

GOONGERAH ENVIRONMENT CENTRE SURVEY REPORT

LARGE TREES FOUND IN VICFORESTS

LOGGING COUPE 893-504-0007

Playgrounds Road – Bendoc State Forest – East Gippsland

Abstract

Forests within the VicForests logging coupe 893-504-0007 were surveyed to determine the presence of large trees. Several of the large trees which were found were measured to determine the diameter at breast height (DBH) from the highest side and marked on a GPS with a waypoint. There were more large trees present which were not measured and recorded.

Several large trees detected in this area require protection under the relevant mandatory biodiversity conservation measures set out in the regulatory framework governing logging operations in Victoria's State Forests. The methodology, results, and recommendations arising from this survey are further detailed within this report.

Given the significance of this area and the trees found we recommend that the coupe be removed from the TRP to protect the large trees and surrounding forest.



14.5m circumference tree found in VicForests logging coupe 893-504-0007

Date of survey
25 September 2021

Date of report
5 October 2021

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Method: Daytime survey conducted 25 September 2021

Equipment Used

- Measuring tape
- Global Positioning System (GPS) [Garmin GPSMAP 64s]
- Mobile phone for images

Method used

1. On 25 September 2021 at approximately 2pm, surveyors started walking through forests in VicForests logging coupe 893-504-0007 to determine the presence of large trees.
2. Large trees were measured at the highest point at breast height (1.3m) to determine the circumference. The measurement was recorded, and a waypoint marked on the GPS at the location of the trees. Photos of the trees were taken using a mobile phone. One tree was marked and was observed to be a large tree but was not measured (waypoint ID BT10).
3. The results of this survey are presented in the table and shown in Figure 1 below.

Table 1: Large trees recorded 25 September 2021

Time	Waypoint ID	Species	Measurement (circumference)	DBH	Location
14:08	BT01 910	<i>E. denticulata</i>	9.1 m	2.9 m	55 H 656042 5881071
14:50	BT02 780	<i>E. denticulata</i>	7.8 m	2.48 m	55 H 656137 5880844
15:01	BT03 750	<i>E. denticulata</i>	7.5 m	2.38 m	55 H 656116 5880762
16:01	BT04 980	<i>E. denticulata</i>	9.8 m	3.12 m	55 H 655981 5880475
16:07	BT05 1210	<i>E. denticulata</i>	12.1 m	3.85 m	55 H 655953 5880444
16:18	BT06 1002	<i>E. denticulata</i>	10 m	3.18 m	55 H 655914 5880387
16:48	BT07 910	<i>E. denticulata</i>	9.1 m	2.9 m	55 H 655760 5880206
17:08	BT08 1450	<i>E. denticulata</i>	14.5 m	4.62 m	55 H 655733 5880142
17:18	BT09 845	<i>E. denticulata</i>	8.45 m	2.69 m	55 H 655650 5880073
17:24	BT10	Undetermined	Unmeasured	N/A	55 H 655582 5880060
17:29	BT11 800	Undetermined	8 m	2.55 m	55 H 655545 5880029



