## Introduction

Biodiversity Response Planning (BRP) is a long-term area-based planning approach to biodiversity conservation in Victoria. It is designed to strengthen alignment, engagement and participation between government, Traditional Owners, non-government agencies and the community.

DELWP Regional staff have been working with stakeholders on actions to conserve biodiversity in specific landscapes, informed by the best available science and local knowledge.

These Fact Sheets capture a point in time, reflecting data and knowledge available in 2020. They provide information for many (but not all) landscapes across Victoria, containing general information on the key values and threats in each area, as well as the priority cost-effective actions that provide the best protection of biodiversity. Fact Sheets are intended to provide useful biodiversity information for the community, non-government and government organisations during project planning and development.

Further information and the [full list of Fact Sheets](http://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/working-together-for-biodiversity) is available on the Department’s Environment website.

## Landscape description

The Eppalock landscape is 64,292ha in size, with just over half (51%) of the area is covered in native vegetation. Public land covers 27% of the area and includes a number of parcels including Longlea State Forest (SF), Knowsley SF and Crosbie Nature Conservation Reserve. Refer to the map at the end of this Fact Sheet.

This landscape has an overlap with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation RSA landscape. For more information, please refer to this Fact Sheet in the [full list of Fact Sheets](http://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/working-together-for-biodiversity).

## Cultural importance

We recognise that the entire landscape has high cultural value for Traditional Owners. Landscapes identified as having “notable” cultural importance is based on the density of recorded cultural heritage sites and knowledge shared by Traditional Owners. We also recognise that there are locations important to Traditional Owners not within these landscapes.

## Stakeholder interest

As part of the BRP process, in October 2020 stakeholders were asked to nominate focus landscapes and actions of interest. Campaspe Shire Council, City of Greater Bendigo, DELWP (Public Land), Goulburn-Murray Water, Coliban Water, and Dja Dja Wurrung all nominated Eppalock.

Possible future investment/project development in this landscape will be available to any interested stakeholders in addition to those who nominated this landscape.

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| 0Ecological values identified by Traditional Owners, partners and community within this landscape |
| Revegetation of Djandak with:   * Buwatji (grasses used for grain) * Witji (weaving grasses) * Gatjawil Matorm (tuberous plants with scented flowers) * Murnang (Yam Daisies) including Kangaroo grass, Lomandra and Dianella species, Chocolate Lily, Vanilla Lily, Bulbine Lily and Yam Daisy |
| Coliban and Campaspe Rivers |
| Wi (cultural fire) authorised and lead by Dja Dja Wurrung on Djandak (Country) |

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|  | Habitat Distribution Models identify 17 species with more than 5% of their Victorian range in this landscape | Traditional Owners, stakeholders and community groups identified the following species of interest within this landscape |
| Plant | 15 Plants; notably:   * Tan Leek-orchid (*Prasophyllum erythrocommum*), endangered with 46% of its Victorian range in area * Bendigo Spider-orchid (*Caladenia sp. aff. fragrantissima* (Central Victoria)), endangered with 45% of its Victorian range in area * Rising Star Guinea-flower (*Hibbertia humifusa subsp. humifusa*), rare with 13% of its Victorian range in area | * Ausfeld's Wattle * Buloke * Blue Burr-Daisy * Goldfields Grevillea * Sutton Grange Greenhood * Swamp Leek-orchid * Southern Swainson-pea |
| Rat | Mammals | * Brush-tailed Phascogale |
| Snake | Reptiles | * Murray River Turtle * Striped Legless Lizard * Bearded Dragon * Woodland Blind Snake * Lace Monitor |
| Sparrow | 2 Birds:   * Eastern Koel, with 7% of its Victorian range in area * Swift Parrot, endangered with 5% of its Victorian range in area | * Bush Stone-curlew * Swift Parrot * Great Egret * Freckled Duck * Blue-billed Duck * White-bellied Sea-Eagle * Grey-crowned Babbler * Speckled Warbler * Chestnut-rumped Heathwren |
| Other: |  | * Murray Cod |

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| Traditional Owners, stakeholders and community groups identified the following threats within this landscape |
| Exclusion of Dja Dja Wurrung leadership (governance) |
| Lack of enquiry and understanding of Dja Dja Wurrung customs and practice to provide an enabling and supportive environment so that Djaara can reconnect to land and reconnect stories and knowledge to place. Ask “How?” not “Why?” |
| Water quality, invasive pests such as Carp, and loss of habitat are threats to aquatic fauna within Lake Eppalock and its tributaries |
| Loss of habitat for species including Striped Legless Lizard and Grey-Crowned Babbler |
| Lack of listening, hearing and respect for Dja Dja Wurrung ability to talk to Country – not utilising Dja Dja Wurrung knowledge base tools and the bias toward western science decision support tools |
| Utilising past learnings and achievement to guide future effort – Dja Dja Wurrung participation in past and future biodiversity planning and delivery below the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) level of ‘involve’ does not support Dja Dja Wurrung aspirations |
| Dead trees (standing or fallen) have created submerged hazards for recreational users at Lake Eppalock, however they provide important habitat for many fish species |
| Impacts of a large population of Eastern Grey Kangaroos |

## Strategic Management Prospects

Strategic Management Prospects (SMP) models biodiversity values such as species habitat distribution, landscape-scale threats and highlights the most cost-effective actions for specific locations. More information about SMP is available in [NatureKit](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/naturekit).

## Additional Threats

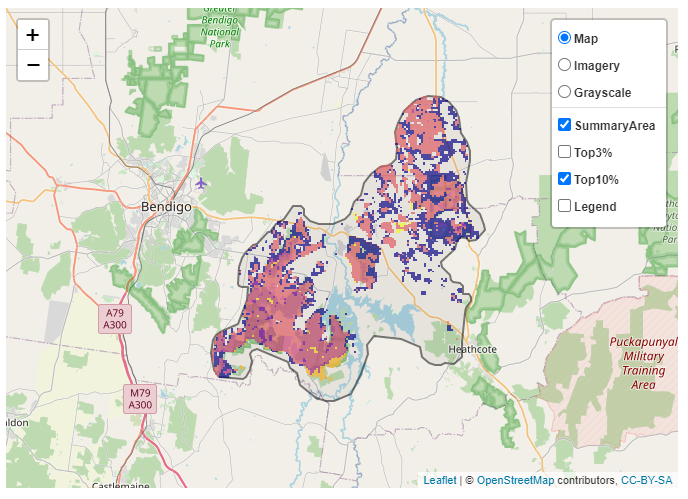
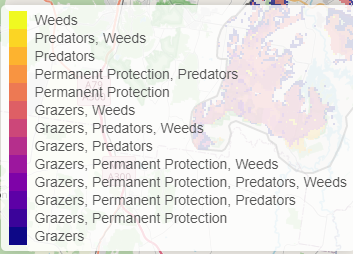
Threats identified (in addition to those modelled in SMP) through the consultation process were:

* alterations to hydrology
* land salinisation
* soil erosion
* habitat degradation due to extremes of climate and weather
* lack of regeneration in some vegetation classes
* recreational activities causing fragmentation
* loss of vegetation, and erosion
* legacy use of public land
* private land use impacting biodiversity
* inappropriate land use planning
* inappropriate fire regimes (planned burning and bushfires)

Some individual threatened species may also require targeted intervention, beyond actions to manage landscape-scale threats, to improve their prospects.

## Which landscape-scale actions are most cost-effective in this landscape?

The coloured areas indicate where the identified landscape-scale actions and locations are most cost-effective and will maximise biodiversity benefit across Victoria for multiple species.

The SMP priority actions which rank among the top 10% for cost-effectiveness of that action across Victoria for much of the landscape are in order of the top 3 actions, see map and list below:

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| Rabbit | Control rabbits 27,059ha |
| Grain | Control weeds 17,764ha |
| A picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Combined cat and fox control 7,528ha |

Of the top 10% of cost-effective actions, control rabbits provides the most cost-effective biodiversity benefits when considering all flora and fauna.

From the nomination process the following additional actions were also suggested for this landscape:

* revegetation
* culture fire and fire management

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| The most cost-effective action for flora and fauna | |
| SparrowSnakeRat | Mammals, reptiles, birds - Combined cat and fox control |
| FrogPlant | Plants, amphibians - Control rabbits |

For a further in depth look into SMP for this landscape please refer to [NatureKit](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/naturekit).

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