





Lifestyle & Opportunity



SHIRE OF CAMPASPE ROADSIDE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

This Strategy uses the data available from a 2007 assessment of the conservation value of all roadside reserves in the Shire of Campaspe.

It will result in an improved decision making process by Council when assessing works that may threaten biodiversity values, and it will lead to the protection and enhancement of the important biodiversity values in the Shire's roadside reserves. Implementing measures to avoid the chances of adverse environmental effects should be standard practice and everyone's responsibility.

This Roadside Conservation Strategy has been developed under the direction of the Shire of Campaspe.

The scope of this Strategy is the management of rural roadsides under the management of the Shire of Campaspe. It specifically excludes urban roads, roads controlled by VicRoads and forest roads controlled by the Department of Sustainability & Environment.

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Disclaimer

This publication is intended to be of assistance to all persons involved in the management of roadsides, but the Shire of Campaspe, its staff and consultants do not guarantee that this document is without flaw of any kind or that it is wholly appropriate for the particular purposes of individuals, and therefore disclaim any liability for any error, loss or other consequence that may arise from reliance on information in this publication.





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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 How to Read this Roadside Conservation Strategy

This Roadside Conservation Strategy consists of three documents targeted to particular audiences:

Document 1 – the 'Roadside Conservation Strategy'

Designed for Council management and services. The Strategy will be a reference document in the Campaspe Planning Scheme.

Document 2 – the 'Community Roadside Management Handbook'.

Designed for the general community, including landholders, fire prevention agencies and Landcare groups.

Document 3 - the 'Roadside Environmental Code of Practice Handbook'

Tailored to the requirements of road construction and maintenance contractors and workers. To be used in conjunction with the Goulburn-Broken Catchment Roadside Biodiversity Risk Management Protocols (G-BCRBRMPP, 2007) and Public Works existing processes and procedures.

1.2 Background

Prior to European settlement a diverse range of native vegetation types existed across the flat to gently undulating landscape of the Shire of Campaspe.

Most of the municipality had Grey Box, Yellow Box, Black Box and River Red Gums as the dominant species. The understorey was often diverse with shrubs, wildflowers and native grasses present. The Northern Plains Grasslands also occupied a large area of the western part of the Shire.

These Woodlands and Grasslands have been extensively cleared for agriculture and the substantial irrigation throughout the municipality has led to a significantly modified landscape contributing to almost total removal of some

native vegetation types.

Most remnants now only remain on road reserves and along the Campaspe and Goulburn River corridors. These represent the few remaining examples of ecosystems where the remnant vegetation provides fauna habitat, corridors and connections between isolated areas of bushland.

Roads primarily provide transport and access routes for people, goods and services. However they also function as reserves for native flora and fauna. Some roads, or more specifically roadsides, support high levels of biological diversity and areas of high conservation value. The implications of climate change increase the significance of these areas for biodiversity conservation.

This Strategy covers all rural roads within the Shire of Campaspe that are not under the direct control of VicRoads. Roads inside town boundaries are not included. The Strategy focuses on the management of remnant vegetation located on roadsides and recognises the opportunities to protect and enhance indigenous vegetation.

While the Strategy focuses on native vegetation it also involves identifying a range of other biodiversity 'assets' on roadsides (including habitats and threatened flora and fauna), cultural sites, wetlands and waterways.

1.3 The Value of Biodiversity in Roadsides

The depletion of native vegetation and habitats in other land tenures has accentuated the importance of roadsides for providing a range of habitats for flora and fauna, including threatened species and vegetation types.

Native vegetation and habitats on roadsides can include many of the few remaining examples in highly developed landscapes, as well as some of the higher quality examples, where there have been fewer disturbances. They often provide the only connectivity to other remnants and also the framework to support revegetation

and restoration efforts in other land tenures. In the Shire of Campaspe there are flora species known only to remain on roadsides and fauna that would otherwise not exist in some areas without roadside habitats.

1.4 Campaspe Roadside Conservation Values Assessment Map

Complementing this Strategy is the Shire of Campaspe Roadside Conservation Values Assessment Map that details the existing conservation values of roadsides throughout the Shire.

In 2007 assessments of the conservation value of all roadside reserves within the Shire of Campaspe was conducted. This data has been incorporated into the Council's Geographic Information System (GIS) for use by all departments. This data, in conjunction with more detailed assessments and other available biodiversity information, can be used as a guide when determining appropriate roadside management. The general public can access roadside conservation values information by contacting Council.

The Shire of Campaspe is responsible for the management of around 3,520 kilometres of local roads which equates to 7,040 kilometres of road length when each side of the roadside is measured separately. This equates to a combined total road and roadside area estimated at around 12,700 ha. All of the roadsides in the Shire have been assessed for their conservation values. As percentages of total roadside length, only 8% of roadsides are rated as having very high conservation value. From figure 1, only half of the roadsides within the Shire of Campaspe have conservation values of medium or higher, meaning only half of the roadsides can be considered to have adequate native vegetation.

1.5 Implementation

The Shire of Campaspe is the responsible authority for municipal roads and has a responsibility to manage risks to biodiversity in road reserves under its care. This role is determined to an extent by a range of

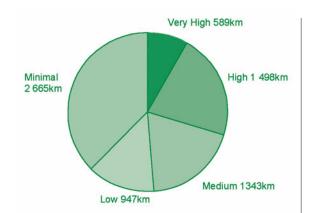


Figure 1: Conservation Value of Roadsides in the Shire of Campaspe

Awareness, understanding and compliance with responsibilities required by these controls can address many of the issues associated with biodiversity conservation in road reserves.

Implementation of this Roadside Conservation Strategy will be achieved by proposed changes to the planning scheme, local laws, additional clauses in tender documentation and performance works contracts. Implementing the Strategy will require ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure appropriate direction of funding, compliance with reporting requirements and the achievement of Council's goals.

This Strategy provides significant opportunities for the Shire of Campaspe to develop and implement new internal procedures for council works and processes (such as Local Laws) to regulate and manage third party activities in road reserves. The Strategy will be a reference document in the Campaspe Planning Scheme.

Within Council, implementation of this Strategy started while the document was being drafted. Staff undertook the unit of competency RTC2702A Observe environmental work practices from Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management, a good introduction to environmental management and works planning for roadsides, focussing on environmental factors, management issues, work practices and planning.

All Council staff have access to the GIS based Roadside Conservation Values Assessment. This enables all staff to include roadside conservation values in their planning of projects.





1.6 Community Education

Community education will accompany this Strategy so that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the value of native vegetation on roadsides and their responsibilities in relation to any work that may impact on roadsides.

By gaining a better understanding of the issues relating to biodiversity conservation, improving practices and implementing simple processes, the Shire of Campaspe can improve its environmental performance, increase efficiencies and reduce costs.

The Community Roadside Management Handbook initiates the education process by providing important information to the community about Roadside Conservation and guidelines for activities on roadsides as well as when and who to contact when activities require a permit.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Strategy Objectives

This Roadside Conservation Strategy aims to:

- Ensure that key stakeholders are aware of this Strategy and to encourage their participation and commitment to its implementation,
- Enhance community awareness and knowledge of roadside issues,
- Increase the adoption of best practices by all land managers,
- Control and reduce the spread, and where possible, eradicate priority pest plants and animals
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity, on both public and private land, encouraging revegetation on adjoining land to compliment roadside values,
- Protect and enhance the environmental, amenity and cultural values of roadsides,
- Prevent further land degradation on linear roadside reserves.
- Improve water quality,
- Increase awareness of the importance of Northern Plains Grasslands (which is endangered in Victoria),
- Minimise the risk and impact from fire,
- Promote minimum disturbance techniques, and;
- Protect service assets located on roadsides while maintaining a safe road network for vehicle transit as detailed in the Shire of Campaspe Road Safety Plan.

2.2 Who is the Strategy for?

This Roadside Conservation Strategy for a range of stakeholders. The following target groups have been identified in each separate Strategy document:

- Document 1: Council management and services (the Strategy contains strategic information based on the objectives along with general principles and actions necessary to implement this Strategy as well as specific information to assist Council officers in their task of protecting roadside biodiversity assets in the performance of their duties),
- Document 2: The community (which includes landholders, fire prevention agencies and Landcare groups who have a separate handbook to focus on the issues relevant to their activities), and:
- Document 3: Road maintenance and construction contractors/service providers (which will assist their roadside activities by implementation of best practice).

This Strategy has been designed so that Council is able to distribute to a specific group only the specific sections to act as targeted working documents. This format allows for a distinction between the strategic, tactical and operational levels of decision making.

2.3 Who will Manage this Strategy?

The Conservation Officer, Public Environment Department will manage this Strategy. Copies of the Strategy (and handbooks) along with the Shire's Roadside Conservation Values Assessment Map are available to all service providers, contractors and public works staff. The community (e.g. Landcare groups) also plays a role in protecting and enhancing roadsides within the municipality and will be provided with access to the Strategy. The Strategy and handbooks will be accessible from the Shire of Campaspe website www.campaspe.vic.gov.au.



Image:

Roadside within this Shire of Campaspe with leaf litter

2.4 The Importance of Roadsides

Roadsides provide:

- Links for fauna movement,
- Locations for service assets,
- Wildlife habitat,
- Biological diversity (roadsides often contain endangered native plants and animals),
- Foundations and framework for landscape connectivity and restoration,
- Important historic, cultural and natural landscape values,
- Aesthetic values for tourism,
- Assistance with the control of land degradation and road integrity (erosion, watertable control etc),
- Areas for planned fire management (as per Municipal Fire Prevention Plan),
- Windbreaks and shelter belts, and:
- Access for pedestrians and cyclists (in some cases).

