities present. Flora survey methods undertaken for this study including field work undertaken on the 14-17 August 2006 and the 13 February 2007 are shown in **Figure 5**, showing locations of quadrats and an indicative extent of general traverses where threatened flora species were targeted.

Identification of plant communities was undertaken including an assessment of the presence of Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC's) as listed under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act). Site data, for each quadrat and transect was recorded in standardised format and information including, species presence, richness, cover abundance, site location, aspect, as well as a GPS location and digital photographs were collated. The overall condition of the site vegetation was noted, including the extent of modification and weed invasion.

Searches were undertaken for threatened flora species listed under the TSC Act and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) considered potential subject species and any additional rare or significant plant species. Cropper (1993) suggests that a general traverse is a suitable method for detecting the presence of rare species during flora surveys. As such, several general traverses were undertaken across the entire study area as part of the field surveys, focussing on areas of remnant vegetation.



3.1.1 Threatened Flora – Capertee Stringybark

The threatened flora species Capertee Stringybark *Eucalyptus cannonii* was identified within a large proportion of the study area and counts of this species were undertaken. A handheld GPS was used to record the location of individual Capertee Stringybark specimens. The initial surveys (14-17 August 2006) for Capertee Stringybarks was restricted to a 25m buffer surrounding the existing service trail. With the revision of the proposed route of the conveyor to areas outside this 25m buffer to the west of the existing service trail, additional fieldwork was undertaken on the 13 February 2007 to capture the location of Capertee Stringybarks in this area.

Where clusters of this species were found within a relatively small area (i.e. up to 30x30m area) a GPS way-point was taken in the approximate centre of the cluster and the number of trees recorded. Flagging tape was used to mark the locations of GPS way points to avoid counting trees twice. The total number of specimens in the study area was determined through calculating the sum of the trees recorded against each way-point.

The approximate number of *E cannonii* specimens potentially removed by the proposed coal unloader was calculated by overlaying the development footprint with the Capertee Stringybark GPS way-points using GIS software, and calculating the approximate sum of the specimens recorded for each way-point within the development footprint. Where there was insufficient plant material to distinguish Capertee Stringybark from the closely related *E. macrorhyncha* or plant material has characteristics of both species (a hybrid) a precautionary approach was taken and so these specimens were recorded as Capertee Stringybark for the purposes of this assessment, however the large majority of specimens could be positively identified in the field. Additionally, traverses of areas outside the study area were undertaken to determine the extent of Capertee Stringybark in the surrounding area (refer **Figure 5**).

3.1.2 Limitations

The list of flora and fauna species recorded from this study should not be seen to be fully comprehensive, but an indication of the species present at the time of the survey. A period of several seasons or years is often needed to identify all the species present in an area, especially as some species are only apparent at certain times of the year eg: orchids or migratory birds and require specific weather and seasonal conditions for optimum detection eg: frogs. The conclusions of this report have therefore adopted a precautionary approach to satisfactorily address the presence of threatened species, in that an assessment of the likelihood of threatened species which may occupy the habitat was made. This approach combined with the level of survey effort is considered adequate to identify the conservation values on the site and ensure that the limitations of the survey have been taken into account when drawing conclusions from the study.



3.2 Results

3.2.1 Floristic Diversity

Native floral species richness was moderately low within the naturally vegetated portions of the study area. A total of 109 flora species from 36 families were identified. This total comprised two species of fern, one conifer species, 72 species of dicotyledons and 25 species of monocotyledons. Of the total species recorded, 15 species of introduced flora were identified, representing approximately 14% of the total species diversity. Four of the introduced species, St Johns Wort *Hypericum perforatum*, Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* and Gorse *Ulex europaeus* are listed as a noxious species within the locality. A comprehensive list of the flora species present within the study area at the time of the survey has been included as **Appendix B**. Considering the flora survey was conducted in late winter, a number of annual species may not have been detected.

3.2.2 Vegetation Communities

The study area comprises three vegetation communities.

- Map Unit 1: Ribbon Gum – Apple Box – Snow Gum Woodland
- Map Unit 2: Brittle Gum – Scribbly Gum – Stringybark Woodland
- Map Unit 3: Regenerating Vegetation

The vegetation communities are summarised in **Table 3**. The distribution of the vegetation communities, as illustrated in **Figure 6**, is related to environmental variables and disturbance history. For example, Map Unit 1 occurs in protected areas such as gullies and east facing slopes. Map Unit 2 occurs in more exposed areas such as west facing slopes and ridge tops. Map Unit 3 occurs in areas which have been cleared but are now regenerating, including areas immediately surrounding the power station, cleared easements and a thin strip along the proposed coal conveyor route adjacent to the existing trail.

Map Unit 1: Ribbon Gum – Apple Box – Snow Gum Woodland

Map unit 1 is associated with the gully areas and lower elevated east-facing slopes along the proposed coal conveyor route. The dominant tree species comprise Ribbon Gum *Eucalyptus viminalis*, Apple Box *Eucalyptus bridgesiana* and Snow Gum *Eucalyptus pauciflora*. Other tree species in this community include Candlebark *Eucalyptus rubida* and Broad-leaved Peppermint *Eucalyptus dives*. Other tree species common to Map Unit 2 occur in this community where the two merge, including Capertee Stringybark, Brittle Gum *Eucalyptus mannifera* and Red Stringybark *Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*.

The shrub layer is generally minimal although Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata* subsp. *dealbata* can be relatively common in areas. The ground layer is dominated by grass species including Snowgrass *Poa* spp, Silvertop Wallaby Grass *Joycea pallida* and *Austrostipa pubescens*. Herb

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species present include Prickly Starwort *Stellaria pungens* and Kidney Weed *Dichondra repens*. Exotic species occur in this community in places including Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* which occurs as numerous dense clumps (see **Plate 1**) and scattered Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and Flatweed *Hypochaeris radicata*. A small area of Map unit 1 is on the northern side of the proposed rail loop at Pipers Flat, which is relatively disturbed from agricultural activities comprising smaller trees with a grazed understorey (see **Plate 2**).

This community contains a tree canopy projective foliage cover of approximately 20 -35% and is approximately 15–18 metres high. There is a sparse shrub layer of Silver Wattle varying between 5-20% foliage cover and 1-5 metres in height. The ground cover contains combinations of grass and herb species with a foliage cover between 50 and 85%, with areas of bare earth and leaf litter present in some sections.



Plate 1. Southern end of the proposed coal conveyor route, showing dense infestation of Blackberry



Plate 2. Vegetation within the proposed rail loop area.

Map Unit 2: Brittle Gum – Scribbly Gum – Stringybark Woodland

Map unit 2 occurs on the ridges and west facing slopes of the study area adjacent to the proposed coal conveyor route (see **Plate 3**). The dominant tree species comprise Brittle Gum, Scribbly Gum *Eucalyptus rossii*, Red Stringybark and Capertee Stringybark. Other common tree species include Broad-leaved Peppermint, Thin-leaved Stringybark *Eucalyptus eugenoides* and Narrow-leaved Stringybark *Eucalyptus sparsifolia*, which are generally restricted to the northern end of the proposed conveyor route.

The shrub layer is generally sparse containing spaced clumps of Box-leaf Wattle *Acacia buxifolia*, Silver Wattle, Peach Heath *Lissanthe strigosa* and Sifton Bush *Cassinia arcuata*. The ground layer is dominated by grass species including Snowgrass *Poa* spp, Silvertop Wallaby Grass *Joycea pallida* and Hedgehog Grass *Echinopogon ovatus*. Other groundcover species include Rough Bedstraw *Galium gaudichaudii*, Bidgee-widgee *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, Wattle Mat-rush



Lomandra filiformis subsp. *filiformis*, Blueberry Lily *Dianella revoluta* and Button Everlasting *Helichrysum scorpioides*. Exotic species are generally absent from this community, however in places some minor weed infestations of Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and Flatweed *Hypochoeris radicata* are present. Along the service trail adjacent to the proposed coal conveyor route there are regenerating examples of this community present (see **Plate 4**).

This community contains a tree canopy projective foliage cover of approximately 20 -35%, approximately 10-15 metres high. There is a sparse shrub layer varying between 5-30% foliage cover and 1-3 metres in height. The ground cover contains combinations of grasses and herb species with a foliage cover between 50 and 85% with areas of bare earth and leaf litter present in some sections.



Plate 3. Brittle Gum-Scribbly Gum-Stringybark Woodland



Plate 4. Regenerating Brittle Gum-Scribbly Gum-Stringybark Woodland (on left)

Map Unit 3: Regenerating Vegetation

Map unit 3 occupies several locations in the study area including:

- Areas of the communications easement along the proposed coal conveyor route adjacent to the service trail (see **Plate 4**);
- Areas surrounding the power station (see **Plate 5**);
- Within the power line easement and disused easements (see **Plate 6**).

Diversity is generally low in these areas however along the proposed coal conveyor route diversity may be higher with recruitment from adjacent remnant vegetation including juvenile *Eucalypt* species. Dominant flora species include Silver Wattle, Sifton Bush and various grass species.



Plate 5. Regenerating vegetation in area surrounding power station

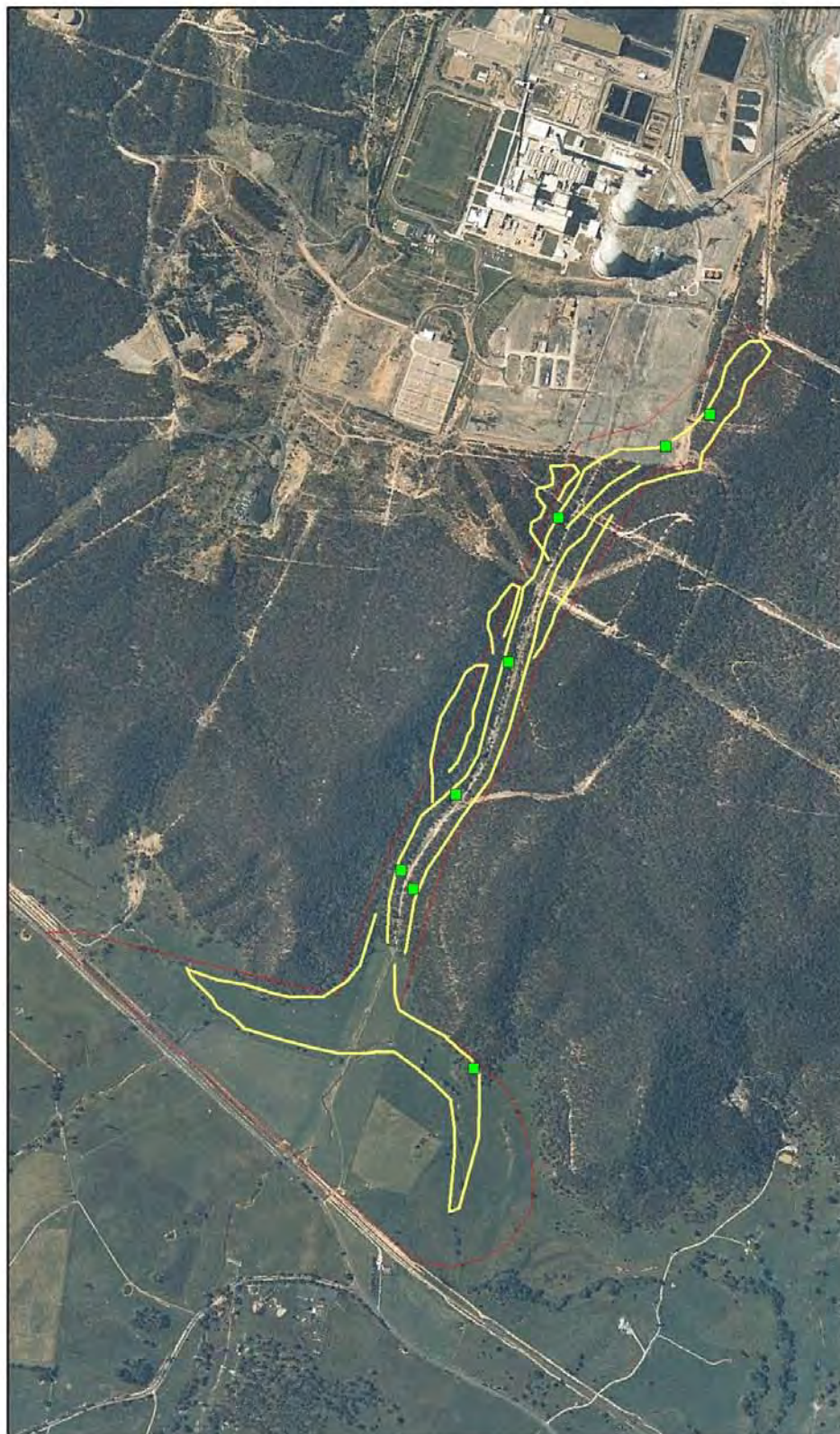


Plate 6. Regenerating/disturbed vegetation within power line easement

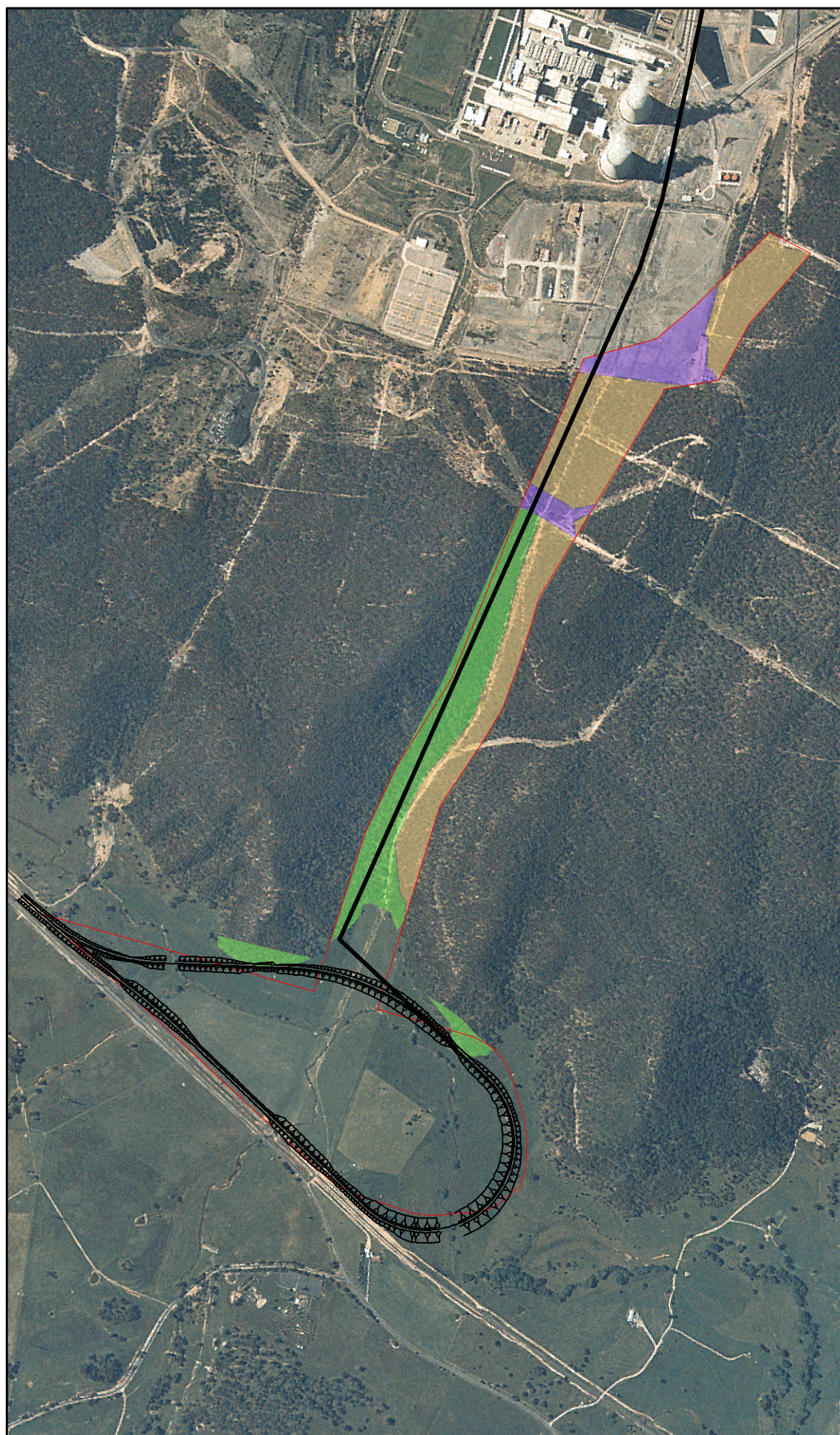
■ Table 3 Summary of vegetation communities

