



**TIMBERLANDS**  
Pacific

# Special Values Management Plan Penola Plantations



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Timberlands Pacific acknowledge the Boandik people as the Traditional Owners of land on which we manage. Timberlands Pacific pay respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging and the continuation of their cultural, spiritual and educational practices.

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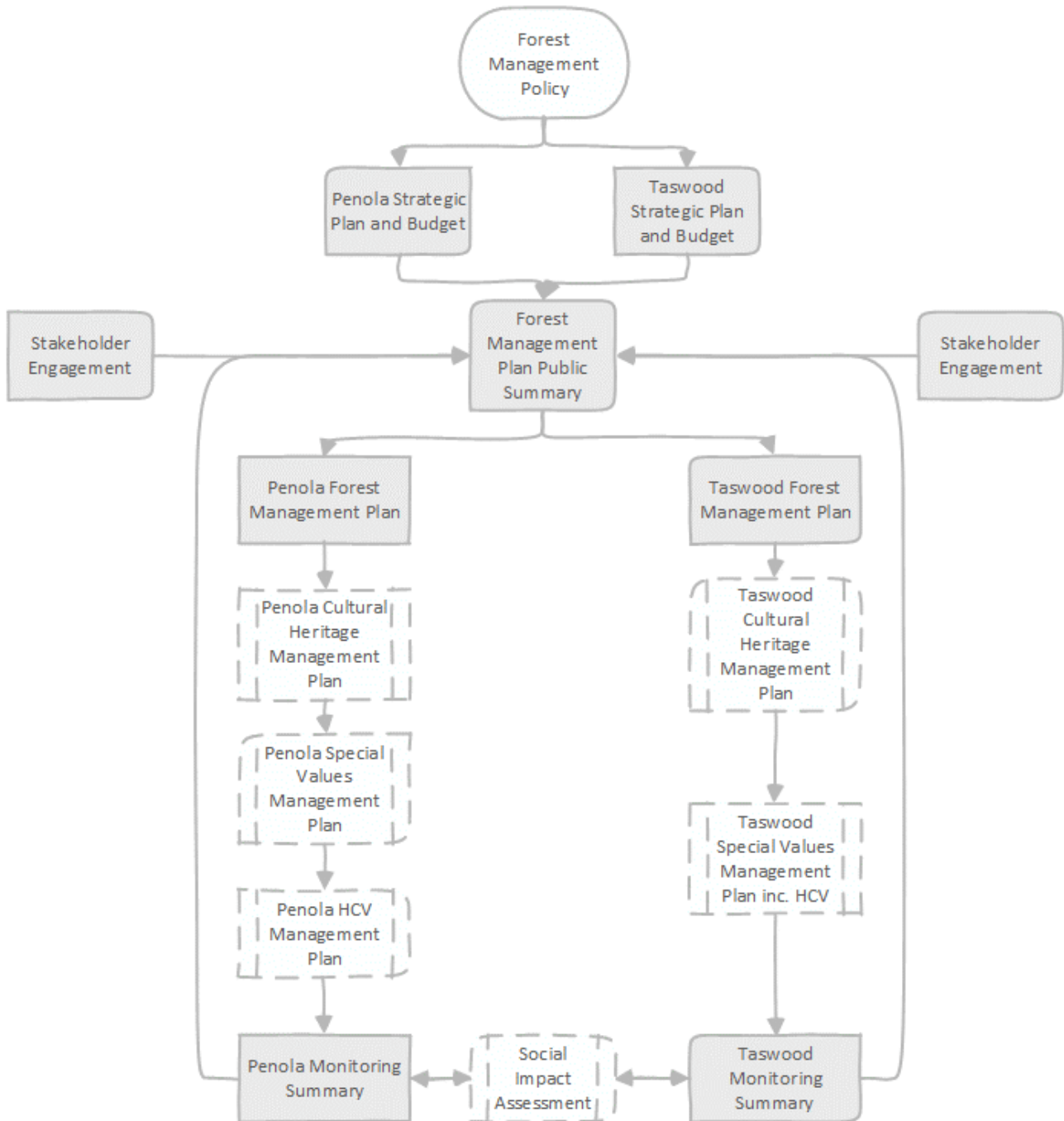
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## Purpose

The purpose of this Special Values Management Plan is to outline the processes followed by Timberlands Pacific Pty Ltd (TPPL) to identify, manage and monitor special values especially when planning and implementing forest operations. Assessment of special values and development of management prescriptions includes engagement of appropriate experts as required.

