

## Surf Coast Shire

### Rural Roadside Management Strategy



**July 2003**

*Rural Roadside Vision:*

*To effectively and co-operatively manage a network of road reserves by incorporating the values of different user groups, integrating fire prevention, flora and fauna diversity, safety & cultural/heritage values and recognising that the function of roads is to provide access and transportation across the landscape.*

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### Community

Thanks to those who took the time to attend the community workshop.

# SECTION A

## BACKGROUND

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Surf Coast Shire covers an area of approximately 1500 square kilometres. The municipality is located in the south-west region of Victoria, 21 kilometres south of Geelong. The rural hinterland contains the townships of Winchelsea, Deans Marsh, Moriac, Bellbrae and Freshwater Creek.

The Shire has 1100kms of road network that stretches across a varied landscape including steep valleys, open plains, foothills and forests. The region supports a range of agricultural pursuits such as dairying, cropping, viticulture, grazing and forestry, and is a popular area for tourism based enterprises.

The municipality contains four major land systems as described by Pitt (1981) on the basis of climate, lithology, landform, soil and indigenous vegetation.

#### ***Land system 1. Western Volcanic Plains***

This system includes the undulating plains located in the northern region of the Shire. The geology is predominantly basalt of the Newer Volcanics with both Tertiary and Quaternary sediments found throughout the region. The annual rainfall ranges from 500 - 600 mm. Land use is primarily mixed agriculture involving mostly sheep and cropping.

The now severely depleted *Themeda*-dominated grasslands once dominated the volcanic plains. Expanses of grassy woodlands supporting Eucalypts such as River Red-gum, Manna Gum, Swamp Gum, Yellow Gum and Grey Box were also common but losses due to clearing, disease and other land use impacts have been well documented in literature (see for example Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories, 1995 for an overview).

#### ***Land system 2. Barrabool Hills***

The Barrabool Hills are a moderately dissected block of the Southern Victorian Uplands. The lithology consists of sedimentary rock of the Barwon Group, Lower Cretaceous sandstones, Cambrian greenstone and Devonian granite. The rainfall ranges from about 500 to 600 mm. Agriculture for beef production and cropping is the primary land use.

Scattered Drooping Sheoke woodlands are generally considered to have been the predominant indigenous vegetation of the Barrabool Hills.

***Land system 3. Otways Hills and Plains***

Included in this system are the moderately dissected hills and elevated plains north of the Otway Ranges. The lithology of the system is varied and consists of finely textured, unconsolidated deposits (Barwon floodplain); course textured soils (Bald Hills) and unconsolidated limestone west of Torquay. The annual rainfall ranges from about 600 mm to 1000 mm. Land uses include mixed agriculture such as cropping, sheep, beef, and dairying and, to a lesser extent, horticultural and wine making. Other new industries have developed such as breeding exotic animals (e.g. alpacas, water buffalo and ostriches) as well as tourist-related businesses.

The indigenous vegetation included forests, woodlands and scrub dominated variously by Messmate Stringybark, Manna Gum, Snow Gum, Narrow-leaf Peppermint and Brown Stringybark. Red Ironbark and Mountain Grey-gum are indigenous to the coastal regions from Anglesea to Torquay.

Only a small amount of remaining vegetation is in conservation reserves. Roadsides often retain the last areas of some high value biodiversity assets.

***Land System 4. Otway Ranges***

The Otway Ranges land system is moderately to steeply dissected with soils derived from Mesozoic and lower Cretaceous sediments. The annual rainfall generally exceeds 700 mm. Moist Foothill Forest Complexes dominate the vegetation of this land system. A greater part of this land system located within the Surf Coast Shire is reserved as Public land. Land use for residential development is generally restricted to coastal township of Lorne although relatively large tracts of land through the area have been set aside for agriculture, particularly for dairying, or for tourist related facilities.

The small size of many retained patches of native vegetation on farmland or roadsides increases the potential impact of weeds, grazing by stock, roadworks and incremental clearing. As these are sometimes significant remnants of depleted vegetation types, protection and conservation management into the future is a major concern.

### **1.1 Purpose of this strategy.**

This strategy aims to facilitate improved management of **rural** road reserves throughout the Shire by:

- identifying issues that effect or are important to road and roadside users
- articulating strategic priorities, goals and actions relevant to roadside management
- providing a framework under which the Rural Roadside Management Code of Practice and Rural Roadside Management Prescriptions will be developed
- aligning with Council's guiding principles and vision of preserving and enhancing the natural environment
- integrating with local, regional and state plans, strategies and policies.

This strategy is concerned with **rural** roadsides, namely the section of land between the road shoulder and the adjoining property. Roadsides, or road reserves, are generally owned by the Crown and managed by local authorities (local government, VicRoads) on behalf of the Crown. Road reserves are public land. They are used and valued for a number of reasons, such as access, easements, recreation, aesthetics, fire prevention, culture and environment.

Rural roadside flora assessments, "*Remnant Roadside Vegetation of the Surf Coast Shire*" were completed in 1997 (see section A3 and appendix 1).

### **1.2 Surf Coast Shire vision, values and environmental policy.**

#### **Vision:**

Our vision is to achieve a unique blend of natural environment and quality of life, which offers the best of all worlds to its community of residents, businesses and visitors.