The primary goal identified for native vegetation management in Victoria's Native Vegetation Framework - A Framework for Action (DNRE, 2002) is 'A reversal, across the entire landscape, of the long-term decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation, leading to a Net Gain.'

Within the Shire of Campaspe approximately 90% of the land has been cleared for agriculture. With a large percentage of this land being irrigated, a significantly modified landscape exists, contributing to almost total destruction of some native vegetation types. This increases the significance and importance of what remains.

Our road reserves often represent some of the few remaining examples of ecosystems where the remnant vegetation provides many services. These include important fauna habitat corridors and connections between isolated areas of bushland. They can provide a store for important genetic flora and fauna resources and are a source for seeds. Furthermore they

can provide protection for livestock on adjoining properties, assist in erosion control and influence water quality.



The Conservation Values of Roadsides in the Shire of Campaspe

All of the 7.040 km of roadsides in the Shire have been assessed for their conservation values. Table 1 shows the total roadside length for each of five different conservation values. Very high conservation value roadsides comprise 8% of the Shire's total roadside length. This is complemented by high conservation value roadsides (21% of all roadsides) and medium conservation value roadsides (19%). These figures provide a useful indicator of the direct contribution roadsides make to biodiversity conservation.

Table 1: Conservation Value of roadsides in the Shire of Campaspe

Conservation Value	Roadside Length (km)* in the Shire of Campaspe	Percentage (%) roadside length in the Shire of Campaspe
Very High	589	8
High	1,498	21
Medium	1,343	19
Low	947	13
Minimal (Degraded/No Vegetation)	2,665	38
Total (both side	s7,042	

of the road)

*Note this figure relates to roadside length and road length will be half this value.

2.6 Roadside Conservation Values Assessment

The conservation values assessment was based on a range of attributes including:

- The proportion of remnant native vegetation including grasslands,
- Percentage of weed cover,
- Degree of site disturbance,
- Potential habitat value,
- Width of road reserve, and;
- The presence of any threatened species of flora or fauna.

From the assessment, the conservation values were classified into five categories, ranging from very high to minimal. The categories used represent a simplified assessment of the method used for determining conservation significance in Victoria's Native Vegetation Framework. The conservation value evaluates the vegetation condition as well as vegetation status (e.g. endangered or vulnerable).

It is important to note that the 2007 survey is a point-in-time assessment. Just because a length of roadside is rated medium conservation value

does not exclude the possibility that its rating could improve in the future, particularly with management intervention.

With each roadside within the Shire of Campaspe assigned a conservation value, this information has been displayed on a map, the Roadside Conservation Values Assessment Map. The map is designed for use in conjunction with management guidelines and is available in Geographic Information System (GIS) format.

Figure 2 provides an example of the final Shire of Campaspe Roadside Conservation Values Map product. The final roadside conservation value, weed points and photo points are displayed. The map also indicates:

- Roads (from publicly available data),
- Cultural points (registered cultural sites from data supplied by North Central Catchment Management Authority), and;
- Biosite points (data supplied by the Department of Sustainability and Environment)

This tool allows straightforward access to the information used to create the final product.

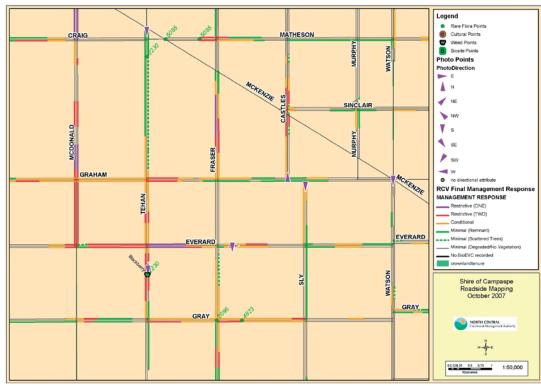


Figure 2: Sample section from the Shire of Campaspe Roadside Conservation Values Assessment Map (available as a GIS map product).

(1) Very High

(2) High

(3) Medium (4) Low

> (5) Minimal / Degraded

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Image 1:

Example of roadside with Very High Conservation Value due to the presence of trees, shrubs, groundcovers and grasses and rare species.

Image 2:

Roadside of Medium Conservation value due to the high level of disturbance and introduced plant species.



(1) Very High Conservation Value (coloured purple in Figure 2) and (2) High Conservation Value (coloured red in Figure 2) indicates significant ecological assets, i.e., endangered vegetation and/or threatened species. These two categories can be grouped together for management purposes as both categories indicate roadsides with native vegetation present in good condition.

Features of very high and high conservation value vegetation may include:

- Relatively lower level of disturbance (may have been subjected to disturbance historically, but has since regenerated),
- Various vegetation layers (such as trees, shrubs, grasses and groundcovers) present, although not necessarily all layers (as native vegetation such as grasslands are characterised by their lack of trees),
- Native vegetation occurs across much of the area,
- Low weed levels (may be seasonally high due to annual weeds),
- Support for a range of habitats,
- Forming of a wildlife corridor that is linked to other adjoining native vegetation,
- Provision of habitat for rare or threatened flora and fauna species,

(3) Medium Conservation Value (coloured orange in Figure 2) also indicates significant ecological assets; however these sections do not currently have the same critical range as high conservation value sites. Vulnerable and rare vegetation of medium conservation value is at the lower end of the condition range. Vegetation condition may be higher for depleted vegetation than on other high conservation value roadsides where the vegetation is of endangered, vulnerable or rare status.



Features of medium conservation value vegetation may include:

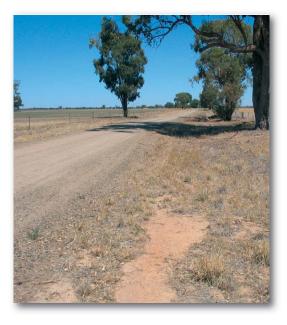
- Moderate disturbance and weed levels (levels could be high at times if annual grassy weeds dominate seasonally),
- Native vegetation occurs mainly in patches, some capacity for natural regeneration, and;
- Few other habitat features.

(4) Low Conservation Value (coloured green in Figure 2) indicates ecological assets that are depleted or least concern status. This category also indicates scattered tree sites.

Features of low conservation value vegetation may include:

 Poor condition substantially disturbed and or modified, predominantly nonnative vegetation,

- Little if any native vegetation on site or adjacent, low natural regeneration
- Few habitat features.



(5) Minimal / Degraded Treeless Vegetation (light green in Figure 2) indicates almost no native vegetation exist, below 25% understorey cover and no tree cover.



Image 3:

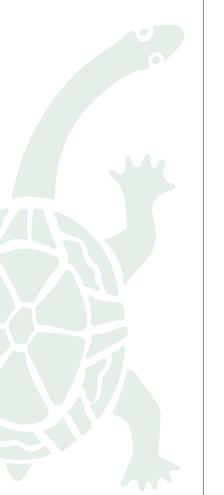
Roadside of Low Conversation Value due to the low level of native vegetation present, high level of disturbance and high level of weeds.

Image 4:

Roadside of Minimal Conservation Value due to the lack of native vegetation and high level of weeds.



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3. COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROADSIDE CONSERVATION

The responsibilities for biodiversity conservation in road reserves do not lie solely with the Shire of Campaspe. Council does have a responsibility for biodiversity conservation and improving roadside conservation outcomes by developing networks and cooperative relationships with agencies, other councils and the community.

3.1 Legislative Requirements and Council

There is an array of legislation and policy relevant to biodiversity and road management. The following Commonwealth Acts influence Council's management of road reserves:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984,
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

The Victorian Acts that influence Council's management of road reserves includes:

- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 which provides for the protection of Aboriginal culture,
- Road Management Act 2004 assigns
 Council as the responsible authority for local roads.
- Heritage Act 1995 provides for the protection and conservation of places and objects of cultural heritage,
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 recognises responsibilities for the control of proclaimed noxious weeds and pest animals,
- Local Government Act 1989 allocates responsibilities to Councils, including the care and management of roads,
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

legislates for the conservation of threatened species and communities and for the management of potentially threatening processes,

- Planning and Environment Act
 1987 governs development and
 administration of Planning Schemes
 and includes native vegetation
 removals and required for Municipal
 Strategic Statement,
- Country Fire Authority Act 1958 aims to prevent and suppress fires and protect life and property in the case of fire,
- Forest Act 1958 control and management of trees, saplings and shrubs and the selling of forest product, and;
- Transport Act 1983 details the use of freeways, highways, main roads, tourist roads and stock routes.

Victoria's *Biodiversity Strategy* 1997 (to be renewed 2010) and *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action 2002* are two Victorian strategies that influence Council's management of road reserves.

Under the Road Management Act 2004,
Council is the responsible authority for all
local roads within the municipality. Council is
also responsible for the management of third
party activities on those roads. VicRoads is
the responsible authority for state highways,
freeways, main roads and tourist roads and the
Department of Sustainability and Environment
(DSE) manages the majority of forest roads.
DSE is also a referral authority for native
vegetation removal on roadsides.

It is also Council's responsibility under Section

43 of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* to 'take all practicable steps to prevent the occurrence of fires on, and minimise the danger of the spread of fires on, any road under its care and management'.

