

Accepted development vegetation clearing code

Managing regulated regrowth vegetation

Effective 7 February 2020

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***Landholders** are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Acts and regulations relevant to their operations, and to seek advice from the department if required.*

Glossary

The following technical terms and their definitions are essential to understanding this accepted development vegetation clearing code (code). Where used in the text, the terms are italicised and bold. All other terms in the text that are italicised and bold, and are **not** included in the below table have the meaning provided for in the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#)¹.

Term	Definition
<i>Acid sulfate soil</i>	Is soil, sediment or other material containing iron sulfides and/or acidity generated by their breakdown.
<i>Aerial application</i>	Means applied from an aircraft or drone.
<i>Agricultural land class A or B</i>	Is the land shown on the State Planning Policy Interactive Mapping System as Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Class A and Class B or identified by a local government in a local planning instrument as ALC Class A or Class B land, based on localised study. Mapping is available on Queensland Globe or in a Vegetation Management Property Report for the lot, which can be requested at www.qld.gov.au .
<i>Agriculture</i>	Is <i>broadacre cropping</i> or <i>horticulture</i> .
<i>Broadacre cropping</i>	Is the commercial cultivation and harvest of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sugar cane and tea • plants for oil, such as canola, mustard and sunflower • plants for fibre, such as cotton and hemp • cereal or pseudo cereal plants such as (including any forage varieties): wheat, rice, barley, oats, rye, chia, triticale, sorghum, quinoa, maize and millets • pulses or leguminous plants such as: lupins, chickpeas, cowpea, faba beans, field peas, mung beans, navy beans, soybeans, lentils, peanuts, guar, dolichos and lucerne <p>Note: Does not include growing pasture to be grazed by livestock.</p>
<i>Coordinated project</i>	Is a project declared as a coordinated project under the <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i> .

¹ A list of terms defined in the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* is available in the [General guide to the vegetation clearing codes: Accepted development vegetation clearing codes](#).

Term	Definition
Defining bank	<p>Is the bank that confines the seasonal flows, but which may be inundated by flooding from time to time, and can be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bank or terrace that confines the water before the point of flooding • where there is no bank, the seasonal high water line which represents the point of flooding.
Diameter	<p>Is the width of a tree trunk measured at 1.3 metres above the ground.</p>
Ecological processes	<p>Is a range of natural processes which maintain an ecosystem, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hydrological processes • soil development • nutrient cycling • chemical processes including storage of nutrients • decomposition and cycling of organic matter • pollination and seed production • seed dispersal • predator-prey relationships • germination and recruitment of species • the carbon cycle and stability of atmospheric carbon • habitats for flora and fauna (such as particular regional ecosystems, logs, rocks, debris, leaf litter, nectar, hollow bearing trees, food and shelter).
Exempt clearing work	<p>Has the meaning given in Schedule 24 (Dictionary) of the Planning Regulation 2017.</p> <p>Note: A list of exempt clearing work is available at www.qld.gov.au.</p>
Ground cover	<p>Is any plant matter, either dead or alive, woody or non-woody, that covers the surface of the ground (either attached or detached), e.g. grasses, shrubs, tree and grass leaf litter, twigs, logs, branches etc.</p>
Habitat tree	<p>Is a living or dead standing native tree that contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more visible hollows positioned at least two metres above the base of the tree² or • an active bird's nest or the nest of a raptor or other bird that uses the same nest each year.

² **Habitat trees** are used, or potentially used, by hollow-dwelling fauna.

Term	Definition
Horticulture	Is the commercial cultivation of plants for harvesting including fruits (e.g. berries, grapes and nuts), vegetables, flowers, stems, roots or leaves, and commercial cultivation of turf grass species for turf harvesting.
Immature tree	Is any native woody vegetation (other than a mature tree or habitat tree) that is two metres or more in height.
Impact area	<p>Is the total area to be cleared in a category C area or category R area that requires an exchange area to be legally secured under section 4.4 of this code.</p> <p>Note: The total area to be cleared includes the area below the limit specified in this code and the area that exceeds the specified limit in this code.</p>
Island	Is any mapped regulated vegetation that is less than 10 hectares in size and is further than 200 metres from any other regulated vegetation . This includes ' islands ' that are within or straddle lot boundaries.
Koala habitat area	See the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 , section 7B.
Landholder	<p>Is (where relevant):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the registered proprietor of freehold land • a lessee of freehold land, subject to the consent of the freehold owner to make a notification • a lessee of a lease under the Land Act, provided the clearing is consistent with the purposes of the lease • a sub-lessee of a lease under the Land Act, provided the clearing is consistent with the purposes of the lease, and subject to the consent of the lessee to make a notification • a licensee or permittee under the Land Act provided the clearing is consistent with the conditions of the licence or permit • the holder of the title or tenure to the land. <p>Note: For the purposes of section 3 of this code, a reference to a landholder includes a reference to a third party who has notified to clear under this code in accordance with section 2 of this code.</p>
Landholder consent	Is a written agreement between a third party and a landholder to enter, access and undertake clearing or other works on the land.
Land zone	Are categories that describe the major geologies, associated landforms and geomorphic processes in Queensland. The land zone can be identified by the middle number in the three digit regional ecosystem identification code. For example, the regional ecosystem identified by the code 12.3.4 is in land zone 3 .

Term	Definition
Low shrub	Is any native woody vegetation less than two metres in height.
Mature tree	Is a native tree that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a <i>Eucalyptus</i>, <i>Corymbia</i>, <i>Lophostemon</i> or <i>Angophora</i> species ('gum' or 'box' trees) with a single trunk or several trunks with a diameter of 30 centimetres or more • another tree species such as a wattle, with a single trunk with a diameter of 20 centimetres or more; or several trunks with a diameter of 25 centimetres or more. <p>(If there are several trunks, add the diameters of the largest two trunks.)</p>
Mechanical clearing	Is the clearing of vegetation using any of the following methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slashing • Brush cutting • Machinery which disturbs the soil surface or uproots woody vegetation
Managing regrowth density	Is the selective clearing of vegetation at a locality to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restore the floristic composition and range of densities typical of the regional ecosystem in the bioregion in which it is located; and • maintain ecological processes and prevent loss of biodiversity.
Public safety risk	Is where vegetation occurs in an area in which the public frequent that threatens the public with injury or danger.
Recognised best practice methods	Is a method recognised by a State or Federal government agency to prevent increased soil erosion and instability , stabilise soil erosion and instability and prevent increased sediment run-off. This includes a guide such as the Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland (3rd edition) , a fact sheet or other advice published or provided by a State or Federal government agency.
Regional ecosystem structure category	Is a vegetation density category that is allocated to each regional ecosystem . It can be found within the Regional Ecosystem Description Database on the Queensland Government website or in a Vegetation Management Property Report for the lot, which can be requested at www.qld.gov.au .
Regrowth management burn	Is a burn that is planned and undertaken for the purpose of managing regrowth density and which restores the range of plant species, size classes, and vegetation densities typical of the regional ecosystem . Note: A regrowth management burn is not for the purpose of reducing hazardous fuel loads. ³

³ Reducing hazardous fuel loads by fire under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, is **exempt clearing work**.

Term	Definition
Regulated vegetation	Is a category A area , category B area , category C area or category R area .
Root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides	Are broad spectrum herbicides that are primarily absorbed by the roots of plants, rather than the shoots. Note: Examples of root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides are hexazinone (Velpar) or tebuthiuron (Graslan).
Salinity expression area	Is an area containing more than one of the following salinity indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant species tolerant of saline conditions, shallow water tables or poor drainage (waterlogging)⁴ • Wet areas in lower parts of the landscape or bare soil (soil scalding) • Dieback of larger trees in low, wetter parts of the landscape (outside drought conditions or the effects of fire) • Salt accumulations on the surface (often white and powdery, sometimes crystalline) • Areas of shallow groundwater⁵
Seasonal high water line	Is a zone that represents the usual peak seasonal flow level, identifiable by deposition, debris or characteristic vegetation zonation.
Self-audit	Is an assessment made either by the landholder , a person who cleared under the code on behalf of the landholder , or a third party to evaluate whether the clearing is consistent with this code, using the department's self-audit form for Managing Regulated Regrowth Vegetation, which is available at www.qld.gov.au .
SEQ lot	Means a lot that is located partly or entirely within the SEQ Region under the Planning Regulation 2017, section 4 and schedule 1.
Soil erosion and instability	Is gully erosion greater than 30 centimetres in depth, landslips, a scarp, soil scalding or stream bank slumping.
Target low shrub species	Is a low shrub species which comprises more than 50 per cent of the ground cover in the area covered by a notification made under this code.

⁴ For example—*Melaleuca* spp. (in particular *Melaleuca bracteata* and *Melaleuca quinquenervia*), *Sporobolus* spp. (in particular saltwater or marine couch), *Salsola australis* (soft roly-poly), *Sclerolaena* spp. (in particular prickly roly-poly), *Cyperus* spp. (sedges), *Juncus* spp. (rushes), *Atriplex* spp. (saltbushes), *Paspalum* spp. (water couch), *Enchylaena tomentosa* (ruby saltbush), *Sesuvium portulacastrum* (purslane), *Tecticornia* species (samphires), *Phragmites* spp.

⁵ A water table less than five metres from the surface would generally be considered as shallow for this purpose. One mechanism to identify this is from a nearby bore.

Term	Definition
Threatening process	<p>Is a process that includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fragmentation • climate change • weather events • weed and pest (animal and plant) infestations • fire • disease • land degradation (e.g. erosion, acid sulfate soil or salinity issues) • predation
Weed	<p>Is any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A non-native plant⁶ • Restricted or prohibited matter declared under the <i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i> • Cadaghi (<i>Corymbia torelliana</i>) and Umbrella Tree (<i>Schefflera actinophylla</i>) in Southeast Queensland bioregion

⁶ The Census of the Queensland Flora, which is undertaken annually by the Queensland Herbarium, provides a current list of plants considered non-native to Queensland. Further information can be found on the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au (search for “flora census”).

1. Introduction

The [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#) (Vegetation Management Act), in conjunction with the [Planning Act 2016](#) (the Planning Act) and subordinate legislation, regulates the **clearing** of **remnant vegetation** and **regulated regrowth vegetation**. This code, which was made by the Minister on 23 December 2019 (effective 7 February 2020) in accordance with section 19O of the Vegetation Management Act and the [State Policy for Vegetation Management](#), is approved as an **accepted development vegetation clearing code** under part 2, section 3 of the [Vegetation Management Regulation 2012](#).

Clearing in accordance with this code is accepted development under schedule 7, part 3, section 12 of the Planning Regulation 2017.

*Note: Other legislation may also affect your intended **vegetation** management activities. Before you notify the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) of your intention to **clear regulated regrowth vegetation** under this code, it is strongly recommended that you contact the relevant agencies listed in [Appendix 1](#) to determine whether your proposed activity is allowable under other local, state and federal laws.*

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this code is to regulate the **clearing** of **regulated regrowth vegetation (category C areas and category R areas)** in accordance with requirements designed to meet the objectives outlined in [section 1.3](#). If the activity does not comply with this code or another code, it is classified as either assessable or prohibited development under the Planning Act and may be subject to the relevant offence provisions⁷.

Note: All sections of this code are mandatory and to ensure you are compliant with this code, you must satisfy the requirements in all sections.

1.2 Scope

This code applies to **clearing regulated regrowth vegetation** in **category C areas** and **category R areas** that is on any of the following land:

- **Freehold** land
- **Indigenous** land
- Leasehold land granted under the *Land Act 1994* for agriculture or grazing purposes—**clearing** on a lease must be consistent with the purpose of the lease
- Land subject to an occupational licence under the *Land Act 1994*

⁷ DNRME uses satellite imagery to monitor compliance with vegetation management legislation.

This code authorises **clearing** for the following purposes:

- **Managing regrowth density**
- **Coordinated projects**
- **Agriculture**
- To address a **public safety risk**⁸

This code **does not** apply to any of the following activities:

- **Clearing** inconsistent with a condition of a **development approval** that remains enforceable.
- **Clearing** inconsistent with a condition applied by the Coordinator General for a **coordinated project**.
- **Clearing** of **vegetation** that is **exempt clearing work** under schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 except where schedule 21 refers to **clearing** under this code.
- **Clearing** of **vegetation** that complies with schedule 7, part 3, section 13 of the Planning Regulation 2017 being operational work for necessary firebreaks or fire management lines.

1.3 Objective

The objective of this code is that **clearing** in **category C areas** and **category R areas** achieves the following environmental outcomes:

- Avoids and minimises impacts on **regulated regrowth vegetation**
- Enhances the floristic composition and range of densities typical of **regional ecosystems**
- Prevents **land degradation**
- Maintains **ecological processes** and **biodiversity**
- Maintains bank stability, water quality and habitat of **wetland**, **watercourse** and **drainage features**

1.4 Commencement date

This code became effective on 7 February 2020, replacing the following superseded code:

- *Managing regulated regrowth vegetation, effective 21 June 2019.*

Notifications made under the superseded Managing regulated regrowth vegetation code effective 21 June 2019 continue to be valid and allow you to clear under this code (effective 7 February 2020) for the areas notified. All notifications lodged on or after 7 February 2020 are limited to the notification limitations in section 2.2 of this code.

⁸ **Clearing** that is necessary to remove or reduce the 'imminent risk' that the **vegetation** poses of serious personal injury or damage to infrastructure is **exempt clearing works** under the Planning Regulation 2017. 'Imminent risk' means the risk is likely to happen at any moment. **Clearing** to address a **public safety risk** under this code provides for situations which do not involve an imminent risk.

***Note:** If you notified under the superseded Managing regulated regrowth vegetation code effective 21 June 2019, you do not need to re-notify under this code unless you want to do additional clearing to that already notified, or the notification has expired.*

1.5 Assistance

Queensland Government staff are available to help **landholders** meet their legal obligations so if—after reading this code—you have questions or want to make sure you’re doing the right thing, contact us by calling 135 VEG (135 834) or emailing vegetation@dnrme.qld.gov.au.

2. Notification requirements

Before any **clearing** is undertaken under this code, DNRME **must** be notified of your intended **clearing** activity by either:

1. the **landholder**⁹
or
2. a third party¹⁰.

***Note:** If you are a third party making a notification over someone else’s land, you need **landholder’s consent** to enter, access and undertake **clearing** on their land.*

2.1 Notification process

1. If your intended **clearing** requires legally securing an **exchange area** in accordance with [section 4.4](#), before notifying, first legally secure the **exchange area**.
2. If you are not the **landholder**, acquire the authorisation to notify on the **landholder’s** behalf, or consent to enter, access and undertake works on their land where required.
3. Complete the online or hard copy notification form, which requires that you provide certain information, including:
 - a. contact details
 - b. the lot on plan on which the activity is proposed
 - c. the tenure of the property (i.e. whether **freehold**, leasehold, or other)
 - d. information that clearly identifies the location of the intended **clearing**

⁹ This includes a person authorised to notify on the **landholder’s** behalf, such as someone who holds a power of attorney.

¹⁰ For example, a mining company seeking to clear a utility corridor on private land.

4. Lodge the completed form with DNRME.
5. Receive confirmation of your notification from DNRME before commencing any **clearing** of **regulated regrowth vegetation**.

Note: If you are notifying online, you should receive an email within 10 minutes that confirms receipt of your notification.

2.2 Notification limitations

All of the following limitations apply to notifications made under this code:

1. A notification is limited to a single lot. If your property consists of multiple lots, you may lodge a notification for each lot.
2. Each notification is limited to one **clearing** purpose. If you wish to **clear** for multiple purposes on a lot, you may lodge a notification for each purpose.
3. A notification remains in effect for two years from the date DNRME issues confirmation of your notification¹¹, or until ownership of the property changes, whichever is the sooner.
4. Each notification made for **managing regrowth density** is limited to:
 - a. For an **SEQ lot** that has one or more **koala habitat areas** mapped on the lot—for each notification made: 10 hectares per lot; and
 - b. For all other lots (including an **SEQ lot** that has no **koala habitat areas** mapped on the lot) -for each notification made: 100 hectares per lot.

