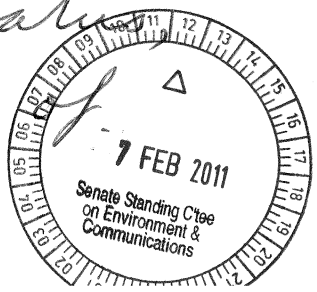
The Inquiry into the status health and sustainability of Australia's koala



I am a disability pensioner living at Muldu 22 kms by road from Cakey Queensland. This is the first time that I have resided in close proximity to koala colonies. The curious creatures needless to say captured my attention.

Purpose of this Submission

The purpose of this submission is to provide further information, evidence and observations in relation to the following terms of reference.

- ☑ The iconic status of the koala and the history of its management
- ☑ Estimates of koala populations and the adequacy of current counting methods
- ☑ Knowledge of koala habitat.
- ☑ Threats to koala habitat such as logging, land clearing, poor management, attacks from feral and domestic animals disease and roads and urban development.
- ☑ The listing of the koala under the EPBC Act.
- ☑ Other related matters.

The iconic status of the koala and the history of its management.

As an Icon, the Acland State School used an ink drawing of a koala on their newsletter recognising their local colony. Any Japanese tourist will identify a picture of a koala and immediately associate it with Australia more than any of our other Fauna.

As to management there is not much in the way of highlights. Brought to near extinction in the slaughter up to 1930 and thence a recognisable but seldom regarded status. Basically known a cute, cuddly, lives in trees & eats gum leaves. Not a great effort has been put into studying its biology, diseases or habitat. Baring a few interested souls until about 20 years ago it has been

a matter of little interest. The groundswell of interest is slow in maturing but is hopefully not too late. I do not see a new approach to management being successful divorced from educating the public & raising their concern about koalas. The task is beyond several hundred as I am sure that at least that number is already involved.

Estimates of koala populations and the adequacy of current counting methods.

In the 1920's the export of saleable koala hides was in the millions per year. That does not include unsaleable ones. As there are seriously less gum trees today than then, the then population today would have us campaining to "save the eulypts". It can be taken as said that koala numbers are seriously down.

Knowledge of koala habitat

The only koala habitat that I have any current familiarity with is a strip from Oakey Queensland in a generally northerly direction for 20 kms. If the current application of New Hope Coal's Stage 3 of New Acland Coal mine is approved under the auspices of the EPBC there is the distinct probability that this area will cease to be koala habitat.

When you head North from Oakey along the Oakey Cooyar Road, on your right is the ADI Oakey Aviation Base & its close to 3 metre security fence. The enclosed maps cover this area. Then there is Doctor's Creek floodplain coming from the NE (right of road). This area is almost devoid of trees. At aprox 4 kms to your left a colony of koalas died out from Ovarian Cyst Disease. It has failed to recolonise. At 8 kms Sabine Road Treeway to the left. In a direct line 2 kms west was a koala colony that decamped when NAC started blasting operations. 9 kms from Oakey. is the Greenwood - Boat water hole road with a

treeway to within a kilometre of the highway. Koalas use this for E-W access. Where the trees peter out there is light scrub cover to the top of Greenwood hill to the north. at 9½ kms Greenwood old school road goes to the west. On the same line 4 kms away another koala colony decamped as a result of blasting by NAC. 13 kms from Oakey access to Acland 5 kms west and at the moment still has koalas in spite of its proximity to the blast site. as they are not tagged it is difficult to say whether resident or transient. There is another colony SW of Acland & W of the Muldu-Jondaryan within the proposed Stage 3 boundry. Coal trucks going to the loading facility at Jondaryan have

accounted for a few casualties.
4 kms north of Acland is Muldu.
and since 2001 when NAC started
operations no transient koalas
have passed through. At the corner
of the Muldu – Plainview was a
reserve which subsequently was sold
to the neighbouring property. The
trees were bulldozed & a 25 strong
colony was ~~disposed~~ dispossessed.
6 kms W of Muldu along the Muldu
Brymaroo Road is a small colony.
There are two small colonies
to the NW of Muldu. On the
northern boundary of NAC Stage 1
vandals shot out a small colony
about 20 years ago & it has not
reestablished.

When the approval for the go ahead
for Stage 3 expansion of NAC is

given, it will soon become a no go zone to 20 kms north of Oahey.