Council, in consultation with other reserve authorities, manages road reserves to meet requirements of State and Federal legislation in a number of areas including:

- Road safety,
- Protection of native flora and fauna,
- Protection of biodiversity,
- Management of cultural heritage sites and sites of aboriginal or archaeological significance,
- Water quality,
- Weed control, and;
- Environmentally sustainable development.

The responsibility of who manages weeds on roadsides is unclear. Currently the Department of Primary Industries and the Municipal Association of Victoria are negotiating who is responsible to control weeds on roadsides. The confusion has arisen due to different interpretations of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

3.2 Implementation

The Shire of Campaspe is the responsible authority for municipal roads and has a

responsibility to manage risks to biodiversity in road reserves under its care. This role is determined to an extent by a range of legislative requirements and strategies.

Many issues associated with biodiversity conservation in road reserves will be addressed by increasing awareness and understanding of the values of biodiversity on roadsides. Compliance with this Roadside Conservation Strategy will be achieved by adopting this Strategy and ensuring all tender documents and performance works contracts comply with this Strategy. Implementing this Strategy will require ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure appropriate direction of funding, compliance with reporting requirements and the achievement of Council's goals.

The Roadside Conservation Strategy further develops Council policies in relation to environmental sustainability and the responsible management of natural resources encapsulated in the Municipal Strategic Statement and the Council Plan 2009-2013. It acknowledges that the primary function of roads is to provide safe vehicle transit, and is complementary to the Campaspe Road Safety Plan 2003 and the Campaspe Road Management Plan 2009.

The Strategy falls within a complex legal context and complies with Victoria's Native Vegetation Management - A Framework for Action 2002. The Strategy will be a reference document in the Shire of Campaspe Planning Scheme. Figure 3 indicates the relationship between the Roadside Conservation Strategy, Council Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement.

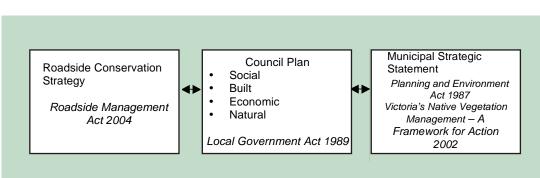


Figure 3: Diagram of the relationship between Roadside Conservation Strategy, Council Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement.



3.3 Strategic Objectives

The natural environment is an identified priority of the 2009-2013 Council Plan. The strategic objectives of the Council Plan are:

- Protect our biodiversity and land,
- Respond to climate change,
- Improve water quality and conservation, and;
- Minimise waste to landfill.

The development of this Roadside Conservation Strategy directly contributes to three of Council's strategic objectives for the natural environment (first three listed above). This Strategy will also assist Council to achieve actions listed against key goals for 'Protect our biodiversity and land' and 'Respond to climate change'.

Campaspe Planning Scheme

The Campaspe Planning Scheme sets out policies and requirements for the use, development and protection of land. It contains State and local planning policies and frameworks, zones and overlays and other provisions that affect how land can be used and developed.

This Strategy is a reference document to the planning scheme. Reference documents explain why particular requirements are in the scheme, substantiate a specific issue or provide background information to specific decision guidelines in the local planning policies and/or schedules.

Municipal Strategic Statement

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) provides direction for the environmental, social and physical development of the Shire of Campaspe. The MSS is the key planning tool for decision making, outlining the planning objectives, strategies and implementation mechanisms.

The Municipal Profile within the MSS highlights the significant landscape modification from pastoral and irrigation activities that has led to the loss of 90% of native vegetation across the Shire. Most remnant native vegetation is now in poor condition, with the most significant stands being primarily limited to the confines of waterway and road reserves.

A central focus of the environmental issues of the MSS is the conservation and management of areas of remnant native vegetation and natural floodplains.

The MSS acknowledges the importance of managing roadsides. This Strategy assists Council to meet the Biodiversity objectives listed within the MSS (clause 21.04):

- To protect, manage and restore native vegetation, including grasslands and wetland vegetation, and;
- To protect and enhance indigenous roadside vegetation.

Further strategic work listed on page 14 of 33 of clause 21.04 recommends:

- Complete a Roadside Management Strategy.
- Develop a Vegetation Protection
 Overlay for private land and roadsides.

This Roadside Conservation Strategy has been prepared to reflect all MSS levels:

- Objectives: To maintain and enhance biodiversity of native flora and fauna communities,
- Strategies: Protect remnant areas of native vegetation, streamlines, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive features, and;
- Implementation: Utilise this Plan and Roadside Conservation Values Assessment Map.

Through these mechanisms, Council aims to provide long-term commitment to ensure that

there is a visible and measurable improvement to roadside reserves throughout the municipality in terms of:

- Safety,
- Quality, viability and quantity of flora and fauna,
- Aesthetics,
- Reversing land degradation, and;
- Best management practices.

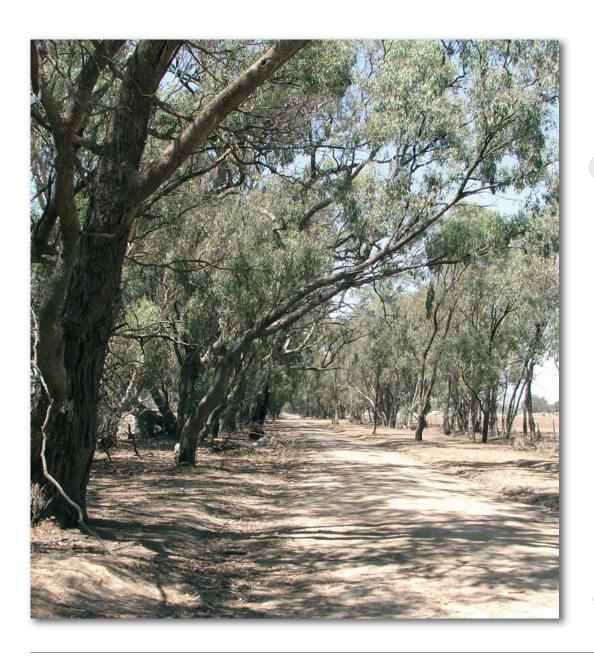


Image:

Box-Woodland on roadside at Corop

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4. TAKING ACTION FOR ROADSIDE CONSERVATION

This Strategy aims to guide a responsible land manager in taking the required action to address a particular roadside management issue. It has been designed to allow for a clear distinction to be made between the strategic (management), tactical (planning, engineering and local laws) and operational levels of decision making.

4.1 What can Council do?

The Council can contribute to biodiversity conservation in the Shire's road reserves through:

Strategy

- 1. Providing direction and support through Council Plans, strategies and policy.
- Integrating roadside environmental management into systems, procedures, processes and practices.
- Implementing systems and controls to manage and ensure compliance with Council consent for third party activities in road reserves, such as 'Consent for Works' and livestock permits.
- Developing, implementing and reviewing incident response procedures.
- Reviewing existing practices and procedures (controls) for strengths and weaknesses and modify where necessary.
- 6. Ensuring adequate reserves.

Legislation

7. Ensuring compliance with legislative and other regulatory responsibilities.

Training / promotion

- 8. Developing awareness, knowledge and commitment to sound environmental management in all Council staff.
- Encouraging communication and sharing of responsibilities between all Council functions.
- 10. Providing regular environmental management awareness and technical training with a focus on a whole of organisation approach rather than just a section such as road crews.
- 11. Including other sectors such as customer service, administration, planning, local laws, infrastructure, management and Councillors, as they all influence roadside management.

Operation

- 12. Identifying and documenting biodiversity asset information, threatening processes and management requirements. Ensure this is accessible, well known and used by operational staff.
- 13. Developing and resourcing Council revegetation/rehabilitation projects.
- 14. Providing skilled environmental technical support for staff.
- 15. Sourcing and providing technical information.
- Supporting inter-council and agency cooperation, information sharing and joint projects.
- Improving the management of weeds (therefore reducing the extent of weeds).

- 18. Encouraging community involvement and acceptance in:
 - Providing information with clear direction from Council,
 - Ensuring informed and consistent responses from Council staff to enquiries,
 - Ensuring systems are in place and implemented to manage third party activities in road reserves e.g. consent for works, livestock permits, and;
 - Discouraging unauthorised activities in road reserves.

4.2 The Roadside Biodiversity Risk Management Protocols

The Roadside Biodiversity Risk Management Protocols (RBRMP) was developed by a joint local government and Goulburn-Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) project, led by Moira Shire Council. The project aims to conserve biodiversity related with roadsides by improving the capacity of local government to manage associated activities and risks.

The protocols provide general guidelines and simple measures that can be easily adapted and implemented by local government and others to mitigate potential impacts to biodiversity as a result of works and other activities in road reserves. The guidelines and checklists are about adopting and implementing measures to avoid and minimise the chances of adverse environmental effects.

The assessment process focuses on identifying a range of biodiversity 'assets' rather than just native vegetation. Emphasis is given to identification of various characteristics including; native vegetation, habitats, threatened species, wetlands and waterways. An essential element of the risk management process is good communication, monitoring and reporting from project concept to completion of works.

The level or complexity of assessment and expertise required to undertake the assessment will vary considerably depending on the circumstances of each proposal, or the type of

activity. Any assessment should follow the steps outlined in Figure 3.

Identify works planned and activities involved

Use the Council's GIS Roadside Conservation Assessment Map to identify the biodiversity assets on-site and off-site (beyond the road reserve).

2. Identify the potential impacts

What potential impacts could there be from the activities required by the works on biodiversity assets on-site and offsite?

3. Assess the likelihood of impacts

Is the proximity of the area of activities to biodiversity assets likely to increase the chances of adverse impacts?

