

Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment

Annual Report 2018-2019

Annual report for the Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance (NES Plan) for the period of 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

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List of abbreviations

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AMS	Adaptive Management Strategy
BGW or Box-Gum Woodland	White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland
CEMP	Construction Environment Management Plan (interchangeable with EMP)
CMTEDD	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
DoEE	Department of the Environment and Energy
EDP	Estate Development Plan
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cwth)
EPSDD	Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
ESA	Emergency Services Agency
LDA	Land Development Agency (under CMTEDD) (Active until 30 June 2017)
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
NES Plan	Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance
NSW	New South Wales
NTG or Natural Temperate Grassland	Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southern Tablelands of NSW and the ACT
PDF	Planning and Design Framework
PTWL	Pink-Tailed Worm Lizard, <i>Aprasia parapulchella</i>
SLA	Suburban Land Agency (Established 1 July 2017)
TCCS	Transport Canberra and City Services (formerly Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS))

Note: References to Department and Directorate names in the body of this report are accurate as at the end of the reporting period, 30 June 2019.

1 Introduction

This Annual Report is prepared in accordance with Section 6 of the NES Plan, September 2011. It reports on the implementation of the NES Plan from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

Section 6 of the NES Plan requires the ACT Government to monitor and report annually on the implementation of the NES Plan. The primary purpose of monitoring and reporting is to ensure that the conservation outcomes described in the NES Plan are achieved.

The published targets in Government's 2018-19 to 2021-22 Indicative Land Release Program indicated the release of 1126 residential dwelling sites (comprised of 208 dwelling in Coombs, 318 dwellings in Wright and 600 dwellings from the initial release in Whitlam- the newest suburb in Molonglo Valley and the first release from Molonglo Valley stage 3); 68,272m² of community facility zoned land (including the release of a non-government school site in Wright) and the release of 12,261m² of commercial-mixed use land.

The actual land release outcome for Molonglo Valley included:

- 541 residential dwelling sites made up of 38 standard residential (detached house) blocks, 51 compact blocks or terrace sites and 452 multi-unit dwelling sites. Releases were recorded in Coombs (346 dwelling sites) and in Wright (195 dwelling sites);
- 19,135m² of mixed use land (in Coombs); and
- A direct sale of 1073m² of urban open space land in Denman Prospect.

2 Background

In September 2008, the ACT and Commonwealth governments entered into an Agreement to conduct a strategic assessment under Part 10 of the EPBC Act.

The strategic assessment included all of East Molonglo with the exception of the suburbs of North Weston, Wright and a portion of Coombs. These suburbs have prior approval under the EPBC Act (Reference numbers: 2009/5041, 2009/4752 and 2009/5050). Refer to Figure 1 for the strategic assessment area.

The NES Plan, which details the ACT Governments commitments to protect MNES in the Molonglo Valley, was assessed by the Commonwealth and endorsed in October 2011. Actions associated with urban development within East Molonglo (not including the West Molonglo area) were approved by the Commonwealth in December 2011.

West Molonglo is included within the scope of the strategic assessment as it includes MNES and was part of the same overall process to establish the Structure Plan. West Molonglo is included in the West Belconnen Strategic Assessment which was prepared by Riverview Projects (ACT) Pty Ltd. On 18 July 2017 the Program for urban development and biodiversity conservation at West Belconnen as outlined in the Program Report (AT Adams Consulting, April 2017) was endorsed by the Commonwealth. On September 2017, the Commonwealth granted approval for classes of actions under the endorsed program.

The NES Plan establishes a set of conservation activities to protect MNES. These are broadly based around the following hierarchy of steps:

- avoidance of impacts on MNES;
- mitigation of impacts on MNES including on-ground management to provide maintenance and improvement of MNES values in important areas; and
- establishing offset areas to compensate for unavoidable impacts on MNES.

The MNES that require protection through the NES Plan are:

- *White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland* (Box-Gum Woodland);
- *Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southern Tablelands of NSW and the ACT* (Natural Temperate Grassland);
- *Aprasia parapulchella* (Pink-tailed Worm Lizard);
- *Polytelis swainsonii* (Superb Parrot); and
- *Lathamus discolor* (Swift Parrot).

3 Implementation of the NES Plan

EPSDD currently has responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the delivery of the NES Plan on behalf of the ACT Government.

The NES Plan specifies conservation outcomes that the ACT Government will deliver to protect MNES and the actions that will be undertaken to achieve those outcomes. In particular, Section 4 of the NES Plan provides 44 specific actions related to conservation outcomes for Box-Gum Woodland, Natural Temperate Grassland and Pink-tailed Worm Lizard.

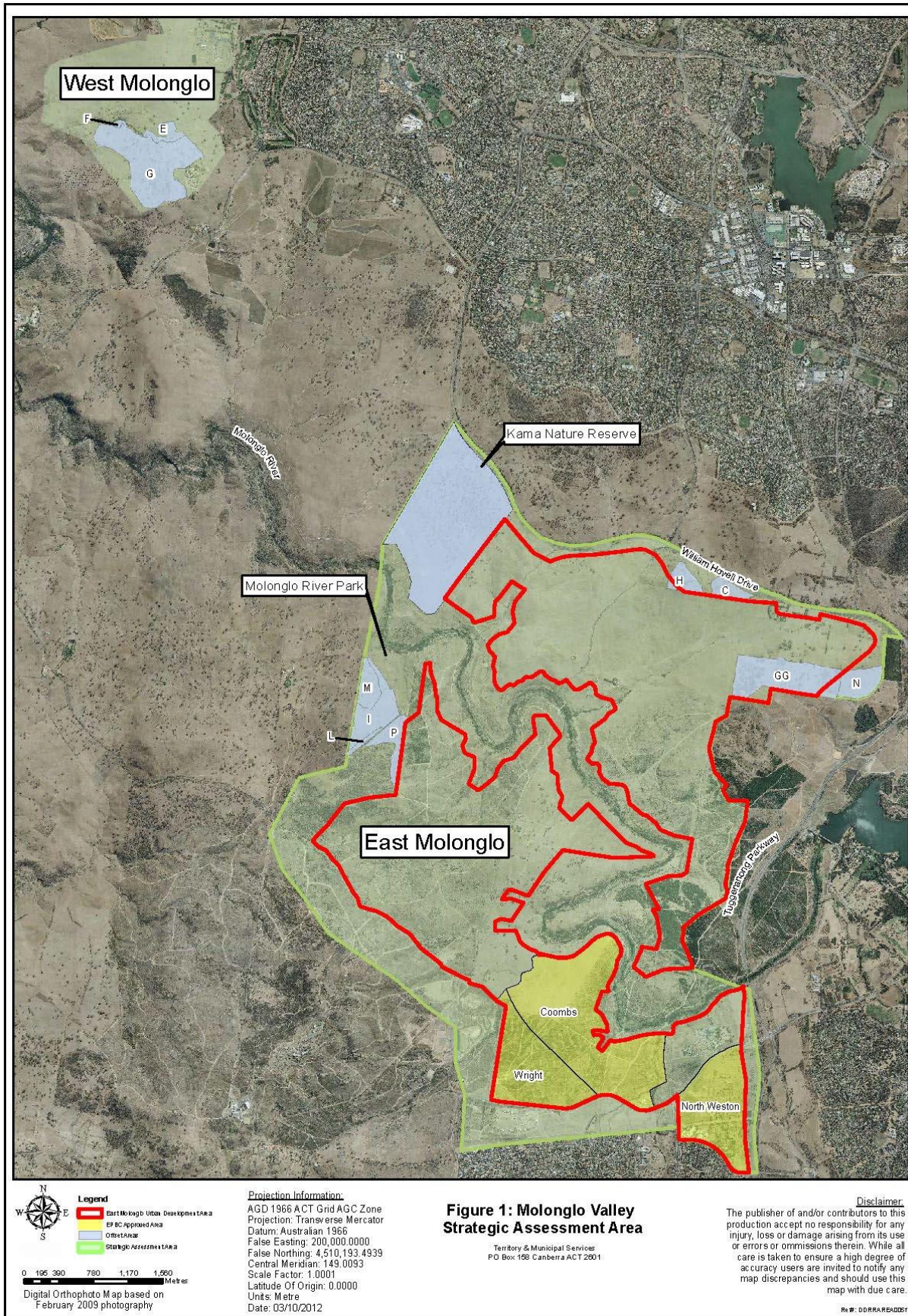
The NES Plan does not specify specific conservation outcomes and actions in relation to the Superb Parrot and Swift Parrot. These species are therefore not included in the table. However, the NES Plan states that the most important conservation action for Superb Parrot and Swift Parrot is the protection and ongoing management of the Kama Nature Reserve which includes approximately 117 ha of BGW. Additionally, conservation outcomes detailed in section 4.1 of the NES Plan for patches C, D, H, I, L, M, P, T, West Molonglo and Patch GG will benefit Superb Parrots and Swift Parrots.