#### **Mission:**

Council is committed to:

- Good governance which is open and accountable
- Preserving and enhancing our natural environment
- Promoting sustainable tourism and other business development
- Developing and promoting sustainable rural and coastal communities
- Developing and promoting the Surf Coast Shire as a place of well-being

**Values:**

What we believe and how we work  
Council and its staff:

- ❑ Are committed to working together for community benefit
- ❑ Will be accountable for our actions
- ❑ Are dedicated to serving the community with integrity in a consistent, friendly and sincere manner
- ❑ Value diversity, respect and listen to others
- ❑ Believe in setting and achieving clear goals

**Guiding Principles:**

- ❑ Recognising that the natural environment and quality of life are the chief attributes and assets of the Surf Coast Shire
- ❑ Retaining the individual and particular character of each town in the Shire
- ❑ Establishing uniform policies throughout the Shire to preserve the natural environment
- ❑ Establishing a viable economic base for the Surf Coast Shire that does not put at risk or compromise its natural environment

**Environmental Policy**

Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to demonstrating leadership in environmental management, and to actively pursuing the goal of conserving and enhancing our natural environment for the benefit of our community and future generations.

This commitment extends to the flora and fauna, the land, water, air, cultural heritage and aesthetic landscape values of the Shire and seeks to maintain a balance between the social, economic and environmental dimensions.

In all our policies and activities, Council will seek to achieve the goal of environmental sustainability through the following:

**OBJECTIVES**

- ❑ *Developing and implementing management systems that set objectives and targets, and implement action programs to address all significant and relevant environmental issues, and that strive to continuously improve environmental performance in our activities.*
- ❑ *Giving due consideration to environmental impacts in all decision making processes.*
- ❑ *Regularly monitoring and reporting on our performance and communicating the outcomes with our employees and the broader community.*
- ❑ *Ensuring that our employees, contractors, suppliers of goods and services, and the broader community are informed about this policy and aware of their environmental responsibilities.*
- ❑ *Encouraging the adoption of new technology and processes to achieve*

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- environmental sustainability.*
- *Working in partnership with individuals, business, institutions, community organisations and government agencies.*
- *Providing the necessary resources to ensure the goals and objectives of the Environmental Policy are met and continually monitored, reviewed and updated.*



## 2 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The development of the strategy comprised 8 main stages:

Stage	When
Formation of a working group.	August 2002
Preparation of a project brief.	January 2003
Appointing a consultant.	February 2003
Community consultation strategy.	February 2003
Community workshop.	March 2003
Preparation of draft strategy by consultant, based on outcomes of workshop.	March 2003
Review of draft strategy by working group.	April 2003
Final draft completed.	June 2003

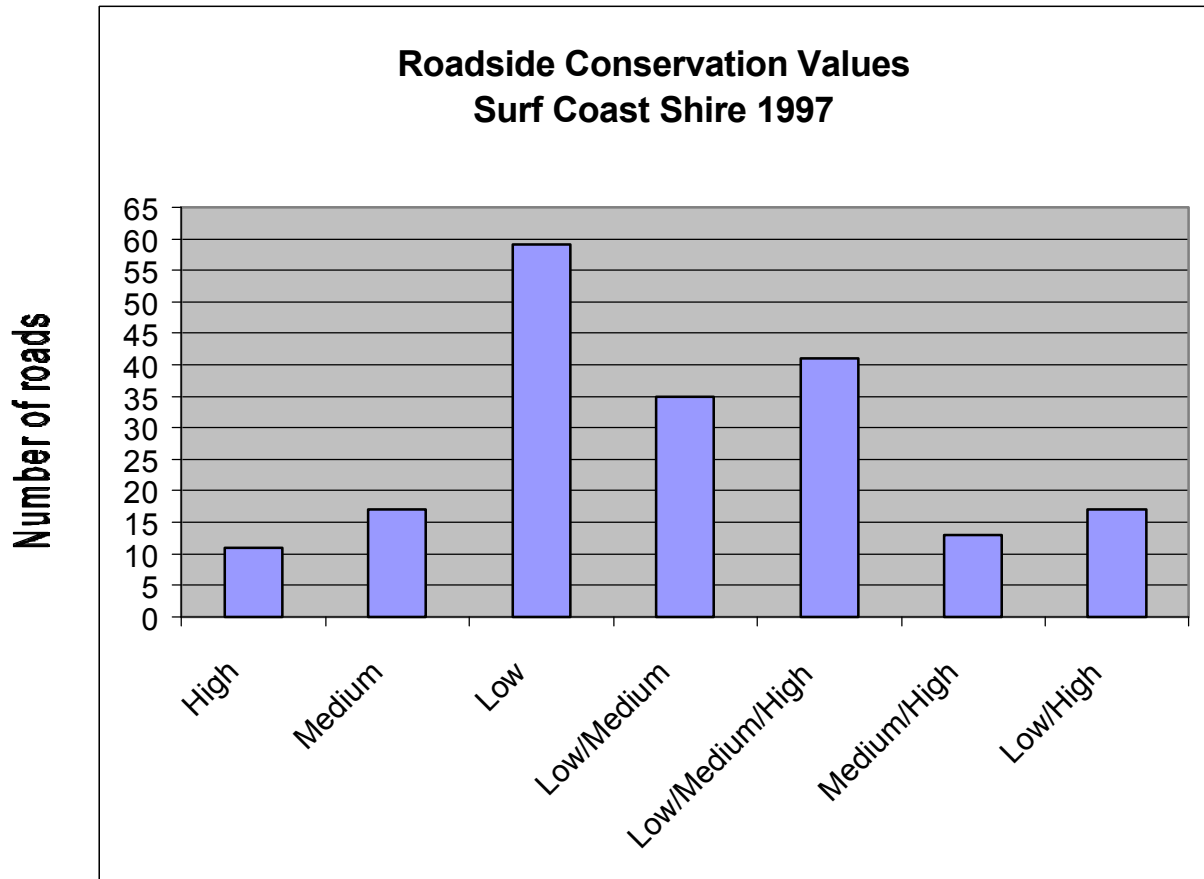
*\* see appendix 2 for details on the community and stakeholder consultation process.*