4. Identify the appropriate mitigation measures

What methods can be used to avoid or at least reduce the likelihood of potential impacts?

Are there existing controls such as legislative requirements, codes of practice that must be complied with?

5. Review and evaluate

Will these measures adequately reduce the likelihood and avoid/minimise potential impacts?

If the result of review is not satisfactory (risks remain that are deemed to be unacceptable), change mitigation, look for alternative options.

6. Mitigation planning and implementation

Prepare a risk management plan of mitigation actions. How will they be implemented? When? What resources are required? Who will be responsible? What monitoring and reporting is required?



Figure 3: Steps in the Roadside Biodiversity Risk Management Process

Image: Roadside within the Shire of Campaspe. There are limited shrubs and regeneration present amongst the Grey Box trees.





Image: Mistletoe on roadside reserve

4.3 Implementing the Shire of Campaspe Roadside Conservation Strategy

Once adopted by Council this Roadside Conservation Strategy will replace the Shire of Campaspe Roadside Management Plan 2000 as a 'Reference Document' in the Campaspe Planning Scheme.

To continue the implementation of this Strategy, after adoption by Council, the following actions and amendment to the Planning Scheme are recommended:

- Investigate developing a Vegetation Protection Overlay to incorporate the Roadside Conservation Values embodied in this Plan.
- All tender and contract documentation to be cross-referenced to the Roadside Conservation Strategy.

Workshops for Council staff, targeting staff that work on roadsides will be run as part of the implementation of this Strategy, the Community Roadside Management Handbook and the Roadside Environmental Code of Practice Handbook.

4.4 Community Education

Community engagement will accompany this Strategy so that all stakeholders have a clearer understanding of the value of native vegetation on roadsides and their responsibilities in relation to any work that may impact on roadsides.

Community education will encourage the adoption of best practices by all land managers and promote maintaining and enhancing native vegetation on roadsides and adjoining properties. Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity on public and private land is promoted through many projects, due to the wide benefits it provides in the landscape.

Increasing knowledge of the issues relating to biodiversity conservation, improving practices and implementing simple processes, the Shire of Campaspe can improve its environmental performance, increase efficiencies and reduce costs.

Council will:

1. Launch the Roadside Conservation

Strategy, Community Roadside
Management Handbook and Roadside
Environmental Code of Practice
Handbook and make copies available to
all stakeholders.

- 2. Ensure the Strategy and supporting handbooks are available electronically from Council's website.
- Actively promote the Strategy and the value of roadsides in the Shire to stakeholders (including service providers, Landcare groups and the community) through:
 - Press releases,
 - · Mavoral columns.
 - Workshops,
 - Activities involving the Shire's Environmental Projects Officer,
 - Landcare Group meetings,
 - Field days, and;
 - Other appropriate public forums.
- 4. Encourage community involvement and acceptance of this Strategy by:
 - Providing information and clear direction.
 - Ensuring informed and consistent responses from Council staff to inquiries.
 - Ensuring systems are in place and implemented to manage third party activities in road reserves e.g. consent for works, livestock permits.
 - Discouraging unauthorised activities in road reserves.

4.5 Review

In order to reflect changes to existing management practices that contribute to a loss or improvement to conservation rankings and to meet changing community expectations, this Strategy will be reviewed every four years to coincide with the review of the Planning Scheme which is to be conducted every four years following the adoption of the Council Plan.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PROTECTING ROADSIDE CONSERVATION VALUES

5.1 Vegetation Communities and Revegetation

The principal objectives and guidelines in Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy 1997, Victoria's Native Vegetation Framework 2002 and the North Central CMA Native Vegetation Management Plan (2005) and the Goulburn Broken CMA Native Vegetation Management Plan (2003) are recognised by this Strategy.

Managing the vegetation of roadsides and revegetating roadsides will be guided by the following principles:

- 1. Native vegetation includes trees, shrubs, grasses and groundcovers. In some cases, not all of these types of plants are present (e.g. grasslands do not feature trees). The highest priority is to retain existing native vegetation by avoiding clearance where feasible, minimising disturbance to flora and fauna while installing and maintaining service assets and ensuring the safe functioning of roads. Where removal is unavoidable the principle of 'Net Gain' will be applied. Net Gain simply requires that land managers responsible for losses in the extent or quality of native vegetation redress those losses by producing gains in extent and quality elsewhere - overall gains to be greater than overall losses.
- 2. Prevent the decline of indigenous vegetation communities and fauna habitat by actively managing roadsides to protect remnants and to maintain visual amenity, landscape qualities as well as cultural and heritage values.
- 3. Enhance priority habitats by targeting

- action for designated priority ecosystems to protect endangered species.
- Improve connectivity by revegetating potential wildlife corridors that form a link between isolated habitats.
- 5. Identify, protect and enhance remnant vegetation including grasslands (note: the width of the road influences this opportunity with the wider 'three-chain roads' in the Shire presenting the best of these opportunities).
- Grasslands are to be restored with grasslands flora (which excludes trees).
- 7. Recognise the importance of understorey and species composition.

5.2 Regeneration

Regeneration of indigenous vegetation will be protected and encouraged except where:

 It imposes a safety risk (including the preservation of sight distances), or;



Image: A landholder has planted shrubs on their property (right of the fenceline) to complement the remnant vegetation of the roadside.

 It interferes with the road, table drains, sign posting, road widening and road construction or where overhead power lines exist. agricultural activities and environmental management activities. The guidelines are also appropriate for consideration by Council.

5.2 Regeneration

Regeneration of indigenous vegetation will be protected and encouraged except where:

- It imposes a safety risk (including the preservation of sight distances), or;
- It interferes with the road, table drains, sign posting, road widening and road construction or where overhead power lines exist.

5.3 Removing Native Vegetation on Roadsides

Council has control of clearing of native vegetation on road reserves under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. A permit may be required to remove, lop or destroy native vegetation. This could include the following activities:

- Pruning or cutting,
- Slashing or mowing,
- Grazing,
- Spraying,
- Clearing along fence lines,
- Ploughing, cultivation or grading,
- Cropping,
- Seed collection, and;
- Firewood collection.

The principle of Net Gain is applied to all permit applications. This involves avoiding vegetation clearance where possible, and minimising and offsetting any vegetation clearance where permits are granted.

VicRoads has produced guidelines (VicRoads, 2005) for the control of third party activities in road reserves that cover property and

5.4 Threatened Flora and Fauna

The Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act 1988 provides special protection for threatened species. Roadsides within Victoria contain 25% of all rare or threatened flora species and communities listed under the FFG Act. Within the Shire of Campaspe, there are more than 27 native fauna species (including the Squirrel Glider, Striped Legless Lizard, Greycrowned Babbler and Bush-stone Curlew) and more than 32 native flora species (including the Red Swainson-pea, and Spiny Rice-flower) are listed as threatened. Table 2 displays a list of threatened flora and fauna that can be found within the Shire of Campaspe with its conservation status in Victoria, whether it is listed under the FFG Act 1988 and its conservation status under the EPBC Act 1999. Table 2 is not a comprehensive list of all threatened species present in the Shire of Campaspe.



Lifestyle & Opportunity

Image:

Dabb).

The Swift Parrot (Lathamus

discolor) is endangered in the Shire of Campaspe

(Image courtesy of Geoff

Threatened Fauna		Conservation Status	FFG	EPBC
Australian Bittern	Botaurus poiciloptilus	Endangered	Listed	
Bandy Bandy	Vermicella annulata	Near	Listed	
,,		Threatened		
Barking Owl	Ninox connivens	Endangered	Listed	
Blue-billed Duck	Oxyura australis	Endangered	Listed	
Brolga	Grus rubicundus	Vulnerable	Listed	
Brown Toadlet	Pseudophryne bibronii	Endangered	Listed	
Brush-tailed Phascogale	Phascogale tapoatafa	Vulnerable	Listed	
Bush-stone Curlew	Burhinus magnirostris	Endangered	Listed	
Carpet Python	Morelia spilota variegata	Endangered	Listed	
Fat-tailed Dunnart	Sminthopsis crassicaudata	Near	Invalid or	
	F	Threatened	Ineligible	
Freckled Duck	Stictonetta naevosa	Endangered	Listed	
Grey-crowned Babbler	Pomatostomus temporalis	Endangered	Listed	
Grey Falcon	Falco hypoleucos	Endangered	Listed	
Growling Grass Frog	Litoria raniformis	Vulnerable	Listed	Vulnerable
Lace Monitor	Varanus varius	Vulnerable		
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	Endangered	Listed	
Macquarie Perch	Macquaria australasica	Endangered	Listed	Endangere
Transquario i eren	interest of the control of the contr	Ziidangerea	215000	Ziidaiigeie
Murray Cod	Maccullochella peelii	Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable
Pale Sun Moth	Synemon selene	Critically	21500	, ameraere
	Synemen serene	Endangered		
Plains-wanderer	Pedionomus torquatus	Critically	Listed	Vulnerable
Tallis Wallacter	T conomina torquants	Endangered	215000	, ameraere
Regent Honey Eater	Xanthomyza phrygia	Critically	Listed	Endangere
g,		Endangered		
Squirrel Glider	Petauras norfolcensis	Endangered	Listed	
Striped Legless Lizard	Delma impara	Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable
Superb Parrot	Prolytelis swainsonii	Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable
Swift Parrot	Lathamus discolor	Endangered	Listed	Endangere
Trout Cod	M. macquariensis	Critically	Listed	Endangere
	1	Endangered		
Woodland Blind Snake	Ramphofyphlops proximus	Near		
	1 351 1 1	Threatened		
Threatened Flora		Conservation	FFG	EPBC
		Status		
Annual Buttons	Leptorhynchos orientalis	Endangered	Listed	
Ausfeld's Wattle	Acacia ausfeldii	Vulnerable	Invalid	
Broom Bitter-pea	Daviesia genistifolia s.s.	Rare		
Buloke Miseltoe	Amyema linophylla subsp.	Vulnerable		
	orientale			
Cane Grass	Eragrostis australica	Vulnerable		
Catkin Wattle	Acacia dallachiana	Restricted		
Chariot Wheels	Maireana cheelii	Vulnerable		Vulnerable
Club-hair New Holland	Vittadinia condyloides	Rare		
Daisy				
Kamarooka Mallee	Eucalyptus froggattii	Restricted		
Long Eryngium	Eryngium paludosum	Vulnerable		
Narrow Goodenia	Goodenia manbarrionii	Vulnerable	Listed	Vulnerable
Pale Spike-sedge	Eleocharis pallens	Poorly known		
Pepper Grass	Panicum laevinode	Vulnerable		
Purple Diuris	Diuris punctata var. punctata	Vulnerable	Listed	
Red Swainson-pea	Swainsona plagiotropis	Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable
	Swainsona sericea	Vulnerable	Listed	





