

Accepted development vegetation clearing code

Managing regulated regrowth vegetation

Effective 22 November 2023

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Table of contents

Glossary	3
1. Introduction	8
1.1 Purpose.....	8
1.2 Scope.....	8
1.3 Objective	9
1.4 Commencement date	9
1.5 Assistance.....	10
2. Notification requirements	10
2.1 Notification process	10
2.2 Notification limitations	11
3. Compliance requirements	12
4. Clearing requirements	12
4.1 Clearing requirements for coordinated projects, to address a public safety risk or agriculture	13
4.1.1 Avoid and minimise requirements for coordinated projects	13
4.1.2 Clearing limits for coordinated projects and to address a public safety risk	13
4.1.3 Clearing limits for agriculture.....	15
4.2 Requirements for managing regrowth density.....	16
4.2.1 Clearing limits for managing regrowth density	16
4.2.2 Mechanical clearing to manage regrowth density	17
4.2.3 Chemical clearing to manage regrowth density	17
4.2.4 Burning to manage regrowth density	18
4.3 Soil and water quality protections	18
4.4 Exchange areas	19
Appendix 1—Other relevant legislation	21
Appendix 2—Prescribed regional ecosystems in which managing regrowth density may occur	23
Appendix 3—Exchange area requirements	28

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

Glossary

The following table of technical terms and their definitions are essential to understanding this accepted development vegetation clearing code (code). Any terms used in this code not included in the below Glossary table have the meaning provided for in the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#)¹.

Term	Definition
Acid sulfate soil	Is soil, sediment or other material containing iron sulfides and/or acidity generated by their breakdown.
Aerial application	Means applied from an aircraft or drone.
Agricultural land class A or B	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 (search 'property report').
Agriculture	Is broadacre cropping or horticulture.
Broadacre cropping	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><u>Note:</u> Does not include growing pasture to be grazed by livestock.</p>
Coordinated project	Is a project declared as a coordinated project under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 .
Defining bank	Is the bank that confines the seasonal flows, but which may be inundated by flooding from time to time, and can be either: <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	Is the width of a tree trunk measured at 1.3 metres above the ground.

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. The general guide is available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'General guide to the vegetation clearing codes').

Term	Definition
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><u>Note:</u> A list of exempt clearing work is available at www.qld.gov.au (search 'exempt clearing work').</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.
Horticulture	<p>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.</p>
Immature tree	<p>Is any native woody vegetation (other than a mature tree or habitat tree) that is two metres or more in height.</p>
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><u>Note:</u> 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	<p>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.</p>
Koala habitat area	<p>See the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017, section 7B.</p>

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

Term	Definition
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 1994, provided the clearing is consistent with the purposes of the lease • a sub-lessee of a lease under the Land Act 1994, 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 1994 provided the clearing is consistent with the conditions of the licence or permit • the holder of the title or tenure to the land.
Land zone	<p>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.</p>
Low shrub	<p>Is any native woody vegetation less than two metres in height.</p>
Mature tree	<p>Is a native tree that is:</p> <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	<p>Is the clearing of vegetation using any of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slashing • Brush cutting • Machinery which disturbs the soil surface or uproots woody vegetation
Managing regrowth density	<p>Is the selective clearing of vegetation at a locality to:</p> <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	<p>Is where vegetation occurs in an area in which the public frequent that threatens the public with injury or danger.</p>
Recognised best practice methods	<p>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.</p>

Term	Definition
Regional ecosystem structure category	Is a vegetation density category that is allocated to each regional ecosystem. It can be found within the Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM REDD) on www.qld.gov.au (search 'VM REDD') or in a Vegetation Management Property Report for the lot, which can be requested at www.qld.gov.au (search 'property report').
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
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 <u>more than one</u> 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 (search 'self audit form').
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.

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

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
Stream order	Means a numerical ordering classification of each stream segment according to its position within a catchment ⁶ . Streams are watercourses and drainage features shown on the vegetation management watercourse and drainage feature map.
Superseded codes	Includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'Managing regulated regrowth vegetation'</i> (effective 21 June 2019) accepted development vegetation clearing code; and • <i>'Managing regulated regrowth vegetation'</i> (effective 7 February 2020) accepted development vegetation clearing code.
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.
Threatening process	Is a process that includes but is not limited to: <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 ⁷	Is any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted or prohibited matter declared under the Biosecurity Act 2014 • A non-native plant • A "Native and naturalised" plant that is not native to the bioregion.

⁶ Further information on identifying stream orders is available in the General guide to the vegetation clearing codes: Accepted development vegetation clearing codes. The general guide is available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'General guide to the vegetation clearing codes').