3.1 Development completed in 2018-19

The following development was undertaken or approved in the Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment Area in 2018-19:

- continued development of Denman Prospect, Coombs, and Wright;
- completed construction of John Gorton Drive Stage 3A (Molonglo 3 road 900 metres south of William Hovell Drive and signalised intersection into future suburb of Whitlam);
- commenced construction of John Gorton Drive Stage 3B, the next 500m to the south of Stage 3A, which includes another signalised intersection into Whitlam;
- commenced development of Whitlam Stage 1A and Stage 1B; and
- development of Denman Prospect 1A and 1B.

Figure 1 Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment Area



3.2 Report on performance by outcome/commitment

Table 1 describes the commitments from the NES Plan and the status of each commitment. Commitments which have been completed are green.

Table 1 Commitments, delivery and timing

NES Plan Ref	Action	Responsible Entity	Timing	Current status
Actions to achieve the conservation outcomes for Box Gum Woodland				
Impacts to Box-Gum Woodland will be limited to a maximum of 110 ha and a range of measures will be implemented to minimise this area of impact.				
1	Ensure that the combined impacts on Box-Gum Woodland from development within East Molonglo and construction of infrastructure within the river corridor do not exceed 110 ha.	EPSDD	Throughout and on completion of the final Planning and Design Framework (PDF) for both stages 2 and 3 and through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	See Section 3.4- Impacts on MNES, Table 3 and Figure 2 show the amount of Box Gum Woodland that has been impacted to date.
2	Amend the East Molonglo river corridor boundary, in stages 2 and 3 respectively with a view to reducing the impacts to Box-Gum Woodland. This process will ensure that connectivity within the river corridor is maintained.	EPSDD	Progressively, on completion of the final EDPs for stages 2 and 3, respectively.	Ongoing. Stage 2 PDF finalised in 2012. The interim limited area planning and design framework for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 was approved in March 2017. The Stage 3 PDF was finalised in February 2019 and in response, the interim limited areas PDF was withdrawn. However, finalising the actual river corridor boundaries will not occur until the final EDPs are approved.
3	Design the infrastructure that will occur in the river corridor to minimise impacts to Box-Gum Woodland.	CMTEDD and EPSDD (PCS, Infrastructure Planning)	Prior to the construction of infrastructure.	Ongoing. Design principles adopted by the Territory and incorporated in contracts for design and construction projects. The extent of recreational infrastructure proposed in the River Park Concept Plan was reviewed through the draft Plan of Management process, with two significant refinements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where practicably possible, the trunk cycle path will be relocated within the Inner Asset Protection Zone to utilise the lighting corridor of the edge road and minimises fragmentation of the River Park; and • recreation facilities such as parks, access roads, car parking, barbecues and toilets will be centralised to the two special purpose reserves– Nummerak Reserve (Sludge Pits) and Ryans Hill. Ecological Management Guidelines were completed in 2015. EPSDD prepared an early draft Urban Edge Master Plan for the Commercial Centre & Environs in Stage 2 to assist the final location of the development boundary and associated infrastructure. EPSDD is now progressing further planning of Stage 2 and are consulting internally with PCS. Both the Molonglo Sewer Pedestrian Bridge (Butters Bridge) and Cravens Creek Pond projects were designed and constructed to minimise impacts on PTWL habitat. TCCS have commenced early design on the JGD bridge over the Molonglo River and are coordinating with EPSDD PCS to minimise impact and risk to BGW and PTWL habitat. An EIS Exemption application has been lodged for JGD Stage 3C which includes the bridge.
4	Develop, implement and independently monitor Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) to ensure that unforeseen direct or indirect impacts from construction activities within the development area and the river corridor are avoided.	EPSDD	Development of the CEMPs prior to construction. Implementation of the CEMPs during construction.	Ongoing. CEMPs have been prepared for all approved estate developments within the strategic assessment area.

				<p>EPSDD has incorporated the requirement for CEMP's in all capital works infrastructure documentation for Molonglo and has engaged a site surveillance officer to monitor capital works projects in Molonglo.</p> <p>The requirement for CEMP's has been incorporated into all capital works documentation for Molonglo River Park.</p> <p>To date, approximately 38 CEMPs have been prepared and approved for construction work in Molonglo Valley. This has been done for minor preliminary works such as geotechnical investigations, fencing and utility relocations, as well as all major construction activities such as roadworks, bridges and ponds.</p>
<p>Three offset sites will be established within the strategic assessment area (Kama Nature Reserve, Molonglo River Park, Patch GG) that will provide for the long-term protection of 234 ha of Box-Gum Woodland (see Figure 6 of NES Plan). The three offset sites will be adaptively managed to maintain and enhance the ecological condition of the Box-Gum Woodland that occurs there.</p>				
5	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the reserve (approximately 117 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>An Operational Plan for Kama Nature Reserve was completed in 2015.</p> <p>Note: A statutory Reserve Management Plan is in preparation for the reserve. Management plans for specific areas within the reserve have been called Operational Plans to avoid confusion with the statutory Management Plan for the entire reserve. Therefore, this commitment refers to the completion of an Operational Plan for the specific area of Kama Nature Reserve.</p>
6	Implement the management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 5. Implementation ongoing.	Ongoing. Management is being undertaken in line with the operational plan.
7	Establish a buffer outside the Kama Nature Reserve between the reserve and the proposed development area and allow for appropriate uses consistent with nature conservation uses of the reserve. The buffer will be developed to ensure that fire management is undertaken outside of the Kama Nature Reserve and will provide protection against urban edge effects.	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning and Land Development Projects)	As part of the final PDF for stage 3 and confirmed through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>On 8 May 2018, the ACT Minister for Planning and Land Management granted the Molonglo Stage 3 Urban Development project an exemption for the requirement to undertake an environmental impact statement under the requirements of the <i>Planning and Development ACT 2007</i>.</p> <p>The exemption included several conditions for development approval including that the treatment and boundary to Kama Nature Reserve must be consistent with the recommendations of the Kama Interface Management Strategy (Capital Ecology 2016). This condition has been incorporated into and represented in the PDF for Stage 3, which was approved in February 2019.</p>
8	Develop a Park Concept Plan for the "Molonglo River Park" which will occur along the East Molonglo river corridor. This Plan will establish management zones within the Park, specifically identifying areas to be designated for conservation as well as identifying recreation areas and resolving public access. A key focus of this plan will be the protection of Box-Gum Woodland.	EPSDD	Development prior to the commencement of construction of John Gorton Drive Stage 2A or within 1 year of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>The Molonglo River Corridor Concept Plan prepared by EPSDD was endorsed on 28 August 2012.</p>
9	Develop a management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the park (approximately 73 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>An Operational Plan for Molonglo River Park was completed in June 2014.</p> <p>At 30 June 2019 the Reserve Management Plan was progressing through statutory approval processes.</p> <p>Management plans (as described in the NES Plan) for specific areas within the reserve have been called Operational Plans to avoid confusion with the statutory Management Plan for the entire reserve. Therefore, this commitment refers to the completion of an Operational Plan for the specific area of the Molonglo River Park.</p>