During the community workshop, participants identified the following issues that they felt needed to be considered in the preparation of the Strategy. These issues form the basis for developing a strategic vision and the strategic priorities to guide the goals and actions for rural roadside management in the Surf Coast Shire.

- Implementation of the Strategy
- Resourcing the outcomes of the Strategy
- Balancing needs of the users
- Conservation values
- Local community expectation
- Coordination
- Education and training of stakeholders
- Protection of indigenous vegetation and fauna
- Rehabilitation of habitat
- Signage of important roadside sites
- Fire prevention
- Roles and responsibilities of adjacent landowners
- Utility providers and roadside activities
- Pest, plant and animal control
- Scenic values
- Soil erosion and water pollution
- Road design, construction and maintenance
- Road safety
- Drainage
- Stockpiles and dump sites
- Corrugations/dust/potholes
- Litter
- Cultural & recreational values

### 3 RURAL ROADSIDE ASSESSMENTS

In 1997, 193 rural roadsides across the municipality were assessed for their conservation significance, using the Roadsides Conservation Advisory Committee (RCAC) method (see appendix 1). All high conservation roadsides were re-assessed in 2003 (appendix 3). A map of the conservation status of all rural road reserves has been produced.



#### Conservation Significance

High Conservation = survey score of 15+  
 Medium Conservation = survey score 8-14  
 Low Conservation = survey score 0-7

A total of 368 species were recorded with a number of regionally, state and nationally significant species found present, as summarised in the table below.

Significance	Number of species
regional significance	69
rare in Victoria	2
vulnerable in Victoria	3
endangered in Australia and Victoria	1
rare in Australia	1
vulnerable in Australia	2

#### **4 RURAL ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT CODE OF PRACTICE**

A Code of Practice for Work on Roadsides (including Council controlled land) has been developed in conjunction with this strategy. The Code generally covers the primary roadside maintenance and construction activities which apply to all of the local road system and the declared main roads in Surf Coast Shire.

The aim of the Code is to define good practice for all road maintenance and construction activities including works by service authorities and organisations. This Code of Practice will be used by Shire staff, contractors, and service organisations and for in-field training. The Code will also guide activities of adjacent landowners and be available to meet public enquiries as to the Shire's and the communities' expectations and accepted work practices for the roadside.

#### **5 RURAL ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS**

Roadside management prescriptions are management plans for individual roads. The purposes of the prescriptions are to describe the specific management requirements of individual roadsides, particularly high conservation roadsides. The prescriptions are to be prepared over 2003-2005.

#### **6 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

Several Acts, policies and strategies are relevant and have an impact on roadside management. These are summarised in Appendix 4.

#### **7 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MANAGEMENT OF RURAL ROADSIDES**

For a summary of responsibilities of roadside management, see Appendix 5.

## SECTION B

# RURAL ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT VISION, PRIORITIES, GOALS AND ACTIONS

### 8 RURAL ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT VISION

The roadside management vision was developed at the community workshop. The vision is:

*To effectively and co-operatively manage a network of road reserves by incorporating the values of different user groups, integrating fire prevention, flora and fauna diversity, safety & cultural/heritage values and recognising that the function of roads is to provide access and transportation across the landscape.*

### 9 RURAL ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The four strategic priority themes which emerged from the workshop and which the Surf Coast Shire will pursue the Rural Roadside Management Vision are:

- (i) Management of the strategy.
- (ii) Efficient and appropriate access and transportation across the landscape.
- (iii) Ensure the safety of road users.
- (iv) Protect, enhance, maintain & restore indigenous vegetation & natural values

Each theme has a series of “sub themes”, for example (i) management of the strategy has four sub themes- maintenance and construction, integration, communication and education and monitoring/evaluation. Each sub theme lists goals and actions which describe how the theme can be achieved.

