

NATIVE VEGETATION CONSERVATION FACTSHEETS

ADDING VALUE TO THE NATURAL ASSETS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

What is the Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Management Strategy?

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What is the role of the Strategy?

The Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Management Strategy (Riverina Highlands RVMS) is a supplementary document to the Riverina Highlands Regional Vegetation Management Plan (Riverina Highlands RVMP). See also **Factsheet No. 2**.

Both the Plan and the Strategy have 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 the local regulation of land clearing (contained in a regulatory Plan explained in **Factsheet No. 2**), and the provision of incentives to landholders to enable them to look after native vegetation (contained in an advisory Strategy). The Strategy recognises the need for a balance between incentives and native vegetation clearing controls to achieve regional native vegetation targets.

Together, the Strategy and the Plan aim for improved conservation and management of native vegetation within the region by integrating native vegetation management into land management practices. This is to be achieved through the development of Property Vegetation Plans which reflect regional priorities for native vegetation, to be implemented with improved incentives.

Identifying Regional Priorities

The Strategy identifies priority actions that should be undertaken in priority areas across the Riverina Highlands landscape, over a 10 year period and beyond, ultimately to maintain the quality and quantity of native vegetation in the region.

The priority areas that have been identified in the region include:

- High Conservation Value Areas;
- Regional Protected Lands; and
- Recharge Areas.

The priority actions necessary for the conservation of native vegetation in the region include:

- Property vegetation planning, including description and assessment of native vegetation;
- Encouraging natural regeneration;
- Replanting shrub and understorey species;
- Revegetation in strategic areas;
- Pest plant and animal control;
- Monitoring native vegetation; and
- Ongoing sustainable management of native vegetation.

Proposed package of incentives for landholders and land managers

Conservation and management of native vegetation are those activities that maintain and enhance the diversity of native plants and animals. The benefits of these include:

- protection of catchments from land degradation, such as salinity and soil erosion;
- maintaining and enhancing water quality and river flow;
- maintaining the scenic and visual appeal of the region;
- conserving flora and fauna, including threatened species; and
- conserving our cultural heritage.

Because these works have a degree of public good associated with them, the importance of providing incentives to enable landholders to undertake conservation management of native vegetation is recognised.



The Strategy recommends a model for the delivery of incentives to achieve the regional targets. It proposes the types and levels of incentives that should be available in the Riverina Highlands. The model proposed is consistent with the types of incentives that are being proposed by the Catchment Management Boards.

Encouraging Property Vegetation Planning

The development of Property Vegetation Plans that reflect regional native vegetation priorities, is a key tool to be implemented with incentives. They are beneficial in recognising the value of a property and its natural assets, streamlining the consent process for clearing activities, qualifying for incentives, getting the 'big picture' of a property's natural resources and planning for sustainable development.

The process for developing a PVP involves:

- Getting support;
- Preparing a base map;
- Proposed management of native vegetation;
- Identifying areas for conservation of native vegetation;
- Identifying areas for retention of native vegetation;
- Identifying areas for proposed clearing; and
- Obtaining approval.

Improved public land management

Because public lands are a resource that provide benefits to the community and environment, these areas should be managed to maximise these benefits. Often the best remnants of native vegetation occur on public land. When there is little native vegetation left in the surrounding landscape, these remnants on public lands are particularly important. Public Lands include roadsides, stock routes, and areas of Crown Land.



Remnant White Box - Gundagai Cemetery

The regulation of clearing on public lands is an important part of achieving good conservation outcomes for native vegetation. However, as for private land, incentives are needed to enable the implementation of activities that are for the public good. The Strategy proposes that incentives be made available to Councils and Rural Lands Protection Boards for the management of native vegetation on public land.

Implementation Action Plan

The Strategy provides an Action Plan for Implementation which identifies the actions necessary for the implementation of the both the Plan and the Strategy.

The Strategy also details principles for implementing the aims, objectives and targets, tools for implementation monitoring indicators and standards, a reporting and review timetable and a process for amending the documents.

Further information

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Riverina Highlands regional native vegetation planning documents and their role