10	Implement the management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the park.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 9. Implementation ongoing.	Ongoing. From 2012, EPSDD has undertaken a number of restoration works within the river corridor in line with the Molonglo River Park operational plans and the draft Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan. Detailed consultation and designs for the first Molonglo special purpose reserve (north), including a remediation action plan for the former Coppins Crossing sewerage treatment ponds were progressed in 2018-19. Significant woodland restoration will be undertaken as part of site rehabilitation works scheduled for mid-2020.
11	Establish Patch GG as an offset site by incorporating the area into the National Arboretum.	EPSDD	Established within 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan.	Complete. On 22 January 2013 the ACT Government purchased 'Glenloch' from its former long-term lessees. In 2014 Patch GG was transferred for incorporation into the National Arboretum to enable management as an offset site.
12	Develop a management plan for Patch GG to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within the park (approximately 44 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)/TCCS	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan, whichever occurs first.	Complete. Patch GG has been incorporated into the National Arboretum. An Operational Plan for Patch GG was completed in June 2014.
13	Implement the management plan for Patch GG to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 12. Implementation ongoing.	Ongoing. Management is being undertaken in line with the operational plan. Restoration planting was undertaken in 2016. Extensive forb enhancement works were undertaken in early 2019. Approximately 45 species of native grass and wildflowers were direct seeded across 5 scrape sites.
Adaptively manage 28 ha of Box-Gum Woodland within the strategic assessment area to maintain and enhance its ecological condition. This will be made up of patches C, H and N.				
14	Develop management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches C, H, and N (see Figure 3 of the NES Plan) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the completion of the final PDF for stage 3.	Complete. An Operational Plan for patches C and H was completed in December 2018. An Operational Plan for Patch N was developed in 2014, as part of the Arboretum Woodland Conservation Area. The land has been under the custodianship of the LDA. PCS are now managing Patch N and Land custodianship is to be transferred to PCS in 2018-19.
15	Implement management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches C, H, and N to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 14. Implementation ongoing.	Ongoing. Management is being undertaken in line with the operational plan. Extensive BGW restoration plantings (including 2000 trees and shrubs) were undertaken in mid-2019. Fences in patches C, H and N have been realigned to better represent vegetation community boundaries.
Adaptively manage 45.4 ha of Box-Gum Woodland within the strategic assessment area to maintain its ecological condition. This will be made up of patches I, L, M and P.				
16	Develop management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches I, L, M and P (see Figure 3 of the NES Plan) to provide for the maintenance of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development after completion of Adaptive Management Strategy and within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan.	Complete. An Operational Plan for patch P was completed in December 2018 Patches I, L and M are managed under a rural lease with a Land Management Agreement.

17	Undertake fuel hazard management in patches I, L, M and P with the management and protection of Box-Gum Woodland as a critical consideration (within the constraints of ensuring the safety of the urban population).	EPSDD (PCS)	On completion of Action 16.	As above. The Bushfire Risk Strategy (Strategy) undertaken by the LDA, sets out the management requirements both within and immediately outside the future urban development boundary in Denman Prospect taking into account Box Gum Woodland. This Strategy is supported by ESA and Fire Management Unit of TCCS. Fuel management is being undertaken in line with the strategy and with protection of BGW as a critical consideration.
18	Annually monitor the condition of the Box-Gum Woodland patches I, L, M, P (total area of 45.4 ha) on the western boundary of East Molonglo to ensure that fuel hazard management is not negatively impacting on the Box-Gum Woodland values.	EPSDD (PCS)	On completion of Action 16.	Ongoing. A Monitoring Procedures Manual for Molonglo was prepared by EPSDD in 2013 in accordance with the AMS. EPSDD has undertaken annual vegetation monitoring since 2013, in accordance with the monitoring procedures manual.
19	Should the monitoring in Action 18 show that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for a period of two consecutive years; • more than 30% of the combined area of patches I, L, M, P (total area of 45.4 ha) no longer meets the EPBC Act listing criteria for Box-Gum Woodland; then the ACT Government will establish an offset site within two years of those monitoring results that meets the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the offset will be in the Molonglo Valley; and • the offset will include a minimum of 90.8 ha of EPBC Act listed Box-Gum Woodland. 	EPSDD	If required.	Ongoing. EPSDD completed annual vegetation monitoring for the sixth consecutive year in 2018. Vegetation condition monitoring results show that the ecological condition of patches I, L, M, P1 and P3 has been maintained. Patch P2 has shown a decline over the past 5 years, however this result is driven by a decrease in native grass cover, which is the result of an increase in leaf litter due to a fallen tree at the P2 monitoring site.
20	Should an offset site be required under Action 19, then the offsite site will be established as a Nature Reserve and managed consistently with the other offset sites (Kama Nature Reserve, Molonglo River Park, Patch GG).	EPSDD (PCS)	If required.	Not required.
Maintenance and enhancement of the Box-Gum Woodland that occurs within the West Molonglo component of the strategic assessment area.				
21	Manage the Box-Gum Woodland that occurs in West Molonglo in accordance with the terms of a Land Management Agreement (LMA). LMAs are required by Part 9.7 of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> for all non-urban leases. The LMA covering the BGW in West Molonglo contains a Land Action Plan which ensures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ecological functioning and integrity of BGW on the lease is retained and improved; • the extent and character of the BGW is preserved; and • there is an Action Plan which details the activities, timeframes and performance measures put in place to ensure the conservation outcomes are met. 	EPSDD (PCS)	Ongoing.	Not required. See Commitment 22 below.
22	West Molonglo is zoned broadacre and is not part of the ACT Government's current land release program. In the event that West Molonglo is developed in the future for broadacre uses or residential development then, subject to confirmatory ecological assessment of Box-Gum Woodland, the area of EPBC Act Box-Gum Woodland that occurs there will be set aside as a Nature Reserve.	EPSDD	If required the Nature Reserve will be established prior to construction in West Molonglo commencing.	Complete. Box-Gum Woodland in West Molonglo was set aside as nature reserve through Territory Plan Variation 351 approved on 23 October 2015. The area of Box-Gum Woodland originally mapped for the strategic assessment was refined through an ecological assessment undertaken by David Hogg Pty Ltd in 2013. The current reserve boundaries were set based on the later ecological assessment.
Improving and applying the knowledge about the management of Box-Gum Woodland.				
23	Establish and manage an off-site restoration project, as an indirect offset, for Box-Gum Woodland.	EPSDD (PCS)	Before development commences in Stage 2.	Complete. The use of Barrer Park which is on site was supported by the Commonwealth as meeting this commitment. EPSDD started BGW restoration work in 2014. A total of 15,607 plants, 1,505 trees and shrubs and 14,102 groundcovers were planted.

