

Approved Area Management Plan

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| Title | Necessary environmental clearing in the Burnett and Kolan catchments |
| Reference no: | 2014/004947 |
| Entity/ies | Penny Hall Burnett Mary Regional Group PO Box 501 Bundaberg QLD 4670 |
| Area | The Burnett and Kolan River Catchments within the following local government areas: Bundaberg Region, North Burnett Region and South Burnett Region. |
| Relevant purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> Controlling non-native plants or declared pests <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring public safety <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Clearing of encroachment <input type="checkbox"/> Thinning <input type="checkbox"/> For fodder harvesting, other than on restricted (fodder harvesting) land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Necessary environmental clearing |
| Plan period | 10 JULY 2014 to 9 JULY 2024 |
| Mandatory condition(s) | Not applicable |
| Additional condition(s) | Not applicable |

Signature



Date

11.7.14

Lloyd Taylor
Executive Director, Operations Support
Department of Natural Resources and Mines

Note: Other legislation may regulate clearing activities including the Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the Queensland Government's *Water Act 2000*, *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*, *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995*, *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*, *Fisheries Act 1994*, *Local Government Act 1993*, and *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*. You should determine if your clearing activity will be affected before clearing any vegetation.

Area management plan—necessary environmental clearing in the Burnett and Kolan catchments

Area management plan area

This area management plan applies to the Burnett and Kolan River Catchments within the following local government areas: Bundaberg Region, North Burnett Region and South Burnett Region (as shown in Attachment 1).

Background

In January 2013, ex-tropical cyclone Oswald travelled south just inland of the coast of Queensland causing widespread flooding. Coastal regions of Queensland were the most impacted with Mundubbera, Eidsvold, Gayndah and Bundaberg severely affected. In many places the rainfall total for January set new records. In Mundubbera, the Burnett River peaked at 22.9 meters at 1 am on 28 January while at Bundaberg the Burnett River reached a new recorded height of 9.53 meters on 29 January. The floods in the Burnett Catchment during the 2013 summer period caused extensive damage to infrastructure, housing, land, economic productivity and the environment.

In rural areas, damage was widespread and included bank erosion and loss of productive land; debris deposition in stream channels threatening infrastructure and natural assets such as agricultural lands and riparian ecosystems; and the spread of weeds due to the floods. Environmental damage included sediment and nutrient deposition to water ways and the Great Barrier Reef lagoon; the loss of riverine, estuary and marine habitat and biodiversity; reduced water quality, and loss and damage to terrestrial and riparian ecosystems.

Context

With state and national flood recovery funding, the Burnett Mary Regional Group have initiated a two year program to stabilise and rehabilitate “high risk” riparian areas. When considering whether an area is “high risk”, the watercourse’s geomorphology (out-side/in-side banks and curvature), bank height and steepness, soil stability, geology (hard rock) and amount of remnant vegetation will be considered.

Landholders involved in the program will be required to undertake on-going management of their riparian areas, including controlled stock movement, weed control, limited burning, restricted clearing and debris removal, and controlled sand/gravel extraction.

The Burnett Mary Regional Group will also be conducting an on-going awareness and education program about sustainable management of riparian areas in the area.

As the flood recovery funding is for 2 years only, the Burnett Mary Regional Group is exploring funding opportunities to continue the program after it ceases. Other resource management program such as Reef Rescue, Healthy Habitats and Sustainable Landscapes are being explored.

Riparian vegetation in the Burnett and Kolan River Catchments

The dominant vegetation community in the Burnett and Kolan River Catchments is a remnant mixture of *Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *tereticornis* (Qld Blue Gum) dominated open forest-woodland with the pre-cleared vegetation community mapped as 12.3.7 (least concern) and 11.3.25 (least concern). These Regional Ecosystems (REs) are a fringing

community along drainage lines and lower banks (waterline) of Qld Blue Gum, *Casuarina cunninghamiana* subsp. *cunninghamiana* (River She-oak) assorted bottlebrush, tea tree and paperbark species and *Lomandra hystrix*. RE 12.3.7 often has a dense low tree understorey dominated by species such as *Geijera salicifolia*, *Cryptocarya triplinervis* var. *pubens*, *Diospyros* species, *Mallotus philippensis* and *Ficus* (Fig) species.