Special Values are intrinsic values associated with a particular site, species or ecosystem type. They can be cultural, biodiversity, geomorphic, visual, soil and water or a combination of these.

This Plan forms part of the Penola Plantations Forest Management Plan. The complete FMP is a collection of documents as identified in the below chart.



## Introduction

Timberlands Pacific Pty Ltd (TPPL) is a forest management company, currently managing over 100,000 hectares across two forest estates located in Tasmania and the Green Triangle region of South Australia and Victoria. Both estates are owned by trusts managed by New Forest Asset Management Pty Ltd.

The **Taswood Estate** is approximately 54,000 hectares of *Pinus radiata* and eucalypt plantations located on Permanent Timber Production Zoned, (PTPZ) land across northern Tasmania. While the **Penola Plantations** is approximately 47,000 hectares of *Pinus radiata* in the Green Triangle region of south east South Australia and western Victoria.

This **Special Values Management Plan is for the Penola Plantations only.**

TPPL welcomes its responsibility to manage the natural and cultural values within the estate. Good forest management goes beyond economic returns to the forest owners.

Penola Plantations is a *Pinus radiata* plantation estate that incorporates areas of natural vegetation. These areas and the plantations themselves are home to a variety of flora and fauna, some of which are considered rare or threatened. TPPL collectively refers to these areas as **Special Values**.

Special Values can include rare or endangered fauna and flora, protected vegetation, wetlands, waterways or cultural heritage sites. The identification and protection of these values is outlined explicitly in Victorian and South Australian legislation. This is enforced through the Victorian Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014 section 4.2, Environmental Values and Plantations, and the Guidelines for Plantation Forestry in South Australia (2009) section 5 Environmental Care, which detail mandatory requirements regarding soil, water and air contamination, which plantation managers must adhere to. TPPL also abides by the guidelines of the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme (AS 4708:2013) and Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) certification (FSC-C115692).

## High Conservation Value (HCV)

Areas of High Conservation Value are a specific type of special value and are managed as a part of the special values management process. There are 6 different categories of High Conservation Value that describe different types of ecological attributes and uses that require protection. Definitions come from the High Conservation Value Forest Toolkit, Edition 1 (December 2003), prepared by ProForest and The Common Guidance for the Identification of High Conservation Values (October 2013) by the HCV Resource Network.

## Defined Forest Area

Penola Plantations is spread across the border region of South Australia and Victoria. Publicly available maps of the estate's defined forest area are available at [www.tppl.com.au](http://www.tppl.com.au). The estate consists of 64 forests totalling 47,000 hectares. Approximately 2,000 hectares is reserved from harvesting and consists of areas that are managed for their environmental and conservation values. These areas include built infrastructure (powerlines and quarries etc), formal reserves, remnant forest, wetlands, swampy areas and stream reserves.

## Governance

South Australian and Victorian legislation mandates the development and lodgement of written plans prior to the commencement of all forest operations. Additionally, Codes of Practice and Guidelines outline requirements, goals and standards for the protection and conservation of cultural and natural values at risk from forest activities.

Useful summaries of applicable legislation can be found in both the Guidelines for Plantation Forestry in South Australia 2009 and Victorian Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014.

## Evaluating Special Values

### Identification

The process of identifying Special Values is via the verification of database information through field reconnaissance.

