

Appendix T Targeted Matters of National Environmental Significance Species Surveys



Targeted Matters of National Environmental Significance species surveys

Tarong West Wind Farm

RES Australia Pty Ltd

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3.0	13 May 2025	Dr Natalie Freeman	Natalie Toon	Natalie Toon

Basis of Report

This report has been prepared by SLR Consulting Australia (SLR) with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the timescale and resources allocated to it by agreement with RES Australia Pty Ltd (the Client). Information reported herein is based on the interpretation of data collected, which has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

This report is for the exclusive use of the Client. No warranties or guarantees are expressed or should be inferred by any third parties. This report may not be relied upon by other parties without written consent from SLR.

SLR disclaims any responsibility to the Client and others in respect of any matters outside the agreed scope of the work.



Executive Summary

RES Australia Pty Ltd engaged SLR Consulting Australia to conduct targeted surveys for matters of national environmental significance listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, for the proposed Tarong West Wind Farm in the locality of Ironpot, in south east Queensland. The entire project site is approximately 17,500 ha in size, encompassing 15 properties. The surveys were conducted from 31 March – 03 April 2025, targeting seven species, those being:

- Austral toadflax (*Thesium australe*)
- grey-headed flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*)
- *Paspalidium grandispiculatum*
- *Polianthion minutiflorum*
- wandering peppercress (*Lepidium peregrinum*)
- yakka skink (*Egernia rugosa*)
- yellow-bellied glider (*Petaurus australis australis*).

The surveys did not detect the seven target species within the project site. Two other protected matters were incidentally recorded, those being:

- greater glider (southern and central) (*Petauroides volans*)
- south-eastern glossy black-cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami*).



Table of Contents

Basis of Report	i
Executive Summary	ii
Acronyms and Abbreviations	v
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Methods	1
2.1.1 Threatened fauna survey.....	1
2.1.2 Threatened flora survey.....	5
2.2 Survey limitations	8
3.0 Results	8
3.1 Detected fauna.....	8
3.2 Targeted fauna.....	15
3.2.1 Grey-headed flying-fox	15
3.2.2 Yellow-bellied glider	15
3.2.3 Yakka skink.....	17
3.3 Targeted flora.....	21
3.3.1 Austral toadflax	21
3.3.2 <i>Paspalidium grandispiculatum</i>	21
3.3.3 <i>Polianthion minutiflorum</i>	21
3.3.4 Wandering peppercress	21
4.0 Conclusions.....	27
5.0 References.....	28

Tables

Table 1 Fauna survey effort	3
Table 2 Species specific survey guidelines for targeted fauna	3
Table 3 Flora survey methods and effort employed.....	5
Table 4 Species specific survey guidelines for targeted flora	6
Table 5 Incidental fauna observed during spotlighting.....	12



Figures

Figure 1 Incidental fauna detections.....	14
Figure 2 Grey-headed flying-fox and yellow-bellied glider survey effort.....	16
Figure 3 Yakka skink survey effort	20
Figure 4 Threatened flora survey effort and results	26

Plate

Plate 1 Greater glider (southern and central)	8
Plate 2 Greater glider (southern and central) in 20 m tree.....	9
Plate 3 Orts made by south-eastern glossy black-cockatoo	10
Plate 4 Sugar glider	11
Plate 5 Squirrel glider.....	12
Plate 6 Common brushtail possum.....	13
Plate 7 Potential yakka skink habitat – brush piles	17
Plate 8 Potential yakka skink habitat – partially buried rocks.....	18
Plate 9 Potential yakka skink habitat – hollow logs.....	19
Plate 10 Potential yakka skink habitat – abandoned homestead	19
Plate 11 Potential habitat for threatened flora species.....	22
Plate 12 Potential habitat for threatened flora species.....	22
Plate 13 Potential habitat for threatened flora species.....	23
Plate 14 Potential habitat for threatened flora species.....	23
Plate 15 <i>Lepidium africanum</i> , an introduced species	24
Plate 16 Austral toadflax detected at reference site	24
Plate 17 Austral toadflax detected at reference site	25



Acronyms and Abbreviations

EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
PER	Public environment report
Proponent	Tarong West Project Co Pty Ltd
SLR	SLR Consulting Australia
WTG	Wind turbine generator



1.0 Introduction

Tarong West Project Co Pty Ltd (the Proponent) engaged SLR Consulting Australia to conduct targeted surveys on matters of national environmental significance (MNES) listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), within the proposed Tarong West Wind Farm (project site). The results of the surveys will provide supporting data for the Tarong West Wind Farm Public Environment Report (PER). The surveys targeted seven MNES, those being:

- three fauna species:
 - grey-headed flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act
 - yakka skink (*Egernia rugosa*), listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act
 - yellow-bellied glider (*Petaurus australis australis*), listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act
- four flora species:
 - Austral toadflax (*Thesium australe*), listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act
 - *Paspalidium grandispiculatum*, listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act
 - *Polianthion minutiflorum*, listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act
 - wandering peppercress (*Lepidium peregrinum*), listed as endangered under the EPBC Act.

This technical memorandum provides a summary of the targeted survey methodology and results within the project site.

2.0 Methods

2.1.1 Threatened fauna survey

Fauna surveys were conducted by one team of two ecologists for four days from 31 March to 03 April 2025. Targeted searches for threatened fauna species considered likely or possible to occur included:

- spotlighting for grey-headed flying-fox and yellow-bellied glider
 - spotlighting included vehicle transects both within and adjacent to the project site, and walking transects of 100 x 100 m by two people
- nocturnal call playback for yellow-bellied glider, including:
 - calls played for 2 min and 5 min of listening.
 - call playback sequence started with glider calls including yellow-bellied glider calls, followed by either squirrel glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*), or sugar glider (*Petaurus breviceps*), and a predator call of either powerful owl (*Ninox strenua*), or masked owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*). The call playback sequence always ended with the predator calls, then spotlighting began.
- minimum 10 minutes of active searching in rocks, logs or abandoned building infrastructure for evidence of yakka skinks (e.g. latrines or burrow entrances).



Survey methods, the number of surveys and the overall effort completed are shown in Table 1. Species specific guidelines are found in Table 2. These surveys coupled with previous survey effort (Ecosure 2023) meet the survey guidelines for each target species.



Table 1 Fauna survey effort

Species	Survey method	Number of sites	Survey effort	Total survey time
grey-headed flying-fox yellow-bellied glider	Nocturnal spotlighting - transects	5	118.5 minutes over 3 nights x 2 personnel	237 minutes (3.95 hr)
grey-headed flying-fox yellow-bellied glider	Nocturnal spotlighting - vehicle	15	627.5 minutes over 4 nights x 2 personnel	1,255 minutes (20.92 hr)
yellow-bellied glider	Nocturnal call playback (calls included yellow-bellied glider, sugar glider, squirrel glider, powerful owl and masked owl)	7	142 minutes over 4 nights x 2 personnel	284 minutes (4.73 hr)
yakka skink	Active searches	11	104 minutes over 3 days x 2 personnel	208 minutes

Table 2 Species specific survey guidelines for targeted fauna

Species	Commonwealth survey guidelines / EPBC Act referral guidelines	Queensland survey guidelines	Previous survey effort to date	Effort and method carried out by SLR	Survey limitations
grey-headed flying-fox	Daytime field surveys for camps (DEWHA 2010). Surveys of vegetation communities and food plants (DEWHA 2010). Night time surveys walking transects (100 m apart), may include night-time audio recordings (DEWHA 2010).	No species-specific guidelines. General survey requirements for mammals that would be relevant are (Eyre et al. 2022): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> searches for flying-fox camps habitat assessment (plant food trees) spotlighting – 2 by 30 person minutes spotlight search 	239 active search hrs	12.43 hr nocturnal spotlighting surveys over 4 days by 2 personnel. Total 24.86 person hrs	Previously conducted and current methods employed were sufficient to detect grey-headed flying-fox foraging within the site.



Species	Commonwealth survey guidelines / EPBC Act referral guidelines	Queensland survey guidelines	Previous survey effort to date	Effort and method carried out by SLR	Survey limitations
	There are no referral guidelines for this species.	within 100 x 100 m, survey site.			
yellow-bellied glider	15 min call playback plus 40 min spotlighting for six nights (DAWE 2022).	Two spotlight/call playback surveys per period for two periods (Eyre et al 2022): Play callback for three minutes, listen for two minutes. Spotlight for five minutes.	189 nocturnal spotlighting hrs	142 min call playback over 3 days by 2 personnel. 12.43 hr nocturnal spotlighting surveys over 4 days by 2 personnel. Total 29.59 person hrs.	Methods employed were sufficient to confirm the presence of other glider species, including greater glider (southern and central), squirrel glider and sugar glider at the site.
yakka skink	No surveys can reliably detect species. Recommended methods are active searches of sheltering sites (such as rocks, human-made debris or logs).	20 minutes search per ha of suitable habitat (Ferguson and Mathieson 2014): Search 20% of suitable habitat when 50 ha or more (e.g. 10 ha per 50 ha) OR 40% when less than 50 ha present (e.g. 2 ha per 5 ha of suitable habitat). Active search in suitable habitat for latrines (Eyre et al 2022).	26 active herpetofauna search hrs	5 ha of suitable habitat identified: 104 min diurnal yakka searches over 3 days x 2 personnel Total 208 person min.	Heavy rain over one day of surveys reduced the number of active searches. However, the following day was sunny which is when yakka skinks emerge to redevelop their burrow entrances, so methods employed were considered suitable to detect presence. No evidence of species detected.



2.1.2 Threatened flora survey

Flora surveys were conducted by one team of two ecologists over four days from 31 March to 3 April 2025. Where important plant species could not be identified in the field (e.g. dominant and characteristic species), specimens were collected in a plant press for further analysis by SLR botanical staff.

Survey methods, the number of surveys and the overall effort completed are shown in Table 3. Species specific survey guidelines are in Table 4. Due to the large size of the site and limited potential suitable habitat, surveys for the threatened flora species were prioritised and targeted to areas of potential habitat (riparian areas) within the clearing footprint. Timed random meander method survey was completed for 12 sites across the project site. This method requires a botanist to walk a random path within suitable habitat and within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint until the habitat has been thoroughly searched.

