

Bushfire Impacts on Koala Habitats in the Greater Blue Mountains

5th December 2019.

Background to study sites: Figure 1 below shows a map indicating the five study locations identified for surveys and ecological studies of koalas as part of the Blue Mountains Koala Project. Work at the South East Wollemi/Hawkesbury site is largely completed, community engagement continues along with radio-tracking of rehabilitated koalas. The Kanangra-Boyd study site has been extended into the Megalong Valley based on recent koala records and habitat mapping is almost complete, ecological studies of koalas are continuing. The Lower Blue Mountains site is due to be initiated in 2020 and the remaining sites in subsequent years.

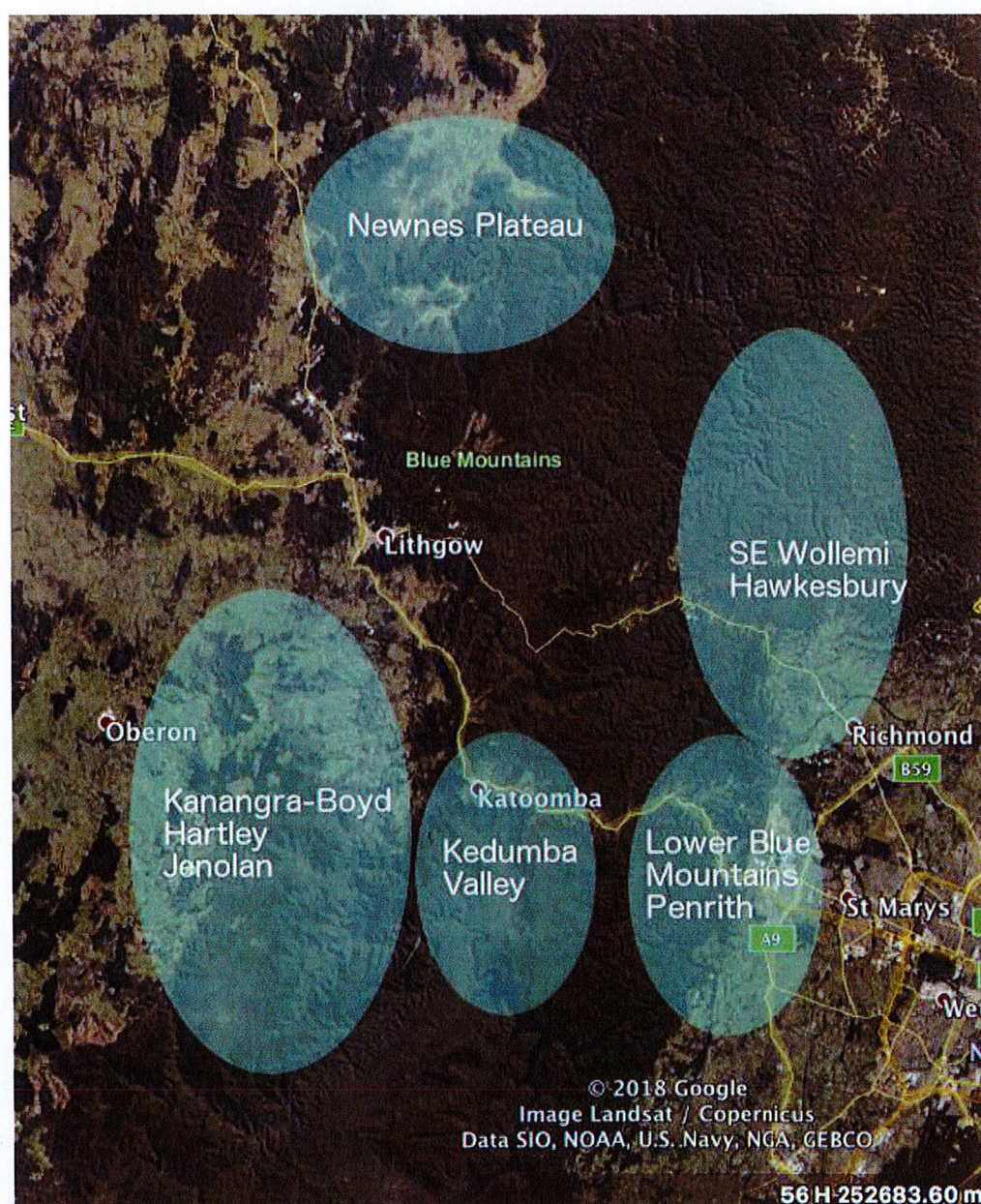


Figure 1. Map of study sites identified for the assessment of koala status and ecology as part of the Blue Mountains Koala Project.



Figure 2. Map showing the extent of the Gopfers Mountain bushfire on December 5th 2019, overlaid across koala habitats mapped at the first study site of Blue Mountains Koala Project. Koalas at this site were included in the genomic analysis published in Kjeldsen et al (2018) and found to be part of the most genetically diverse koala population sampled in Australia.

