



Mountain Leafless Bossiaea Detection Report

Little Dargo River, Boulung-Deera State Forest

VicForests logging coupes 535-503-0013, 535-503-0014, 535-502-0003, 535-502-0002, 535-502-0001, 535-503-0015 and 535-501-0002

Report on the detection of significant populations of the vulnerable Mountain Leafless Bossiaea (*Bossiaea bracteosa*) within and adjacent to seven connecting VicForests scheduled logging coupes along Little Dargo River



Abstract

Active surveys were conducted across three days in areas within and adjacent VicForests logging coupes 535-503-0013, 535-503-0014, 535-502-0003, 535-502-0002, 535-502-0001, 535-503-0015 and 535-501-0002 to find populations of the vulnerable Mountain Leafless Bossiaea (*Bossiaea bracteosa*) (MLB). Significant populations of MLB plants were identified and recorded during these surveys. This investigation concludes that VicForests has failed to identify these populations of MLB within and adjacent this conglomerate of coupes and have scheduled logging in this important area for the MLB.

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Date of investigation: 15–17/01/2022

Date of report: 8/3/2023

Location details

This investigation was undertaken in the Boulung-Deera State Forest at Little Dargo River, within and adjacent to VicForests logging coupes 535-503-0013, 535-503-0014, 535-502-0003, 535-502-0002, 535-502-0001, 535-503-0015 and 535-501-0002.

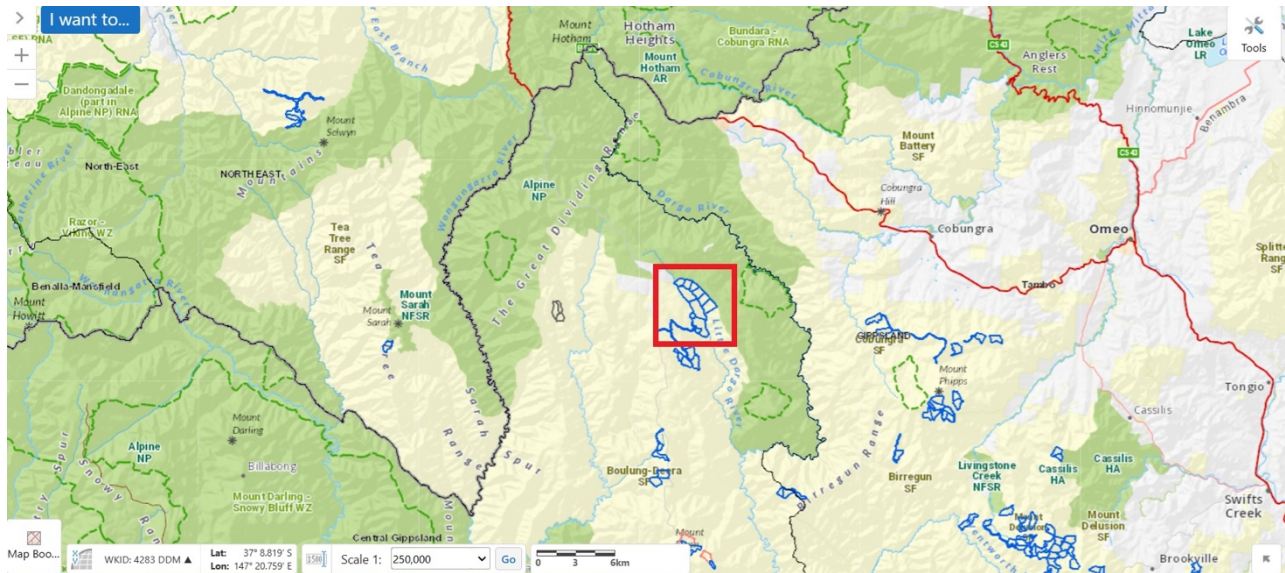


Figure 1. Map showing the location of the logging coupes investigated (in red box) in the context of the Little Dargo River area within the Boulung-Deera State Forest, adjacent the Alpine National Park, image taken as a screenshot from the Forest Information Portal on 23/02/2023: Forest Information Portal (ffm.vic.gov.au)

Method

The following active search methodology was used:

- Patches of forest within and adjacent coupes 535-503-0013, 535-503-0014, 535-502-0003, 535-502-0002, 535-502-0001, 535-503-0015 and 535-501-0002 were actively searched by multiple groups across three days (15–17/01/23) looking for MLB plants.
- Once spotted and identified as the target species, each plant location was marked by waypoint on a GPS. In some locations, one waypoint was marked to represent a cluster of multiple MLB plants in a small area.
- Images were taken of some but not all plants to demonstrate location and identification.

