

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

**NORTH-EASTERN STUDY AREA
DISTRICT 2**

**LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL, VICTORIA
MELBOURNE, JULY 1974**

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LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL

464 St. Kilda Road,
Melbourne, Vic. 3004
July, 1974

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NORTH-EASTERN AREA, DISTRICT 2

The Hon. W. A. Borthwick, M.P.,
Minister for Conservation,
Parliament House,
Melbourne, Vic. 3002.

In accordance with the provisions of the *Land Conservation Act* 1970, I have the honour to present the recommendations of the Land Conservation Council with respect to land use on the public land in the Council's North-eastern Area, District 2.

S. G. McL. DIMMICK, *Chairman.*

Contents

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION	5
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	9
A. Parks	13
B. Reference Areas	16
C. Wildlife	18
D. Education	19
E. Water Production	21
F. Hardwood Production.. .. .	23
G. Softwood Production	25
H. Forest Area	28
I. Agriculture	29
J. Minerals and Stone	31
K. Uncommitted Land	33
L. Other Recreation and Conservation Areas	35
M. Survey and Utilities	39
MAPS	}
Supplementary Plans 1 to 7	}
Map A	}
	Follows text

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Land Conservation Council was established by the *Land Conservation Act* 1970. As one of its three functions, it makes recommendations to the Minister for Conservation with respect to the use of public land, in order to provide for the balanced use of land in Victoria. This report contains the Council's final recommendations concerning the public land in the North-eastern Area, District 2.

Notices showing the boundary of the study district and advising that an investigation was to be carried out were published in the *Victoria Government Gazette* on 23 June, 1971 and in local and Victorian newspapers in June and July, 1971. A descriptive report was published on 8 August, 1973. The Council received 98 submissions on the future use of public land. Individuals, associations, companies, and local and State government bodies, representing a wide cross-section of the community, made helpful submissions covering most feasible forms of land use for the district. Extracts from the *Land Conservation Act* 1970 covering the procedure to be followed in formulating recommendations were included in the descriptive report.

After considering these submissions, and having visited the area, the Council formulated its proposed recommendations, which were published on 7 February, 1974. The Council subsequently received 45 submissions commenting on the proposed recommendations. After due consideration the Council now presents its final recommendations.

Land Use

The study district covers a total area of approximately 350,000 hectares (ha), of which about 265,400 ha (76 per cent.) has been alienated and is used mainly for livestock production. About 10 per cent. of the alienated land—mainly in the Harry Creek—Marraweeny, Lurg, Upton Hill, Terip Terip, Glen Creek, and Tolmie areas—is not developed for agriculture. The total area of public land, which includes Lakes Nillahcootie and Eildon (part) is about 85,650 ha (24 per cent.) and most of it is in large blocks. Table 1 summarizes the recommended uses of public land. It is not possible to categorize all land precisely and the multiple use of most areas should be appreciated. The Council's recommendations propose new areas to be used primarily for recreation and conservation. Types of reserves proposed include parks, reference areas, education areas, forest areas, bushland areas, historic areas, and flora areas. The land recommended for softwood production and agriculture meets the present needs and will be reviewed from time to time.

Recommendations are grouped under the major forms of land use, but it must be recognized that in most cases these are not exclusive and many secondary uses are compatible. Each section recommends the uses to which individual parcels of land should be put and in most cases suggests an appropriate tenure. Where it has been recommended that uses be phased out or not permitted because of conflict with the primary uses, Council has been satisfied that alternative areas exist where these needs can be reasonably met. The areas quoted are approximate. Where land is not specifically mentioned, present legal uses and tenure should continue.

Where a given area of land is subject to demands from competing uses, it is not possible to satisfy them all. However, these recommendations attempt to achieve balance in providing for the present needs of most forms of use while retaining flexibility and the opportunity to adjust to future changes in the demands upon land. They do so by placing as much of the public land as possible under forms of use that do not have a major impact on the natural ecosystem, and by placing areas into the "uncommitted land" category. Flexibility in planning is essential, since land use should be reviewed periodically as community needs and technology change.

TABLE 1.
RECOMMENDED PUBLIC LAND USE.

Recommended land use	Area (ha)	Percentage of all land in study district	Percentage of public land
1. Uncommitted land	33,940	9	40
2. Softwood production*	15,110	4	17.5
3. Hardwood production	10,400	3	12.0
4. Forest areas	9,620	3	11.0
5. Parks	9,024	2.5	10.5
6. Other recreation and conservation	2,908	1	3.5
7. Water production**	2,070	0.5	2.5
8. Reference areas	1,600	0.5	2
9. Education area	380	} 0.25	} 1
10. Agriculture	271		
11. Wildlife***	250		
12. Utilities and survey	45		
13. Minerals and stone	36		

* Includes existing plantations.

** Includes Lakes Nillahcootie and Eildon (part).

*** Not included in area calculation in descriptive report.

Figures have been rounded, 1 hectare = 2.47 acres.

The accompanying map of the study district (Map A) gives a broad view of the recommendations. The areas of land referred to in the text have been identified as clearly as practicable, having regard to the information available and the comparatively small scale of the map. However, the boundaries of many areas have not been precisely surveyed and are therefore subject to minor modification. Boundaries shown on the map do not include present declared roads under the *Country Roads Act* 1958 that abut or pass through other public land. A series of detailed plans show land recommended for alienation in Schedule 1, and the proposed historic area (L1) is shown in detail in Plan 7.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Council wishes to stress the need for adequate management and protection of public land, as it has made its recommendations on the assumption that sufficient manpower and finance will be provided for the appropriate managing authority. If these resources are not provided, the Council's recommendations cannot be effectively implemented. There is an urgent need to make additional field staff and finance available, particularly to the National Parks Service. It is recommended that the present legal status and management of public land in each case be retained until the relevant authorities have the capacity to manage each area.

The Council, believing that it is essential that adequate provision be made for protection of public land from fire, recommends that :

- (a) State Forest that, through processes under the *Land Conservation Act 1970*, is changed from such status, should remain subject to the fire-protection provisions of the *Forests Act 1958* that apply to State Forest ;
- (b) satisfactory arrangements be made to ensure that Forests Commission fire-fighting personnel obtain or retain (as the case may be) familiarity with such land for fire-fighting purposes ;
- (c) all fire-protection works conducted by the Forests Commission on such land, other than suppression of wildfires, be subject to prior agreement between the management authority and the Forests Commission ;
- (d) in the event of failure to reach agreement as referred to in (c), such matter to be referred to the Governor-in-Council for decision.

The Council, being aware that the Forests Commission and National Parks Service have already discussed the matter fully and reached agreement on the principles, further recommends that the two bodies continue their collaboration and devise a *modus operandi* for the implementation of such agreement. Council views favourably the proposed amendment to the *Forests Act 1958* pertaining to fire prevention and suppression on public land.

A large proportion of the district forms part of the Lake Nillahcootie, Ryans Creek, and Upper Goulburn water supply catchments proclaimed as such under the *Soil Conservation and Land Utilization Act 1958*.

The use of all land within these areas is subject to specification by notice or by determination made by the Soil Conservation Authority, acting under the provisions of the above *Act* and its amendment. In this regard, the Council recommends that in proclaimed catchments, until a determination has been made by the Soil Conservation Authority, management prescriptions be agreed to by the Authority and any management body concerned. Further, where these circumstances apply and where the Land Conservation Council recommends grazing as a use, the numbers of stock

and period of use should be determined by the managing body (whoever it may be) after consultation with the Soil Conservation Authority before a grazing licence is issued.

Council notes the Lake Nillahcootie planning scheme in the Shires of Benalla and Mansfield as defined by the Town and Country Planning Board under the provisions of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1961*.

A. PARKS

The number of people participating in recreational activities in natural surroundings is increasing rapidly, and Council believes that participation will continue to increase. However, the area of natural land available for these activities is decreasing and it is essential to allocate land to them now, before alienation and clearing further reduce the resources available.

A park is here defined as “an area of land in a natural or semi-natural condition, reserved because of its scenery, floral and faunal content, historical interest, or other features, which is used by the public primarily for open-space recreation and education”. This definition encompasses many different types of parks, the main differences arising from variations in size and content and the types and intensity of uses to which they are subjected.

Definitions of different types of park are needed to clarify the main purpose for which a park is created. Such definitions will help planners, managers, and users of parks. In addition it is desirable to zone areas within parks for ease of management. This publication presents recommendations concerning parks in terms of the uses to which the land should be put. Parks have also been placed into categories, according to the scheme of classification suggested below.

The categories are not to be confused with the existing terminology of National Park, Forest Park, etc., which mainly denote tenure and the managing body rather than the types of purpose for which they are to be used. For instance, some of the present National Parks are more akin in character and purpose to a State or regional park than to the national park of nation-wide significance outlined in the classification. The concepts associated with each category of Park are attached as Appendix A of this report.

