

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a field project undertaken in the west and south Gippsland region of Victoria between May and December 2002. The work is a component of the larger Gippsland Dairy Riparian Project funded by the Dairy Research and Development Corporation and GippsDairy. The aim of the larger project is to determine, demonstrate and communicate Best Management Practices for riparian habitats in landscapes dominated by dairy farming.

In this project, we surveyed 107 sites and conducted 28 landholder interviews to gain information on the variation in the ecological condition of riparian habitats and management practices among farmers in the west and south Gippsland region. The specific aims of the project were:

- To determine the current condition of riparian habitats across the west and south Gippsland dairy region.
- To investigate the relationships between landholder management practices and riparian condition.
- To make recommendations for management practices that could be investigated at demonstration sites planned for the region.