Table 3 Flora survey methods and effort employed

Target species	Number of sites	Survey method	Survey effort	Total survey time
<i>Thesium australe</i> Austral toadflax	11	Random meanders within suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant riparian habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint.	495 min over 4 days x 2 personnel	990 min
<i>Paspalidium grandispiculatum</i>	1	Random meanders within the limited suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint.	45 min over 1 day x 2 personnel	90 min
<i>Polianthion minutiflorum</i>	1	Random meanders within the limited suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint.	45 min over 1 day x 2 personnel	90 min
<i>Lepidium peregrinum</i> wandering peppergrass	11	Random meanders within suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant riparian habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint.	495 min over 4 days x 2 personnel	990 min



Table 4 Species specific survey guidelines for targeted flora

Species	Commonwealth survey guidelines / EPBC Act referral guidelines	Queensland survey guidelines	Previous survey effort to date	Effort and method carried out by SLR	Survey limitations
<i>Thesium australe</i> Austral toadflax	No survey or referral guidelines are available for this species.	N/A	Timed random meanders in suitable habitat (woodland in damp riparian areas).	Timed random meanders within suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant riparian habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint. Total 990 person min.	Species detected at reference site, therefore identifiable during this survey period.
<i>Paspalidium grandispiculatum</i>	No survey or referral guidelines are available for this species.	N/A	Not previously targeted.	Timed random meanders within suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant forest and woodland habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint. Total 90 person min.	Limited suitable habitat was identified within the clearing footprint. Methods employed were sufficient to survey for <i>Paspalidium grandispiculatum</i> within the clearing footprint.
<i>Polianthion minutiflorum</i>	No survey or referral guidelines are available for this species.	N/A	Not previously targeted.	Timed random meanders within suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant forest and woodland habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint. Total 90 person min.	Limited suitable habitat was identified within the clearing footprint. Methods employed were sufficient to survey for <i>Polianthion minutiflorum</i> within the clearing footprint.



Species	Commonwealth survey guidelines / EPBC Act referral guidelines	Queensland survey guidelines	Previous survey effort to date	Effort and method carried out by SLR	Survey limitations
<i>Lepidium peregrinum</i> wandering peppercress	No survey or referral guidelines are available for this species.	N/A	Timed random meanders in suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant riparian communities).	Timed random meanders within suitable habitat (remnant and non-remnant riparian habitat) within a 50 m buffer of the clearing footprint. Total 990 person min.	Methods employed were sufficient to confirm the presence of <i>Lepidium</i> species (<i>L. africanum</i>), however no <i>L. peregrinum</i> (wandering peppercress) was detected within the clearing footprint.



2.2 Survey limitations

Targeted surveys can confirm the presence of a particular fauna species from a given area but cannot confirm the absence of a species. Species detectability may be affected by factors outside the control of survey design such as heavy rainfall. Weather data during the survey from the Kingaroy Airport station recorded 30.8 mm of rain falling on 2 April 2025 (Bureau of Meteorology, 2025). This heavy rainfall prevented active searches for yakka skinks on one day and may have washed away evidence of their presence (such as the latrines and swept burrow entrances). However, surveys on 3 April were considered to be improved for detection as the species excavates any accumulated dirt from around their burrow entrances on the first sunny days after rain (Ferguson and Mathieson 2014).

3.0 Results

3.1 Detected fauna

3.1.1.1 Greater glider (southern and central)

Spotlighting surveys incidentally observed six greater gliders (southern and central) (*Petauroides volans*, listed as endangered under the EPBC Act) foraging within the project site (Plate 1 and Plate 2). The greater gliders (southern and central) were foraging in *Eucalyptus tereticornis* and *Corymbia citriodora* that ranged from 17–20 m in height. Locations of greater glider (southern and central) detections are displayed in Figure 1.



Plate 1 Greater glider (southern and central)





Plate 2 Greater glider (southern and central) in 20 m tree



3.1.1.2 South-eastern glossy black-cockatoo

Evidence of south-eastern glossy black-cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami*, listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act) foraging was detected within the project site. Chewings ('orts') of black she-oak (*Allocasuarina littoralis*) cones of were incidentally detected while searching for yakka skink latrines (Plate 3). The location of south-eastern glossy black-cockatoo orts is was an area previously known and is presented in Figure 1. The immediate area had a large stand of black she-oak with some suitable nesting hollows nearby, however no nests or individuals were observed.



Plate 3 Orts made by south-eastern glossy black-cockatoo



3.1.1.3 Other incidental findings

Other glider species detected while spotlighting included sugar glider (*Petaurus breviceps*, Plate 4) and squirrel glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*, Plate 5).



Plate 4 Sugar glider





Plate 5 Squirrel glider

Common brushtail possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*, Plate 6) were frequently observed during spotlighting. A condensed list of fauna species detected during the fauna surveys is found in Table 5, and displayed in Figure 1. Of note were the eastern barn owl (*Tyto javanica*), southern boobook (*Ninox boobook*), barking owl (*Ninox connivens*), sulphur-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*) and galah (*Eolophus roseicapilla*).