You may make a subsequent notification to **clear** to **manage regrowth density**. However, before lodging the notification, you must undertake a **self-audit** to ensure that the **clearing** already undertaken has satisfied the code requirements. If the results of the **self-audit** indicate that your **clearing** is consistent with the requirements in this code, you may renotify. Otherwise, you should contact DNRME.

5. **Clearing** for **agriculture** under this code is limited to a maximum of 10 hectares in total for both **category C areas** and **category R areas** combined per lot¹². Once a **landholder** reaches the maximum limit of 10 hectares, no further notifications for **clearing** for **agriculture** can be made under this code.

¹¹ Notifications do not transfer on title. If you have recently purchased the property and intend to undertake **clearing** in **regulated regrowth vegetation** for a purpose authorised by this code, you must first notify DNRME.

¹² This includes **clearing** under this code for **agriculture** by a former **landholder**.

*For example: You notified the department of your intention to **manage regrowth density** across an area of 100 hectares on a lot that has no **koala habitat areas** on 17 June 2019. You managed the 100 hectares over the months from July to November 2019. You undertook a **self-audit**, and the results indicate your **clearing** was consistent with the requirements in this code. In August 2020 you need to undertake additional management of **regulated regrowth vegetation** on the same lot. Because you have undertaken a **self-audit**, and the results indicate the area **cleared** satisfies this code, you can notify DNRME of your intention to **manage regrowth density** across another area of the same lot.*

3. Compliance requirements

To comply with this code, you **must** do all of the following:

1. Notify DNRME in accordance with the notification requirements (section 2 of this code).
2. Conduct your **clearing** in accordance with all of the requirements relevant to the purpose of the **clearing** (section 4 of this code).
3. Keep all of the following records and make them available to DNRME upon request:
 - a. If **managing regrowth density**, or **clearing** to address a **public safety risk**, pre-clearing photographs and GPS coordinates of the site that the pre-clearing photographs are taken.
 - b. If **clearing** for **agriculture**, a map that shows that the area is **agricultural land class A or B**.
 - c. An **exchange area** management plan, where relevant.
 - d. Appropriate records detailing the progress and effectiveness of all **exchange area** works, management actions and outcomes in accordance with the management plan.
4. Keep all **self-audit** results, where relevant, and make them available to DNRME upon request.

4. Clearing requirements

Clearing must comply with all of the following:

1. **Clearing** requirements for **coordinated projects**, to address a **public safety risk** or **agriculture** in [section 4.1](#).
2. Requirements for **managing regrowth density** in [section 4.2](#).
3. Soil and water quality protections in [section 4.3](#).
4. **Exchange area**¹³ requirements in [section 4.4](#), if section 4.1 requires you to legally secure an **exchange area**.

¹³ Before undertaking **clearing** that requires legally securing an **exchange area**, it is recommended that independent legal and financial advice is obtained regarding the impact of any subsequent certification of a **property map of assessable vegetation (PMAV)** or **declared area** (voluntary).

4.1 Clearing requirements for coordinated projects, to address a public safety risk or agriculture

Section 4.1 of this code applies to the *clearing of vegetation* for a *coordinated project, public safety risk, or agriculture*.

4.1.1 Avoid and minimise requirements for coordinated projects

Clearing is only permitted under this code for a *coordinated project* if all of the following are satisfied:

1. The *coordinated project* cannot reasonably be located in *category X areas* or existing *cleared* areas¹⁴.
2. As much of the *clearing* is located in *category X areas* or existing *cleared* areas as reasonably possible.
3. All possible steps are taken to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimise to the greatest extent possible, *clearing*:
 - a. within riparian protection zones listed in Table 2
 - b. in *essential habitat*
 - c. of *habitat trees*.

4.1.2 Clearing limits for coordinated projects and to address a public safety risk

Clearing for *public safety risk* and *coordinated projects* must comply with all of the following *clearing* requirements:

1. Total *clearing* in *essential habitat, endangered regional ecosystems* or *of concern regional ecosystems* must not exceed the limits in Table 1, unless an *exchange area* that complies with section 4.4 of this code is legally secured.

Clearing under this code for a *coordinated project* may be undertaken by multiple notifications. However, where *clearing* is undertaken by way of two or more notifications for the same *coordinated project*, *clearing* for this requirement must be calculated by including any other prior *clearing* under this code for the *coordinated project*, and an *exchange area* must be legally secured prior to the combined *clearing* exceeding the limits in Table 1.

2. *Clearing* must not occur in riparian protection zones specified in Table 2, unless an *exchange area* that complies with section 4.4 of this code is legally secured.

¹⁴ It may not be reasonable to locate the *coordinated project* in *category X areas* or existing *cleared* areas due to the nature of the *coordinated project* or the landscape. In this case, it is reasonable to locate the *coordinated project* within *regulated regrowth vegetation*.

3. Where a **category C area** or **category R area** provides the only connection between two or more areas which are mapped as any of the following:

- a. **category B area**
- b. **category A area**
- c. a **wetland**
- d. **essential habitat**

both of the following apply **unless** an **exchange area** that complies with section 4.4 of this code is legally secured:

- i. **Clearing must not** occur within an area of **vegetation** that is less than 100 metres in width.
- ii. **Clearing must not** reduce the width of **vegetation** to less than 100 metres.

Table 1: Clearing area limits for coordinated projects and to address a public safety risk

Regional ecosystem structure category*	Clearing area limits for coordinated projects and public safety risk
Dense and mid dense	0.5 hectares
Sparse and very sparse	2 hectares
Grassland	5 hectares

Notes:

* The **regional ecosystem structure category** can be found within the *Regional Ecosystem Description Database* on the Queensland Government website or in a Vegetation Management Property Report for the lot, which can be requested at www.qld.gov.au.

