

2.17 RgT RISES – gently undulating, TERTIARY

Numerous small areas of Tertiary alluvial deposits occur throughout the study area. These deposits frequently consist of gravels and sands that are cemented by silica and/or iron, and numerous remnants persist as flat topped cappings occupying higher points in the landscape. The cemented gravels occasionally outcrop on the edge of the cappings, or are brought to the surface by cultivation. The soils are invariably shallow and infertile, and where the scrubby native vegetation has been cleared only poor-quality pastures grow. In some areas native shrubs are recolonising the cleared areas.

Geology Tp, Tpb, Tm – Gravel, sand, silt and clay, often ferruginised or lateritised

Rainfall 400 - 850 mm per annum

Slope Average 1%; range 0-10%

Dominant landform element (90%) Broad crest, slope

Minor landform elements (10%) Drainage depression, minor scarp

Soils Dominant: Uc, Uc2.34, Um Uniform sands predominate, usually with an apedal grey or brown sand or loamy sand topsoil and frequently including a pale or bleached A₂ horizon overlying a cemented sandy or gravelly C horizon; soils vary in depth, but all have low water-holding capacities, are droughty in summer, yet may also become waterlogged in winter as the cemented C horizon inhibits water percolation; this provides an adverse environment for plant growth.

Minor: Dy3.41, Db1.13. Brown, yellow or red duplex soils occasionally occur throughout the unit

Native vegetation Where it has been retained the native vegetation comprises a woodland II of *E. melliadora* and *E. polyanthemos*; the understorey is typically sparse and heathy, with common species including *Cassinia arcuata*, *Acacia acinacea*, *A. genistifolia* and various heaths; *Casuarina luehmannii* occasionally occurs in northern areas; the native vegetation is invading many areas previously cleared for pasture

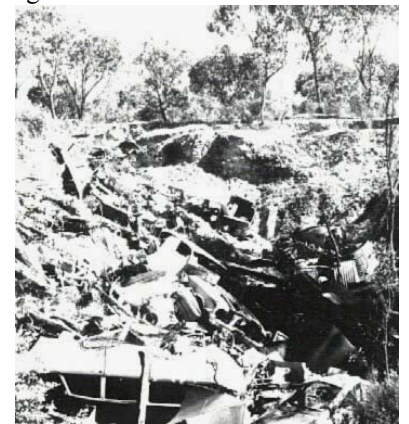
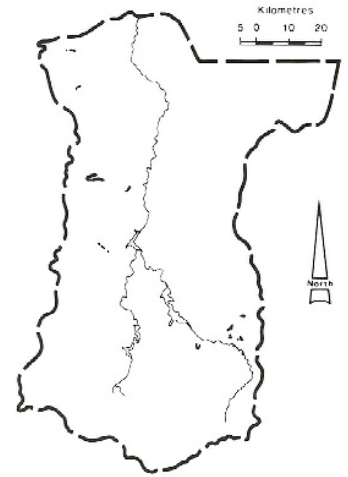
Stone-rock outcrop 0-5%

Pans Silica and iron indurated gravel hardpans extend over most of the mapping unit, varying in depth and thickness, but generally less than 1 m from the surface and more than 1 m thick

Land use The larger gravel deposits have been mined for road construction materials; this strips the areas of surface soil, making revegetation difficult. Some areas are used as municipal tips; others have been cleared and provide low-quality pastures

Observed land deterioration Sheet erosion is extremely common in the gravel-stripped areas, with some associated rill and gully erosion; minor wind erosion also occurs

Susceptibility to land deterioration
Sheet erosion (moderate to high)
Rill and gully erosion (low to moderate)
Wind erosion (low to moderate)



The old gravel scrapes seem to attract illegal rubbish-dumps.

Gold-mining has been a common activity in the areas of Tertiary gravels. A more recent land use has been the stripping of the gravels to obtain road construction materials.