| Vegetation Community | Species composition / Description |
|--|---|
| Map Unit 1: Ribbon Gum – Apple Box – Snow Gum Woodland | <p>Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>, <i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i>, <i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i>, <i>Eucalyptus dives</i>, <i>Eucalyptus rubida</i>, <i>Eucalyptus cannonii</i>, <i>Eucalyptus mannifera</i>, <i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i></p> <p>height/cover: 15–20 metres / 20-35%</p> <p>Shrubs: <i>Acacia dealbata</i> subsp. <i>dealbata</i>, <i>Lissanthe strigosa</i></p> <p>Grasses: <i>Joycea pallida</i>, <i>Austrostipa pubescens</i>, <i>Poa</i> spp</p> <p>Herbs: <i>Stellaria pungens</i>, <i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i>, <i>Dichondra repens</i></p> <p>Ferns: <i>Pteridium esculentum</i>, <i>Cheilanthes sieberi</i></p> <p>Vines/Climbers: <i>Rubus fruticosus</i></p> |
| Map Unit 2: Brittle Gum – Scribbly Gum – Stringybark Woodland | <p>Canopy: <i>Eucalyptus mannifera</i>, <i>Eucalyptus rossii</i>, <i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i>, <i>Eucalyptus cannonii</i>, <i>Eucalyptus dives</i>, <i>Eucalyptus eugenoides</i>, <i>Eucalyptus sparsifolia</i></p> <p>Height/cover: 10–15 metres / 20-35%</p> <p>Shrubs: <i>Acacia buxifolia</i>, <i>Acacia dealbata</i> subsp. <i>dealbata</i>, <i>Lissanthe strigosa</i>, <i>Indigofera australis</i>, <i>Monotoca scoparia</i>, <i>Cassinia arcuata</i>, <i>Astroloma humifusum</i>, <i>Hibbertia obtusifolia</i>, <i>Bursaria longisepala</i> var. <i>pilosa</i>, <i>Hovea heterophylla</i>, <i>Bossiaea buxifolia</i>, <i>Podolobium ilicifolium</i>, <i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i></p> <p>Grasses: <i>Joycea pallida</i>, <i>Poa</i> spp , <i>Echinopogon ovatus</i></p> <p>Herbs/Other: <i>Galium gaudichaudii</i>, <i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i>, <i>Hypericum gramineum</i>, <i>Helichrysum scorpioides</i>, <i>Lomandra filiformis</i> subsp. <i>filiformis</i>, <i>Veronica calycina</i></p> <p>Ferns: <i>Cheilanthes sieberi</i></p> |
| Map Unit 3: Regenerating Vegetation | <p>Shrubs: <i>Acacia dealbata</i> subsp. <i>dealbata</i>, <i>Cassinia arcuata</i>, <i>Acacia penninervis</i></p> <p>Height/cover: 1-5 metres / 0-15%</p> <p>Understorey: <i>Poa</i> spp., <i>Joycea pallida</i>, <i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i></p> |

Figure 5
Flora Survey Methods



**Figure 6 Distribution of
Vegetation Communities**



Legend

Vegetation Community

- Brittle Gum - Scribbly
Gum - Stringybark
Woodland
- Regenerating
Vegetation
- Ribbon Gum - Apple
Box - Snow Gum
Woodland
- Proposed rail loop
- Proposed conveyor



0 100 200 400
Meters



Source:
Aerial photograph: NSW Dept Lands
Vegetation Mapping: SKM

File Name: MP_004a_VegComm.mxd
File Location: I:\ENVR\Projects\
EN02154\Technical\GIS\Template
Date: 25/9/2006
Revision: 1
Datum: GCS_GDA_1994



3.2.3 Threatened and Rare Flora

One flora species the Capertee Stringybark *Eucalyptus cannonii* was recorded in the study area. The species is scheduled as Vulnerable under both the TSC Act (State listed species) and the EPBC Act (nationally threatened species).

The distribution of Capertee Stringybark was found to occur in 3 distinct groups adjacent to the proposed coal loader conveyor route (see **Figure 7**). This species was generally confined to areas of Map Unit 2, however in some areas where Map Unit 1 and 2 merge it was also found in Map Unit 1. The population of Capertee Stringybark within the study area is estimated to be approximately 500 individuals. A similar species Red Stringybark *Eucalyptus macrorhyncha* was also relatively common along the proposed coal loader conveyor route, however the two species generally occur in separate clusters except for a few locations. At the time of the survey most specimens had sufficient biological material present (in particular the flower buds) for correct identification. However, a small number of Red Stringybark may have been included in the counts of Capertee Stringybark where these species occurred together or where there was insufficient material present for positive identification. Hybrids of these two species are common at some locations (DEC 2005), however little evidence of this was recorded in the study area.

General observations from the surrounding area indicate that Capertee Stringybark is widely dispersed and Ecotone (1996) recorded it as locally common throughout the Mt Piper perimeter lands. Recent surveys in the Ben Bullen State Forest (SKM 2007) has determined the presence of this species between Baal Bone Mine and Mt Piper Power Station, where it was found to be abundant within clusters along power easements and trails.

Another species regarded as regionally significant due to its limited distribution in NSW in the Capertee district is the Clustered Daisy-bush *Olearia suffruticosa* which was recorded in low abundance in areas outside the proposal area. A small number of this species was also recorded by Ecotone (1996) in perimeter lands to the west of the Mt Piper Power Station.

Other threatened flora species could potentially be present within the study area, but were undetectable during the survey period due to their cryptic nature when not in flower. Threatened flora that are difficult to detect outside their flowering period that have been identified as potentially occurring in the study area in **Section 2.3** include Doubletail Buttercup *Diuris aequalis*, *Derwentia blakelyi* and Hairy Geebung *Persoonia hirsuta*. To mitigate potential impacts to these species if present within the proposed works area, it is recommended that once the location of the proposed coal unloader has been surveyed, pre-clearance surveys be undertaken during the respective flowering times for these species, in late spring and summer. Surveys conducted during February 2007 (late summer) did not detect the presence of any of these species.



3.2.4 Introduced Flora Species

A total of 15 introduced flora species were identified in the study area, including 4 noxious species, listed in **Table 4** (indicated in bold). The *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* outlines the responsibilities for control and management of noxious weeds. Weed management strategies should be implemented as part of any proposed works.

■ **Table 4 Introduced Flora Species of the Study area**

| Species | Common Name | Noxious Species |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Briza maxima</i> | Quaking Grass | |
| <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> | Spear Thistle | |
| <i>Cynosurus echinatus</i> | Crested Dogstail | |
| <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> | Cocksfoot | |
| <i>Echium plantagineum</i> | Patterson's Curse | |
| <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> | St Johns Wort | W4 |
| <i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> | Catsear | |
| <i>Phalaris aquatica</i> | Canary Grass | |
| <i>Phalaris minor</i> | Lesser Canary Grass | |
| <i>Pinus radiata</i> | Radiata Pine | |
| <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> | Plantain | |
| <i>Rosa rubiginosa</i> | Sweet Briar | W4 |
| <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> | Blackberry | W4 |
| <i>Salix babylonica</i> | Weeping Willow | |
| <i>Ulex europaeus</i> | Gorse | W3 |

W2 Noxious weeds must be continually suppressed and destroyed;

W3 Noxious weeds must be prevented from spreading and their numbers and distribution reduced; and

W4 Noxious weeds must not be sold, propagated or knowingly distributed.

Weed abundance was found to be generally low within remnant vegetation, except for parts of Map Unit 1 which supported dense clumps of Blackberry and patches of St Johns Wort. As expected a greater abundance of agricultural weeds such as St Johns Wort and pasture grasses were found to occur within the proposed rail loop area which has been previously cleared and grazed. There are only scattered individuals of Gorse in the vicinity of the proposed coal loader conveyor route.

**Figure 7 Distribution of
*Eucalyptus cannonii***



Legend

- Study Area
- Proposed Rail Loop
- Proposed Conveyor
- Eucalyptus cannonii*



0 100 200 400
Meters



Source:
Aerial photograph: NSW Dept Lands
Vegetation Mapping: SKM

File Name: MP_005c_Ecannonii.mxd
File Location: I:\ENVR\Projects\
EN02154\Technical\GIS\Template
Date: 20/10/2006
Revision: 1
Datum: GCS_GDA_1994



4. Fauna Habitat and Survey

Field surveys for fauna were aimed at assessing the species richness of the site and investigate the fauna habitats present and the potential for local threatened fauna species to occur. The survey incorporated a range of techniques to target species from all fauna groups including mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. These techniques included live-trapping for small to medium sized terrestrial and arboreal mammals, live trapping and ultrasonic call detection for microchiropteran bats, nocturnal census (spotlighting, owl call playback and frog searches), searches for active herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians), diurnal bird census and recording of indirect evidence of fauna presence (tracks, scats, nests, diggings, bones and other traces). In addition, all opportunistic sightings of fauna were recorded.

A full description of the specific methodologies used during the terrestrial fauna field survey is discussed in **Section 4.2**.

4.1 Fauna Habitats

■ *Modified grassland habitats (grazing land)*

Grassland is a common feature of the Pipers Flat area selected for the rail loop infrastructure occupied by grazing land. This habitat supports a diversity of fauna adapted to open and modified landscapes such as grazing macropods, some reptiles, raptors, granivorous and insectivorous birds. Occasional isolated mature trees are scattered throughout the grasslands and these provide perching, nesting and refuge habitat for birds as well as potential roosting and breeding hollows for microbats and birds.

■ *Open forest and woodland habitats*

Open forest and woodland covers the majority of the elevated lands surrounding the proposed conveyor route. These habitats generally comprise a sparse to open understorey and low shrub diversity. Some areas have been selectively cleared or grazed and subsequently relatively young regrowth is present. Large mature trees and dead stags are scattered throughout woodland habitats in low densities and are absent from many areas of regrowth. Small to medium sized tree hollows are well represented in the forest / woodland areas which support the best quality habitats for arboreal and hollow-dependent fauna on the property. The presence of sandstone rocky slopes provides sheltering opportunities for native small mammals.

■ *Dams and creeks*

Dams and creeks provide open water with some reed and sedge habitats that are locally significant for dependent fauna. The dam habitats are characterised by both relatively deep and shallow water areas and occasionally exhibit dense inundated and fringing vegetation comprising reeds and sedges.

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4.2 Methodology

The fauna survey was conducted during the period from 14-17 August 2006. Three sites were selected from aerial photograph, topographic map and site reconnaissance to concentrate trapping efforts through sampling the woodland habitats as these were expected to yield the majority of the fauna species assemblage. Steep slopes were also targeted by general herpetofauna searches at woodland habitat sites where possible. Surveys in cleared grasslands and dams were restricted to observational data and no specific survey sites or trapping were used. The location of the fauna trap sites, spotlighting transects and other techniques is shown on **Figure 8**.

Mammals

The live-trapping survey for small to medium sized mammals was conducted using ground and tree-mounted traps at each of the three sample sites. 25 ground traps (Elliott type A, 33 x 10 x 9 cm, aluminium folding traps) were placed along transects at intervals of 10 metres and placed in or under cover at every opportunity. Traps were left open for a three-night period (96 hours) equating to 126 ground trap nights.

Ten tree traps (Elliott type B, 15 x 16 x 45 cm aluminium folding traps) were placed at each of the three sites in a grid, with each trap spaced 75-100 metres apart. Traps were mounted on a platform attached to the tree trunk at a height of 4 metres. Each trap grid was active for three consecutive nights (96 hours). Total Elliott (type B) trapping effort equated to 60 trap nights. All Elliott traps were baited with a mixture of peanut butter, rolled oats and honey and cage traps were baited with tinned sardines. The trunk of the tree adjacent to the tree trap was sprayed with a mixture of water and honey to act as an attractant. Traps were checked in the morning and captured animals were measured, weighed and released.

Spotlighting was undertaken for all medium and large-sized terrestrial and arboreal mammals, as well as nocturnal birds, by two observers over two nights using Lightforce 50Watt hand-held spotlights. The locations of sightings of fauna species were recorded during the spotlighting surveys.

Bats

Standard two-bank 4.2m² harp traps were used to sample for microchiropteran bats at three sites over 3 nights for a total of 6 trap nights. Harp traps were placed in forested areas along narrow gaps such as creeks, gullies and vehicle tracks as such locations are generally associated with natural flyways for microchiropteran bats. Captured bats were collected in the morning, measured and weighed. Captured individuals were held that day and released at the capture point the following night. A stationary ultrasonic bat call detector (Anabat II, Titley Electronics) was used with a storage ZCAIM unit to record bat calls at 3 sites adjacent to farm dams, forest edges and vehicle tracks. Calls were recorded continuously between 1800 and 0500 hours over three nights. Recorded

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calls were later identified to genus or species level where possible using computer frequency analysis software (Analook v.4.0). Spotlighting and listening for calls of megachiropteran bats (*Pteropus* spp) was conducted during spotlighting activities.

Diurnal Birds

A formal bird census was conducted at each of the three trap sites in addition to opportunistic bird census conducted over remaining areas of the study area. Formal census involved point counts along designated transects (up to 100m where possible) sampling natural vegetated areas. A standard 20-minute survey was carried out during early morning sessions where birds were identified on the basis of visual identification and characteristic call. All opportunistic observations of bird species were recorded whilst undertaking general survey activities on the site. A total of approximately eight person hours were spent surveying for birds.

Nocturnal Birds

Nocturnal birds were surveyed using the playback of pre-recorded calls of threatened owl species. Calls were played at the start of the spotlighting surveys. These surveys involved initial listening periods at dusk for 30 minutes, followed by playing the species recorded call for five minutes duration. Each call was followed by a ten minute listening period for an audible response before commencing with the next species call. The end of the last call was followed by a five-minute listening period for any audible response, then spotlighting for approximately 10-minutes. The pre-recorded calls were played through a portable cassette and broadcast via a loudhailer (Toa megaphone). Species targeted included the Powerful Owl, Masked Owl and Barking Owl.

Searches and listening for calls of other nocturnal birds was conducted during the spotlighting surveys.

Herpetofauna Census

Reptiles and amphibians were surveyed by hand-searches in suitable habitat, and spotlighting for nocturnal species.

For reptiles, hand searches concentrated on the hill slopes and mid slopes and around dead trees and included turning rocks wherever encountered to target the threatened Pink-tailed Lizard.

All opportunistic sightings of active herpetofauna were noted. A nocturnal search was conducted around farm dams using a head torch to survey for active frogs. Frogs were identified on the basis of their characteristic call as well as by direct observation. A total of approximately eight person hours were surveyed for reptiles and amphibians.

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Searches for Evidence of Species Presence

Searches were conducted for animal dung (scats) of predatory and non-predatory species. Where encountered these were identified to species level if possible. The search concentrated on the ground beneath trees as well as around hollow logs and tracks. Searches were made for other characteristic signs of fauna species presence including tracks, bones, hair, shed skins and animal remains, as well as nests, diggings, chew marks, scratchings and pellets (indicative of birds of prey).

4.3 Limitations

The list of flora and fauna species recorded from this study should not be seen to be fully comprehensive, but an indication of the species present at the time of the survey. A period of several seasons or years is often needed to identify all the species present in an area, especially as some species are only apparent at certain times of the year eg: orchids or migratory birds and require specific weather and seasonal conditions for optimum detection eg: frogs. The conclusions of this report have therefore adopted a precautionary approach to satisfactorily address the presence of threatened species, in that an assessment of the likelihood of threatened species which may occupy the habitat was made. This approach combined with the level of survey effort is considered adequate to identify the conservation values on the site and ensure that the limitations of the survey have been taken into account when drawing conclusions from the study.

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Species Diversity

A total of 45 fauna species were recorded from the study area during the field survey. This list comprised 29 bird species, 13 mammal species, and two frog species. The list of species and the respective habitat types from which they were recorded are provided in **Appendix B**.

The fauna assemblage encountered is considered generally low and may be the result of the small area surveyed as well as the degree of past disturbance of the habitats, in particular the modified pasture and creek areas. The bird species assemblage was dominated by honeyeaters (Meliphagidae), with several insectivores and granivorous species also present.

Areas of dense shrub growth occur on the upper slopes, gullies and hill tops in the study area and these areas provide higher quality habitat for smaller bird species which were noted to occur and possibly restricted to such areas. This included smaller passerines such as the Buff-rumped and Striated Thornbill, Grey Fantail and Superb Blue Fairy-wren.

Figure 8
Fauna Survey Sites



Legend

Survey Type

- Anabat
- Aquatic
- Harp Trap
- Owl Call Playback
- Elliot Traps
- Spotlighting



0 100 200 400
Meters



Source:
Aerial photograph: NSW Dept Lands
Survey sites: SKM

File Name: MP_006a_FaunaSurvey.mxd
File Location: I:\ENVR\Projects\
EN02154\Technical\GIS\Template
Date: 20/10/2006
Revision: 1
Datum: GCS_GDA_1994



Other than honeyeaters, the most abundant bird species in the woodland and grassland habitats on lower slopes included the Red-browed and White-browed Treecreepers, Crimson Rosella, Galah, Australian Magpie, Australian Raven, Striated and Spotted Pardalote. Each of these species is adapted to modified woodland habitats with a reduced or absent understorey.