Threatened Fauna		Conservation Status	FFG	EPBC
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	Endangered	Listed	
Macquarie Perch	Macquaria australasica	Endangered	Listed	Endangered
Murray Cod	Maccullochella peelii	Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable
Pale Sun Moth	Synemon selene	Critically Endangered		
Plains-wanderer	Pedionomus torquatus	Critically Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable
Regent Honey Eater	Xanthomyza phrygia	Critically	Listed	Endangered
Turnip Copperburr	Sclerolaena napiformis	Endangered	Listed	Endangered
Umbrella Wattle	Acacia oswaldii	Endangered	Listed	
Velvet Daisy Bush	Olearia pannosa ssp cadiophylla	Vulnerable	Listed	
Weeping Myall	Acacia pendula	Endangered	Listed	
Waterbush	Myoporum acuminatum	Rare		
Western Bitter-cress	Cardamine linearibba	Vulnerable		
Western Rat-tail Grass	Sporobolus creber	Vulnerable		
Western Silver Wattle	Acacia decora	Vulnerable		
Woolly Mantle	Eriochlamys behrii s.s.	Rare		
Yarram Wattle	Acacia omalophylla	Endangered	Listed	
Yellow-tongued Daisy	Brachyscome chrysoglossa	Vulnerable	Listed	

(adapted from DSE 2005, DSE 2007 and DSE 2009)

If a rare or threatened species is suspected to be present at a site, Council and/or the Department of Sustainability and Environment should be consulted for confirmation and appropriate management advice. It is an offence to disturb or destroy species listed under the FFG Act 1988 and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999. Heavy penalties apply for breaches of the EPBC Act 1999 and/or FFG Act 1988. Removal of listed species requires a Permit to Take Protected Flora and is available from the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

5.5 Protecting Native Fauna and Wildlife Habitat

Roadsides contain habitat for a range of native fauna. In particular, scattered large old remnant trees that are features of the Shire of Campaspe landscape contain hollows that are vital habitat for many species including gliders, possums, birds and bats.

Other elements such as fallen timber, coarse woody debris, leaf litter and native understorey form equally important habitat for other species including lizards, insects and birds.

Written consent from Council is required for works in a Council road reserve and conditions apply. Council must be contacted to obtain a permit for works on roadsides. A copy of the permit application form attached in Appendix 1. The term works is defined by the *Road Management Act 2004*, and many of the activities listed in Table 3: Guideline Summary for Roadside Activities.

The following guidelines apply to protecting habitat for wildlife:

- Natural regeneration on roadsides will be encouraged where they form wildlife corridors and these areas are to be given first priority in restoration programs,
- Dead trees or limbs containing hollows, that have fallen naturally will be retained to provide habitat unless they are identified as a safety risk,
- All habitat components will be retained unless they pose a significant hazard as specified by the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan,
- Check for nests or other fauna habitat.

and avoid disturbance to those areas,

- Retain all habitat such as rocks, dead standing trees, fallen timber and leaf litter unless they pose an identifiable risk in terms of road safety,
- Ensure that large old trees are protected from activities such as firewood collection, and agricultural activities,
- Do not slash or disturb regeneration, unless approved and for safety, and;
- Leave native vegetation undisturbed. Do not 'tidy up' areas of native vegetation or fallen timber/leaf litter, on roadsides.

5.6 Protecting Wetlands and Waterways

The Shire of Campaspe contains significant wetlands including the Wallenjoe Wetland Complex, Kanyapella Basin, Timmering Depression and Kow Swamp.

Prior to any works being undertaken consultation will take place with the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA), the Goulburn Broken CMA and the Department of Sustainability and Environment, where works may change a natural wetland, including the interruption or diversion of flows into wetland areas.

The North Central CMA or the Goulburn Broken CMA should be contacted and a 'Works on Waterways permit' obtained before undertaking any works within the bed and banks of designated waterways. Refer to the Loddon Campaspe Wetland Management Plan (NCCMA) and the Goulburn Broken Wetland Implementation Plan (GBCMA) for further details.

Designated waterways may be named or unnamed, permanent or seasonal and range in size from a river to a natural depression. Wetlands and waterways are to be protected by appropriate practices based on minimum disturbance principles:

- Wetlands will be identified, protected and enhanced and the status will be recorded, and;
- Artificial wetland areas on roadsides will be retained if they do not have a

detrimental effect on native flora and fauna

5.7 Unused Road Reserves

Unused road reserves can provide some of the best examples of remnant vegetation. In some cases they form part a corridor for movement of fauna in between patches of remnant vegetation.

Where opportunities exist for projects to protect and/or enhance native vegetation on unused road reserves, they will be supported by Council. The Department of Sustainability and Environment will be consulted regarding any projects on unused road reserves with the goal of obtaining long-term protection of these sites.

5.8 Road Maintenance & Road Construction and Widening & Service Installation and Maintenance

- The principles and guidelines in the VicRoads 2006 'Roadside Handbook: An Environmental Guide for Roads Construction & Maintenance' should be included in tender and contract documentation. The principle of Net Gain including the requirement for offsets will apply to all works.
- The list of Council designated locations for site stockpiles will be used and monitored.
- Any maintenance proposal that may involve removal of native vegetation must include consideration of the Victorian Native Vegetation Framework (2002).

5.9 Fire Management

Reviews of Municipal Fire Prevention Planning will reflect the changes made to the Roadside Conservation Strategy. Refer to section 6.2 Fire Prevention and Management for further details of activities.



Image:

A cultural heritage site in the Shire of Campaspe.

5.10 Protecting Cultural Heritage

Indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage provides a sense of community identity. Heritage sites include archaeological sites, buildings or structures, created landscapes and community values or beliefs.



As activities on roadsides have the potential to impact on heritage sites, it is important to identify heritage issues to ensure impacts are avoided, minimised or mitigated, and to understand that there is a legal obligation to do so as indicated below.

5.10.1 Aboriginal Heritage

All registered and unregistered Victorian Aboriginal archaeological sites are protected by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. In Victoria it is mandatory to contact Aboriginal Affairs Victoria if you discover an Aboriginal site or object.

A primary objective of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* is to recognise Aboriginal people as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage, and accords appropriate status to traditional owners in protecting their heritage through a system of Registered Aboriginal parties.

Registered Aboriginal parties must be advised of any proposed works that may affect Aboriginal sites. If proposed works are a high impact activity and are in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan may be required under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.

There are three Registered Aboriginal parties within the Shire of Campaspe; Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, and Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

Refer to Appendix 3 for the statewide map of Registered Aboriginal Parties by local government area and contact details for the Dja Dja Wurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, and Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

5.10.2 Non-indigenous Heritage

All Victorian non-indigenous historical sites are protected by the *Victorian Heritage Act* 1995. Heritage Victoria administers the Act and maintains the Victorian Heritage Register.

The act prohibits the destruction or disturbance of any cultural heritage site, place, or object, whether on private or public land. Where harm is unavoidable this legislation provides legal mechanisms for resolution via permit application for proposed works.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES ON ROADSIDES

Under the Road Management Act 2004, written consent is required from Council before undertaking works in a road reserve. This written consent is provided by Council in the form of a permit for working on roadsides which can place conditions on the works undertaken (for example timing of works, minimising environmental impacts, etc). Refer to Appendix 1 for permit form. Refer to 'Community Roadside Management Handbook' and the 'Roadside Environmental Code of Practice Handbook' for detailed guidelines on specific activities.

6.1 Firewood Collection and Timber Removal

Firewood collection is not permitted on roadsides. Dead and fallen timber is very important habitat for many native mammals, birds, bats, reptiles and insects. Firewood collection is listed as a threat to many native vegetation types contributing to the decline of some species of fauna. Given the highly altered landscape of the Campaspe Shire, few roads contain enough native vegetation to require biomass removal through firewood collection.

Firewood collection will be permitted when it is part of the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan, with the conditions specified by the Making Victoria Fire Ready program of the Victorian State Government. When collection of firewood has been approved, the purchase of a Forest Produce Licence from the Department of Sustainability and Environment is required.

6.2 Fire Prevention and Management

Under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* the Council has a responsibility to 'take all practicable steps to prevent the occurrence

of fires on, and minimise the danger of the spread of fires on, any road under its care and management'.