Park categories

I. National Park

An extensive area of public land, of nation-wide significance because of its outstanding natural features and diverse land types, set aside primarily to provide for public enjoyment, education, and inspiration in natural environments in such a manner and by such means as will leave the natural environment unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

II. State Park

An area of public land, containing one or more land types, set aside primarily to provide for public enjoyment, education, and inspiration in natural environments.

III. Regional Park

An area of public land, readily accessible from urban centres or a major tourist route, set aside primarily to provide open-space recreation in natural or semi-natural surroundings for large numbers of people.

IV. Multi-purpose Park

An area of public land set aside primarily to provide recreational and educational experiences in natural surroundings, in which other activities such as hardwood timber production, stone extraction, hunting, or grazing are permitted where these form part of or supplement, but do not substantially conflict with, the primary object.

It should be noted that, while parks are primarily used for recreation and conservation, other areas (which for example may be used for water, wildlife, and timber production) also have nature conservation values and are available for recreation.

In recommending the establishment of two parks in the district, the Council has noted the localities, natural features of the land, and alternative possible uses. It also notes the high fire hazards existing around and within the proposed parks and recommends that adequate fire-protection plans be drawn up and the resources needed for their implementation be provided.

Specific Recommendations

A1 (Mount Samaria State Park)

That the area of 6,960 ha indicated on the map be used to :

- (a) provide opportunities for recreational and educational experiences related to enjoying and understanding natural environments ;
- (b) protect and conserve natural environments ;
- (c) provide for apiculture along the western margins of the park.

and that the area be a State park permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 and managed by the National Parks Service.

The Council, being aware that the above recommendations now exclude timber production from within the park, points out that it has also recommended that an additional area carrying substantial volumes of merchantable timber be added to the hardwood area at Toorour (Recommendation F1 page 23).

A2 (Reef Hills Regional Park)

That the area of 2,064 ha indicated on the map and including the two road reserves within the area be :

- (a) primarily used to
 - (i) provide opportunities for open-space recreation and education related to the enjoyment and understanding of this environment for large numbers of people ;
 - (ii) protect and conserve the Lurg and Benalla land systems, with particular emphasis on native ground flora and shrubs, the squirrel glider, lace lizard, and significant birds as listed in the descriptive report ;

(b) secondarily used to :

- (i) support apiculture ;
- (ii) provide locations suitable for use as a rifle range and for pistol club activities ;
- (iii) provide road-making materials for use by the Shire of Benalla for essential shire roadworks north of the Hume Highway and west of the Broken River until 1983. The siting and operation of the quarry should be such as to minimize conflict with the primary uses and be agreed upon by the National Parks Service and the Shire.

(Investigations to locate alternative sources of supply of road-making materials for use on the Hume Freeway around Benalla have been successful.

The Council is satisfied that the requirements of the City of Benalla can be met from alternative supplies over the next 10 years. While it has recommended that limited material be removed from the park, it strongly recommends that investigations for alternative sources be continued),

- (iv) provide poles, fencing materials, firewood and other minor forest products where methods, intensity, and locality of use do not conflict with the primary uses (a i and ii). (The timing and nature of timber extraction within the park should be selected so as to minimize conflict with the primary uses and be agreed upon by the National Parks Service and the Forests Commission. The sale of forest produce should be by arrangement with the Forests Commission and in accordance with the *Forests Act 1958*),

and that it be a regional park permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act 1958* and managed by the National Parks Service.

The Council further recommends that :

- (c) in order to manage the area for the range of permitted uses outlined above, the National Parks Service should zone the area to cater for all permitted uses and provide a substantial degree of vehicular access ;
- (d) (i) use by the Army be phased out (Council believes the district contains suitable alternative areas—see Recommendation F1 page 23.)
- (ii) no grazing or gravel stripping should be permitted.

B. REFERENCE AREAS

Reference areas are areas of public land containing viable samples of one or more land types that are, wherever possible, relatively undisturbed. These areas are reserved as a reference, to which those concerned with changing and managing land for either productive or aesthetic uses may refer when attempting to solve problems arising from use of the land.

Reference areas would normally be typical examples of land types that have been extensively developed elsewhere for productive uses such as agriculture or softwood production. The course and effects of human alteration and utilization of the land can be measured against these relatively stable natural areas. The areas should be viable and a buffer zone should surround each. Most developed regions have few suitable areas remaining.

In common with references and standards used in other fields, these areas must not be tampered with and natural processes should be allowed to continue undisturbed.

Access should be restricted and experimental manipulation should not be permitted. Reference areas will enable continued study of natural features and processes, for example fauna, flora, hydrology, and nutrition. These studies are important in increasing our knowledge of the ecological laws and processes on which man's survival may ultimately depend.

The preservation of some species in the long term requires the setting aside of areas free from human interference (in the form of productive or recreational use of the land). These areas preserve a valuable pool of genetic material—Man often uses wild species to genetically strengthen inbred races of domestic plants and animals—and the future use of gene pools will probably expand far beyond this.

The management policies for reference areas throughout the State should be formulated by an advisory committee drawn from the universities and government agencies. After approval by the Government, the policies would be implemented by the authority managing the buffer zone.

Policy Recommendations

- B(i)** That, because of restrictions on their use and to help ensure their viability, reference areas should be surrounded by a buffer zone. (These zones could be, for example, part of a park, forest area, or wildlife reserve in which the aim of management would include prevention of any damage to the reference area.)
- (ii)** That the authority managing the buffer zone should control the enclosed reference area.

In recommending the creation of reference areas, the Council foresees the need for new legislation to specify the status of these areas for the establishment of an advisory committee to determine the broad policy for their management.

The delineation of buffer zones should be by joint agreement between the managing authority and the advisory committee.

Specific Recommendations

The Council, in making recommendations on reference areas, has used as a basis the land systems described and mapped in Chapter 12 of the descriptive report. Equivalent land systems outside the study district have been taken into consideration. One area in District 3 of the North-eastern Area is considered to be the best example of the Archerton and Tolmie land systems, and so no sample has been recommended in this district. Another area in District 3 that better meets the requirements for a reference area contains a sample of the Drumtop land system, which is the equivalent of the Loombah land system in District 2. The decision not to allocate reference areas in this district may have to be reviewed following the final recommendations for District 3.

An area in the headwaters of the Broken River (indicated on Map A by cross-hatching) is an undisturbed, representative sample of the Cambatong land system. It lies within a larger area that is proposed to be uncommitted until the adjacent Alpine Area is investigated. It is recommended that the options for a reference area be kept open within and immediately adjacent to the cross-hatched area.

No viable examples of the Wrightley, Tabletop, Mansfield, Warby, and Swanpool land systems remain. However, an area in the watershed of Back Creek contains an example of the Swanpool land system, and some components of this area (such as soils) should be kept in an undisturbed condition. A reference area that contains a sample of the Lurg and Benalla land systems at the Reef Hills would be difficult to maintain.

B1 (Toorour reference area)

That the area of 480 ha indicated on the map be used to maintain the ecosystem (permitting natural processes to continue with a minimum of human interference) for scientific study related to the impact of Man's activities on similar ecosystems, and that the area be reserved for scientific reference.

This area is a representative sample of the Moonee Moonee land system.

B2 (Glen Creek reference area)

That the area of 390 ha indicated on the map be used and reserved as in B1.

This area contains a representative sample of the Moorngag land system.

B3 (Blue Range reference area)

That the area of 400 ha indicated on the map be used and reserved as in B1 and managed by the same management body that manages the proposed Mount Samaria State Park (see A1).

This area is a representative sample of the Strathbogie land system.

B4 (Ryans Creek reference area)

That the area of 320 ha indicated on the map be used and reserved as in B1.

This area is a representative sample of the Tiger Hill land system.

C. WILDLIFE

The conservation of fauna depends on conservation of habitat, and by far the largest proportion of natural habitat remaining in Victoria is on public land. Wildlife areas may enable the conservation of species that will be utilized or are endangered.

They may conserve distinctive wildlife values related to particular areas of land, such as favoured breeding and feeding localities of migratory and nomadic species. They may also include places where the occurrence of a species is of particular scientific interest and places that provide, with advantages, special features suitable for research, recreation, and education related to wildlife conservation. The conservation of flora and the provision of open-space recreation are major secondary uses of wildlife reserves.

The conservation of fauna as components of representative functioning biological communities in a region can be achieved alongside certain other uses of public land. These comprise those that conserve the habitat to a considerable degree, such as low-intensity recreation and many forms of hardwood timber production.

Policy Recommendation

C(i) That wildlife and fish habitats on public land be conserved and restored if practicable, especially in the case of westlands and water frontages.