Of the 13 mammal species recorded 7 of these were microchiropteran bats. Additional bat species are likely to occur and would require several survey periods to detect. These species roost in tree hollows and are all common and widespread species in both forest and woodland habitats in eastern NSW.

The most widespread and abundant species recorded was the Eastern Grey Kangaroo *Macropus giganteus* which was observed from all parts of the study area including woodland and open grassland areas. Small mammal diversity and abundance was low, consisting of only one species, the native Brown Antechinus *Antechinus stuartii*.

Three arboreal mammals were recorded, the Common Ringtail Possum *Pseudechis peregrinus*, Common Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula* and Sugar Glider *Petaurus breviceps*. These species were relatively common and sighted in several locations wherever tree hollows were present

The frog fauna identified during the survey was low, although this may be a reflection of cold conditions during the survey and general lack of freshwater habitats present. Few additional species would be expected.

No reptiles were recorded despite intensive searches and this is related to the cool conditions during the survey and lack of microhabitat features (rocks and logs).

4.4.2 Threatened Fauna

No threatened fauna species (*TSC Act* or *EPBC Act*) were identified from the study area as a result of the field surveys. However several species are known from the Mt Piper power station perimeter lands (Ecotone 1996) and may occasionally utilise the site based on the habitat assessment. Further discussion on threatened species is provided in Section 6 of the report.



5. Aquatic Habitat Assessment

5.1 Methodology

A number of freshwater streams have the potential to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal and as such an assessment of the condition of these streams and the potential for each to provide habitat for threatened aquatic species was conducted. The methodology used to assess aquatic habitats within the study area is outlined below.

A list of aquatic endangered communities, threatened species and endangered populations with potential to occur within the study area has been derived from a variety of sources including those listed below. Background information used to gain a better understanding of the overall condition of streams and aquatic habitats within the locality and relevant catchments, such as:

- DEC Threatened Species Database Records for the locality (i.e. 10 km radius)
- DEH Online Protected Matters Search Tool for Matters of National Environmental Significance (NES) (DEH 2006a); and
- Online search of NSW Department of Primary Industries website threatened species lists (DPI 2006).

A visual habitat assessment of all streams likely to be traversed by the proposed rail loop within close proximity to the proposed construction area was conducted using a standard pro-forma field sheet. Notes were taken on the aquatic and riparian vegetation present, substrate type, water quality (if water was present), habitat types, and general condition and health of the reach.

5.2 Results

5.2.1 Aquatic Habitats of the Study Area

The proposed rail loop at Pipers Flat includes 4 crossings of Pipers Flat Creek. The following field assessment results shown in **Table 5** were collected at Pipers Flat Creek (refer to **Figure 8**).

■ **Table 5 Aquatic Field Assessment Results**

| Criteria | Site 1 – Pipers Flat Creek (west of proposed conveyor) | Site 2 – Pipers Flat Creek (east of proposed conveyor creek diversion area) |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Flow Regime: | Flowing creek with permanent pools to about 2 metres depth | Slow flowing permanent to semi permanent creek |
| Stream Substrate: | Gravel and Clay | Gravel |
| Water Quality (visual assessment): | Clear, absence of algal scum and no/little odour | Relatively turbid |
| Adjoining Landuse: | Grazed pasture | |
| Riparian | No remnant riparian vegetation present. Weeping Willows are the dominant tree species | |

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| Criteria | Site 1 – Pipers Flat Creek (west of proposed conveyor) | Site 2 – Pipers Flat Creek (east of proposed conveyor creek diversion area) |
|--|---|---|
| Vegetation: | along the channel occurring with pasture grasses. | |
| In-stream Vegetation: | Mainly exotic grasses, however some native species are present including Common Rush <i>Juncus usitatus</i> , Tall Sedge <i>Carex appressa</i> and Austral Mudwort <i>Limosella australis</i> . | Mainly exotic grasses, however some native species are present including Common Rush <i>Juncus usitatus</i> . |
| Nearby Wetlands: | Thompsons Creek Dam occurs up stream of Thompsons Creek to the south of the study area and an un-named dam occurs up stream of Pipers Flat Creek. There are also larger dams downstream including Warragamba Dam. | |
| Refuge Areas: | There are some deep pools to 2 metres depth which may provide refuge | Little to none |
| Spawning Areas: | Deep pools, gravel beds, snags, boulders and riffles | Shallow pools, gravel beds |
| Barriers to Fish Passage: | No Barriers in study area, however dams up stream and downstream of this area provide barriers to movement. | |
| Disturbances | Unrestricted stock access to creek. Moderate to high bank erosion and subsequent sedimentation of creek. High level exotic vegetation cover. | |
| Threatened Species Habitat: | Unlikely habitat for local threatened fish species due to the high level of disturbance and lack of adequate habitat attributes. | |
| Migratory Species: | Small and large dams up stream and downstream of this area limit movements of migratory fish and are therefore unlikely to be present. | |
| Introduced Fish: | Likely to be present, none apparent during visual surveys | |
| Waterway Class (Fairfull and Witheridge 2003): | Class 2 – Moderate Fish Habitat | |
| Riparian corridor classification (c.f. DIPNR 2004) | Category 1 Riparian corridor | |



Plate 7: Pipers Flat Creek



Plate 8: Bank erosion along Pipers Flat Creek

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5.2.2 Threatened Aquatic Species

Macquarie Perch (*Macquaria australasica*) are listed as Endangered under the EPBC Act and in NSW they are listed as Vulnerable under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*. Records of the species are known from the Coffs River (Sydney Water 2005) of which Pipers Flat Creek is a tributary.

The Macquarie Perch is a riverine, schooling species and prefers deep, rocky holes with considerable vegetation cover and areas of shallow running water for spawning (DEH 2006a). Macquarie Perch are especially sensitive to degradation and are essentially restricted to pristine streams preferring clear, cool water with riffles (McDowell 1996). There are recent records from tributaries with the Warragamba protected area which are examples of relatively pristine waterways with few degrading processes. Although some habitat elements are present within Pipers Flat Creek the highly degraded nature of the creek and the barriers provided by dams up and downstream, makes habitats of the study area unsuitable for this species, and therefore it is unlikely to be present.

5.3 Discussion

5.3.1 Waterways classification

Pipers Flat Creek is considered to provide moderate to low value fish habitat. The NSW Fisheries classification scheme for watercourse crossings (Fairfull and Witheridge 2003) has been applied to Pipers Flat Creek within the vicinity of the proposed works is detailed below in **Table 6**.

■ Table 6 Classification Scheme for Watercourse Crossings

| Classification | Characteristics of watercourse | Minimum preferred engineering solutions |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Class 2 – Moderate fish habitat | Smaller named permanent or intermittent stream, creek or river. Clearly defined drainage channels with semi-permanent to permanent waters in pools or in connected wetland areas. Marine or freshwater aquatic vegetation is present. Known fish habitat and/or fish observed inhabiting the area. | A large box culvert or a bridge crossing. Cross-sectional area of structure should aim to equal the cross-sectional area of the watercourse. |

(source: Fairfull and Witheridge 2003)

Fairfull and Witheridge (2003) provides a comprehensive overview of the best way to plan, design, construct and maintain waterway crossings to minimise impacts on fish passage and aquatic habitats and must be followed in NSW.



5.3.2 Riparian Corridor Value

Discussions with DNR during the course of the assessment identified a preference by the Department to categorise Pipers Flat Creek according to the habitat value criteria outlined in DIPNR (2004). In this regard DNR suggested the creek should be classified as a category 1 environmental corridor. The overall objective of this environmental corridor category is to *'maintain connectivity between one destination to another for the movement of aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora'* (DIPNR 2004).

At present lands surrounding Pipers Creek, in the vicinity of the rail loop, are completely modified and cleared of vegetation with a long-history of cattle grazing. As any existing habitat connectivity for terrestrial flora and fauna along the creek is absent there is essentially no scope to *'maintain connectivity'* as an outcome of the project. However the proposal to divert a short section of Pipers Flat Creek is consistent with the objectives of this category, in that these works would effectively maintain connectivity along the creek for aquatic fauna and fish passage.

The project would concentrate on the restoration of new and old creek areas in accordance with the guidelines of DIPNR (2004). Riparian vegetation protection or restoration under this category should concentrate on an area of 50 m width along the creek bank (i.e. 40 m from the top of the bank plus 10 m buffer).



6. Impact Assessment

6.1 General Impacts

6.1.1 Conveyor Route

The proposed coal loader comprises a conveyor raised above the ground and transports coal from the rail loop to the Mt Piper power station. The conveyor traverses a generally straight route with a disturbance area of approximately 15 metres wide by 1.7 km in length through areas of remnant vegetation. Assuming vegetation clearance will be required along this entire length approximately 2.5 ha of remnant vegetation will require removal, however the placement of the conveyor within disturbed/regenerating areas will reduce the amount of clearing required.

Capertee Stringybark was recorded as a common component of the vegetation surrounding and within the conveyor route. Generally this species occurs in clusters along the proposed conveyor route comprising approximately 500 individuals with all age classes represented. The total number of Capertee Stringybarks within the perimeter lands of the Mt Piper Power Station is likely to be much larger than the extent within the study area given the presence of comparable habitat throughout. The closely related Red Stringybark also occurs within and surrounding the proposed conveyor route, generally occurring separately from the clusters of Capertee Stringybark. However these two species do intergrade in places and hybrids are often found in these areas. It is anticipated that up to 50 Capertee Stringybark may have to be removed for the proposed conveyor, however this number may be smaller depending upon the exact placement of the conveyor.

6.1.2 Rail Loop Infrastructure

The site for the proposed rail loop is located on predominantly cleared agricultural land and comprises a grazed pasture and disturbed riparian zones of Pipers Flat Creek. There is also a small area of low quality remnant vegetation on the northern side of the proposed rail loop comprising younger remnant trees with a pasture understorey (see **Plate 2**).

As part of the rail loop construction, low-lying lands will be filled to raise the level of the track above the floodplain. Spoil for the embankments will be trucked from the Lamberts Gully mine to the rail loop site along the conveyor easement. This proposal will involve construction of a 20 m wide vehicle track adjacent to the conveyor, most of which will follow the existing track in this location which would be widened up to 8 m. A new section of track will traverse through uncleared vegetation at the southern end of the route before entering onto the cleared lands adjacent to Pipers Flat Creek. No Capertee Stringybarks were recorded in this location.

6.1.3 Fauna movement

The proposed conveyor and associated maintenance track and infrastructure will create a physical barrier to fauna dependent on ground movements, such as small and medium sized terrestrial

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mammals, some frog species, particularly ground dwelling species and possibly reptiles. Many species could be expected to traverse the conveyor and track including arboreal mammals and there will be no barrier to mobile species such as birds and bats.

6.2 Key Thresholds

Potential ecological impacts from the proposal can be minimised through restricting the footprint of the proposed conveyor to within the existing easement and tracks where possible. However it is likely that between approximately up to 50 of the estimated 500 individual Capertee Stringybark within the study area will require removal. No threatened fauna were recorded in the disturbance areas and the habitat contained within the works area is considered of relatively low value due to the lack of critical habitat features (vegetation structure, logs, hollows and rocks) compared to the surrounding slopes. No threatened fauna area expected to occur.

Mitigation measures should be enforced during the construction of the project, particularly for the proposed coal conveyor and riparian areas within the proposed rail loop. Measures to avoid impacts on threatened species and their habitat imposed by this development include:

- Appropriate placement of the proposed coal conveyor and access trails to utilise existing disturbed areas along the proposed route, including regenerating vegetation within the existing communications easement and the service trail;
- Marking the limits of clearing and installing temporary fencing around areas of remnant vegetation outside the construction footprint to avoid unnecessary vegetation and habitat removal;
- Storage of equipment and stockpiling of resources should be restricted to designated areas in cleared and degraded land to minimise the overall impact of the construction and avoid unnecessary vegetation and habitat removal and disturbance;
- Restoration of riparian zones at Pipers Flat disturbed from the proposed rail loop;
- Collection of seed from Capertee Stringybarks in the study area to be used in the restoration of existing degraded areas such as areas surrounding Mt Piper Power Station and areas disturbed from the construction of the proposed conveyor;
- Appropriate management of weeds should be implemented to ensure they are not spread throughout areas of remnant vegetation; and
- The use of best-practice sediment and erosion controls.

6.3 Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995

An assessment of the impacts of this proposal on species, populations and ecological communities listed under Schedules 1, 1A and 2 of the TSC Act and Schedules 4, 4A and 5A of the FM Act has been undertaken. The proposal is to be assessed under Part 3A of the EP&A Act and consequently

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this impact assessment was undertaken in accordance with the Draft Guidelines for Threatened Species Assessment (DEC 2005).

6.3.1 Critical habitat

Critical habitat is defined as an area that is critical to the survival of an endangered species, population or ecological community. The proposal will not impact on critical habitat declared under the TSC Act.

6.3.2 Endangered Populations

No endangered populations were recorded in the study area

6.3.3 Endangered Ecological Communities

No endangered ecological communities were recorded in the study area.

6.3.4 Threatened Flora

Capertee Stringybark *Eucalyptus cannonii*

The listed Capertee Stringybark (Schedule 2 TSC Act) was recorded as locally common within remnant vegetation surrounding the proposed coal conveyor. The location of trees surveyed within the proposed conveyor route are shown in **Figure 7**. General observations from the surrounding area indicate that Capertee Stringybark is widely dispersed and Ecotone (1996) recorded it as locally common throughout the Mt Piper perimeter lands.

This species is well represented within conservation reserves, and has limited potential threats other than land clearing (Hunter and White 1999). Hunter and White (1999) consider the listing of this species as Vulnerable under the TSC Act as no longer appropriate due to the variation and size of populations within the current reserve network and non-productive private land.

How is the proposal likely to affect the lifecycle of a threatened species and/or population?

Capertee Stringybark is restricted to an area of about 100 x 60 km in the central tablelands of NSW, with the western extent comprising a line between Bathurst and Mudgee and the eastern extent comprising a line between Lithgow and the town of Bylong (DEC 2005). Within the area Capertee Stringybark is often locally frequent (DEC 2005). Some populations are quite large, with one population in Winburndale Nature Reserve estimated to be at a minimum of 6000 individuals with the total closer to 10,000 individuals. The species is also reserved in other conservation reserves comprising Avisford Nature Reserve, Wollemi National Park and Gardens of Stone National Park, with the total reserved population estimated to exceed 20,000 plants in at least 14 separate populations (DEC 2000a). The species has limited potential threats other than land clearing (Hunter and White 1999).

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The distribution of Capertee Stringybark in the study area is relatively extensive and many individuals were also recorded in adjacent lands outside the proposal area. The approximate number of individuals within the study area is estimated to be approximately 500 individuals. General observations from the surrounding area indicate that Capertee Stringybark is widely dispersed and Ecotone (1996) recorded it as locally common throughout the Mt Piper perimeter lands.

Up to 50 Capertee Stringybark individuals will require removal depending upon the exact alignment of the coal conveyor, and a relatively large number of individuals will remain within the study area and surrounding areas of remnant vegetation. The proposed coal conveyor will result in a small degree of fragmentation, however this is not expected to significantly disrupt ecological processes such as pollination that may cause genetic isolation of Capertee Stringybarks. Considering these factors, the proposal is unlikely to adversely affect the life cycle of Capertee Stringybark at Mt Piper.

How is the proposal likely to affect the habitat of a threatened species, population or ecological community?

The proposed coal conveyor will disturb only a very small area of habitat with the implementation of the recommended mitigative measures and large areas of potential habitat will remain in surrounding areas. The proposed area of disturbance represents a very small fraction of the potential habitat for Capertee Stringybark in the local area. With the implementation of adequate weed management principles during construction of the proposed coal conveyor, Capertee Stringybark habitat is unlikely to be significantly disturbed in the long-term, and any disturbed areas of habitat are likely to regenerate with recruitment from the surrounding woodland and existing soil seed bank. Therefore it is unlikely that the proposal will adversely affect potential habitat for Capertee Stringybark. Additionally, it is recommended that seeds are collected from Capertee Stringybark in the proposal area, and propagated seedlings used in restoration activities within existing disturbed areas and areas disturbed from the proposed construction activities.

Does the proposal affect any threatened species or populations that are at the limit of its known distribution?

The Capertee Stringybark population at Mt Piper is at the southern edge of the species distribution (DEC 2000). However, the proposal will not reduce the distributional extent of Capertee Stringybark considering that up to 50 of the estimated 500 Capertee Stringybark individuals in the study area will require removal provided that the proposed coal conveyor is appropriately placed. A relatively large number of individuals will remain within the study area and the surrounding areas of remnant vegetation.

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How is the proposal likely to affect current disturbance regimes?

Grazing and firewood collection are the major disturbance regimes operating within the study area. With the procurement of these lands by Delta Electricity, grazing activities and firewood collection are likely to cease. Access to areas of remnant vegetation will be limited by the proposed rail loop which will deter firewood collection in this area. Weed species within areas of remnant vegetation are most likely spread by stock allowed to intermittently graze this area. Therefore it is likely that disturbance regimes will cease or become less frequent with the implementation of the proposal.

