



GECO survey report,
published with Friends of
the Greater Glider

HIGH DENSITY OF GREATER
GLIDERS (*Petauroides
volans*) -Steps Track
Queensborough river
catchment

Logging Coupes: 892-507-
0015, 892-507-0014, 892-
507-0022



Date of survey:

Night of March 11, early
morning March 12, 2018

Names of surveyors:

Ed Hill, Lauren Mueller, Darcy
Vermont,
Shellie Butterworth, Amy Tobin
and others

Date of report: April 12, 2018

Report author: Ed Hill

Appendix data: Rena Gaborov

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Photo: Forest in coupe 892-507-0015

Introduction:

This report details a high density population of Greater Gliders (*Petauroides volans*) within and adjacent to VicForests proposed logging coupes 892-507-0015, 892-507-0014, 892-507-0022

Surveys were conducted on the night of March 11th 2018 and early morning of March 12th 2018. Results from spotlighting surveys are presented and relevant legislative provisions within the regulatory framework governing timber harvesting operations in Victoria's state forests are examined.

The report concludes that the area surveyed contains a high density of Greater Gliders, triggering the regulatory requirement for the creation of a 100 hectare Special Protection Zone.

Methods:

Spotlighting was conducted along roads and tracks in the Bendoc state forest to assess the presence and abundance of Greater Gliders.

The survey began at the intersection of Steps track and Marriott's track. A group of seven surveyors walked in an easterly direction along the southern boundary of proposed coupes 892-507-0022 and 892-507-0015 on Steps track. Spotlights were used to search the forest canopy for Greater Gliders and other arboreal fauna. The group turned left off Steps track at the eastern end of an unnamed track and headed in a westerly direction along the unnamed track completing a loop back to Steps track.

A halogen battery pack spotlight, two LED hand held spotlights and a high powered LED head torch were used to spotlight trees and the canopy of the forest. One Garmin 64St and a Garmin 64s GPS unit was used to record locations of arboreal fauna detected on the transect. A Suunto compass was used to take bearing readings. A notebook and pen were used to document times, locations, distance of animals from observer, directional bearing, species. A handheld Cannon DSLR camera was used to capture low quality photographs of fauna where possible.

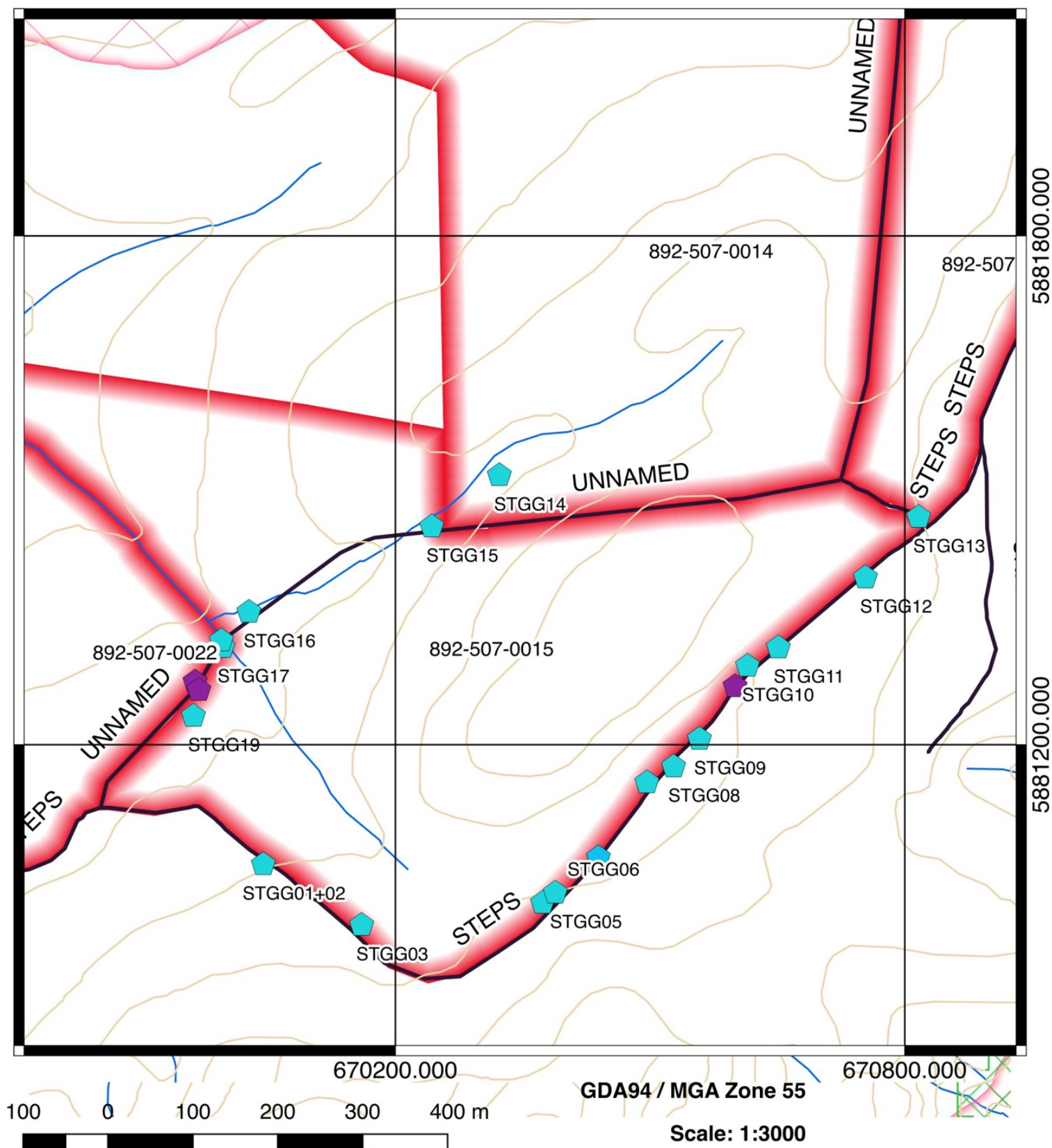
Results:

19 Greater Gliders were observed on the survey. 13 Greater Gliders were observed along Steps track over a distance of 993m. A further 6 Greater Gliders were recorded along the unnamed track running along the northern boundary of coupe 892-507-0015. Three Mountain Brushtail possums were observed and their locations recorded. A number of aural observations of sugar gliders and owl night jars were also observed but not recorded.

Results table 1 - Arboreal fauna observed on survey – March 11-12th 2018

Time of observation	Species	Location (GDA 94)	Number of animals	Distance (m)	Bearing (°)	Waypoint name	Cumulative Greater Glider count	Notes
10:40pm	Greater Glider	0670044 5881058	2	N/A	N/A	STGG01+02	1 + 2	Two in same tree, photo of single GG on lower branch
10:50pm	Greater Glider	0670160 5880987	1	30	205	STGG03	3	
11:10pm	Greater Glider	0670373 5881013	1	10	253	STGG04	4	
11:18pm	Greater Glider	0670439 5881067	1	30	300	STGG05	5	
11:25pm	Greater Glider	0670439 5881067	1	15	340	STGG06	6	
11:35pm	Greater Glider	0670496 5881155	1	20	270	STGG07	7	
11:40pm	Greater Glider	0670527 5881174	1	60	40	STGG08	8	No photo
11:44pm	Greater Glider	0670557 5881206	1	N/A	N/A	STGG09	9	No photo
11:47pm	Mountain Brushtail possum	670599 5881268	2	N/A	N/A	STBB02	x	
11:50pm	Greater Glider	0670614 5881292	1	N/A	N/A	STGG10	10	
11:52pm	Greater Glider	0670650 5881314	1	20	150	STGG11	11	
12:00am	Greater Glider	0670753 5881397	1	20	310	STGG12	12	No photo
12:05am	Greater Glider	0670816 5881468	1	N/A	N/A	STGG13	13	
12:22am	Greater Glider	0670322 5881517	1	N/A	N/A	STGG14	14	
12:30am	Greater Glider	0670242 5881457	1	N/A	N/A	STGG15	15	Grey morph
12:45am	Greater Glider	0670027 5881356	1	60	293	STGG16	16	No photo
12:50am	Greater Glider	0669996 5881315	1	N/A	N/A	STGG17	17	No photo
12:50am	Greater Glider	0669994 5881322	1	N/A	N/A	STGG18	18	No photo
12:58am	Mountain Brushtail Possum	0669963 5881274	2	20	180	STMBT02 STMBT03	x	
1:00am	Greater Glider	0669961 5881233	1			STGG19	19	Grey morph

Arboreal fauna records from spotlighting survey - Steps Track Bendoc state forest



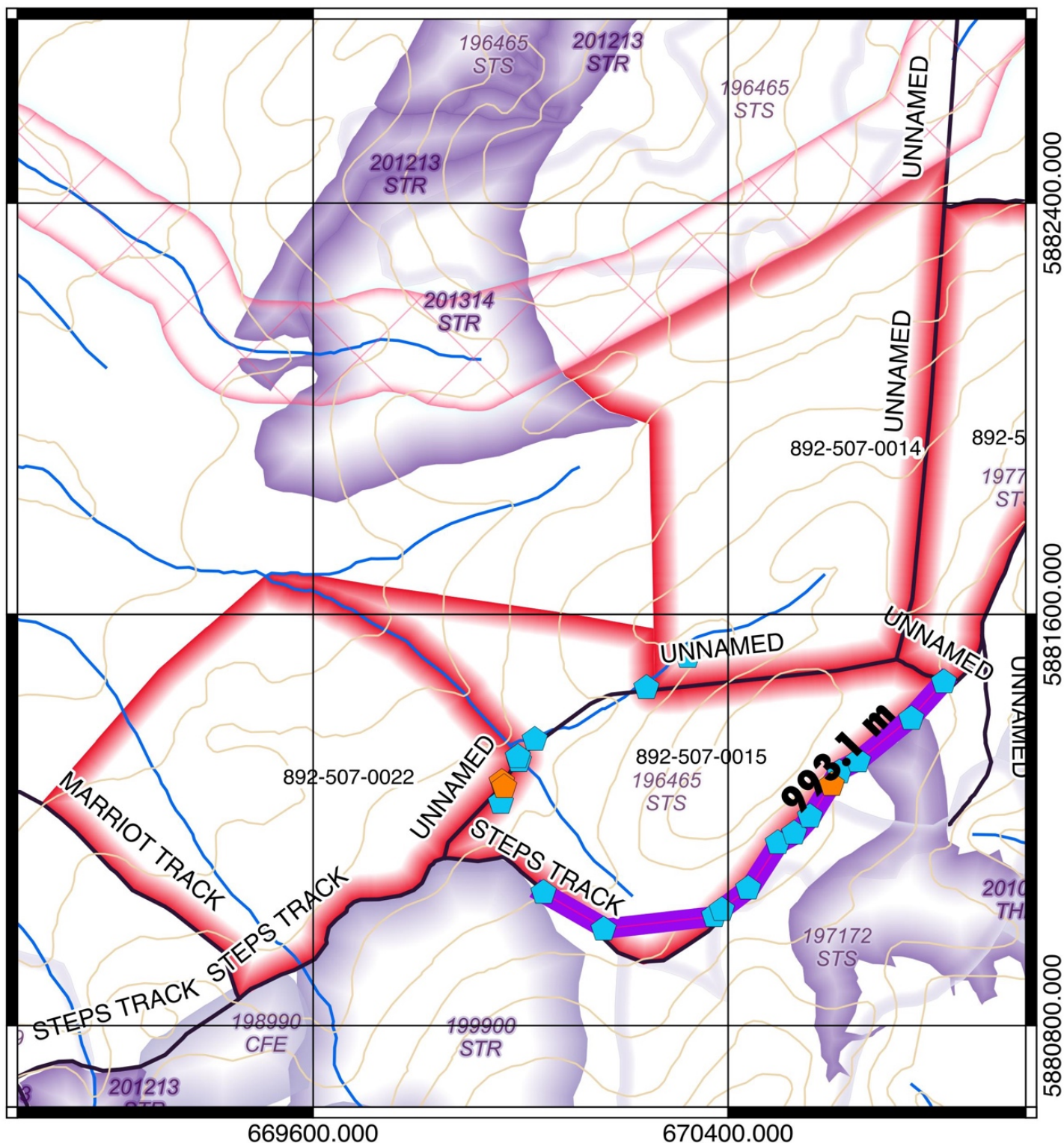
Legend

- Mountain brushtail possum
- Greater glider
- contours
- Special Protection Zone