				<p>EPSDD completed Stage 3 of the BGW restoration in 2016-17. As part of Stage 3, ten vertical habitat structures, 400 CWD logs and 80 tonnes of surface rock was placed into the restoration area to provide habitat for threatened and non-threatened BGW species.</p> <p>The vertical habitat structures project is an innovative restoration initiative currently being trialled in the Molonglo River Reserve. The project installed a total of ten habitat structures, including 5 utility poles and 5 relocated mature trees, enriched with carved hollows and artificial bark providing habitat for invertebrate, bird, bat and marsupial species.</p> <p>In collaboration with ANU researchers at the Fenner School of Environment and Society, this study will shed light on the effectiveness of this restoration method for biodiversity in modified landscapes.</p> <p>In 2017-18 visitor infrastructure including signage, trail upgrades, seats and lookouts were completed at Barrer Hill to inform visitors of the values in the area and manage access and recreational use to this important conservation site. A number of grassland restoration scrape sites were also completed, totalling 0.3 hectares.</p> <p>In 2019, an 11th vertical habitat sculpture was constructed from a salvaged 400 year old yellow box remnant and resurrected as a habitat sculpture for wildlife and a focal point for community engagement and education. An additional 500 plants were planted around this structure, including as part of a community planting day and Ministerial launch. In collaboration with the ANU, a manuscript detailing the findings of this research was published in Biological Conservation https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0006320719300461</p> <p>In addition, an interactive web interface was launched in partnership with the ANU, which collates remote camera data collected from the vertical structures allowing members of the public to access and tag information molonglo.life/#/</p>
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Actions to achieve the conservation outcomes for Natural Temperate Grassland				
No direct or indirect impacts to Natural Temperate Grassland.				
24	Protection of the Natural Temperate Grassland within the Kama Nature Reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Ongoing.	<p>In December 2018 EPSDD completed the Molonglo Field Guide – a plant field guide for the Molonglo Valley Conservation Area to promote the ecological values of the reserve and thereby assist residents in the Molonglo Valley to protect the reserve.</p> <p>EPSDD is undertaking the following research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> grassland habitat research – slashing as a biomass management tool for NTG and BGW – research project; and NTG ecosystem recovery through habitat rock supplementation. <p>In 2016-17, EPSDD commenced a forb enhancement program in Kama Nature Reserve to enhance forb diversity, increase ecological condition and habitat values of NTG and BGW within Kama Nature Reserve and to implement and test BGW understorey enhancement recommendations informed by research undertaken by the ANU Fenner School. Implementation and management of the forb enhancement program continued in 2017-18.</p> <p>In 2016-17 and 2018-19, EPSDD conducted an ecological burn within the Kama Nature Reserve. The burn was undertaken as part of a larger grassland restoration research project, which aims to improve the ecological condition of NTG. The grassland restoration project continued in 2018-19.</p>
Adaptive management of the Natural Temperate Grassland that occurs within the Kama Nature Reserve to maintain and enhance its ecological condition.				
25	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Natural Temperate Grassland within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Complete. Please see response to commitment 5. Operational Plan complete.
26	Implement the management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of Natural Temperate Grassland within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 25. Implementation ongoing.	Ongoing. Please see response to commitment 6.
27	Establish a buffer outside the Kama Nature Reserve between the reserve and the proposed development area and allow for appropriate uses consistent with nature conservation uses of the reserve. The buffer will be developed to ensure that fire management is undertaken outside of the Kama Nature Reserve and will provide protection against urban edge effects.	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning and Land Development Projects)	As part of the final PDF Stage 3 and confirmed through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	Please see response to commitment 7.
Actions to achieve the conservation outcomes for Pink-tailed Worm Lizard				
Impacts to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat will be limited to a maximum of 27 ha and a range of measures will be implemented to minimise this area of impact.				
28	Ensure that the combined impacts on high and moderate quality PTWL habitat from development within East Molonglo and construction of infrastructure within the river corridor do not exceed 27 ha.	EPSDD (PCS, (Infrastructure Planning), SLA (Molonglo Valley),	Progressively, on completion of the final EDPs for stages 2 and 3, respectively.	Ongoing. PDF Stage 2 complete. PDF stage 3 complete. Final boundaries will be confirmed once EDPs are approved.

29	Amend the East Molonglo river corridor boundary in stages 2 and 3 respectively with a view to reducing impacts to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat. This process will ensure that connectivity within the river corridor is maintained.	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning)	Progressively, on completion of the final EDPs for stages 2 and 3, respectively.	Ongoing PDF Stage 2 complete. The East Molonglo River Corridor was amended accordingly. The PDF for stage 3 is complete. Final boundaries will be confirmed once EDPs are approved.
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30	Design the infrastructure that will occur in the river corridor to minimise impacts to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat.	EPSDD & CMTEDD	Prior to the construction of infrastructure.	Ongoing. Please see response to commitment 3.
31	Develop, implement and independently monitor Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) to ensure that unforeseen direct or indirect impacts from construction activities within the development area and the river corridor are avoided.	EPSDD & (PCS, Infrastructure Planning) SLA (Molonglo Valley), CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery)	Development of the CEMPs prior to construction. Implementation of the CEMPs during construction.	Please see response to commitment 4.
Two offset sites will be established within the strategic assessment area (Kama Nature Reserve and the Molonglo River Park) that will provide for the long-term protection of 66 ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat (see Figure 6 of the NES Plan). These areas will be adaptively managed to maintain and enhance the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat that occurs there.				
32	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of all PTWL habitat within the reserve (approximately 6 ha which includes 3.33 ha of high and moderate quality habitat).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Complete. Please see response to commitment 5.
33	Implement the management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of all PTWL habitat within the reserve.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 32. Implementation ongoing.	Ongoing. Please see response to commitment 6.
34	Establish a buffer outside the Kama Nature Reserve between the reserve and the proposed development area and allow for appropriate uses consistent with nature conservation uses of the reserve. The buffer will be developed to ensure that fire management is undertaken outside of the Kama Nature Reserve and will provide protection against urban edge effects.	EPSDD (PCS, Strategic Planning and Land Development Projects)	As part of the final Planning and Design Framework for stage 3 and confirmed through the approval of estate development plan (subdivision) development applications.	Ongoing. Please see response to commitment 7.
35	Develop a Park Concept Plan for the "Molonglo River Park" which will occur along the East Molonglo river corridor. This Plan will establish management zones within the Park, specifically identifying areas to be designated for conservation as well as identifying recreation areas and resolving public access. A key focus of this plan will be the protection of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat.	EPSDD	Development prior to the commencement of construction of John Gorton Drive Stage 2A or within 1 year of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Complete. The Molonglo River Corridor Concept Plan prepared by EPSDD was endorsed on 28 August 2012.
36	Develop a management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the park (approximately 62 ha).	EPSDD (PCS)	Development prior to the commencement of the construction of the Sewer 3 East or within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan; whichever occurs first.	Complete. Please see response to commitment 9.
37	Establish a 20 m buffer around high and moderate quality Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitat (other than, for example the areas to be impacted by the bridge crossings and strategically placed walking tracks) within the East Molonglo river corridor. Manage these areas to ensure the maintenance of their conservation value. Management measures (as outlined in Section 3) will be incorporated into the management plan for the river corridor.	EPSDD (PCS)	On completion of the final Planning and Design Framework for stage 2 and completion of the Park Concept Plan.	Ongoing. Buffer zones were identified in the Park Concept Plan. Management measures are incorporated into the Molonglo River Reserve Draft Reserve Management Plan which was submitted to the Minister of Environment and Heritage for approval in November 2018.
38	Implement the management plan for the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the park.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 36. Implementation ongoing.	Ongoing. Operational plans are being implemented.
39	Register a disallowable instrument under the <i>Domestic Animals Act 2000</i> to effect a cat containment policy for the Molonglo area.	TCCS & EPSDD (PCS)	30 June 2012	Complete. DI-2015-58

Continued protection of 28.1 ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the Lower Molonglo Nature Reserve (see Figure 4 of the NES Plan). These areas will be adaptively managed to maintain the ecological condition* of the PTWL habitat that occurs there.				
40	Continued implementation of the Plan of Management for the Lower Molonglo Nature Reserve to provide for the maintenance of the ecological condition of the high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occurs there (approximately 28.1 ha).	EPSDD	Ongoing.	<p>The following management actions have been undertaken in the Lower Molonglo Nature Reserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ongoing strategic ecological cattle grazing to reduce exotic grass biomass and reduce fire risk from surrounding fuel loads; • targeted Blackberry (<i>Rubus Fruticosus</i>) control; • ongoing monitoring of pest species.; and • ongoing strategic grazing and weed control requirements on properties with PTWL habitat that are managed under the Land Management Agreement process.
Protection of an additional 23.3 ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat within the strategic assessment area outside of the development and offset areas (see Figure 4 of the NES Plan). These areas will be adaptively managed to maintain and enhance the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat that occurs there.				
41	Develop management plans for the other areas of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occurs within the strategic assessment area and outside of the development and offset areas (approximately 23.3 ha) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Development after completion of the Adaptive Management Strategy and within 2 years and 6 months of endorsement of the NES Plan.	<p>Complete</p> <p>The Operation Plan for the PTWL in the Molonglo River Reserve was finalised in April 2018.</p>
42	Implement management plans for the other areas of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occurs within the strategic assessment area and outside of the development and offset areas (approximately 23.3 ha) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat within these areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement on completion of Action 41. Implementation ongoing.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>PTWL habitat restoration Stage 4 is complete at the Coombs peninsula tip to ensure the ecological condition of PTWL habitat is enhanced and connectively improved and to ensure that fire management standards are reached.</p>
Improving and applying the knowledge about the management of PTWL.				
43	Undertake a research project examining the effects on PTWL of disturbance and proximity to urban areas.	EPSDD (PCS)	Commencement within 6 months of endorsement and incorporated into the Planning and Design Framework for both stages 2 and 3.	<p>Stage 1a (Mt Taylor habitat disturbance case study) - complete.</p> <p>Stage 1b - ongoing. The PTWL low-impact monitoring research project commenced in 2014 and will continue until 2020. Early results are promising with the low-impact monitoring method achieving a similar number of detections as traditional methods of surveying the species (i.e. rock rolling).</p> <p>Stage 2a (population monitoring) – ongoing. Population monitoring and habitat condition monitoring is being undertaken as part of Stage 1b and the Molonglo vegetation condition monitoring program.</p> <p>Stage 2b (PTWL translocation trial) – ongoing. Translocation recipient sites are being established.</p> <p>Stage 2c (PTWL habitat restoration) – ongoing. 4ha of habitat restoration has been undertaken since 2014.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2014, 11 habitat islands were established across the former Blewitts pine plantation. The objective of the restoration works was to improve habitat connectivity between the two genetically distinct populations. Over the past three years, 10 of the 11 habitat islands have been colonized leaving only one island to be colonized before the two populations are effectively reconnected. - Following the development of a PTWL habitat restoration method in collaboration with the ANU (McDougall, A., R.N. Milner, D.A. Driscoll & A.L. Smith (2016). Restoration rocks: integrating abiotic and biotic habitat restoration to conserve threatened species and reduce fire fuel load.

				<i>Biodiversity and Conservation 25 (8), 1529-1542</i> , 3 ha of PTWL habitat restoration has been undertaken within fire management zones adjacent to PTWL habitat. The objective of the restoration works is to reduce fire fuel loads and provide habitat for the PTWL. PTWL have been detected in five of the seven PTWL habitat restoration sites surveyed and a second threatened species, Perunga grasshopper, has also been found in one of the restoration sites.
44	<p>Amend the development boundary, adjacent to high and moderate quality PTWL habitat on the western edge to avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct impact from bushfire management – the Outer Asset Protection Zone (OAPZ) and Inner Asset Protection Zones (IAPZ) will be between the PTWL habitat and the development boundary; and • indirect impacts from urban development. 	EPSDD	Boundary amendment will be incorporated immediately into the draft Planning and Design Framework for stage 2. The boundary amendment will be prescribed by a Territory Plan amendment, post completion of the Estate Development Plan (EDP) for stage 2.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Stage 2 development boundaries were set by the Territory Plan Variation 281. The development boundary on the north western edge has been adjusted to avoid impacts on the high and moderate quality PTWL habitat.</p>

3.3 Other NES Plan requirements and actions

In addition to the specific MNES related commitments, the NES Plan contains a number of implementation requirements and actions. Table 2 details each action or requirement and provides a status update as at 30 June 2018.

Table 2 Other NES Plan requirements and actions

No	NES Plan Page Reference	Commitment	Responsible Entity	Comment/Status
1	2	To ensure conservation outcomes and protect MNES adjacent to the development area in the lower Molonglo Valley, the ACT Government will make necessary amendments to the Structure Plan.	EPSDD (Strategic Planning, Territory Plan)	<p>Whilst the commitment refers to the Structure Plan, which is part of the Territory Plan, it will be the Territory Plan (not specifically the Structure Plan) that will be varied in accordance with the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> as development in Molonglo progresses.</p> <p>On 10 August 2012 Technical Amendment to the Territory Plan No. 2012-24, which includes the applicable provisions arising from the Planning and Design Framework (PDF) for Molonglo Valley Stage 2 came into effect.</p> <p>EPSDD and the former LDA commenced background planning investigations and assessments for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 in 2013-14. These investigations are now being undertaken by EPSDD and informed the PDF for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 which was finalised on 27 February 2019.</p> <p>On 23 November 2019, EPSDD released Draft Variation to the Territory Plan 360 (Molonglo River Reserve: changes to public land reserve overlay boundaries and minor zone adjustment) for public consultation. On 22 March 2019, following the consideration of submissions received during the public consultation period, the Draft Variation was referred to the ACT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal. The Standing Committee released their report on the Draft Variation. The ACT Government is currently considering the report and will make a formal response in due course.</p>
2	3	Following endorsement of the NES Plan under the EPBC Act, actions (or classes of actions) that will occur to implement the endorsed NES Plan may be approved by the Minister.	EPSDD	Complete. Commonwealth Minister provided approval on 20 December 2011. The approval has effect until 31 December 2041.
3	9	<p>Infrastructure within the river corridor comprises the following activities and will be staged to be most cost effectively developed (in the following order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Gorton Drive which includes the construction of dual bridges crossing the Molonglo River; • East-West Arterial Road bridge crossing of the Molonglo River; • Water quality control ponds; water mains; sewer mains and sewer pump stations; and • A combined sewer / pedestrian / cycle bridge. 	EPSDD (PCS, Infrastructure Planning, TCCS, CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery), SLA (Molonglo Valley))	<p>On 27 April 2012, the ACT Government advised the Commonwealth that the ACT Government required a change to the order of this infrastructure to effectively manage the sequencing of land release.</p> <p>The following infrastructure has been completed within the River Corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewer Pedestrian Bridge (Butters Bridge) over the Molonglo River, and associated sewer main approaches; and • Cravens Creek Pond. <p>The East West Arterial has been constructed west of John Gorton Drive for approximately 1.1 km.</p> <p>John Gorton Drive construction has been recently completed in Molonglo 3 south from William Hovel Drive, and has been initially constructed for a distance of approximately 900m. The next 500m of John Gorton Drive commenced construction in the first quarter of 2019. The final section of John Gorton Drive includes the dual carriageway bridge crossings of the Molonglo River and another 1.7km of dual carriageway approaches. This is currently at preliminary design stage which commenced in early 2019. A 'Detail Design and Construction' package for the final stage will be tendered in late 2020, subject to budget funding being approved.</p> <p>In 2018-19 EPSDD completed construction of minor recreation facilities in the River Reserve at Barrer Hill, opposite to Coombs including a pedestrian trail, signage and low impact lookouts. These facilities were constructed using low environmental impact methods and will help to control pedestrian movement through the reserve and away from areas of high conservation value.</p> <p>In 2018-19 EPSDD progressed design of the first of two special purpose reserves, Nummerak, that will manage access to the reserve and provide focused areas for recreation and river access.</p>

