

TEA – SUBMISSION REGARDING PRIORITY VEGETATION MAPPING AT REEDY MARSH

MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL RESPONSE 27.8.19

The Environment Association has made further submissions regarding the inaccuracy of TASVEG 3.0 mapping for the purposes of defining the Priority Vegetation Area (PVA) overlay. In support of that submission, the TEA enlisted the services of Mr Phil Cullen, botanist, to identify localised examples of inaccuracies at Reedy Marsh, with particular reference to Threatened Native Vegetation Communities (TNVC's) that have not been identified in the overlay map. Mr Cullen's analysis was drawn from observations along Wadleys Road, Silver Wattle Drive, Johns Road, Farrells Road, Larcombes Road and a particular block off Kelly's Road.

In the LPS hearings on the Natural Assets Code and the PVA overlay, Council undertook to include omitted areas of TNVC's where they could be appropriately verified. Section LP1.7.5(d) of the SPP's provides that a *"planning authority may modify the priority vegetation area derived under clause LP1.7.5(c) based on field verification, analysis or mapping undertaken by, the planning authority or a suitably qualified person on behalf of the planning authority, which ... (i) addresses any anomalies or inaccuracies in the mapping and data in sub-clause LP1.7.5(c)"*.

The inaccuracy of the data that is required to be included in the PVA overlay was openly acknowledged at the hearings and is described in Council's report under s.35G. The findings of Mr Cullen regarding data accuracy at Reedy Marsh are not surprising. The TEA submission asserts at Page 5, that "it is expected that MVC would attend to any field investigations". Council does not recall this being a requirement of the Commission, nor is it required by the legislative process. Council maintains its clear position that it would not, of its own accord, undertake detailed site assessments to verify the data as this would set a precedent for the approximately 2500 square kilometres of applicable zoning, on which it is simply not feasible to conduct site assessments as part of the LPS process.

Council was also clear that acceptance of additional PVA overlay mapping would be contingent on site verification and field work on the land that would properly identify the extent of an omitted TNVC. This is consistent with the work required to upload amended TNVC data to 'TASVEG Live' through the DPIPWE. Whilst Council does not question the conclusions of Mr Cullen, the extent of probable TNVC's has not been verified on the ground by accessing the subject lots. The condition of the vegetation community is a key component of its classification as a TNVC and this cannot be verified without the assessor conducting an on-ground assessment.

The one exception to this is the information provided by Mr Ricketts for his own titles, which was verified 'on-ground' by a suitably qualified person at the time the conservation covenant was created over the land. It is noted that the majority of the titles are subject to the PVA overlay, however the underlying data of the Regional Ecosystem Model does not identify TNVC's that were a key factor in the approval of the conservation covenant. Figure 1 below highlights the TNVC's on Mr Ricketts land that are not identified in the PVA overlay data. Whilst not practically impacting the application or operation of the overlay (particularly given the conservation covenant), it does affect the description of the data values that would be generated in the Priority Vegetation Report available through Council's LPS mapping platform, which will be a permanent service when the LPS is declared and operational. (See attached reports generated on the basis of existing data) This can be rectified for Mr Rickett's properties through inclusion of the TNVC data that was attached to the TEA submission in the PVA overlay data.



Figure 1 – Copy of Ricketts, *Vegetation of proposed covenant*, 2009, showing identified TNVC's in red outline.

The submissions of the TEA and Mr Cullen express concern that a failure to rectify the data inaccuracies will result in the loss of critically endangered vegetation, as these areas will not be incorporated into assessment under the planning scheme. Despite not being included in the PVA overlay map, and therefore within the ambit of the planning scheme, there remain obligations under the Forest Practices Regulations in regard to obtaining a Forest Practices Plan for the removal of TNVC's as they are classed as 'vulnerable land'. The exemption only applies if a permit is granted under LUPAA. For the removal of TNVC's, it will be subject to either the planning system or the forest practices system. The long term and continuing risk of the loss of TNVC's is when parties choose to remove vegetation without enquiring about, or obtaining, the necessary approvals. This will be the case irrespective of the accuracy of the PVA overlay map or TASVEG.

The conclusions and analysis of Mr Cullen can be forwarded to DPIPWE for consideration for further works and amendments to TASVEG 3.0. Whilst Council is not prepared to accept it as the basis for amending the PVA overlay, there is merit in highlighting the discrepancy to the agency that holds TNVC data, particularly in light of the recent EPBC Act listing of Ovata communities. Whilst ongoing changes to the data cannot be considered in planning schemes until an amendment is effected, there is value in improving the accuracy of TASVEG 3.0 data as this can be considered in any future assessment under the forest practices system.