- Special Management Zone
- General Management Zone
- Roads
- Watercourse
- Proposed additional coupes VicForests TRP

Locations of arboreal fauna records from spotlighting survey and logging history

The purple line represents a distance of 993.1m over which 13 Greater Gliders were recorded



Legend

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Mountain Brushtail location | Logging history (year) |
| | Greater Glider location | 196465 |
| | 993.1 m line | 197172 |
| | Contours (20m) | 198990 |
| | Special Protection Zone | 199192 |
| | Roads and Tracks | 199900 |
| | Watercourses | 201112 |
| | Proposed additional coupe | 201213 |
| | | 201314 |

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 m



Scale: 1:5000

GDA 94/MGA Zone 55



Results - photos



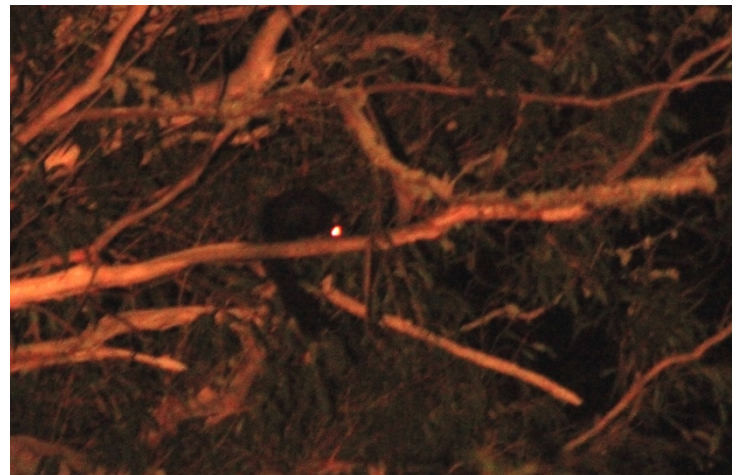
Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG01+02
55 H 0670044 / 5881058



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG03
55 H 0670160 / 5880987



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG04
55 H 0670373 / 5881013



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG05
55 H 0670439 / 5881067



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG006
55 H 0670439 / 5881067



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG007
55 H 0670496 / 5881155



Mountain Brushtail possum at waypoint location
STBB02 55H 670599 / 5881268



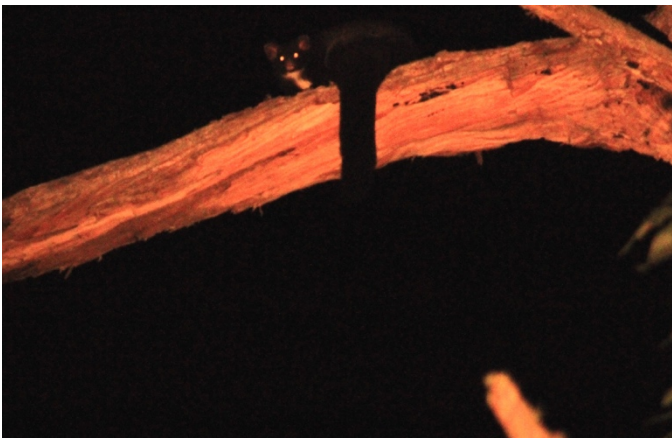
Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG10
55 H 0670614 5881292



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG11
55 H 0670650 / 5881314



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG13
55 H 0670816 / 5881468



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG14
55 H 0670322 / 5881517



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG15
55 H 0670242 / 5881457



Greater Glider at waypoint location STGG19
55 H 0670027 / 5881356

Discussion / Conclusion:

The results show the forest within proposed coupes 892-507-0015, 892-507-0014, 892-507-0022 contains a significantly high density of Greater Gliders.