Welcome swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) were observed inhabiting the old homestead (Plate 10).

Table 5 Incidental fauna observed during spotlighting

Common name	Scientific name	EPBC Act listing
barking owl	<i>Ninox connivens</i>	-
cane toad*	<i>Rhinella marina</i>	-
common brushtail possum	<i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i>	-
domesticated cow	<i>Bos taurus</i>	-
eastern barn owl	<i>Tyto javanica</i>	-
European rabbit*	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	-
feral pig*	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	-
galah	<i>Eolophus roseicapilla</i>	-
south-eastern glossy black-cockatoo^	<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami</i>	Vulnerable
greater glider (southern and central)	<i>Petauroides volans</i>	Vulnerable
green tree frog	<i>Litoria caerulea</i>	-
laughing kookaburra	<i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i>	-



Common name	Scientific name	EPBC Act listing
rufous bettong	<i>Aepyprymnus rufescens</i>	-
southern boobook	<i>Ninox boobook</i>	-
squirrel glider	<i>Petaurus norfolcensis</i>	-
sugar glider	<i>Petaurus breviceps</i>	-
sulphur-crested cockatoo	<i>Cacatua galerita</i>	-
tawny frogmouth	<i>Podargus strigoides</i>	-
welcome swallow	<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	-

* invasive species

^ cone chewings (orts)



Plate 6 Common brushtail possum

3.1.1.4 Biosecurity matters

Feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) were incidentally observed within the project site. Wallows were observed near wind turbine generator (WTG) T105, scat was observed approximately 900 m southwest of WTG T08, and a feral pig was observed at the corner of Ironpot Road and Boyne River Road.

European rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) were also observed. Although cane toads (*Rhinella marina*) have been noticed on the site before, there was an extremely high number of cane toads observed within and adjacent to the project site.