Specific road reserves have been used as fuel reduced corridors for many years. Fire prevention measures outlined in the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan include periodic fuel reduction and firebreaks.

The objectives of roadside fire management, after road user safety, are:

- Prevent fires on roadsides (which includes education, regulation and provision of fuel free areas including fuel free shoulder),
- Contain roadside fires,
- Manage safety of road users,
- Provide control lines (on designated roads, not all roads), and;
- Recovery from roadside fires (CFA, 2001).

Landowners are advised that only works in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan are permitted on road reserves. Any fire prevention works on roadsides, including burning, require written consent from Council. The Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Council are authorised to conduct burning on roadsides. Council is authorised under the *Road Management Act 2004:*

- General Local Law No. 7 in association with the Road Management Act 2004 state that no new ploughed or graded firebreaks should be constructed by landowners on roadsides. Breaches of this law will be prosecuted.
- Landowners are encouraged to undertake fire prevention works, including new firebreaks, on their own





property, as promoted as best practice by the CFA.

 Existing ploughed or graded firebreaks can only be maintained if they are part of the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan. These breaks are not to expand or encroach on native vegetation. Breaks generally should not exceed 3 metres.

Existing firebreaks are not located on roadsides with conservation values of very high or high. The development of new firebreaks is to be placed on adjacent land as recommended by the CFA (CFA. 2001).

Fuel reduction burning on the road reserve may reduce surface fuels to a minimum and deprive an ignition source of fuel. In areas where there is a history of successful fuel reduction burning and where there is no dispute over the application of this treatment, it is suggested that the practice continue (CFA, 2001). In the Shire of Campaspe, roadsides managed by Council and suited to fuel reduction burning will be described in the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan and conducted in an arrangement with local CFA brigades. Where CFA brigades complete fuel reduction burns on roadsides, assistance will be provided by Council to obtain the required Works on Roadside permit.

Landowners should refer to CFA publications and CFA website **www.cfa.vic.gov.au** for further information.

6.3 Pest Animal Control

Pest animals have many detrimental impacts on the natural environment, including:

- Limiting remnant vegetation regeneration by eating seedlings,
- Contributing to land degradation by burrowing and scratching soils,
- Reducing biodiversity by killing native animals, or outcompeting them for available food sources, and;
- Spreading weeds.

The major pest animal species in the municipality are rabbits, foxes, hares and feral cats.

Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 'A landowner must take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of regionally controlled weeds and established pest animals on a roadside that adjoins the landowner's land' (except arterial roads controlled by VicRoads).

6.4 Pest Plant Control

Pest plants are a major threat to native vegetation on roadsides and have a large economic impact.

Noxious weeds are plants that are legally declared to be a serious threat and economic cost to agriculture and the environment. There are four classifications, State Prohibited, Regionally Prohibited, Regionally Controlled and Restricted. The management of State Prohibited weeds is the responsibility of the Victorian Government (Department of Primary Industries). Landowners (including Council) must take reasonable steps to eradicate Regionally Prohibited weeds and they have an obligation to take reasonable steps to prevent growth and spread of Regionally Controlled weeds. Restricted Weeds describe plants that pose an unacceptable risk of spreading in Victoria or other parts of Australia and are not to be traded or sold.

The Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 provides the legislative base for weed control in Victoria. The interpretation of the Act regarding who is responsible for Regionally Prohibited and Regionally Controlled weeds on local roadsides (those not controlled by VicRoads) is currently under review.

Environmental weeds are plants that invade areas of natural bushland and include both introduced plants and native plants that originally come from other areas of Australia.

Unlike Regionally Prohibited and Regionally Controlled weeds, these species are not declared under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, however landholders are encouraged to consider removal of these species on roadsides to reduce spread.

Strategies for the management of weeds have been developed at a national, state and regional level. The Shire's Weed Management

Plan outlines the strategic approach for weed management within the Shire. On roadsides with high conservation value, particularly where the native vegetation is grasslands, the preferred method of weed control is spot spraying. In some cases it is preferable to burn the weeds, mainly to reduce annual grasses such as rye and oats and the burn can also be timed to promote an ecological response such as stimulating a soil seed bank.

A list of noxious weeds and environmental weeds currently threatening roadside vegetation in the municipality can be found in Appendix 2.

6.5 Fencing

Council consent is required for fencing works being undertaken by a third party in a road reserve as required under the Road Management Act 2004. There is an exemption under the planning scheme to allow the removal, destruction and lopping of native vegetation to enable the construction of a fence on a boundary between properties in different ownership or to enable the operation or maintenance of an existing fence. The combined maximum width of clearing must not exceed 4 metres. Vegetation can be cleared either side of the fence provided the combined width does not exceed 4 metres. This exemption does not apply to the construction of internal property fences or where there is an Environmental and Landscape overlay.

This exemption for clearing vegetation is to a maximum width of 4 metres, it is not to be interpreted that it is a right to clear 4 metres along the entire length of fence. Council expects clearing of native vegetation for fencing to be minimised.

6.6 Farming and Associated Activities

Livestock Movement, Droving and Grazing

Livestock are an important economic factor within the Shire. However the Roadside Conservation Strategy seeks to address the impact of livestock activities on roadsides such as the potential spread of weeds. Grazing can destroy areas of significant high conservation value native vegetation.

Permanent livestock crossing(livestock regularly crossing a road at a particular location) is only permitted with a Council permit as specified under General Local Law No.7.

Livestock droving (the movement of livestock either by driving them into the municipality or by driving them along any road or roads through the municipality a distance greater than can be achieved by travelling in one day between the hours or sunrise and sunset) or grazing (livestock held in an area for the purpose of feeding off roadside vegetation) requires a permit. In granting a permit Council must consider whether damage to plants of conservation value is likely and may impose permit conditions.

Movement of livestock(livestock which are being moved on any Council controlled road other than droving or grazing or regular movement) does not require a permit, provided that:

- All livestock reach their destination by the most direct route consistent with the requirements of General Local Law No.7 clause 4.12,
- Livestock are only allowed on the road for the time it takes for the movement to their destination.
- Stock are only allowed on a road during daylight hours,
- Must be supervised by a competent person and adequate warning must be given to drivers on that road, with no traffic delays exceeding 5 minutes in any one crossing,
- Stock movement is not allowed on sections of the road that are determined by the Council to have high or very high conservation value, and;
- Comply with directions from Council with regards to; protection from damage caused by livestock to the road, the road reserve, roadside vegetation, any construction on the road or roadside drainage.

Regular movement of livestock (in excess of 52 separate movements in one 12 month



Image:

Illegal cropping on a Shire of Campaspe roadside.

period) between parts of one farm requires a permit. Livestock must be moved by the shortest distance as determined by Council. Regular movement of livestock must meet the requirements of movement of livestock, as listed above.

Cultivation and Ploughing

Ploughing, grading or cultivation on roadsides requires written consent for works on roadsides under General Local Law No. 7 and the *Road Management Act 2004*. Landholders are required to install firebreaks for private benefit on private land, as recommended by the CFA. Firebreaks for community benefit can only be constructed on public land on sites listed in the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan. Any infringement can result in rehabilitation works to compensate for biodiversity loss and to reduce the spread of weeds. The destruction of species listed under FFG Act 1988 and/or EPBC Act 1999 can result in prosecution under these Acts.

Slashing

Slashing of native vegetation with very high or high conservation value requires written consent from Council and a permit and consultation with DSE, except by authorised Council staff or contractors to improve traffic safety (i.e. at intersections to improve line of sight). Slashing of native grasses should not occur between October and February to allow native seed set, and blades on slashers should be set no lower than 150mm above the ground.

Cropping and Haymaking

Cropping or haymaking activities on roadsides require written consent from Council for works on roadsides (General Local Law No. 7 and *Road Management Act 2004*). Non-compliance could result in an infringement notice being issued. Anyone wishing to undertake these activities should apply to Council for the above permit and consent. Council will assess each application on a case by case basis subject to conditions at the time. Cropping and haymaking is not the preferred management for roadsides.

Machinery Movement

Due to the value placed on remnant vegetation, Council is reluctant to approve machinery movements requiring vegetation removal beyond normal clearance distances.



Drainage of Land

Landholders require a planning permit for earthworks that may alter the direction or rate of water flow across a property boundary, or change the point of water discharge from a property or increase the discharge of saline groundwater. Typical activities that might involve earthworks include; landforming, laser grading, levee banks, construction of lanes, tracks, channels and drains as well as above ground storages.

Landholders need to ensure water is retained on-farm through improved irrigation practices as the Environment Protection Authority can impose penalties for discharge offsite, including roadsides.

Farm storage

Storage of farm equipment, refuse, fencing materials or chemicals is prohibited on roadside reserves.



Image:

Grey Box roadside vegetation in the Shire of Campaspe. Note native grasses in foreground of picture.

Table 3 – Summary of Guiding Principles for Specific Activities on Roadsides.