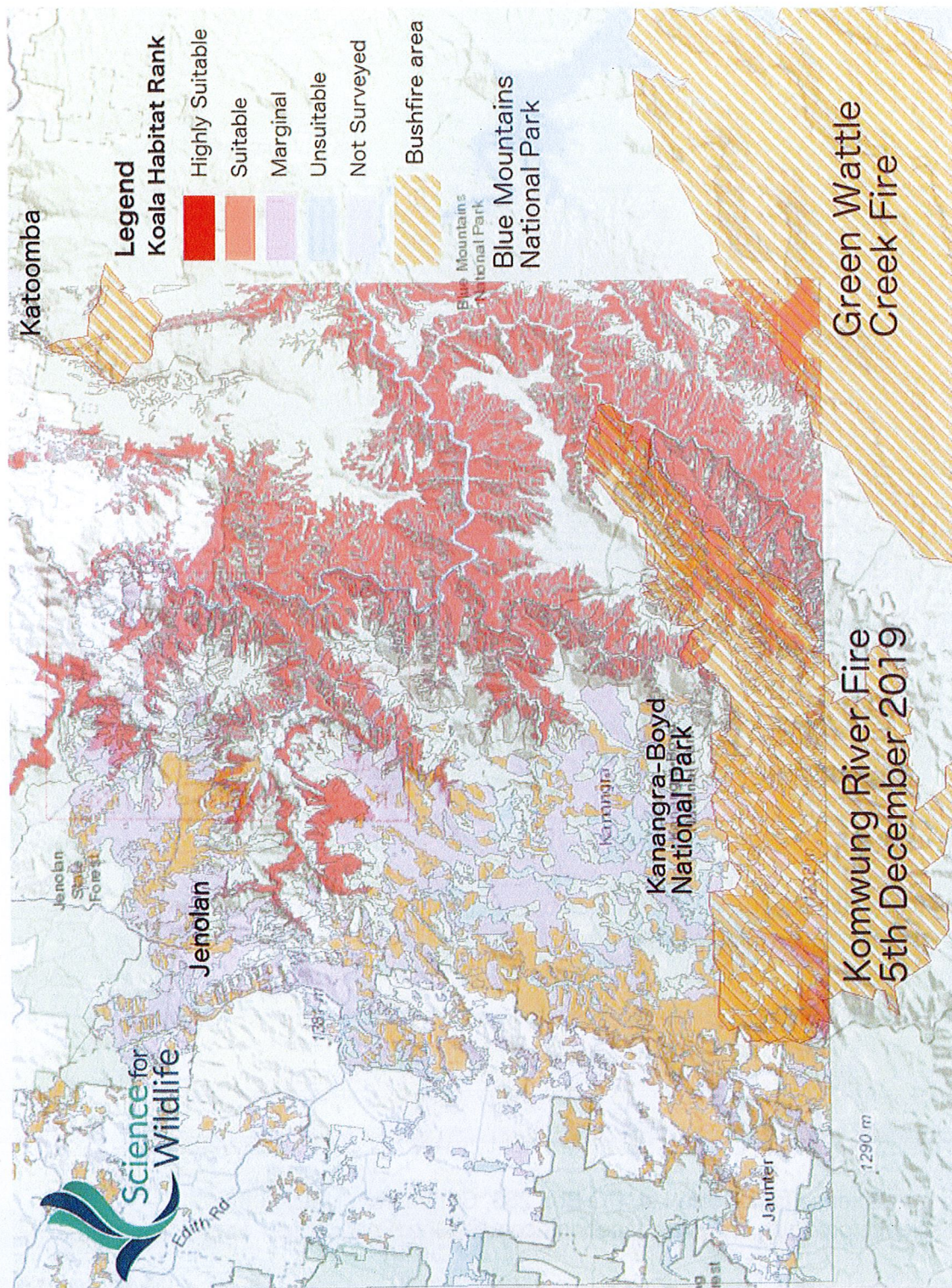


Figure 3. Map showing the extent of two bushfires in the region of Kanangra-Boyd National Park on December 5th 2019, overlaid across a draft koala habitat map for the 2nd study site.

Reference: Kjeldsen S.R., Raadsma, H. W., Leigh, K. A., et al (2018). Genomic comparisons reveal biogeographic and anthropogenic impacts in the koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*): a dietary-specialist species distributed across heterogeneous environments. *Heredity*.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41437-018-0144-4>

Document tendered by
DR KELLIE LEIGH
Received by
ANDREW RATCHFORD
Date: 09 / 12 / 19
Resolved to publish Yes / No

Prepared by Dr Kellie Leigh
Executive Director, Science for Wildlife