

APPENDIX C

FLORA AND FAUNA ASSESSMENT

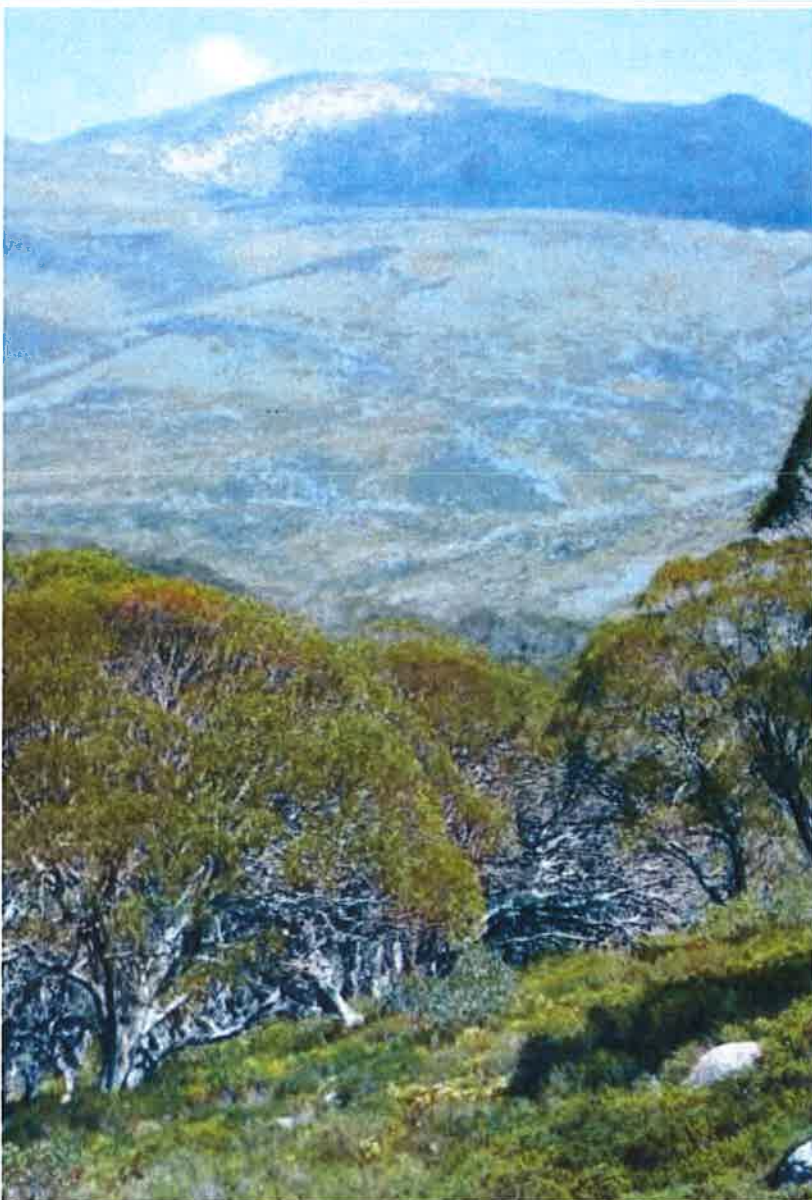


FLORA AND FAUNA ASESMENT

Proposed Powder Valley Traverse, Guthega, Perisher Ski Resort

Prepared for
Perisher Blue Pty Ltd

15 April 2014





Flora and Fauna Assessment

**Proposed Powder Valley Traverse, Guthega, Perisher Ski
Resort, Perisher Ski Resort**

PREPARED FOR **Perisher Blue Pty Ltd**

PROJECT NO **14NARECO-0007**

DATE **15 April 2014**

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1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd (ELA) was engaged by Perisher Blue Pty Ltd at the request of Dabyne Planning Pty Ltd to prepare a flora and fauna assessment to accompany a proposal for tree and rock removal, and the construction of a ski bridge, to improve the Powder Valley Traverse, at Guthega, Perisher Ski Resort. Due to timing constraints, these three project components will be separated into three separate Development Applications.