Results

This investigation detected more than 62 Mountain Leafless Bossiaea plants across a conglomerate of logging coupes.

Results are provided in the following sections:

- **Results 1:** Figures 1a,b – photographs of Mountain Leafless Bossiaea plants located during the surveys to prove identification of the plant
- Figures 2a-d – some examples of photographs taken of the plants with location coordinates of the detection location.
- **Results 2:** Figure 3 – A map of the MLB detection locations including a 200m buffer around the populations.
- **Results 3:** Attachments – Attached further photographic evidence of plant identification and location.

Results 1



Figure 1a,b. Photographs of Mountain Leafless Bossiaea (a) flowering MLB, (b) MLB plant example, showing distinctive cladodes



Figure 2a-d. examples of photographs taken of the plants with location coordinates of the detection location at waypoints - (a) JON04BBV (b) KIN01BBV (c) KIN02BBV (d) KIN05BBV

Results 2

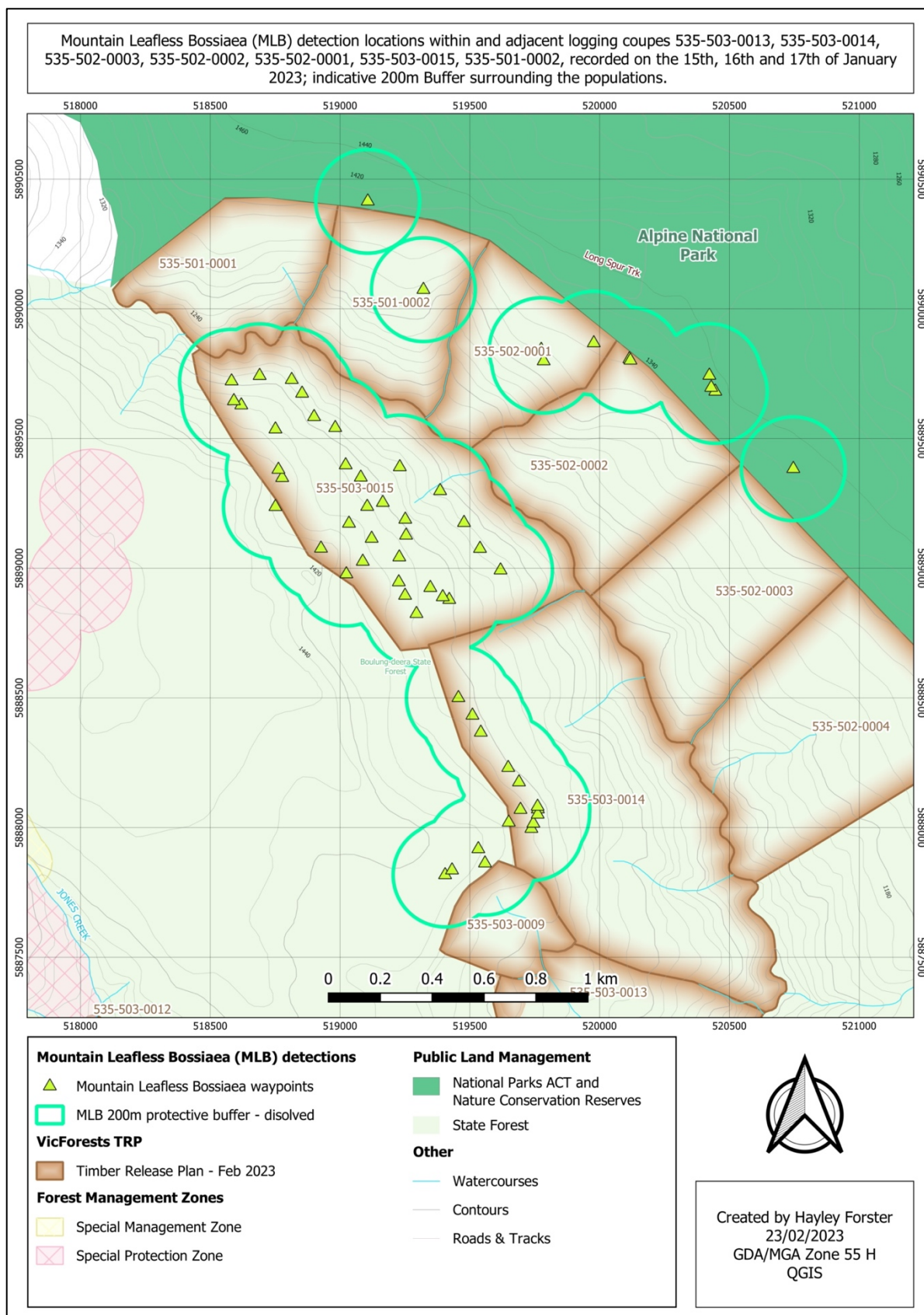


Figure 3: Map of Mountain Leafless Bossiaea detections and 200m protective buffer.

Discussion

The Mountain Leafless Bossiaea (*Bossiaea bracteosa*) is listed as vulnerable under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic). Consequently, this vulnerable species requires effective protection from disturbances such as logging to prevent further declines.

Mandatory actions

Under the *Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004* (Vic), it is mandatory for VicForests, its contractors and any other organisations undertaking timber harvesting operations in a Victorian state forest to comply with all prescriptions outlined in the Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014 (amended in 2022).

The following is the mandatory actions relevant to the Mountain Leafless Bossiaea that has been extracted from Schedule 1: Management Standards and Procedures for timber harvesting operations in Victoria’s State forests, of the Code of Practice.

Clause 4.2.1.3 of the Management Standards and Procedures requires:

If evidence of the presence of a value listed in Table 13 Rare or threatened fauna and invertebrate prescriptions or Table 14 Rare or threatened flora prescriptions (see excerpt below) is verified, apply and undertake any associated management action specified in the Table.