This analysis is utilised through the operation planning phase to ensure Special Values within an operational area that require management prescriptions, are implemented to conserve and protect them from the impact of harvesting and reforestation activities. These prescriptions must be included in the Timber Harvest Plan and any subsequent reforestation operational plans, which are both legally and contractually binding documents. Each step of the evaluation process is critical to ensuring that **known values are monitored over time** and any **new values are identified and managed**.

It is important not only to protect values within the estate boundaries, but also to mitigate any impacts on values surrounding the land.

### Field validation

Field verification of any special values identified during the initial desktop evaluation, planning and mapping process is required. This may also identify additional values not already known. For further detail on the validation process refer to SOP for Special Values and HCV Management. Special Values and HCVs Management.

## Evaluating High Conservation Value Forests

### Identification

The process of identifying HCVFs is via field surveys and assessments, analysis of database information and verification through field reconnaissance.

There are 6 categories of HCVs, however within the Penola Plantations, only HCVs meeting the criteria for HCV 3 have been identified.

The HCV 3 Rare, Threatened or Endangered Ecosystems that have been identified are outlined below.

Location	Ecological Class	Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999	National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972	Area (ha)
Heatherlie	Plains Grassy Woodland + Plains Swampy Woodland	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	28.8
Fields	Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland, (Plains Grassy Wetland, EVC 125)	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	0.9
Mingbool	Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland, (Plains Sedgy Wetland, EVC 647)	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	0.6
Nangwarry South	Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland, (Plains Sedgy Wetland EVC 647 mosaicked with Aquatic Herbland EVC 653)	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	7.0
Spehr	Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland, (Plains Sedgy Wetland EVC 647, Plains Grassy Wetland EVC 125),	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	0.8
Werrikoo	Damp Heathland			61.9

## Managing and monitoring special values

Each of the HCVs identified have a management plan as outlined below.

Location	Threats	Management Plan
Heatherlie	Weeds – coastal wattle and sweet vernal grass Pine wildlings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fell pine wildlings</li> <li>• Cut and paint coastal wattle</li> <li>• Ensure grazing or other disturbance does not occur at the site</li> </ul>
Fields	Weeds – Phalaris and spear thistle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain site free of Radiata Pine wildlings.</li> <li>• Undertake Spear Thistle and Phalaris control</li> <li>• Maintain buffer</li> </ul>
Mingbool	Radiata Pine wildlings in buffer Weeds - Penny-royal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control Radiata Pine wildlings – recommended to ringbark large adults and manually fell juveniles</li> <li>• Use specialist weed control contractors attempt to control Penny Royal outbreak when the wetland is dry</li> <li>• Increase Buffer to 15m next rotation</li> </ul>
Nangwarry South	Current compartment track intersects small section of the wetland to the north Mature and small wildlings Weeds - Small number of Spear thistle and Variegated thistle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove mature and juvenile wildlings</li> <li>• Maintain site free of radiata Pine Wildlings</li> <li>• Change alignment of the track to follow around the edge of the plantation</li> <li>• Control thistle species around the basin to prevent further establishment</li> </ul>
Spehr	Changed soil character over the shallow sections of the wetland where the site had been previously ripped and mounded Narrow and degraded buffer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain site free of Radiata Pine wildlings</li> <li>• Avoid further disturbance. Do not replant the previously ripped and mounded area.</li> <li>• Increase the buffer width to &gt;15m (from the high-water mark) next rotation.</li> </ul>
Werrikoo	<u>Heath Mouse</u> Restricted distribution Specialised habitat requirements Need for active management <u>Swamp Antechinus</u> Sensitive to fire, requires unburnt vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cool mosaic ecological burn conducted in Autumn, before breeding season which occurs during May/June</li> <li>• Multiyear burning</li> <li>• Monitoring (trapping) after burning</li> </ul>

The above HCVs are monitored annually to assess the effectiveness of the management practices in maintaining or enhancing these values.

In addition, all special values are managed and monitored as follows.

