Soft mulga

Landform	Flat to gently undulating plains.
Woody vegetation	Mulga, false sandalwood, cypress pine, poplar box, beefwood and ironwood.
Expected pasture composition	* *Denotes non-native "Expected Pasture Composition" species*.
Preferred	Silky umbrella grass, cotton panic, mulga oats, kangaroo grass, mulga Mitchell grass, buffel grass*.
Intermediate	Golden beard grass, silky heads, curly windmill grass, woollybutt, purple lovegrass, mountain wanderrie grass, bottlewasher grasses.
Non-preferred	Wiregrasses (e.g. Jericho, dark), five-minute grass, three-awn wanderrie grass, rough speargrass, greybeard grass.
Legumes	Slender tick trefoil, native indigo, Birdsville indigo.
Suitable sown pastures	Buffel grass, digit grass.
Introduced weeds	
Soils	Shallow to moderately deep (50–120 cm) red sandy or loamy earths.
Description	***Surface:*** Loamy hard or moderately hard surfaces; ***Surface texture:*** light sandy loam to clay loams; ***Subsoil texture*****:** clay content increasing down profile to light to medium clays.
Water availability	Low to very low.
Rooting depth	Shallow
Fertility	Low (phosphorus, carbon, nitrogen).
Salinity	Very low.

Sodicity

Non-sodic

pH

Usually acid throughout profile of red loams.

Long-term carrying capacity information (A condition)

Based on fully watered area for 1AE = 450 kg animal consuming 8kg DM/day				
Median annual rainfall 469– 558 mm				
Pasture type	Median tree cover (TBA m^2/ha) (FPC %)	Median annual pasture growth (DM kg/ha)	Safe annual utilisation pasture growth (%)	LTCC (ha/AE)
Native species	0 TBA/FPC	1390 - 1500	15%	13 - 14
	6 TBA 15 FPC	670 - 750	15%	26 – 29

Enterprise

Breeding ewes and cows.

Land use and management recommendations

- Mulga fodder provides drought protein reserves.
- Stock lightly during dry periods and post drought to maintain ground cover to minimise water and wind erosion, and to maximise rainfall capture.
- Use fire opportunistically as management tool to control woody weeds and dense mulga.

Land use limitations

- Fragile grazing lands.
- Wiregrasses often predominate in areas cleared of mulga and on sandier soils.
- Mulga density and/or woody weed invasion commonly limits pasture growth.
- Strip clearing is preferable to clearing of large areas to minimise erosion and degradation
- Soil nutrient deficiencies (phosphorus, sulphur, calcium, magnesium), acidity and poor surface structure.
- Dense stands of burrs (galvanised) and broad-leaved weeds (weir vine, pigweed, mulga fern, pimelea) may limit pasture growth, productivity and be toxic to stock.

Conservation features and related management

- A high diversity of birds including babblers, thornbills, honeyeaters, pardalotes, parrots such as Mallee ringneck, blue bonnet and red-winged parrot can be found in the soft mulga woodlands.
- Mulga groves also provide habitat for the rare and threatened pink cockatoo, painted honeyeater, yakka skinks and the woma python.
- Native mammals found here include swamp wallaby, dunnarts and Forrest's mouse – particularly where good ground cover is maintained.
- Many areas have been extensively cleared or thinned, and significant areas are in poor condition due to irreversible sheet erosion.
- A grazing regime that allows spelling and control of feral animals (especially goats) can help to maintain cover in the ground layer and prevent erosion.
- Use of fire could assist in controlling woody weeds and enhance productivity and habitat potential of the land zone.