Specific Recommendations

C1 (Seven Creeks wildlife reserve)

- (a) That the Seven Creeks above Halls Gap road be used for the conservation of the trout, cod, and other native fish.
- (b) That stream frontages on the Seven Creeks from allotment 11A, section A, Parish of Wondoomarook (Halls Gap road), upstream to allotment 6, section D, Parish of Strathbogie, be used for the conservation of wildlife and for water supply purposes. At present it is anticipated that proper management for these uses will not require closure of any further sections of Seven Creeks to angling.
- (c) That adjacent landowners should be permitted to obtain water for their stock and that the area designated in C1 (b) be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 as a wildlife reserve to be managed by the Fisheries and Wildlife Division in consultation with the Euroa Waterworks Trust.

D. EDUCATION

Education in ecology is an important step in the conservation of our natural resources. This area of study is becoming an increasingly important feature of school curricula at primary and secondary levels and with other organizations concerned with nature appreciation.

One such example is the Form V biology course, which includes such topics as natural communities, food chains, succession, animal societies, and the effect of Man on the ecosystem.

The study of ecosystems is indispensably linked with field studies and mainly concerns natural systems or comparison of these with greatly altered ones—for example, agricultural land and softwood plantations. The public land in many cases best fulfils these requirements.

Obviously, the use of areas for education purposes can take place in conjunction with primary uses such as outdoor recreation, nature conservation, and hardwood production. However, in some circumstances, there is also a need for reserves with associated laboratory and accommodation facilities, which will enable long-term studies by successive groups. In these groups class size should be small and activities should be closely supervised both by the managing authority and the user organization.

Activities permitted here, which may not be appropriate elsewhere, would include collecting material for study, excavating soil profiles, and establishing growth plots. No one organization should have the exclusive right to use an area for education purposes. Rather it would have the opportunity to use a number of areas in different parts of the State. Access to other public land for education purposes should also be available where there is no conflict with the primary uses of such land.

Council recognizes that this new project of establishing areas for educational purposes cannot be implemented until provision is made for a responsible body to inaugurate, and eventually administer, the project and arrange for the necessary costs to be met. Council will also need to collaborate with the Environment Studies Association, which proposes to create centres for field studies.

It is also recognized that this Council will have to discuss with the various land management departments a uniform management scheme (including fire protection) for these areas, as control of each area should be vested in the designated land management department.

Policy Recommendations

D(i) That areas of public land should be set aside for educational purposes and that in some cases permanent accommodation be provided on this land. These areas will serve to supplement the existing arrangements of the use for educational

purposes of other public lands used primarily for other purposes. It is suggested that permanent accommodation be sited so as to minimize any fire hazard to or arising from the occupants.

- (ii) That managing agents of public lands make reasonable provision for education.

Specific Recommendation

D1 (Lima South education area)

That the area of 380 ha indicated on the map be used to provide opportunities for field teaching aimed at promoting an understanding of natural environments and that it be reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 for this purpose and be protected forest.

E. WATER PRODUCTION

The district is an important water source for town water supplies and for irrigation on the drier agricultural land further to the west. The water supply catchments for Lake Nillahcootie, Ryans Creek, and Upper Goulburn have been proclaimed as such under the *Soil Conservation and Land Utilization Act* 1958. The use of all land within these areas is subject to specification by notice or by determinations made by the Soil Conservation Authority, acting under the provisions of the above Act and its amendment.

Public land in the Ryans, Honeysuckle, Mountain Hut Creeks and Seven Creeks domestic water supply catchments has been shown by blue cross-hatching on Map A. Implementation of any recommendations for this public land will require recognition that water catchment values such as water yield, quality, and flow régime are of prime concern.

This Council proposes to recommend to the Governor-in-Council that the domestic water supply catchments of Seven Creeks and Honeysuckle and Mountain Hut Creeks be proclaimed as such under the *Soil Conservation and Land Utilization Act* 1958.

Future additional water needs for domestic purposes and for stock and irrigation may require the construction of additional water storages in the district. Specific areas cannot be reserved for this purpose until the need arises and possible sites are investigated. The Council notes the proposals for additional water storages on Mountain Hut Creek and at Polly McQuinns and Currie-McMasters on Seven Creeks.

Specific Recommendations

- E1** That the Loombah Weir and its associated water reserves and the Lake Mokoan diversion channel continue to be used for water conservation and supply and remain under the present tenure and control.
- E2** That the area of 364 ha indicated on the map be used to protect the water supply at Lake McCall Say and that it be reserved for water supply purposes under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958, and be under the control of the Benalla Waterworks Trust as a committee of management.
- E3** That the area of 8 ha indicated on the map be used to protect the water storage on Mountain Hut Creek and that it be reserved for water supply purposes under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 and be under the control of the Euroa Waterworks Trust as a committee of management.
- E4** That the area of 2 ha indicated on the map be used to protect the water storage on Honeysuckle Creek and that it be reserved for water supply purposes under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 and be under the control of the Violet Town Waterworks Trust as a committee of management.

- E5 (i)** That the present water reserves (excluding the reserve within allotment 24, Parish of Nillahcootie) around Lake Nillahcootie and Lake Eildon (in this district) be—
- (a) used to protect these water storages ;
 - (b) used for fauna conservation and recreation in a manner consistent with (a) above—
- and that the managing authority clearly provide access for acceptable recreation activities such as angling.
- (ii)** That the water bodies of Lake Nillahcootie and Lake Eildon (in this district) be used for water conservation and also for fauna conservation and recreation where these do not conflict with water conservation aims.

F. HARDWOOD PRODUCTION

Hardwood sawmilling, which directly employs about 200 men, is an important industry for the district. However, not all the sawn log supplies come from the district.

Messmate, stringybark and St. John's blue gum are the most important timber species. The capability for intensive hardwood production is highest where large stands of these species exist on relatively gentle terrain.

Most of the sawn timber is marketed in nearby regions, and the supplies of fencing materials, poles, and firewood cater for the needs of small local markets.

In addition, the establishment of any future processing plant for softwood fibre is likely to be also based on the availability of hardwood fibre. Any projects involving large-scale clear felling should be referred to the Land Conservation Council. In the following recommendations, two substantial areas have been recommended for hardwood production. This is justified by the importance Council places on the existing industry and the strong likelihood of a requirement for hardwood timber and fibre in the future. The use of land in this way retains flexibility and allows the possibility of later adaption to most other uses. Hardwood production is compatible with other uses, such as conservation of flora and fauna, recreation, landscape preservation, and apiculture. The policy recommendation is intended to ensure that these other uses are recognized and encompassed in the management of areas for hardwood timber production.

Policy Recommendation

F(i) That recreation and nature conservation be major secondary uses of areas set aside primarily for hardwood timber production.

Specific Recommendations

F1 (Toorour hardwood forest)

(a) That the area of 6,900 ha indicated on the map be used to :

(i) provide hardwood timber ;

(ii) provide for other activities and products, including use by the Army as a training area, that are compatible with the above use (Council appreciates that the types of training activities and other details of use are subject to agreement between the Army and the managing authority).

(b) That within the area indicated by cross-hatching the following values be maintained :

(i) the attractive forest environment;

- (ii) the existing range of habitat for native fauna including the areas around Mount Strathbogie and Wild Dog Bluff and in wet gullies in Tallangalook Creek ;
 - (iii) the historic features associated with early mining at Tallangalook ;
 - (iv) landscape values and high vantage points used to obtain scenic views ;
- and that it remain or become reserved forest.

The use of land within this catchment is subject to specification by notice or by determination made by the Soil Conservation Authority.

G. SOFTWOOD PRODUCTION

The report on the North-eastern Area, District 2, deals with the national case for an expanded softwood planting programme and with some criticisms of that programme. It shows that Australia imports, and will continue to import, large amounts of wood and wood products and that many of these imports could be grown in this country. Points of contention are the future level of Australian consumption of wood and wood products, and the relative efficiency of importing them as compared with producing them locally.

The Strathbogie Ranges and Tolmie Highlands are generally favoured by suitable soils, adequate rainfall, and relatively flat terrain. Two plantations, one of 3,560 ha net at Warrenbayne-Boho and another of 1,010 ha net near Wrightley have already been established (to July 1973). The softwood and hardwood industries both have an important influence on regional employment and economic growth. These factors and the continuing strong demand for wood and wood products were taken into account in the allocation of some public land to softwood-growing in this district.

Planning period

Provision is made in these recommendations for land for planting of softwoods in the district until 1983, thus allowing a planning period of 10 years for the establishment of softwoods. However, finance for softwood plantings depends to a considerable degree on the Commonwealth-State Softwood Forestry Agreement, which is scheduled for review in 1976 and possibly again in 1981. If substantial changes are made in the above Agreement, it will be necessary to review these recommendations, particularly the area of land provided for softwood planting in 1982 and 1983. The Council will consider making land available for softwood planting after 1983 in sufficient time to allow reasonable preparation for such plantings.