Relatively small areas of 12.3.1 (endangered) occur in the coastal areas. This RE is a complex to simple notophyll vine forest. *Waterhousea floribunda* is predominant fringing stream channels. Other species can include *Cryptocarya hypospodia*, *C. obovata*, *C. triplinervis*, *Argyrodendron trifoliolatum*, *Ficus coronata*, *F. fraseri*, *F. macrophylla*.

In the inland or western parts of the catchments, RE 11.3.4 (of concern) is locally dominant in association with 11.3.25. The vegetation is dominated by *Eucalyptus tereticornis* woodland to open forest. Other tree species that may be present and locally dominant include *E. camaldulensis*, *Corymbia tessellaris*, *E. coolabah*, *C. clarksoniana*, *E. populnea* or *E. brownii*, *E. melanophloia*, *E. platyphylla* or *Angophora floribunda*. *E. crebra* and *Lophostemon suaveolens* may be locally dominant.

Regional ecosystem 12.3.7 is essential habitat for *Phascolarctos cinerea* (Koala). The Vegetation Management Act 1999, requires landowners to prevent loss of biodiversity and maintain the current extent of essential habitat.

Management intent

The management intent for environmental clearing and works carried out under this plan in riparian areas is to:

1. Avoid disturbance of native vegetation where possible
2. Where disturbance is necessary to stabilise or rehabilitate riparian areas and watercourses, retain as much native riparian vegetation as possible.
3. In unstable riparian areas with insufficient natural vegetation for long term river bank stability, undertake supplementary vegetation planting with species compatible with the RE in the area.
4. Where it is necessary to clear vegetation to gain access for stabilisation works in riparian areas and in a watercourse, any disturbed areas at a site will be revegetated with species compatible with the surrounding RE.

Management outcome

The management outcomes of this area management plan are that:

1. Improve water quality by stabilising the watercourse bank and thereby prevent siltation and sedimentation of watercourses
2. Avoid further damage to man-made infrastructure
3. Habitat value of watercourses and riparian areas improved by restoring the ecological and environmental condition of riparian areas and thereby improve biodiversity and wildlife habitats
4. Increased likelihood of assessable vegetation persisting in the landscape by restoring or maintaining riparian native vegetation and regional ecosystems and aquatic habitats
5. Ecosystem processes restored and threatening processes reduced by restoring in-stream processes and reducing the risk of watercourse bank failure in the future
6. Protect valuable agricultural land.

Conditions

General

1. Clearing of assessable vegetation will only be undertaken where:
 - Removal of assessable vegetation is necessary to maintain riparian and watercourse stability and/or function; or
 - Removal of assessable vegetation is necessary to undertake works for the stabilisation and repair of riparian areas and watercourse function; or
 - The health and safety of workers is threatened when undertaking stabilisation and revegetation works in riparian areas and in a watercourse; or
 - Access is required to undertake stabilisation and revegetation works in riparian areas or in a watercourse
2. Clearing will only be undertaken where a landholder has a site plan approved by the Burnett Mary Regional Group.

Planning

3. Prior to any works commencing, a site assessment of each parcel of land will be undertaken by the Burnett Mary Regional Group together with the landholder, to determine the site's stability and the works necessary to restore the ecological and environmental condition of land.
4. A site specific management plan, including a site map, will be submitted to the Burnett Mary Regional Group. Refer to Attachment 2 for a sample site plan. The site plan will:
 - specify sediment, erosion and salinity control measures;
 - include a map that shows regional ecosystems, watercourses, wetlands and essential habitat (a vegetation management supporting map);
 - identify geomorphic processes (stream channel and floodplain development/formation; erosion processes; flood dynamics including velocity, depth and duration; bank height and steepness; soil type and stability; geology)
 - identify site access consistent with condition 1 of this area management plan;
 - specify site stabilisation works and the vegetation removal methodology and
 - outline the on-going management of the area (including revegetation and rehabilitation consistent with mapped regional ecosystems, weed control, a monitoring program, and stock control measures)
5. The site plan will be consistent with all clearing and works conditions of this area management plan (1, 4, and 7 to 15).
6. Once the Burnett Mary Regional Group has approved the site plan and the landholder has notified the Department of Natural Resources and Mines of their intention to clear under this area management plan, works can be carried out in accordance with the site plan.