Table 2: Riparian protection zones for coordinated projects, agriculture, and to address a public safety risk

Water feature	Riparian protection zones *
Wetlands	100 metres
Watercourses and drainage features	
Stream order† 1 or 2	10 metres
Stream order 3 or 4	25 metres
Stream order 5 or more	50 metres

Notes:

* The riparian protection zone includes the area between the **defining banks** of the **watercourse, drainage feature** or **wetland**, plus the specified distance measured from the **defining bank** away from the water body.

† Stream order is shown on the vegetation management supporting map.

4.1.3 Clearing limits for agriculture

Clearing for **agriculture** must comply with all of the following **clearing** requirements:

1. **Clearing** is only permitted under this code for **agriculture** if the **agriculture** cannot reasonably be located in a **category X area** or an existing **cleared** area.
2. **Clearing** is only permitted under this code for **agriculture** on areas that are mapped as **agricultural land class A or B**.
3. **Clearing** must not occur in any of the following areas:
 - a. **essential habitat**
 - b. **koala habitat area**
 - c. **endangered regional ecosystems**
 - d. **of concern regional ecosystems**
 - e. riparian protection zones specified in Table 2
 - f. slopes greater than 5 per cent where **clearing** is for annual **agriculture**
 - g. slopes greater than 10 per cent where **clearing** is for perennial **agriculture**
 - h. an **island**
4. **Clearing** in a **category R area** must not exceed one hectare.
5. **Clearing** for **agriculture** under this code must not exceed a maximum of 10 hectares in total for both **category C areas** and **category R areas** combined per lot¹⁵
6. Where a **category C area** or **category R area** provides the only connection between two or more areas which are mapped as any of the following:
 - a. **category B area**
 - b. **category A area**
 - c. a **wetland**
 - d. **essential habitat**
 - e. **koala habitat area**both of the following apply:
 - i. **Clearing** must not occur within an area of **vegetation** that is less than 100 metres in width.
 - ii. **Clearing** must not reduce the width of **vegetation** to less than 100 metres.
7. **Clearing** must not result in the creation of an **island**.

¹⁵ This includes **clearing** under this code for **agriculture** by a former **landholder**.

4.2 Requirements for managing regrowth density

Section 4.2 of this code applies to *managing regrowth density*.

Note: Managing regrowth density is selective clearing only and does not involve complete vegetation removal or removal of an entire vegetation layer, such as the clearing of all low shrubs and immature trees.

4.2.1 Clearing limits for managing regrowth density

When *managing regrowth density*, all of the following apply:

1. **Clearing must not** exceed:
 - a. For an **SEQ lot** that has one or more **koala habitat areas** mapped on the lot: 10 hectares per lot¹⁶; and
 - b. For all other lots (including an **SEQ lot** that has no **koala habitat areas** mapped on the lot): 100 hectares per lot.
2. **Clearing** is only permitted in **regional ecosystems** listed in Appendix 2.
3. **Clearing** is only permitted within a **regional ecosystem** that has a minimum density of **immature trees** per hectare that exceeds the limits in Table 3.

Table 3: Minimum number of immature trees per hectare (before managing regrowth density)

Regional ecosystem structural category	Immature trees per hectare
Very sparse (see Appendix 2, Table A)	500 immature trees /hectare
Sparse (see Appendix 2, Table B)	750 immature trees /hectare
Mid-dense (see Appendix 2, Table C)	1250 immature trees /hectare

4. All of the following **must** be retained:
 - a. A full range of plant sizes and species typical of the **regional ecosystem** in the area, distributed in a pattern that is as natural as possible
 - b. In **regional ecosystem** 11.7.7, all **immature trees** regardless of the species
 - c. All **mature trees** and **habitat trees**
 - d. At least the number of **immature trees** per hectare listed in Table 4, that are species characteristic¹⁷ of the **regional ecosystem**
 - e. At least 10 per cent of **target low shrub species**

¹⁶ This limitation requirement only applies to clearing under a notification made on or after 7 February 2020. For clearing under a notification made between 21 June 2019 and 7 February 2019, limitations in section 4.2.1(1)(b) apply.

¹⁷ The Regional Ecosystem Description Database (REDD) at www.qld.gov.au describes characteristic species for each **regional ecosystem**.

Table 4: Minimum number of immature trees to be retained per hectare

Regional ecosystem structural category	Number of immature trees per hectare
Very sparse (see Appendix 2, Table A)	200 <i>immature trees</i> /hectare
Sparse (see Appendix 2, Table B)	300 <i>immature trees</i> /hectare
Mid-dense (see Appendix 2, Table C)	500 <i>immature trees</i> /hectare

4.2.2 Mechanical clearing to manage regrowth density

When **mechanical clearing**, all of the following applies:

1. **Clearing must not** be undertaken using a chain or cable linked between two tractors, bulldozers or other traction vehicles.
2. **Mechanical clearing must not** occur in any of the following areas:
 - a. A **regional ecosystem** where there is a practice limitation stating: 'mechanical methods not permitted' in Appendix 2
 - b. A riparian protection zone listed in Table 5
 - c. Within 50 metres of an area of **soil erosion and instability**
 - d. On slopes greater than 15 per cent
3. **Mechanical clearing must not** result in any of the following:
 - a. Disturbance of more than 50 per cent of the ground surface in any hectare
 - b. Less than 50 per cent **ground cover** in any hectare
 - c. Debris being stacked or pushed up against **mature trees** and **habitat trees**

Table 5: Riparian protection zones for managing regrowth density

Water feature	Riparian protection zones*
Wetland	20 metres
Watercourses and drainage features	
Stream order† 1 or 2	10 metres
Stream order 3 or 4	15 metres
Stream order 5 or more	20 metres

Notes:

* The riparian protection zone includes the area between the **defining banks** of the **watercourse, drainage feature or wetland**, plus the specified distance measured from the **defining bank** away from the water body.