How is the proposal likely to affect habitat connectivity?

The proposed coal conveyor will result in a small degree of fragmentation to the remnant vegetation. However this is not expected to significantly disrupt ecological processes such as pollination which would cause isolation of habitats and/or species.

How is the proposal likely to affect critical habitat?

No critical habitat has been identified for this species.

6.3.5 Threatened Fauna

The list of threatened fauna species recorded from the Mt Piper power station perimeter lands and the surrounding study area is provided in Section 2. Through an analysis of the known habitat requirements of these threatened species, in relation to the diversity of habitats present within the proposed impact area, a list of potential subject species has been compiled. Potential subject species are defined as those threatened species considered likely to occur in the habitats present within the study area.



■ **Table 7 Assessment of the potential for threatened fauna species to occur within the habitats present in the impact area**

| Common name | Species | Habitat requirements | Likely presence in the extension area |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby | <i>Petrogale penicillata</i> | Open forest habitats with exposed rocks, rock overhangs and steep topography | Not expected |
| Regent Honeyeater | <i>Xanthomyza phrygia</i> | A nomadic species typically associated with forest and woodland habitats with the presence of suitable foraging species such as Yellow Box and Red Ironbark | Not expected |
| Spotted-tailed Quoll | <i>Dasyurus maculatus</i> | Open and closed forest habitats, requires large expansive areas of habitat to sustain territory size. | Extensive areas of habitat within Ben Bullen State Forest suitable for this species. |
| Grey-headed Flying-fox | <i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i> | Occur in subtropical and temperate rainforests, tall sclerophyll forests and woodlands, heaths and swamps as well as urban gardens and cultivated fruit crops. | No camps known to be present in the local area, nearest camps in Western Sydney. Suitable foraging habitat present. |
| Green and Golden Bell Frog | <i>Litoria aurea</i> | Ephemeral creeks, dams, ponds with adjacent grassy areas | Not expected |
| Bathurst Copper Butterfly | <i>Paralucia spinifera</i> | Inhabits open forest / woodland areas above 900m in elevation and prefers sites that receive full all-day sun. Also requires the presence of the Native Blackthorn (<i>Bursaria spinosa</i> ssp <i>lasiophylla</i>) in the understorey an important host plant critical for larvae. | Low potential. While the habitat is marginal, there are several records of this species approximately 7-8 km to the southeast of the Mt Piper power station. |
| Large-eared Pied Bat | <i>Chalinolobus dwyeri</i> | Open forest and woodland habitats, a cave roosting species which favours sandstone escarpment areas for roosting | Potential foraging area, no roosting habitat present |
| Blue Mountains Water Skink | <i>Eulamprus leuraensis</i> | Sedge swamps, hanging swamps in the upper Blue mountains area | Not expected |
| Giant Dragonfly | <i>Petalura gigantea</i> | Sedge swamps, freshwater wetlands and peat bogs | Not expected |
| Stuttering Frog | <i>Mixophyes balbus</i> | Permanent streams in moist and wet sclerophyll forests | Not expected |
| Booroolong Frog | <i>Litoria booroolongensis</i> | A highland species (200 – 1000m asl) associated with western-flowing rocky streams on the slopes and tablelands of the Great Dividing Range. Streams are slow-flowing and bordered by grassy vegetation. | Not expected |
| Koala | <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> | Open forests and woodlands with favoured food tree species | Not expected |
| Gang-gang Cockatoo | <i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i> | Moist and tall open forests, particularly in steep topographic areas | Not expected |
| Powerful Owl | <i>Ninox strenua</i> | Open forests with dense wet gullies and creek areas, requires large mature trees with hollows for breeding and dense areas of vegetation for prey and roosting | Not expected |
| Eastern Bent-wing Bat | <i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i> | Forages in a variety of habitat types including cleared and modified environments, a cave roosting species | May forage for insects in all areas |

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| Common name | Species | Habitat requirements | Likely presence in the extension area |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Glossy Black-Cockatoo | <i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i> | Open forest habitats with She-oak species (<i>Allocasuarina</i> sp) required for food. | Not expected, no food trees identified from the works area |
| Yellow-bellied Glider | <i>Petaurus australis</i> | Tall open forest habitats, favours mature wet sclerophyll forest and dense gullies. | Not expected |
| Brown Treecreeper | <i>Climacteris picumnus</i> | Woodland bird species, favour dry sclerophyll forests and woodlands, generally with a sparse understorey, grassy areas and logs. | Potential habitat present, may occur |
| Grey-crowned Babbler | <i>Pomatostomus temporalis</i> | | |
| Black-chinned Honeyeater | <i>Melithreptus gularis gularis</i> | | |
| Hooded Robin | <i>Melanodryas cucullata</i> | | |
| Diamond Firetail | <i>Stagonopleura guttata</i> | | |
| Speckled Warbler | <i>Pyrrholaemus sagittata</i> | | |
| Eastern False Pipistrelle | <i>Falsistrellus tasmaniensis</i> | Occurs in a variety of open forest and woodland habitats, with hollow-bearing trees required for roosting, may forage in younger regrowth and modified environments | May forage for insects in all areas, potential roost sites present. |
| Greater Broad-nosed Bat | <i>Scoteanax rueppellii</i> | | |
| Barking Owl | <i>Ninox connivens</i> | Forest and woodland habitats, particularly drier western slopes and riverine areas, hunts for birds and small mammals. | Not expected |
| Squirrel Glider | <i>Petaurus norfolcensis</i> | Forest and woodland habitats, particularly areas with a diversity of eucalypt species in the canopy. | Not expected. No habitat present in the study area. Not recorded from the Mt Piper perimeter lands despite intensive four seasonal trapping survey (Ecotone 1996). |
| Square-tailed Kite | <i>Lophoictinia isura</i> | Occurs in a variety of open forest and woodland habitats, particularly riverine woodlands | Not expected |
| Pink-tailed Legless Lizard | <i>Aprasia parapulchella</i> | In general, occurs in open grassland and woodland habitats that have a substantial cover of rocks and exposed rock. A small population is known from the Bathurst area | Low potential to occur on the basis that suitable sheltering habitat is very poorly represented in the proposed works area. Although some rocky sites occur on the steeper slopes adjoining the site and individuals may occur. |
| Turquoise Parrot | <i>Neophema pulchella</i> | Open forest and woodlands | Not expected |

No threatened fauna species (TSC Act or EPBC Act) were identified on the site during the field surveys. Indeed, the results of the field survey and habitat assessment indicate that the habitat is not suitable for the large majority of threatened fauna species that are known to occur in the area. This conclusion is based on the lack of critical habitat features and degree of modification and impacts from past activities.

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However the presence of natural open forest and woodland habitat provides some habitat value to a small diversity of threatened fauna species as evidenced by the habitat assessments. The list of potential subject species includes:

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Woodland birds | ■ Brown Treecreeper | ■ Grey-crowned Babbler |
| | ■ Diamond Firetail | ■ Black-chinned Honeyeater |
| | ■ Speckled Warbler | ■ Hooded Robin |
| Microchiropteran Bats | ■ Eastern False Pipistrelle | ■ Greater Broad-nosed Bat |
| Other Mammals | ■ Spotted-tail Quoll | ■ Grey-headed Flying Fox |
| Reptiles | ■ Pink-tailed Worm Lizard | |
| Invertebrates | ■ Bathurst Copper Butterfly | |

Impact Assessment

How is the proposal likely to affect the lifecycle of a threatened species and/or population?

Potential impacts on small populations of these threatened fauna may result from the clearing of vegetation and habitat to accommodate the coal conveyor and haul road access. This relates to the reduction in available habitat for local populations and potential loss of critical features that provide shelter such as tree hollows used by the Brown Treecreeper for breeding and as roost sites for hollow-roosting bats in addition to surface rocks (Pink-tailed Worm Lizard) and feeding habitat (Bathurst Copper Butterfly).

On a landscape scale, the loss of habitat has been minimised through selection of the Pipers Flat route option, which will predominantly traverse through an existing disturbed easement and vehicle track. In contrast the former option involved considerably more habitat disturbance.

Fauna habitat identified within the works area is relatively low in value compared to the surrounding hillslopes and indeed the remainder of the Mt Piper perimeter lands, as evidenced by the fauna species diversity recorded in the study area compared to the broader perimeter lands (c.f. Ecotone 1996). Much of the tree cover is considered young in age and relatively few mature or hollow-bearing trees were noted. Further the cover of rocks in the proposal area is very low in abundance compared to observations of the surrounding landscape, particularly on the upper slopes. As a result of these observations it is evident that the proposal area provides very marginal and low quality sheltering habitat for the assessed threatened fauna and that higher quality and more extensive areas of preferred habitat are represented in the surrounding landscape.

The habitat is to be disturbed potentially provides for foraging life-cycle events for woodland birds and microchiropteran bats. These species forage over large areas which may include forest and woodland but also open modified and degraded lands. The proposal will not significantly impact on the local availability of foraging habitat and the degree of clearing is not expected to significantly impact on feeding habitat for local populations of woodland birds given the extent of suitable and

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indeed better quality habitats present in the locality. The current potential for these species to occur in the proposal area will remain post-construction.

The proposal area provides potential foraging habitat for Spotted-tail Quoll and Grey-headed Flying Fox which both utilise large areas of habitat for hunting and foraging. The removal of 2ha of potential habitat for these species is unlikely to have potential impacts to the life cycle of these species, as this area would comprise only a very small proportion of the species home range.

There are no known roost sites 'flying-fox camps' for the Grey-headed Flying-fox in the study area and the nearest known camps are from the Sydney area including the Botanic Gardens, Cabramatta, Gordon, Penrith, and Wheeney Creek and Yarramundi in the Hawkesbury. There are no existing roost sites within the areas selected for development of infrastructure for the coal conveyor project.

Habitat for the Grey-headed Flying-fox and Spotted-tailed Quoll is extensive throughout all naturally vegetated areas of the region. In particular, high conservation value remnants are conserved in several national parks, conservation reserves and state forests within proximity to Mt Piper. Indeed the Mt piper perimeter lands also provide potential habitat for these species.

The habitat in the proposal area was not identified as preferred or potential foraging habitat for the Bathurst Copper Butterfly or Pink-tailed Worm Lizard.

How is the proposal likely to affect the habitat of a threatened species, population or ecological community?

The habitats within the works area are of comparatively lower value for these threatened species than the surrounding hillslopes and indeed the remainder of the Mt Piper perimeter lands. This is evidenced by the degree of disturbance and past clearing of remnant vegetation and the state of regeneration. The degree of clearing required for this project is not expected to significantly impact on local populations of the assessed species given the extent of suitable and indeed better quality habitats present in the locality. Further pre-clearing surveys have been recommend to identify and flag hollow-bearing habitat trees in proximity to the works area with the aim of further minimising the loss of these features in the final design and construction phase of the project.

There are no known roost sites 'flying-fox camps' for the Grey-headed Flying-fox in the study area and the nearest known camps are from the Sydney area including the Botanic Gardens, Cabramatta, Gordon, Penrith, and Wheeney Creek and Yarramundi in the Hawkesbury. There are no existing roost sites within the areas selected for development of infrastructure for the coal conveyor project.

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conserved in several national parks, conservation reserves and state forests within proximity to Mt Piper. Indeed the Mt Piper perimeter lands also provide potential habitat for these species

Does the proposal affect any threatened species or populations that are at the limit of its known distribution?

The Bathurst Copper Butterfly is restricted to the Bathurst and Lithgow area however the habitat in the proposal area has been identified as low quality and not preferred by this species.

None of the remaining species are at the limit of their distribution on the study area

How is the proposal likely to affect current disturbance regimes?

The impacts from cattle grazing as well as gully erosion and weed invasion are the major disturbance regimes operating within the study area. With the procurement of these lands by Delta Electricity, grazing activities will cease.

Weed species within areas of remnant vegetation are most likely spread by stock allowed to intermittently graze this area. Therefore it is likely that disturbance regimes will be cease or become less frequent with the implementation of the proposal. Weeds should be monitored post-construction to determine their invasiveness and a weed management plan prepared if necessary.

The issue of erosion within creek areas should be addressed through stabilisation and restoration of creek areas as discussed in the recommendations section of the report.

How is the proposal likely to affect habitat connectivity?

The proposed coal loader conveyor and access track may provide a barrier to movements of larger mammals including ground and tree dwelling species moving across the landscape.

Potential movement opportunities will also be impacted along the short section of Pipers Flat Creek diverted for the proposal. Measures to provide and restore connectivity in riparian areas are required as a component of the project and this is discussed in the recommendations section of the report.

How is the proposal likely to affect critical habitat?

The Pipers Flat option was selected to minimise disturbance to vegetation and habitat. Given the degree of disturbance and modification to the habitat within the works area resulting from past activities, this small area is unlikely to constitute critical habitat for the assessed species. Comparatively larger and higher quality habitats are represented through the surrounding landscape and Mt Piper perimeter lands that may provide critical habitat should populations of these

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threatened fauna occur. There is no evidence gathered by the field surveys to suggest that the proposal area provides critical habitat for the assessed species.

6.3.6 Threatened Fish

Records of Macquarie Perch (*Macquaria australasica*) have been recorded from the Cox's River catchment (Sydney Water 2005) of which Thompson's Creek and Piper Flat Creek are included in. These records have occurred from tributaries in the lower catchment such as Little River which are considered to be in relatively pristine condition. Given the condition of the waterways in the study area (i.e. lack of riparian cover, high turbidity and bank erosion) populations of this species are unlikely to occur.

6.4 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999

There is a statutory responsibility to comply with the requirements and intent of the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*, 1999 (EPBC Act) in relation to the protection and management of threatened species. This assessment deals specifically with the significance of impacts from the proposed coal conveyor and rail loop on nationally threatened species and commonwealth migratory species.

6.4.1 Nationally Listed Threatened Species:

Capertee Stringybark *Eucalyptus cannonii*

This assessment deals specifically with the significance of impacts from the proposed development on the nationally Vulnerable Capertee Stringybark. Appropriate placement of the proposed coal conveyor will minimise the removal of this species in the study area, however a small number of individuals of this species are expected to be removed by the proposed activity. Of the estimated 500 individuals recorded in the study area, potentially 50 of these may require removal depending upon the exact alignment of the coal conveyor.

The closely related Red Stringybark *Eucalyptus macrorhyncha* was also present within the study area, occurring adjacent Capertee Stringybark in some areas. A small number of *E. macrorhyncha* may have been included in the counts of Capertee Stringybark where these species occurred together or where there was insufficient material present for positive identification. Hybrids of these two species are common at some locations (DEC 2005), however evidence of this was recorded in only a few locations where the two species intergrade.

The assessment of nationally threatened species present within or known to utilise the study area has been undertaken in accordance with the significant impact criteria for endangered and vulnerable species as outlined in the Significant Impact Guidelines relating to matters of national environmental significance (DEH 2006) to determine whether the proposal would have a



significant impact on any of these species, and hence on a matter of national environmental significance. This assessment is provided below.

1. Lead to a long-term decrease in the size of an important population of a species.

Capertee Stringybark is restricted to an area of about 100 by 60 km in the central tablelands of NSW, with the western extent comprising a line between Bathurst and Mudgee and the eastern extent comprising a line between Lithgow and the town of Bylong (DEC 2005). Within this range Capertee Stringybark is often locally common (DEC 2005). Some populations are quite large, with one population in Winburndale Nature Reserve estimated to be at a minimum of 6000 individuals with the total closer to 10,000 individuals. The species is also reserved in other conservation reserves comprising Avisford Nature Reserve, Wollemi National Park and Gardens of Stone National Park, with the total reserved population estimated to exceed 20,000 plants in at least 14 separate populations (DEC 2000a).

The distribution of Capertee Stringybark in the study area is relatively extensive and many individuals were also recorded in adjacent lands outside the proposal area. The approximate number of individuals within the study area is estimated to be approximately 500 individuals. The distribution of Capertee Stringybark within the study area is generally within 3 clusters along the proposed coal conveyor route.

Up to 50 Capertee Stringybark individuals will require removal depending upon the exact alignment of the coal conveyor, and a relatively large number of individuals will remain within the study area and surrounding areas of remnant vegetation (Ecotone 1996). Considering this the proposal is unlikely to lead to a long-term decrease in the size of the local population. Additionally, to offset the potential loss of individual trees, Capertee Stringybarks should be propagated from seed collected from the study area to be used in native plantings in disturbed areas surrounding the power station and areas disturbed from proposed construction activities.

2. Reduce the area of occupancy of an important population

The Capertee Stringybark population at Mt Piper is at the southern edge of the species distribution (DEC 2000). The proposal will reduce the area of occupancy for Capertee Stringybark, however only a small number of Capertee Stringybark (up to 50) individuals will require removal depending upon the exact alignment of the coal conveyor, and a relatively large number of individuals will remain within the study area and surrounding areas of remnant vegetation. The importance of the population is not highly significant to maintaining the entire population, however there is some significance considering the species is at or near its distributional limit.



3. Will the action adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of the species?

Habitat critical to the survival of a species refers to areas that are necessary:

- *For activities such as foraging, breeding, roosting, or disposal;*
- *For the long-term maintenance of the species including the maintenance of other species essential to the survival of the species, such as pollinators;*
- *To maintain genetic diversity and long-term evolutionary development; or*
- *For the reintroduction of populations or recovery of the species.*

The area of habitat proposed for removal is unlikely to be critical to the survival of the species, considering the high representation of the species and suitable habitat in conservation reserves and areas surrounding the study area. The proposed coal conveyor will disturb only a very small area of habitat with the implementation of the recommended mitigative measures (see **Section 5.2.4**).

The proposal is likely to reduce threatening processes for this species. Grazing and firewood collection are the major disturbance regimes operating within the study area. With the procurement of these lands by Delta Electricity, grazing activities and firewood collection are likely to cease. Access to areas of remnant vegetation will be limited by the proposed rail loop which will deter firewood collection in this area. Weed species within areas of remnant vegetation are most likely spread by stock allowed to intermittently graze this area.

4. Modify, remove, or isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline.

The proposed area of disturbance represents a very small fraction of the potential habitat for Capertee Stringybark. The proposed coal conveyor will disturb only a very small area of habitat with the implementation of the recommended mitigative measures (see **Section 5.2.4**), and therefore is unlikely to remove, modify or decrease the availability or quality of habitat for Capertee Stringybark to the extent that the species will decline. The proposed coal conveyor will result in a small degree of fragmentation, however this is not expected to significantly disrupt ecological processes such as pollination and seed dispersal that would cause isolation of habitats or species. To offset the potential loss of habitat for Capertee Stringybarks, this species should be propagated from seed collected from the study area and plantings established and maintained within disturbed areas surrounding the power station and other disturbed areas.

5. Result in invasive species that are harmful to a vulnerable species becoming established in the threatened species habitat.

Weed species recorded in the study area could potentially be further spread into areas of remnant vegetation. The implementation of weed management principles during construction will greatly

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minimise or eliminate this from occurring. Invasive species have not been identified as a major threatening process for this species (DEC 2005).

6. Interferes substantially with the recovery of the species

There is no recovery plan or designated recovery actions for this species under the EPBC Act. The proposal is unlikely to significantly conflict with any recovery actions proposed for the species considering the large reserved populations, many individuals will be retained in the surrounding areas and the minimal impact to individuals and areas of potential habitat.

Threatened Fauna

This assessment deals specifically with the significance of impacts from the proposed development on the nationally vulnerable Grey-headed Flying-fox and Spotted-tailed Quoll and Bathurst Copper Butterfly. The first two species are expected to utilise habitat that may be affected by the proposed activity. The habitat is considered only very marginal for the Bathurst Copper Butterfly and certainly not preferred habitat. All remaining threatened fauna species are considered either not to occur in the study area, or the habitat is only very marginal in extent and quality and there would be no impacts on suitable habitat resulting from the proposed activities.

The assessment of nationally threatened species present within or known to utilise the study area has been undertaken in accordance with the significant impact criteria for endangered and vulnerable species as outlined in the Significant Impact Guidelines relating to matters of national environmental significance (DEH 2006) to determine whether the proposal would have a significant impact on any of these species, and hence on a matter of national environmental significance. This assessment is provided below.

1. Lead to a long-term decrease in the size of an important population of a species.

There are no known roost sites ‘flying-fox camps’ for the Grey-headed Flying-fox in the study area and the nearest known camps are from the Sydney area including the Botanic Gardens, Cabramatta, Gordon, Penrith, and Wheeney Creek and Yarramundi in the Hawkesbury. There are no existing roost sites within the areas selected for development of infrastructure for the coal conveyor project.

Habitat for the Grey-headed Flying-fox and Spotted-tailed Quoll is extensive throughout all naturally vegetated areas of the region. In particular, high conservation value remnants are conserved in several national parks, conservation reserves and state forests within proximity to Mt Piper. Indeed the Mt piper perimeter lands also provide potential habitat for these species.

There are no records of the Bathurst Copper Butterfly in proximity to the proposal area and the site habitats are not considered suitable for this species given the absence of known food resources.

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The proposal would not remove important food resources nor impact on a roosting colony or breeding habitat for these species.

2. Reduce the area of occupancy of an important population

The proposal would not remove a significant area of native remnant or regrowth vegetation and would not result in the loss of an area currently occupied by a nationally threatened species.

3. Will the action adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of the species?

Habitat critical to the survival of a species refers to areas that are necessary:

- For activities such as foraging, breeding, roosting, or disposal;
- For the long-term maintenance of the species including the maintenance of other species essential to the survival of the species, such as pollinators;
- To maintain genetic diversity and long-term evolutionary development; or
- For the reintroduction of populations or recovery of the species.

The proposed area of disturbance represents a very small fraction of the potential home range area for the Grey-headed Flying-fox and Spotted-tailed Quoll should these species occur. Both species typically exhibit very large home ranges and Grey-headed Flying-fox are known to travel distances of at least 15km from roost sites to access seasonal foraging resources (Tidemann 1995). No evidence of a roosting colony of the Grey-headed Flying-fox was observed from the field surveys.

The habitat is considered only very marginal for the Bathurst Copper Butterfly and certainly not preferred habitat. All remaining threatened fauna species are considered either not to occur in the study area, or the habitat is only very marginal in extent and quality and there would be no impacts on suitable habitat resulting from the proposed activities.

4. Modify, remove, or isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline.

The proposed area of disturbance represents a very small fraction of the potential home range area for the Grey-headed Flying-fox and Spotted-tailed Quoll should these species occur. Both species typically exhibit very large home ranges and Grey-headed Flying-fox are known to travel distances of at least 15km from roost sites to access seasonal foraging resources (Tidemann 1995). No evidence of a roosting colony of the Grey-headed Flying-fox was observed from the field surveys.

The habitat is considered only very marginal for the Bathurst Copper Butterfly and certainly not preferred habitat.



5. Result in invasive species that are harmful to a vulnerable species becoming established in the threatened species habitat.

Weeds have been recorded in the study area and could potentially spread to suitable habitat areas. The implementation of a weed management actions are required to target any weed invasions which could arise from the proposal would significantly reduce the potential impacts of weed species.

6. Interferes substantially with the recovery of the species

The proposal would not conflict with the recovery actions proposed for threatened fauna and would involve minimal impact to the potential habitat for this species in the regional area.

Migratory species or their habitat

A number of listed migratory bird species have been recorded from the western Sydney region which constitutes a part of the range area for migratory species such as the Satin Flycatcher and Black-faced Monarch.

The project area does not provide unique or critical habitat, preferred habitat, or habitat of significance for any of these species, and as discussed previously there would be very minimal impact on native vegetation resulting from the project. Construction of the proposed works would not affect the visitation rates and behaviours of migratory species in the region



7. Avoidance and Mitigation Recommendations

7.1 Avoidance

Wherever possible the design of the proposed coal conveyor and rail loop should consider restricting vegetation clearance to modified areas such as grazed paddocks and areas of regenerating remnant vegetation. This is particularly important for the proposed coal conveyor and associated access trail, to utilise existing disturbed areas along the proposed route, such as regenerating vegetation within the existing communications easement and the service trail.

Additionally, efforts should be made to conserve and appropriately manage the intact areas of remnant vegetation adjoining the works areas and/or restore similar modified areas of vegetation outside the proposed construction footprint to offset any potential small losses associated with individual trees.

The proposed coal conveyor route and/or service trail should be located within these areas of regenerating vegetation adjacent to the service trail wherever applicable, to avoid removal of more mature vegetation including larger trees.

7.2 Mitigation

7.2.1 Natural Vegetation

- The proposed location of the coal conveyor and access trail is surrounded by areas of remnant vegetation. To limit impacts in this area, the proposed disturbance footprint should be clearly defined on-ground using temporary fencing to avoid unnecessary vegetation and habitat removal;
- It would be appropriate to conduct a pre-clearing survey to identify and flag any significant hollow-bearing habitat trees and Capertee Stringybark within the works corridor with the aim of avoiding these features in the final design and construction phases of the project where possible;
- Pre-clearance surveys for other threatened flora species potentially occurring in the study area should be undertaken during their flowering times from late spring to summer, including but not limited to Doubletail Buttercup, *Derwentia blakelyi* and Hairy Geebung;
- To offset potential impacts to Capertee Stringybark, this species should be propagated from seed collected from the study area and plantings established and maintained within existing disturbed areas surrounding the power station or areas disturbed from the proposed construction activities;
- Storage of equipment and stockpiling of resources should be restricted to designated areas in cleared and degraded land to minimise the overall impact of the construction and avoid unnecessary vegetation and habitat removal;

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- Restoration of riparian areas disturbed from the proposed rail loop at Pipers Flat. The restoration of the currently cleared or degraded riparian area may assist in maintaining fauna movements;
- Appropriate weed management strategies should be implemented during construction to ensure they are not spread throughout the study area and particularly into areas of remnant vegetation adjacent to the proposal area;
- The use of best-practice sediment and erosion controls;
- Fallen logs encountered within the proposed disturbance footprint should be relocated to areas of retained remnant vegetation; and
- Timber felled for clearing should be retained on the ground in the area as habitat for terrestrial fauna.

7.2.2 Water Quality

The preservation of water quality is an important construction issue particularly for the proposed rail loop which will involve crossings over Pipers Flat Creek. As a result strict sediment and erosion controls should be adopted to prevent impacts on water quality. Appropriate measures to store and manage fuels and oils are to be adopted and spill containment equipment should be carried at all times to prevent and contain accidental spills in the creek.

7.2.3 Creek Crossing Structures

Pipers Flat Creek is considered to provide moderate to low value fish habitat being classified as a Class 2 waterway (Fairfull and Witheridge 2003) indicating a clearly defined drainage channel with semi-permanent pools. As a Class 2 waterway (as classified by NSW Fisheries – DPI) the proposed crossing of Pipers Flat Creek by the rail loop would need to be a large box culvert or bridge with the cross sectional areas of the structure equal to the cross-sectional area of the watercourse in order to facilitate safe fish passage. If a large box culvert is used it is imperative that the crossing structure does not impede fish passage by ensuring that the base of the culvert is positioned below the bed of the creek.

7.2.4 Creek Restoration

The proposal should be consistent with the objectives of the category 1 status of this waterway (refer to DIPNR 2004) by reinstating riparian vegetation and providing connectivity along the creek for movement by terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna. The following mitigation measures are recommended for the creek restoration:

- Establish and maintain riparian vegetation plantings and macrophytes along Pipers Flat Creek, concentrating on an area 50m wide from either side of the top of the creek bank to filter flow



and enhance bank stability. Discussion on the appropriate species to use in revegetation / restoration works are described in Table 8 below.

- Restore degraded riparian zones on remaining creek areas of Thompsons Creek and Irondale Creek in proximity to new infrastructure to improve the current level of degradation.
- Destruction of creek crossings application of jute matting or similar should be conducted to stabilise soil while construction is being undertaken to prevent sedimentation of creeks. Any woody debris which is required to be removed for the proposal should be relocated to other areas of the creek or placed within the new creek section, and care must be taken not to obstruct fish passage.

Revegetation of Pipers Flat Creek and surrounding areas should use native species which occur in the local area and are adapted to the local conditions. A list of flora species suitable for revegetation of the various habitats of this area are listed in **Table 8**.

- **Table 8 native flora species suitable for revegetation of Pipers Flat Creek and surrounding areas.**

| Species | Within Creeklines | Wetlands | Riparian | Sight screens | Higher ground |
|--|-------------------|----------|----------|---------------|---------------|
| Trees | | | | | |
| Ribbon Gum <i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> | | | X | X | X |
| Apple Box <i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i> | | | X | X | X |
| Candlebark <i>Eucalyptus rubida</i> | | | X | X | X |
| Snow Gum <i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i> | | | X | X | X |
| Shrubs | | | | | |
| Silver Wattle <i>Acacia dealbata</i> | | | X | X | X |
| Tea-tree <i>Leptospermum squarrosum</i> | | | X | X | X |
| Grasses | | | | | |
| Kangaroo Grass <i>Themeda australis</i> | | | X | | X |
| Snowgrass <i>Poa sieberiana</i> | | | X | | X |
| Sedges/Rushes | | | | | |
| Tall Sedge <i>Carex appressa</i> | X | X | | | |
| Common Rush <i>Juncus usitatus</i> | X | X | | | |
| Tall Spike-rush <i>Eleocharis sphacelata</i> | | X | | | |

The species listed in **Table 8** reflect plants which occur within Ribbon Gum / Apple Box / Snow Gum Grassy Woodland which is likely to have naturally occurred in this area in the past. The shrub cover of this vegetation community type is generally sparse, however Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata* usually occurs at low densities. Wattle species are fast growing and therefore would be suitable for providing a temporary sight screen surrounding infrastructure relatively quickly until



tree species become well established. Sedge/rush species should be planted within creek lines and wetland areas, with Tall Spike Rush *Eleocharis sphacelata* planted within areas of deeper water in creeklines and wetlands. Grass species are suitable for planting on higher ground the surrounding Pipers Flat Creek.

Habitat is not suitable for Capertee Stringybark in this area surrounding Piper's Flat Creek, and revegetation activities utilising Capertee Stringybark should occur on the dryer slopes surrounding Mt Piper which support disturbed vegetation. Seed should be collected from Capertee Stringybark along the proposed coal conveyor route and seedlings propagated for use in revegetation of disturbed lands surrounding the power station.

7.2.5 Fauna movement

There may be minor impacts on fauna movements as a result of the clearing and construction of the conveyor and new infrastructure. As a result provisions should be made to allow for several fauna crossing points along the conveyor. These would simply need to include a clearance of at least 900mm below the structure at designated locations to allow small and medium sized mammals such as macropods and wombats to pass beneath.

7.2.6 Introduced species

Introduced fauna are currently present within the study area. The construction would not be expected to increase populations or exacerbate the impacts of introduced fauna. The use of the construction machinery and exposure of the ground surface could potentially result in increased spread of weeds, including noxious species. Weed management principles should be implemented during construction such as the appropriate disposal of removed weed material including soil containing propagules and washing down machinery before entering areas of remnant vegetation, particularly after use in weed infested areas such as the grazed lands of Pipers Flat.

7.2.7 Induction of construction personnel

Construction personnel should be aware of the importance of remnant vegetation and the presence of the Capertee Stringybark in the area and other sensitive features including hollow-bearing trees, standing dead trees, trees with bird nests, fallen logs, and shrub cover. All construction personnel should be inducted to the study area and be aware of their environmental responsibilities, including the preservation of tree cover and riparian habitats. Construction personnel should inspect the trunk, foliage and limbs of any trees that require removal to prevent fauna mortality. If fauna species were present, these should be given the opportunity to move away from the construction zone prior to felling. Any animal injured during construction should be appropriately handled and transported to an animal care authority for attention. A stewardship should be encouraged over all fauna encountered, including poisonous snakes and no mortality of fauna should result knowingly from the construction.