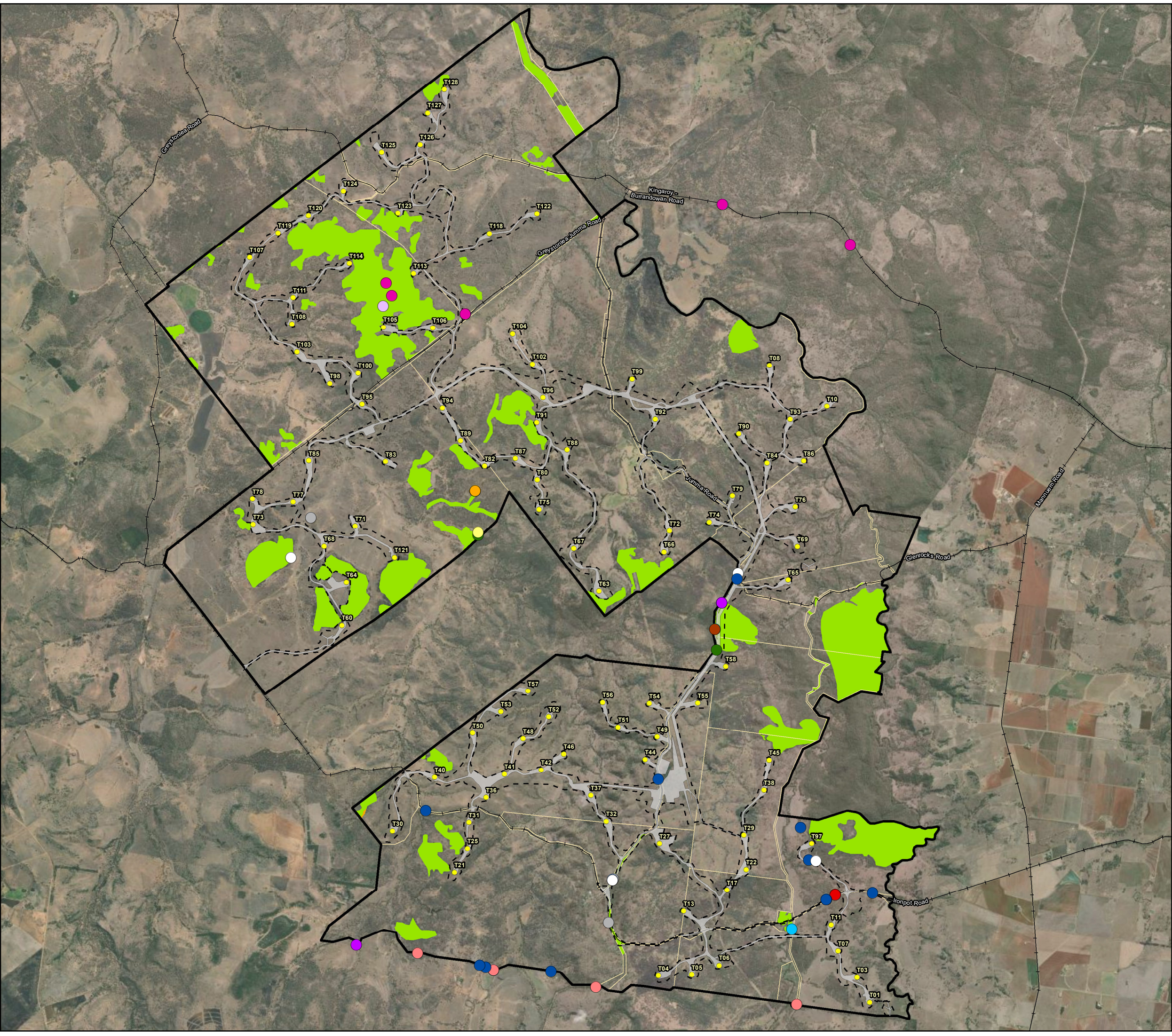


Figure 1: Incidental fauna detections

Legend

Species

- Southeastern glossy black-cockatoo (orts)
- Greater glider (southern and central)
- Barking owl
- Southern boobook
- Pretty face wallaby
- Sulfur-crested cockatoo
- Barn owl
- Common brushtail possum
- Galah
- Laughing kookaburra
- European rabbit
- Rufous bettong
- Squirrel glider
- Sugar glider
- Tawny frogmouth
- WTG

Remnant RE

- Endangered - dominant
- Of concern - dominant
- Of concern - subdominant
- Least concern

Other Legend Items:

- Road
- Land parcel
- Clearing footprint
- Planning corridor
- Project boundary

Tarong West Project Co Pty Ltd

Targeted Matters of National Environmental Significance
species surveys

0 1 2 4
Kilometers

Coordinate system: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56 Transverse Mercator
Job number: 620.042143
Revision: 0
Author: KF
Date: 04/14/2025



3.2 Targeted fauna

3.2.1 Grey-headed flying-fox

Grey-headed flying-fox were not detected during the survey. A total of 1,492 person minutes (24.86 person hours) was spent spotlighting for grey-headed flying-fox over four nights. Locations of spotlighting transects are found in Figure 2.

3.2.2 Yellow-bellied glider

Yellow-bellied gliders were not detected during the survey. A total of 1,776 person minutes (29.59 person hours) were spent spotlighting and conducting call playback for yellow-bellied glider over four days. In addition, no V-shaped feeding scars (which are characteristic of yellow-bellied gliders (Goldingray and Kavanagh 1991)) were detected on any suitable foraging trees. Locations of call playback, spotlighting transects and spotlighting via vehicle are found in Figure 2. No presence or signs of yellow-bellied glider were detected during the targeted 2025 surveys or during the targeted surveys previously conducted on the project site (Ecosure 2023). Based on these findings and fragmented nature of the project site compared to the large continuous patches of habitat where known records of yellow-bellied glider have previously been recorded in the region (e.g. within 80 km of the project site Diamondy State Forest [14,200 ha], Barakula State Forest [283,500 ha], Tarong State Forest [1,500 ha] and Squirrel Creek State Forest [8,655 ha]), there is a low likelihood of this species occurring within the impact area or project site.



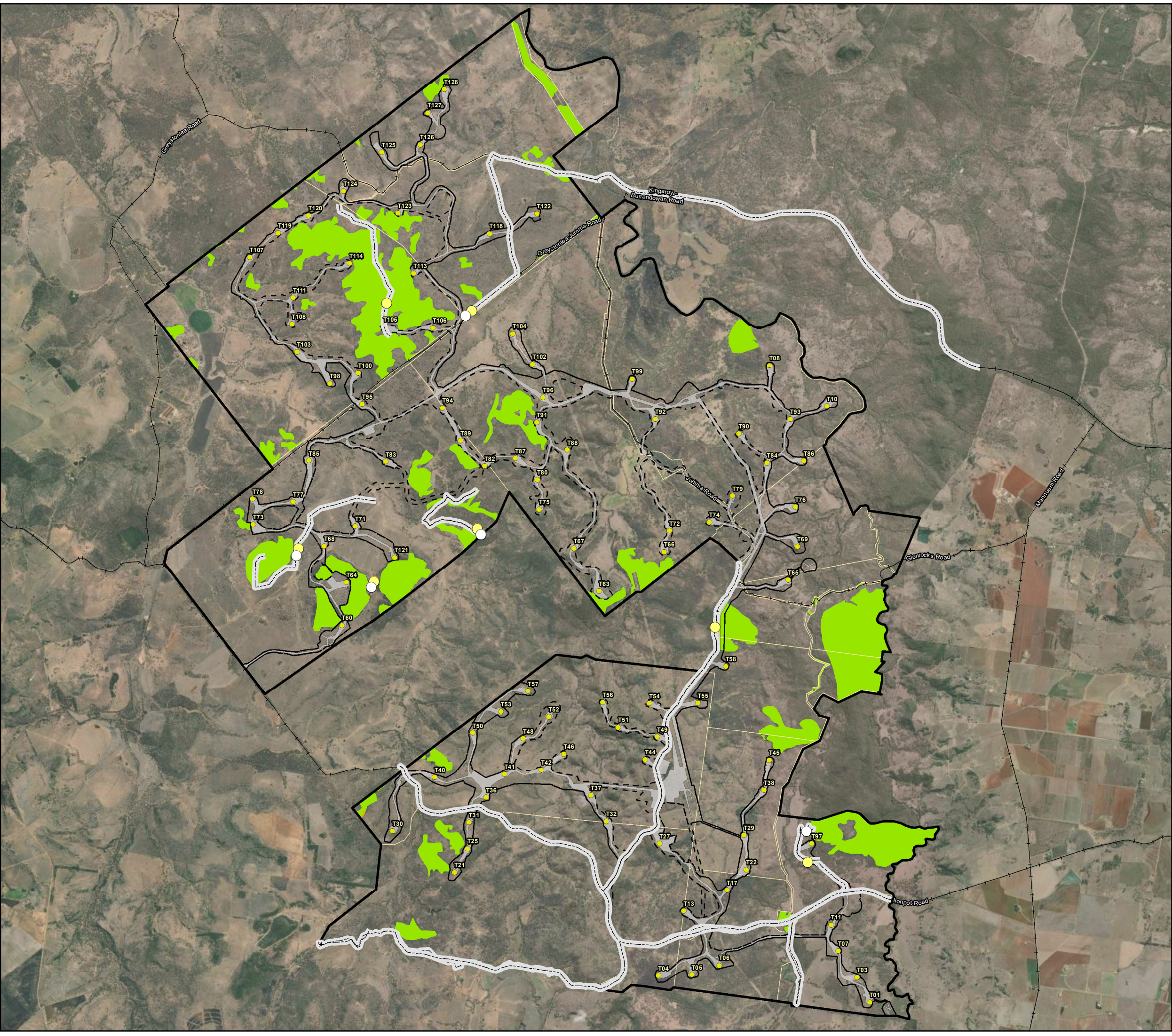


Figure 2: Yellow-bellied glider and grey-headed flying-fox survey effort

Legend

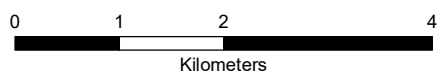
- Call playback
- Spotlighting transect and feeding scar survey
- Spotlighting vehicle
- WTG
- Road
- Land parcel
- Clearing footprint
- Planning corridor
- Project boundary

Remnant RE

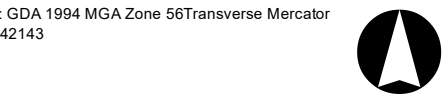
- Endangered - dominant
- Of concern - dominant
- Of concern - subdominant
- Least concern

Tarong West Project Co Pty Ltd

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3.2.3 Yakka skink

Yakka skink were not detected during the survey. 208 person minutes of active searches were conducted, and no signs of yakka skink burrows (such as latrines, basking rocks and swept burrow entrances) were present. As yakka skink burrows can be in a wide variety of microhabitats, searches included brush piles (Plate 7), partially buried rock (Plate 8), hollow logs (Plate 9) and abandoned homesteads (Plate 10). While the yakka skink can exist in cleared habitat such as the heavily grazed pastures of the impact area (TSN 2008), there is minimal microhabitat (e.g. rabbit warrens, log piles or deep crevices beneath rocks) available for refuge. As such, this species is at risk of trampling by cattle and predation by foxes (Ferguson and Mathieson 2014), both of which are present on the site. Survey effort focused on areas where suitable habitat was present, this habitat is predominately found in the north of the site, locations of the searches are found in Figure 3. No presence or signs of yakka skink were detected during the targeted 2025 surveys or during the targeted herpetofauna surveys previously conducted on the project site. Based on these findings and the limited suitable habitat present on the site there is a low likelihood of this species occurring within the impact area or project site.



Plate 7 Potential yakka skink habitat – brush piles





Plate 8 Potential yakka skink habitat – partially buried rocks





Plate 9 Potential yakka skink habitat – hollow logs



Plate 10 Potential yakka skink habitat – abandoned homestead



3.3 Targeted flora

3.3.1 Austral toadflax

Austral toadflax was not detected during the surveys. A total of 990 person minutes was spent searching through riparian areas that contain potential habitat for this species. Figure 4 shows the survey locations and for this species. Examples of potential habitat within the project site can be found in Plate 11 to Plate 14.

There is a known reference population of this species beside Jarail Road, about 1 km west from the project site. An investigation of the reference site detected the species (Plate 17 and Plate 18), therefore indicating a suitable survey period for species detection should it be present within the project site. However, this species was not detected within the impact areas of the project site.

3.3.2 *Paspalidium grandispiculatum*

Paspalidium grandispiculatum was not detected during the surveys. A total of 90 minutes was spent searching through forest and woodland areas that contained potential habitat for this species. Figure 4 shows the survey locations and for this species. No suitable habitat was detected within the clearing footprint.

3.3.3 *Polianthion minutiflorum*

Polianthion minutiflorum was not detected during the surveys. A total of 90 minutes was spent searching through forest and woodland areas that contain potential habitat for this species. Figure 4 shows the survey locations and for this species. Examples of potential habitat within the project site can be found in Plate 11 to Plate 14.

