

Maroondah City Council

Draft Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan

Community consultation summary report



The draft Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan

Eight biolinks that are the 'pathways of least resistance' through the Maroondah landscape that represent the best opportunities for improving habitat connectivity and facilitating wildlife movement have been identified.

The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink is the first of these eight biolinks to be taken to the next level of planning.

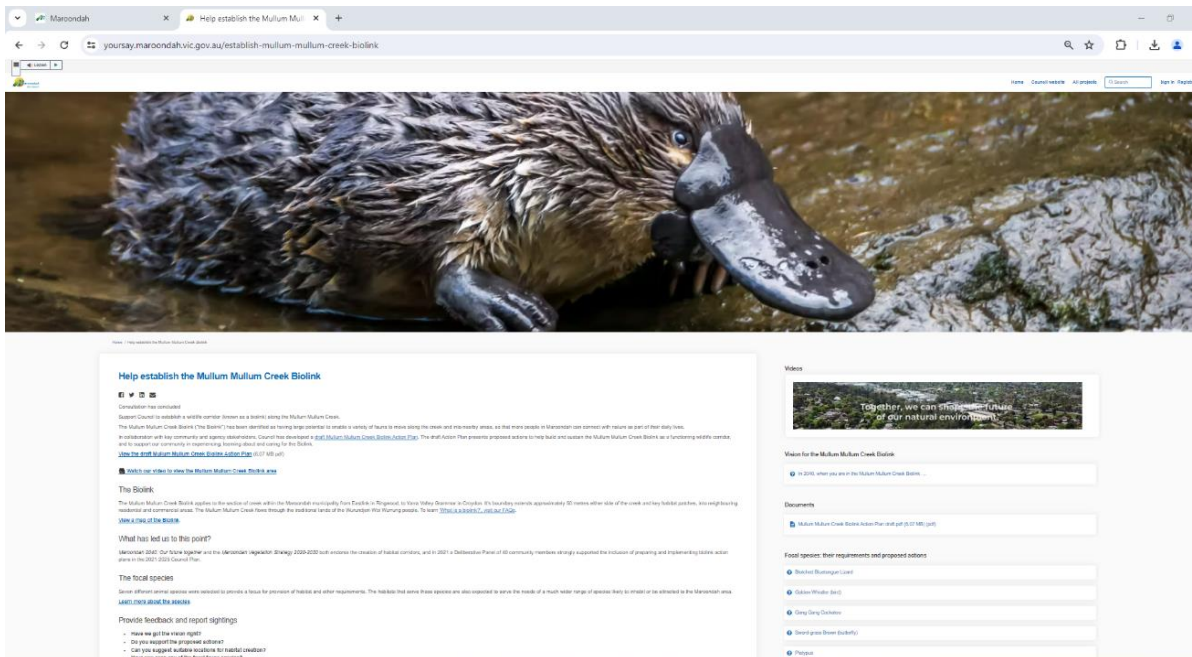
A draft action plan was developed by a key stakeholder group that proposed a range of actions required to build and sustain the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink as a functioning wildlife corridor, and to progress towards their shared vision for the biolink.

The draft plan was released publicly from 8th November to 10th December, 2023 to share the proposed actions with organisations and individuals in the wider Maroondah community. The purpose was to seek comments and feedback that can reflect the level of community support for creating the biolink overall, the identified actions, and also suggestions that can help to locate, refine, improve and consolidate the actions to be included in the final action plan.

The draft Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan was structured as follows:

- Background
 - About this plan
 - What has led us to this point?
 - The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink
 - Landscape context
- Vision
- Proposed actions to
 - meet the needs of the seven focal species (Blotched Bluetongue Lizard, Golden Whistler, Gang Gang Cockatoo, Sword-grass Brown (butterfly), Platypus, Powerful Owl, Spotted Marsh Frog)
 - support the biolink
 - sustain the biolink
 - connect the community to the biolink

How did we consult?



A webpage titled [“Help establish the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink”](#) on the MaroonDAH “Your Say” online platform was used to provide the means for community to learn about the draft action plan and provide their feedback on it.

In addition to the draft action plan document, this webpage also provided extracts such as the vision, the habitat requirements and proposed actions for each of the seven focal species, the proposed actions for supporting, sustaining and creating community connection to the biolink, frequently asked questions, and a video outlining the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink area.

Visitors to the page were posed the questions:

- Have we got the vision right?
- Do you support the proposed actions?
- Can you suggest suitable locations for habitat creation?
- Have you seen any of the focal fauna species?

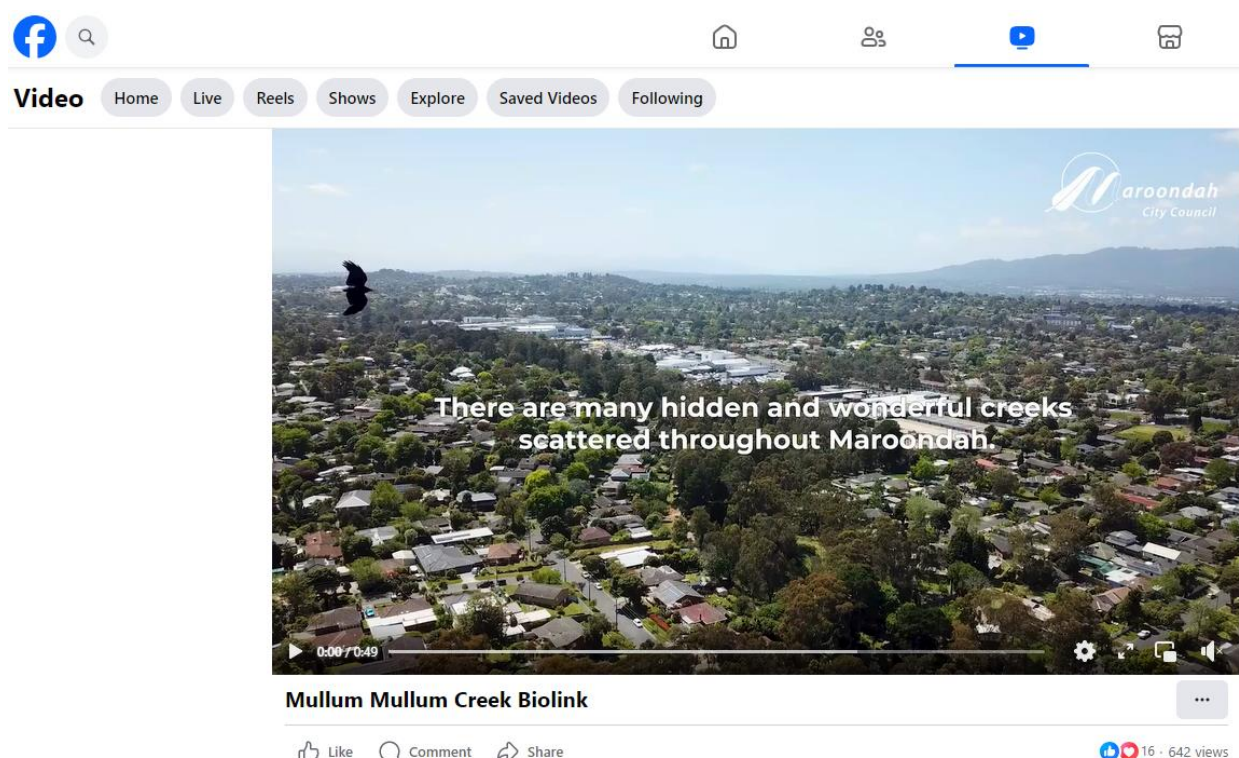
Their responses were collected via:

- Completing an online survey (feedback on the vision and proposed actions)
- Dropping a ‘pin’ on an interactive map (suggest locations for habitat creation and sightings of the focal species)