Included are maps, diagrams and a newspaper article with a photo graph.

Assessable Vegetation Map

Remnant vegetation (v6.0)

- Containing endangered regional ecosystems
- Containing of concern regional ecosystems
- Remnant vegetation that is a least concern regional ecosystem
- Remnant vegetation under Section 20AH These areas are edged in yellow and filled with the Remnant RE Status
- Non-remnant
- Plantation Forest
- Dam or Reservoir
- Remnant Vegetation

- VMA Essential Regrowth Habitat v3.0
- VMA Essential Habitat v3.0
- Subject Lot(s)
- Cadastral line

The maximum spatial error of parcels extracted for this map from the Digital Cadastral Data Base (DCDB) range from: 14m to 251m at 95% confidence level. Property boundaries shown are provided as a locational aid only.

High value regrowth vegetation

- Containing Endangered regional ecosystems
- Containing Of Concern regional ecosystems
- That is a Least Concern regional ecosystem

Property Map of Assessable Vegetation
Vegetation Category Area

- Category A area
- Category B area
- Category C area
- Category X area

Oakey Aviation Base proposed Stage 3 NAC Stage 1 & 2 NAC

- Regrowth Watercourse v2.0
- Other Watercourse v2.0 (Stream order shown against stream where available)
- Great Barrier Reef Wetlands

- Local Authority Boundary
- Bioregion Boundary
- National Park Boundary, State Forest
- Roads © MapInfo Australia Pty Ltd 2009

N

Queensland Government

1:100,000

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 km

Lot on Plan:

1RP36486

NON-STANDARD MAP

This map is a copy of the VMA Regional Ecosystem and Remnant Map, PMAV, Regrowth Vegetation Map as defined by the map extent.

All datasets are updated as they become available to provide the most current information as of the date shown on this map.

The PMAV data shown on this map are a representation of the data used to create certified PMAVs. Variations may occur between PMAV boundaries and cadastral boundaries. PMAV data incorporates cadastral boundary data as at the time of certification of the PMAV. The cadastral boundaries shown on this map may have shifted relative to the PMAV boundaries as more accurate cadastral boundary data have become available.

A remnant map covers areas not covered by a regional ecosystem map.

Defined map areas are labelled with the regional ecosystem (RE) code along with the percentage breakdown if more than one RE occurs within the area. Detailed definitions of regional ecosystems are available from www.derm.qld.gov.au/REDD. Defined map areas smaller than 5ha may not be labelled.

Regional ecosystem linework has been compiled at a scale of 1:100 000, except in designated areas where a compilation scale of 1:50 000 is available. Linework should be used as a guide only. The positional accuracy of RE data mapped at a scale of 1:100 000 is +/- 100 metres. The extent of remnant regional ecosystems as of 2006, depicted on this map is based on rectified 2006 Landsat TM imagery (supplied by SLATS, Department of Environment and Resource Management).

Some watercourse lines are derived from GeoScience Australia 1:250 000 mapping.

Disclaimer:
While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this product, the Department of Environment and Resource Management and MapInfo Australia Pty Ltd, makes no representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability or any particular purpose and disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which you might incurr as a result of the product being inaccurate or incomplete in any way and for any reason.

Additional information is required for the purposes of land clearing

or assessment of a regional ecosystem map or
PMAV applications. For further information go to the web site: www.derm.qld.gov.au/vegetation or contact the Department of Environment and Resource Management.

Digital regional ecosystem data is available in shapefile format, for Lot on Plans from www.derm.qld.gov.au/REDATA or from DERM for larger areas.

RE Date	**October 2009**
DCDB Date	**January 2011**
Map Date	**24/01/2011**

Produced by: The Department of Environment and Resource Management

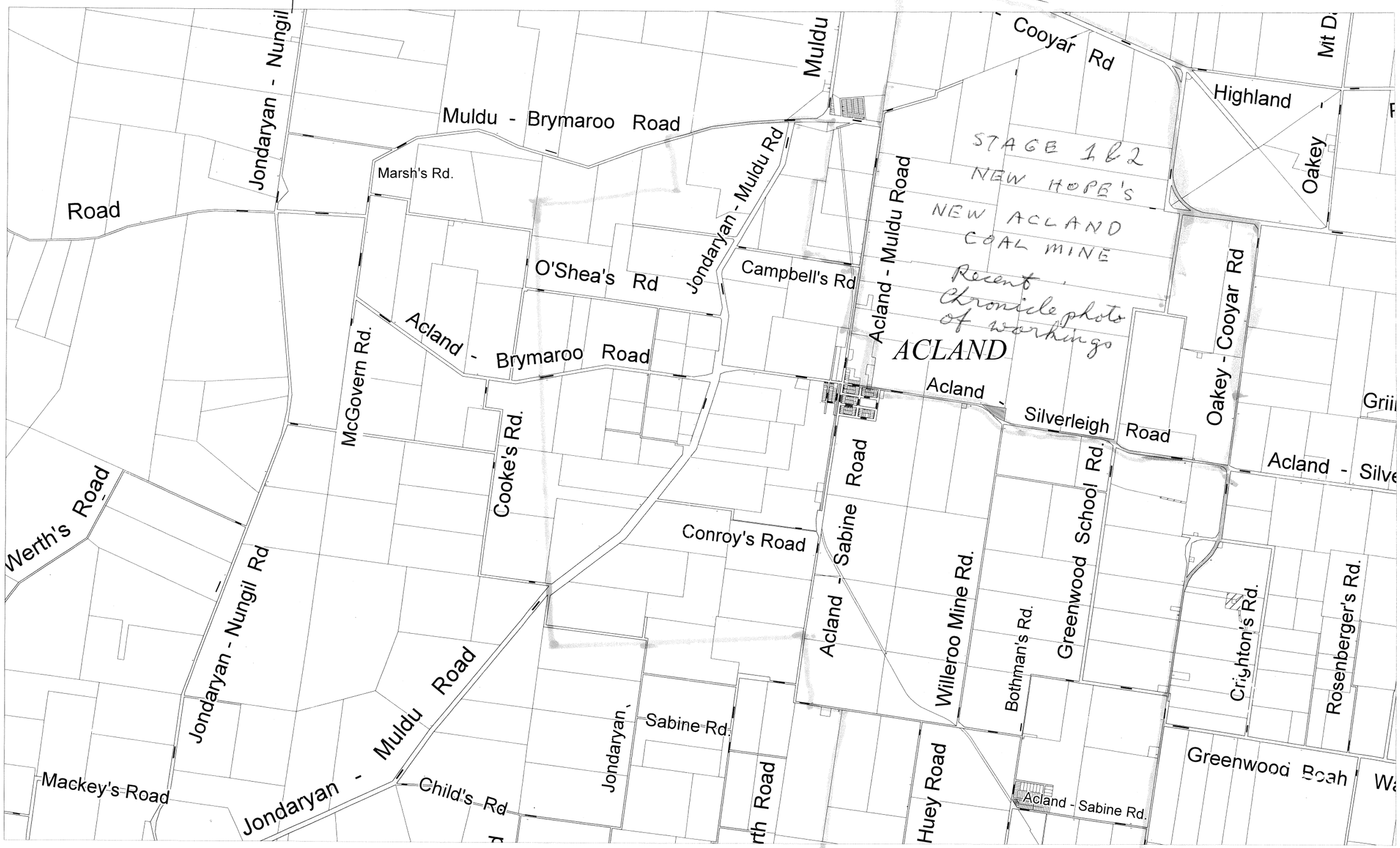
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94)

Grey numbered tick marks are 1000 metre intervals on Transverse Mercator Projection
Map Grid of Australia (MGA) Zone 56

Cadastral data provided with the permission of the Department of Environment and Resource Management

Property boundaries shown on this map are provided as a locational aid only.
DCDB boundaries do not represent legal cadastral boundaries.

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Jondaryan - Nungil
Muldu
Cooyar Rd
Highland
Mit D
Muldu - Brymaroo Road
Marsh's Rd.
Road
Jondaryan - Muldu Rd
Acland - Muldu Road
STAGE 1 & 2
NEW HOPE'S
NEW ACLAND
COAL MINE
Recent
Chronicle photo
of workings
Oakey
O'Shea's Rd
Campbell's Rd
Acland - Brymaroo Road
McGovern Rd.
ACLAND
Acland
Silverleigh
Road
Oakey - Cooyar Rd
Cooke's Rd.
Conroy's Road
Acland - Sabine Road
Willeroo Mine Rd.
Bothman's Rd.
Greenwood School Rd.
Crighton's Rd.
Rosenberger's Rd.
Werth's Road
Jondaryan - Nungil Rd
Jondaryan - Muldu Road
Jondaryan
Sabine Rd.
Huey Road
Acland - Sabine Rd.
Mackey's Road
Child's Rd
proposed Stage 3
not all the area



A bird's eye view of New Hope's Acland coal mine which has been closed due to flood inundation. PICTURE: JACINTA CUMMINS\DALBY HERALD

Coal operations on hold



By JOHN FARMER
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@thechronicle.com.au

OPERATIONS have come to a standstill at coal mines across the flood-hit Western Downs.

All of the region's three major mines — Wilkie Creek, Acland and Cameby Downs — have experienced some level of inundation during the past month.

Meanwhile, it could be months before access to the Port of Brisbane is reopened after it was cut off due to the damage to Queensland's rail network.

Peabody Energy, which operates the Wilkie Creek coal mine near Dalby, only regained access to the mine site on Wednesday.

Currently, operations remain on hold as the company attempts to secure the site.

"At this stage, safety is our top priority and a full risk assessment will be conducted at the mine before workers return to the site and begin to focus on recovery activities," a company spokesman said.

Peabody's spokesman said it was too early to comment on the state of Queensland's rail network.

"We will be guided by Queensland Rail as to any future impacts on our operations."

During the worst of the floods, Wilkie Creek employees assisted State Emergency Service personnel with relief efforts in Dalby, Toowoomba and across the Darling Downs.

Meanwhile, Queensland Premier Anna Bligh said water would not be discharged from coal pits at the expense of the environment.

About 85 per cent of Queensland's 59 coal mines shut down production or operated under restrictions during the floods.

"Every single mine is required to have an environmental authority to release water and we are working with every single mine to work out how we get that water out of the pits," Ms Bligh said.

— with AAP

Helpers urged to register

By JOHN FARMER
john.farmer
@thechronicle.com.au

LOCKYER Valley Regional Council has urged flood clean-up volunteers to register before they converge on the region.

Chief executive officer Ian Flint said it was simply not possible to accommodate all offers of assistance in one day or weekend.

Mr Flint said by registering, volunteers would allow council to better co-ordinate the rebuild.

"It is just wonderful that so many people care enough about our community that they are trying to help," he said.

"We are so very grateful, but, at this stage we need to be in a better position to manage it."

Mr Flint said until further notice, council centres could not take donations of perishable and non-perishable food items, or furniture. He said a bank account had been established where cash donations could be made.

