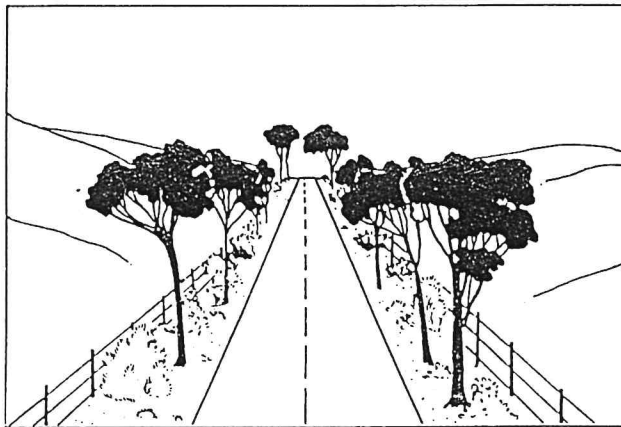


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Department of Biodiversity,
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SURVEY OF ROADSIDE CONSERVATION VALUE



Roadside Conservation Committee

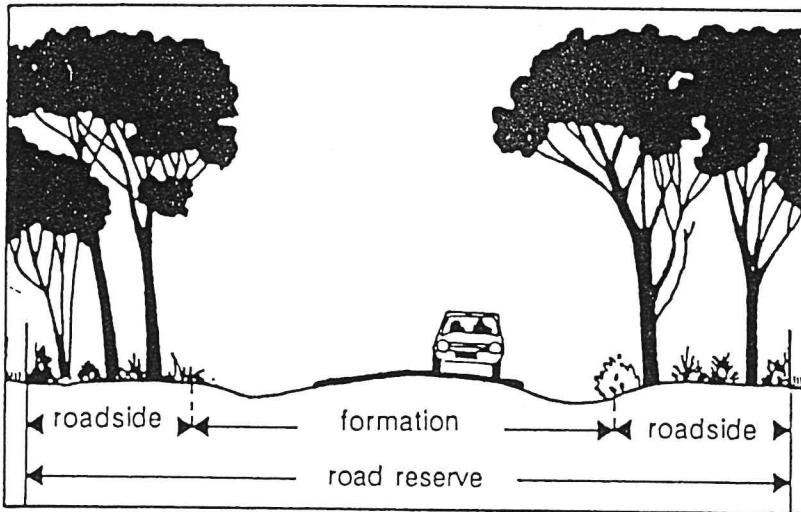


INTRODUCTION

THE ROAD RESERVE

When a public road is created a corridor of land is dedicated for this purpose and called the road reserve.

The road formation and its associated drainage works are accommodated within the road reserve. The remaining space is called the roadside.



Care, control and management of the road reserve is carried out by the organisation in which the road reserve is vested – usually Main Roads Western Australia or a Local Government Authority.

In order to plan their roadworks so that important areas of roadside vegetation are not disturbed, road managers should know of these areas. Consequently the Roadside Conservation Committee is coordinating a register of roads important for conservation.

The register will also be important for service authorities such as Western Power, Alinta Gas, Telstra and the Water Corporation, which often use the road corridor for the location of their services.

UNDERTAKING THE SURVEY

BEFORE YOU START

- ❖ Use a map that gives the NAMES of roads (eg. Castrol Country Road Directory).
- ❖ Decide on the region you wish to survey.
- ❖ Check with the RCC 9334 0423 which roads have already been surveyed in that region.

Date	_____
Observer(s)	_____
Road name	_____
Shire	_____
Nearest named place	_____
Direction of travel (N,S,E,W)	_____
Section no.	_____
Starting point	_____
odometer reading	_____
Ending point	_____
odometer reading	_____
Length of section	_____

1. SELECTING A ROAD

- ❖ Select a public road that has not already been surveyed.
- ❖ Proceed to an identifiable starting point for that road, eg. T-junction with another road.
- ❖ Note the road name, starting point and odometer reading.
- ❖ Drive slowly along the road, completing the survey sheet for both sides of the road.

2. CHANGING SECTIONS

- ❖ Use one survey sheet for each section of road.

For your first few sheets, when to start a new section will be the most difficult thing to decide.

- ❖ As a general rule, a new section is started when there is a change in the quality of the roadside vegetation over a distance of 500m or more.
- ❖ Some roadsides may be uniform along their length, and so need only one survey sheet.
- ❖ On others, some feature of the road may change significantly, for example:
 - change in road reserve with, say from 20m to 60m
 - road passes from State Forest into farmland
 - roadside changes from mostly native vegetation to mostly weeds (over a length greater than 500m).

For changes such as these, start a new sheet.

Don't change to a new sheet if there's only a change in native vegetation type. For example, many wheatbelt roads repeatedly traverse the whole range of topographically controlled vegetation types, from kwongan (scrub) on the sandy lateritic uplands, through woodlands on the fertile red soils to salt scrub in valleys. Change sections if there is a change in the quality of the vegetation but not if it is merely a change in vegetation type.

- ❖ Note the odometer reading at change over point. This will give the length of section 1 of the road.
- ❖ Section 2 will continue until another marked change is observed when section 3 will begin, etc.
- ❖ Number each section on the survey sheet.
- ❖ Occasionally note down the odometer reading for some identifiable point, eg a side road. (This is very useful as an office check on the accuracy of your odometer!)
- ❖ Clip together all sheets pertaining to one particular road.
- ❖ Change to a new sheet when you change roads.

3. WIDTH OF ROAD RESERVE

- ❖ Road widths were measured in chains (approx 20m). Early roads were usually one chain wide, or a multiple of this. Road reserve widths are therefore normally 20, 40, 60 or 100m wide.
- ❖ With a little practice, it is easy in agricultural regions, to recognise these, as fences delineate the edges of the road reserve. However, in uncleared land, such as forest, it may be difficult to tell on the ground where the road reserve stops and the forest starts. In this case write "unknown".

WIDTH OF ROAD RESERVE (m)

Side of the road

Left

Right

WIDTH OF VEGETATED ROADSIDE

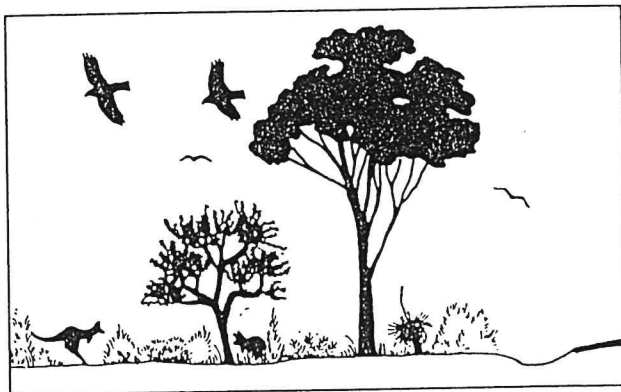
1-5 m

5-20 m

over 20 m

4. WIDTH OF VEGETATED ROADSIDE

- ❖ This is a measure of how much land is left along the roadside. Again, with practice, it is easy to recognise the width categories.
- ❖ Ignore this section where the road passes through unfenced land such as National Park, State Forest, etc.



5. NATIVE VEGETATION ON ROADSIDE

- ❖ Undisturbed native vegetation in WA either forms forest, woodland, mallee, kwongan (scrub or sandplain) or grassland.
- ❖ Most formations have more than one layer. For example, woodland has not only trees, but also a scrub layer and a ground layer that contains such plants as reeds, everlastings and orchids.
- ❖ If one or more of the expected layers is missing, the conservation value of the area is reduced. In the wheatbelt, for example, roadside woodland is often represented only by trees and introduced grasses forming the ground layer.

NATIVE VEGETATION ON ROADSIDE

Tree layer
Shrub layer
Ground layer

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. EXTENT OF NATIVE VEGETATION ALONG ROADSIDE

- ❖ Note whether the native vegetation is continuous along the road section, or interrupted by weeds or other disturbances.

EXTENT OF NATIVE VEGETATION ON ROADSIDE

Less than 20%
20-80%
over 80%

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. NUMBER OF DIFFERENT NATIVE SPECIES

- ❖ This is a measure of the diversity of the vegetation and so of its conservation value.
- ❖ Make an average estimate over a 100m length of roadside. It does not have to be done in detail.
- ❖ Please do not list dominant species unless you are sure of your identification (common names will do).

8. WEEDS

- ❖ Estimate an average of weediness over the section being considered. It should be estimated as a percentage of total plants along the section.
- ❖ On some roadsides, especially those with York Gum and Jam, there may be good tree and shrub cover but the ground layer is totally weeds. Please note this.

WEEDS

Few weeds (<20% total plants)
 Half weeds (20-80% total)
 Mostly weeds (>80% total)
 Ground layer totally weeds

TYPES OF WEEDS

Complete this section if you know name of weeds present. It should be an estimate of the percentage of total weeds along the section. This information can be used to produce an overlay map of weed infestation.

