

Notice to Stakeholders July 2006

Border Ranges Hotspot Rainforest
Multi-species Recovery Plan

1Newsletter #2
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Contents
Background 1
GIS 1
Fauna 1
Flora 1
Threats 1
Indigenous consultation 2
Community consultation 2
Want more information or to get involved? 2
Background

The first interstate meeting of the Border Ranges Rainforest Multi-species Recovery team was held at Binna Burra in March 2006. At this meeting, six specialist teams were established to address six key components of plan preparation.

This newsletter for the project provides an update of how the specialist teams have progressed since their formation.

GIS

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to share spatially mapped data. This will allow the development of GIS datasets across the state boundary in the study area. These data include vegetation mapping, threatened species records, conservation reserves, biogeographic regionalisations, wildlife corridors and identified areas of biodiversity significance. Negotiations are also underway to obtain other GIS datasets such as roads, rivers, land use zonings, terrain and species models. These datasets will be important for undertaking biodiversity conservation analysis for developing priorities for recovery actions.

Other work has been undertaken to analyse the study area by dividing it into sub-regions based on topography, extant vegetation and land use. For each of these

regions, analysis has been undertaken to compare the area of conservation reserves, amount of wet sclerophyll forest and rainforest, and the degree of vegetation connectivity and rainforest fragmentation.

This will help in providing a comparative overview of parts of the study area and will assist in assessing threats and assigning priorities for recovery actions.

Fauna

The fauna team has been finalising the list of species that will be addressed by the multi-species plan. All rainforest and wet sclerophyll forest fauna known to occur within the Border Ranges Hotspot and considered threatened at either the NSW, Queensland or Commonwealth level will be included in the plan. Other rainforest dependant fauna that are not listed as threatened but are considered to be priorities for conservation in the Border Ranges hotspot will also be considered.

A process of refining existing fauna habitat models is also underway. This process aims to refine the models by incorporating assessments of species' habitat connectivity, movement and home range areas, to predict the potential for populations to persist in the face of localised extinction and recolonisation.

Flora

The flora team has been busy finalising the list of plants and ecological communities that will be addressed by the multi-species plan. Similar to the fauna list described above, the list will include a mix of both threatened and priority flora.

Work is also being undertaken on behalf of the recovery team by botanical experts to develop a conceptual framework to address flora at the multi-species level. This involves grouping flora into management assemblages based on key species attributes relating to life history and morphology.

Threats

The team has been collating information from various sources and will be identifying a final list of threats (both

sources and stresses) on the rainforest species of the study area when the team meets in July.

The team is also investigating the spatial mapping of threats (either directly or through surrogates). This will be used to identify and prioritise recovery actions to control or mitigate threats at a landscape, regional or site-specific scale.

Indigenous consultation

The Indigenous consultation panel is currently researching international and national best practice models for Indigenous engagement in biodiversity planning and development. Components from several of these models will form the basis for Indigenous consultation on the Multi-species Recovery Plan project.

Meanwhile, Northern Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Officers from the DEC Cultural Heritage Division are currently assisting the team in the final stages of distributing information to the Indigenous community on how they can be involved in the project. Initial meetings have been held with Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the Ballina, Casino, Lismore and Tweed areas to discuss the project. The Team Leader has also had the pleasure of attending a meeting with the Eastern Yugambeh Limited Native Title Group in Queensland to formally introduce the project and answer any queries.

Community consultation

The initial meeting at Binna Burra identified a range of key tasks to guide the community consultation team. This team seeks to engage and inform the wider community of the aims of the Multi-species Recovery Plan project and facilitate community input into plan development and implementation.

July 2006 will see the team identifying all key stakeholders and promoting the project's aims and objectives to these stakeholders. By October, the panel will commence implementation of a communication strategy. This will include coordinating community input into the plan through a range of engagement processes.

Want more information
or to get involved?

Team leaders can be contacted if you want more information or want to provide input.

- GIS

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