## 10 GOALS AND ACTIONS

### *Management of the Strategy*

#### 10.1 Maintenance and Construction

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To establish & apply systems which enable roadside maintenance and construction to be responsibly implemented, monitored, evaluated and reported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a Code of Environmental Practice for Work on Roadsides (and other Council Controlled Land).</li> <li>• Ensure all works programs are in accordance with Surf Coast Shire's "Code of Environmental Practice for Works on Roadsides (and other Council Controlled Land)" and VicRoads "Roadside Handbook".</li> <li>• Ensure that working in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Handbook are included as a standard conditions on contracts.</li> <li>• Ensure construction and maintenance activities consider this strategy and the Code of Practice in the early design stage.</li> </ul>	Shire	Code of Practice prepared.
		VicRoads	Roadside works comply with best practice principles.  All contracts include standard condition relating to working in accordance with VicRoads Handbook.
To ensure contract specifications are clearly identified, followed & enforced (best practice operating principles). in regard to environmental impact / effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review use of contract conditions.</li> <li>• Undertake random audit and report on compliance of contractors to conditions.</li> </ul>	Shire	Contract conditions reviewed.  Audit undertaken.

### 10.2 Integration

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To integrate the implementation of the Roadside Management Strategy and Code of Practice with the Shire's other strategies and programs to ensure complementary and consistent decision making.	Undertake regular review of the strategy.	Shire	Internal review of strategy by environment unit every 3-5 years.
To ensure that there is integration and coordination of all uses of the roadside to allow for sustainable management of roadside values.	Undertake regular audits to assess compliance with the Code of Practice.	Shire	Roadside values maintained and enhanced.
		VicRoads DSE CFA Landholders	

### 10.3 Communication and Education

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To ensure effective communication is maintained with other agencies (Fire, Utilities, VicRoads, DPI/DSE) particularly regarding roadside plan objectives and requirements.	Conduct an annual Roadside Management Forum with key stakeholders to encourage information sharing and report on progress of Shire and other agencies roadside management plans and strategies.	Shire VicRoads DSE CFA	Annual forum organised and attended.

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To ensure Council staff, contractors, landholders, stakeholders and the broader community are informed about this strategy and related documents (ie Code of Practice) and understand and respect their purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a “roadside kit” with roadside management “notes”, such as “planting on roadsides”, “weed control on roadsides”, “fire management on roadsides” and “firewood collection on roadsides”.</li> <li>• Conduct training and workshops for landholders, staff and contractors.</li> <li>• Investigate opportunities (funding and otherwise) to provide regular and ongoing training to Shire staff.</li> <li>• Ensure the staff induction process introduces new staff to the Strategy and Code of Practice.</li> <li>• Publish two articles a year in Groundswell.</li> <li>• Publish two articles a year in a local newspaper.</li> </ul>	Shire	<p>Roadside Kit prepared.</p> <p>Workshops conducted.</p> <p>Two articles in Groundswell and two articles published.</p>

#### 10.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To develop systems to monitor & review roadside activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate options for monitoring and review of roadside activities.</li> <li>• Review Shire Work Instructions and their application.</li> <li>• Investigate the need and application of a formal compliance procedure and related audits.</li> </ul>	Shire	<p>Options for monitoring and review identified.</p> <p>Work instructions reviewed.</p> <p>Compliance procedure investigated.</p>
		VicRoads DSE CFA	

*Efficient and appropriate access and transportation across the landscape.*

**10.5 Movement of Stock/Recreational Activities**

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To recognise existing rights of landholders to move stock across or along a road to travel from one part of a property to another part, as a use of roadsides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issue permits or document existing stock movements to recognise rights and establish co-operation.</li> <li>Ensure movement of livestock is carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice.</li> </ul>	Shire	Stock movement documented.
		Landholders VicRoads DSE/DPI	
To minimise disturbance to indigenous roadside flora and fauna by agricultural activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate systems (permits, local laws) used to regulate agricultural activities such as droving, grazing, ploughing, use of herbicides, etc. on roadsides.</li> <li>Ensure agricultural activities are carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice.</li> </ul>	Shire	Reduced impact on flora and fauna values.
		DSE/DPI Landholders VicRoads	
To minimise disturbance to indigenous roadside flora and fauna by recreational activities.	Ensure permit based recreational activities are carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice.	Shire	Number of permits issued.





**Ensure the safety of all road users**

**10.7 Risk Management**

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To minimise the risk & impact of fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure fire management activities are in accordance with the Code of Practice.</li> <li>• Undertake all fire prevention works in accordance with the Municipal Community Fire Safety Strategy (CFSS) and Wildfire Prevention Strategy (WFP).</li> <li>• Consider CFA Roadside Fire Management Guidelines.</li> <li>• Establish a permit system for landholders undertaking fire prevention works on roadsides.</li> <li>• Ensure CFSS is regularly reviewed &amp; updated and roadside management strategy is considered.</li> <li>• Ensure the CFSS has regard to conservation values of roadsides and sites of rare, threatened or significant flora or fauna.</li> <li>• Investigate opportunities for use of burning to achieve fuel reduction and conservation objectives.</li> <li>• Research use of burning regimes in native vegetation management.</li> <li>• Locate strategic fire breaks on low conservation roadsides whenever possible.</li> <li>• Ensure that the establishment of new roads takes into consideration fire prevention and suppression requirements.</li> <li>• Reduce fuel loads through pest plant removal.</li> </ul>	Shire	Review of CFSS has considered Roadside Management Strategy.  Number of roadsides where burning regime is utilised successfully.
		CFA VicRoads	

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To ensure the safe function of the road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out regular road maintenance audit.</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate signage is used to raise awareness of risk areas.</li> </ul>	Shire	Audit completed. Appropriate signage erected.
		VicRoads	
To assess and manage vegetation for the safety of road users	<p>Carry out regular road maintenance audit.</p> <p>Ensure hazardous vegetation is managed appropriately.</p>	Shire	Annual audit completed.

***Protect, enhance, maintain & restore indigenous vegetation & natural values.***

**10.8 Flora and Fauna**

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To identify significant areas	Periodically review and update "Remnant Roadside Vegetation of the Surf Coast Shire".	Shire	Report reviewed and updated.
		SCS DSE VicRoads	
To protect, enhance & restore indigenous vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate use of Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme to protect roadside flora and fauna and wildlife corridors.</li> <li>• Ensure subdivisions and land developments take account of roadside values and are in accordance with the Code of Practice.</li> <li>• Develop roadside management plans (prescriptions) for high (priority) and medium conservation roads.</li> <li>• Ensure revegetation on roadsides uses species characteristic of the ecological vegetation class which applies to the area and that the stock is of local provenance.</li> <li>• Locate fire breaks on private land rather than roadsides.</li> <li>• Ensure utility service installation and maintenance is carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice.</li> </ul>	Shire	Roadside vegetation protection overlay developed.  Production of individual roadside management plans.  % known significant vegetation protected  % revegetation using indigenous species.  Number of fire breaks located on private land.
		DSE CFA VicRoads DSE	
To identify, maintain & enhance wildlife corridors	Review high conservation roadsides to identify strategic wildlife corridors, and identify fragmented and isolated vegetation patches.	Shire	Strategic corridors are identified and mapped, and potential habitat linkages are identified.
		VicRoads DSE	

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To protect rare, threatened and vulnerable flora & fauna	Identify locations of threatened species and ensure user groups are aware of their locations and importance (education). Implement Roadside Conservation Advisory Committee's significant roadside signage system.	Shire	Locations of significant species known and mapped.  Significant roadside signage documented.
		VicRoads DSE	
To ensure ongoing management of roadside flora and fauna assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue monitoring of rare and threatened species and communities.</li> <li>Provide roadside markers and signage for roadside workers.</li> </ul>	Shire	Rare and threatened species and communities maintained and managed.
		DSE	

### 10.9 Other Natural Values

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
To identify and protect sites of cultural, heritage and natural significance.	Undertake cultural and heritage study to identify sites of cultural and heritage significance. Ensure cultural and heritage values are protected by following the Code of Practice - Cultural and Heritage Values.	Shire	Study completed and sites mapped.
		VicRoads DSE Heritage Vic AAV	

**10.10 Control weeds, pest animals and soil erosion.**

Goal	Action/s	Leading Agency	Performance Indicators
		Partner Agency	
Develop a roadside weed control program.	Integrate roadside weed control program with key actions identified in roadside section of <i>"Surf Coast Shire Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan"</i> .	Shire	Weed control program established for roadsides.
To ensure education of employees, contractors & utility providers with regard to the control of weeds and pest animals.	Integrate education and training days with key actions identified in roadside section of <i>"Surf Coast Shire Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan"</i> .	Shire VicRoads DSE	Delivery of one PPA training day.
To ensure all stakeholders understand their responsibilities under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.	Integrate education and training days with key actions identified in roadside section of <i>"Surf Coast Shire Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan"</i> .	Shire VicRoads DSE	Increase in awareness of responsibilities.
To prevent land degradation and soil erosion on roadsides due to flood and runoff and thereby improve water quality.	Ensure stormwater drainage and management of runoff is in accordance with the Code of Practice.	Shire DSE VicRoads CMA	Soil erosion runoff reduced and minimised.
Ensure construction and maintenance workers do not contribute to the spread of weeds on roadsides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure works are carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice.</li> <li>Review and promote Environmentally Aware Contractor Program (EAC) and Roadside Identification System (RIDS).</li> </ul>	Shire DSE	Spread of weeds on roadsides eliminated.
To ensure pest plant and animal control objectives and actions in this strategy are integrated with the Shires Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan.	Annually review priority works to be undertaken as part of PPA Action Plan and integrate roadside management objectives where possible.	Shire	Roadside management actions are included in delivery of PPA Action Plan.
To locate stockpile sites in appropriate and strategic locations, avoiding high and medium conservation value roadsides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and make recommendations on current stockpile sites.</li> <li>Ensure stockpiles and dump sites are in accordance with the Code of Practice.</li> </ul>	Shire	Stockpile sites located in appropriate locations.

## SECTION C

# REFERENCES AND APPENDICES

### 11 REFERENCES

CFA Roadside Fire Management Guidelines (2001)

Remnant Roadside Vegetation of the Surf Coast Shire (1997)

North East Regional Roadside Management Strategy (1998)

Shire of Yarra Ranges Code of Environmental Practice for Works on Council Controlled Land (including Roadsides) (1999)

# Appendix 1

## Roadside Assessments

The roadside assessment report "*Remnant Roadside Vegetation of the Surf Coast Shire*" (1997) is a 350 page document which can be obtained from the Surf Coast Shire Environment Unit. The report presents a flora list for all rural roadsides in the municipality.