Wildoats
 <20% total weeds
 20-80% total weeds
 >80% total weeds

Lovegrass
 <20% total weeds
 20-80% total weeds
 >80% total weeds

Bridal Creeper
 <20% total weeds
 20-80% total weeds
 >80% total weeds

Others (provide approx. % of weeds)

9. VALUE AS A BIOLOGICAL CORRIDOR

- ❖ In cleared areas, the road reserve can be very important as a corridor for movement of animal – especially birds – enabling them to seek out feeding and nesting areas.
- ❖ It is important to know if such corridors link remnants of bush.

VALUE AS A BIOLOGICAL CORRIDOR

Connects uncleared areas

☐☐

Flowering shrubs

☐☐

Large trees with hollows

☐☐

Hollow logs

☐☐

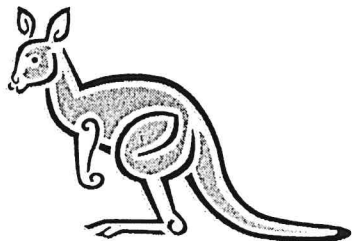
FAUNA OBSERVED

Rabbits (evidence of)

☐☐

10. FAUNA OBSERVED

- ❖ Brief notes only, please.
- ❖ Indicate if there is any evidence of rabbit activity.



11. PREDOMINANT ADJOINING LAND USE

- ❖ Ignore small land use changes (ie less than 500m long).
- ❖ The road reserve is most valuable as a conservation area where it is a corridor of remnant vegetation in an otherwise cleared landscape.
- ❖ Where a road runs through or alongside a National Park or Nature Reserve, that area represents the main conservation region and the road reserve merely compliments it.
- ❖ Through the pastoral regions, unless the road reserve is fenced to exclude grazing stock, its conservation value can be considered merely an extension of the surrounding land.
- ❖ If a rail or drain reserve parallels the road, record also the land use on the far side of it.

PREDOMINANT ADJOINING LAND USE

Agricultural crop or pasture:-

- completely cleared

- scattered

Uncleared land

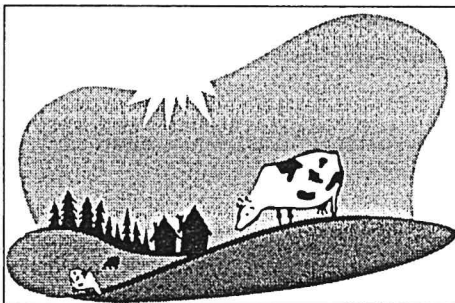
Plantation of non-native trees

Urban or industrial

Railway Reserve parallel to road

Drain Reserve parallel to road

Other



12. UTILITIES/DISTURBANCES

- ❖ The road reserve is often used as a site to locate public service utilities. Electricity and telegraph lines and water pipelines are often built on the roadside. To construct and maintain them native vegetation may be destroyed and so their presence is detrimental to the conservation value of the roadside.
- ❖ Vegetation may be destroyed in discrete areas for other reasons, such as gravel or sand quarry, metal dumps or hardstanding for machinery park.
- ❖ Some landowners have ploughed the roadside outside their fence to act as a firebreak. This not only destroys native vegetation but provides a good habitat for weed growth.
- ❖ Ignore disturbances if they are not obvious

Utilities/Disturbances

Disturbances continuous

☐☐

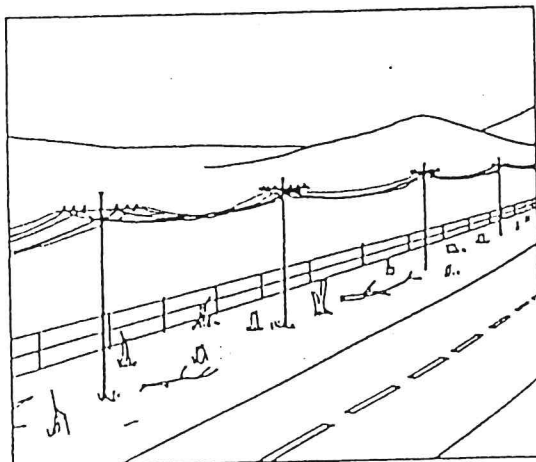
Disturbances isolated

☐☐

Disturbances absent

☐☐

Type



13. CONSERVATION VALUE

- ❖ What is your opinion of the conservation value of the road and why? (for example, if there are a number of different vegetation types along the road).

Conservation Value

High

☐☐

Medium

☐☐

Low

☐☐

Reasons

14. LANDSCAPE VALUE

- ❖ What is your opinion of its landscape value?
- ❖ An avenue of trees contributes greatly to the scenic effect of the road, especially if they arch over the road and form a tunnel.

Landscape Value

High

☐☐

Medium

☐☐

Low

☐☐

Reasons

15. GENERAL COMMENTS

- ❖ You may like to write in here further detail, for example, presence of wildlife.

GENERAL COMMENTS



THANKS!