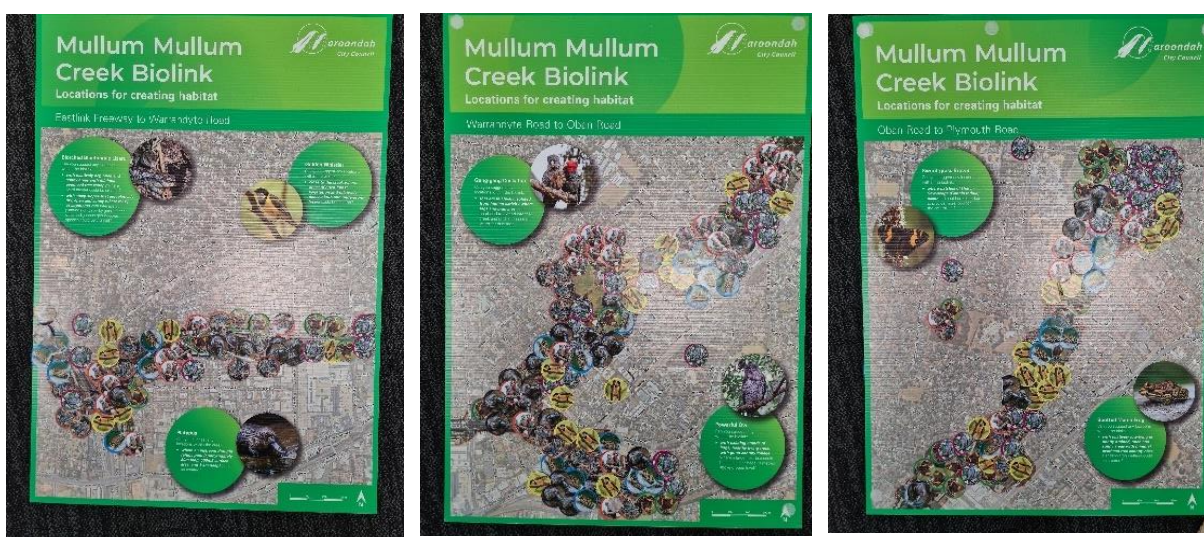
Promoting the opportunity to comment

The opportunity to provide feedback and a link to the Your Say web page were communicated to the community through several means:

- Promotional flyers put up at bushland reserves and community group noticeboards and buildings
- Flyers displayed at four locations along biolink area (end of Leonard St, end of Sonia St, entrances both sides of Oliver St)
- Promotional postcards delivered to local residents within biolink
 - 9th November - 900 postcards delivered to letterboxes
- Maroondah News publications
 - 21st November - November/December 2023 edition email
 - 2500 hardcopies distributed to 40 locations - customer service centres, Council venues, community houses, newsstands in shopping centres and post offices.
- MCC Customer Service Centres
 - 300 postcards available for pick up
 - TV promotion at Realm level 1 and Croydon Library
- Social media - video posts (<https://youtu.be/bodwmQrTknw>)
 - 28th November - Facebook - Reach - 1,454 Reactions - 14 Views - 533
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=727867669237774>
 - 9th December - Facebook - Reach - 1,434 Engagement - 4 Views - 499
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3219218288381886>
 - Instagram - Reach - 1,682 Likes - 69 Comments - 1



- eNewsletters
 - 8th November - Waste and Sustainability - 2873 deliveries, 73% open rate
 - 10th November - MCC eNews - 14169 deliveries, 70% open rate
 - 21st November - Maroondah News online - 14226 deliveries, 93% open rate
 - 24th November - Nature News - 1485 deliveries, 47% open rate
 - 24th November - MCC eNews - 14206 deliveries, 69% open rate
- 12th November - Maroondah Festival
 - Display and map activity in Café Consult marquee at Maroondah Festival - estimate of 500 people visited the marquee.
 - Postcards handed out to visitors
 - Visitors to the marquee were encouraged to add focal species stickers to map of biolink in locations where they think suitable habitat could be created



- 24th to 27th November - Great Southern Bioblitz nature discovery activities
 - Postcards handed out to 50 participants
- Stakeholder support
 - 1st to 10th December - Eastland promoted on the large screen at Ringwood Town Square
 - Wurundjeri Special Projects Manager: Included in community notices.
 - Eastern FM - Included in content of Councillor radio spot

Community engagement with the Your Say web page

- 545 people visited the Your Say web page
- 296 people clicked on one or more links on the page:
 - 24 viewed the video
 - 156 downloaded a document (the draft action plan)
 - 124 visited the FAQ page
 - 62 contributed to an online tool (survey or pin drop)

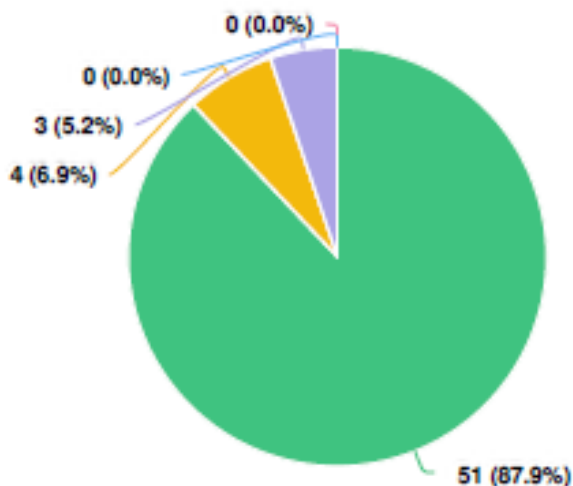
What did people tell us?

- 58 people completed the feedback survey
 - ages ranged from 12-17 years old to over 85 years old
 - 32 identified as female, 25 as male, and 1 preferred not to say
- Responses to survey questions:

“To what extent do you support the creation of biolinks in Maroondah?”

High level of support	51	87.9%
Support	4	6.9%
Unsure	3	5.2%
Low level of support	0	0%
No support	0	0%

(58 responses)



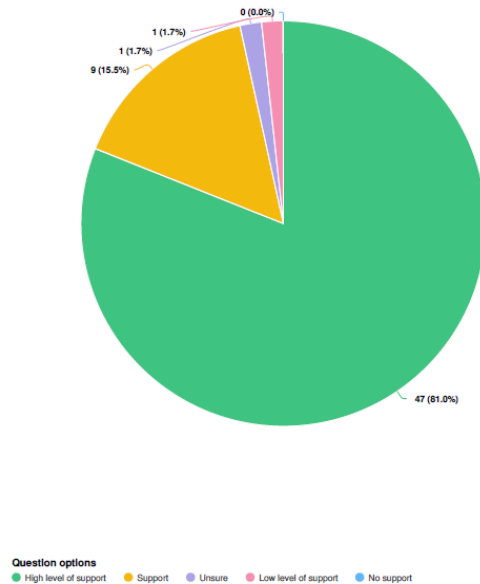
Question options

● High level of support
 ● Support
 ● Unsure
 ● Low level of support
 ● No support

“To what extent do you support pursuit of the vision for the Biolink?”

High level of support	47	81.0%
Support	9	15.5%
Unsure	1	1.7%
Low level of support	1	1.7%
No support	0	0%

(58 responses)



“Thinking about supporting, sustaining and connecting the community to the Biolink, to what extent do you endorse the proposed actions presented in the draft Action Plan? I endorse:”

Proposed actions to support the Biolink

None of the proposed actions	0	0%
Some of the proposed actions	7	12.1%
All of the proposed actions	51	87.9%

(58 responses)

Proposed actions to sustain the Biolink

None of the proposed actions	0	0%
Some of the proposed actions	8	13.8%
All of the proposed actions	50	86.2%

(58 responses)

Proposed actions to connect the community

None of the proposed actions	0	0%
Some of the proposed actions	13	22.4%
All of the proposed actions	45	77.6%

(58 responses)

“Thinking about meeting the needs of focal species (habitats and threats), to what extent do you endorse the proposed actions presented in the draft Action Plan?