No	NES Plan Page Reference	Commitment	Responsible Entity	Comment/Status
4	10	Variations to the East Molonglo development boundary to minimise the impact on MNES values. A particular focus of this is the reduction of impacts on moderate and high quality Pink-tailed Worm-lizard habitat.	EPSDD (Land Development Projects) & SLA (Molonglo Valley)	<p>Changes to the river corridor boundary occurred after the Molonglo Valley Stage 2 PDF was approved in 2012.</p> <p>EPSDD and the former LDA commenced background planning investigations for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 in 2013-14. These investigations are now being undertaken by EPSDD and have informed the preparation of the PDF, which has been finalised. The buffer to Kama Nature Reserve was considered in the Molonglo Stage 3 Urban Development project environmental impact statement exemption (s 211 <i>Planning and Development ACT 1999</i>). The exemption included a number of conditions for development approval including that the treatment and boundary to Kama Nature Reserve must be consistent with the recommendations of the Kama Interface Management Strategy (Capital Ecology 2016). This condition has been incorporated into and represented in the PDF for Stage 3, which was approved in February 2019.</p> <p>On 23 November 2019, EPSDD released Draft Variation to the Territory Plan 360 (Molonglo River Reserve: changes to public land reserve overlay boundaries and minor zone adjustment) for public consultation. On 22 March 2019, following the consideration of submissions received during the public consultation period, the Draft Variation was referred to the ACT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal. The Standing Committee released their report on the Draft Variation. The ACT Government is currently considering the report and will make a formal response in due course.</p>
5	10	<p>Designing infrastructure that will occur in the river corridor to avoid or minimise impacts to MNES. This process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> re-aligning the location of the major bridges (as compared to the original location proposed in the Molonglo Structure Plan) to minimise impacts on moderate and high quality Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitat; and aligning other infrastructure to avoid moderate and high quality Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitat and Box-Gum Woodland where this can be achieved. 	EPSDD (PCS, Infrastructure Planning), TCCS, CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery), SLA (Molonglo Valley).	Ongoing. Please see response to Table 1- Commitment 3.
6	10	A design principle to maintain ecological values within the East Molonglo development area where possible.		<p>Complete.</p> <p>Design principles adopted by the Territory and incorporated in contracts for design and construction projects.</p>
7	10	A commitment to avoid impacts on MNES within West Molonglo.		<p>Complete.</p> <p>MNES in West Molonglo, referred to as West Belconnen were considered through the variation to the Territory Plan and amendment to the National Capital Plan. This area is included in the West Belconnen Strategic Assessment.</p>
8	11, 35-36	The ACT Government will ensure that all construction activities (whether in the urban area or in the river corridor) will be subject to construction environmental management plans (CEMPs). These CEMPs will help to ensure that unnecessary impacts from construction (eg through the uncontrolled movement of machinery) are avoided. A detailed description of the content of CEMPs is provided in Section 4 of the NES Plan.	EPSDD (PCS) SLA (Molonglo Valley), CMTEDD (Civil Infrastructure Delivery)	Ongoing. Please see response to Table 1- Commitment 4
9	12	<p>Within the strategic assessment area fire management will be aimed at the protection of both built assets and MNES values. This will be achieved through the identification of appropriate asset protection zones and the application of hazard reduction techniques that will both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the standards for fuel loads in the SBMP are met; and protect MNES values through the use of sympathetic management techniques. 	EPSDD (PCS) ESA, SLA (Molonglo Valley)	Ongoing. Asset protection zones have been identified as part of the operational plan for the river corridor and the Bushfire Risk Strategy undertaken by the LDA. ESA and Fire Management Unit of TCCS support the fire management plan, which set out the management requirements both within and immediately outside the future urban development boundary in Denman Prospect taking into account BGW. In addition, controls for asset protection and management will be included in EDPs.
10	17	It is also important to note that under Division 3.3 of the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1980</i> , Pink-tailed Worm Lizard has been declared a vulnerable species and Natural Temperate Grassland and Box Gum Woodland are declared endangered communities. The effect of these statutory declarations is that these species and communities need to be managed in accordance with a prescribed Action Plan, prepared by the Conservator for Flora and Fauna.	EPSDD	The <i>Nature Conservation Act 1980</i> has been amended to reflect this requirement.

No	NES Plan Page Reference	Commitment	Responsible Entity	Comment/Status
11	18	Construction in the Molonglo Valley stage 2 and stage 3 will not commence before completion of the respective Planning and Design Frameworks for both stages 2 and 3. The final Planning and Design Frameworks will incorporate NES actions and commitments.	EPSDD (Planning Delivery and Strategic Planning))	Completed. The PDF for Molonglo Valley Stage 2 prepared by EPSDD was approved on 17 April 2012. The interim Limited Area PDF for Molonglo Valley stage 3 prepared by EPSDD was approved in March 2017. The PDF for Molonglo Valley Stage 3 prepared by EPSDD was approved on 27 February 2019. The framework supersedes the March 2017 Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Interim Limited Area Planning and Design Framework, which permitted the construction of certain capital works items to support future land release in Molonglo Stage 3.
12	18	The ACT Government, as the proponent, will ensure that all development concerning MNES in the Strategic Assessment area is incorporated into any future development application and associated documentation to ensure any Commonwealth requirements are reflected in the decision by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.	EPSDD (Planning Delivery)	Ongoing – for consideration/application at development assessment stage.
13	41	The ACT Government will monitor and report annually to the public on the implementation of the NES Plan. An annual report highlighting the conservation outcomes achieved in the previous year will be published by the ACT Government and provided to the Department of the Environment. The Report will include the monitoring results on the condition of the MNES, conservation outcomes (as listed in Section 4) and the outcomes of enhancement projects.	EPSDD (Planning Delivery)	Ongoing. To be finalised by the end of November each year.
14	41,42,43	Develop an Adaptive Management Strategy to set out the framework for achieving the NES Plan's commitments through monitoring, evaluation, experimental design, reporting, auditing and continuous improvement processes. The Strategy will inform the content and timing of specific management plans and actions to ensure a consistent, integrated and efficient application of adaptive management principles and practices to achieve long term conservation outcomes for MNES. The approved Adaptive Management Strategy will be submitted for approval by the Minister (Commonwealth) or delegate.		Complete. The AMS was endorsed by the Commonwealth Government on 7 August 2013.
15	44	The NES Plan and its associated actions will be audited by an independent, third party expert every five years, for a 30 year period. The audit reports are to be provided to the Department of the Environment for their consideration.	EPSDD	The Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment completed the first independent audit of the NES Plan in April 2018.
16	44	Appoint an independent, third party auditor and develop a customised audit protocol to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commitments made by the ACT Government in the NES Plan are being adhered to; and conservation outcomes for the MNES are being achieved. 	EPSDD	As above. Required every 5 years. The next independent audit is due on 31 May 2022.
17	44	The Treasury Directorate will ensure that commitments and actions in the NES Plan are funded.	CMTEDD	Ongoing. PCS completed two Capital Works projects in 2018-19 in the Molonglo River Reserve delivering on NES Plan actions. These programs saw the completion of the Barrer Restoration project (a key NES action) and other NES actions related to research, restoration and reserve establishment. In the 2018-19 ACT Budget \$3.182M was allocated over four year for the Capital Works project Establishing the Molonglo River Reserve to be delivered by PCS. This project will continue to protect native species and habitats in the Molonglo River Reserve (the Reserve) through ecological conservation works as part of the Molonglo Valley Protection of Matter of National Environmental Significance. Importantly, it will deliver detailed design of the first of two special purpose reserves in the Reserve. This area will be a focus area for residents and visitors to manage access into the Reserve protecting the areas with sensitive ecological values.

3.4 Impacts on MNES

The NES Plan specifies limits for impacts on MNES from any development within the Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment area. The following limits apply:

- a maximum of 110 ha of BGW can be impacted;
- a maximum of 27 ha of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat can be impacted; and
- no direct or indirect impact to Natural Temperate Grassland is allowed.

The NES Plan does not specify an allowable impact on the Superb Parrot and Swift Parrot.

Table 3 summarises the impacts on MNES from all developments completed in the assessment area since the NES Plan was endorsed as well as projects that were being progressed in 2018-19. Figures 2 and 3 show the location and areas of BGW and PTWL that have been cleared.

Table 3 Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance (ha)

Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance (ha)			
	Pink-tailed Worm Lizard (limit 27 ha of high and moderate quality habitat)	Box Gum Woodland (limit 110 ha)	Natural Temperate Grassland (no impact)
Total cleared at 30 June 2018	0.64 ha	11.18 ha	0 ha
Available balance	26.36 ha	98.82 ha	0 ha

Figure 2 BGW areas that have been cleared to date

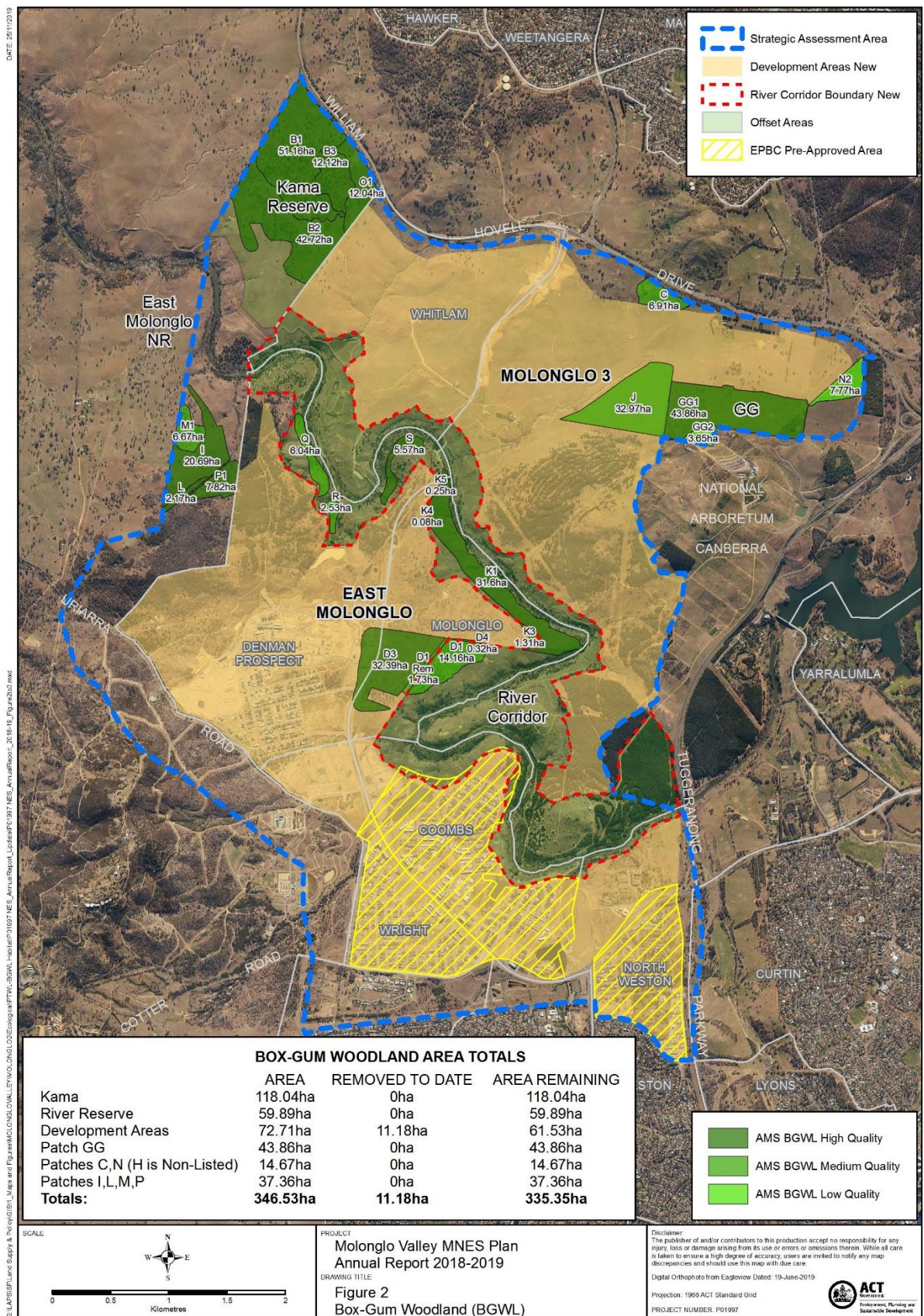
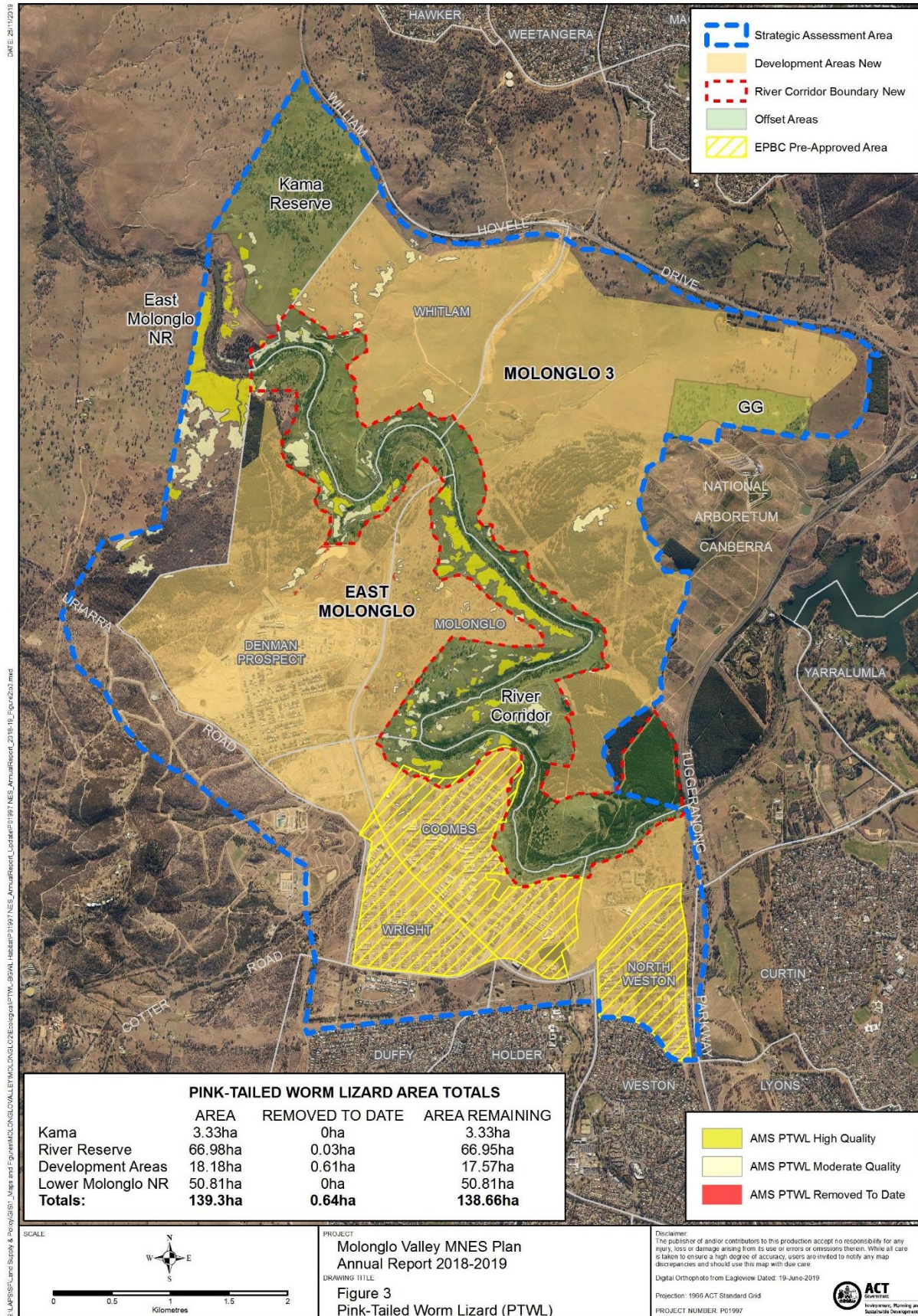


