

Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) – Vegetation Clearing & Mulching

ORGANISATION DETAILS			
Principal contractor:	Brendan McKenna Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Contact number:	0417 710 806
Project manager or supervisor:		Contact number:	
Person completing the SWMS:	Brendan McKenna	Contact number:	0417 710 806
Position:	Site Manager	Reviewed by:	Ron Broadhurst
Date prepared:	19/05/26	Review date:	As required
PROJECT DETAILS			
Project	Vernon Conservation Park – Fireline Construction Works		
Project Reference	P263811		
What is the scope of the work?	Vegetation clearing and mulching within approved fireline corridors, fence alignments and access tracks including hazardous tree removal and tree felling.		
Who else was consulted/involved in preparing this SWMS?	This SWMS has been developed in consultation with relevant workers, supervisors and subject matter experts. Control measures will be monitored and reviewed where incidents occur, hazards are identified, or site conditions and work activities change.		
What high risk work activities are covered by this SWMS?	Vegetation clearing and mulching operations including hazardous tree removal, tree felling, chainsaw use, mulching activities, operation of mobile plant and associated works within approved fireline corridors, access tracks and work areas.		
References: Legislation, Australian Standards, Codes of Practice, MSDS and SOPs.	WHS Act 2011 (Qld) / WHS Regulation 2011 (Qld) / Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace Code of Practice / Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work Code of Practice / Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice / Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld) / Biosecurity Act 2014 (Qld) / QPWS Scope of Works / QPWS Cultural Heritage Field Guide / Project EMP / SSMP / Relevant BME SWMS and Emergency Procedures.		
Plant involved in the scope of work:	Posi-track/skid steer with mulching attachment; Dozer; Chainsaws; Support vehicles		
What high risk licence classes will be required to do the work?	Relevant plant competencies and chainsaw training required where applicable. Construction White Card and QPWS site induction required. TMI competency required where traffic controls are implemented.		

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The following notes apply to the risk controls where relevant:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): The following PPE will need to be worn by workers at times on this project as directed:

☐ High Vis Garments ☐ Hearing protection ☐ Safety Glasses ☐ Hard Hats ☐ Gloves ☐ Safety Footwear ☐ Other

Vegetation Clearing & Mulching:

- Work must remain within approved fireline, access track and clearing alignments only.
- QPWS site induction is required for all workers and subcontractors before commencing work.
- QPWS staff will identify approved clearing alignments and boundaries before works commence.
- Habitat trees and trees greater than 300 mm DBH are to be retained where possible unless approved for removal.
- A licensed fauna spotter/catcher is required where habitat trees cannot be avoided.
- All vegetation is to be mulched before fireline construction activities where practicable.
- Stop work immediately if fauna, cultural heritage items, human remains, unstable trees or unsafe conditions are identified.
- Follow the **Find–Stop–Notify–Manage** process for cultural heritage discoveries.

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Identify each task in order	Specify the hazards/risks you have identified	What are the risks to health and safety?	Who is responsible for implementing and monitoring controls?
Arriving onsite and pre-start assessment	Hazard: • Changed site conditions • Communication blackspots • Wet/unstable ground • Unauthorised access • Inadequate planning Risk: • Unsafe work area • Plant rollover • Delayed emergency response • Injury to workers or others	Complete daily pre-start, machine pre-start and site-specific risk assessment prior to commencing works. Confirm workers have completed QPWS induction and understand approved work areas, environmental requirements and emergency arrangements. Inspect work areas for unstable ground, overhead hazards, weather conditions and access restrictions. Confirm emergency contacts, communication methods and check-in arrangements. Inspect plant, attachments, tools and PPE prior to use. Establish exclusion zones and communicate work activities during toolbox meetings.	Site Manager or Supervisor
Vegetation clearing and site preparation	Hazard: • Vegetation debris • Hidden obstacles • Uneven ground • Falling branches Risk: • Slips, trips and falls • Impact injury • Equipment damage	Inspect work areas before clearing activities commence. Remove unnecessary obstacles where practicable. Maintain good housekeeping and minimise vegetation accumulation. Workers must remain outside plant exclusion zones. Only approved work areas may be disturbed.	Site Manager or Supervisor
Operation of posi-track/skid steer with mulching attachment	Hazard: • Flying debris/projectiles • Plant interaction	Operators must hold relevant competency and be authorised. Conduct pre-start inspections of plant and attachments.	Plant Operator / Site Manager or Supervisor