Greater gliders were recorded at densities triggering the regulatory requirement to establish a 100 hectare Special Protection Zone (SPZ). These requirements are listed in the *“Planning Standards for timber harvesting operations in Victoria’s State forests 2014, Appendix 5 to the Management Standards and Procedures for timber harvesting operations in Victoria’s State forests 2014”*, specifically s4.3 - *Fauna – detection based zoning* and Table 4 - *Detection based FMZ rules for fauna*.

In order to meet the requirements of the High Density of Greater Glider prescriptions, a Special Protection Zones must be established and fully implemented prior to any logging operations in this area.

The Greater Glider population documented in this report occurs on land currently within the “Bendoc – Mariott Creek” planned burn area (GP-SNO-BOC-0016). GECCO is concerned that this burn will impact on hollow bearing trees and habitat Greater Glider. DELWP's own research has shown that planned burns reduce hollow availability and increase the likelihood of hollow bearing tree collapse¹.

We note that DELWP has previously written to environment groups regarding existing management measures to mitigate threats to Greater Gliders in planned burn areas.

The measures detailed in letters from DELWP include:

- removing fuel from around hollow bearing trees
- not burning in Greater Glider breeding season (February to June)
- night burning to reduce intensity
- using exclusion areas where fire will be excluded

DELWP's correspondence on this issue also states that decisions on mitigation measures is based on records of occurrence within planned burn areas.

Considering the abundance of Greater Glider records within the planned burn area, we would like to know what specific measures to mitigate threats to Greater Gliders will be applied to the Bendoc / Mariott Creek planned burn?

Please inform our organisation on DELWP's progress to make the required zoning amendments and processing this report by providing regular updates and clear and transparent information.

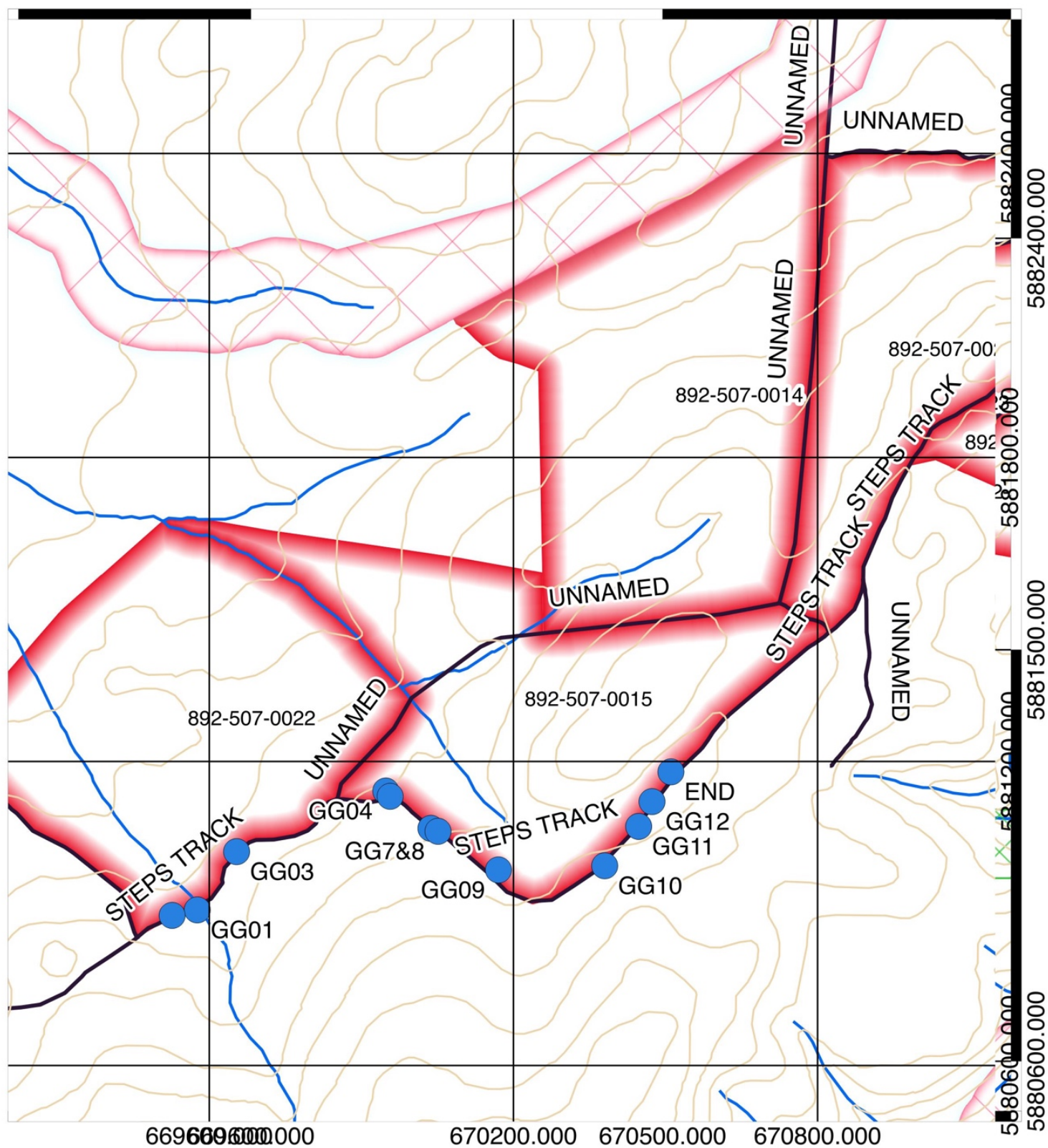
¹ Bluff. L, *Reducing the effect of planned burns on hollow bearing trees, Fire and adaptive Management Report no. 95*, Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Melbourne, February 2016

