

Information Sheet



South Gippsland
Shire Council

The Giant Gippsland Earth Worm Overlay (ES09)

What is the Giant Gippsland Earthworm?

The Giant Gippsland Earthworm (*Megascolides australis* – the earthworm), is one of the world's largest earthworms and is only found in about 40,000 hectares approximately between Loch, Korumburra and Warragul.

Where does the Earthworm live?

Suitable habitat is generally moist, blue-grey clay soils on, or close to, flat land near streams or soaks. The earthworms can be found on steep areas and watercourses on south or west-facing slopes. They live in complex permanent burrows that extend to around 1.5 m in depth.

What is Proposed?

Amendment C107 introduces maps to the Planning Scheme known as an overlay. The overlay shows areas of likely habitat to help landowners identify where this endangered species may live. By avoiding any disturbance to these areas, habitat is protected and fines and delays to development can be avoided.

The Amendment;

- Introduces new planning permit requirements for buildings, works and some earthworks suitable earthworm habitat;
- Exempts minor buildings and works (less than 200 square metres) associated with farming;
- Exempts lots less than 8,000 square metres within a Residential, Township or Industrial Zone;
- Includes a Reference Document which has practical handling information and background on the earthworm.



What is an overlay?

An overlay is a map or area in a planning scheme that describes special features, such as suitable habitat for earthworms.

This overlay shows where caution is required if soil is to be disturbed.

How was this map made?

This overlay uses accurate habitat modelling developed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) and has already been applied in Baw Baw Shire. The maps identify the soil types and conditions where earthworms may be present. By preserving where they might live, we can protect the individuals and their colonies.

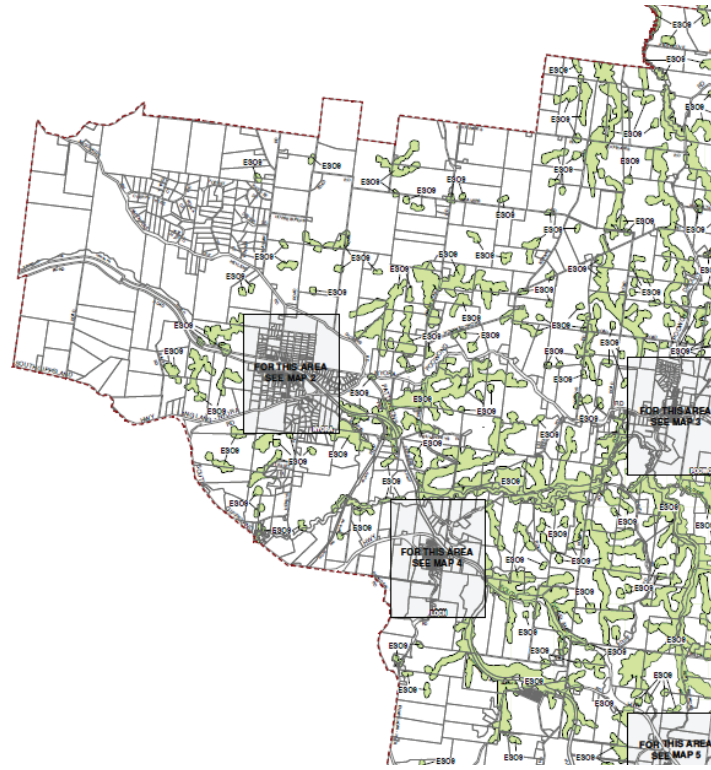
What happens if I find worms on my property?

If you want to develop call Council immediately on 5662 9200 or the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) on 5172 2111. Practical information about how to treat unearthed worms, including how to relocate them at: www.giantearthworm.org.au and in the Reference Document which forms part of this Amendment.

Always keep an unearthed worm horizontal as holding them vertically ALWAYS results in their death. Ideally, worms should be left alone or relocated very carefully, see the Reference Document for instructions.

How much will a survey cost?

Council will come to your land at no charge to determine whether a more detailed survey is required. The cost of a more detailed survey will depend on the area needing investigation. Biological or ecological surveyors can provide a quote.



You can find view which areas are affected by the C107 overlay at www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au



Where can I get more information?

Please visit the South Gippsland Council Webpage and refer to Amendment C107 or visit www.giantearthworm.org.au

South Gippsland Shire Council
www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au
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