Survey of remnant vegetation was conducted using the standards and conventions adopted by Surfcoast Shire and the Roadside Conservation Advisory Committee (RCAC) manual for roadside assessment. These conventions particularly apply to the direction of travel, delineation of road segments and measurement of roadside width.

An 'Arnie' trip computer, calibrated against a VICROADS reference distance, was used to measure roads, road sections and where applicable, significant species, vegetation communities or roadside features. The starting measurement was taken from a point that defined the intersection of the mid-lines of the roads at the respective junction. The end point was recorded where the roadside vegetation ceased.

Measurements along roads or road sections were recorded to the nearest 10m given that changes in the composition and distribution of vegetation generally occurs on a gradient that delineates one community from another. Where applicable, specific features such as notable flora species and cultural or geomorphic features are generally recorded to the nearest meter.

### 3.1 CONSERVATION RATING

In this report, each roadside has been given a 'conservation rating' based on the criteria set out in the RCAC assessment report sheet (Appendix 1). The rating reflects the value of the roadside vegetation for fauna habitat value, extent of regeneration, the width of the reserve and degree to which the roadside has been physically modified and/or invaded by weed species. It also takes into account the occurrence of significant species and communities of indigenous vegetation where present, although the criteria used to rate values has been modified from the original assessment procedures for this survey.

The specific criteria for rating of rarity are as follows;

- Species or communities having regional significance = 4 points
- Species recognised as having significance throughout Victoria = 8 points
- Species recognised as having significance throughout Australia = 10 points

Further, where more than one species or community of local significance occurs on a roadside section the score is adjusted by the addition of one point for each significant species or community. For example, the presence of White Everlasting (*Chrysocephalum baxteri*) is recognised as a regionally significant species and would score a 4 for rarity. If other regionally significant species or communities occurred in the identical roadside section then the rating is increased by one for each species or community to a maximum of 8 points.



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The designation of regionally significant species was based on various published and unpublished reports (e.g. Meredith, 1986; Carr and McMahon, unpublished; Beauglehole, 1983) and on additional evaluation by the authors. It was also accepted that vegetation communities of single-species stands, particularly those that stand in isolation as a viable population and usually trees and shrubs, should be recognised as having at least similar conservation value to that assigned to regionally significant species. The designation of significant communities may be less systematic than that applying at a species level but is considered appropriate for this assessment.

The rating for State and National significance follows Gullen, Cheal and Walsh (1990).

Significant species have prefixes that are defined at the commencement of the Flora Summary.

A survey score is provided for each roadside section and the Conservation Status determined using the following criteria;

<i>Survey score</i>	<i>Conservation Status</i>
• 0 - 7	LOW
• 8 - 14	MEDIUM
• 15+	HIGH

Each roadside section length and respective Conservation Status are illustrated graphically in a linear representation of the road.

## Appendix 2 Community and Stakeholder Consultation

A Community Consultation Strategy was developed to ensure relevant stakeholders had the opportunity to input into the development of the strategy. The following table outlines the consultation method used for each stakeholder.

Who	Consultation Method
Key agency stakeholders Shire CFA VicRoads DSE CCMA	Participation in working group.
Landholders/community groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Article in Shire newsletter "Groundswell".</li><li>• Community survey.</li><li>• Workshop.</li></ul>
Utilities	Letter advising of strategy and survey asking for involvement.
Landcare Groups	Letter advising of strategy and survey asking for involvement.
EPA	Letter advising of strategy and survey asking for involvement.

In terms of the strategy, the community survey asked two key questions:

- How important is roadside management to you?
- Would you like to be involved in the preparation of the Strategy?

Over two thousand surveys were distributed to rural landholders and sixty six completed surveys were received. Respondents who answered "yes" to being involved in the preparation of the strategy were invited to a workshop, which was conducted in March 2003. The results of the workshop have been described in section 2.

Respondents who could not attend the workshop but who indicated they wished to participate were sent a copy of the draft strategy in June 2003.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Roadside re-assessment, 2003**

A re assessment of high conservation roadsides was conducted in April 2003. The thirteen page report is available from the Surf Coast Shire and the results are summarised below.

#### **SUMMARY**

Overall most of the roadsides that were reassessed retained their high conservation value. A total of ten roadsides (or sections thereof) require further floristic surveys in spring to confirm the presence of significant species whose presence would maintain the roadsides high rating. It was recommended that one roadside be downgraded to low.

## Appendix 4

# Summary of legislative context

Reproduced with permission from the North East Regional Roadside Management Strategy

### **Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1992**

Regulations relate to matters such as spray drift, commercial operators licences, agricultural chemical users' permit, registration requirements for chemicals and chemical control areas. A Code of Good Practice for Farm Chemical Spray Application has been produced by Agriculture Victoria.

### **Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972**

Aboriginal and archaeological sites are protected.

### **Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994**

Identifies responsibility for the control of noxious weeds on roadsides. Adjacent landholders must control Pest Animals and Regionally Controlled weeds on municipal-controlled roadsides (excluding highways, Declared Roads and Unleased Crown land). The Department of Natural Resources and Environment is responsible for pest animals and weeds on public land. The Act also regulates the movement of machinery from land onto a road and removal of soil, sand gravel or stone in relation to the control of noxious weeds.

