

### 2.30 Rg/uS1 RISES – gently undulating to undulating, SEDIMENTARY, type 1

Extensive tracts of gentle sedimentary terrain throughout the western-central parts of the study area extend south from Kingower to Talbot. Native vegetation has been retained in the bulk of the unit, although the gentler lower slopes and valley floors are frequently cleared for grazing, or less commonly cropping. Gold-mining was prevalent throughout the unit during the later part of last century, and at that time much of the vegetation was cleared to supply the need of then mining community. Scars of that mining era – such as sheet and gully erosion, pits and mullock heaps – can still be found beneath the box-ironbark-gum forests that characteristically cover the goldfields.

The soils have hard-setting surfaces and ground cover is usually sparse. Sheet erosion is common, particularly on the steeper slopes. Gully erosion, and occasionally salting, are other forms of land deterioration.

**Geology** Ol-m – lower middle Ordovician sandstone, shale and slate

**Rainfall** 450-600 mm per annum

**Slope** Average 2-6%; range 1-15%

**Dominant landform element** (85%) Gentle crest, gentle slope

**Minor landform elements** (15%) Sharp crest, drainage depression, steeper slope

**Soils** Dominant: Dr2.41, Dr2.42, Dr3.41, Dr2.22. Red duplex soils on the gentle slopes and crests, with loamy, poorly structured, hardsetting topsoils that frequently contain fragments of sedimentary rock; subsoils are coarsely structured, acidic to neutral and sometimes mottled; the soils are usually less than 1 m deep, and overlie fractured and frequently weathered bedrock

Sub-dominant: Dy3.2, Dy3.41, Db2.41. Yellow to brown mottled sodic duplex soils on the lower slopes and in depressions which are essentially poorer-drained variants of the red duplex soils; the A<sub>1</sub> horizon is grey, loamy and hardsetting, and the pale to bleached massive A<sub>2</sub> horizon frequently contains fragments of stone and sometimes small amounts of buckshot; subsoils are typically acidic

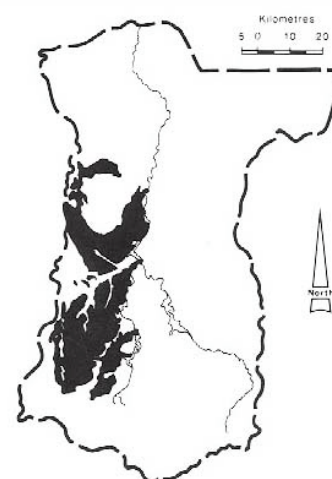
Minor: Gn3, Gn4.11, Gn4.54. Shallow soils with greyish brown, stony loam surface textures which become more clayey and red, or less commonly, pale to red or reddish yellow at depth are common on the upper slopes and sharper stony crests; these soils grade into deeper red duplex soils on the slopes

**Native vegetation** The woodlands to open forests II of *E. microcarpa*, *E. leucoxyton* and *E. sideroxyton* are characteristic of the goldfields; *E. sideroxyton* and *E. microcarpa* occur on the upper slopes, with occasionally associated species *E. polyanthemus*, *E. macrorrhyncha* and *E. goniocalyx* while *E. microcarpa* and *E. leucoxyton* grow on the lower slopes, occasionally with *E. melliadora* and *E. camaldulensis* in the larger drainage depressions; *Acacia pycnantha*, with its attractive golden flowers in late winter, is widespread; the understorey is characteristically open, and usually grassy or heathy, the heathy areas containing numerous plant species and offering colourful displays in spring

**Stone-rock outcrop** Surface stone common on the upper slopes, but virtually absent on the lower slopes and depressions

**Pans** Nil or not observed

**Land use** The forested areas supply limited quantities of timber products such as firewood, sleepers and posts, and also support a scattered but important apicultural industry; prospecting for gold is an extremely popular recreation, and the fold-fields still yield substantial quantities of nuggets – some areas, such as those around Kingower, are more intensively mined in business ventures; significant residential areas adjoin the larger towns of Maryborough and Dunolly; the remaining cleared areas support grazing, or less commonly cropping



**Observed land deterioration** Numerous forms of deterioration are evident: the weakly structured, hardsetting topsoils shed water readily, and sheet erosion is prevalent; the increased run-off, combined with the moderately dispersible subsoils on the lower slopes, frequently leads to gully erosion; salting occurs in some lower-lying areas of the landscape

**Susceptibility to land deterioration**

Sheet erosion (moderate to high)

Gully erosion (moderate to high)

Compaction (moderate)

Salting (moderate)



*Many areas bear the scars of past gold-mining exploits.*