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	• Rollovers • Contact with workers Risk: • Crush injury • Serious injury • Fatality	Establish and maintain exclusion zones around operating machinery. Keep personnel clear of mulcher operating area. Operate at safe speeds and avoid sudden movements on unstable terrain. Do not operate on slopes outside equipment limits. Stop work if visibility or site conditions become unsafe.	
Tree felling and hazardous tree removal	Hazard: • Hung-up trees • Falling limbs • Uncontrolled tree fall direction • Dead or unstable trees Risk: • Crush injury • Fatality • Struck by falling objects	Assess trees before cutting. Determine intended fall direction and escape paths. Establish exclusion zones around felling area. Only competent personnel may undertake tree felling activities. Use soft-felling methods where fauna protection requirements apply. Do not work beneath suspended or hung-up vegetation. Cease work during high winds or unsafe conditions. No personnel are permitted within the designated tree felling exclusion zone unless directly involved in the activity.	Site Manager / Chainsaw Operator
Manual handling and movement of equipment	Hazard: • Repetitive movement • Lifting, pushing and pulling equipment • Awkward postures • Heavy or unstable loads Risk: • Musculoskeletal injury • Strains and sprains	Use mechanical lifting aids where practicable. Assess loads before lifting and use team lifting where required. Maintain correct lifting techniques and avoid twisting while carrying loads. Reduce manual handling by positioning equipment close to the work area where safe to do so. Take regular breaks and rotate tasks where practicable. Workers are to report discomfort or injury immediately.	All workers / Site Manager or Supervisor

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	• Back, shoulder and arm injuries		
Chainsaw operation	Hazard: • Chainsaw kickback • Contact with chain • Noise and vibration • Flying debris Risk: • Lacerations • Amputation • Eye injury • Hearing damage	Chainsaw operators must have verified competency/training. Inspect chainsaw prior to use. Use required PPE including chainsaw chaps where required, eye protection, hearing protection, gloves and safety boots. Maintain secure footing before cutting. Do not cut above shoulder height. Shut down chainsaw when walking or moving between work areas. Maintain exclusion zones.	Chainsaw Operator / Supervisor
Fire risk from machinery and vegetation works	Hazard: • Hot machinery components • Friction and sparks • Dry vegetation build-up • Fuel sources Risk: • Fire ignition • Bushfire spread • Injury to personnel • Environmental damage	Inspect plant regularly for vegetation build-up around hot components. Remove accumulated vegetation from machinery during operations. Maintain fire extinguishers on plant and support vehicles. Do not park hot machinery in long dry vegetation. Stop work if fire risk becomes unacceptable. Report any fire immediately and implement emergency procedures.	Plant Operator / Site Manager or Supervisor
Environmental and fauna controls	Hazard: • Fauna interaction • Clearing outside boundaries • Sediment runoff • Biosecurity risks	A licensed fauna spotter/catcher shall be used where habitat trees cannot be avoided. Retain habitat trees and trees greater than 300 mm DBH where possible. Maintain erosion and sediment controls.	All Workers / Site Manager or Supervisor

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	Risk: • Environmental harm • Injury from wildlife • Non-compliance	Machinery washdown procedures and biosecurity controls shall be implemented. Remain within approved work boundaries. Stop work and notify the Supervisor / QPWS if protected fauna, habitat trees or sensitive environmental areas are identified.	
Emergency response and remote work	Hazard: • Remote work location • Medical emergency • Communication failure Risk: • Delayed rescue • Serious injury	No personnel are to work alone where risk assessment identifies unacceptable risk. Confirm emergency access and communication methods & Maintain first aid equipment onsite. Conduct regular check-ins. Emergency procedures to be communicated during induction and toolbox meetings.	All Workers / Site Manager or Supervisor
Site restoration and demobilisation	Hazard: • Remaining hazards • Debris and waste • Public access Risk: • Injury to workers/public • Environmental harm	Remove waste and equipment from work areas. Inspect completed works and ensure areas are left safe. Remove temporary controls where no longer required. Ensure erosion controls remain effective. Complete final inspection and sign off work area.	Site Manager or Supervisor
Cultural heritage identification	Hazard: • Unexpected discovery of cultural heritage items • Disturbance of artefacts, scarred trees, human remains or heritage places • Workers not recognising potential heritage items Risk: • Damage to cultural	Apply the QPWS Find–Stop–Notify–Manage process. Stop work immediately if suspected cultural heritage items, artefacts, scarred trees, human remains or heritage places are identified. Establish an exclusion zone around the area. Do not touch, move, collect or disturb the item or area. Notify the Site Manager / Supervisor immediately.	All workers / Site Manager or Supervisor

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	heritage • Legal non-compliance • Project delays • Harm to culturally significant areas	The Site Manager / Supervisor must contact the QPWS representative for further direction before works recommence.	
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This SWMS has been developed in consultation and has been read, understood and signed by all workers undertaking the scope of works:

Print Names:	Signatures:	Dates: