## Background / preamble

The *Brodribb Bemm Foothills* landscape was recognised during the 2019/20 Gippsland Biodiversity Response Planning (BRP) process as a focus area for future collaborative biodiversity action and investment.

Under the Victorian Government’s *Biodiversity 2037: Protecting Victoria’s Biodiversity* plan, the BRP process 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 to benefit biodiversity by working together to identify, promote and tackle local biodiversity needs as part of an ongoing collective process.

In 2019/20, significant impacts from the bushfires in East Gippsland and coronavirus (COVID-19) on community, biodiversity stakeholders and agencies, and the environment, resulted in planned engagement with many local stakeholders in Gippsland about BRP being postponed to a future process. In the interim, a multi-agency working group of local staff in Gippsland came together to identify a series of potential strategic priority actions across the region, as well as 13 focus landscapes. Membership of this working group for Gippsland included staff from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) coasts & marine policy and local forest, fire and biodiversity teams, East Gippsland and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authorities (EGCMA & WGCMA), Parks Victoria, Trust for Nature (TfN), the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) and the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC).

As part of this process, the Gippsland BRP working group drew upon information available from the DELWP Strategic Management Prospects (SMP) tool as well as their own local knowledge to identify key biodiversity assets, threats and potential management actions across Gippsland. A subset of this information is presented in this Fact Sheet, reflecting a point in time assessment of some of the important biodiversity needs and landscapes for focus across the region.

These BRP Fact Sheets provide useful biodiversity information for the community, non-government and government organisations during project planning and development, including guidance for stakeholders interested to contribute towards some of the strategic priorities identified in these areas to date. 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

Landscape context: 355,192ha, 96% public land, 90% native vegetation cover

The Brodribb Bemm Foothills landscape includes the tract of foothills and low mountains (to about 1200m) north of the Princes Highway between Orbost and Cann River, east of the Snowy River, west of the Cann River and south of the Monaro Tablelands. This area is virtually all public land (mix of National Park and State Forest) and includes the catchments of the Rodger, Yalmy, Brodribb and Bemm Rivers and the western catchment of the Cann River. Vegetation types include extensive areas of Lowland, Shrubby Dry and Damp Forest, Wet Forest in the upper catchments and Warm Temperate Rainforest patches in lower elevation gullies and along rivers, grading to Cool Temperate Rainforest in the upper catchments (above about 800m).

Key natural features of this landscape include the Errinundra Plateau, the Bowens, Monkey Top and Murrungowar Range. Settlements include Goongerah, Combienbar, Club Terrace and Buldah.

### Biodiversity highlights and important places:

Unbroken tract of native forest across this landscape are continuous with forested landscapes to the south, east and west. This landscape is core habitat for forest-dependent species such as rainforest flora, arboreal mammals and large forest owls, including large areas of forest dominated by old trees and some areas of old growth forest in Errinundra, however much of the landscape is also recovering from extensive bushfires over the last 20 years. Continuous forested catchments for several substantial rivers, including Rodger, Brodribb and Bemm.

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| Important vegetation communities in this landscape include: | |
| \*FFG listed | Warm Temperate Rainforest - East Gippsland Alluvial Terraces  Cool Temperate Rainforest  Mixed Forest |
| \*\*EPBC listed | Nil |

\**Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Victorian)

\*\**Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Federal)

## Cultural importance

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land across this landscape. We pay our respects to Country, and to Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices. We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria’s Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations into the 21st century and beyond in the spirit of self-determination. The Gippsland BRP project team are seeking interest from traditional owners in this area to contribute towards biodiversity planning and conservation processes, including Biodiversity Response Planning.

## Stakeholder and community interest

Local engagement for BRP in Gippsland in 2019/20 was postponed due to impacts from fire and coronavirus (COVID-19). If you would like to contribute local knowledge about this landscape in the future, find out more about BRP or add your name to the state-wide or Gippsland BRP stakeholder lists, you can find [further information](http://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/working-together-for-biodiversity) on the Department’s Environment website.