Action	VERY HIGH + HIGH	Conservation Value MEDIUM	LOW
Native Vegetation Removal	Avoid removing native vegetation beyond the road formation where possible. Apart from exempt works a	Avoid removing native vegetation beyond the road formation where possible. Apart from exempt works a permit is required to remove native vegetation from roadsides.	Avoid removing native vegetation beyond the road formation where possible. Apart from exempt works a permit is required to remove native vegetation from roadsides.
Firewood collection	No firewood collecting permits are issued for roadsides.	No firewood collecting permits are issued for roadsides.	No firewood collecting permits are issued for roadsides.
Weed management	No broadacre spray applications to be conducted on these roadsides. Use hand weeding, rope wick applicator or spot spraying to remove isolated weeds in areas of native vegetation. Dispose at municipal disposal site.		Identify location of prominent weeds. Inform adjacent landholders of proposed weed control and encourage their involvement. Plan to slash weeds in late spring. To ease slashing consult with Council prior to removing stumps and fallen timber. Implement a program to remove woody weeds between March and July (except Blackberries, which require control during November to March).
Grazing on Roadsides	Droving or grazing is not permitted on Very High and High Conservation Value roadsides, unless approved by DSE for ecological management.	Limited droving or grazing may be permitted where ecological benefits such as weed control can be demonstrated, or to reduce fuel in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.	Droving will only be permitted when soils are not saturated or prone to compaction.
Slashing	If slashing is unavoidable, plan works to occur during early spring or autumn to minimise disturbance to native grasses and groundcovers.	If slashing is unavoidable, plan works to occur during early spring or autumn.	Check all sites prior to slashing operations and identify regenerating native vegetation with a stake or other appropriate method [e.g. temporary fencing].

Table 3: The foremost principle for all of the activities in Table 3 is that approval to remove native vegetation requires a planning permit. Secondly, consent from Council is required to work on a Council road reserve.



6.7 Summary of approval required for Roadside Activities.

Table 4 – Guideline Summary for Roadside Activities

Table 4 Summarises the required approvals for activities on roadsides. This table is also included in both the 'Community Roadside Management Handbook' and 'Roadside Environmental Code of Practice Handbook'.

Activity	Approval Required Native Vegetation on Roadsides	Point of Contact
To remove, lop or destroy native vegetation	Working on roadside permit required (even if the activity is exempt from a planning permit). Permit to take Protected Flora from DSE (for species listed under FFG Act 1988 exempt and non-exempt removal). A Forest Produce licence from DSE may be required.	Council Phone: 1300 666 535 DSE Phone 136 186 E:customer.service@dse.vic.gov.a
Revegetation	Working on roadside permit required.	Council
Collection of firewood	Not permitted on roadsides with exception if in an approved site to for a reduction burn identified in the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan. If collection approved, a Forest Produce licence from DSE is required.	Council
Droving	Local Law permit is required.	Council
Grazing (including regular movement of livestock as per General Local Law No. 7)	Local Law permit is required.	Council
Ploughing or grading	Local law permit required. Planning permit, if activity will remove, lop or destroy native vegetation. If vegetation is protected, require Protected Flora permit.	Council DSE
Cropping	Planning permit required. Planning permit, if activity will remove, lop or destroy native vegetation. If vegetation is protected, require Protected Flora permit.	
Mowing /Slashing Working on roadside permit required. Planning permit, if activity will remove, lop or destroy native vegetation. If vegetation is protected, require Protected Flora permit.		Council DSE
Haymaking	Not permitted on roadsides.	
Fire Prevention	Permission from Municipal Fire Prevention Officer	Council
Spraying	Working on roadside permit required	Council

Table 4 – Guideline Summary for Roadside Activities Cont.

Activity	Native Vege Astivi t\on Roadsides	Point of Contact
Fencing	Working on roadside permit required, if working from the	Council
	road reserve. Planning permit if overlays present for removal is beyond exemption. If vegetation is protected, require Protected Flora permit. Forest Produce licence if timber is removed from roadside.	DSE
Seed Collection	Working on roadside permit + seed collection permit from DSE.	Council
	DOL.	DSE
Earthworks	Working on roadside permit required.	Council
	Planning permit, if activity will remove, lop or destroy native vegetation. If vegetation is protected, require Protected Flora permit.	DSE
	Waterways and Wetlands	
Any works on the banks or beds of a waterway.	Works on Waterways permit. Planning permit if native vegetation being removed.	NCCMA / GBCMA (03) 5448 7124 / (03) 5820 1100 Council
	Cultural Heritage	
Any works or activities that may disturb or damage site of cultural heritage.	Notification or approval, depending on the nature of the works.	Aboriginal Affairs for Aboriginal sites. Heritage Victoria for European Sites.





7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In order to reflect changes to existing management practices that contribute to a loss or to an improvement to conservation rankings and to meet changing community expectations, this Strategy will be reviewed every four years to coincide with the review of the Planning Scheme

Actions specified in the Strategy will be reported against annually.

A Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy is required to assess the progress of implementation of this Plan. The following performance indicators have been identified.

Annually:

- Review Council's on-line documentation to see if the relevant documents have been updated to include reference to this Roadside Conservation Strategy. This would include:
- Develop a Vegetation Protection
 Overlay to incorporate the Roadside
 Conservation Values embodied in this
 Plan.
- 1b Review Council Local Laws to ensure they cover issues which cannot be fully addressed through the planning system including the application of overlays in relation to the protection of roadside conservation values.

 Issues such as fencing, stock crossing, storage, bee keeping, pest animal management, firewood collection, haymaking and cropping, and revegetation works.
- 1c All tender and contract documentation will be cross-referenced to the Roadside Conservation Plan.

- 2. Conduct a review of works undertaken on roadsides in the municipality, to measure compliance.
- Commence photo point recording, and other monitoring, of high value and medium value roadside vegetation to monitor (visual) change over time, include grasslands.

After four years:

 Review incident reporting and investigation procedures to see whether gains have been made from the development and implementation of the Roadside Conservation Strategy.

REFERENCES

Country Fire Authority (2001) Roadside Fire Management Works - Guidelines and Procedures. Country Fire Authority Victoria.

Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework - A Framework for Action, Department of Natural Resources & Environment, The State of Victoria.

Department of Sustainability and Environment (2005) Advisory List of Rare or Threatened Plants in Victoria – 2005. Department of Sustainability and Environment, East Melbourne, Victoria.

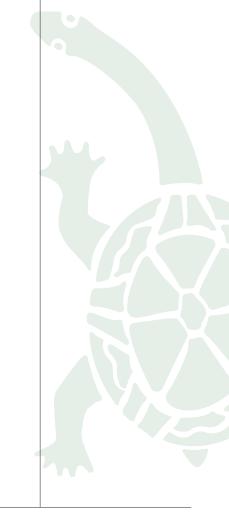
Department of Sustainability and Environment (2007) Advisory List of Threatened Vertebrate Fauna in Victoria – 2007. Department of Sustainability and Environment, East Melbourne, Victoria.

Department of Sustainability and Environment (2009) Advisory List of Threatened Invertebrate Fauna in Victoria – 2009. Department of Sustainability and Environment, East Melbourne, Victoria.

Goulburn-Broken Catchment Roadside Biodiversity Risk Management Protocols Project (2007), Goulburn-Broken Catchment Roadside Biodiversity Risk Management Project.

VicRoads (2005) A Guide to Working in the Road Reserve Road Management Act 2004. VicRoads, Victoria.

VicRoads (2006) Roadside Handbook: An Environmental Guide for Road Construction & Maintenance. VicRoads www.vicroads.vic.gov.au





GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Bioregion To improve natural resource management in Australia, a national

framework of .Bioregions exists. Bioregions recognise the ecological and biophysical characteristics of the landscapes and provide a natural

framework for management.

Conservation Status Refers to Bioregional Conservation Status and is based on the level of

depletion and rarity of vegetation types (ecological vegetation classes).

Conservation Value Value (very high, high, medium or low) given to roadsides based on

assessment that examines roadside width, fauna habitat, degree of regeneration, wildlife corridor, weed cover, site disturbance and presence of rare/flora and fauna species and/or communities.

Declared Road Freeways, arterial roads (which include tourist roads, highways

and forest roads) which are managed and maintained by VicRoads in accordance with VicRoads Corporate Practice and Roadside

Management Plans.

Ecological Vegetation Class A mapping unit used to describe groups of plants which occur together

in similar environments. Several EVCs exist in any one Bioregion.

Environmental Weed A plant that colonises natural vegetation and threatens conservation

values. It can be an exotic or native plant that is not indigenous to the area. They are so called, because their presence is in some way

detrimental to the natural environment.

lines and provide a clear traffic route.

Fuel Reduced Zone Area of minimum fuel or vegetative hazard that is maintained in a

fuel reduced condition to the extent that the passage of fire will be

restricted (e.g. Short green lawn, paths, driveway).

Grazing of Stock Using a particular area for grazing rather than for droving or movement

of livestock.

Indigenous Vegetation Native vegetation that occurs naturally in a local district, including

trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses.

Movement of Stock Regular movement of livestock as part of normal farming practices on

a regular basis from one paddock to another or on an occasional basis

from one paddock or property to another.

Native Vegetation Plants (including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses) which are

indigenous to an area.

Net Gain Net Gain is a reversal across the entire landscape of the decline in the

extent and quality of native vegetation.

Non Declared or Local Road Roads that are managed and maintained by Council.

Noxious Weed A plant listed under the Catchment and Land Protection Act that

requires either eradication or control (dependent on the category).

Priority Access Road A road that is critical for an ensured transport route for travellers and

provides a link between critical locations to reduce travel time for fire

fighters.

Remnant Vegetation Remaining native vegetation.

Road Formation That portion of the road reserve along which vehicles travel. It includes

the road pavement, shoulders and the area to the outermost side of the roadside drain, at least to where the drain batter meets the natural

surface. This area includes the table drain.