I endorse:”

Blotched Bluetongue Lizard

None of the proposed actions	2	3.4%
Some of the proposed actions	6	10.3%
All of the proposed actions	50	86.2%

(58 responses)

Golden Whistler

None of the proposed actions	1	1.7%
Some of the proposed actions	4	6.9%
All of the proposed actions	53	91.4%

(58 responses)

Gang-gang Cockatoo

None of the proposed actions	2	3.4%
Some of the proposed actions	5	8.6%
All of the proposed actions	51	87.9%

(58 responses)

Sword-grass Brown (butterfly)

None of the proposed actions	2	3.4%
Some of the proposed actions	2	3.4%
All of the proposed actions	54	93.1%

(58 responses)

Platypus

None of the proposed actions	0	0%
Some of the proposed actions	6	10.3%
All of the proposed actions	52	89.7%

(58 responses)

Powerful Owl

None of the proposed actions	1	1.7%
Some of the proposed actions	4	6.9%
All of the proposed actions	53	91.4%

(58 responses)

Spotted Marsh Frog

None of the proposed actions	1	1.7%
Some of the proposed actions	4	6.9%
All of the proposed actions	53	91.4%

(58 responses)

Comments made on specific actions and corresponding response statements

- 29 comments were received on the actions proposed for supporting, sustaining and connecting the community to the Biolink:
 - 14 comments on proposed actions
 - 15 comments on actions/issues missed
- 31 comments were received on the proposed actions for meeting the needs of focal species:
 - 8 comments on actions not supported
 - 13 comments on actions supported
 - 10 comments on actions/issues missed

Do you have any feedback about specific actions proposed for supporting, sustaining and connecting the community to the Biolink?

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>8.6. Public lighting. I think the current state of public lighting can be improved in terms of consistency. It is important to shield wildlife so that artificial lighting isn't creating an unnatural impact, but at the same time, in considering how to create strong community engagement with the biolink, having adequate lighting so the place is inviting at all times and not seen as a dangerous place at night is important. I support 8.6 as it stands, but would suggest as part of the improvements, additional lighting be considered.</p> <p>9.8. Eastland. 8.8(a) suggests new developments should consider facing the creek. I think Eastland is a missed opportunity in that all of the focus has gone into the Town Square precinct and the front facing Maroondah Highway, whilst the back facing the creek against the Ringwood Bypass feels literally like the "butt" of Eastland, both in physical aspect and also in feeling (it literally feels like a concrete landscape). Council and Eastland should partner to consider how the "butt" can be improved so that there is a natural connection with the surrounding environment. I think Westfield Knox and its connection to the adjacent Lewis Park is an example of a step in the right direction. It's not perfect, and they can also improve, but it feels much more open and connected.</p>	<p>Should any additional lighting be proposed for the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail, an assessment on the need for path lighting would be undertaken in accordance with the Maroondah Public Lighting Guidelines. For nature reserves, lighting is generally only considered necessary where a strategic pedestrian or bicycle route has been identified (Note: The Mullum Mullum Creek main trail has been identified as a strategic link in the Maroondah Principal Pedestrian Network and the Victorian Strategic Cycling Corridors). Where justified, lighting is generally only operational during night-time peak use periods - outside of these hours, the lighting is switched off or dimmed.</p> <p>Eastland are aware and acknowledge their ownership of the narrow strip of land between the shopping centre and the creek reserve. As part of this ownership, Eastland have invested in efforts to improve the habitat values of the narrow strip of landscaped land they own, and in consultation with Council's Bushland team have commenced with the planting of ground layer indigenous plants into the gaps and will continue to manage this area with their gardening team.</p> <p>Eastland will continue to work closely with their stakeholders including Maroondah City Council's Bushland teams on maintenance and potential improvements of this area.</p>	<p>Modify action 8.6 to read 'Design public lighting, especially lighting of shared trails, to be wildlife-friendly by minimising light spill and potential impacts on nearby habitats without reduction in public safety'</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>If the information could be less to read at first for the community to follow you may get a bigger following, eg a fast fact sheet, with more visual pictures. If they want to read the full plan details they can and will</p>	<p>We agree that simple and concise information to explain the biolink plan will help more people understand and potentially support it aims. It is expected that the action 10.6 'Promote the biolink to raise awareness and build community support and involvement by establishing a Council webpage dedicated to the Mullum Mullum Creek biolink' will help do this.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>The concept of a biolink i.e. follow the creeks (?) does not support the total ecosystem. For example, certain native and heritage plants are missing from the plan i.e. terrestrial orchids, fungi, beetles, micro food sources. These are extremely important to small birds e.g. pardalotes. Scrub such as tea tree needs to be preserved. Dead logs and roughage need to remain and not cleaned up by staff. Certainly the "pre-settlement" surveys of 1841 and onwards noted obvious "stringbarks" and so forth but other plants were not on the survey maps. Unless the whole ecosystem is promoted, the select few of the "focal species" might not live in optimum surroundings. Some of the Action Items (keep feral rabbits, dogs, cats and foxes at bay) are obvious and really in the hands of council by-laws. Little is mentioned of the polluted water and its quality, not of shopping trolleys, plastics, etc. These are more a danger to animals.</p>	<p>Current day Maroondah is very different to what it was like before European settlement having become very urbanised since then, however remnant patches of the once extensive habitats still remain. The eight biolinks that have been identified represent the "pathways of least resistance" through our highly urbanised landscape where we have the best chance to connect and restore habitats such that they can enable movement of some wildlife through Maroondah. Many, but not all, of these biolinks follow creeks. Several plants and animals that once occurred in Maroondah no longer occur here, and although the prospects of getting many of them back again are slim at best, biolinks offer an opportunity to reintroduce some. The seven focal species were selected for just that - to provide a focus for both action planning and engaging the community, and with the view that serving their needs would also serve the needs of a much wider range of plant and animal species. In addition to the recognised sites of biological significance, the biolinks will provide Council with key areas to focus its efforts on habitat protection, improvement and creation. Reducing the potential impact of dogs, cats and foxes is not the sole responsibility of Council - cat and dog owners can play a major role in preventing their pets from accessing areas important for native fauna. The importance of water quality is referenced under the requirements for Platypus, and associated actions needed under the sub-heading 'Threat reduction'.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>First map had coloured polygons but no legend. Connect with community on native vegetation, biolinks, cultural burning and fire safety in the landscape</p>	<p>The first map included labels for each of the coloured polygons but did lack a title. The actions 10.2 'Create learning opportunities for people using the trails through the biolink' and 10.4 'Create learning opportunities for people visiting the biolink' are both expected to cover, and help connect the community to the biolink, a range of topics that are likely to include the topics you suggest.</p>	<p>Add map title</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>Who are the Wurundjeri people? Do they live in the area where residents rates will be used to enhance? If not then I feel you are not working in the interest of rate payers. Also, there is no mention of the budget for this project. The public should be heavily consulted before there is a decision to provide financial support for changes to private lands within biolink scope. I dont want my rates going to fixing up someones backyard or a private companies gardens.</p>	<p>The Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people are the acknowledged Traditional Owners of the land now known as Maroondah. Their ancestors once lived sustainably on this land, and their present day descendants retain a strong connection to this Country. The purpose of consulting the community on the draft Action Plan was to understand the level of community support before moving into the more detailed specifics including setting priorities, responsibilities and budgets.