### Biodiversity

TPPL field supervisors are trained at recognising biodiversity values and implementing management requirements outlined in operational plans. All TPPL contractors are provided with copies of all plans, with specific requirements being outlined in pre-operational meetings. Adherence to these requirements are maintain through systematic monitoring and audit. The outcomes of these audits are summarised in the annual Penola Plantations Annual Monitoring Summary\_ which is publicly available through the TPPL website.

### **Threatened species**

The management of biodiversity values within a production forest in South Australia is regulated by Primary Industries and Resources SA (PIRSA) and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in Victoria. TPPL's management of all threatened species generally involves processes outlined in Forest Operational Safety Plans (FOSPlan) and Timber Harvest Plans (THP).

### **Remnant Vegetation**

Remnant vegetation within the estate is particularly susceptible to wilding incursions as they are generally surrounded or bordered by pines. As this poses a risk to the ecological values of these areas, monitoring and maintenance is conducted regularly.



**Photograph 1: Patch of remnant native vegetation surrounded by fallow land that will be replanted.**

The spread of weeds and other pathogens is an additional threat to remnant vegetation. As such, full machine wash-down is required on all TPPL managed forestry operations. Compliance is ensured at the completion of an operation when the machinery will be moved into another forest.

Where appropriate, TPPL will engage with our neighbours to develop a multi tenure management plan in the event risks are posed to areas that cross boundaries. This may be as simple as a weed control plan or more complex management plan involving habitat rehabilitation work. Progress and outcomes of activities will be reported in the Penola Plantations Monitoring Summary.

### **Fire Management**

Fire is an effective tool used to manage risk as well as biodiversity values in and surrounding the estate.

Fuel reduction burns create a mosaic across the plantation that protects lives, property and the valuable plantation. TPPL meets all legislative requirements in both South Australia and Victoria including strategic annual maintenance of fire breaks and boundaries. TPPL has a Forest Industry Brigade consisting of employees and contractors who maintains fire equipment and support both CFA and CFS.

### **Cultural Heritage**

#### **Indigenous persons access**

TPPL recognises that the Guditjmara and Buandig Aboriginal people are the original custodians of the land we manage and acknowledges that the land and any traditional sites are of enormous significance to local Aboriginal people. TPPL will allow full access, if requested, to all areas of the estate for traditional use such as ceremonies, gathering, hunting, access to important sites or as part of teaching law and customs to future generations.



Cultural heritage does not just mean physical artefacts. It includes places that are locally and spiritually significant and are fundamental to the identity of past, present and future communities.

TPPL manages areas with known or potential heritage values as per the Penola Plantations Cultural Heritage Management Plan. To date no site of significance has been identified within the estate.

#### **Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement**

The majority of stakeholder engagement is with neighbours that may be impacted by forestry operations. Our internal Stakeholder Contacts register is continually being expanded to include all neighbours of the Penola Plantations. TPPL are asking that neighbours contact the Mount Gambier Office. Contact details are available on the website [www.tppl.com.au](http://www.tppl.com.au).

### **Soil and water management**

#### **Soil Protection**

The soils in the Penola Plantations are derived from limestone and basalt geology. Weathering of the limestone parent material typically results in approximately 3 distinct soil types predominantly consisting of sand. The sandy soils are typically found in flat to rolling topography, where drainage is excellent. The only erosion risk is very significant, intense rainfalls, however due to the very flat nature of the country it is only a moderate risk.

Conservation of organic matter is the primary issue with all soil types in the Green Triangle. Naturally low levels indicate soil productivity can degrade quickly if inappropriate burning and site preparation techniques are used. (refer to the Penola Plantation Forest Management Plan for details)

#### **Water Conservation and Wetlands**

There is limited surface water within the Penola Plantations, with very few flowing streams and much of the 'wet' areas consisting of low lying swampy areas and small wetlands.

Machinery exclusion zones are utilised to exclude ground disturbing machinery and large buffers are enforced when herbicide is applied aerially. To ensure that herbicide usage is in line with legal and community standards, TPPL uses an extensive and independent water monitoring program whenever herbicides are applied close to flowing water or water bodies.

Results can be made available on request, or if a detection is found which may impact on a downstream user.