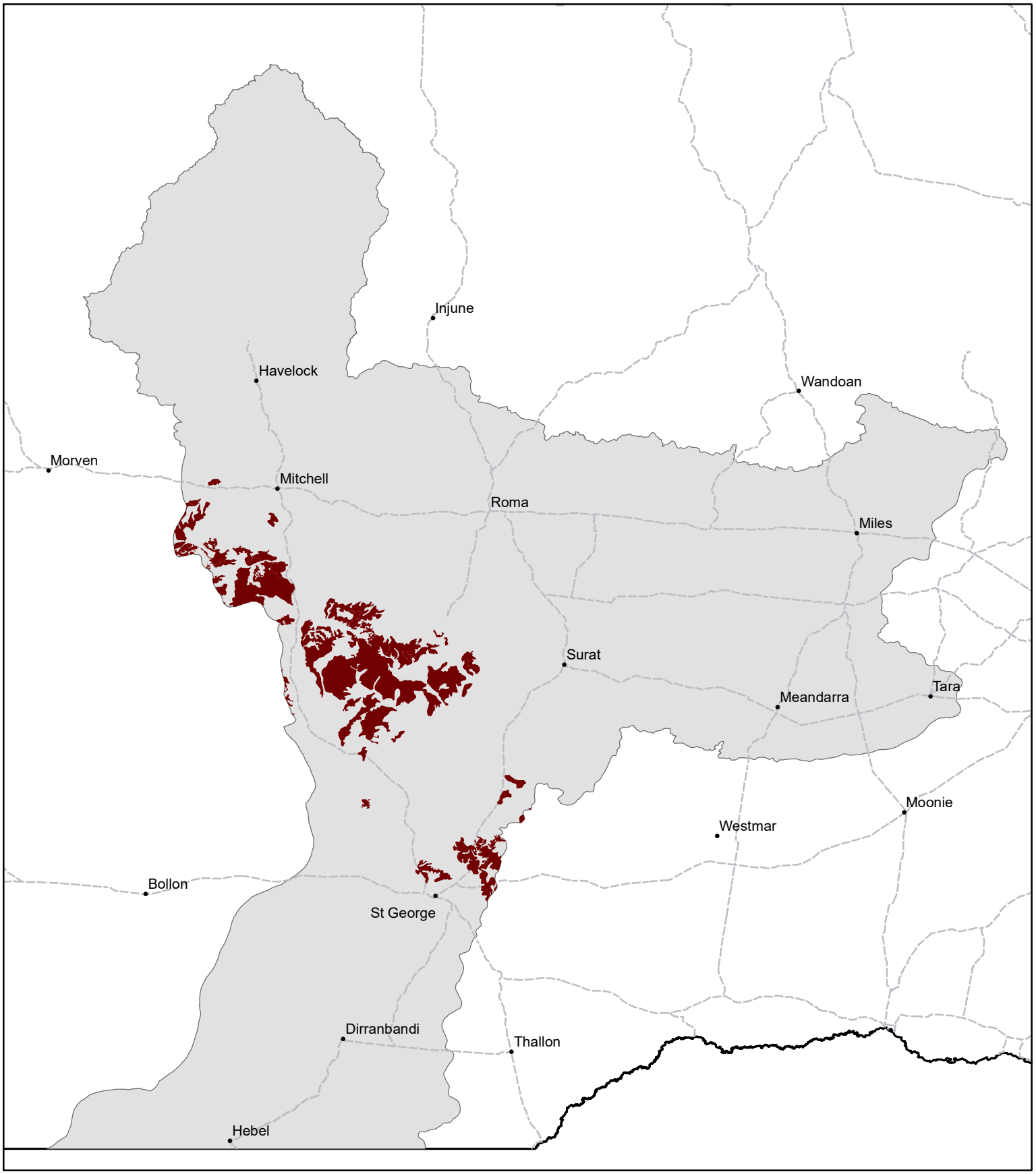
Regional Ecosystems

6.5.1.

Land units; Map units; Land resource areas; Soil associations

Land Units (Galloway *et al* 1974) 24; Map Units (DPI 1984) 3 (89), 43; LRA, (DPI 1987) Areas of soft mulga may occur in 4 – Coogoon, 10 - Macwood.

MB17 Soft Mulga*



Area of land type in region: 0.3%
Median rainfall (region): 400 – 615 mm
Average rainfall (region): 438 – 630 mm
Area of land type with FPC: 32%
Median FPC: 49%
Median TBA: 21 m2/ha

* MB17 Soft Mulga is only present as a subdominat mapping unit.

Queensland Government