Priority Vegetation Report

PID	CT	Address	Locality	Improvements	Area (m ²)
3011274	204936/1	780 LARCOMBES RD	REEDY MARSH TAS 7304	DWELLING	409528

Priority Vegetation Overview

PRIORITY VEGETATION OVERVIEW MAP



The Priority Vegetation Area overlay is based on the Regional Ecosystem Model. However, the overlay contained in the planning scheme is shown only over zones to which it can apply.

The Regional Ecosystem Model (REM) is a comprehensive, high resolution spatial analysis that identifies:

- native vegetation and threatened species and their relative conservation status and management priority;
- the characteristics of the landscape that may affect its ability to sustain these elements.

The subsets of information that are included are:

- Threatened native vegetation communities is based on TasVeg 3.0, but has been corrected for inherent logical consistency issues and includes credible field-based mapping where it was available.
- Threatened flora and fauna species locations and habitat are modelled using two methods:
 - Rules applied to Natural Values Atlas (NVA) records that are customised for each species to

reflect their patterns of local distribution (e.g. riparian species), based on a limited number of habitat variables; and

- More detailed habitat models for about 100 threatened fauna species that reflect agreed habitat definitions used by the Forest Practices Authority but utilise a much wider range of data, including landforms and vegetation structural maturity, to more accurately identify habitat and potential habitat.
- Native vegetation of local importance includes:
 - a subset of threatened fauna species habitat models,
 - native vegetation with limited bioregional reservation and extent and native vegetation remnants on heavily cleared types of land where local factors affect ecological sustainability of the landscape.

Each local area contributes to the survival of threatened vegetation communities, threatened flora and threatened fauna within a State wide mosaic that enables the distribution of species to be maintained and provides for mobility of fauna through connected habitat.

Each subset of data that is identified on the property is described below.

Priority Vegetation Details

Relative Rarity



- unknown (NNP)

Relative rarity, or extent, is scaled to reflect increased importance for vegetation types which are more restricted, and less importance for those which are relatively extensive. The threshold of 2,000 ha is used by the Forest Practices Authority.

Why is it included?

- Less than 2000 hectares of the community in the bioregion

Data Source:

- TasVeg 3.0 (minor exceptions)

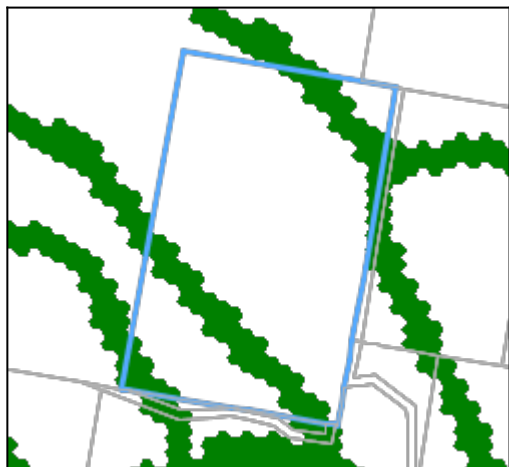
Reliability:

- Highly variable

Management:

- Check TasVeg for field verification
- Consider local extent, condition & management options
- Potentially require on-ground field verification

Threatened Fauna and Significant Habitat



Threatened Fauna
• giant freshwater crayfish

These are species listed as threatened fauna under the Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act (1975) or Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999). Listed threatened species have statutory recognition that they are likely to become extinct if the factors causing them to be threatened are not managed. Species may be listed due to historical loss since settlement, natural rarity giving rise to potential risk, or impacts of particular land use and land management practices.

Threatened fauna habitat characteristics are extremely varied and are modelled as significant based on Natural Values Atlas records with a limited number of habitat variables or more detailed customised models for about 100 fauna species. Some species habitat occurs across the landscape but not all sites may be essential for species survival and not all suitable habitat may be occupied. Species that rely on this type of habitat are classified as landscape-dependent and are regarded as being of local importance, however the relative importance of the site to the survival of the species can only be known in response to field verification, the context and the nature of a proposal.

Why is it included?

- Statutory recognition that species extinction is likely, however not all sites are important or occupied

Data Source:

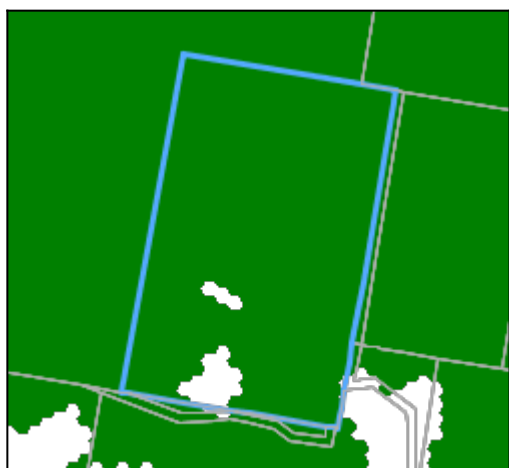
- NVA records combined with REM point-based modelling rules
- Habitat-based models

Reliability:

- Variable

Management:

- Check species observation source
- Check data on habitat and local context
- Potentially require on-ground field verification



Threatened Fauna Habitat
• masked owl
• spotted-tailed quoll

Contacts

Telephone: 03 6393 5300

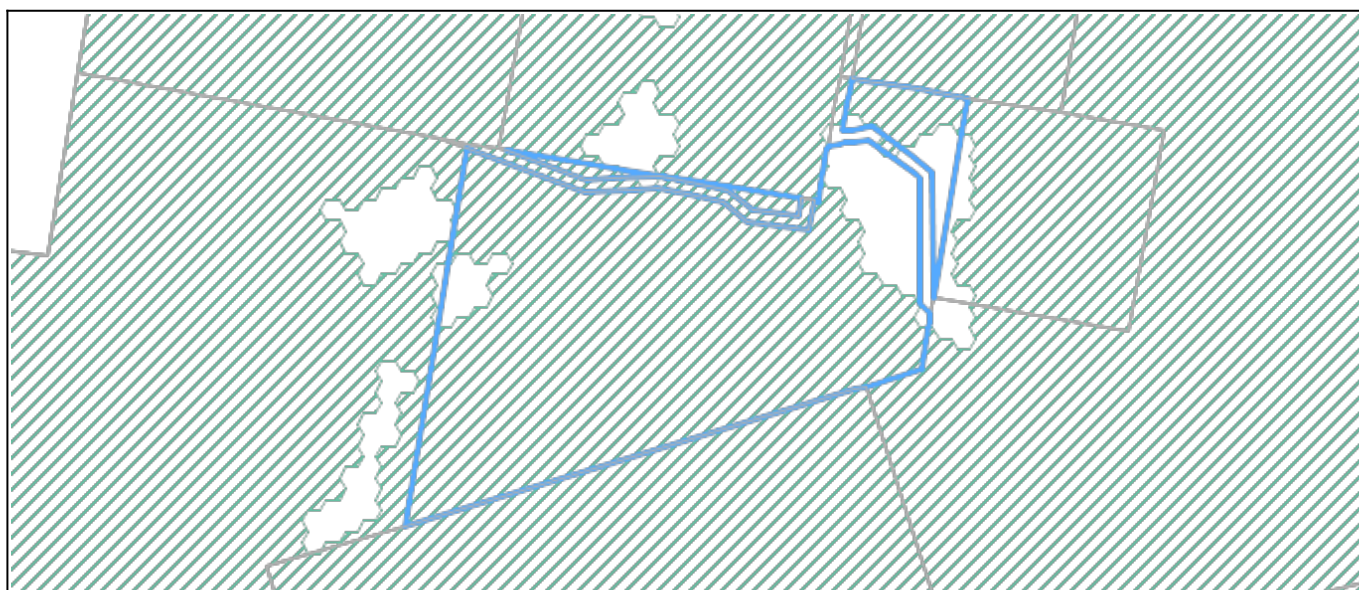
Email: mail@mvc.tas.gov.au

Priority Vegetation Report

PID	CT	Address	Locality	Improvements	Area (m ²)
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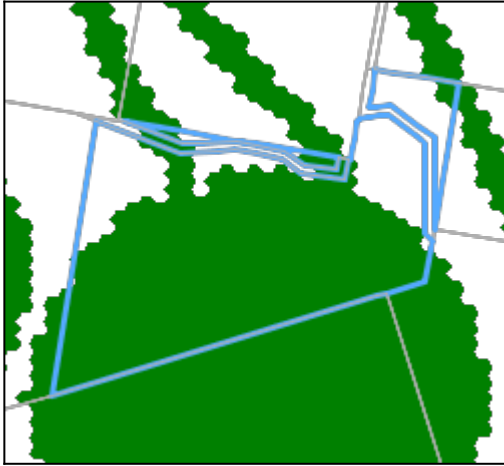
Reliability:

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Management:

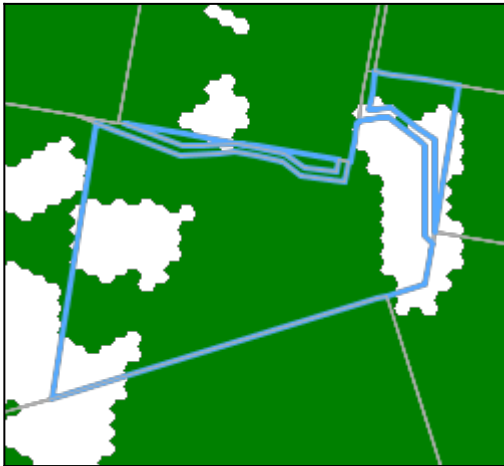
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Threatened Fauna and Significant Habitat



Threatened Fauna

- giant freshwater crayfish
- grey goshawk



Threatened Fauna Habitat

- masked owl
- spotted-tailed quoll

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