</p> <p>The community feedback received on the draft biolink action plan does indicate a high level of community support for implementing the proposed actions for creating the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink. As part of finalising the Action Plan, the highest priority actions will be identified and provide the focus for implementation for the first couple of years.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>If Biolink is a measure for the benefit of many citizens in the area, I believe that those who are restricted in the use of their personal property due to this plan should be compensated appropriately.</p>	<p>Should any action that may affect what a landholder can do on their property be considered, it would go through its own public consultation process prior to being enacted.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Only one targeted species mentioned enforcing cat lockups at night. This should be mentioned for all species where cats are to be encouraged to stay indoors during the day.</p>	<p>The threat of predation from cats, and the associated threat reduction action of encouraging cats to be kept indoors, is identified for five of the seven focal species. For the other two species (Powerful Owl and Sword Grass Brown butterfly) predation from cats is not considered a major threat.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>In addition to 8.1 General actions to support the Biolink - add creation of wetland habitats in suitable areas beside Mullum Mullum Ck watercourse that provide quality habitat for indigenous aquatic flora, aquatic invertebrates and frogs such as the Spotted Marsh Frog, one of seven target species for the proposed Biolink.</p>	<p>The first action under the sub-heading 'Habitat creation and improvement' for Actions needed for the Spotted Marsh Frog (page 29), is "7.1 In locations within the biolink where there are lower-lying or poorly drained, open and sunny areas with minimal overhead tree canopy, create a series of small and medium sized permanent and semi-permanent habitat wetlands, ideally spaced within 500m (and no more than 1000m) of each other"</p> <p>On page 30, there are a range of other species listed that are also expected to benefit from the actions proposed for the Spotted Marsh Frog.</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>Cats should be on 24/7 cat curfew to further protect wildlife, and the biolink doesnt seem to include the part of the creek around dampier grove to hillcrest ave area, which is also in maroondah council.</p>	<p>Council's current cat curfew is from dusk to dawn, however its enforcement is reliant on residents participating in Council's cat trapping program (to help identify cat owners). More information is available on Council's website including what you can do about a stray or nuisance cat. (https://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Residents-property/) A review of Maroondah's Domestic Animal Management Plan will commence in late 2024/early 2025 with community consultation on a range of topics including the cat curfew. The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink boundary does not include all of the Mullum Mullum Creek catchment. It has been drawn by adding a 50-metre buffer around the priority locations identified in the Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Plan (2021). Although the area between Dampier Grove and Hillcrest Avenue is within the Mullum Mullum Creek catchment it does not fall within the biolink boundary.</p>	<p>Modify actions 1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19 and 7.9 to read "Promote the dusk till dawn cat curfew, including options available to residents if they encounter stray and nuisance cats." Add new action "Invite community input into future reviews of the Domestic Animal Management Plan including the cat curfew"</p>
<p>Whilst extensive transparent objectives and proposals do need to be established, caution should be applied not to get lost in bureaucracy. Outcomes and demonstrable results should be the focus.</p>	<p>Action 9.17 on page 35 proposes the establishment of a Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan oversight group to coordinate, monitor and drive action. This includes tracking progress against agreed measures of success.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>The Mullum Mullum biolink in parts is already a corridor of high significance in that it has some relatively pristine spots along its length. To impose human based interactive signage, yarn circles or other is in my opinion, not required for engagement, there are other ways for the community to learn to appreciate the natural environment than to impose man made creations, into what should remain a nature trail.</p>	<p>It is agreed that the Mullum Mullum Creek corridor already has areas of significance and habitat value that contribute to it currently functioning to some level as a biolink. The proposed actions in the plan are seeking to greatly increase its effective function as a biolink, and this will require substantial and sustained community support. The proposed interpretive signage is expected to increase community understanding of, and subsequent connection to and valuing of, the biolink, its cultural importance, and the plants and animals it aims to serve. The design and siting of any such signage will take into account, and seek to avoid, their potential impact on any existing natural values.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>very supportive; except for the observation hut [near platypus habitat] which I feel would be invasive</p>	<p>We understand and share the concern. If we are successful in attracting Platypus back into Mullum Mullum Creek, then there will be a high level of community interest in trying to see one. We would then want to see if we can create a suitable viewing area that enables people to look over a pool where platypus may be seen, but do so with minimal likelihood of disturbing Platypus (and other fauna) that may occur there, and also direct people away from other more sensitive locations.</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>Did not see costings and can't compare with other needs.</p>	<p>The primary purpose of the draft action plan was to introduce the concept of creating a functioning biolink along the Mullum Mullum Creek corridor, describe the wide range of actions needed to do so, and test the level of community support for those actions. If community support is strong, then actions will be prioritised, and high priority actions will be described in more detail, allocated a lead responsibility and resources sought accordingly. These will be included in a rolling two-year implementation plan to accompany the final version of the biolink action plan. The feedback received indicates there is a high level of community support.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Action 8.3 - should be more WSUD generally, even beyond the immediate biolink as any property near and around Maroondah highway in particular will feed into the stormwater system it must be assumed Hope that measures to "ensure" are truly enforced and not just a statement of action - if people know there is no repercussion they will not do the right thing unfortunately (particularly businesses) Who will make up the "oversight group" from action 9.17? Hope to see community representation in that group, not just from Council Permit process of nature strip planting needs to be expediated and made easier - there is currently not clear communication / information about what is allowed / not allowed and no contact for information - the planting of nature strips with diverse (especially indigenous) species should be encouraged more even beyond the biolink corridor - it all contributes, with the Nature Havens a great initiative to see I wonder how the permit application of the Grill'd restaurant to remove vegetation and increase vehicular traffic with a drive-through fits in with this proposal - doesn't seem to be a good fit being quite close by the corridor</p>	<p>Action 5.12 Undertake a specialised investigation of the wider catchments of the creek is designed to enable us to understand just how much and what types of water sensitive urban design treatments will be needed in the creek's catchment to restore flow regimes and water quality to more natural levels. This is seen as a critical prerequisite to understanding the scale of the task, and where the highest priorities may lie. Where there are not laws in place where compliance can be legally enforced, then education is expected to be the primary means for 'ensuring' particular measures. The oversight group will be primarily comprised of people and organisations with lead responsibilities for delivering priority actions. This may include community organisations as well as Council and other agencies. The creation of understorey habitat on a nature strip needs to meet many different requirements including road safety, utility provision and access, and ongoing maintenance, amongst other things. It is being proposed that a template planting plan be created that addresses the various requirements and specifies appropriate species for specific locations within the biolink. It is hoped that this would make the process clearer and easier.</p>	<p>Modify action 8.5 to read 'Facilitate the creation and ongoing maintenance of understorey habitat on nature strips within the biolink, such as creating planting plan templates for interested landowners that meet Council's permit requirements (a suitable planting plan and permit from Council are required)'</p>