## Species summary

An analysis of available Habitat Distribution Models\* identify 545 species with more than 5% of their Victorian range falling within the *Brodribb Bemm Foothills* BRP landscape, including 72 threatened species and 17 EPBC listed species.

\*Note: While version 2.0 of the SMP model utilises HDMs for ~3,200 terrestrial species in its analysis, these models currently exclude aquatic, invertebrate, marine and non-vascular plant species. These HDMs and SMP will continue to be improved upon with ongoing input from species experts and natural resource management practitioners.

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| Species class | Species with a high proportion of their Victorian distribution in this landscape | Other notable species identified during the BRP process |
| Plant  460 plants, incl. 55 threatened species (9 EPBC) | 21 rare and threatened species with more than 50% of their Victorian range falling within this landscape, notably:   * Errinundra Plum-pine *Podocarpus aff. lawrencei (Goonmirk Rocks)* (restricted to this landscape) * Upright Pomaderris *Pomaderris virgata* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 99% of Victorian range) * Tasmanian Wax-flower *Philotheca virgata* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 79% of Victorian range) * Blackfellow’s Hemp *Androcalva rossii* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 73% of Victorian range) * Black Stem *Adiantum formosum* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 67% of Victorian range) * Blunt Sandlewood *Santalum obtusifolium* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 65% of Victorian range) * Chinese Brake *Pteris vittata* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 64% of Victorian range) * Fine Bent-grass *Deyeuxia boormanii* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 64% of Victorian range) * Long-leaf Bitter-pea *Daviesia wyattiana* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 62% of Victorian range) * Bantam Bush-pea *Pultenaea parrisiae* (EPBC listed, Vulnerable, 56% of Victorian range) * Eastern Leek-orchid *Prasophyllum sp. aff. odoratum* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 55% of Victorian range) * Cabbage Fan-palm *Livistona australis* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 54% of Victorian range) | * Slender Tree-fern *Cyathea cunninghamii* (FFG listed, vulnerable, 11% of Victorian range) |
| Rat  25 mammals, incl. 7 threatened species (5 EPBC) | Notable species include:   * Long-footed Potoroo (EPBC listed, Endangered, 46% of Victorian range) * Long-nosed Potoroo (EPBC listed, Vulnerable, 15% of Victorian range) * Eastern Horseshoe Bat (FFG listed, vulnerable, 12% of Victorian range) * Greater Glider (EPBC listed, Vulnerable, 11% of Victorian range) * Spot-tailed Quoll (EPBC listed, Endangered, 11% of Victorian range) * Southern Brown Bandicoot (EPBC listed, Endangered, 8% of Victorian range) * Common Bent-wing Bat (eastern ssp.) (FFG listed, vulnerable, 5% of Victorian range) | * None raised |
| Snake  13 reptiles, incl. 2 threatened species (0 EPBC) | Notable species include:   * Diamond Python (FFG listed, endangered, 5% of Victorian range) * Lace Monitor (FFG listed, endangered, 5% of Victorian range) | * None raised |
| Sparrow  35 birds, incl. 5 threatened species (0 EPBC) | Notable species include:   * Sooty Owl (FFG listed, vulnerable, 22% of Victorian range) * Masked Owl (FFG listed, endangered, 15% of Victorian range) * Glossy Black-Cockatoo (FFG listed, vulnerable, 13% of Victorian range) * Powerful Owl (FFG listed, vulnerable, 9% of Victorian range) * White-throated Needletail (FFG listed, vulnerable, 6% of Victorian range) | * None raised |
| Frog  12 frogs, incl. 3 threatened species (3 EPBC) | Notable species include:   * Large Brown Tree Frog (EPBC listed, Vulnerable, 57% of Victorian range) * Giant Burrowing Frog (EPBC listed, Vulnerable, 31% of Victorian range) * Green and Golden Bell Frog (EPBC listed, Vulnerable, 8% of Victorian range) | * None raised |
| Other species raised by the working group (e.g. fish, invertebrates etc):  Orbost Spiny Crayfish (FFG listed, endangered, restricted to this landscape), Arte Spiny Crayfish (restricted to this landscape), East Gippsland Galaxias (FFG listed, endangered, restricted to this landscape), McDowells Galaxias (FFG listed, critically endangered, restricted to this landscape), Cann Spiny Crayfish (restricted to this landscape) | | |