3.3.4 Wandering peppercress

Wandering peppercress was not detected during the surveys. A total of 990 person minutes was spent searching through riparian areas that contain potential habitat for this species. Figure 4 shows the survey locations and for this species. Examples of potential habitat within the project site can be found in Plate 11 to Plate 14.

A *Lepidium* species, *Lepidium africanum*, was observed during field surveys (Plate 16), however this species was known to inhabit the project site and is an introduced species.





Plate 11 Potential habitat for threatened flora species



Plate 12 Potential habitat for threatened flora species





Plate 13 Potential habitat for threatened flora species



Plate 14 Potential habitat for threatened flora species





Plate 15 *Lepidium africanum*, an introduced species



Plate 16 Austral toadflax detected at reference site





Plate 17 Austral toadflax detected at reference site



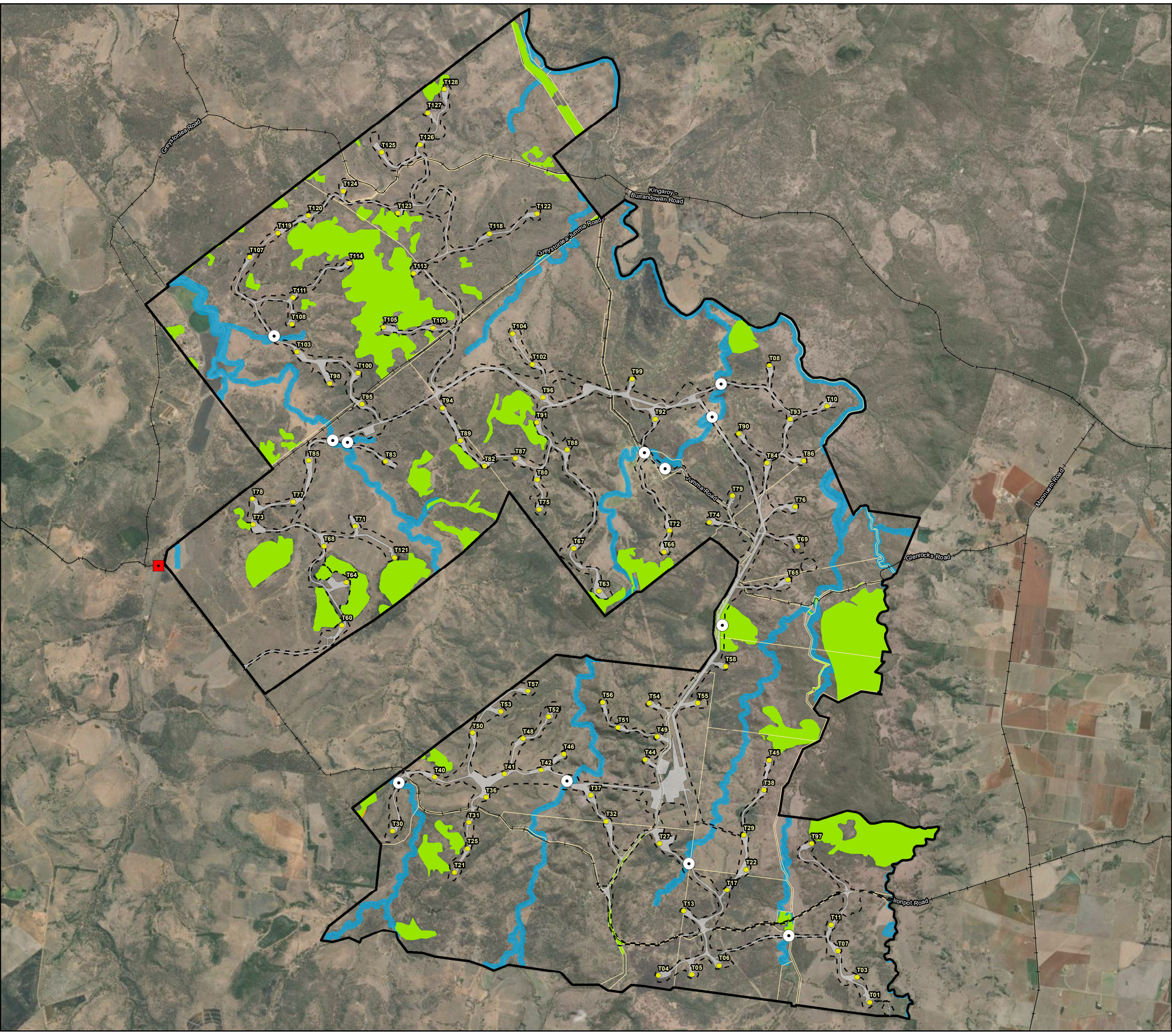


Figure 4: Threatened flora survey effort and results

Legend

- Reference site
- Threatened flora survey
- WTG
- Road
- Land parcel
- Clearing footprint
- Planning corridor
- Project boundary
- Riparian woodland/grassland

Remnant RE

- Endangered - dominant
- Of concern - dominant
- Of concern - subdominant
- Least concern

Tarong West Project Co Pty Ltd

Targeted Matters of National Environmental Significance species surveys

0 1 2 4
Kilometers

Coordinate system: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56 Transverse Mercator
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Date: 04/14/2025

4.0 Conclusions

SLR did not find evidence of yellow-bellied glider, yakka skink, wandering peppercreep, or Austral toadflax within the project site. Greater gliders (southern and central) were detected during spotlighting, and foraging evidence of south-eastern glossy black-cockatoo was detected however, both of these species are known to inhabit the project site. Although known to utilise the project site, no presence of grey-headed flying-fox were detected. No suitable habitat was detected for *Paspalidium grandispiculatum* on the project site. Some marginal habitat for *Polianthion minutiflorum* was identified and surveyed, but there was no evidence of the species.