“Do you think there are any specific actions or issues that have been missed relating to supporting, sustaining and connecting the community to the Biolink?”

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>Could all schools in this area be involved, in some way - wonderful opportunities for the whole community to learn.</p>	<p>All schools are welcome to contribute in whatever ways they are able, and at their initiative. Yarra Valley Grammar was singled out because it has a significant patch of bushland habitat within the biolink that is critical to the future functioning of the biolink.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Every primary school and secondary school in Maroondah should be encouraged to engage in the plan, with projects - displayed at eastland. For students to visit sites, to plant to see before, during and after work - to do there own surveys to establish a care for there environment and, flora fauna, waterways etc</p>	<p>All schools are welcome to contribute in whatever ways they are able, and at their initiative. Yarra Valley Grammar was singled out because it has a significant patch of bushland habitat within the biolink that is critical to the future functioning of the biolink.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>There appears no attempt to provide a baseline count of "focal" or any other species. Unless there is a "biolink" line in the sand, the project has no way to gauge if it has been successful in promoting species, else it is just rhetoric. Many of the plants, that have been cited to be planted, have not been native to area - see P32. From the photo, I can't see how a paper-bark tree and tufted grasses promote any sort of native ecosystem. P36. It has been confirmed by academic sources (Woiwod, Aboriginal Languages V4 by Dixon and Blake) that the Wurundjeri language essentially ceased to be used. There is one small private (one person) revival but many of our so-called Aboriginal words e.g. Mullum Mullum, Kalinda, Carcoola are not Indigenous. How many "big birds" or "place of eagles" have been in the environment of Deep Creek? Very few. So be very wary of creating a local "Indigenous" environment because, in many cases, it did not exist e.g. Indigenous art. McGivern did record some local stories but to use "mainstream" Indigenous culture, in this local area, is, I would think, offensive to those descendants. A "platypus refuge pool", are you serious? "Deliver community education programs around use snail and rat baits,", please don't kill the native mice and native land snails! So, in summary, I think that this project is a half-hearted effort and really hasn't been thought out properly. I acknowledge Lorimer's fine work but all the rhetoric of the "2040 Vision" dilutes any real attempt to make a genuine difference, at least to "sustain" what is current these in 2023.</p>	<p>Action 9.17 on page 35 proposes the establishment of a Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan oversight group to coordinate, monitor and drive action. This includes tracking progress against agreed measures of success that they will need to determine. The existing records of focal species within the biolink may well provide a baseline for monitoring success. There are no plant species 'cited to be planted' on page 32, only an illustrative photo of an example of planting of native understorey species beneath a street tree. Irrespective of whether or not the Woi-Wurrung (Wurundjeri) language ceased to be used, components of the language still exist, and retains its potential to be revived. The Wurundjeri people will be directly consulted on use of language and other proposed representations of their culture. Proposed action 5.3 to undertake a technical investigation to identify viable locations where creating a drought refuge pool for platypus is feasible will ensure that any subsequent efforts to create a refuge pool are undertaken seriously. It is acknowledged that other actions to improve habitat conditions for platypus are likely to be needed before taking on the task of creating a refuge pool. The community education programs around the use of snail and rat baits are about avoiding their use and are linked to proposed action 1.9 (Encourage residents within the biolink to avoid using toxic snail baits in their garden - page 14) and action 6.7 (Deliver an education program to discourage the use of second-generation rodenticides within the biolink - page 27)</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>We could be even more assertive/ambitious as a community, so even residents living a few blocks away could make an impact. I am not sure whether the 'stepping stone' strategy is strong/visible enough.</p>	<p>The process used in the Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Plan (2021) that identified the eight biolinks provides the strategic rationale for focussing our efforts where we think we are most likely to have success. If the biolinks can be successfully created, then expanding linkages further into the rest of Maroondah have a greater chance of being effective in dispersing more nature into those areas.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no reference to fire impact in the plan. • Much reference to 50m revegetation and no reference to balancing fire risk with vegetation encroaching on residences and structures. • Focus on habitat creation and improvement which in itself is a good thing, but no thought into the impacts of this outside of biodiversity. • No reference/consideration to access issues in the event of a fire. • CFA keen to be an active stakeholder in future actions for this plan. • Planning controls to consider bushfire. 	<p>We acknowledge that the draft action plan does not make reference to fire impact so will include in the final version reference to bushfire risk and guidance on keeping the risk low. The '50 metre' references relate to how the biolink boundary was defined (ie adding a 50m buffer to the priority locations identified in the Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Plan (2021), and not to any proposed extent of revegetation. The CFA have since conducted an overview assessment of bushfire risk within the biolink. This concluded there is a low risk of bushfire due to several factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the biolink shape and its position in the landscape (largely urbanised) - no record of bushfire in the area for the past 50 years - not listed in the Victoria Fire Risk Register - the network of trails, roads, and mown grassy areas have created discontinuity of fuels and numerous access options that in the event of a fire starting would limit fire spread and support suppression efforts <p>The CFA would be welcomed as another stakeholder for implementation of this plan, potentially as a participant in the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan oversight group proposed under action 9.17 (page 35).</p>	<p>In the section 9. Management and maintenance actions to sustain the biolink, under the heading 'Managing and maintaining public land', add the following:</p> <p>Bushfire risk</p> <p>The CFA have assessed there is a low risk of bushfire within the biolink due to several factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the biolink shape and its position in the landscape (largely urbanised) • there has been no record of bushfire in the area for the past 50 years • the area is not listed in the Victoria Fire Risk Register • the network of trails, roads, and mown grassy areas provide discontinuity of fuels and numerous access options that in the event of a fire starting would limit fire spread and support suppression efforts <p>Actions aimed at creating new habitat (ie revegetation) should seek to maintain this low level of bushfire risk by ensuring new areas of vegetation retain sufficient discontinuity of fuels, and avoid butting up to adjacent property fencing.</p>
<p>Has any analysis been done towards the fact that an increase in seven focal species may increase the risks of natural predators like venomous snakes? The word snake does not exist on either of your project documents... What will be done to keep snake populations down and away from residents yards where they may have pets and young kids?</p>	<p>Of the seven focal species, only the Spotted Marsh Frog is considered likely to be a regular prey item for snakes, although Bluetongue lizards may also be taken. Implementation of the biolink action plan is considered very unlikely to elevate the risk of venomous snakes entering residential yards beyond the existing (very low) risk.</p>	<p>In the section 7. Spotted Marsh Frog, add under "Other species likely to be served by these actions" the following dot point:</p> <p>"Species that regularly prey on frogs and tadpoles such as larger waterbirds, Laughing Kookaburra, Rakali, fish, larger reptiles (including snakes) and predatory invertebrates."</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>There is also potential to support local bees and to reintroduce native flowers and plant species from custom seed banks. There is a wonderful project called Melbourne Meadows, please see https://linktr.ee/melbourne_meadows Council funds can be better used for propagating these meadows that are far less cumbersome and costly to maintain (no more grass mowing!), and for introducing plants that have been forgotten, and no new weeds.</p>	<p>The proposed action 1.1 (page 14) to establish areas of diverse understorey vegetation in locations where there are relatively dry, open and sunny areas with minimal overhead tree canopy, using understorey species associated with Valley Heathy Forest, presents an opportunity to create meadow-like areas that can incorporate wildflower species as well as grasses and sedges. Native bees are expected to benefit from most of the habitat creation actions proposed in the action plan.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Would recommend adding an item to 10.2 Create learning opportunities for people using the trails through the biolink: Duplicate parts of the trail to separate cyclists and fitness runners from sections where there are natural and cultural points of interest and interpretation areas. People will stop and take their time enjoying the attractions, potentially blocking the path if there are larger groups. Could create a conflict with some fast-moving cyclists. I recently saw a near miss along this creek which could have ended up with a severe injury!</p>	<p>There is support for the principle of separating slower moving, nature observing trail users from the faster moving cyclists and runners. There are existing duplications of the trail in parts of the biolink corridor providing a narrower, and more meandering and informal alternative, however the narrowness of the public creek corridor and the desire to avoid unnecessary vegetation removal, limits the opportunity for duplicating the trail along its entire length.</p>	<p>Add Action 10.2 (f) Investigate options for separating faster moving trail users (eg runners and commuting cyclists) from slower moving users such as alternative trails, and offshoots to points of interest and/or rest places</p>