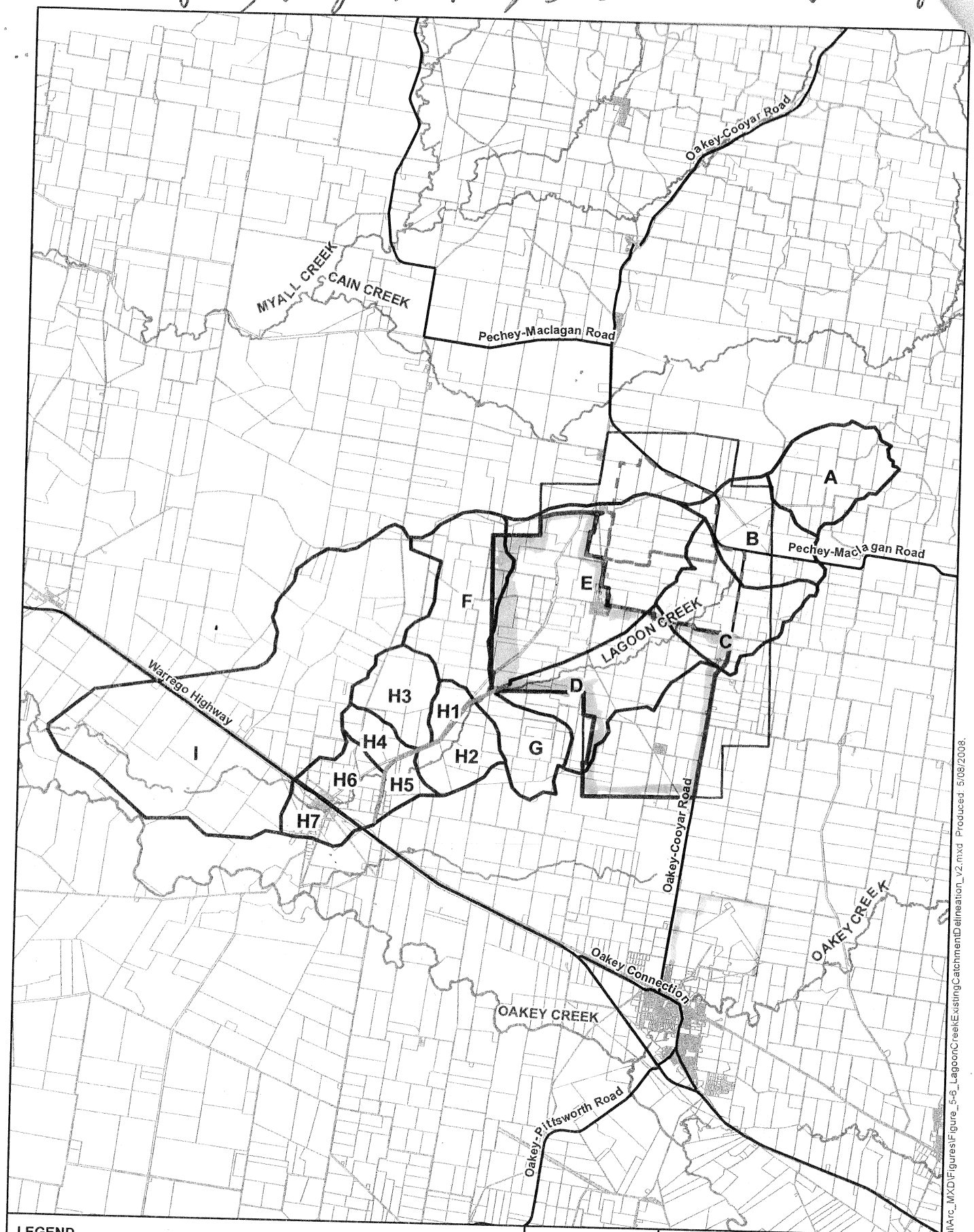
"We must hold off on taking more material donations until it best suits the needs of the people that need it most — at a time they need it most," he said.

"In the future, as more people start rebuilding their lives, homes and neighbourhoods, material donations will be most helpful."

The Lockyer Valley Regional Council's Flood Recovery Bank Account details are: BSB: 084 657 /account number: 188 881 996

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Veg. → Fig 7-1 of EIS



LEGEND

- Drainage
- Cadastre
- Proposed Private Haul Road
- Existing Mining Lease
- Stage 3 Mining Lease Application
- Stage 3 MDL
- Lagoon Creek Sub Catchments

proposed stage 3 New Hope Coal

Stage 1&2 new acland coal mine

Oakey aviation Base

NEW HOPE COAL

SKM

FIGURE 5-6

NEW ACLAND STAGE 3 COAL MINE EXPANSION

Lagoon Creek Existing Catchments

0 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometres

Scale 1:175,000 on A4

Projection: AMG - Zone 56 (AGD84)

I:\QENV2\Projects\QE06455\SpatialArc_MXD\Figures\Figure_5-6_LagoonCreekExistingCatchmentDelineation_v2.mxd Produced: 5/08/2008.



LEGEND

- Locality
- Road
- Proposed Private Haul Road
- Cadastre
- Existing Mining Lease
- Stage 3 Mining Lease Application
- Stage 3 MDL
- Remnant Vegetation
- Non-Remnant Vegetation

Threatened Flora

- *Bothriochloa biloba*
- *Digitaria porrecta*
- *Homopholis belsonii*
- *Stemmacantha australis*

NEW HOPE COAL AUSTRALIA

SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ SKM

FIGURE 7-3
NEW ACLAND STAGE 3 COAL MINE EXPANSION
Observed Regional Ecosystems and Threatened Flora

0 1 2 3 4
Kilometres
Scale 1:100,000 on A4
Projection: AMG - Zone 56 (AGD84)

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Stage 2 was not started at the time



LEGEND

- Locality
- Road
- Proposed Private Haul Road
- Pit Boundary
- Cadastre
- Existing Mining Lease
- Stage 3 Mining Lease Application
- Stage 3 MDL

Regional Ecosystems

- Remnant 'Endangered' - Dominant
- Remnant 'of concern' - Dominant
- Remnant 'of concern' - Sub dominant
- Remnant - 'Not of Concern'

NEW HOPE COAL AUSTRALIA

SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ SKM

FIGURE 7-1

NEW ACLAND STAGE 3 COAL MINE EXPANSION

Current Regional Ecosystems

0 1 2 3 4

Kilometres

Scale 1:100,000 on A4

Projection: AMG - Zone 56 (AGD84)

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Threats to koala habitat such as logging, land clearing, poor management, attacks from feral and domestic animals, disease and roads and urban development.