Purchase of private land

The Council believes that softwood plantation extension should incorporate substantial areas of purchased private lands as well as public land. The area of public land allocated to State plantings (9,240 ha) includes 2,537 ha (27 per cent.) of previously purchased private property. Of this, 1,196 ha is included in the Boho-Toorour area and 1,341 ha at Wrightley-Tolmie. (The latter includes 650 ha of Benalla Waterworks Trust land, the purchase of which is currently being negotiated between the Trust and the Forests Commission.)

Plantation planning guidelines

The impact of large plantations of softwoods on the natural environment can be lessened by retaining selected areas of native vegetation and by adhering to catchment prescriptions laid down by the relevant management authorities, where applicable. The guidelines set out below apply specifically to the establishment of plantations on public land in North-eastern Victoria. They have been adapted from those

prepared and used by the Forests Commission. Obviously planning plantations in this way increases their total area. Allowances for this have been made in calculating the areas allocated to softwood planting.

Plantation requirements

The Council believes that the probable establishment of a large wood-processing industry drawing on supplies from the Benalla–Mansfield zone and possibly the Central zone necessitate the use of sufficient land to meet requirements for both hardwood and softwood supplies. Both sources of wood are necessary if the pulp mill is similar to that at Maryvale, which in 1972 used eucalypt and softwood volumes in the ratio of 1 : 1.

The Forests Commission's requirements in these combined zones are for softwood plantations with a net area of at least 60,000 ha, which are reasonably consolidated and within economic range of suitable industrial sites. The contribution of softwood plantations from this district and adjacent areas (mainly in North-east District 3), as requested in their submission, would amount to a net area of about 28,000 ha.

Non-government plantations

The Council's general policy is that public land may be considered for private softwood planting if a company shows its preparedness to undertake a planting programme using purchased private land and if the use of this public land would consolidate the project. Further, any public land would be made available in the form of leases.

Policy Recommendations

G(i) That public land should be made available for growing of softwoods, provided the planning and establishment of plantations follow the procedures and practices outlined below.

No continuous plantation unit should exceed 1,400 ha without obvious break-up by areas that are retained for native forest. Large samples (100–200 ha) of all vegetation types in the area should be retained. Where possible, several types should be combined for retention in one unit. The unit may be sited to improve the appearance of the plantation, or to combine with unsuitable land to form a range of habitats for wildlife. Units may also include stands of native hardwood managed for timber production. While logging and fuel-reduction burning need not be prohibited in areas where native vegetation is retained, it is important that the amenity and recreational values of these areas be protected. Any utilization, including that carried out prior to clearing, should be carefully controlled, and slash, snig tracks, and landings cleaned up. No retained area should be fuel-reduced in its entirety in any one year.

Native vegetation should be retained for a minimum width of 40 m from each bank along minor streams and 80 m from each bank along major streams and such areas should be maintained free of exotic vegetation. This is in line with other Council

recommendations that all wetlands on public land be conserved. These strips of retained native vegetation should be kept free of bulldozed material, and windrows should be swept back from them to protect them from hot burns. They should be linked to areas of native forest wherever possible, to allow movement of wildlife.

Strips of native forest should be retained for a minimum width of 100 m along highways and main roads. On minor through-roads, a visually diverse environment should be maintained by plantings (preferably of native and local species). Where plantations are to be established adjoining private property, consideration should be given to reasonable requests by the landowners for the retention of native vegetation along boundaries.

The Council notes that the Forests Commission's current planting guidelines in North-east District 2 are very similar to the above guidelines.

Specific Recommendations

G1 That the present plantations continue to be used for the production of softwood products and the provision of other goods and services compatible with this primary use as well as providing opportunities for education and recreation, and that the area indicated by G1 on the map be reserved forest.

G2 (Toorour-Boho)

That the area (5,330 ha) indicated on the map be used for softwood production and that it be reserved forest.

G3 (Wrightley-Tolmie)

That the area (3,910 ha) indicated on the map be used for softwood production and that it be reserved forest.

The total area (G2 and G3) of 9,240 ha is based on the current planting rate of 700 ha per annum for the 10 years 1974 to 1983 inclusive. In arriving at a gross area, about 20 per cent. has been allowed for roads, firebreaks, and areas retained for native vegetation. The use of land within the Ryans Creek Catchment is subject to specification by notice or by determination made by the Soil Conservation Authority. The importance of the Mount Barranhet area for domestic water supply should also be recognized in planning softwood plantations.

H. FOREST AREA

When making recommendations on land for softwood plantations the Council has recognized that their establishment constitutes a major change from any natural ecosystems they replace. Further, it realizes that softwood production is a long-term endeavour and that restoration of softwood plantation areas to a natural condition is difficult. Adjacent areas of public land that have high nature conservation and/or landscape values thus play an important role in maintaining a local balance in land use. Because of their location, these areas are also critical for fire protection of the softwood resource and therefore must also be managed for this purpose. Such land has been designated a forest area.

Specific Recommendations

H1 That the area of 9,620 ha indicated on the map be used for :

- (a) conservation of fauna and flora, and preservation of scenic values (in particular, the scientific values of the Holland Creek area should be recognized and also the high fauna values in the northern sections east and west of Warrenbayne) ;
 - (b) protection of the adjacent area recommended for softwood production ;
 - (c) low-intensity hardwood production, recreation, forest grazing, honey production, and mining where these activities do not conflict with (a) above ;
- and that it be reserved forest.

Council also recommends that the fundamental importance of the Honeysuckle Creek and Mount Barranhet areas as sources of domestic water be recognized in their management.

I. AGRICULTURE

The Council recommends that no additional large areas of public land be developed for agriculture at this time.

The alienated lands of the district lie mainly on the relatively flat to rolling topography of the Benalla and Mansfield plains, the Lurg Hills, and the Strathbogie plateau. Some agricultural land extends up the steeper slopes surrounding this plateau and into the foothills and plateaux of the Tolmie highlands.

Considerable untapped potential remains for further developing the alienated lands, particularly on the river flats, plains and rolling hills at lower elevations and some of the plateaux at high elevations.

The greatest scope for large-scale agricultural development of forested land exists in the plateau forming the headwaters of Ryans Creek, the two broad interfluves on either side of this stream, the headwaters of Seven Creeks (near Mount Barranhet), Rocky Ned, Brankeet, Gerar, and Tallangalook Creeks in the Strathbogie Ranges, and some public land around Tolmie. Much of this area has been left as uncommitted land (see Section K), which could be alienated in the future for agricultural production or used for other purposes. However, this should only be after the Council has again looked at the area (see Policy Recommendation K (i)—Uncommitted land). If the demand for agricultural products outgrows the ability of the private lands of State to produce them, further consideration would be given to the provision of additional public land for agriculture.

It is emphasized however that the uncommitted land in Ryans Creek catchment supplies water for domestic purposes. Forested catchments, if properly managed, are best able to meet requirements for domestic water in this district.

The Council has made recommendations for some small areas of public land to be made available for agriculture.

Specific Recommendations

II. That the land described in Schedule I below (approx. 271 ha) and indicated in detail in Plans 1-6 be used for agriculture.

Precise notice of the land that becomes available for agriculture will be made by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey. It is intended that this land should form additions to present farms rather than be developed as new units.

With reference to section 5 (3) of the *Land Conservation Act* 1970, the Council considers that the best method of making the land in the schedule available for agriculture is in accordance with the existing provisions of the *Land Act* 1958, the *Soil Conservation and Land Utilization Act* 1958, and the *Soil Conservation and Land Utilization (Amendment) Act* 1971.

SCHEDULE 1.
LAND RECOMMENDED FOR AGRICULTURE

Parish	Location								Area (ha)
Borodomanin	Allotment 8F (Ancona)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Longwood	Allotment 39A	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	98
Monea South	Allotment 35B	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	28
Moorngag	Water reserve, south of allotments 46 and 47	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Ruffy	Allotments 21, 22 and 23	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	133
Warrenbayne	Adjacent to allotment 86B	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5

J. MINERALS AND STONE

Materials covered by the definition of “stone” in the *Extractive Industries Act 1966* are widespread in the district. These materials include granite, rock of any kind, slate, gravel, clay, sand, earth, and soil.

There are also known deposits of “minerals” as defined in the *Mines Act 1958* (metallic minerals, etc.) and further deposits will probably be found.

It is not possible at this stage to reserve areas of public land to meet future requirements for “stone” or “minerals”. The exploration necessary to delineate areas containing stone material that meets the various physical and chemical requirements for that particular material commonly involves lengthy and costly programmes of drilling and testing. This can only be justified where markets are guaranteed, for example near cities and major construction projects. At present, a number of sites in the district have yielded “stone” and still have reserves available. Mining for minerals is current at a few localities.

Other areas of public land will eventually be required for minerals and/or stone production. Thus it is important that as much land as possible remain in a form of tenure that will permit exploration when and if this becomes necessary, and that permissible uses of public land include mining where possible so that both exploration and extraction may take place as the need arises.

