

Attachment H: Test of significance for species and communities listed under Biodiversity Conservation Act

The proposal is unlikely to adversely affect threatened species listed under the Biodiversity Conservation Act (see section 8.2.5 of the REF).

However, the proposal includes works on the walking track that traverses two ecological communities listed as endangered under the Biodiversity Act. These are:

- Lepironia Freshwater Wetland (a component of the **Freshwater Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains EEC**)
- Oakdale Alluvial Rough Bark Apple Forest (a component of the **River-Flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplains EEC**).

See Figure H1.

Hence, the factors outlined in section 7.3 of the BC Act must be taken into account for the purposes of determining whether a proposed activity is likely to significantly affect terrestrial threatened species or ecological communities, or their habitats. This test of significance follows the guidance of the NSW Threatened Species Test of Significance Guidelines.

Freshwater Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains EEC and River-Flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplains EEC

Adverse effects on the life cycle of a species

(a) in the case of a threatened species, whether the proposed development or activity is likely to have an adverse effect on the life cycle of the species such that a viable local population of the species is likely to be placed at risk of extinction.

NA – not a threatened species

Adverse effects on ecological communities

(b) in the case of an endangered ecological community or critically endangered ecological community, whether the proposed development or activity:

(i) is likely to have an adverse effect on the extent of the ecological community such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction, or

(ii) is likely to substantially and adversely modify the composition of the ecological community such that its local occurrence is likely to be placed at risk of extinction

The Lepironia Wetland EEC (a component of the Freshwater Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains EEC) is quite extensive in the park, areas of periodic or continuous inundation with water, including the foreshores of the lakes where intact vegetation occurs. Of the approximately 30 hectares occupied by this EEC in the park, only approximately 500 m² is at risk of disturbance, mainly on either side of the existing track.

The Oakdale Alluvial Rough Bark Apple Forest (a component of the River-Flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplains EEC) is less extensive in the park, occupying about 8 hectares along lake margins and in the channels between lakes. Approximately 1600 m² will be at risk of disturbance (on either side of the existing track). This is approximately 2% of the EEC present in the park.

With hygiene protocols (including adoption of 'Arrive clean, leave clean' guidelines) to reduce spread of weeds and pathogens, the proposal is unlikely to adversely affect the composition of either EEC.

Thus the proposal is unlikely to place the local occurrence of either EEC at risk of extinction.

Adverse effects on habitats

(c) in relation to the habitat of a threatened species or ecological community:

- (i) the extent to which habitat is likely to be removed or modified as a result of the proposed development or activity, and*
- (ii) whether an area of habitat is likely to become fragmented or isolated from other areas of habitat as a result of the proposed development or activity, and*
- (iii) the importance of the habitat to be removed, modified, fragmented or isolated to the long-term survival of the species or ecological community in the locality.*

The proposed walking track works will affect an abiotic aspect of the habitat for these EECs by import of crushed sandstone which may result in minor changes to flooding patterns. Minor vegetation disturbance will occur to allow the bobcat to transport the sandstone material along the track.

Although the walking track does partially fragment the EEC, this fragmentation is pre-existing and will not be increased by the activity (other than management of encroaching vegetation). Instead, as a key aim is to reduce track braiding, the activity will result in reduced levels of fragmentation.

Adverse effects on areas of outstanding biodiversity value

(d) whether the proposed development or activity is likely to have an adverse effect on any declared area of outstanding biodiversity value (either directly or indirectly)

N/A. There are no areas of outstanding biodiversity value in proximity to the works.

Key threatening processes

(e) whether the proposed development or activity is or is part of a key threatening process or is likely to increase the impact of a key threatening process

The proposal in the EECs will be focused on the existing walking track, improving the surface of this track in low-lying areas to reduce track braiding and the risk of disturbance of vegetation outside the narrow corridor of the walking track. Thus the project is likely to decrease the impact of the Clearing of Native Vegetation Key Threatening Process.

Other key threatening processes that could be exacerbated by the activity and corresponding mitigation measures to include:

- Loss of hollow-bearing trees – the proposal will involve minimal removal of trees within the picnic area, none of which are hollow-bearing. No trees will be removed from the EEC.
- Removal of dead wood and dead trees – any dead wood removed from the walking track in the Alluvial Forest will be relocated away a short distance from the track's edge.
- Loss and degradation of native plant and animal habitat by invasion of weeds (such as escaped garden plants, including aquatic plants, lantana, African olive, exotic perennial grasses, exotic vines and scramblers) – the crushed sandstone will be certified as weed free and machinery will be cleaned before use at the site.
- Infection of frogs by amphibian chytrid causing the disease chytridiomycosis – hygiene protocols (including cleaning boots of work crews) will reduce the risk of spreading chytrid fungus.
- Introduction and establishment of Exotic Rust Fungi of the order Pucciniales pathogenic on plants of the family Myrtaceae – hygiene protocols (including cleaning boots of work crews) will reduce the risk of spreading Myrtle rust.



Figure H1. Threatened ecological communities in proximity to the picnic areas and walking track.