For the purpose of this report, and to ensure that all the associated fauna and flora impacts assessed together, all three components are covered in this report

This report provides the findings of a review of relevant literature, database searches, as well as field survey. It also addresses relevant statutory considerations. The aim of this investigation was to assess the ecological impacts of the proposal on flora, fauna and habitats within the study area. The objectives of this investigation were to:

- identify the flora species and vegetation communities present in the study area, describe their condition and assess their conservation significance
- to identify the fauna habitats present in the study area and describe their condition
- to identify the fauna species which are present or likely to occur in the study area, and assess their conservation significance
- to assess the impacts of the proposal on vegetation, fauna, habitats, and other environmental features as necessary
- to make recommendations regarding any environmental management and impact mitigation/amelioration measures to limit the effects of the proposal on vegetation, fauna, habitats, and other environmental values as necessary.

1.2 THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to undertake tree and rock removal works and installation of a skier bridge as part of the re-establishment and widening of the Powder Valley Traverse, a ski traverse run that is located within the Guthega ski area of the Perisher Ski Resort. As the Powder Valley Traverse Ski Run has already previously been created, groomed and used, the proposed tree and rock removal works allow for a wider and safer ski run, which allows improved access and safer operation of grooming equipment. With the construction and opening of the Freedom Quad Chairlift, the widening of the traverse and closure of the other ski run traverses is further justified due to the additional skier traffic that will be generated by the new lift.

The tree and rock removal works will require the removal and/or pruning of 44 Snow Gum trees, and 56 rocks. The installation of the skier bridge will not require any footings, with the bridge to be founded on the existing rocks and piers. The bridge will be 8 m wide and 10 m long.

The Powder Valley Traverse is located between the bottom of the Mother In-Law Ski Run and the new Freedom Quad Chairlift, which has replaced the Cow Pastures J-bar. The Powder Valley Traverse Ski Run is located lower down the slope than the existing Low Traverse Ski Run and higher up the slope than the existing Creek Traverse Ski Run located on the opposite side of Blue Cow Creek. The Powder Valley Traverse Ski Run is therefore intended to be the primary ski run that connects skiers and boarders from Blue Cow, the Pleasant View Trail Ski Run and Double Trouble Ski Run (from the back of the Pleasant Valley Chair) to Guthega.

The Powder Valley Traverse Ski Run will improve skier circulation from these parts of the resort through to Guthega and allow Perisher to close the Low Traverse Ski Run and not rely on the Creek Traverse Ski Run to provide connectivity to the new Freedom Quad chairlift. This is important for safety reasons due to existing and potential future collisions between users of the Low Traverse and users of the ski runs including The Screw, Schnatzl and Karl's which all cross through the traverse, perpendicular to the skiers and boarders using it.

As with the Creek Traverse, a snow bridge is required to form an access over Blue Cow Creek to the bottom of the new Freedom Quad chairlift. Therefore, not relying on this traverse is beneficial for Perisher particularly in marginal conditions during the early and latter parts of the ski season.

The tree removal will occur in autumn, via foot access. Where larger trees are removed, the trunk sections will be cut into manageable pieces and stacked for pick-up over-snow during winter. Smaller branches and sections of trunk will be spread throughout surrounding vegetation in a manner which avoids adverse impacts.

The rock removal will be undertaken over-snow during the late winter, to minimise the potential for impacts on vegetation. The rock removal will utilise Perishers over-snow rock removal technique, whereby a small compressor and other equipment is brought in by snowmobile and trailer. Holes are drilled into the rocks and explosives used to crack the rock as required, with fragments placed around the base of the rock as supplementary habitat. Vegetation on or around the rock is pulled back where necessary during the blasting and placed back after the work has been completed.

The installation of the skier bridge will not require any footings, with the timber bridge to be founded on the existing rocks and piers. The materials for the bridge will be transported to the site over snow during the late winter with construction to occur in summer, via foot access.



Photo 1: The proposal involves strategic tree, tree limb and rock removal to improve the capacity for snowriders to use the Powder Valley Traverse.



Photo 2: The proposal involves the construction of a log bridge across Blue Cow Creek. The bridge will only be usable by snowriders and groomers, and will involve the removal of several tree limbs.



Photo 3: The rock removal will be limited to 56 rocks along the route of the traverse that rise above the vegetation and, as evidence by scratches, are already scraped by groomers.