It is the responsibility of the government to establish the existence and extent of the State’s mineral resources, particularly those of a strategic nature, which would be of significance in a time of national emergency. It is important, therefore, that the reservation of conservation areas should not automatically exclude the exploration for stone, mineral, or petroleum resources, either by exploration companies under strict supervision or by the Mines Department itself. Attention should be directed towards ensuring that other values and interests are protected rather than attempting to prevent exploration activities.

Policy Recommendation

J(i) The extraction of “stone” and “minerals” on public land should be subject to the approval and conditions specified by the relevant authorities. All extraction sites should be reclaimed and revegetated except under special circumstances—for example, where a quarry may have value for recreation, education, or scientific study.

Specific Recommendations

J1 That the existing stone, gravel and quarrying reserves and the water supply reserve (within allotment 24, Parish of Nillahcootie) continue to be used as sources of “stone”.

- J2** That mining on the existing mineral leases continue and that the existing extraction of “stone” on other than quarry reserves be allowed to continue.
- J3** That the portion of land covered by exploration licence No. 466 that falls within the proposed Mount Samaria State Park (A1) should not be included in any renewal of the licence except after consultation with the managing authority.

K. UNCOMMITTED LAND.

In planning land use, known resources are allocated to satisfy or predicted demands. However, Council is aware that many changes cannot be foreseen and that resources themselves will change as exploration, investigation and technology progress.

For these reasons it is desirable that planning be flexible so that, when land use is reviewed, resources can be re-allocated or adapted to meet changed demands. Changes in demand may affect present uses or may create entirely new ones.

Provision for future demands is made by placing land under flexible forms of use (that is, uses that do not have a major impact on the ecosystem) and by retaining as much land as possible in an uncommitted state. This is best attained by firstly ensuring that while the land remains securely in public ownership the form of tenure will facilitate any change in status if this becomes necessary following review by this Council. The second requirement is for careful management of all resources. This must be aimed at preventing the impairment of the land's capability for any kind of production in the future. In practice, this means protecting those capabilities that the land is currently known to possess, while allowing low levels of use for some products (provided this can be done without reducing options for future uses by causing changes that would be difficult to reverse). In many cases permitted activities should be restricted to localities where access is already provided, so that the options for uses requiring relatively undisturbed land are maintained. Adequate measures to prevent soil erosion and to protect the area itself and adjoining land from damaging wild-fires are essential.

Uncommitted land includes areas that, although having a low capability to satisfy any known demand, have an unknown (and perhaps high) capability to satisfy as-yet-unforeseen future demands.

Uncommitted land also includes areas that, although having a high capability to satisfy one or more known demands, are at present not committed to any one, as foreseeable requirements can readily be met from other areas.

Specific Recommendations

- K1** That the land indicated on Map A (approx 1,200 ha) be used to :
- (a) achieve or maintain stability of the land and maintain its usefulness for all possible future uses ;
 - (b) protect water catchments ;
 - (c) conserve native fauna and flora ;
 - (d) provide other activities and products that are necessary to achieving, or do not conflict with, the uses above ;
- and that it be uncommitted land and become unoccupied Crown land proclaimed as protected forest.

K2 That the land indicated on the map (11,840 ha) :

- (a) remain under the present legal status pending a review by the Council when recommendations for the Alpine area and North-eastern Area District 3 are being considered ;
- (b) be used as in K1 until such review, provided the options for a reference area are kept open within and immediately adjacent to the cross-hatched area ; and that it be uncommitted land.

L. OTHER RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AREAS

Historic area

For this area of public land, the best use is to preserve Aboriginal relics and areas of historical or archaeological significance.

Specific Recommendation

L1 (Toombullup historic area)

That the area indicated on Plan 7 (265 ha) be used such that various sites (and the surrounding environment) that are associated with Victoria's early history are preserved

and that it be reserved forest.

It is not suggested that the area be developed as a major tourist attraction, but rather that the historical values be preserved, and that public access to the area be strictly controlled.

Bushland areas

Bushland areas are relatively small, often isolated, areas of public land supporting remnants of the local bushland. They are set aside to maintain the local character and quality of the landscape.

Specific Recommendations

L2 (Upton Hill bushland reserve)

That an area of 62 ha indicated on the map be used to maintain the local character and quality of the landscape, with special emphasis on flora conservation

and that it be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 for the purposes stated above.

L3 (Euroa Hill bushland reserve)

That the area (77 ha) indicated on the map be used to maintain the local character and quality of the landscape, with emphasis on the conservation of the white box woodland

and that it be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 for the purposes stated above.

L4 (Bald Hill bushland reserve)

That the area (102 ha) indicated on the map be used to maintain the local character and quality of the landscape

and that it be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 for the purposes stated above.

Flora areas

These areas are reserved to preserve particular species of native plants.

Specific Recommendations

L5 (Tenneriffe flora reserve)

That the area indicated on the map (60 ha) be used to preserve *Acacia penninervis* and that it be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 as a flora reserve.

L6 (Big Hill flora reserve)

That the area indicated on the map (62 ha) be used to preserve *Acacia penninervis* and that it be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 as a flora reserve.

Flora and fauna reserves

These areas are set aside to preserve particular species or associations of native plants and animals.

Specific Recommendations

L7 (Mount Wombat–Garden Range flora and fauna reserve)

That the area of 1,400 ha indicated on the map be used to :

- (a) provide a source of water for domestic use in Euroa (Mountain Hut Creek watershed) ;
- (b) protect and conserve the flora and fauna ;
- (c) provide recreational and educational experiences related to an appreciation of natural environments ;
- (d) provide for firewood and posts where intensity, locality and method of use do not conflict with the primary uses (a) and (b) ;

and that it be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 and managed by the Forests Commission.

L8 (Hat Hill flora and fauna reserve)

That the area of 764 ha indicated in the map be used to :

- (a) protect and conserve the flora and fauna ;
- (b) provide recreational and education experiences related to the appreciation of natural environments ;

and that it be permanently reserved under section 14 of the *Land Act* 1958 and managed by the Forests Commission.

Roadside areas

The primary use of most road reserves is for access and transport. However, the Council recognizes that roadside areas within these reserves often have important nature conservation values and may help maintain the local character and quality of the landscape.

Policy Recommendations

- L9** (i) That road reserves in rural landscapes be used to help maintain the local character and quality of the landscape and that their use in reducing the hazard of fire to and arising from road-users should be consistent with maintaining these values.
- (ii) That the road authorities institute more effective control over removal of road-making material and the rehabilitation of such sites on road reserves.
- (iii) That, because of the importance of indigenous vegetation and fauna habitat on some of these reserves, the relevant management authorities should adequately assess the environmental consequences of any management practices.

Specific Recommendation

- L9** That roadside reserves along the Kelly Gap road be used to conserve the native vegetation and that roadside reserves along the Oak Valley road for a distance of 2 km from the Hume Highway be used to conserve *Acacia penninervis*.

Water frontages

Policy Recommendation

- L10** (i) That, because of the importance of indigenous vegetation and fauna habitat along stream frontages, the relevant management authorities should adequately assess the consequences to the environment of any management practices, including works designed to improve drainage or otherwise alter streams.

Specific Recommendations

- L10** (a) That all reserved stream frontages in this study district be used to conserve native flora and fauna, to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation where appropriate and to maintain the local character and quality of the landscape, and that these frontages remain or be permanently reserved.
- (b) That, where these frontages are subject to water frontage licences, the relevant legislation and regulations should be amended so as to clearly provide for public access to and use of these lands for recreation, such as fishing, picnicking, and walking.

Other reserves (various)

Policy Recommendation

- L11** (i) That, because of the importance of indigenous vegetation and fauna habitat on some existing reserves set aside for various purposes the relevant management authorities should adequately assess the consequences of management practices to the environment.

Specific Recommendations

- L11** (a) That the various other recreation, water, public purposes, wildflower, picnic ground, camping, caravan park, and racecourse reserves not mentioned elsewhere in the recommendations, and also land leased as a golf course, remain under present tenure and control.
- (b) The recreation reserve at Glenrowan (24 ha) should be used to help maintain the local character and quality of the landscape in addition to providing opportunities for organized sport. The reserve contains stands of grey box and Blakely's red gum with associated understorey species such as lightwood and bush-pea.

M. SURVEY AND UTILITIES

Policy Recommendations

- M** (1) That government agencies concerned with provision and installation of communication equipment, transmission lines, pipelines, roads, etc., be requested to submit to the Council during the early planning stages any such proposals that would involve occupation agreements or the setting aside of sites on public land.

This would assist in achieving co-ordinated planning and perhaps help avoid costly resurveys should these become necessary.

Trigonometrical stations

Six trigonometrical stations are located on public land in the district.