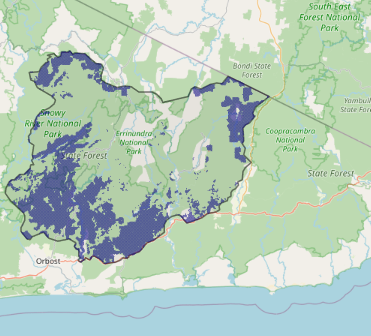
## Strategic Management Prospects

Strategic Management Prospects (SMP) models species distributions, habitat importance, landscape-scale threats, and management costs. It then compares and highlights those places with the greatest opportunities for cost-effective action state-wide. Learn more about this tool on the [SMP webpage](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/natureprint).

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

The maps and information below show those places and actions modelled by SMP to provide the best opportunities for cost-effective action to benefit biodiversity across the state. Coloured areas in the maps below indicate opportunities for highly cost-effective actions that provide significant benefits to biodiversity in those places. If undertaken across Victoria, these collective actions should provide the greatest potential benefit to biodiversity by focusing on undertaking landscape-scale actions in places where they will provide the greatest benefit for cost across all species.

**Map a)** shows actions in the top 3% cost-effectiveness areas, and **Map b)** shows actions in the top 10% cost-effective areas.

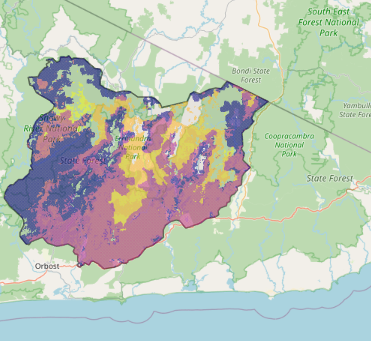


Map a) – SMP top 3% cost-effective actions

The following landscape-scale actions were ranked among the top 3% cost-effective opportunities for biodiversity action across the state by SMP:

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| Pig | Control pigs 70,627ha |
|  | Control deer 31,777ha |
|  | Control horses 5,387ha |

The following landscape-scale actions were ranked among the top 10% cost-effective opportunities for biodiversity action across the state by SMP:



Map b) – SMP top 10% cost-effective actions



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| A picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Control deer 197,843ha |
| A picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Combined fox and cat control 188,224ha |
|  | Control weeds 119,941ha |
| PigA picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Control cats 113,106ha |
| A picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Control pigs 86,867ha |
|  | Control foxes 55,682ha |

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| The most cost-effective actions for flora & fauna according to SMP | | | |
| Plant | Plants – Control deer and Combined fox and cat control (particularly cats) |  | Birds – Combined fox and cat control (particularly cats) |
| Rat | Mammals – Combined fox and cat control (particularly cats) | FrogSparrow | Amphibians – Combined fox and cat control (particularly cats) and Control deer |
| Snake | Reptiles – Combined fox and cat control (particularly cats) and Control deer |

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

## Additional threats raised by the working group

## Removing trout from headwaters with threatened galaxiid species

## Highest priority strategic actions

With consideration of the information available in SMP and local knowledge of this landscape, the Gippsland BRP working group identified the following priority actions for future collaboration and investment in this landscape:

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| The highest priority actions for the Brodribb Bemm Foothills landscape include: | |
|  | 1. Controlling deer |
| A picture containing text  Description automatically generatedA picture containing text  Description automatically generated | 1. Integrated predator control (including the continuation & expansion of the Southern Ark fox-baiting program plus cat control around key biodiversity assets) |
|  | 1. Controlling transformer weeds |
| Other key actions highlighted by the working group include: | |
|  | * Controlling pigs (particularly in the northern areas of Snowy River National Park) |
| Fish | * Removal of brown trout from headwaters containing threatened galaxias species |
| Forest scene | * Protection of riparian vegetation (including domestic stock control) |