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Appendix A Threatened Flora Assessment

| Threatened Flora | Conservation Status | | | Distribution and Habitat Requirements* | Suitable Habitat in Study Area |
|---|---------------------|-----|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| | Cwlth | NSW | RoTAP | | |
| <i>Acacia baueri</i> subsp. <i>aspera</i> | - | V | 2RC- | Restricted to the Sydney region, occurring on the Kings Tableland in the central Blue Mountains and with sporadic occurrences on the Woronora Plateau in the Royal National Park, Mt. Keira district and at Wedderburn. May also occur on the escarpment/Woronora Plateau in the Flat Rock Junction and Stanwell Tops area of the Illawarra. Occurs in low, damp heathlands, often on exposed rocky outcrops over a wide range of climatic and topographical conditions. Appears to prefer open conditions; rarely observed where there is any shrub or tree canopy development; and many of the observations of this species have been made following fire, suggesting the species prefers early successional habitats. | Marginal |
| <i>Acacia bynoeana</i> | V | E | 3VC- | Found in central eastern NSW, from the Hunter District south to the Southern Highlands and west to the Blue Mountains. It has recently been found in the Colymea and Parma Creek areas west of Nowra. Occurs in heath or dry sclerophyll forest on sandy soils. Seems to prefer open, sometimes slightly disturbed sites such as trail margins, edges of roadside spoil mounds and in recently burnt patches. Associated overstorey species include <i>Corymbia gummifera</i> , <i>Eucalyptus haemastoma</i> , <i>Eucalyptus parramatisensis</i> , <i>Banksia serrata</i> <i>Angophora bakerii</i> . | No |
| <i>Acacia clunies-rossiae</i> | - | V | 2RC-t | Kanangra Wattle grows in the Kowmung and Cocks River areas entirely within Kanangra-Boyd and Blue Mountains National Parks. Grows in dry sclerophyll forest on skeletal soils on rocky slopes, or on alluvium along creeks. | Marginal |
| <i>Acacia flocktoniae</i> | V | V | 2VC- | The Flockton Wattle is found only in the Southern Blue Mountains (at Mt Victoria, Megalong Valley and Yerranderie. Grows in dry sclerophyll forest on sandstone. | Marginal |
| <i>Acacia gordonii</i> | E | E | 2K | Restricted to the north-west of Sydney. Has a disjunct distribution, occurring in the lower Blue Mountains in the west, and in the South Maroota/Glenorie area in the east. Grows in dry sclerophyll forest and heathlands amongst or within rock platforms on sandstone outcrops | No |
| <i>Acrophyllum australe</i> | V | V | 2VCi | Restricted, from Faulconbridge to Lawson, South of Bilpin and near Kings Tableland, in the Blue Mountains area, all within the Central Coast Botanical Subdivision, currently known from 27 sites. Grows in sheltered gullies beneath waterfalls and drip zones of rock overhangs and cliff faces, usually with a south-east to south-west aspect. Typically found in areas where there is a more or less constant supply of water. Usually grows in shale interbeds at the base of small cliffs, in crevices on the sandstone rock face or on talus slopes. The rock overhangs are of Hawkesbury or Narrabeen Sandstone. Associated species commonly include <i>Callicoma serratifolia</i> , <i>Dracophyllum secundum</i> , <i>Todea barbata</i> , <i>Allania endlicheri</i> and <i>Blechnum mbiguum</i> . Found adjacent to open forest of <i>Eucalyptus piperita</i> and <i>Angophora costata</i> and closed forest of <i>Doryphora sassafras</i> and <i>Ceratopetalum apetalum</i> . Frequently growing on very thick layers of moss. | No |
| <i>Apatophyllum constablei</i> | E | E | 2ECi | Known from four sites, three of which are within Wollemi National Park near Gaspers Mountain and Coorongoo Creek, the fourth of which is about 2 km from Glen Davis. Occurs in dry sclerophyll forest on slopes with a north to north-westerly aspect. It typically grows near cliffs (i.e. near the base or just above). The soils at sites are sandy and skeletal, mostly on Narrabeen sandstone. Found in association with <i>Eucalyptus piperita</i> , <i>E. punctata</i> , <i>E. sparsifolia</i> , <i>Banksia serrata</i> , <i>Acacia linifolia</i> , <i>Cleistochloa rigida</i> , <i>Lomandra obliqua</i> . | No |
| <i>Asterolasia buxifolia</i> | - | E | - | Known from a single site at a granite outcrop in the riparian zone of the Lett River. Rediscovered in 2000, little is known about the species. | No |
| <i>Boronia deanei</i> | V | V | 2VC | There are scattered populations of Deane's Boronia between the far south-east of NSW and the Blue Mountains (including the upper Kangaroo River near Carrington Falls, the Endrick River near Nerriga and Nalbaugh Plateau), mainly in conservation reserves. Grows in wet heath, often at the margins of open forest adjoining swamps or along streams. | No |
| <i>Caesia parviflora</i> | - | E | - | Found in damp places in open forest on sandstone. This variety occurs uncommonly in | No |

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| Threatened Flora | Conservation Status | | | Distribution and Habitat Requirements* | Suitable Habitat in Study Area |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| | Cwlth | NSW | RoTAP | | |
| <i>var. minor</i> | | | | Tasmania, southern Victoria and south-east South Australia with an outlying population in NSW, in Barcoongere State Forest, between Grafton and Coffs Harbour. This variety may be more common than currently known, as Pale Grass-lilies are often not identified to variety level. | |
| <i>Calotis glandulosa</i> | V | V | 3VC- | Mauve Burr-daisy's main distribution is in the Monaro and Kosciuszko regions. There is a known site in the upper Shoalhaven catchment and record from near Oberon. There are old, highly dubious records from the Dubbo area and Mt Imlay. Found in montane grasslands in the Australian Alps. Found in subalpine grassland (dominated by <i>Poa</i> spp.), Natural Temperate Grassland (dominated by <i>Themeda australis</i>) and Snow Gum (<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i>) Woodlands on the Monaro and Shoalhaven area. | Yes |
| <i>Carex klaphakei</i> | - | E | | Found in only three locations, from the Blue Mountains (at Blackheath and Mt Werong) to the Southern Highlands (at Penrose). Grows with other native sedges and rushes in swamps on sandstone at altitudes of greater than 600 m. | No |
| <i>Darwinia peduncularis</i> | - | V | 3RCi | Occurs as local disjunct populations in coastal NSW with a couple of isolated populations in the Blue Mountains. It has been recorded from Brooklyn, Berowra, Galston Gorge, Hornsby, Bargo River, Glen Davis, Mount Boonbourwa and Kings Tableland. Usually grows on or near rocky outcrops on sandy, well drained, low nutrient soil over sandstone. | Yes |
| <i>Dillwynia tenuifolia</i> | V | V | 2RCa | The core distribution is the Cumberland Plain from Windsor to Penrith east to Deans Park. Other populations in Western Sydney are recorded from Voyager Point and Kemps Creek in the Liverpool LGA, Luddenham in the Penrith LGA and South Maroota in the Baulkham Hills Shire. Disjunct localities include the Bulga Mountains at Yengo in the north, and Kurradjong Heights and Woodford in the Lower Blue Mountains. In western Sydney, it may be locally abundant particularly within scrubby/dry heath areas within Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and Shale Gravel Transition Forest on tertiary alluvium or laterised clays. May also be common in transitional areas where these communities adjoin Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland. At Yengo, is reported to occur in disturbed escarpment woodland on Narrabeen sandstone. | Marginal |
| <i>Derwentia blakelyi</i> | - | V | 2K | Restricted to the western Blue Mountains, near Clarence, near Mt Horrible, on Nullo Mountain and in the Coricudgy Range. Occurs at fewer than 20 locations, none of which is in a conservation reserve. Occurs in eucalypt forest, often in moist areas. | Yes |
| <i>Diuris aequalis</i> | E | V | 3VC- | The Buttercup Doubletail has been recorded in Kanangra-Boyd National Park, Gurnang State Forest, towards Wombeyan Caves, the Taralga - Goulburn area, and the ranges between Braidwood, Tarago and Bungendore. The Type collection (from the 19th Century) is from Liverpool, west of Sydney. Recorded in forest, low open woodland with grassy understorey and secondary grassland on the higher parts of the Southern and Central Tablelands | Yes |
| <i>Epacris hamiltonii</i> | E | E | 2ECi | Occurs in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. Found at 72 sites within three creek catchments. The creeks occur in an altitude range of 810 - 940 m a.s.l. and are all located on the northern side of the escarpment and flow into the Grose Valley. All known sites occur within a radius of approximately 5 km. Has a very specific habitat, being found on or adjacent to Narrabeen sandstone cliffs alongside perennial creeks, often below plateau hanging swamps. The soil generally has a spongy/peat-like consistency, with a very high moisture content. Sites are found at the sheltered base of cliffs adjacent to wet gully or swamp vegetation, usually where a perennial or virtually perennial source of water, such as cliff seepages, is present. Associated species include King Fern (<i>Todea barbara</i>), Rough Tree Fern (<i>Cyathea australis</i>) and Coral Fern (<i>Gleichenia rupestris</i>). Sundews (<i>Drosera binata</i>) are also common on the cliff face. Occasionally occurs beside small creek lines which are vegetated with moist gully forest species (<i>Callicoma serratifolia</i> , <i>Doryphora sassafras</i> , <i>Ceratopetalum apetalum</i>). | No |
| <i>Eucalyptus benthamii</i> | V | V | 2VCi | Occurs on the alluvial flats of the Nepean River and its tributaries. There are two major subpopulations: in the Kedumba Valley of the Blue Mountains National Park and at Bents Basin State Recreation Area. A further 18 trees are scattered along the Nepean River, south to The Oaks. Requires a combination of deep alluvial sands and a flooding regime that permits seedling establishment. Occurs in open forest. Associated species at the | No |

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| Threatened Flora | Conservation Status | | | Distribution and Habitat Requirements* | Suitable Habitat in Study Area |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| | Cwlth | NSW | RoTAP | | |
| | | | | Bents Basin site include <i>Eucalyptus elata</i> , <i>E. bauerina</i> , <i>E. amplifolia</i> , <i>E. deanei</i> and <i>Angophora subvelutina</i> . Understorey species include <i>Bursaria spinosa</i> , <i>Pteridium esculentum</i> and a wide variety of agricultural weeds. The Kedumba Valley site lists <i>E. crebra</i> , <i>E. deanei</i> , <i>E. punctata</i> , <i>Leptospermum flavescens</i> , <i>Acacia filicifolia</i> and <i>Pteridium esculentum</i> among its associated species. | |
| <i>Eucalyptus cannonii</i> | V | V | 2VCi | Restricted to the western side of the Blue Mountains from Mount Piper in the south to the Mudgee area in the north. There are also populations to the west in Winburndale Nature Reserve and adjacent state forests. Occurs in several local government areas including Greater Lithgow City, Rylstone and Bathurst City. Occurs at more than 55 different locations. Occurs on a wide variety of geological types and soil substrates across a wide altitudinal range. Although also found in a variety of topographic locations, it is commonly found on footslopes. Commonly found in ecotonal areas such as the boundaries of Tablelands Grassy Woodland Complex communities and Talus Slope Woodland vegetation. | Yes |
| <i>Eucalyptus copulans</i> | E | E | 2E | Only two individual trees are known, at Wentworth Falls in the Blue Mountain, though the second tree was struck by lightning and killed. A larger population is thought to have occurred historically in the locality. Due to the low number of records, the habitat is not known. The records coincide with swampy areas along creeklines, however occurrences may not be restricted to this type of habitat. Associated species include <i>Grevillea acanthifolia</i> , <i>Hakea dactyloides</i> , <i>Eucalyptus stricta</i> , <i>Gleichenia dicarpa</i> , <i>Leptospermum juniperinum</i> and <i>Petrophile pulchella</i> . | No |
| <i>Eucalyptus pulverulenta</i> | V | V | 3V | The Silver-leafed Gum is found in two quite separate areas, the Lithgow to Bathurst area and the Monaro (Bredbo, Bombala areas). Grows in shallow soils as an understorey plant in open forest, typically dominated by Brittle Gum (<i>Eucalyptus mannifera</i>), Red Stringybark (<i>E. macrorhyncha</i>), Broad-leafed Peppermint (<i>E. dives</i>), Silvertop Ash (<i>E. sieberi</i>) and Apple Box (<i>E. bridgesiana</i>). | Yes |
| <i>Euphrasia scabra</i> | - | E | 3KCa | There are ten old herbarium collections of Rough Eyebright from NSW (including Port Jackson, Bathurst Plains, Lake George, Jindabyne, Yarrangobilly Caves and Tumbarumba). The species is regarded as extinct in South Australia. There is one population in Tasmania and seven in Victoria. There are three extant populations in NSW: one in Bondi State Forest, two in South East Forests National Park. Total NSW population is between 250 and 500 plants. Occurs in or at the margins of swampy grassland or in sphagnum bogs, often in wet, peaty soil. | No |
| <i>Grevillea evansiana</i> | V | V | 2VC | Restricted to a small area east of Rylstone on the Central Tablelands. Known populations occur on the western side of Wollemi National Park and nearby private lands, within the Rylstone Local Government Area. Grows in dry sclerophyll forest or woodland, occasionally in swampy heath, in sandy soils, usually over Hawkesbury sandstone. | Yes |
| <i>Grevillea obtusifolia</i> | E | E | - | Subspecies <i>obtusiflora</i> occurs near Rylstone, while subspecies <i>fecunda</i> occurs in the Capertee Valley, north-west of Lithgow, and in the Gardens of Stone National Park. Occurrences of both subspecies are within the Central Tablelands botanical subdivision. Species growing in association with subspecies <i>fecunda</i> include <i>Eucalyptus tenella</i> , <i>E. fibrosa</i> , <i>E. macrorhyncha</i> , <i>E. punctata</i> , <i>Callitris endlicheri</i> , <i>Acacia buxifolia</i> , <i>Leptospermum continentale</i> , <i>Monotoca elliptica</i> , <i>Persoonia linearis</i> , <i>Indigofera</i> sp. and <i>Pomax umbellata</i> . | Yes |
| <i>Hibbertia puberula</i> | - | E | - | Has not been seen for over 40 years. Early records of this species are from the Hawkesbury River area and Frenchs Forest in northern Sydney, South Coogee in eastern Sydney, the Hacking River area in southern Sydney, and the Blue Mountains. Occurs on sandy soil often associated with sandstone. | Marginal |
| <i>Isopogon fletcheri</i> | V | V | 2VCat | Restricted to a very small area in the Blackheath district of the Blue Mountains on the Central Tablelands. The entire known population occurs within Blue Mountains National Park. Restricted to moist sheltered cliffs within the spray zone of a waterfall. Grows in dry sclerophyll forest and heath on sandstone and is confined to sheltered moist positions. | No |
| <i>Lastreopsis hispida</i> | - | E | - | Occurs in the Blue Mountains. Also occurs in southern Victoria and Tasmania. Grows in wet forests, frequently under <i>Nothofagus antarcticus</i> . Often rotting on logs. | No |

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| Threatened Flora | Conservation Status | | | Distribution and Habitat Requirements* | Suitable Habitat in Study Area |
|--|---------------------|-----|-------|--|--------------------------------|
| | Cwlth | NSW | RoTAP | | |
| <i>Leionema lachnaeoides</i> | E | E | 2ECi | Occurs at 10 sites in the upper Blue Mountains, within a 12 km range between Katoomba and Blackheath. Potential habitat occurs in the Megalong and Jamison Valleys. Populations occur on exposed sandstone cliff tops and terraces, at 960 - 1000m altitude and with aspects from south-east to south-west. Habitat vegetation is montane heath and commonly includes <i>Eucalyptus stricta</i> , <i>Allocasuarina nana</i> , <i>Dillwynia retorta</i> , <i>Epacris microphylla</i> and <i>Caustis flexuosa</i> . | No |
| <i>Lepidosperma evansianum</i> | - | V | - | Currently known from 3 locations (at Blackheath and Wentworth Falls). All known sites occur within Blue Mountains National Park, although they are near the boundary of the reserve. It grows on wet sandstone cliff faces in the Blue Mountains in the central tablelands of New South Wales. | No |
| <i>Leionema sympetalum</i> | V | V | 2VC- | Restricted to a small area within Wollemi National Park, east of Rylstone on the Central Tablelands. Has only ever been recorded at four sites. All known sites are in the Rylstone Local Government Area. May also occur at previously unrecorded locations. Restricted to exposed rocky sandstone formations known as pagodas. The species occurs in dry sclerophyll forest and probably also occurs in open or closed heathland communities. | No |
| <i>Lepidium hyssopifolium</i> | E | E | 3ECi+ | There is a population consisting of 6 plants near Bathurst, a population near Bungendore and Crookwell both on the Southern Tablelands. The species was also recorded near Armidale in 1945 and 1958 however it is not known whether it remains in this areas. A specimen collected in the Cooma area about 100 years ago may also be Aromatic Peppercreese. The species occurs in a variety of habitats including woodland with a grassy understorey and grassland. | Yes |
| <i>Melaleuca deanei</i> | V | V | 3RC- | Deane's Paperbark occurs in two distinct areas, in the Ku-ring-gai, Berowra, Holsworthy and Wedderburn areas, and there are also more isolated occurrences at Springwood, Wollemi National Park, Yalwal and the Central Coast areas. The species grows in heath on sandstone | No |
| <i>Melaleuca sp. 'Megalong Valley'</i> | - | V | - | Known only from a small section of the eastern Megalong Valley in the western Blue Mountains. Occurs in shrubby swamp habitat, in closed scrub dominated by <i>Leptospermum</i> spp., including <i>L. morrisonii</i> , <i>L. juniperinum</i> and <i>L. obovatum</i> with occasional emergent <i>Melaleuca linearifolia</i> and <i>Eucalyptus camphora</i> . | No |
| <i>Olearia cordata</i> | V | V | 2VCi | A NSW endemic with a scattered distribution generally restricted to the south-western Hunter Plateau, eastern Colo Plateau, and the far north-west of the Hornsby Plateau near Wisemans Ferry east of Maroota. Most known populations occur within conservation reserves (Wollemi National Park, Yengo National Park and Wisemans Ferry Historic Site). Grows in dry open sclerophyll forest and open shrubland, on sandstone ridges. | Yes |
| <i>Persoonia acerosa</i> | V | V | 2VC- | The Needle Geebung has been recorded only on the central coast and in the Blue Mountains, from Mt Tomah in the north to as far south as Hill Top where it is now believed to be extinct. Mainly in the Katoomba, Wentworth Falls, Springwood area. occurs in dry sclerophyll forest, scrubby low-woodland and heath on low fertility soils. | Marginal |
| <i>Persoonia hindii</i> | - | E | 2V | Restricted to the Newnes Plateau in the Blue Mountains, north of Lithgow. Was only discovered in 1989 and all known locations occur within Newnes State Forest. Occurs in dry sclerophyll forests and woodlands on sandy soils. | Yes |
| <i>Persoonia hirsuta</i> | E | E | 3KCi | The Hairy Geebung has been recorded in the Sydney coastal area, the Blue Mountains area and the Southern Highlands. Found in sandy soils in dry sclerophyll open forest, woodland and heath on sandstone. | Yes |
| <i>Persoonia marginata</i> | V | V | 2V | Known from only four disjunct locations on the Central Tablelands and Central Coast. Core of the species distribution is within Clandulla State Forest, west of Kandons. Disjunct populations occur; to the north at Dingo Creek and Mount Dangar within the Wollemi and Goulburn River National Parks; to the south within Ben Bullen State Forest, south-east of Capertee; and to the south-east at Devils Hole, north of Colo Heights within Parr State Recreation Area. Grows in dry sclerophyll forest and woodland communities on sandstone. | Yes |
| <i>Pherosphaera fitzgeraldii</i> | E | E | 2ECi | All currently-known populations occur in the upper Blue Mountains between Wentworth Falls and Katoomba, a range of nine kilometres. Pre-1950 records occur at Katoomba | No |