Specific Recommendation

- M1** That the minimum area necessary for survey purposes be reserved around trigonometrical stations on public land in the district where it would otherwise remain as unreserved Crown land, and that, where other forms of public land tenure apply, the Department of Crown Lands and Survey have the right to occupy a minimum area around the station and provide lines of sight.

The requirements of the Department of Crown Lands and Survey for the reservation of future trigonometrical stations in suitable locations as yet unknown is also recognized.

Transmission lines

Specific Recommendations

- M2** (a) That the area designated on the map as occupied by S.E.C. transmission lines continue to be used for that purpose and that S.E.C. rights under the *State Electricity Act 1958* continue.
- (b) That the area required for an easement to accommodate a third 330-kv single-circuit transmission line between Dederang Terminal Station and South Morang be uncommitted land (K2) until a review following the final recommendations for District 3. The required additional easement involves little public land in this district, but is of more importance in the Council's North-eastern Study Area District 3.
- (c) That an easement for the proposed duplication of the existing 66-kv sub-transmission line between Benalla and Mansfield should not be within the proposed Reef Hills Regional Park. Council understands that reasonable alternative routes are available.

*Freeways***Specific Recommendation**

- M3** That Council opposes a freeway routed through the proposed Reef Hills regional Park (A2). If a route between the golf links and the proposed park is the only practicable alternative, the Freeway should be sited so as to cause minimum disturbance to the park.

APPENDIX A**PROPOSED PARK CATEGORIES**

A park is here defined as an area of land in a natural or semi-natural condition, reserved because of its scenery, floral and faunal content, historical interest, or other features, which is used by the public primarily for open-space recreation and education.

The four categories listed below are the minimum thought necessary to distinguish between different forms of parkland.

National park

An extensive area of public land, of nation-wide significance because of its outstanding natural features and diverse land types, set aside primarily for public enjoyment, education, and inspiration in natural environments in such a manner and by such means as will leave the natural environment unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

The conservation of native flora, fauna, and other features would be an essential part of national park management. Interpretative services would be provided. Development of facilities would be limited to a very small portion of the park. Activities would largely consist of sightseeing and the observation of flora, fauna, and other natural features. Wilderness areas, which are large undisturbed tracts of land used for solitude and primitive unconfined forms of recreation, could be within a national park. It is envisaged that there would be only a few national parks within Victoria.

State park

An area of public land, containing one or more land types, set aside primarily to provide for public enjoyment, education, and inspiration in natural environments.

State parks would include samples of each major land type not already represented in national parks. Interpretative services would be provided. Development of facilities would be limited to a very small portion of the park. Activities would largely consist of the observation of flora, fauna, and other natural features.

Regional park

An area of public land, readily accessible from urban centres or a major tourist route, set aside primarily to provide open-space recreation in natural or semi-natural surroundings for large numbers of people.

These parks would be intensively developed for passive recreation such as picnicking and walking for pleasure and could include reasonable vehicular access. Although natural beauty would enhance their value, proximity to an urban centre is more important than natural attributes.

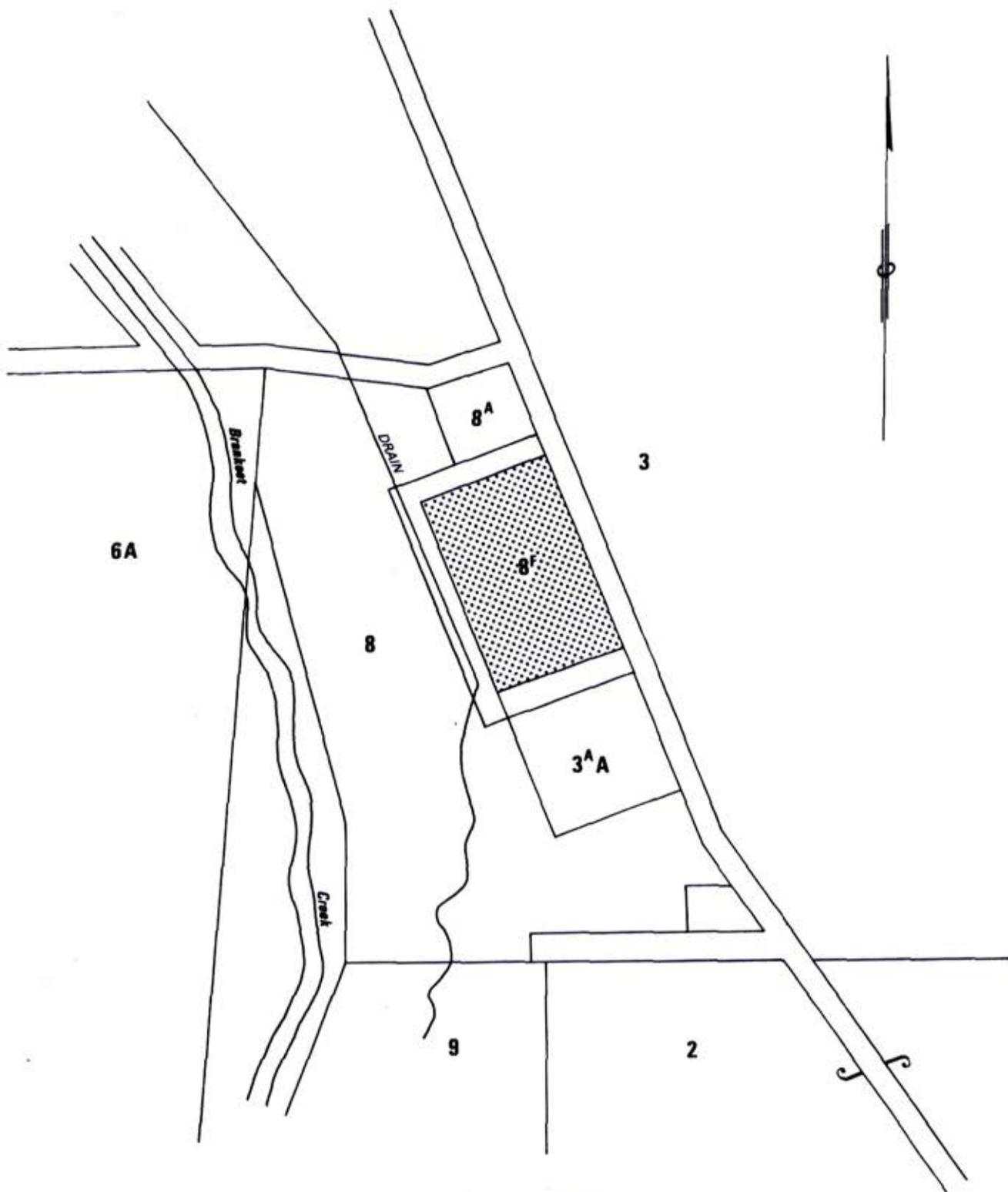
Multi-purpose park

An area of public land set aside primarily to provide recreational and educational experiences in natural surroundings, in which other activities such as hardwood timber production, stone extraction, hunting, or grazing are permitted where these form a part of, do not substantially conflict with, or supplement the primary object.

Victoria contains areas where, although recreation is an appropriate primary use of land, it is not desirable, or necessary, to wholly exclude other uses that would be unacceptable in National or State parks.