† Stream order is shown on the vegetation management supporting map.

4.2.3 Chemical clearing to manage regrowth density

Clearing must not be undertaken using either of the following:

1. **Aerial application**
2. The application of **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides**

4.2.4 Burning to manage regrowth density

For a **regrowth management burn**, all of the following applies:

1. Prior to undertaking a **regrowth management burn**, all necessary fire permits **must** be obtained¹⁸.
2. A **regrowth management burn must** be conducted in such a way (timing, intensity, weather conditions, and lighting pattern) to limit the likelihood of damage to **mature trees** and **habitat trees**.
3. A **regrowth management burn must** be undertaken in accordance with the fire guideline for the **regional ecosystem**, as outlined in the [Regional Ecosystem Description Database](#) (REDD) at www.qld.gov.au.

*Note: Burning to reduce hazardous fuel loads in accordance with a permit under the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 is **exempt clearing work**. You do not need to notify or conduct your burn in accordance with this **accepted development vegetation clearing code** when reducing hazardous fuel loads by fire under the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990.*

4.3 Soil and water quality protections

When **clearing** for **coordinated projects, agriculture**, to address a **public safety risk** or **managing regrowth density**, all of the following apply:

1. **Recognised best practice methods must** be employed to:
 - a. prevent increased **soil erosion and instability** resulting from the **clearing**
 - b. stabilise **soil erosion and instability** which has resulted from the **clearing**
 - c. prevent increased sediment run-off entering a **wetland, watercourse** or **drainage feature** as a result of the **clearing**.
2. **Clearing is not** permitted within 100 metres of a **salinity expression area, unless**:
 - a. it is required for a **coordinated project** or to address a **public safety risk**; and
 - b. an **exchange area** that complies with section 4.4 of this code is legally secured.

¹⁸ Fire permits can be obtained by contacting your local fire warden, [Rural Fire Service Queensland](#).

3. In **land zone** 1, 2 or 3 where the elevation is less than five metres above sea level, top soil **must not** be mechanically disturbed to a depth greater than 30 centimetres, **unless acid sulfate soils** are managed consistent with both of the following:
 - a. State Planning Policy, Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 2017
 - b. Soil Management Guidelines in the Queensland Acid Sulfate Soil Technical Manual, Department of Science Information Technology Innovation and the Arts 2014.

4.4 Exchange areas

An **exchange area must** be legally secured where required for **clearing** for **coordinated projects** or to address a **public safety risk**.

Exchange areas must comply with all of the following:

1. The **exchange area must** be located in a **category X area, category C area, category R area, or category B area**.
2. The **exchange area must** contain a predominant native woody vegetative layer which is at least two meters in height.
3. The **exchange area must** be consistent with one of the three options listed in Table D (Appendix 3).
4. The **exchange area must** be legally secured using the relevant mechanism outlined in Table D (Appendix 3), before commencement of **clearing the impact area**.
5. The **exchange area must** be located within the same **bioregion** as the **impact area**, or where it is not reasonably possible, located in an adjacent **bioregion**.
6. The **exchange area must** be located and configured in a way that ensures it remains in the landscape despite **threatening processes**.
7. The **exchange area must** be shown as a **category A area** on the **regulated vegetation management map** until the area becomes **remnant vegetation** and is mapped as a **category B area** on the **regulated vegetation management map**.
8. The **exchange area must** be managed in accordance with a management plan.
9. The management plan¹⁹ for the **exchange area must** include all of the following:
 - a. Property owner's details
 - b. Description of the area/s the subject of the **exchange area**, including a map showing the location and extent

¹⁹ The level of detail required in a management plan will depend on the nature and scale of the activity being undertaken.

- c. The management objective, which **must** be either of the following:
 - i. If the **exchange area** is located in a **category X area**, **category C area** or **category R area**—to return the **exchange area** to **remnant vegetation** (a **category B area** on the **regulated vegetation management map**) as soon as possible and within 20 years
 - ii. If the **exchange area** is located in a **category B area**—to achieve the nominated substantial conservation outcome or address the nominated significant **land degradation** issue as soon as possible
- d. Description of the works / management actions that will be undertaken to achieve the management objective, including the methods, timing, frequency, intended benefits etc.
- e. The conservation outcomes that will be achieved by the works / management actions
- f. Description of the management actions that will be undertaken to ensure that the effects of the works do not result in **land degradation**
- g. Details of who is responsible for all works and management actions, and the estimated length of time the area/s will be managed
- h. Monitoring and auditing processes including adaptive management approaches to rectify negative results from the monitoring and auditing processes
- i. Record keeping process for retaining appropriate records for monitoring and auditing processes.