<p>Create opportunities for ALL Maroondah Schools to participate in water quality monitoring, biodiversity monitoring. Provide and offer biolinks outreach people to schools</p>	<p>All schools are welcome to contribute in whatever ways they are able, and at their initiative. Yarra Valley Grammar was singled out because it has a significant patch of bushland habitat within the biolink that is critical to the future functioning of the biolink.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Please do not create any concrete pathways, only soft surface nature trails</p>	<p>The Mullum Mullum Creek main trail has been identified as a strategic link in the Maroondah Principal Pedestrian Network and the Victorian Strategic Cycling Corridor Network, and as a result whenever a trail upgrade is required Council is obligated to bring it to the Austroads/VicRoads shared use trail standards. Provision of an all-weather seal along the main trail is supported to cater for the significant pedestrian and cyclist use. The existing asphalt section between Oban Road and Kalinda Road is in poor condition with a few unsafe bends, and plans for an upgrade are in preparation with works expected to commence in late 2024 and into 2025. This upgrade will result in a 3-metre-wide concrete path to meet shared use path specifications, with modified alignments in some locations to address safety issues on bends with poor sightlines.</p>	<p>Add statement to spiel under the heading "10. Promotional, learning and engagement actions to connect people to the biolink": "The Mullum Mullum Creek Main Trail has been identified as a strategically important link in the Maroondah Principal Pedestrian Network and the Victorian Strategic Cycling Corridor Network"</p>
<p>I propose that other schools near the creek should also have similar opportunities to contribute to sustaining the biolink. Also, another possibility for enhancing community engagement with the biolink is a Parkrun along the Maroondah area of the creek.</p>	<p>All schools are welcome to contribute in whatever ways they are able, and at their initiative. Yarra Valley Grammar was singled out because it has a significant patch of bushland habitat within the biolink that is critical to the future functioning of the biolink. There is an existing Mullum Mullum Park Run that extends into Maroondah.</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>There is no mention of the original reason for the Mullum Mullum Ck as a green area still.</p> <p>I understand that at the time of the initial settlement, Mitcham and surrounds was one of the highest, if not the highest rainfall in the eastern Metropolitan area. When I was growing up, the forest was wet sclerophyll hence the messmates, peppermints, manna gums and blackwood wattles. There was an assortment of ferns, springs, and orchids. The area hosted the most diverse range of acacias in the Melbourne area, next to Studley Park. At the head of the creek there was a gold-antimony mine. People fished for eels, and blackfish. As a child, I drank from the creek and walked along its stream bed, where large cobbles and rocky outcrops marked elevation falls.</p> <p>This does not appear to have been considered. My walks along the creek today bear no resemblance to yesteryear, and the plan makes no mention of re-establishing the smaller herbs and ferns within the green belt. I can only hope that the microclimates that the Mullum Valley used to support allowing these to thrive, will be established and encouraged. The smaller marsupials need tracks to cross roads. There is no mention of aerial pathways or faunal culverts so the possums, antechinus, native rats etc can move through without being squashed. What about koalas? As a child they used to visit our yards. The plan mentions echidnas. Where do the echidnas live? What about the legless lizards? Do we return to the fire paranoias of previous centuries resulting in the loss of the multi-layered understory? And the return to exotic weed species?</p> <p>If the plan forms a component of the overall Eastern Seaboard Greening, the Maroondah greenbelts need to be connected through to the Yarra Ranges, through to the southern coast up to the Great Divide and North Queensland. How does the Maroondah Environmental Plan fit within this much broader picture? Has it been considered? I hope so.</p> <p>There is no link/reference to the species lists of the EVCs within the greenbelts of Maroondah.</p> <p>There is no faunal species list either historical or current.</p>	<p>The draft action plan does not attempt to provide a history of the Mullum Mullum Creek corridor other than a very brief background for context, with the plan focussed on establishing a functioning biolink by building on the current situation. Proposed action 10.6 Promote the biolink to raise awareness and build community support and involvement (page 37) proposes establishment of a Council webpage dedicated to the Mullum Mullum Creek biolink that would provide an ideal platform for providing the community with more information on the history of the creek corridor. Local knowledge holders are likely to be a valuable source of information for this purpose.</p> <p>Although the draft action plan has been developed around meeting the requirements of seven focal fauna species, many of the proposed actions are aimed at creating new habitats and improving existing habitats (through weed control amongst other things) that are expected to benefit many plant and animal species beyond just the focal species.</p> <p>It is hoped that some species that once occurred along the Mullum Mullum Creek corridor can be attracted back as a result of establishing the biolink, however it is also sadly acknowledged that some species are not expected to return.</p> <p>The Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Plan that was the basis for identifying eight biolink routes through the Maroondah landscape took into account habitat connectivity beyond the Maroondah boundaries. The biolink action planning processes for each biolink however will be focussed on actions within Maroondah. Lists of species that occur/ once occurred within the biolink could be incorporated into the proposed webpage outlined above.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Including public schools such as Ringwood SC</p>	<p>All schools are welcome to contribute in whatever ways they are able. Yarra Valley Grammar was singled out because it has a significant patch of bushland habitat within the biolink that is critical to the future functioning of the biolink.</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>Cats could be regulated to have to remain indoors at all times across the council, not just the biolink - where is the line drawn for being expected to keep them indoors and how will it be ensured it is being maintained - across the board makes it an easier regulation and protects our wildlife throughout the council.</p> <p>Some idea of how this biolink could or will connect to others across the council would be good to include in the biolink 'website'</p> <p>Creating a council wide encouragement of WSUD initiatives, including more creative pilot projects to educate and share information would be great to combine with this as the systems are all connected.</p>	<p>Council's current cat curfew is from dusk to dawn, however its enforcement is reliant on residents participating in Council's cat trapping program (to help identify cat owners). More information is available on Council's website including what you can do about a stray or nuisance cat. (https://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Residents-property/)</p> <p>A review of Maroondah's Domestic Animal Management Plan will commence in late 2024/early 2025 with community consultation on a range of topics including the cat curfew.</p> <p>Agree with the inclusion of biolink connectivity on the proposed webpage.</p> <p>Establishing demonstration and practical WSUD projects that have a clear purpose of helping establish a functioning biolink is expected to help encourage their wider acceptance and adoption.</p>	<p>Modify actions 1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19 and 7.9 to read "Promote the dusk till dawn cat curfew, including options available to residents if they encounter stray and nuisance cats."</p> <p>Add new action "Invite community input into future reviews of the Domestic Animal Management Plan including the cat curfew".</p> <p>Add a bullet point to action 10.6 that reads "how this biolink will connect to other biolinks and habitat outside of Maroondah"</p>
<p>Will roads intersecting the bushland surrounding the creek such as Oban Rd and Oliver St (through the edge effect) negatively influence the connectivity of key wildlife species' numbers after the supporting actions are completed?</p>	<p>Roads that cut across the biolink such as Oban Road and Oliver Street do present challenges to the habitat connectivity for some species, especially those that are ground-dwellers. For aquatic species and some terrestrial ground-dwellers, the existing culverts under these roads should provide opportunities to safely get past the roads, and the proposed action 6.6 (on page 27) to use large-canopied indigenous tree species as street trees is expected to improve canopy connectivity, especially over roads that cut across the biolink and should benefit many birds and arboreal species.</p>	<p>No change</p>