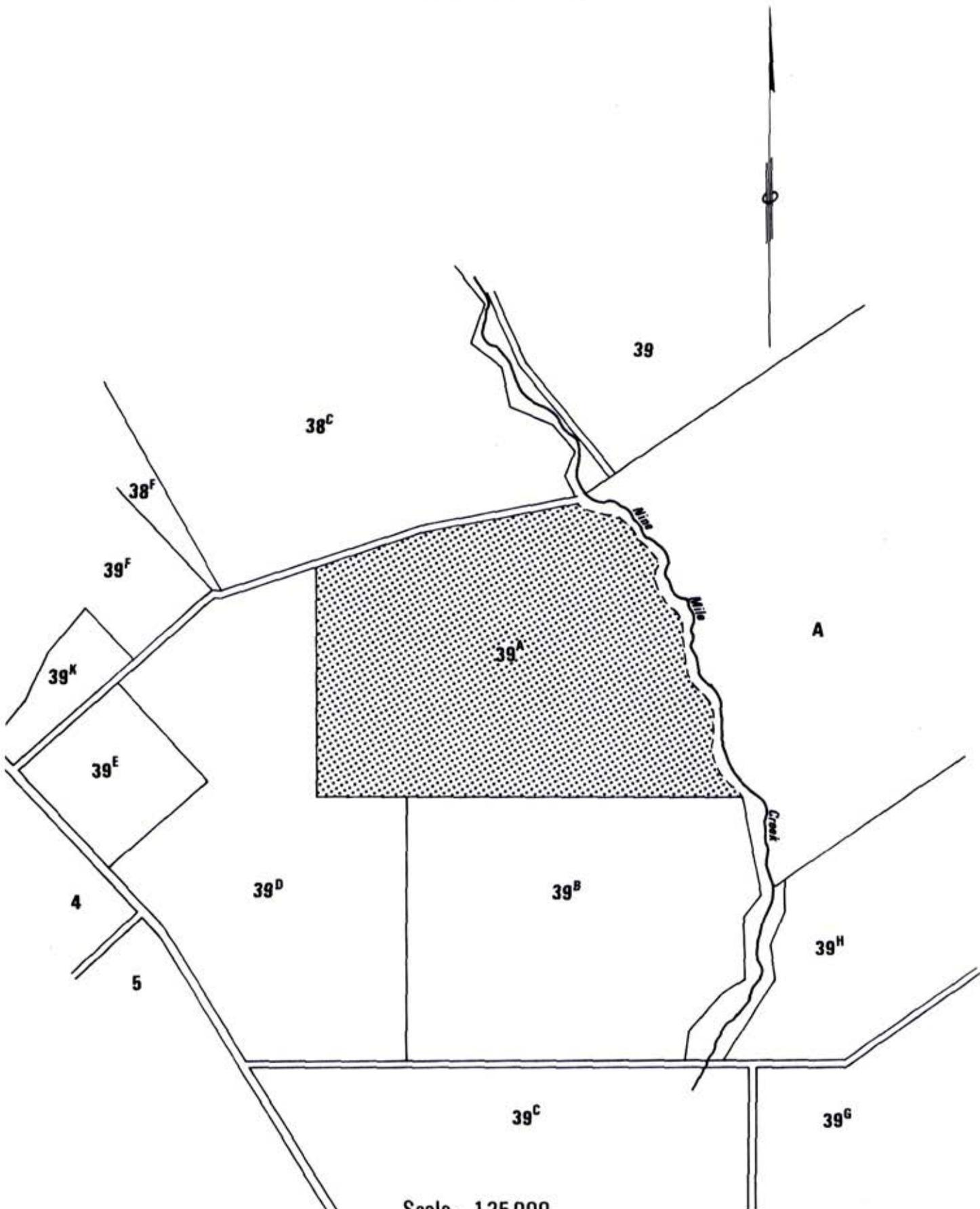
MAPS

BORODOMANIN



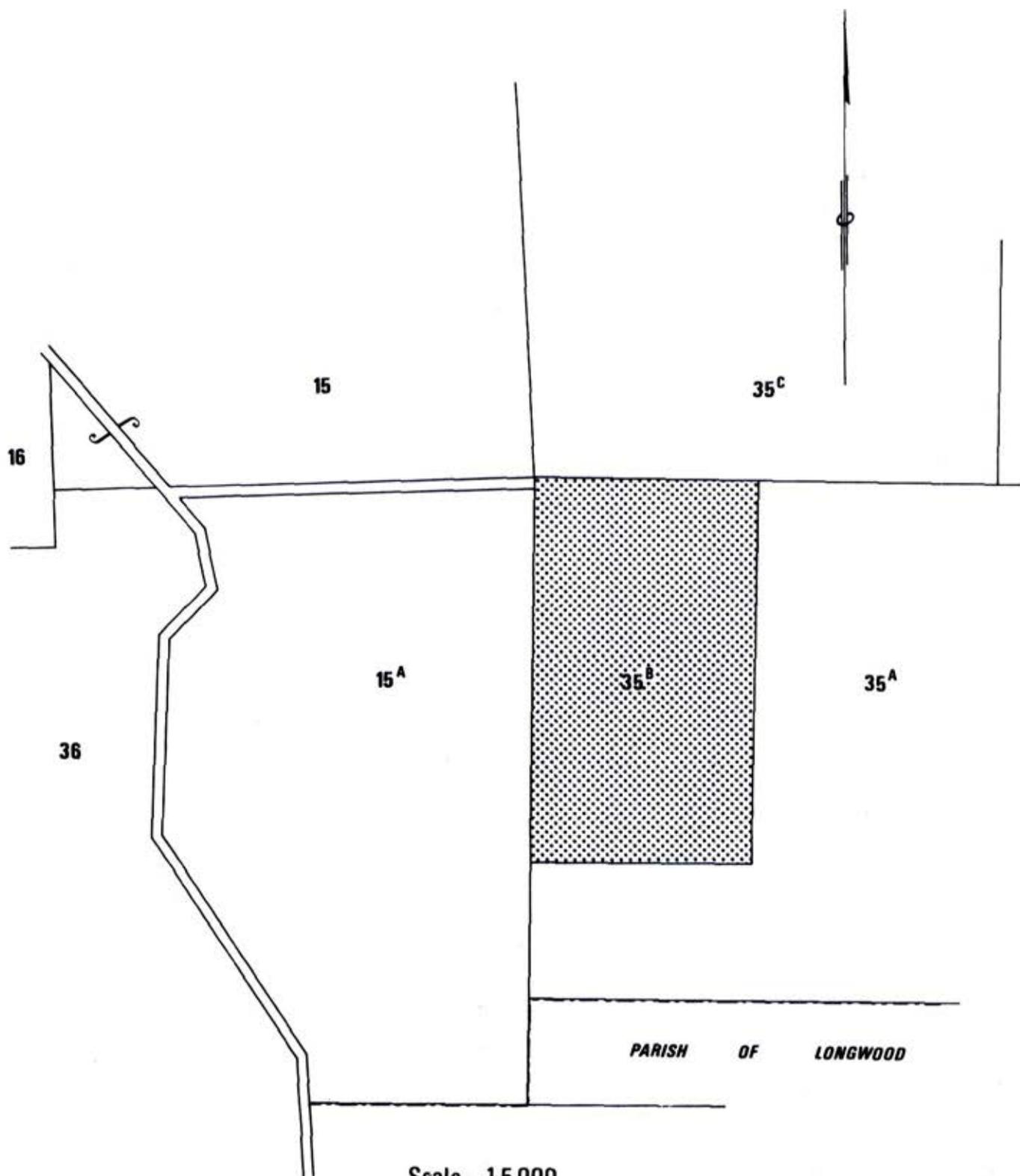
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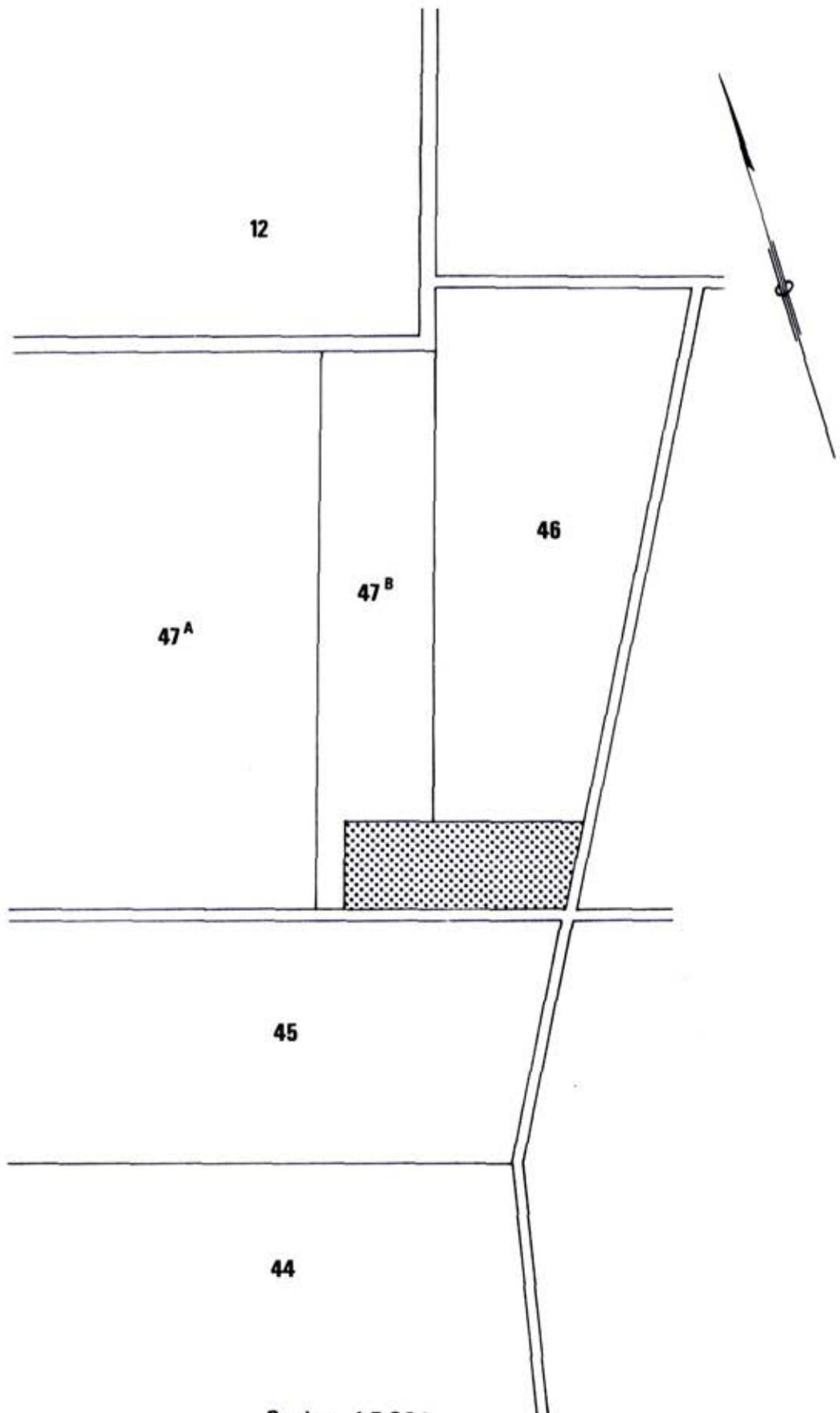