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| Threatened Flora | Conservation Status | | | Distribution and Habitat Requirements* | Suitable Habitat in Study Area |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-----|-------|--|--------------------------------|
| | Cwlth | NSW | RoTAP | | |
| | | | | Falls, Leura Falls and Bonnie Doon Falls. All sites fall within the Blue Mountains local government area. Found within the spray zone or associated drip lines and seepage areas of waterfalls on steep, sandstone cliffs and ledges, at altitudes between 680 and 1000 metres above sea level. The sites face south-east to south-west, and being on near-vertical to vertical slopes or under overhangs, are heavily shaded. The degree of shading from other plants varies from none on exposed cliffs and ledges to up to 70% from nearby rainforest plants on larger, lower ledges and overhang caves. | |
| <i>Prasophyllum fuscum</i> | V | V | 2V | The type specimen is from "moist meadows towards the Georges River" in the Sydney area. The species is likely to be extinct from this area. Harden (1993) states that it is confined to the Blue Mountains area. However, some authorities believe <i>Prasophyllum</i> species from this area are not <i>P. fuscum</i> , but an undescribed species. In addition, some authorities believe it is identical to <i>P. uroglossum</i> which occurs in the Wingecarribee area. Grows in moist heath, often along seepage lines. | No |
| <i>Prostanthera cryptandroides</i> | V | V | - | Occurs in restricted areas but over a fairly broad range from the Lithgow and Sandy Hollow Districts into the Border Rivers/Gwydir Catchment and up into Queensland. Occurs in the Wollemi National Park and is likely to also occur within the Goulburn River National Park. At Glen Davis, occurs in open forest dominated by <i>Eucalyptus fibrosa</i> . Other eucalypt species may be present as sub-dominants. In the Denman-Gungal and Widden-Baerami Valley areas, occurs on rocky ridgelines on Narrabeen Group Sandstones in association with a range of communities. Associated communities include: Narrabeen Rocky Heath, Narrabeen Acacia Woodland, Narrabeen Exposed Woodland; Open Heath of <i>Calytrix tetragona</i> , <i>Leptospermum parviflorum</i> , <i>Isopogon dawsonii</i> ; and Open Scrubland of <i>Eucalyptus dwyeri</i> , <i>Baeckea densifolia</i> , <i>Dillwynia floribunda</i> , <i>Aotus ericoides</i> and <i>Hemigenia cuneifolia</i> . | No |
| <i>Prostanthera stricta</i> | V | V | 2V | Highly restricted, known only from Mt. Vincent and Genowlan Mountain in the Central Tablelands. occurs in the transition zone between fertile basalt caps and infertile sandstones. This area is often characterised by steep rocky sideslopes, cliff lines, sandstone platforms or gentle slopes with exposed sandstone outcrops. Vegetation ranges from Tall Forest to Open Forest to Woodlands. Often a dominant undershrub at Mount Vincent, in heath/scrub communities along cliff edges and sandstone outcroppings, downslope of Tall Open-Open Forest consisting of combinations of <i>Eucalyptus blaxlandii</i> , <i>E. viminalis</i> , <i>E. sparsifolia</i> , <i>E. cannonii</i> and <i>E. punctata</i> . Forms extensive colonies at Genowlan Mountain in Open-forest/Woodlands of <i>Eucalyptus sparsifolia</i> , <i>E. cannonii</i> , <i>E. polyanthemos</i> , <i>E. rossii</i> and <i>E. mannifera</i> . Also extends into heath/scrub and Open-forest/heath communities in this locality. | Yes |
| <i>Pultenaea glabra</i> | V | V | 3VCa | Restricted to the higher Blue Mountains and has been recorded from the Katoomba-Hazelbrook and Mount Victoria areas, with unconfirmed sightings in the Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine areas. All known populations occur within the Blue Mountains Local Government Area. Grows in swamp margins, hillslopes, gullies and creekbanks and occurs within dry sclerophyll forest and tall damp heath on sandstone. | Yes |
| <i>Solanum celatum</i> | - | E | - | Restricted to an area from Wollongong to just south of Nowra, and west to Bungonia. Majority of records are prior to 1960 and the majority of populations are likely to have been lost to clearing. Grows in rainforest clearings, or in wet sclerophyll forests. | No |
| <i>Stemmacantha australis</i> | - | PE | 3V | Presumed Extinct. Usually grows on heavy soils; north from the Jenolan Caves area. | No |
| <i>Trachymene saniculifolia</i> | E | E | - | Occurs along the banks of the Boyd River in the Kanangra Boyd National Park, approximately 200 km west of Sydney. Restricted to flat or gently sloping ground in the riparian zone of Boyd River. At one site, the species is distributed along a tea-tree (<i>Leptospermum</i> sp.) thicket that borders the banks of the river within a eucalypt woodland. At another site, individuals occur upon a gravel patch situated beside the river. | No |
| <i>Xanthosia scopulicola</i> | - | V | - | Known only from scattered locations between Kings Tableland (Wentworth Falls) and Boars Head rock (west of Katoomba) in the Blue Mountains. Most populations are within Blue Mountains National Park, though only near the boundary of the reserve. Grows in cracks and crevices of sandstone cliff faces or on rocky outcrops above the cliffs. | No |

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| Threatened Flora | Conservation Status | | | Distribution and Habitat Requirements* | Suitable Habitat in Study Area |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| | Cwlth | NSW | RoTAP | | |
| <i>Zieria citriodora</i> | V | E | - | The species is known from two sites in NSW - Numerella and Kybean Trig - east of Cooma. The species is also very rare in Victoria. Lemon Zieria grows in low woodland of <i>Eucalyptus mannifera</i> - <i>E. macrorhyncha</i> - <i>E. dives</i> with a shrub understorey . | Yes |
| <i>Zieria covenyi</i> | | E | | Has been recorded from only one location, Narrow Neck Peninsula within Blue Mountains National Park, south-west of Katoomba in the Central Blue Mountains. Grows occurs in open sclerophyll forest dominated by <i>Eucalyptus sieberi</i> . The species occurs on gentle east and south-facing slopes and on ridges in shallow sandy soil. | No |
| <i>Zieria involucrata</i> | V | E | 2VCa | Has a disjunct distribution north and west of Sydney, in the Baulkham Hills, Hawkesbury, Hornsby and Blue Mountains LGAs. Recent records for the species come from 22 populations in the catchments of the Macdonald, Colo and Hawkesbury Rivers—between Melon Creek and Mogo Creek in the north to Little Cattai Creek and Wheeny Creek in the south, and from a single population in the upper Blue Mountains north of Katoomba. Occurs primarily on Hawkesbury sandstone. Also occurs on Narrabeen Group sandstone and on Quaternary alluvium. Found primarily in sheltered forests on mid- to lower slopes and valleys, such as in or adjacent to gullies which support sheltered forest, however some populations extend upslope into drier vegetation. Also known from at least two atypical ridgetop locations. The canopy typically includes <i>Syncarpia glomulifera subsp. glomulifera</i> , <i>Angophora costata</i> , <i>Eucalyptus agglomerata</i> and <i>Allocasuarina torulosa</i> . | No |
| <i>Zieria murphyi</i> | V | V | 2VC- | Velvet Zieria is found in the Blue Mountains at Mt Tomah and on the southern tablelands where it has been recorded in Morton National Park in the Bundanoon area. The Velvet Zieria is found in gullies in dry sclerophyll forest with sandy soil. | Yes |

RoTAP Codes

2 = geographic Range in Australia less than 100km
 3 = geographic Range in Australia greater than 100km
 V = Vulnerable – at risk over longer period (20-50years)
 E = Endangered – at risk within 10-20 years.
 R = Rare – uncommon plants with no current threats
 C = Reserved
 a = 1000 plants or more know from conservation reserves
 i = less than 100 plants in conservation reserves
 - = reserved population size not accurately known

SUMMARY

Total species assessed: 51
 Marginal habitat attributes present: 6
 Most habitat attributes present: 17
 No or very little habitat attributes present: 28

EPBC Act and TSC Act Codes

E = Endangered
 V = Vulnerable

* Distribution and habitat requirement information adapted from the Department of Environment and Conservation Threatened Species Website (http://www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au/tsprofile/browse_allspecies.aspx)



Appendix B Flora Species List

| Classification/ Scientific name | Recent Synonyms | Common Name | |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| Ferns | | | |
| ADIANTACEAE | | | |
| <i>Cheilanthes sieberi</i> subsp. <i>sieberi</i> | | Slender Cloak-fern | |
| DENNSTAEDTIACEAE | | | |
| <i>Pteridium esculentum</i> | | Bracken | |
| Conifers | | | |
| PINACEAE | | | |
| <i>Pinus radiata</i> | | Monterey Pine | i |
| Flowering Plants - Dicotyledons | | | |
| APIACEAE | | | |
| <i>Daucus glochidiatus</i> | | | |
| <i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i> | | Stinking Pennywort | |
| <i>Hydrocotyle tripartita</i> | | Tre-foil Pennywort | |
| <i>Platysace ericoides</i> | | Heathe Platysace | |
| ASTERACEAE | | | |
| <i>Bracyscome spathulata</i> | | | |
| <i>Cassinia aculeata</i> | | Dollybush | |
| <i>Cassinia arcuata</i> | | Sifton Bush | |
| <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> | | Scotch Thistle | i |
| <i>Helichrysum scorpioides</i> | | Button Everlasting | |
| <i>Hypochoeris radicata</i> | | Flatweed | i |
| BORAGINACEAE | | | |
| <i>Cynoglossum australe</i> | | | |
| <i>Echium plantagineum</i> | | Pattersons Curse | i |
| CARYOPHYLLACEAE | | | |
| <i>Stellaria pungens</i> | | Prickly Starwort | |
| CLUSIACEAE | | | |
| <i>Hypericum gramineum</i> | | Narrow-leaf St. Johns Wort | |
| <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> | | St. Johns Wort | i |
| CONVOLVULACEAE | | | |
| <i>Dichondra repens</i> | | Kidney Weed | |
| DILLENIACEAE | | | |
| <i>Hibbertia obtusifolia</i> | | Blunt-leaf Guinea-flower | |
| ERICACEAE | | | |
| <i>Astroloma humifusum</i> | | Prickly Pine Heath | |
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| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i> | Daphne Heath |
| <i>Leucopogon pillifer</i> | Thready Beard heath |
| <i>Leucopogon virgatus</i> | Common Beard-heath |
| <i>Lissanthe strigosa</i> | Peach Heath |
| <i>Monotoca scoparia</i> | Prickly Broom-heath |
| EUPHORBIACEAE | |
| <i>Amperea xiphoclada</i> | Broom Spurge |
| FABACEAE | |
| FABOIDEAE | |
| <i>Bossiaea buxifolia</i> | |
| <i>Daviesia leptophylla</i> | |
| <i>Desmodium varians</i> | Slender Tick-trefoil |
| <i>Dillwynia phyllicoides</i> | |
| <i>Glycine clandestina</i> agg. | Twining Glycine |
| <i>Gompholobium minus</i> | Dwarf Wedge-pea |
| <i>Hovea heterophylla</i> | |
| <i>Hovea linearis</i> | Narrow-leaf Hovea |
| <i>Indigofera australis</i> | Native Indigo |
| <i>Mirbelia platylobioides</i> | |
| <i>Podolobium ilicifolium</i> | <i>Oxylobium ilicifolium</i> Prickly Shaggy-pea |
| <i>Pultenaea foliolosa</i> | |
| <i>Ulex europeaus</i> | Gorse |
| <i>Vicia spp.</i> | Vetch |
| MIMOSOIDEAE | |
| <i>Acacia buxifolia</i> | Box-leaf Wattle |
| <i>Acacia cultriformis</i> | Knife-leaved Wattle |
| <i>Acacia dealbata</i> subsp. <i>dealbata</i> | Silver Wattle |
| <i>Acacia gunnii</i> | Ploughshare Wattle |
| <i>Acacia penninervis</i> | Hickory |
| <i>Acacia terminalis</i> | Sunshine Wattle |
| <i>Acacia ulicifolia</i> | Prickly Moses |
| GERANIACEAE | |
| <i>Geranium solanderi</i> var. <i>solanderi</i> | Native Cranesbill |
| GOODENIACEAE | |
| <i>Goodenia paniculata</i> | Panicled Goodenia |
| HALORAGACEAE | |
| <i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i> | Poverty Raspwort |
| <i>Gonocarpus teuroides</i> | Raspwort |
| LAMIACEAE | |
| <i>Ajuga australis</i> ? | Austral Bugle |
| LORANTHACEAE | |

SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ



| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Amyena miquelii</i> | | Drizzling Mistletoe | |
| MYRTACEAE | | | |
| EUCALYPTS | | | |
| <i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i> | | Apple Box | |
| <i>Eucalyptus cannonii</i> | | Capertee Stringybark | t |
| <i>Eucalyptus dives</i> | | Broad-leaved Peppermint | |
| <i>Eucalyptus eugenoides</i> | <i>Eucalyptus nigra</i> | Thin-leaved Stringybark | |
| <i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i> | | Red Stringybark | |
| <i>Eucalyptus mannifera</i> | | Brittle Gum | |
| <i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i> | | Snow Gum | |
| <i>Eucalyptus rossii</i> | | Tableland Scribbly Gum | |
| <i>Eucalyptus rubida</i> subsp. <i>rubida</i> | | Candlebark | |
| <i>Eucalyptus sieberi</i> | | Silvertop Ash | |
| <i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> | | Ribbon Gum | |
| PITTOSPORACEAE | | | |
| <i>Billardiera scandens</i> | | Apple-berry | |
| <i>Bursaria longisepala</i> var. <i>pilosa</i> | | | |
| PLANTAGINACEAE | | | |
| <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> | | Plantain | i |
| <i>Plantago varia</i> | | | |
| PROTEACEAE | | | |
| <i>Persoonia linearis</i> | | Narrow-leaf Geebung | |
| ROSACEAE | | | |
| <i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i> | | Bidgy-widgy | |
| <i>Rosa rubiginosa</i> | | Sweet Briar | i |
| <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. | | Blackberry | i |
| RUBIACEAE | | | |
| <i>Galium gaudichaudii</i> | | | |
| <i>Galium propinquum</i> | | Maori Bedstraw | |
| RUTACEAE | | | |
| <i>Boronia microphylla</i> | | Small-leaf Boronia | |
| SALICACEAE | | | |
| <i>Salix babylonica</i> | | Weeping Willow | i |
| SANTALACEAE | | | |
| <i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i> | | Cherry Ballart | |
| <i>Leptomeria acida</i> | | Native Current | |
| SCROPHULARIACEAE | | | |
| <i>Limosella australis</i> | | Austalian Mudwort | |
| <i>Veronica calycina</i> | | Common Speedwell | |
| <i>Veronica pleblia</i> | | Trailing Speedwell | |
| STYLIDIACEAE | | | |

SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ



| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Stylidium graminifolium</i> | | Grass-leaf Trigger Plant | |
| VIOLACEAE | | | |
| <i>Viola betonicifolia</i> | | Showy Violet | |
| Flowering Plants - Monocotyledons | | | |
| CYPERACEAE | | | |
| <i>Carex appressa</i> | | Tall Sedge | |
| IRIDACEAE | | | |
| <i>Patersonia glabrata</i> | | Cauline-leaf Purple-flag | |
| <i>Patersonia sericea</i> var. <i>sericea</i> | | Basal-leaf Purple-flag | |
| JUNCACEAE | | | |
| <i>Juncus cognatus</i> | | Rush | |
| <i>Juncus usitatus</i> | | Common Rush | |
| LOMANDRACEAE | | | |
| <i>Lomandra glauca</i> subsp. <i>glauca</i> | | Glaucous Mat-rush | |
| <i>Lomandra filiformis</i> subsp. <i>filiformis</i> | | Wattle Mat-rush | |
| <i>Lomandra longifolia</i> subsp. <i>longifolia</i> | | Spiny Mat-rush | |
| <i>Lomandra multiflora</i> subsp. <i>multiflora</i> | | Many-flowered Mat-rush | |
| PHORMIACEAE | | | |
| <i>Dianella revoluta</i> var. <i>revoluta</i> | | Black-anther Flax Lily | |
| POACEAE | | | |
| <i>Aristida ramosa</i> | | Three-awned Spear Grass | |
| <i>Austrostipa pubescens</i> | <i>Stipa pubescens</i> | Tall Spear Grass | |
| <i>Briza maxima</i> | | Quaking Grass | i |
| <i>Cynosurus echinatus</i> | | Crested Dogstail | i |
| <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> | | Cocksfoot | i |
| <i>Echinopogon caespitosus</i> | | Hedgehog Grass | |
| <i>Echinopogon ovatus</i> | | Hedgehog Grass | |
| <i>Eragrostis leptostachya</i> | | Paddock Lovegrass | |
| <i>Joycea pallida</i> | <i>Danthonia pallida</i> | Red-anthered Wallaby Grass | |
| <i>Panicum effusum</i> | | Hairy Panic | |
| <i>Phalaris aquatica</i> | | Canary Grass | i |
| <i>Phalaris minor</i> | | Lesser Canary Grass | i |
| <i>Poa</i> spp. | | Snow Grass | |
| <i>Poa siebriana</i> | | Snowgrass | |
| <i>Themeda australis</i> | <i>Themeda triandra</i> | Kangaroo Grass | |
| TOTALS | | | |
| <i>Total Flora Species</i> | | 109 | |
| <i>Total Number of Families</i> | | 36 | |
| <i>Total Monocotyledons</i> | | 25 | |

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| | |
|--|-----------|
| <i>Total Dicotyledons</i> | <i>81</i> |
| <i>Total Fern Species</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>Total Conifer & Cycad Species</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>Total Exotic Species</i> | <i>16</i> |
| <i>Total Threatened Species</i> | <i>1</i> |

ABBREVIATIONS:

- i = introduced (i.e. not indigenous to Australia)
- n = native Australian species not considered to be indigenous to the site
- c = cultivated (i.e. planted on the site)
- t = listed as a threatened species under State and/or Commonwealth legislation
- spp. = several species of the one genus (sometimes occurring as a hybrid swarm)
- sp. = unidentified species⁴
- sp. aff. = unidentified species with characteristics similar to the indicated species or genus³
- ? = unconfirmed species⁴
- var. = variety
- subsp. = subspecies
- cv. = cultivar (i.e. a anthropogenic form of the species)
- agg. = an aggregate of several yet to be defined species

NOTES:

1. Recent 'synonyms' include misapplied names.
2. A sample flora assemblage obtained from a short term survey, such as the present one, cannot be considered to be comprehensive, but rather indicative of the actual flora assemblage. It can take many years of flora surveys to record all of the plant species occurring within any area, especially species that are only apparent in some seasons.
4. Not all species can be accurately identified in a 'snapshot' survey due to absence of flowering or fruiting material, etc.

SCIENTIFIC NAMES & AUTHORITIES:

Scientific names & families are those used in the *Flora of New South Wales* as maintained by the Royal Botanic Gardens

(<http://plantnet.rbgsyd.gov.au>).

Orders and higher taxa are based on Angiosperm Phylogeny Group (2003).

For sake of simplicity, scientific names in this list do not include authorities. These can be found in the *Flora of New South Wales*.



Appendix C Fauna Species List

NOTES ON SYMBOLS USED IN THE TABLE

HABITATS

- 1 Open Forest
2 Riparian / Creek
3 Modified Grass / Paddock

OBSERVATION TYPE

- O Observed
W Heard call
P Scat
E Nest/roost/burrow
T Trapped
BC Bat Call (Recorded)

| FAMILY/Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Obs Type |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|----------|
| MAMMALS | | | |
| DASYURIDAE | | | |
| <i>Antechinus stuartii</i> | Brown Antechinus | 1 | T |
| VOMBATIDAE | | | |
| <i>Vombatus ursinus</i> | Common Wombat | 1,2,3 | O / E |
| PETAURIDAE | | | |
| <i>Petaurus breviceps</i> | Sugar Glider | 1 | O |
| PSEUDOCHEIRIDAE | | | |
| <i>Pseudocheirus peregrinus</i> | Common Ringtail Possum | 1 | O |
| PHALANGERIDAE | | | |
| <i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i> | Common Brushtail Possum | 1 | O |
| MACROPODIDAE | | | |
| <i>Macropus giganteus</i> | Eastern Grey Kangaroo | 1 | O / P |
| RHINOLOPHIDAE | | | |
| <i>Rhinolophus megaphyllus</i> | Eastern Horseshoe Bat | 1 | BC |
| VESPERTILIONIDAE | | | |
| <i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i> | Large Bent-wing Bat | 1 | BC |
| <i>Nyctophilus gouldi</i> | Gould's Long-eared Bat | 1 | T |
| <i>Chalinolobus gouldii</i> | Gould's Wattled Bat | 1 | BC |
| <i>Chalinolobus morio</i> | Chocolate Wattled Bat | 1 | BC |
| <i>Vespadelus darlingtoni</i> | Large Forest Bat | 1 | T, BC |
| <i>Vespadelus vulturnus</i> | Little Forest Bat | 1 | BC |
| AMPHIBIA | | | |
| MYOBATRACHIDAE | | | |
| <i>Crinia signifera</i> | Common Eastern Froglet | 2 | W |
| HYLIDAE | | | |
| <i>Litoria verreauxii</i> | Verreaux's Tree Frog | 2 | W |
| AVES | | | |
| CHARADRIIDAE | | | |
| <i>Vanellus miles</i> | Masked Lapwing | 3 | O, W |
| CACATUIDAE | | | |
| <i>Calyptorhynchus funereus</i> | Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo | 1 | O, W |
| <i>Cacatua roseicapilla</i> | Galah | 1,3 | O |
| PSITTACIDAE | | | |
| <i>Platycercus elegans</i> | Crimson Rosella | 1 | O |
| CUCULIDAE | | | |

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| FAMILY/Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Obs Type |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Cacomantis flabelliformis</i> | Fan-tailed Cuckoo | 1 | O |
| HALCYONIDAE | | | |
| <i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i> | Laughing Kookaburra | 1 | O |
| CLIMACTERIDAE | | | |
| <i>Cormobates erythrops</i> | Red-browed Treecreeper | 1 | O |
| <i>Cormobates leucophaeus</i> | White-throated Treecreeper | 1 | O, W |
| MALURIDAE | | | |
| <i>Malurus cyaneus</i> | Superb Fairy-wren | 1, 2 | O |
| PARDALOTIDAE | | | |
| <i>Pardalotus punctatus</i> | Spotted Pardalote | 1 | W |
| <i>Pardalotus striatus</i> | Striated Pardalote | 1 | W |
| <i>Acanthiza lineata</i> | Striated Thornbill | 1 | O |
| <i>Acanthiza reguloides</i> | Buff-rumped Thornbill | 1 | O |
| MELIPHAGIDAE | | | |
| <i>Anthochaera carunculata</i> | Red Wattlebird | 1 | O |
| <i>Philemon corniculatus</i> | Noisy Friarbird | 1 | O |
| <i>Lichenostomus chrysops</i> | Yellow-faced Honeyeater | 1 | O |
| <i>Lichenostomus leucotis</i> | White-eared Honeyeater | 1 | O |
| <i>Melithreptus brevirostris</i> | Brown-headed Honeyeater | 1 | O |
| <i>Melithreptus lunatus</i> | White-naped Honeyeater | 1 | O |
| PETROICIDAE | | | |
| <i>Eopsaltria australis</i> | Eastern Yellow Robin | 1 | O |
| <i>Petroica multicolor</i> | Scarlet Robin | 1 | O |
| PACHYCEPHALIDAE | | | |
| <i>Colluricincla harmonica</i> | Grey Shrike-thrush | 1 | O |
| DICRURIDAE | | | |
| <i>Myiagra rubecula</i> | Leaden Flycatcher | 1 | O |
| <i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i> | Grey Fantail | 1 | O |
| CAMPEPHAGIDAE | | | |
| <i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i> | Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike | 1 | O |
| ARTAMIDAE | | | |
| <i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i> | Australian Magpie | 1, 2, 3 | O |
| <i>Strepera graculina</i> | Pied Currawong | 1 | O |
| CORVIDAE | | | |
| <i>Corvus coronoides</i> | Australian Raven | 1 | O |
| CORCORACIDAE | | | |
| <i>Corcorax melanorhamphos</i> | White-winged Cough | 1 | O |



Appendix D – Site Photographs



AEP



**Above: Looking East at Ch 1250m.
Below: Location of bridge at approx. Ch 1400m.**





AEP



**Above: Looking east at Ch 1600m.
Below: Location of bridge at approx. Ch 1800m.**





Above: Looking west to location of Dump Station.

Below: Looking east to forested area at location of proposed cutting from Ch 2050m.





AEP



**Above: Looking east in forested area at Ch 2300m.
Below: Looking south-east in forested area at Ch 2400m.**





AEP



**Above: Location of bridge at Ch 2550m.
Below: Looking west at approx. Ch 450m.**





Appendix E – Author CVs

CRAIG ANDERSON

Curriculum Vitae

An environmental professional with over 20 years experience providing high level ecological services, advice, strategic direction and management for sectors such as land development, infrastructure, conservation, government, legal, mining & quarrying.

Personal Details

Full Name: Craig John Anderson
Date of Birth: 5 November 1971
Postal Address: PO Box 210, ADAMSTOWN NSW 2289
Email: craig@andersonep.com.au
Phone Mobile: 0418 681 581

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Assessment & Management) University of Newcastle, New South Wales (1994).
- Completing a Graduate Diploma in Archaeological Heritage through University of New England (one subject to complete).

Licencing

- NSW Scientific Investigation Licence SL101313
- NSW Animal Research Authority
- NSW Accredited Biobanking Assessor No. 150
- NSW Biodiversity Accredited Assessor BAAS: 17002

Further Education & Training (select summary)

- Biobank and Biocertification Assessors Training Course / BAAS Fast-track Accreditation Course
- Animal Ethics Training (University of Newcastle / NSW DPI)
- RFS / PIA NSW Consulting Planners Bushfire Training
- Bush Regeneration Training
- OH&S Induction Training / Green Card
- NSW Driver's Licence: Car (Class "C"). Experienced 4WD operator.
- Occupational Health & Safety Training, including legal compliance requirements of Officers (Standard 11 & S1,S2,S3).
- + various other vocational environmental and computer based training sessions.

Fields of Special Competence

- Production and peer review of detailed environmental impact assessment documentation. Author and / or Manager of hundreds of ecological / environmental / bushfire / historical heritage / archaeological heritage / strategic & statutory planning documents over nearly 25 years of environmental work
- Biobanking & Biodiversity Offset Commissions – initial scoping and feasibility, BAM impact assessments and BDAR reporting, biobank calculations, Stewardship site creation
- Detailed ecological field survey, covering all aspects of terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna
- Expert witness legal representation
- Ecological Management Planning, ranging from individual species to full ecosystem management
- Project Management and delivery of complex projects, including projects worth more than \$100M
- Project Management (including areas outside environmental sphere)
- Environmental Due Diligence processes for both asset procurement and divestment
- Management and co-ordination of teams producing EIA documentation
- Identification of strategic approval pathways and key project risk evaluation and management
- Extensive experience in conflict resolution, impact mediation and outcome negotiation on large scale and contentious projects
- Environmental peer review and ecological compliance auditing
- Project advocacy and representation with all levels of stakeholders
- Detailed knowledge of land and infrastructure development processes

Professional Affiliations / Memberships (past / present)

- Hunter Bird Observers Club (HBOC). Current member of Records Appraisal Committee, previous elected Committee Member.
- Ecological Consultants Association of NSW (ECA). Current member. Involved in the initial formulation of the Association. Served two terms as an elected Councillor.
- Society for Growing Australian Plants (SGAP).
- Hunter Coal Environment Group (HCEG).
- NSW Minerals Council (NSWMC), including Executive Committee Meetings representation.
- Queensland Resources Council (QRC).
- Bird Observers Club of Australia (BOCA).
- Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA).
- Planning Institute of Australia (PIA).
- Australasian Bat Society (ABS).
- Frog and Tadpole Study Group (FATS).

- Society of Frogs and Reptiles (SOFAR).
- Hunter Heritage Network (HHN).

Employment History

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| 2013-present | Director / Principal Consultant Anderson Environment & Planning, Environment & Planning Consultants, Newcastle |
| 2012-present | Director Habitat Indoor / Outdoor Living, Furniture, Homewares & Design, Newcastle |
| 2010-2012 | General Manager Sustainable Development Cockatoo Coal Ltd, Coal Mining Company, Newcastle / Sydney / Brisbane |
| 2009 – 2010 | Independent Environmental Expert Donaldson Conservation Trust |
| 2010 | Principal - Environment RPS, Development Consultants, Newcastle |
| 2006 – 2009 | Manager Environment Group RPS HSO, Development Consultants, Newcastle (Company sold to UK listed Company RPS in Nov 2006) |
| 2001 – 2006 | Manager Environment Group / Director Harper Somers O’Sullivan, Development Consultants, Newcastle. (Company Director & shareholder as of July 2003) |
| 2000 – 2001 | Senior Ecologist & NSW Projects Manager Wildthing Environmental Consultants, Salt Ash. |
| 1996 – 1999 | Ecologist Wildthing Environmental Consultants, Salt Ash. |
| 1995 – 1996 | Ecologist / Environmental Officer Pulver Cooper & Blackley, Engineers & Surveyors, Newcastle. |
| 1995 | Environmental Officer / Cadastral Survey Assistant Kel Nagle Cooper & Associates, Golf Course Design & Construction Newcastle. |

IAN BENSON

Curriculum Vitae

Ian works with AEP in the role of ecologist. He is an experienced bird watcher and a regular participant in wader surveys. Ian has previously had a successful career as a project manager with a local geotechnical engineering firm. His background in project management and soil sciences combined with his ecological knowledge is utilised in a diverse array of applications in his current role.

Qualifications

- Graduate Diploma in Science (Ecology) University of New England (2014)
- Bachelor Engineering (Civil) University of Newcastle (2008)

Further Education & Training (select summary)

- NSW Class C Driver's Licence. Experienced 4WD operator.
- Occupational Health & Safety Training
- Rail Industry Worker
- ARTC Safety Induction for Contractors (NSW)
- ARTC Hunter Bulk Terminal Induction

Fields of Special Competence

- Ecological field survey, covering terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna
- Highly proficient at avifauna surveys, including challenging wetland and shorebird environs
- Project Management
- Soil science

Professional Affiliations / Memberships (past / present)

- Hunter Bird Observers Club (HBOC).
- Graduate Member of The Institution of Engineers Australia in the Civil College

Relevant Employment History

2016-present Ecologist

Anderson Environment & Planning, Newcastle

Currently employed by Anderson Environment & Planning to assist in the provision of consulting services to land, property, mining industry, legal and government sectors. Covering ecological, project management, environmental, planning services, advices, strategy and representation.

2012-2016 Project Manager

Douglas Partners, Newcastle

As a project manager with Douglas Partners I was responsible for proposal and tender preparation, planning, implementation and reporting of geotechnical and geo-environmental investigations for a broad range of projects including site classification, foundations, pavements, bridges and slope stability. I was required to liaise with clients regarding project requirements, project goals and deadlines. I was responsible for the development and implementation of Work Health and Safety Plans as well as Environmental Plans and documentation. This included the development of safe work procedures, safety inspections on site and implementing improved safety procedures with staff. I was responsible for ensuring projects were completed on time and on budget whilst meeting the clients' expectations and achieving quality assurance standards.

2008-2012 Geotechnical Engineer

Douglas Partners, Newcastle

AS a geotechnical engineer for Douglas Partners I was involved in the planning and implementation of geotechnical investigations for a wide range of development in the Hunter Valley area. I was primarily involved in site supervision of geotechnical investigations using drilling rigs for boreholes, truck mounted cone penetration testing and test pit excavations using excavators and backhoes. My role also included site inspections involving the assessment of conditions for piles, piers and shallow footings. I also undertook site walkovers for assessment of mine subsidence and slope stability.

2007-2008 Undergraduate Geotechnical Engineer

Douglas Partners, Newcastle

Whilst an undergraduate engineer with Douglas Partners I experienced a broad range of practice areas and developed a diverse range of engineering skills.

Relevant Ecological Experience

2013 - Current Bird Surveyor

Hunter Bird Observers Club

Volunteer survey work for Hunter Bird Observers Club for regular wader and water bird counts and Tomago and Koorangang Island.