

Interpreting the regrowth vegetation map

New arrangements protecting regrowth vegetation take effect from 8 October 2009 and the new regrowth vegetation map is the first place to look to understand what clearing can be done.

The new regrowth vegetation map shows areas of mature regrowth that have not been cleared since 31 December 1989 and regrowth watercourses in priority reef catchments.

To obtain a regrowth vegetation map for your property visit the Department of Environment and Resource Management's (DERM) website at <www.derm.qld.gov.au>. Have your 'Lot on Plan' number or property coordinates ready when you do this and follow the instructions on the website.

If a property map of assessable vegetation (PMAV) exists for a property, it will be provided when a regrowth vegetation map is requested from the website.

The clearing of any native vegetation within high-value regrowth areas, regrowth watercourses, or category 4 on a PMAV must be consistent with the code, unless exempt.

Before clearing you must notify DERM of your intention to clear by completing a clearing notification form, available at <www.derm.qld.gov.au>, and posting or faxing it to a departmental business centre. A list of business centres is available on the website.

A copy of the map is also available to view from business centres.

Regrowth vegetation map

The regrowth vegetation map is the starting point for determining whether your property is subject to the new regrowth laws. If regrowth vegetation is mapped on your property, think about whether you wish to undertake activities that will result in clearing in this regulated regrowth.

Then, consider whether the clearing is for an exempt activity such as maintaining fence lines or establishing a fire break. If so, the clearing can be conducted, without a permit or reference to the code, provided it is within the prescribed limits. For further information, refer to the *Guide to exemptions under the vegetation management framework*, which is available on the website.

Other clearing of regulated regrowth is allowed provided you notify DERM that you intend to clear regulated regrowth vegetation, and that the clearing is consistent with the code. The code and notification form are available on the DERM website <www.derm.qld.gov.au>.

What is shown on the regrowth vegetation map?

The regrowth vegetation map identifies areas of regrowth that are subject to the new laws. This includes endangered, of concern and least concern regional ecosystems that have not been cleared since 31 December 1989, shown as high-value regrowth vegetation on the map.

The map also includes watercourses in the Burdekin, Mackay Whitsunday and Wet Tropics catchments, referred to as regrowth watercourses.

It is important to note the satellite images that were used to create these maps may have been taken of areas that have since been legitimately cleared. This means that in some cases, areas may not contain a regional ecosystem.

The maps must not be read in isolation and should be considered with the legislation and what is on the ground. Landholders can apply for a PMAV if they want to clarify what is on the ground. If landholders have any concerns they should contact DERM.

Essential regrowth habitat

The regrowth vegetation map shows areas of essential regrowth habitat as blue hatched areas. These areas potentially contain habitat factors for threatened species. The blue numeric labels can be used in conjunction with the essential regrowth habitat database to determine which habitat factors might exist for a particular species.

The code has restrictions if three or more factors exist for a particular species. The database that identifies the factors for each species is available on the DERM website <www.derm.qld.gov.au>. You can also contact a vegetation management officer at your local departmental business centre for assistance.

High-value regrowth containing endangered regional ecosystems

High-value regrowth vegetation containing endangered regional ecosystems is shown on the regrowth map as pink areas. These regional ecosystems have the highest level of protection in the code. These areas may also contain of concern and least concern regional ecosystems.

High-value regrowth containing of concern regional ecosystems

High-value regrowth vegetation containing of concern regional ecosystems is shown on the regrowth map as

orange areas. These areas may also contain least concern regional ecosystems.

High-value regrowth containing least concern regional ecosystems

High-value regrowth vegetation containing least concern regional ecosystems is shown on the regrowth map as green areas. These regional ecosystems have the lowest level of protection in the code as they are the least threatened of the mapped regrowth regional ecosystems.

Remnant vegetation

Areas of remnant vegetation are shown on the regrowth vegetation map as grey areas. These areas are where existing tree clearing rules apply. Regional ecosystem maps showing the detail of the grey areas are available on the website. What can and cannot be cleared in these areas can also be found on the website <www.derm.qld.gov.au>.

Regrowth watercourses

Regrowth watercourses within the priority reef catchments of the Burdekin, Mackay Whitsunday and Wet Tropics were are shown on the map. The maroon lines on the regrowth map indicate which watercourses have vegetation that is protected by the regrowth watercourse measures.

Other watercourses

The regrowth map shows watercourses outside of priority reef catchments as thin blue lines.

For both types of watercourses shown on the map, the exact location of a watercourse depends on the location of the watercourse from time to time.

Stream ordering

The majority of the watercourses on the map have been given a stream order number (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 next to a watercourse section on the regrowth map) to be used when determining the width of stream protection zones under the code.

Changing the regrowth map for a property

The vegetation management framework and the map work together to allow landholders to clear for exempt purposes without having to change the map. Therefore in most circumstances, corrections to the map are not required.

However, if you wish to modify the boundaries of regrowth vegetation or define the boundaries of regional ecosystems that are mapped together, you can apply for a PMAV.

There is no fee for a PMAV to correct map errors.

A guide and application form for PMAVs can be downloaded from the DERM website <www.derm.qld.gov.au> or is available from your local departmental business centre.

Applying the code to endangered and of concern regional ecosystems

The simplest way of ensuring that complying with the code's restrictions on clearing endangered regional ecosystems (and of concern on grazing leases) is to avoid clearing in the areas mapped as endangered or of concern.

However, sometimes these mapped areas contain other types of regrowth ecosystems. These can be identified on the ground.

Identifying these allows endangered, of concern and least concern regional ecosystems to be separated.

Detailed information on separating the regional ecosystems is available by contacting a vegetation management officer at your local departmental business centre.

Further information

Further information about the new regrowth vegetation arrangements is available on the DERM website at <www.derm.qld.gov.au>, or from your local departmental business centre or by calling 13 13 04 (8.30 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday).

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**For general enquiries contact the
Queensland Government call centre 13 13 04
or visit www.derm.qld.gov.au**