Appendix 1—Other relevant legislation

Activity	Legislation	Agency	Contact details
Interference with overland flow Earthworks, significant disturbance	<i>Water Act 2000</i> <i>Soil Conservation Act 1986</i>	Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.dnrme.qld.gov.au
Indigenous cultural heritage	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i> <i>Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.datsip.qld.gov.au
Mining and environmentally relevant activities Infrastructure development (coastal) Heritage issues Protected plants and protected areas ²⁰	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> <i>Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995</i> <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i> <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.des.qld.gov.au
Interference with fish passage in a watercourse, mangroves Forest activities ²¹	<i>Fisheries Act 1994</i> <i>Forestry Act 1959</i>	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 25 23 www.daf.qld.gov.au
Matters of National Environmental Significance including listed Threatened Species and Ecological Communities	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	Department of the Environment, (Australian Government)	Ph: 1800 803 772 www.environment.gov.au
Development and planning processes	<i>Planning Act 2016</i> <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>	Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.dsdmip.qld.gov.au
Road corridor permits	<i>Transport Infrastructure Act 1994</i>	Department of Transport and Main Roads (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.tmr.qld.gov.au
Local government requirements	<i>Local Government Act 2009</i> <i>Planning Act 2016</i>	Your relevant local government office	

²⁰ In Queensland, all plants that are native to Australia are protected plants under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#), which endeavours to ensure that protected plants (whether whole plants or protected plants parts) are not illegally removed from the wild, or illegally traded. Prior to clearing, you should check the flora survey trigger map to determine if the **clearing** is within a high-risk area by visiting www.des.qld.gov.au. For further information or assistance on the protected plants flora survey trigger map for your property, please contact the Department of Environment and Science on 13QGOV (13 74 68) or email palm@des.qld.gov.au.

²¹ Contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries before **clearing** :

- Any sandalwood on state-owned land (including leasehold land)
- On **freehold** land in a “forest consent area”
- More than five hectares on state-owned land (including leasehold land) containing commercial timber species listed in parts 2 or 3 of Schedule 6 of the Vegetation Management Regulation 2012 and located within any of the following local government management area – Banana, Bundaberg Regional, Fraser Coast Regional, Gladstone Regional, Isaac Regional North Burnett Regional, Somerset Regional, South Burnett Regional, Southern Downs Regional, Tablelands Regional, Toowoomba Regional, Western Downs Regional.

Appendix 2—Prescribed regional ecosystems in which managing regrowth density may occur

The listed *regional ecosystems* have been prescribed for *managing regrowth density* under this code. In each table, *regional ecosystems* are grouped by *bioregion*.

Notes:

1. The applicable restrictions on *managing regrowth density* are provided in the column entitled 'Limitations'.
2. The limitation 'restricted to managing *low shrubs* only' denotes *regional ecosystems* in which *immature trees* cannot be *cleared*.
3. The limitation 'mechanical methods not permitted' denotes *regional ecosystems* in which *mechanical clearing must not* occur.

Very sparse regional ecosystems

There are no very sparse **regional ecosystems** in which **managing regrowth density** can occur in the following **bioregions**:

- Wet Tropics
- Central Queensland Coast
- New England Tablelands

Table A: Very sparse regional ecosystems in which managing regrowth density can occur

Bioregion						Limitations
Gulf Plains						
2.3.9	2.3.10	2.3.34	2.5.2	2.5.5		
Cape York Peninsula						
3.3.37	3.9.5	3.9.7	3.11.15			
3.9.4	3.9.6	3.10.15	3.11.17			
Mitchell Grass Downs						
4.3.9	4.5.2	4.7.4	4.9.10	4.9.14	4.9.18	
4.3.10	4.5.6	4.5.9	4.9.12	4.9.16		
Channel Country						
5.5.2	5.5.4	5.9.2				
Mulga Lands						
6.3.7	6.3.24	6.5.16	6.6.2	6.7.9	6.7.16	
6.3.9	6.5.14	6.5.18	6.7.6	6.7.14	6.7.17	
6.3.22	6.5.15	6.5.19	6.7.7	6.7.15	6.9.2	
Wet Tropics						
7.12.28						
Einasleigh Uplands						
9.3.5	9.8.4	9.11.24	9.12.11	9.12.23		
9.3.22	9.8.9	9.12.1	9.12.12	9.12.27		
9.7.5	9.11.13	9.12.4	9.12.14	9.12.28		
9.8.1	9.11.17	9.12.6	9.12.15	9.12.33		
9.8.2	9.11.23	9.12.10	9.12.16	9.12.40		
Desert Uplands						
10.3.6	10.3.12	10.5.5	10.5.9	10.5.12		
Brigalow Belt						
11.8.4	11.8.5	11.10.6	11.11.6	11.11.12		

Sparse regional ecosystems

Table B: Sparse regional ecosystems in which managing regrowth density can occur

Bioregion						Limitations
Gulf Plains						
2.3.7	2.3.22	2.5.9	2.5.14	2.9.4	2.10.2	
2.3.11	2.3.36	2.5.10	2.7.4	2.9.6	2.10.4	
2.3.18	2.5.1	2.5.12	2.7.5	2.10.1	2.11.1	
2.3.17	2.3.20	2.3.21	2.3.24	2.3.29	2.3.30	Mechanical methods not permitted.
Cape York Peninsula						
3.3.8	3.3.24	3.5.6	3.7.3	3.11.12	3.12.11	
3.3.16	3.3.28	3.5.24	3.9.2	3.11.13	3.12.18	
3.3.20	3.5.5	3.5.25	3.11.7	3.12.10		
Mitchell Grass Downs						
4.3.8	4.5.4	4.5.8	4.9.6	4.9.11		
Channel Country						
5.5.1	5.5.3	5.6.2	5.6.3	5.6.4		
Mulga Lands						
6.3.5	6.3.21	6.5.7	6.5.10	6.6.1	6.7.12	
6.3.16	6.5.1	6.5.8	6.5.11	6.7.10	6.7.13	
6.3.18	6.5.6	6.5.9	6.5.13	6.7.11		
Central Queensland Coast						
8.12.6	8.12.20	8.12.22	8.12.9	8.12.12		
Einasleigh Uplands						
9.3.2	9.3.21	9.5.9	9.11.1	9.11.19	9.12.32	
9.3.6	9.5.3	9.5.10	9.11.2	9.11.25		
9.3.8	9.5.4	9.5.13	9.11.3	9.11.26		
9.3.16	9.5.6	9.7.1	9.11.5	9.12.7		
9.3.19	9.5.7	9.7.3	9.11.7	9.12.13		
9.3.20	9.5.8	9.8.11	9.11.15	9.12.24		
9.3.3	9.3.15	9.11.16	9.11.31	9.12.31		Mechanical methods not permitted.
Desert Uplands						
10.3.11	10.3.9	10.3.10	10.3.27	10.3.28	10.5.4	
10.3.14						Mechanical methods not permitted.