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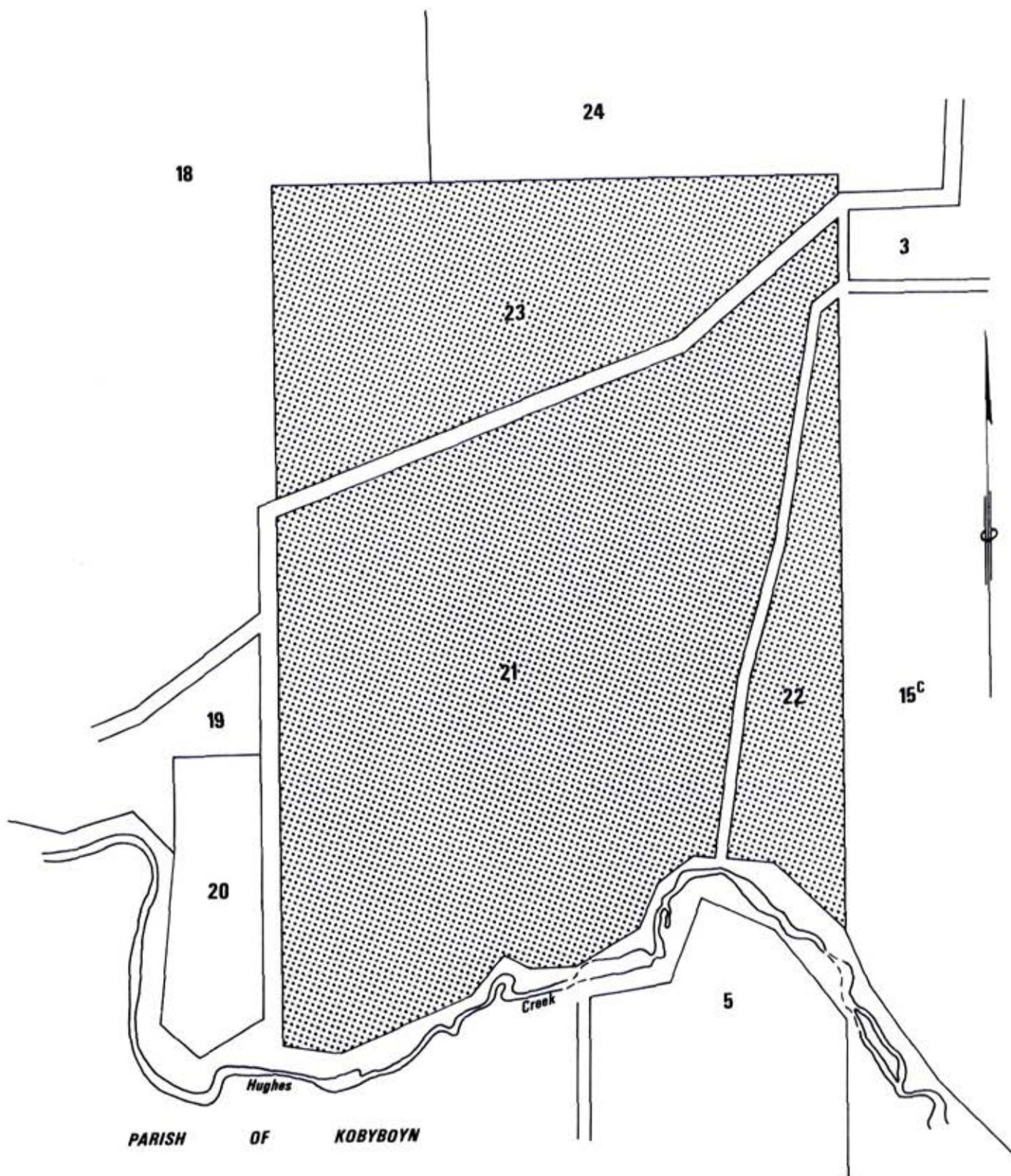


MOORNGAG



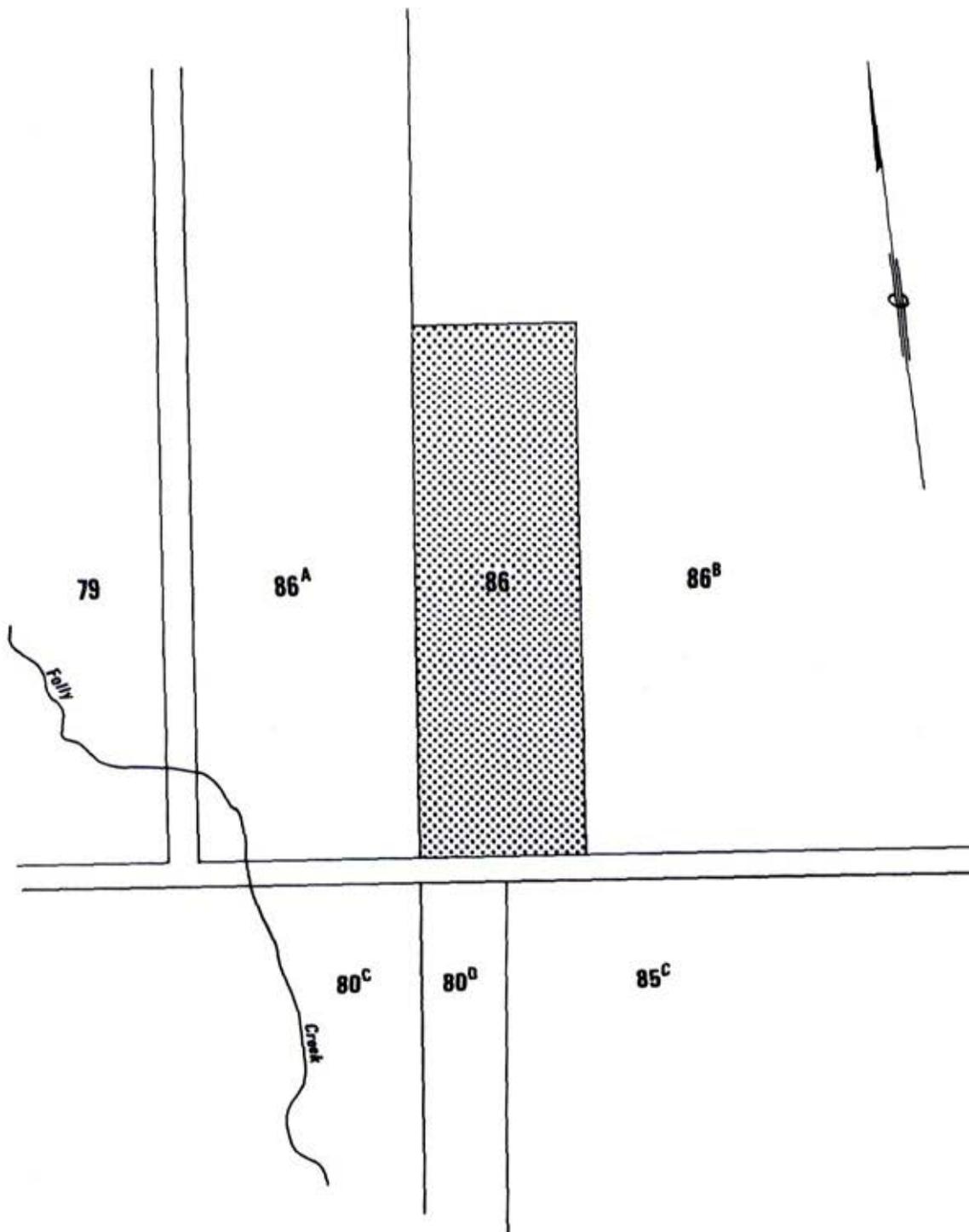
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WARRENBAYNE



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TOOMBULLUP