Figure 3 PTWL areas that have been cleared to date



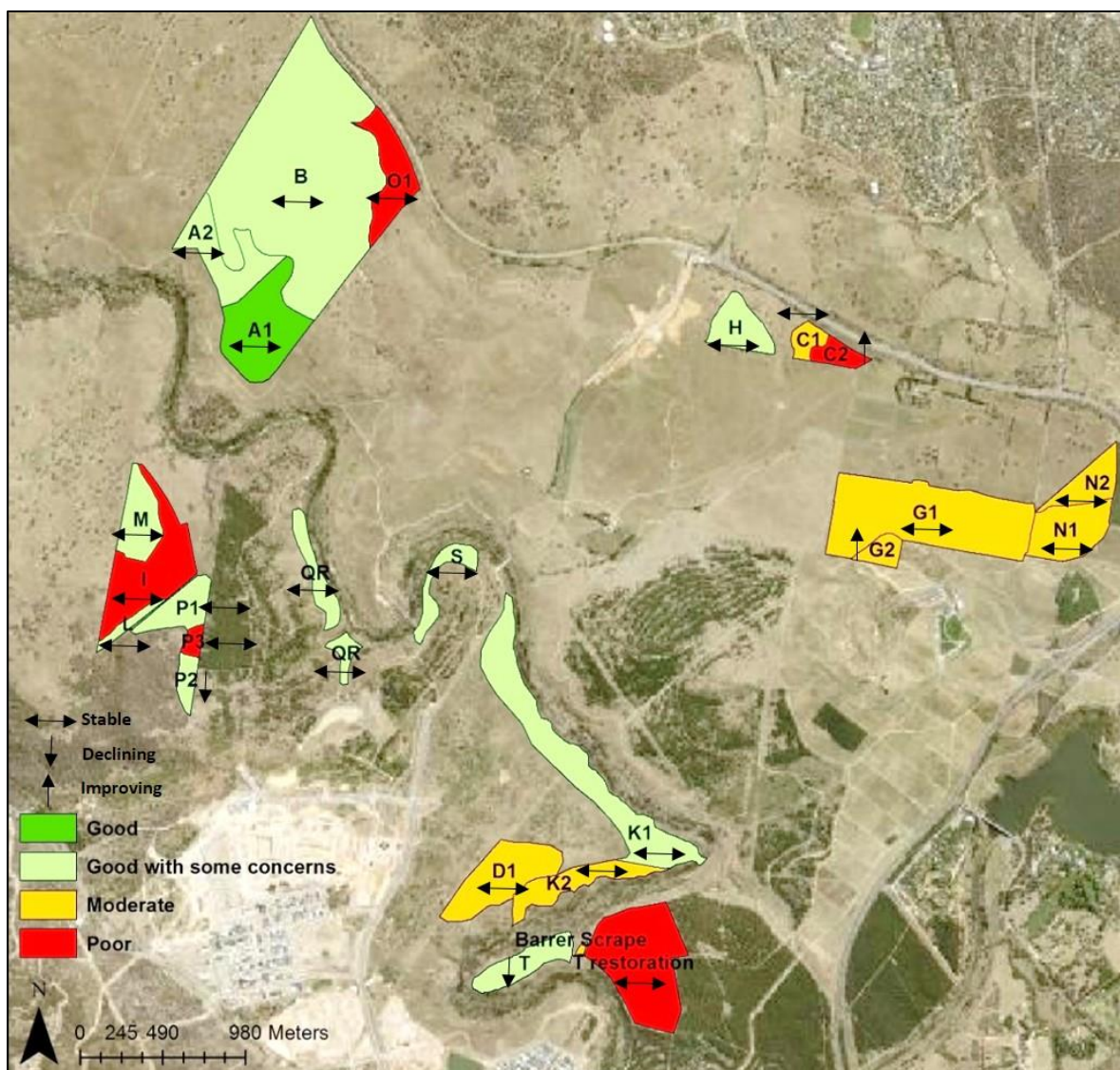
3.5 Expert Panel Review Report

The Molonglo Adaptive Management Strategy requires an expert panel to convene every five years, at a minimum, to evaluate and review the results of the ecological monitoring. The purpose of the review is to provide advice and recommendations for any amendments necessary to ensure the operational plans are achieving the conservation outcomes and performance targets for MNES.

On 30 October 2018 the first expert panel report (the Molonglo Valley vegetation condition monitoring report 2013-2017) was submitted to the Commonwealth. The report examines vegetation monitoring results for the Molonglo River Reserve and associated offset sites from 2013 to 2017.

The results of the review (Figure 4) indicate that the vegetation condition across the offset sites is currently maintained and in moderate to good condition. The NTG within Kama Nature Reserve has been maintained and remains in good condition. Vegetation condition of PTWL habitat within Molonglo River Reserve and Kama Nature Reserve has been maintained and remains in good condition.

Figure 4: Map showing the Molonglo NES Patch vegetation condition and condition trend in 2017.



It is noted that while management across the Molonglo Valley offset sites appears to have successfully maintained ecological condition, there are only two instances where ecological condition appears to have been increased. The expert panel report noted that this result is not unexpected, given the strong influence of climatic variation, as well as the relatively short timeframe over which ecological values within the Molonglo Valley offset sites have been actively managed.

To ensure that management objectives and performance targets for the Molonglo Valley continue to be achieved, the Expert Panel provided a number of recommendations focused on mitigating key threats including pest plants, pest animals, biomass disturbance, human land use impacts and dieback and have been given a rating to help better inform and prioritise the distribution of resources, funding and works.

3.6 Independent Audit

The Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment completed the first independent audit of the Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment (*Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance* (the NES Plan)) in April 2018.

The audit found that of the 60 commitments in the Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment, a total of 44 (28 with observations), were compliant. A total of 11 commitments were non-compliant, four of which were identified as high risk, four were termed undetermined and one was not applicable.

Non-compliances were largely due to timing issues for the delivery of commitments.

The following four corrective actions were issued to ensure priority commitments are met:

1. provide the final draft Molonglo Reserve Management Plan to the Minister for Planning and Land management (Commitment 9 and 36). Completed November 2018;
2. finalise the operation plan for Offset (Patch P) to ensure appropriate management is occurring (Commitment 16). Completed December 2018;
3. incorporate actions and monitoring requirements into relevant Land Management Agreements for the protection of the ecological condition of matter of national environmental significance within Offset area (Patches I, L and M) (Commitment 16). Completed December 2018;
4. finalise operation plan from the Pink-Tailed Worm-Lizard Conservation Area in the Molonglo River Reserve (Commitment 41). Completed April 2018.

All the corrective actions have been delivered.

4 Deviation or non-compliance

The ACT notes the following areas of deviation or non-compliance with the commitments of the NES Plan. There are no recorded incidences of impacts on MNES that are protected by the Plan as a result of these non-compliances.

Table 5 – areas of non-compliance

Action No.	Commitment	Non-Compliance matter
5,9,25,32,36	Develop a management plan for the Kama Nature Reserve and the Molonglo River Park to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of MNES.	A draft Reserve Management Plan (statutory) was prepared by November 2014 meeting the required timeframe; however, review of the fire management approach was required to bring the draft plan into line with the new Strategic

Action No.	Commitment	Non-Compliance matter
		<p>Bushfire Management Plan version 3 which was endorsed in September 2014.</p> <p>The final Draft Molonglo River Reserve Plan was completed in November 2018.</p> <p>At 30 June 2019 the Reserve Management Plan was progressing through statutory approval processes.</p>
16	Develop management plans for Box-Gum Woodland patches I, L, M and P to provide for the maintenance of the ecological condition of Box-Gum Woodland within these areas.	<p>Patches I, L and M are managed under a rural lease with a Land Management Agreement.</p> <p>An operational plan for Patch P was complete in December 2018. This Operational Plan was delayed allowing the completion of a fire management strategy for the western boundary of Denman Prospect urban development.</p>
41	Develop management plans for the other areas of high and moderate quality PTWL habitat that occur within the strategic assessment area and outside of the development and offset areas (approximately 23.3ha) to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological condition of the PTWL habitat within these areas.	<p>The operational plan was delayed allowing the suitability of experimental restoration techniques to be tested and results gained over several years.</p> <p>The operation plan was completed in April 2018.</p>

5 Corrections to information and data

In 2013, TAMS completed a Baseline Condition Assessment of the Box-Gum Woodlands (BGW) in the Strategic Assessment Area. This Assessment divided Patch P into 3 sub-patches based on condition, as follows:

- P1 – 7.8ha BGW;
- P2 – 3.2ha other vegetation; and
- P3– 1.7ha other vegetation.

Patch M was also divided into sub patches, as follows:

- M1 – 6.7ha BGW; and
- M2 – 3.1ha other vegetation.

This revision was reflected in the AMS endorsed by the Commonwealth in August 2013.

Molonglo River Reserve Boundary Adjustments

Draft Variation (DV) to the Territory Plan No. 360 (Molonglo River Reserve: changes to public land reserve overlay boundaries and minor zone adjustment) has been prepared to align the Territory Plan with the boundary and zoning requirements of the Molonglo River Reserve - Reserve Management Plan which was approved by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage on 24 July 2019.

The DV proposes changes to the public land reserve overlay boundaries and a minor zone adjustment on the Territory Plan Map for the area of the new Molonglo River Reserve. The changes are also necessary in order to align

the Territory Plan Map with the provisions in the Reserve Management Plan for the Molonglo River Reserve. The DV is currently progressing through the statutory approval processes.

The new river corridor boundary increases the Molonglo River Reserve area from 489.66 hectares to 523.09 hectares with an increase of 1.01 hectares of box gum woodland and 0.22 hectares of pink tailed worm lizard habitat within the reserve area.

Figure 5: Molonglo River Corridor Boundary Adjustments