Bioregion						Limitations
Brigalow Belt						
11.3.4	11.3.19	11.5.2	11.5.21	11.10.11	11.12.1	
11.3.6	11.3.26	11.5.3	11.7.4	11.10.12	11.12.2	
11.3.7	11.3.29	11.5.4	11.7.6	11.11.1	11.12.3	
11.3.9	11.3.30	11.5.5	11.9.2	11.11.4	11.12.9	
11.3.10	11.3.32	11.5.8	11.10.1	11.11.7	11.12.11	
11.3.12	11.3.35	11.5.9	11.10.4	11.11.9	11.12.13	
11.3.14	11.3.39	11.5.12	11.10.7	11.11.15		
11.3.18	11.5.1	11.5.20	11.10.9	11.11.20		
11.7.7						Restricted to clearing of low shrubs only. Clearing of immature trees is not permitted.
South East Queensland						
12.3.12	12.8.17	12.9–10.4	12.12.4	12.12.5		
New England Tableland						
13.11.4	13.12.5	13.12.2				

Mid-dense regional ecosystems

There are no mid-dense *regional ecosystems* in which *managing regrowth density* can occur in the following *bioregions*:

- North West Highlands
- Cape York Peninsula
- Mitchell Grass Downs
- Channel Country
- Desert Uplands
- Central Queensland Coast
- New England Tablelands
- Einasleigh Uplands

Table C: Mid-dense regional ecosystems in which managing regrowth density can occur

Bioregion						Limitations
Gulf Plains						
2.5.16						Mechanical methods not permitted.
Mulga Lands						
6.7.1	6.7.2					
Wet Tropics						
7.11.21						
7.12.53						Mechanical methods not permitted.
Brigalow Belt						
11.12.6						
South East Queensland						
12.9-10.2						

Appendix 3—Exchange area requirements

Table D: Requirements for exchange areas

Exchange area requirements	Size of exchange area	Required mechanisms to legally secure and manage the area ²¹
<p>Option 1: The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area, is dominated by native vegetation more than 10 years of age, is a functioning regional ecosystem which occurs in the same bioregion as the impact area, and is at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same pre-clear regional ecosystem/s as the impact area • A higher pre-clear regional ecosystem status (e.g. Endangered or Of Concern) than the values of the impact area • Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse • Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a wetland • In a location that creates a corridor of at least 100 metres in width between regional ecosystems that are mapped as either a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map, which are each at least 4 hectares in size and 100 metres in width • An area that adjoins either an area mapped as a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map which is at least 4 hectares in size or • Another area of environmental significance to flora or fauna under other State or Commonwealth legislation 	<p>Equal to the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater.</p>	<p>Property Map of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV) that shows the area to be used as the exchange area as a category A area and management plan or Declared area (voluntary)²² and management plan</p>

²¹ Note that both— a declaration made under section 19F of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* and its associated management plan; and a **Property Map of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV)** that contains a **category A area**— transfer on title.

²² A Guide to voluntary declarations under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* is available at www.qld.gov.au.

Exchange area requirements	Size of exchange area	Required mechanisms to legally secure and manage the area ²¹
<p>Option 2: The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area and is at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same pre-clear regional ecosystem/s as the impact area • A higher pre-clear regional ecosystem status (e.g. endangered or of concern) than the values of the impact area • Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse • Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a wetland • In a location that creates a corridor of at least 100 metres in width between regional ecosystems that are mapped as either a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map, which are each at least 4 hectares in size and 100 metres in width • An area that adjoins either an area mapped as a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map, which is at least 4 hectares in size or • Another area of environmental significance to flora or fauna under other State or Commonwealth legislation. 	<p>Double the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater.</p>	<p>Declared area (voluntary) and management plan.</p>

Exchange area requirements	Size of exchange area	Required mechanisms to legally secure and manage the area ²¹
<p>Option 3: The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area, category B area, a category C area or a category R area, with specific management actions will achieve all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A substantial conservation outcome or address a significant land degradation issue • Remnant vegetation status <p>An example of a ‘substantial conservation outcome’ includes restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key habitat for an endangered species listed under State or Commonwealth legislation • an area that is severely weed infested and is an endangered regional ecosystem • the ecological integrity of a Ramsar listed wetland²³ • a threatened ecological community listed under State or Commonwealth legislation • an area within or adjacent to a World Heritage property or listed on the National Heritage List for natural values. <p>An example of addressing a significant land degradation issue includes stabilizing and restoring the stream bank of a watercourse that has evidence of mass failure.</p>	<p>Three times the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater.</p>	<p>Declared area (voluntary) and management plan.</p>

²³ A list of Ramsar wetlands is available at www.environment.gov.au