⁷ The Census of the Queensland Flora and Fungi, which is updated annually by the Queensland Herbarium, identifies plants considered "Native in Queensland", or "Native and naturalised" for particular bioregions in Queensland. The Census will include non-native plants as either: "Formerly naturalised", "Doubtfully naturalised" or "Naturalised in Queensland". Plants that are "Native and naturalised" for particular bioregions in Queensland, are non-native for the remaining bioregions. Further information can be found on the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'flora and fungi 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 5 September 2023 (effective 22 November 2023) in accordance with section 19O of the Vegetation Management Act and the State Policy for Vegetation Management⁸, is approved as an accepted development vegetation clearing code under section 3 of the [Vegetation Management Regulation 2023](#).

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 Resources 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 provisions⁹.

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
- Land subject to an occupational licence under the [Land Act 1994](#)

⁸ The State Policy for Vegetation Management is available at www.qld.gov.au (search 'state policy for vegetation management')

⁹ The Department of Resources 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 risk¹⁰

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

- Clearing inconsistent with a condition of a development approval under the Planning Act 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 22 November 2023, replacing the following superseded code:

- *Managing regulated regrowth vegetation* (effective 7 February 2020)

Any current notifications made under the superseded *Managing regulated regrowth vegetation* code effective 7 February 2020 continue to be valid and allow you to clear provided you comply with all requirements of this code (effective 22 November 2023).

¹⁰ 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 7 February 2020 superseded code, 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. From 22 November 2023, you must however ensure you undertake the clearing in accordance with the requirements of this code.

1.5 Assistance

Queensland Government staff are available to help you understand your obligations, so if—after reading this code—you have questions or want to make sure you’re doing the right thing, contact the Department of Resources by calling 135 VEG (135 834) or emailing vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au.

2. Notification requirements

Before any clearing is undertaken under this code, the Department of Resources must be notified of your intended clearing activity by either:

1. the landholder¹¹
or
2. a third party.

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. 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
3. Lodge the completed form with Department of Resources.

¹¹ This includes a person authorised to notify on the landholder’s behalf, such as someone who holds a power of attorney.

4. Receive confirmation of your notification from Department of Resources 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 the Department of Resources issues confirmation of your notification¹².
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 the Department of Resources.

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 lot. Once the maximum limit of 10 hectares per lot is reached, no further notifications can be made and no further clearing can be undertaken for clearing for agriculture on the lot under this code¹³.

Note: If you or another person have previously cleared 10 hectares on the lot for agriculture under this code or the superseded codes, no further clearing is permitted under this code.

¹² 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 the Department of Resources.

¹³ This clearing limitation is calculated by including any and all clearing on the lot under this code or any superseded codes for agriculture by any former landholder or any third party.

For example: You notified the Department of Resources 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 2024. You managed the 100 hectares over the months from July to November 2024. You undertook a self-audit, and the results indicate your clearing was consistent with the requirements in this code. In August 2025 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 the Department of Resources 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 the Department of Resources 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 the Department of Resources 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 the Department of Resources 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 area¹⁴ requirements in [section 4.4](#), if [section 4.1](#) requires you to legally secure an exchange area.

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 areas¹⁵.
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.

¹⁴ 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).

¹⁵ 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.

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.
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 Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM REDD) on www.qld.gov.au (search 'VM REDD') or in a Vegetation Management Property Report for the lot, which can be requested at www.qld.gov.au (search 'property report').

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 lot¹⁶
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 areaboth 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.

¹⁶ This clearing limitation is calculated by including any and all clearing on the lot under this code or any superseded codes for agriculture by any former landholder or any third party.

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 lot¹⁷; 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 characteristic¹⁸ of the regional ecosystem
 - e. At least 10 per cent of target low shrub species

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ The Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM 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 immature trees/hectare
Sparse (see Appendix 2, Table B)	300 immature trees/hectare
Mid-dense (see Appendix 2, Table C)	500 immature trees/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 obtained¹⁹.
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 Vegetation Management [Regional Ecosystem Description Database](#) (VM REDD) at www.qld.gov.au (search 'VM REDD').

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.
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, 2017²⁰

¹⁹ Fire permits can be obtained by contacting your local fire warden, visit www.qld.gov.au (search 'local fire warden').

²⁰ Available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'State Planning Policy').

- b. [Soil Management Guidelines in the Queensland Acid Sulfate Soil Technical Manual](#), Department of Science Information Technology Innovation and the Arts 2014²¹.

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 plan²² 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
 - 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

²¹ Available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Guidance materials for acid sulfate soils').

²² The level of detail required in a management plan will depend on the nature and scale of the activity being undertaken.

- 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>	Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.rdmw.qld.gov.au
Earthworks, significant disturbance	<i>Soil Conservation Act 1986</i>	Department of Resources (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.resources.qld.gov.au
Fire Permits	<i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990</i>	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services	Ph: 13 QOV (13 74 68) www.qfes.qld.gov.au
Indigenous cultural heritage	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i> <i>Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts (Queensland Government)	Ph. 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au
Mining and environmentally relevant activities Infrastructure development (coastal) Heritage issues	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> <i>Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995</i> <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.des.qld.gov.au
Protected plants and protected areas ²³	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 1300 130 372 (option 4) palm@des.qld.gov.au www.des.qld.gov.au
Koala mapping and regulations	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) Koala.assessment@des.qld.gov.au www.des.qld.gov.au
Interference with fish passage in a watercourse, mangroves Forest activities ²⁴	<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 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Australian Government)	Ph: 1800 803 772 www.dcceew.gov.au

²³ 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.qld.gov.au (search 'flora survey trigger map'). 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.