Table 14 requires the implementation of a 200m radius protection area for the MLB.

Species Name	Value	Applicable FMAs	Management Actions
Mountain Leafless Bossiaea <i>Bossiaea bracteosa</i>	Population	Gippsland FMAs	Apply a protection area of 200 m radius over each population.

Figure 4. Excerpt from ‘Table 14: Rare or threatened flora prescriptions’, from Schedule 1: Management Standards and Procedures.

Conclusion

- This report details the detection of significant populations of the vulnerable Mountain Leafless Bossiaea within and adjacent VicForests logging coupes 535-503-0013, 535-503-0014, 535-502-0003, 535-502-0002, 535-502-0001, 535-503-0015 and 535-501-0002, Boulung-Deera State Forest
- There is no evidence to suggest that VicForests have accounted for these important populations of MLB within the area through the planning phase of the TRP.
- This report concludes that VicForests, through failing to identify these populations of MLB, has planned to conduct logging operations throughout the evidently significant area for the vulnerable MLB.

Recommendations

- DEECA must restrain VicForests from conducting timber harvesting operations within the following scheduled logging coupes 535-503-0013, 535-503-0014, 535-502-0003, 535-502-0002, 535-502-0001, 535-503-0015 and 535-501-0002, and ensure the implementation of the prescribed 200m protection area around these detections as seen in Figure 3.
- Further comprehensive surveys for the Mountain Leafless Bossiaea should be undertaken within the above listed coupes and any adjacent coupes to ensure all plants are accounted for when implementing mandatory protections.
- The logging coupes 535-503-0013, 535-503-0014, 535-502-0003, 535-502-0002, 535-502-0001, 535-503-0015 and 535-501-0002 should be removed from VicForests Timber Release Plan as this forest is of high significance to the vulnerable Mountain Leafless Bossiaea.



We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land in which we conduct our surveys and other important work where sovereignty has never been ceded, and we pay our respects to elders past and present.