### **Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987**

Prior to works being undertaken which may disturb *critical* habitat (as defined under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act) a plan of works must be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

### **CFA Act 1958**

Municipalities are responsible for managing roadside vegetation to reduce the fire threat to life and property. Although most fire prevention works on roadsides are exempt from the Native Vegetation Clearance Controls under the Planning and Environment Act, fire prevention planners must have *due regard* to native vegetation values.

The CFA now requires new Municipal Fire Prevention Plans to be developed along risk management guidelines and Fire Prevention Committees will be reviewing their current plans as part of this procedure.

The document Roadside Management Guidelines for Fire Prevention Planners (CFA 1994) provides background information for achieving the balance between fire prevention and native vegetation protection on roadsides.

### **Crown Land Act 1958**

Allows prosecution for unauthorised cutting or removal of timber from roadsides. Department of Natural Resources and Environment issues permits for firewood collection.

**Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978**

Gives Crown ownership rights over all vegetation on roadsides (except weeds).

Environment and Natural Resources Committee (Parliament of Victoria) Report of Weeds in Victoria May 1998

Proposes several recommendations that are relevant to roadsides:

that NRE assume responsibility, using CMA's for the implementation of roadside management strategies for roadside weed management; CMA's develop and implement regional weed strategies; NRE to enforce compliance by land owners with the Catchment and Land Protection Act where education and extension measures fail; the Regionally Prohibited Weeds category be abolished and where appropriate, weeds be reclassified as State Prohibited or Regionally Controlled weeds; NRE develop Codes of Practice to prevent the spread of noxious weeds through seed, soil machinery etc. a Victorian Weeds Advisory Committee be established; and a rapid response plan be developed and implemented for new weed infestations.

**Environment Protection Act 1970**

Provides for the control of polluted runoff from disturbed roads.

**Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) 1999**

Commonwealth legislation concerning projects (actions) which are likely to have an impact on a matter of national significance.

**Extractive Industries Development Act 1995**

A license/works authority is required to remove stone, gravel, sand etc from public land. There are exemptions that relate to road works. The Act is administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

**Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. 1988**

Public authorities must have regard to flora and fauna conservation and management objectives which are:

- to guarantee that Victoria's flora and fauna can survive, flourish and retain their potential for evolutionary development in the wild.
- to conserve Victoria's flora and fauna communities
- to manage potentially threatening processes.

**Forests Act 1958**

Gives local municipalities responsibility for managing vegetation on most roadsides.

**Litter Act 1964**

Makes it an offence to litter roadsides.

**Local Government Act 1989**

Gives local government responsibility for management of undeclared roads. Gives Council power to create certain local laws relating to roadsides.

**Planning and Environment Act 1987**

The Victorian Planning Provisions established under the Planning and Environment Act contain provisions governing the removal of native vegetation from roadsides under the *Native Vegetation Retention Controls* and seeks to encourage the retention of native vegetation on private and public land.

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Prior to removing, destroying or lopping native vegetation on any roadside a permit must be issued by the Responsible Authority. All applications for permits to remove native vegetation on roadsides must be referred to the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Local planning schemes under this Act may have vegetation clearing limits that are more stringent than those in the State Section. If this is the case, then the more stringent application applies.

Exemptions apply to CFA and to Service providers to undertake particular works on roadsides.  
**Regional Vegetation Plan**

This plan (in preparation) provides a regional framework for the interpretation and implementation of Native Vegetation Retention (NVR) Controls by Municipalities and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. There are two stages. Stage 1 involves a regional interpretation of NVR to be used in assessment of applications under the planning scheme process and provides a regional context for remnant vegetation management. Stage 2 is aimed at ensuring that priorities are established for the protection of native vegetation and revegetation consistent with the Regional Catchment Strategy and the objectives of the Victorian Biodiversity Strategy.

### **Road Safety (Road Rules - Give Way to Stock) Regulations 1997**

Requires drivers (who pass a *give way to stock* sign) to travel at a safe speed and give way to stock, and/or stop at stock crossings where stock graze or are driven along, or cross roads. The law also requires certain standard signs to be displayed by the person controlling the stock.

### **Servicing Acts**

Permits servicing authorities to locate assets on roadsides and gives them rights of access for maintenance works.

### **State Conservation Strategy 1987**

Seeks to integrate conservation with other activities and recognises the value of roadside vegetation. It commits the government to prepare roadside management plans.

### **State Biodiversity Strategy 1998**

Is part of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Program and sets out how to achieve the FFG Act's objectives. The strategy aims to:

- increase awareness of the need to conserve biodiversity;
- enable continued development of partnerships between the community, industry and government in the custodianship of our biodiversity;
- indicate the existing and proposed mechanisms for achieving the objectives of flora and fauna conservation and management in the context of ecological sustainability;
- detail strategic frameworks to prevent further loss of habitat and a focus for better management of existing habitats and the continuation of natural ecological processes;
- highlight the habitats and environments that require urgent attention; and
- highlight major threatening processes.