²⁴ 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 1 of the [Vegetation Management Regulation 2023](#) 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.

Activity	Legislation	Agency	Contact details
Development and planning processes	<i>Planning Act 2016</i> <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>	Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.statedevelopment.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
Wet Tropics World Heritage Area	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i>	Wet Tropics Management Authority	Ph: (07) 4241 0500 www.wettropics.gov.au
Local government requirements	<i>Local Government Act 2009</i> <i>Planning Act 2016</i>	Your relevant local government office	

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:

- North West Highlands
- Central Queensland Coast
- South East Queensland
- New England Tableland

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

Bioregion						Limitations
Gulf Plains						
2.3.9	2.3.10	2.5.2	2.5.5	2.7.4		
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						
4.3.10	4.5.9	4.9.10	4.9.14			
4.5.6	4.7.4	4.9.12	4.9.18			
Channel Country						
5.5.2	5.5.4	5.6.2	5.9.2			
Mulga Lands						
6.3.7	6.5.14	6.7.6	6.7.14	6.9.2		
6.3.9	6.5.16	6.7.7	6.7.15			
6.3.22	6.5.18	6.7.9	6.7.16			
Wet Tropics						
7.12.28						
Einasleigh Uplands						
9.3.5	9.8.2	9.11.17	9.12.6	9.12.14	9.12.27	
9.3.22	9.8.4	9.11.23	9.12.10	9.12.15	9.12.28	
9.7.5	9.8.9	9.11.24	9.12.11	9.12.16	9.12.33	
9.8.1	9.11.13	9.12.4	9.12.12	9.12.23	9.12.40	
Desert Uplands						
10.3.12						

Brigalow Belt						
11.3.7	11.3.32	11.8.5	11.10.6	11.11.6	11.11.12	

Sparse regional ecosystems

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

- North West Highlands
- Wet Tropics

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	2.9.6	2.10.4	
2.3.11	2.3.36	2.5.10	2.7.5	2.10.1	2.11.1	
2.3.18	2.5.1	2.5.12	2.9.4	2.10.2		
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	4.3.9	4.5.2	4.5.4	4.9.11	4.9.16	
Channel Country						
5.5.1	5.5.3	5.6.3	5.6.4			
Mulga Lands						
6.3.5	6.3.24	6.5.8	6.5.13	6.7.10		
6.3.16	6.5.1	6.5.9	6.5.15	6.7.11		
6.3.18	6.5.6	6.5.10	6.5.19	6.7.12		
6.3.21	6.5.7	6.5.11	6.6.1	6.7.13		
Central Queensland Coast						
8.12.6	8.12.9	8.12.12	8.12.20	8.12.22		

Bioregion						Limitations
Einiasleigh Uplands						
9.3.2	9.3.21	9.5.9	9.11.1	9.11.19	9.12.24	
9.3.6	9.5.3	9.5.10	9.11.2	9.11.25	9.12.32	
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	9.12.1		
9.3.19	9.5.7	9.7.3	9.11.7	9.12.7		
9.3.20	9.5.8	9.8.11	9.11.15	9.12.13		
9.3.3	9.3.15	9.11.16	9.11.31	9.12.31		Mechanical methods not permitted.
Desert Uplands						
10.3.6	10.3.10	10.3.27	10.5.4	10.5.9		
10.3.9	10.3.11	10.3.28	10.5.5	10.5.12		
10.3.14						Mechanical methods not permitted.
Brigalow Belt						
11.3.4	11.3.26	11.5.4	11.7.6	11.10.12	11.12.2	
11.3.6	11.3.29	11.5.5	11.8.4	11.11.1	11.12.3	
11.3.9	11.3.30	11.5.8	11.9.2	11.11.4	11.12.9	
11.3.10	11.3.35	11.5.9	11.10.1	11.11.7	11.12.11	
11.3.12	11.3.39	11.5.12	11.10.4	11.11.9	11.12.13	
11.3.14	11.5.1	11.5.20	11.10.7	11.11.15		
11.3.18	11.5.2	11.5.21	11.10.9	11.11.20		
11.3.19	11.5.3	11.7.4	11.10.11	11.12.1		
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
- Gulf Plains
- Cape York Peninsula
- Mitchell Grass Downs
- Channel Country
- Central Queensland Coast
- Einasleigh Uplands
- Desert Uplands
- New England Tableland

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

Bioregion						Limitations
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)²⁵ 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.

²⁵ A Guide to voluntary declarations under the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#) is available at www.qld.gov.au (search 'voluntary declaration guide').

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>
<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 wetland²⁶ • 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>

²⁶ A list of Ramsar wetlands is available at <https://www.dcceew.gov.au>