Based on the findings of this report coupled with the results of the surveys conducted between 2018 and 2023 by Ecosure (2023), SLR recommends the following species likelihood of occurrence be downgraded as follows:

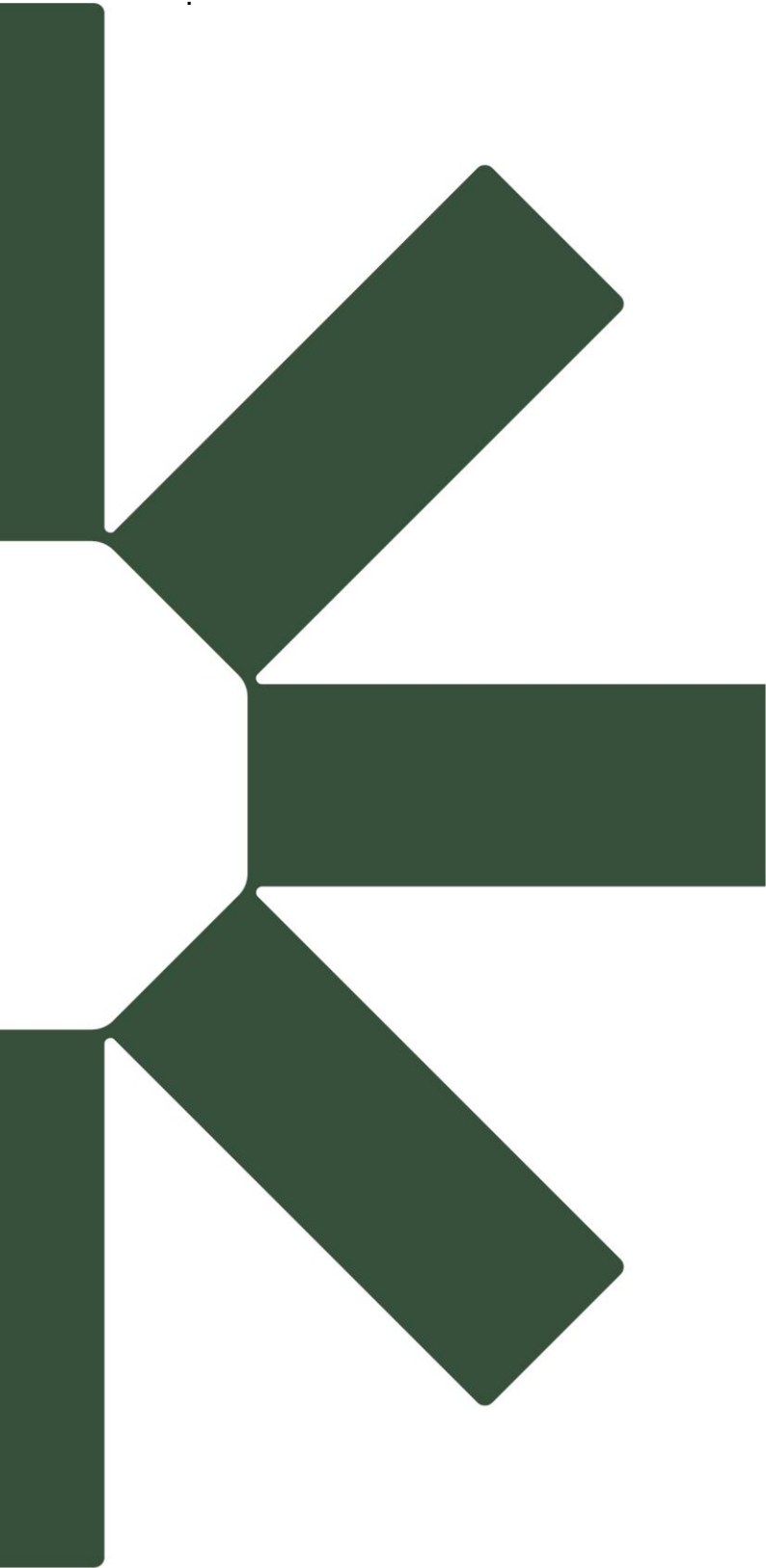
- yellow-bellied glider from possible to occur to unlikely to occur
- yakka skink from possible to occur to unlikely to occur
- *Paspalidium grandispiculatum* from possible to occur to unlikely to occur
- *Polianthion minutiflorum* from possible to occur to unlikely to occur
- Austral toadflax from likely to occur to possibly to occur.



5.0 References

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