

# NATIVE VEGETATION CONSERVATION FACTSHEETS



ADDING VALUE TO THE NATURAL ASSETS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

## Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Management Plan

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### Overview

Regional Vegetation Management Plans (RVMPs) are 10 year plans being developed under the *Native Vegetation Conservation Act 1997* (NVC Act) that provide for the management, protection and conservation of native vegetation based on regional needs.

The Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Committee formed in 1999 to develop a RVMP for the Riverina Highlands Native Vegetation Region.



The Riverina Highlands RVMP provides a blueprint for the conservation and management of native vegetation in the region over the next 10 years. The Riverina Highlands Native Vegetation Region covers the local government areas of Tumut, Tumbarumba and Holbrook and those parts of Hume, Gundagai and Wagga Wagga east of the Hume Highway.

### Why have a RVMP for the Riverina Highlands?

The Riverina Highlands region covers the high altitude, high rainfall headwaters of the Murrumbidgee and Murray River catchments. Much of the region is productive agricultural land, used for grazing, cropping, horticulture and increasingly native forestry and pine plantations.

Native vegetation conservation and management was seen as a matter of significance in the region for a number of reasons including:

- The extensive clearing that has already occurred in the region;
- The region's potential for timber plantation establishment and expansion;
- The significant interest of the community in undertaking regional planning for native vegetation management and a desire for clear guidelines;
- The community's desire for the orderly development of sustainable agriculture, forestry operations that balance conservation and development interests;
- The desire to ensure consistency in the approach by local governments in the carrying out of their responsibilities for native vegetation, including consistency between Local Environment Plans.

### How was the Plan developed?

The Plan was developed by the Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Committee, which is community-based and includes rural, conservation, Indigenous and government interests of the region. The members of the committee were appointed by the Minister for Land and Water Conservation.

The committee consulted extensively with the community during the development of the Plan, holding a number of Community Information Forums throughout the region to provide an opportunity for inviting community input and comment. The draft Plan and supporting documentation were publicly exhibited from December 2001 to the end of February 2002.

## What is the goal of the Plan?

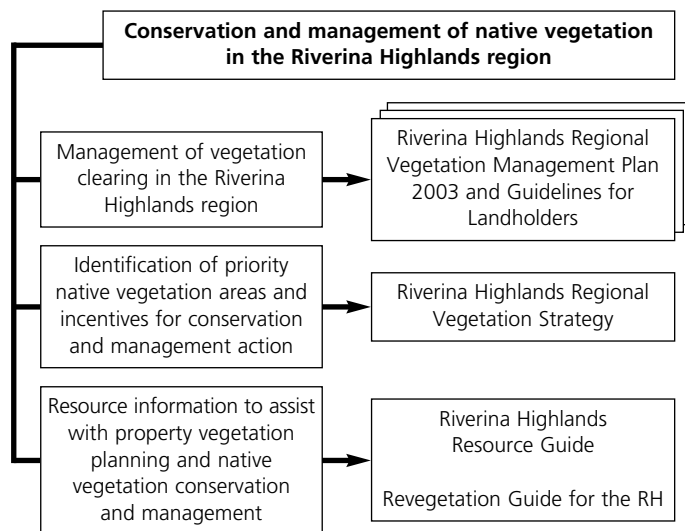
The Plan has the goal of stemming, and reversing, the decline of native vegetation, so that there will be 'no net loss' in its quality and quantity. This will be achieved through both the local regulation of land clearing, and the provision of incentives to landholders to enable them to look after native vegetation.

The Committee's vision is to empower people to ensure healthy native vegetation is integrated into a vibrant regional community. In order to achieve this vision, the ten-year plan sets out targets for the retention, protection and re-establishment of native vegetation in priority areas including high conservation value areas, Regional Protected Lands, and recharge areas.

There are five parts to achieving the Vision, which include:

1. Identifying priority areas and actions for conservation and management;
2. Incentive payments for landholders and land managers;
3. The management of land clearing;
4. Encouraging property vegetation planning; and
5. Improved public land management.

The diagram below lists each of the Riverina Highlands regional native vegetation planning documents and their role.



## Regulatory Plan

The Riverina Highlands RVMP contains clearing consent provisions specifying whether or not development consent is required for clearing native vegetation or regional protected land, pursuant to Section 25 (2) (a) of the NVC Act. The Regulatory Plan is supported by a range of advice and incentive strategies. These strategies are detailed in the Regional Vegetation Strategy.

## Regulatory Manual

This document supports the Regulatory Plan and contains all guidelines and maps as referenced in the Regulatory Plan. The Regulatory Manual is available at gazettal.

## Regional Vegetation Strategy

The Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Management Strategy is an advisory document that identifies priority areas and actions for conservation and management of native vegetation in the region. It also recommends the types and levels of incentives that are required by landholders and land managers to undertake action in priority areas through the development and implementation of property vegetation plans (PVPs) and improved public land management. The Strategy is to be published and available by the time of commencement of the Plan, which will be three months after gazettal.

## Resource Guide

A Resource Guide that has been developed for the region guides the development of property vegetation plans, providing a 'toolkit' for the conservation and management of native vegetation at a property scale. The Resource Guide will be added to and developed over time. The Resource Guide will be available at the time of commencement of the RVMP.

## Guidelines for landholders

Guidelines have been developed to explain aspects of the Riverina Highlands RVMP. They will assist landholders and land managers to interpret the Plan. Several of the guidelines form part of the Regulatory Manual.

## Factsheets

A series of Factsheets have been developed to explain components of the RVMP and any supporting documentation. These Factsheets will be available at the time of commencement of the RVMP.

## How will the Plan be implemented?

The Plan provides the basis for the management of native vegetation in the Riverina Highlands. Table 13 of the Strategy details the partnerships that are involved in the many aspects of improving the management of native vegetation in the Region. While the Department of Land and Water Conservation is responsible for administering the Plan regulations, landholders, local councils, National Parks & Wildlife Service, NSW Agriculture, community organisations and the Regional Vegetation Committee, all have roles to play.

## Further information

For further information about the Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Management Plan 2003 and the Strategy, contact your local DLWC office

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