There is no logging

In the last 13 years only two paddocks in the surrounding area have been cleared. One surrounded on four sides by forested country. The other not large & only possible small overall impact. Another small area of Belah close to a house & piggery & isolated from any other timber.

Poor management usually of long standing. Even the old farmers look aghast at you if you talk about cutting down trees.

There is some poor cultivation technics, but probably do not overly effect koalas.

There are foxes, feral cats & the odd dingo or dingo between bait runs. No available data relevant to fauna. I have lived in sheep country and I make it known that only dingoes are loose at night and they get shot. No ifs or maybe.

Since the koala colony closest to Oakey was devastated by O.C.D. no one seems to be aware of disease casualties.

About four have been killed on the Muldu - Jondaryan Road. This is the Coal Haul Road & triple & quad trailer trucks cannot take evasive action or they get wrecked. One koala spat out from under a coal truck it miraculously

only stunned.

One was killed on the Oakey-Looyar Road about 4 years back near the Sabine turn off. The staff at the mine numerously road kill just about every other possible type of wildlife excepting koalas. Urban development is not an issue in this area.

The listing of the koala under the EPBC act.

Tomorrow is not too soon for Southern Queensland.

Early 2010 – three month ground survey near Charleville 6 sightings

2010 Central Southern district State listing (of concern)

Late 2010 SE corner East of the range, dropped from 15,000 to 2,500.

all this before an unprecedented flood event.

attached is a copy of part of New Hope Coal's submission for New Acland Coal Mine Stage 3 Expansion Project - Enviromental Impact Statement pages 4-8 & 4-9 of Section H 5 appendisc.

Although it is not about koalas it deals with another migratory species listed N V under the E P B C. a bat can fly to its feeding & camping sites and does so at night & you can hear them twittering in flight. as it breeds in in N S W the attitude is that if it does not camp in an area its feeding grounds can be cut off with impunity. It appears that the opinion of Dr Harry Frith of the CSIRO commenting on the conservation of migratory speies in Waterfowl in Australia has not been

taken to heart. His comment is about all migratory species not just waterfowl.

How does this relate to a koala. A koala cannot fly and is most numeral on the ground. Has low energy output due to singular food type. This makes for a rather sedentary life style. Is reliant on tree corridors & eculypts for mobility, rest places, safety & food supply. Break the chain of requirements & they will be detrimently affected. as it takes on average 20 years to reestablish eculypts in this area & it is proposed for this mining operation to go into the 2030's before ceasing operations, so no established food source until aprocimately 2050.

This is a very narrow focus & dis regards impacts on any other species. The Queensland floods recently have focused our attention. a large urban area cut off by road, sea & airport unusable, did we say don't be a wimp if koalas can have their food & travel put on hold for years show some fortitude. No! the ADF was mobilized to chopper in essentials as soon as possible. No food & no possibility of getting to it and you will die.

Will listing koalas on the EPBC provide any worthwhile protection overall or will history put it down as a nice try but it didn't work.

While the Resources Industries are escempted from vegetation laws. They have the choice of choosing between State & Federal Licencing of opperations to dodge more restrictive conditions. The sometimes obtainable loopholes because conditions imposed are very limited in scope or emphatically stated. Listing a species is one thing making it work on the ground can be estremely difficult. There is no system of relating culminative effects & if seperate projects though not appearing overly detrimental in isolation will in relation to other considerations contribute to disaster over a larger area.