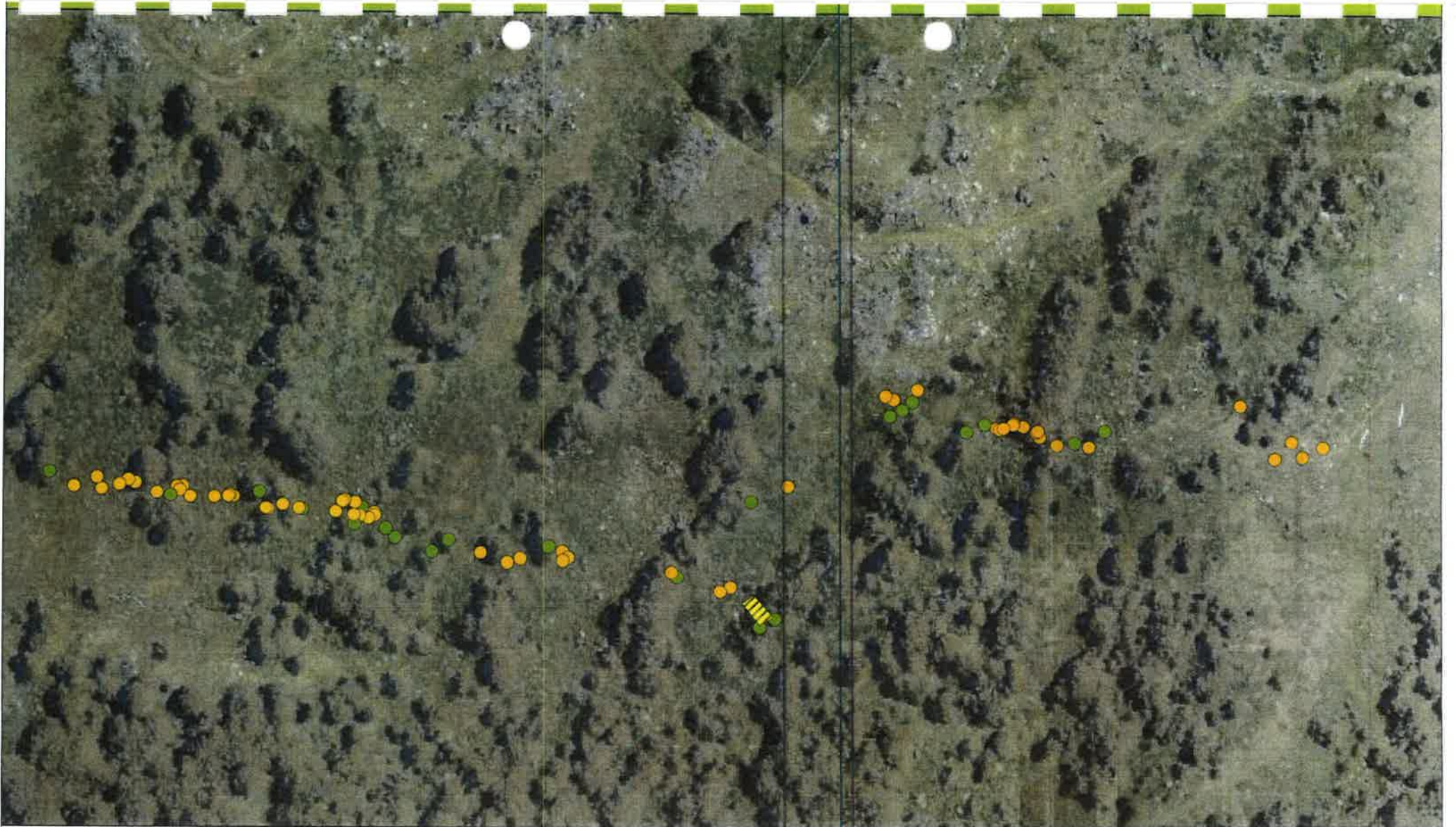
Photo 4: The rocks to be treated will be reduced in size with fragments placed around their bases. Vegetation is typically crushed by the weight of the groomers against the rocks, so it is likely that, in the medium term, there will be more vegetation around the affected rocks .






Photo 5: The location where the traverse crosses a boulderfield. In this area the tops of six boulders will be reduced.

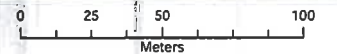


Photo 6: The boulderfield shown in Photo 6, showing the group of large boulders and the vegetation growing over them. The absence of vegetation and scratching on the tops of the boulders is indicative of the damage associated with existing grooming activities.



Legend

-  Bridge Location
-  Rock to be removed
-  Tree to be removed/pruned



Datum/Projection:
GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

Data Sources:
Bing Aerials



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