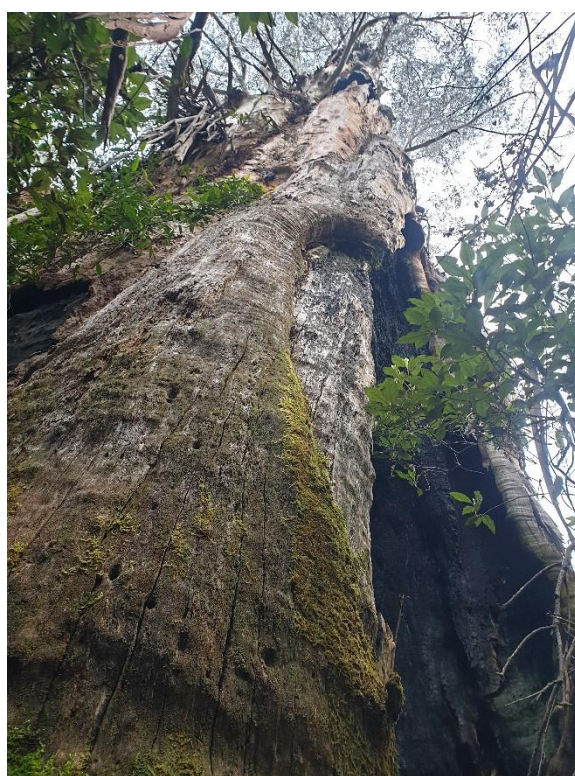
BT05



BT06



BT02



BT03



BT08



BT07



BT011



BT04

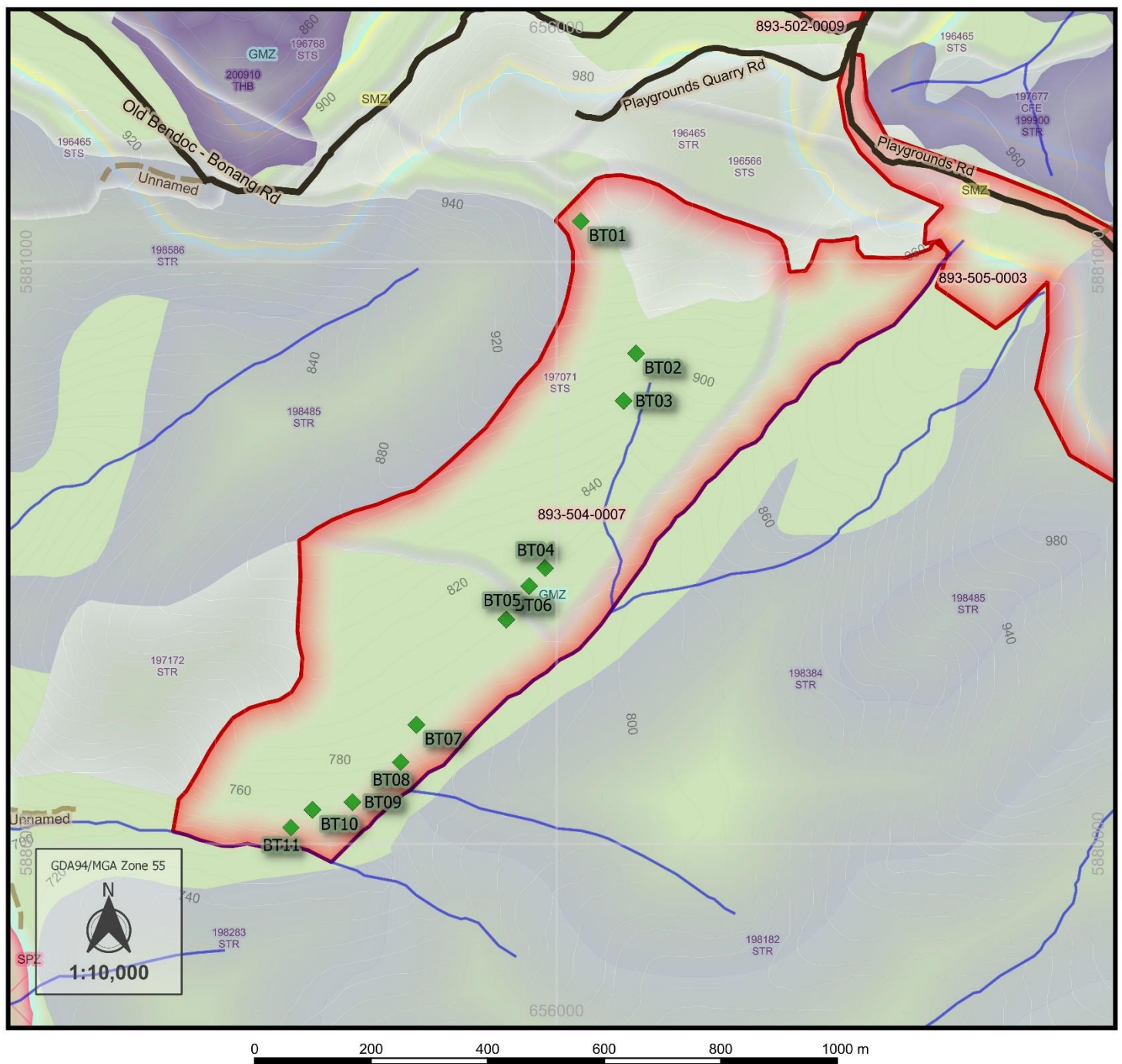
Relevant Legislation

Department of Environment Land Water and Planning, Field Guideline – Identification and Protection of Large Trees p. 2:

3.2 Protection of large trees

1. In all coupes where timber harvesting is conducted, VicForests must make all reasonable endeavours to protect large trees from the direct impacts of timber harvesting and regeneration burning.
 - a. Where practicable, large trees are to be incorporated into retained patches or within expanded exclusion areas.
 - b. Slash and bark must not be allowed to accumulate with 3 metres of the base of large trees in accordance with section 7.2.4.1 of the *Management Standards and Procedures for timber harvesting in Victoria's State forests 2014*.
 - c. Damage to large trees caused by felling or extracting other trees should be avoided
 - d. The construction of roading and snig tracks through retained large tree patches or expanded exclusion areas should be avoided.
 - e. Where there is no practicable alternative (that will have a lesser environmental impact), the construction of roading and snig tracks through retained large tree patches or expanded exclusion areas is acceptable, providing that the large trees as defined above are retained and harvesting slash created during snigging or road construction is removed from the patch to minimise future fire risk.

Figure 1: Locations of large trees recorded in VicForests logging coupe 893-504-0007



Current Investigation

- ◆ Large Trees

Public Land

- Parks and Reserves
- Forest Management Zones
 - Special Protection Zone
 - Special Management Zone
 - General Management Zone
 - All FMZ Forest Areas

Logging and Disturbance

- Scheduled Logging Coupes (VicForests, September 2021)
- Logging History (LOGSEASON)
 - 195960
 - 196970
 - 197980
 - 198990
 - 199900
 - 200001
 - 200910

Other layers

- Roads
 -
 -
- Watercourses
 -
 -
 -
- Contours
 -

Conclusion/recommendations

The large trees measured in this coupe were just a selection of large trees present. There is some historic selective logging, however senescent trees were the dominant age class of Eucalypts observed, along with numerous hollow-bearing trees. The coupe is situated in one of the few areas which was not impacted by the 2019/2020 bushfires and is a critical refuge for wildlife and rare old forest. It is within the areas identified by the Environment Department as an important area for wildlife following the fires¹.

One of the trees measured is of a similar size and significance to the tree in the Old Growth Forest walk in the Errinundra National Park, not far from this area scheduled for logging. The tree, which we found and recorded measured at 14.5m circumference, is easily accessible from the Bonang Road, a main tourist road and close to many other tourist attractions.

Some of the trees found and recorded were only a fraction smaller than the required 2.5m DBH and above to qualify for protection. The protections don't require VicForests to retain buffers around large old trees, which protect trees from logging machines damaging their root structure, and risks to windthrow and post-logging burns.

Given the significance of this area and the trees found we recommend that the coupe be removed from the TRP to protect the large trees and surrounding forest.



¹ Precautionary measures in timber harvesting post the 2019/20 Victorian bushfires, Regulatory position statement. May 2020. Conservation Regulator Victoria p. 7, 9