Criteria	Assessment of Significance
Reduce the area of occupancy of an important population	Plant material will be collected from all metapopulations to be impacted, and will be translocated to a receiving site within the same locality. As such, translocated plants will be located within the same area of occupancy as the existing plants. More significantly, they will be located within a designated conservation area, rather than roadside vegetation which is subject to extensive disturbance.
Fragment an existing important population into two or more populations	Populations of these species are already highly fragmented. To that extent, the Project will not fragment any populations which are not already widely separated.
Adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species	The Project will impact on a number of highly fragmented populations of these species. The patches are located in an agricultural landscape and are subject to grazing pressure, mechanical disturbance and weed invasion. As a result, these patches are not considered critical to the survival of the species.
Disrupt the breeding cycle of an important population	These plants maintain self-sustaining populations in roadside vegetation. It is expected that they will also reproduce within the proposed translocation areas and as such, the breeding cycle will not be significantly disrupted.
Modify, destroy, remove or isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline	The Project will disturb the habitat of these species. However, implementation of the PSRMP will result in the establishment of ex-situ populations of all species in a secure location. It is therefore considered that the species are unlikely to decline as a result of the Project.
Result in invasive species that are harmful to a vulnerable species becoming established in the vulnerable species habitat	These species persist alongside several invasive species (e.g. Soft Roly Poly (*Salsola kali*), *Opuntia tomentosa*, etc.). There is potential for the spread of weed species as a result of construction and operation activities. However, as part of the mine operation there will be a weed management plan in place. As a result, weeds should be kept under control as part of the Project's management regime.
Interferes substantially with the recovery of the species	No formal recovery plan has been adopted for this species under the provisions of the EPBC Act.

4.2.5. Grey-headed Flying Fox

The Project will result in the temporary reduction in foraging habitat at a local level, potentially adversely impacting on the foraging behaviour of members of the local flying-fox population. The assessment of the significance on the Grey-headed Flying-fox is presented in **Table 4-5**.

Table 4-6 EPBC Act assessment of significance on Grey-headed Flying Fox

Criteria	Assessment of Significance
The action is likely to have a significant impact on a vulnerable species if it is likely to:	Grey-headed Flying-fox
Lead to a long-term decrease in the size of an important population of a species	The Grey-headed Flying-fox has been recorded as single individuals foraging in the Project site. There are no camps located within the Project site. The records of the species from the Project site and a general low level of activity indicate that the population is transitory in nature, and does not fall within the definition of "important population" as defined by the EPBC Act.
Reduce the area of occupancy of an important population	The population is not considered to be an important population.
Fragment an existing important population into two or more populations	The population is not considered to be an important population.

H5

Criteria	Assessment of Significance
Adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species	The habitat within the Project site is not critical to the survival of the species.
Disrupt the breeding cycle of an important population	The population is not considered to be an important population.
Modify, destroy, remove or isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline	The occasional use of habitat within the Project site is consistent with the foraging ecology of this species throughout its range. It will occur seasonally in the wider locality, but may not utilise available habitats on a regular basis. Longer term, reestablishment of Lagoon Creek's riparian zone may offer additional habitat.
Result in invasive species that are harmful to a vulnerable species becoming established in the vulnerable species habitat	The Project will not introduce any invasive species which is recognised as a threat to this species.
Interferes substantially with the recovery of the species	The Project is considered very unlikely to interfere with the recovery of the species.

4.2.6. Impacts on Migratory Species

One listed migratory species have been recorded on the Project site, the Cattle Egret. An additional species, the White-throated Needletail, is considered to have at least a moderate likelihood of occurring at the Project site based on the suitability of the habitat.

The ToR for the EIS does not contain prescriptions which specifically relate to impacts on migratory species. As a result, this assessment has defaulted to EPBC Act Policy Statement 1.1 - Significant Impact Guidelines (Matters of National Significance). This section lists the significant impact criteria against which the proposal is to be assessed, reviews the occurrence of important habitat and ecologically significance of populations across the Study Area.

A summary assessment of the level of impact of the Project on these migratory species is provided in **Table 4-6**.

Page H4-1

Pteropus poliocephalus

Grey-headed Flying Fox

nationally Vunerable

EPBC

Other related Matters

The Tourism Industry is a beneficiary of the presence of koalas

Koalas must be of some International political significance as the members of the Copenhagen climate change committee that visited Australia dropped in on one of the local koala colonies as at times other International Representatives have done in the past.

There needs to be more research to improve our sparse knowledge.

Koalas are not compatable with suburbia very low brain capacity & not adoptable.

Farmers who supply milk generally have a sign on their fence. Landcare participants have a sign. How about – This Property contains a koala habitat or This property has a koala friendly Freeway Corridor. a badge of pride & achievement not of enforced liability.

The ball is in your court. Best of luck assembling the information & gleaning usuable suggestions