“Thinking about meeting the needs of focal species (habitats and threats), do you have any feedback on specific actions you do support and why?”

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19, 7.5 Cats: I am curious to know how strongly Council enforces the dusk-to-dawn cat curfew, as I have occasionally seen cats roaming the neighbourhood. Given this curfew is not fully enforced, I question how the Council would enact its plan to "encourage" cats to be kept indoors. I think the plan should be more specific in how this would be done, and how strong this "encouragement" would be.</p> <p>1.5, 5.17 Dogs: Similarly, I would be interested to see how this enforcement of dog leashing would in reality be implemented and executed, as I have personally never once seen it happening.</p>	<p>Council's current cat curfew is from dusk to dawn, however enforcement is reliant on residents participating in Council's cat trapping program (to help identify cat owners). More information is available on Council's website including what you can do about a straying or nuisance cat. Stray and nuisance cats Maroondah City Council</p> <p>Council's Animal Management Officers conduct patrols for compliance with Council's on leash requirements.</p> <p>A review of Maroondah's Domestic Animal Management Plan will commence in late 2024/early 2025 with community consultation on a range of topics including dog off leash provisions and cat curfew.</p>	<p>Modify actions 1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19 and 7.9 to read "Promote the dusk till dawn cat curfew, including options available to residents if they encounter stray and nuisance cats."</p> <p>Add new action "Invite community input into future reviews of the Domestic Animal Management Plan including the cat curfew"</p> <p>Modify actions 1.4, 5.16 and 7.6 to read "Encourage dog owners using off-lead areas (Peter Vergers Reserve and south-eastern oval of Mullum Mullum Reserve) to manage their dogs and ensure they remain in permitted areas only, and do not stray into bushland areas"</p> <p>Modify actions 1.5, 5.17 and 7.7 to read "Encourage dog owners to keep their dogs on lead at all times when not in off-lead areas and Council's Animal Management Officers to conduct patrols for compliance with Council's on-leash requirements "</p>
<p>Action to support one species will help with the conservation of other species. How can we take action to support one species and not the others on the same space? Wouldn't that defeat the purpose of that council is trying to do?</p>	<p>The biolink action plan is about creating habitat and other conditions that would support the seven focal species, and in doing so would also meet the requirements of many other species as well (other species expected to benefit from the proposed actions are listed at the end of each focal species section). The focal species were selected on this basis and represent a wide diversity of fauna with diverse habitat requirements.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>I don't have a whole lot of input on the other species, but I have knowledge of Blue Tongues and I think it should really be hammered home about pesticide usage (such as snail bait), as bio-accumulation of toxins is not something the Everyman will be thinking about. Perhaps in addition to discouraging usage of snail bait, also give suggestions for natural alternatives, such as companion plants and egg shells.</p>	<p>We agree with the idea of suggesting alternatives.</p>	<p>Modify action 1.9 to read 'Encourage residents within the biolink to avoid using toxic snail baits in their garden, by using organic or physical alternatives if they are having issues with snails or slugs'</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
Balance with bushfire safety	<p>The CFA have conducted an overview assessment of bushfire risk within the biolink. They concluded there is a low risk of bushfire due to several factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the biolink shape and its position in the landscape (largely urbanised) - no record of bushfire in the area for the past 50 years - not listed in the Victoria Fire Risk Register - the network of trails, roads, and mown grassy areas have created discontinuity of fuels and numerous access options that in the event of a fire starting would limit fire spread and support suppression efforts. <p>A section on bushfire risk will be added to the action plan.</p>	<p>In the section 9. Management and maintenance actions to sustain the biolink, under the heading 'Managing and maintaining public land', add the following: Bushfire risk</p> <p>The CFA have assessed there is a low risk of bushfire within the biolink due to several factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the biolink shape and its position in the landscape (largely urbanised) • there has been no record of bushfire in the area for the past 50 years • the area is not listed in the Victoria Fire Risk Register • the network of trails, roads, and mown grassy areas provide discontinuity of fuels and numerous access options that in the event of a fire starting would limit fire spread and support suppression efforts <p>Actions aimed at creating new habitat (ie revegetation) should seek to maintain this low level of bushfire risk by ensuring new areas of vegetation are 'islanded' to retain the discontinuity of fuels, and avoid butting up to adjacent property fencing.</p>
1.7,2.4,3.5,5.19,7.9 - Cats should be treated like foxes and trapped and culled if they are in the Bio-link, they should never be in there in the first place as they should be contained on their owners property	The biolink action plan recognises that predation by cats is a threat to a wide range of native fauna, including some of the focal species, and proposes the action "Encourage cats to be kept indoors at all times within the biolink or wider catchment and reinforce the dusk-to-dawn cat curfew" to reduce that threat.	No change
<p>Section 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5</p> <p>The start of the creek at Highland Ave past Yarra Valley Grammar to Strathfield Pde is dominated by Willow Trees and Radiata Pine trees and is in poor condition, these weed species should be removed and large wetlands created. These wetlands could have multiple benefits: pollution reduction, slow water flows during storm events, filtering of water, habitat creation. A wetland could also be created downstream of the initial wetlands that could be used for platypus habitat. There is large open space along this stretch of the creek and could easily fit the wetlands.</p>	<p>The removal of willows and pines in Strathfield Parade section would form part of restoring the riparian vegetation that once occurred there. This section also lends itself to the creation of several wetlands that could provide habitat for frogs and waterbirds (refer actions 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 and 7.8). Such wetlands require minimal overshadowing from nearby trees and shrubs, so they have good access to sunshine.</p> <p>Actions 5.3 and 5.4 relate specifically to creation of one or more drought refuge pools for Platypus. It is assumed that before suitable locations for these could be transformed, other issues such as high velocity flows and water quality will need to be addressed first.</p>	No change

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
I'm impressed by the many and varied actions listed in this plan and excited to imagine what the results will be like in the future. You seem to have covered everything!	Thank you	No change
<p>Actions to encourage the nominated birds, Golden Whistler and Gang-gang Cockatoo by establishing quality habitat will provide the benefit of attracting many other visiting bird species.</p> <p>Also, if the aquatic habitats are made suitable for Spotted Marsh Frogs, it is likely to be so for a range of other species such as the Eastern Banjo Frog, which I recently heard while walking through the reserve adjacent to the Yarra Valley Grammar bushland area.</p>	We agree. The biolink action plan is about creating habitat and other conditions that would support the seven focal species, and in doing so would also meet the requirements of many other species as well. The focal species were selected on this basis and represent a wide diversity of fauna with diverse habitat requirements.	No change
6.5 and 6.6 There is a need to provide DENSE impenetrable prickly mid-level habitat for prey (eg. ring-tailed possums). Large enough for them to build dreys. [eg. Dense impenetrable habitat plantings of: Bursaria spinosa, Allocasuarina littoralis, Melaleuca ericifolia, Pomaderris aspera, Acacia paradoxa, Acacia verticillata, Cassinia longifolia, Coprosma quadrifida, and perhaps re-introduce local Banksia that used to be in thickets along the creek.]	We agree, but also recognise that creating this type of habitat needs to be balanced with providing other types of habitat to serve a wide range of species - this clarification will be incorporated into the action plan.	Modify action 6.5 to read "For their prey, retain and protect hollow bearing trees, and retain and/or create dense stands of tall indigenous midstorey habitat including prickly shrub species, whilst balancing the need for more open and unshaded understorey vegetation that provides habitat for other species."
Exclusion/control of pest species, including feral domestic animals	There are actions with measures to protect sites from predation by dogs, cats and foxes where habitats for lizards, frogs and other species are to be created.	No change
Actions as specified for platypus	Thank you	No change
1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19, 7.9, 9.11 - I live near to the proposed Biolink area and regularly see cats roaming at night time, including across my own property. Given the well documented catastrophic damage that cats are known to cause to native wildlife I would like to see stronger action taken to prevent cat predation - 5 of the 7 Focal Species are noted as being at risk of cat predation but the plan only proposes the fairly weak action of "Encourage cats to be kept indoors at all times". I would strongly and enthusiastically support a full-time cat curfew, requiring cat owners to contain their cat indoors or to a suitable outdoor enclosure. Similar schemes are in operation in numerous other local government areas, I would like to see Maroondah join the growing number of councils to enforce responsible cat ownership.	<p>Council's current cat curfew is from dusk to dawn, however its enforcement is reliant on residents participating in Council's cat trapping program (to help identify cat owners). More information is available on Council's website including what you can do about a stray or nuisance cat. (Residents & property/Animals/Stray and nuisance cats)</p> <p>A review of Maroondah's Domestic Animal Management Plan will commence in late 2024/early 2025 with community consultation on a range of topics including the cat curfew.</p>	<p>Modify actions 1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19 and 7.9 to read "Promote the dusk till dawn cat curfew, including options available to residents if they encounter stray and nuisance cats."</p> <p>Add new action "Invite community input into future reviews of the Domestic Animal Management Plan including the cat curfew"</p>

“Thinking about meeting the needs of focal species (habitats and threats), if you selected 'some' or 'none' of the proposed actions, please provide feedback on the specific actions you do not support, stating the relevant action code number/s and why”

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
Cockatoos are stripping trees in big gangs as neighbour is feeding them, so noisy too	There are several different species of cockatoo that have been recorded in Maroondah. The Gang-gang Cockatoo does not form large flocks and are typically very quiet feeders.	No change
I don't think that increasing the population of any specific frog or butterfly is a sound use of rate payers money.	The biolink action plan is about creating habitat and other conditions that would support the seven focal species, and in doing so would also meet the requirements of many other species as well. The focal species were selected on this basis and represent a wide diversity of fauna with diverse habitat requirements. It is hoped the biolink will provide habitat and connectivity for many species into the future.	No change
I am a cat owner. I don't want to be limited in my ability to keep cats because of this plan.	The biolink action plan does not propose a ban on keeping cats. It recognises that predation by cats is a threat to a wide range of native fauna, including some of the focal species, and proposes the action "Encourage cats to be kept indoors at all times within the biolink or wider catchment and reinforce the dusk-to-dawn cat curfew" to reduce that threat.	Modify actions 1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19 and 7.9 to read "Promote and enforce the dusk till dawn cat curfew, including options available to residents if they encounter stray and nuisance cats." Add new action "Invite community input into future reviews of the Domestic Animal Management Plan including the cat curfew"
The selection of suitable sites did not include protection from predators such as feral cats and foxes in the area.	There are actions with measures to protect sites from predation by dogs, cats and foxes where habitats for lizards, frogs and other species are to be created.	No change
Blotched Blue-tongue: There is no mention of Island refuges, just fences, to exclude unwelcome lizard predators. Platypus 5.11. Be wary of excluding all rocky banks and stream verges. These help stabilise high-energy streambanks with muddy/silty reaches for small invertebrates, larvae, and crustacea. Both are needed as the Mullum Mullum Creek is high in the catchment. It is a reasonably straight stream lacking the muddy meanders of a plains stream.	Patches of habitat that provide the requirements of Blotched Bluetongues and other lizard species and are protected from unwelcome predators would be considered island refuges. Stable creek banks and a healthy supply of aquatic invertebrates are essential for attracting Platypus, so rocky banks would not be removed if it created excessive bank instability. Reducing the volume and velocity of flows in the creek following high rainfall events is also considered important for improving conditions for Platypus and their invertebrate food sources.	No change
Use of pesticides being sprayed - some banned by other countries {eg; round up} Only organic sprays to be used anywhere by Maroondah Council.	The prudent use of herbicides is still considered an effective tool in the management of environmental weeds for improving the condition of habitats, with strict safety protocols applied around their use.	No change