Watercourse and wetland protection

7. Clearing must not occur on a site that does not require stabilisation or that the Burnett Mary Regional Group considers will stabilise naturally.
8. Clearing must not occur on sites that cannot be effectively rehabilitated.
9. Clearing must not occur in a wetland.

Soil protection

10. All works including sediment and erosion control will follow the management guidelines outlined in Chapter 12 Floodplain Management, and Chapter 13 Stream

Stabilisation, in the Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland (see Attachment 3) and the Burnett Mary Regional revegetation guidelines (at Attachment 4) and the Burnett Mary Regional river bank stabilisation guidelines (at Attachment 5).

11. Sites within land zones 1, 2 or 3 below 5 metres AHD will be monitored for the presence and exposure of any acid sulphate soils during the removal of any assessable vegetation. Any acid sulphate soils encountered will be dealt with in accordance with the Soil Management Guidelines in the *Queensland Acid Sulfate Technical Manual*.

Connectivity and maintenance of regional ecosystems

12. Vegetation clearing will be minimised.
13. Sites will be rehabilitated consistent with regional ecosystem mapping and the species listed in the regional ecosystem descriptions.

Essential habitat

14. Where a site is essential koala habitat, the species essential habitat factors must be considered, and works limited to activities that do not impact on koala or its habitat; to consider the following:
 - a. Not causing death or injury to koalas.
 - b. Limiting operational activity between the hours of 6 pm and 6 am.
 - c. Not clearing a tree in which a koala is present, or a tree with a crown overlapping a tree in which a koala is present.
 - d. Allowing koalas in the area time to move out without human intervention.
 - e. Conducting sequential clearing.
 - f. Limiting the presence of dogs on site.
15. Where a site includes essential habitat for another species, the species essential habitat factors must be considered, and works limited to activities that do not impact on the particular species or its habitat.

Access

16. Any clearing to provide access to the bed and banks of a watercourse must be at right angles to the waterflow and a minimum of 50 metres apart.

Other legislation

17. This area management plan addresses the requirements under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* only. Other Commonwealth, State or local Government approval may be required—this AMP does not provide approval under any other legislation.

Reporting

18. Within 4 months of completing works, landholders must submit a report to the Burnett Mary Regional Group. The report will:
 - include before and after evidence such as photos,
 - discuss the outcomes of the site stabilisation and revegetation works, and
 - outline the on-going management of the area.
19. Every 6 months from the date of approval of this area management plan, the Burnett Mary Regional Group will provide a progress report to the Director, Operations Support of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines on the number of sites that have:
 - had site plans approved,
 - been stabilised, and
 - been revegetated under this area management plan.

Definitions

Assessable vegetation is vegetation in an area shown on the regulated vegetation management map as a category A, B, C or R area.

Essential habitat is shown on the essential habitat map, available at www.dnrm.qld.gov.au. (Refer to s.20AC of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* for the full definition of essential habitat).

Essential habitat factor, for protected wildlife, is a component of the wildlife's habitat, including for example, a landform, pollinator, regional ecosystem, soil and water, that is necessary or desirable for the wildlife at any stage of its lifecycle.

Watercourses are natural rivers, creeks or channels that are shown on the vegetation management watercourse map.

Wetland is an area of land that supports plants or is associated with plants that are adapted to and dependent on living in wet conditions for at least part of their life cycle that is shown on the vegetation management wetlands map.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Map of the area management plan area

Attachment 2: Sample site plan

Attachment 3: Chapter 12 and 13, Floodplain Management and Stream Stabilisation, from the Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland

http://www.bmrq.org.au/files/2713/9650/8409/Chapter_12_floodplain_mngmt_BMRG_C1.pdf

http://www.bmrq.org.au/files/4013/9650/8415/Chapter_13_stream_stability_BMRG.pdf

Attachment 4: Burnett Mary Regional revegetation guidelines

http://www.bmrq.org.au/files/8013/9650/8424/NB_rip_reveg_guidelines_2014.pdf

http://www.bmrq.org.au/files/4613/9650/8419/Fact_sheet_1_Planting_and_establishment_processes.pdf

Attachment 5: Burnett Mary Regional river bank stabilisation guidelines

http://www.bmrq.org.au/files/9613/9650/8421/Fact_sheet_2_Slope_stabilisation_and_stability_of_cuts_and_fills.pdf