Road Reserve The total strip of land reserved for transportation purposes from fence

line to fence line or boundary to boundary if unfenced. The road reserve

usually consists a central road formation bounded by roadsides.

Roadside The strip of land that supports vegetation between the road formation and

the boundary of the road reserve, which is usually also the boundary of

the adjacent property.

Roadside Biological CorridorNative roadside vegetation, usually of higher conservation value, which

connects blocks of remnant vegetation, provides a strategic link for wildlife

movement and serves as a gene pool for flora.

Set Back A minimum distance that works must be located from fencelines (for

repairs) or road centres (for safety).

Sites of Significance Sites of either cultural, historical or conservation significance.

Unused Road Reserve A road that has been gazetted under the Crown Lands Act where it is not

used for public traffic. Department of Sustainability and Environment then

becomes the responsible authority.





Shire of Campaspe Works on Roadsides Permit Form

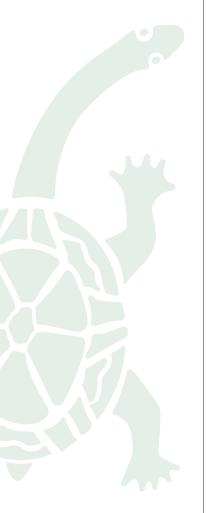
Works Within Road Reserves - Non Utilities / Municipal Roads This notification / application is provided in accordance with - 1. Road Management Act 2004, Schedule 7 2. Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2005								
Use this form: (i) Notif Coordinating Road Aut		ed works, (ii) Application for	consent, or	r (iii) No	otification of	completed work	s to the
GENERAL INFORMAT	TION							
Date: / /	_	Permit Nur	mber:			Your Refe	renœ:	
Type: (Please tick the ap	plicable())	Notific	ation of propose	d works	or	Applio	ation for consen	t
To: (Coordinating Road Authority	Council:						Fee: \$ 56.72	
PROPERTY DETAILS:	:							
Property Owners Name/s:								
Property Address: (Location of Works)				Clty/To	wn:			
S	State:		Postcode:					
Property Number: (As per Rates notice)	•							
YOUR DETAILS:								
	wner – as above uilder		Occupier Contract					
Name:				A	BN (If a	wallable)		
Address						one (BH)		
					•	one (AH)		
	Clty/Town:				acsimi lobile:			
	Postcode:			E	mall A	ddress:		
Works Manager:								
Insurance Details (Please attach copy of Public Liability Insurance)								
DETAILS OF WORK								
Work Type: (Please tick applicable items) ☐ Service Connection ☐ Drainage Connection ☐ Vehicle Crossing ☐ Other (please specify)								
Description of Works: (Include list of Assets affected by works)								
Proposed Start Date:								

36 ROADSIDE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Lifestyle & Opportunity

TRAFFIC IMPACT					
1.	Will a Traffic Management Plan be in operation during the proposed works? (Please tick applicable) Yes No				
l.	(Note: Refers to 99A of the Roads Safety Act 1985 and Code of Practice for Worksite Safety – Traffic Management)				
2	Will major traffic control devices requiring a "Memorandum of Consent" be used? (Please tek applicable)				
ı	☐ Yes ☐ No Examples of major traffic control devices include speed limit signs, traffic signals (including portable traffic				
l	signals, etc. (Note: refer Road Safety (Road Rules) 1999 and Code of Practice for Worksite Safety - Traffic				
	Management)				
3.	Will the works:				
	(a) Require deviation of vehicular traffic into on-coming traffic lane? ☐ Yes ☐ No				
ı	(b) Be conducted in a clearway when in operation?				
	(c) Be conducted on, partly or affect a bridge or other structure? ☐ Yes ☐ No				
4.	Will closure of the road or part of the road to vehicular traffic be required for?				
ı	(a) A continuous period of more than 12 hours?				
ı	(b) More than 24 hours in a 7 day period?				
5.	If "Yes" to either 4(a) or 4(b), then what is:				
ı	(a) The number of traffic lanes to be closed?Lanes				
ı	(b) The length of traffic lane to be closed (1 st lane) km / maters applicable				
	(c) The length of traffic lane to be closed (2 rd lane)km / maters items)				
6.	Please provide any other relevant traffic information, including impact on pedestrians				
	(Including provision for people with disabilities) and cyclists:				
wo	RKS MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES:				
	ciples applying to infrastructure managers and works managers:				
(1)	An infrastructure manager or a works manager must have regard to the principles specified in this clause in the				
(2)	provision of; The Primary purpose of a road used by members of the public and authorized users must be managed as far as is				
(2)	reasonable:				
(3)	(3) Without limiting the generality of sub-clause (2), authorized users must be managed so as to – a) Minimise any damage to roads and road infrastructure;				
ı	 Ensure that works necessary for the provision of non-road infrastructure are conducted as quickly as 				
ı	practicable; c) Minimise any disruption to road users;				
ı	 d) Minimise any disruption to road users; d) Minimise any risk to the safety and property of road users and the public generally; 				
ı	Facilitate the design and installation of infrastructure which minimizes any risk to the safety of road users;				
ı	f) Ensure that the road and any other infrastructure is reinstated as nearly as practicable to the condition				
ı	axisting before the works;				
l	 Protect and preserve existing significant roadside vegetation and sites of biological significance within the road reserve. 				
(Ro	ad Management Act – Schedule 7, Section 14)				
_	ase provide sketch of proposed works:				
Piec	ase provide sketch of proposed works:				
l					
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Created 18 April 2007



APPENDIX 2.

Noxious Weeds and Environmental Weeds in the Shire of Campaspe

Declared Noxious Weeds

Common Name	Scientific Name	North Central CMA	Goulburn Broken CMA
African Boxthorn	Lycium ferocissimum	С	С
Amsincka	Amsinckia spp.	С	С
Bathurst Burr	Xanthium spinosum	С	С
Blackberry*	Rubus fructicosa	С	С
Boneseed/ Bitou Bush*	Chrysanthemoides monilifera	Р	С
Bridal Creeper*	Asparagus asparagoides	R	R
Caltrop/ Bindii	Tribulus terrestris	С	С
Cape Tulip (one-leaf)	Moraea flaccida	С	С
Cape Tulip (two-leaf)	Moraea miniata	С	С
Gorse*	Ulex europaeus	С	С
Horehound	Marrubium vulgare	С	С
lvy-leafed Sida	Malvella leprosa	S	S
Onion weed	Asphoedelus fisulosus	R	R
Paterson's Curse	Echium plantagineum	С	С
Prickly Pear	Opuntia stricta	С	R
Scotch Thistle /Spear Thistle	Cirsium vulgare	R	R
Silverleaf nightshade	Solanum elaeagnifolium	С	С
Spiny Rush	Juncus acutus	С	С
St. John's Wort	Hypercium perforatum	С	С
Sweet Briar	Rosa rubiginosa	С	С
Variegated thistle	Silybum marianum	R	С
Willows*	Salix.spp	R	R
S = State Prohibited, * Weeds of National Sign	P = Regionally Prohibited nificance	I, C = Regionally Contro	lled, R = Restricted

Lifestyle & Opportunity

Environmental Weeds

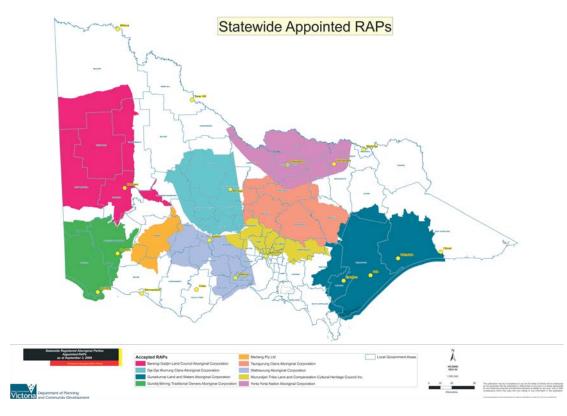
Common Name	Scientific Name
Arrowhead	Sagittaria graminea
Barley grass	Hordeum Vulgare
Blue Periwinkle	Vinca major
Cambungi#	Typha spp
Common Olive	Olea Europaea
Couch	Cynodon dactylon
Date palm	Phoenix dactylifera
Deadly Nightshade	Atropa belladonna
Desert Ash	Fraxinus angustifolia
Fat Hen	Chenopodium album
Ferny cotula	Cotula bipinnata
Gazania	Gazania linearis and Gazania rigens
Hogweed	Zaleya galericulata subsp. australis
Marshmallow	Malva spp.
Paspalum	Paspalum dilatatum
Peppercorn trees	Schinus molle
Phalaris	Phalaris spp.
Ox Tongue	Helminthotheca echoides
Soursob	Oxalis prs-caprae
Quaking grass	Briza maxima
Rye Grass	Lolium spp.
Silver Poplar	Populus alba
Silverleaf Nightshade	Solanum elaeagnifolium
Wild Fruit Trees	Various species
Wild Oats	Avena fatua
# native species that can be a weed in certa	in locations





APPENDIX 3.

Statewide Map of Registered Aboriginal Parties by Local Government Area



Registered Aboriginal Parties within the Campaspe Shire and contact details are as follows:

Dja Dja Wurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation

Contact: Drew Berick

Email: dberick@ntsv.com.au • Phone: (03) 9321 5304

Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation

Contact: Kim Monohan (Executive Officer)

Email: taungurung@gmail.com • Phone: (03) 5869 3353

Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation

Contact: Neville Atkinson (Chairperson)

Email: reception@yynac.com.au • Phone: (03) 5869 3353