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 5.6, 6.2 too vague; 4.1-4.3, is there evidence those plants will thrive under current conditions?; 6.4, never saw birds preferring nest boxes; 8.6, impact of new lighting on public safety?</p>	<p>Actions 1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 5.6, and 6.2 are about aiming to restore/create habitats that are similar in structure and plant species mix to the vegetation communities that existed in those locations prior to European settlement. Those plant species have adapted to the local soils and other environmental conditions so are expected (and have) to thrive. They also in turn provide the food, shelter and other resources that the indigenous animals we hope to attract need. Although their survival cannot be guaranteed, all revegetation will be conducted in ways designed to optimise plant survival.</p> <p>The use of nest boxes by target species is also not guaranteed, however their use by hollow-dependent species is more likely if there is a shortage of suitable tree hollows in the surrounding area.</p>	<p>Modify action 8.6 to read 'Design public lighting, especially lighting of shared trails, to be wildlife-friendly by minimising light spill and potential impacts on nearby habitats without reduction in public safety'</p>

“Thinking about meeting the needs of focal species (habitats and threats), do you think there are any specific actions or issues that have been missed?”

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
Maybe Gang Gang Cockatoo but, obvious, the author hasn't seen one of them really drinking.	The main reason Gang Gang Cockatoos come to ground level is to drink where they are most vulnerable to predation by cats and foxes.	Modify action 3.3 to read "Enable access to water, for example by placing logs and branches to extend into creek or wetlands in locations relatively secure from cats and foxes"
Ban domestic cats altogether.	Council's current cat curfew is from dusk to dawn, however its enforcement is reliant on residents participating in Council's cat trapping program (to help identify cat owners). More information is available on Council's website including what you can do about a stray or nuisance cat. (Residents & property/Animals/Stray and nuisance cats) A review of Maroondah's Domestic Animal Management Plan will commence in late 2024/early 2025 with community consultation on a range of topics including the cat curfew.	Modify actions 1.7, 2.4, 3.5, 5.19 and 7.9 to read "Promote the dusk till dawn cat curfew, including options available to residents if they encounter stray and nuisance cats." Add new action "Invite community input into future reviews of the Domestic Animal Management Plan including the cat curfew"
How will you guarantee that the increase in some of these species wont increase predators like venomous snakes?	Of the seven focal species, only the Spotted Marsh Frog is considered likely to be a regular prey item for snakes, although Bluetongue lizards may also be taken. Implementation of the biolink action plan is considered very unlikely to elevate the risk of venomous snakes entering residential yards beyond the existing (very low) risk.	In the section 7. Spotted Marsh Frog, add under "Other species likely to be served by these actions" the following dot point: "Species that regularly prey on frogs and tadpoles such as larger waterbirds, Laughing Kookaburra, Rakali, fish, larger reptiles (including snakes) and predatory invertebrates."
The start of the creek at Highland Ave past Yarra Valley Grammar to Strathfield Pde is dominated by Willow Trees and Radiata Pine trees and is in poor condition, these weed species should be removed and the creek repaired and more native species planted.	The removal of willows and pines in Strathfield Parade section would form part of actions aimed at restoring the riparian vegetation that once occurred there.	No change
Why are skinks not included in the list of focal species?	The Blotched Bluetongue Lizard is a skink. Providing for this species is expected to also meet the requirements of a number of other skink species at the same time (some of which are listed in the action plan).	No change

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
<p>For the more ambitious focal species, the Platypus and Powerful Owl it could take some time possibly at least a decade before they are attracted to and call Mullum Mullum Ck home.</p> <p>The Powerful Owl may briefly visit to feed on possums before moving on. But for them to stay for longer periods and possibly breed using provided nest boxes the bushland would have to be very well established and already supporting high numbers of prey species.</p> <p>Improving the water quality along the Mullum Mullum Ck watercourse will be the major challenge for platypus. This will take time and money in creating pollution filters, water traps and of course substantial bank modifications.</p> <p>For both these species we need to emphasize that it will take time (possibly decades), before we can have the pleasure of seeing them along Mullum Mullum Ck. But I support them being nominated, as it will make us work harder and put more resources toward converting Mullum Mullum Creek into a high-quality wildlife corridor.</p>	<p>Agreed, much is needed to be done over a long period of time to create the conditions that are likely to attract and retain species such as the Platypus. Restoring more natural levels of stormwater volume, velocities and quality are probably the major challenges for encouraging Platypus to return, which makes action 5.12 'Undertake a specialised investigation of the wider catchments of the creek' particularly important for determining the scope and scale of the task.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>relationship between the animals, the plants and fungi specific to the area.</p>	<p>Protecting and re-establishing the many relationships and interdependencies between the animals, plants and fungi that will make up the biolink is important. It is expected that the range of actions outlined in the plan will create the conditions for this to occur.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>trafficways across roads and between areas. There is no mention of aerial roadways over roads or faunal culverts under roadways. How does this plan fit within the broader plan for the Eastern Australian Seaboard Greening.</p>	<p>Roads that cut across the biolink such as Oban Road and Oliver Street do present challenges to the habitat connectivity for some species, especially those that are ground-dwellers. For aquatic species and some terrestrial ground-dwellers, the existing culverts under these roads should provide opportunities to safely get past the roads, and the proposed action 6.6 (on page 27) to use large-canopied indigenous tree species as street trees is expected to improve canopy connectivity, especially over roads that cut across the biolink and should benefit many birds and arboreal species. The Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Plan that was the basis for identifying eight biolink routes through the Maroondah landscape took into account habitat connectivity beyond the Maroondah boundaries. The biolink action planning processes for each biolink however will be focussed on actions within Maroondah. Maroondah is located on the edge of the Great Eastern National Corridor and if this plan is successful in creating a functioning wildlife corridor would contribute to this larger corridor.</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comment made	Response statement	Change to action plan
harmful sprays. removal of trees and bushland for high density development	The prudent use of herbicides is still considered an effective tool in the management of environmental weeds, with strict safety protocols applied around their use. Action 8.8 'Introduce planning and development controls (eg an Environmental Significance Overlay over the entire biolink)' could help address any unnecessary removal of trees and vegetation caused by urban development.	No change
There are increasing numbers of the invasive Indian Myna bird in many parts of Maroondah, including in the Biolink area. It is interesting that the ACT and SA state governments declare them as pests but the Victorian state government does not - I think it would be a huge missed opportunity to further encourage native bird life if the Biolink Action Plan did not aim to reduce the Indian Myna population - in fact there would even be a risk that without some form of control that the newly created habitat proposed in the plan might in fact lead to a surge in population of Indian Mynas, which may outcompete the native focal species. Furthermore, given how prevalent and noticeable this invasive species is, not taking action to reduce their numbers will make it harder for local residents to observe any improvement in native bird species.	Indian Mynah's have a preference for open areas where there is little tree cover, such as suburban open parks and gardens. The protection and restoration of riparian vegetation along the creek is expected to create conditions more favourable to indigenous species, and less favourable for the Indian Mynah.	No change