### **Summary Offences Act 1966**

This law states that it is unlawful to obstruct driving, i.e. to mischievously interfere with stock movements. However it is still possible for Council to pass local laws to regulate how driving shall be undertaken. Section 4 of the Act prohibits the lighting of fires in public open spaces.

**Telecommunications Act 1991**

Telstra's Corporate Environmental Plan provides strategies for the planning, installation and maintenance of services, including those relating to environmental matters and community and government consultation. Schedule 3 of the Act relates to Carriers' powers and immunities and has special provisions for threatened species, environmental impact assessment and other environmental matters.

**Transport Act 1983**

Sets out responsibilities for roads. VicRoads is responsible for management of declared roads (freeways, highways, main roads, tourist roads and forest roads). Councils are responsible for works and maintenance of most main roads as agents of VicRoads.

**Electrical Safety Act 1998**

The Code of Practice for Powerline Clearance (Vegetation) 1996 controls the clearance required between trees and powerlines for safety and powerline protection. Powerline companies and their contractors must comply with this code for tree clearing and pruning activities.

Under the Code special arrangements that vary from the normal applications of the Code can be made to protect areas of particular significance - areas of outstanding examples of vegetation, or which contain threatened flora and fauna or high conservation roadsides. An effective alternative management plan has to be agreed to which will not result in any appreciable increase in the risk of fire ignition in the area.

## Appendix 5

# Responsibilities for roadside management

Taken with permission from North East Catchment Management Authority Roadside Management Plan

Roadside management of main roads, freeways, highways, forest roads and tourist roads (called declared roads) is the responsibility of VicRoads, whilst Local Government is responsible for main roads (as agents of VicRoads) and local roads. However, both bodies must take into account legislative responsibilities of other agencies such as CFA, NRE and Service Providers under various Acts and Regulations.

The following table summarises the major roadside activities and primary responsibilities on **undeclared** (municipal) roads.

Activities	Organisations responsible		
	NRE	Local Council	Other (specified)
Firewood collection	•	•	
Road maintenance		•	
Grading		•	
Installation, maintenance and supervision of service installations		•	Service authorities eg Telstra, energy companies
Bridges and drainage		•	
Road signs, guard rails & markings		•	
Stockpile management		•	
Vegetation removal/pruning	•	•	
Rubbish/litter dumping		•	
Maintenance of wayside stops	•	•	
Fire management		•	CFA
Stock movement		•	
Revegetation		•	
Other conservation issues eg. preservation of wildlife corridors	•	•	
Pest plants and animals		•	Adjoining land owner

**Table adapted from:** Parliament of Victoria, Environment and Natural Resources Committee Report of Weeds in Victoria May 1998, p192



## Appendix 6

### Glossary of terms

Main Roads	Roads declared under the Transport Act that are managed by Municipalities on behalf of VicRoads using funds contributed by VicRoads.
Declared Roads	Roads declared under the Transport Act ie freeways, State highways, main roads, tourist roads and forest roads which are managed by VicRoads.
Undeclared or Local Road	Other roads that are maintained by local government.
Bioregion	A national system of biogeographical regions that has been developed to relate to biodiversity values. The bioregion captures the patterns of ecological characteristics in the landscape and reflects underlying environmental features.
Indigenous	Native vegetation including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses or fauna that occurs naturally in a particular district.
Rare or threatened Species, Regionally Significant Species	<p><i>Rare</i>: those species with small Victorian populations usually found in a particular geographic area, that are not at present <i>Endangered</i>, but are at risk.</p> <p><i>Threatened</i>: a collective term used to denote species that are <i>extinct</i>, <i>endangered</i>, <i>rare</i> or <i>insufficiently known</i>.</p> <p><i>Regionally Significant</i>: species that are rare or threatened in the North east Region.</p>
Road Formation	That portion of the road reserve along which vehicles travel. It includes the road pavement, shoulders and the area to the outermost side of the roadside drain, at least to where the drain batter meets the natural surface.
Road Reserve	The total strip of land reserved for transportation purposes from fence line to fence line or boundary to boundary if unfenced. The road reserve includes the roadside.
Roadside	The strip of land between the road formation and the boundary of the road reserve which is usually also the boundary of the adjacent property.

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Movement of Stock		Movement of stock (during daylight hours and not less than one km per hr) as part of everyday farming practices on a regular basis from one paddock to another or on an occasional basis from one paddock of a property to another.
Droving of Stock		Droving of large numbers of stock from one location to another to change their grazing area, or droving in or through the Municipality by moving stock along roadsides for the purpose of feeding.
Grazing of Stock		Grazing a particular area rather than droving or stock movement and not indiscriminate droving for supplementary feeding. The area is usually enclosed/fenced and is usually adjacent to the landholder title area. (This may vary between Municipalities).
Fire Break		Any natural or constructed discontinuity in a fuel bed used to segregate, stop and control the spread of a wildfire, or to provide a fire-line from which to suppress a fire.
Fuel Break		see fire break
Municipal Prevention Plan	Fire	A plan which is developed by the Municipal Fire Prevention Committee as required by the CFA Act. The plan identifies fire risks, and specifies how those risks are to be treated and who is responsible for the actions.
Firewood collection		The collection and removal of fallen timber. It does not refer to the felling of standing timber (alive or dead).