

2.33 RuS RISES – undulating, SEDIMENTARY

An area of low rises covered with mallee vegetation, and locally known as the ‘Whipstick’, adjoins the study area boundary north of Bendigo. The soils are generally shallow and stony, with low water-holding capacities and low nutrient stores giving rise to the poor vegetation type. The soils frequently contain ferruginised rock and may be underlain by a mottled hardpan that may be the remains of a highly weathered land surface. The area, although with a low potential for agricultural land use, provides a valuable reserve for a variety of native plants and animals. Careful management is required to maintain the loamy topsoils, which are readily eroded by water.



Geology Olm, Olb, Omd, Ola – interbedded Ordovician shales and sandstones

Rainfall 400-500 mm per annum

Slope Average 3%; range 1-10%

Dominant landform element (90%) Crest, slope

Minor landform elements (10%) Drainage depression, sharp crest

Soils Dominant: Gn3.75, Gn3.2, Gn3.1. Shallow stony red or yellow gradational soils, often with pale A₂ horizons that may contain buckshot gravel; the loamy topsoils, if remaining, are thin and poorly structured; the soils have low water-holding capacities and nutrient level

Minor: Um1. Very shallow uniform stony loams on some sharper, rockier crests

Dr2.42, Dr2.41. Reed duplex soils with bleached A₂ horizons on some lower slopes with an A₂ horizons frequently full or ferruginised stone fragments; the subsoils are seldom mottled, and are acidic to neutral at depth

Native vegetation Mallee vegetation predominates throughout, with *E. viridis*, *E. behriana* and *E. polybractea* forming on open scrub to open forest I, but some lower slopes and drainage depressions carry non-mallee eucalypts – mainly *E. leucoxyton*, *E. sideroxyton*, *E. microcarpa* and *E. polybractea*; common understorey species in the mallee areas include *Acacia williamsonii*, *Melaleuca uncinata*, *M. decussata* and *Eriostemon verrucosus*

Stone-rock outcrop 0-10%; occasional ferruginised rock outcrop to 50%

Pans Hardpans of highly weathered and lateritised rock commonly occur, often at shallow depth

Land use A large proportion of the native mallee vegetation cover has been retained and preserved in reserves; many areas support harvesting of the eucalypts leaves for oil, and some carry limited rural residential housing; the ‘Whipstick’ is also a popular recreational destination

Observed land deterioration Sheet erosion is extremely common, especially in areas cleared for agricultural or used for eucalypt-leaf harvesting; minor gully erosion occurs in some drainage depressions

Susceptibility to land deterioration

Sheet erosion (high)

Gully erosion (low)

Wind erosion (low)



The ‘Whipstick’; an extensive area of mallee vegetation north of Bendigo, is now preserved in two State parks managed by the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands.