

FLORA AND FAUNA GUARANTEE - SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FINAL RECOMMENDATION ON A NOMINATION FOR LISTING

Central Gippsland Plains Grassland Community

Date of receipt of the nomination: 6 April 1992  
Date of preliminary recommendation: 28 July 1992  
Date of final recommendation: 17 November 1992

File No.: 92/2234

**Validity:**

The nomination is for a valid item and the prescribed information was provided. The nominated community is accepted by the SAC as a valid community because it is adequately defined and described according to accepted practice, and it is described in such a way as to be distinguished from all other communities.

The community is dominated by *Themeda triandra* (Kangaroo Grass) and includes a range of native herbs including *Hypoxis hygrometrica* (Golden Weather-glass), *Helichrysum apiculatum* (Common Everlasting), *Tricoryne elatior* (Yellow Rush-lily) and *Pimelea humilis* (Common Rice-flower). Trees are rare, although in some places thickets of *Allocasuarina verticillata* (Drooping She-oak) occur, and saplings of *Eucalyptus tereticornis* (Forest Red Gum) and *Kunzea ericoides* (Burgan) are present.

**Eligibility for listing as a community under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee**

The nominated item satisfies at least one criterion of the set of criteria prepared and maintained under Section 11 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, and stated in Schedule 1 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Regulations 1990*.

**Evidence that criteria are satisfied:**

**Criterion 2.2** *The community is significantly prone to future threats which are likely to result in extinction.*

*Evidence:*

The rarity of the community makes it susceptible to environmental catastrophes. Remnants of the community are threatened by:

- changes in V/Line rail maintenance and changes in cemetery maintenance and use;
- stock grazing and reduction in fire frequency;
- inappropriate tree planting programs.

The majority of remnants are not fenced and are grazed by stock. The community requires burning programs to maintain its integrity. Most sites are not managed primarily for conservation purposes.

**Criterion 2.2.1** *The community is very rare in terms of the total area it covers or it has a very restricted distribution or it has been recorded from only a few localities.*

*Evidence:*

The community is extremely restricted in distribution and it is estimated that less than 20-30ha currently exist. Remnants are currently known only from small areas on the Melbourne to Bairnsdale rail-line; on the disused Heyfield - Maffra rail-line and in a few local cemeteries (e.g. Briagolong, Toongabbie and Rosedale). Degraded remnants also occur along a few roadsides east of Toongabbie.

The data presented on distribution and abundance are the result of comprehensive surveys and provide clear evidence that the community is very rare in terms of abundance and distribution.

**Background Information:**

- *Diuris punctata* (Purple Diuris) occurs within the community and has been listed on Schedule 2 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.
- Central Gippsland Plains Grassland Community appears to be derived from the original savannah woodland, present at European settlement, following tree removal and regular burning.

## Advertisement for public comment

In accordance with the requirements of Section 14 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, the preliminary recommendation was advertised for public comment for a period of at least 30 days.

The preliminary recommendation was advertised in:

- "The Age" - on 30 September 1992
- "The Bairnsdale Advertiser" - on 2 October 1992
- "The Gippsland Times" - on 29 September 1992
- Government Gazette* - on 30 September 1992

Submissions closed on 6 November 1992.

### **Further evidence provided:**

No public comments were received by the Scientific Advisory Committee.

No evidence was provided to warrant a review of the Scientific Advisory Committee's preliminary recommendation that the community is eligible for listing.

### **Documentation**

The published information and research data provided to the SAC have been assessed. To the best of their knowledge, the SAC believes that the data presented are not the subject of scientific dispute and the inferences drawn are reasonable and well supported.

## Final Recommendation of the Scientific Advisory Committee

The Scientific Advisory Committee concludes that on the evidence available the nominated item is eligible for listing in accordance with Section 11(1) of the Act because primary criteria 2.2. is satisfied.

The SAC also concludes that sub-criterion 2.2.1 has been satisfied and that no evidence exists to suggest that primary criterion 2.2 cannot be satisfied as a consequence of sub-criterion 2.2.1 being satisfied.

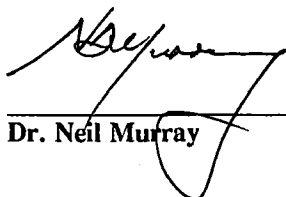
The Scientific Advisory Committee recommends that the nominated item be supported for listing on Schedule 2 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

### **Selected references:**

- Aldrick, J.M., Hook, R.A., van de Graaff, R.H.M., Nicholson, B.M., O'Beirne, D.A. and Schoknecht, N.R. (1988). *A study of the land in the catchment of the Gippsland Lakes*. Dept. of Conservation, Forest and Lands, Melbourne.
- Cheal, D.C., Lau, J.A., Robinson, R.W., Ellis, J.E. and Cameron, D.G. (in prep). *Vegetation survey and sites of botanical significance in the Melbourne Area*. Dept. of Conservation and Environment.
- Gullan, P.K., Walsh, N.G. and Forbes, S.J. (1981) *Vegetation of the Gippsland Lakes catchment*. *Muelleria* 4:333-383.
- LCC (1982) *Report on the Gippsland Lakes Hinterland area*. Land Conservation Council. Government Printer, Melbourne.
- Stuwe, J. (1986) *An assessment of the conservation status of native grasslands on the Western Plains, Victoria and sites of botanical significance*. Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research Technical Report Series No. 48. Dept. of Conservation, Forest and Lands, Melbourne.
- Stuwe, J. and Parson, R.F. (1977) *Themeda australis grasslands on the basalt plains, Victoria: Floristics and management effects*. *Australian Journal of Ecology* 2:467-476.

## Endorsement by the Convenor of the Scientific Advisory Committee

Date



Dr. Neil Murray

11 January 1993