Appendix:

Survey results from separate survey coordinated by Rena Gaborov on the same night as the survey detailed above. This survey was conducted with 15 people at a GECO citizen science camp and recorded 11 Greater Gliders along a section of Steps track

Species	time	Waypoint Name	Cordinates (GDA 94, UTM)	Bearing	approximate distance
Greater Glider	22:21	GG01	669576 5880907	140	25
Greater Glider	22:35	GG02	669527 5880896	330	20
Greater Glider	22:38	GG03	669654 5881022	290	20
Common Ringtail Possum	22:50	NO WAYPOINT		NOT TAKEN	NOT TAKEN
Owlet Nightjar	22:50	NO WAYPOINT		NOT TAKEN	NOT TAKEN
Common Ringtail Possum	22:52	NO WAYPOINT		NOT TAKEN	NOT TAKEN
Mountain Brushtail Possum	22:58	NO WAYPOINT		NOT TAKEN	NOT TAKEN
Common Ringtail Possum	22:58	NO WAYPOINT		NOT TAKEN	NOT TAKEN
Greater Glider	23:03	GG04	669948 5881142	320	18
Yellow-bellied Glider	23:06	GG04	669948 5881142	300	NOT TAKEN
Greater Glider	23:09	GG05	669957 5881131	355	50
Greater Glider	23:16	GG06	670037 5881068	340	10
Yellow-bellied Glider	23:21	GG06	670037 5881068	260	45
Greater Glider	23:16	GG07 and 8	670051 5881062	200	80
Greater Glider	23:30	GG09	670171 5880986	160	18
Greater Glider	23:46	GG10	670380 5880994	345	20
Mountain Brushtail Possum	23:54	NO WAYPOINT		NOT TAKEN	
Greater Glider	23:55	GG11	670447 5881072	335	22
Greater Glider	12:02	GG12	670473 5881121	335	NOT TAKEN
end	12:07	End	670511 5881179		

Additional survey for Greater Gliders at Steps Track by Rena Gaborov coupe 892-507-0015, 892-507-0022



Legend

- Greater Glider
 - Contours (20m)
 - ✓ Modelled Old Growth (MOG 2009)
 - Special Protection Zone
 - Roads
 - Watercourse
 - VicForests coupe proposed for addition to TRP
- Map scale: 1:5000
- GDA94 / MGA Zone 55
- 0 100 200 300 400 500 m

