

Information Sheet

Natural Resource Management

Rolling term grazing leases over State forests

This information sheet addresses the main areas of concern for those stock graziers who have been granted a Land Act rolling term lease over Queensland State forests.

Background

State forests are managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) within the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (NPRSR) on behalf of the community. State forests are reserved for the purpose of producing timber and associated products in perpetuity and of protecting a watershed therein.

Each State forest must be used and managed to achieve the purpose, having regard to the benefits of permitting grazing in the area, the desirability of conservation of soil and the environment and of protection of water quality, and the possibility of applying the area to recreational purposes.

Public Access

Notification of other authorities over State forests that overlaps grazing lease area:

QPWS operational policy is to condition permit holders such that the permit holder must notify the lessee when an event is to occur (e.g. a condition of a permit to hold a car rally requires that the operator notify the lessee of the dates that the car rally will be held).

QPWS will also make best endeavours to notify lessees if it is undertaking any activity that is likely to impact on the grazing business.

Many activities on State forests do not require an authority to be issued by QPWS, and so QPWS cannot inform lessees of these activities. Generally, commercial activities are regulated in State forests.

Access rights:

Under the *Forestry Act 1959*, State forests are reserved and set apart for timber production and public purposes. Even where a term lease is in place, the land is still reserved and set apart for public purposes. This provision has been in the *Forestry Act* since at least 1962.

Public access is allowed unfettered in State forests unless regulated under the *Forestry Act*. This has been the case for many decades.

Further information on the multi-use purpose of State forests:

The Government's multi-use policy applies to State forests and can be found at: [Queensland's State forests a multi-use tenure policy statement](#)¹.

¹ This document is available on the NPRSR website at: <<http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/managing/pdf/multi-use-tenure-policy-statement.pdf>>.

Vegetation management

Removing timber/trees:

QPWS currently allows vegetation clearing for maintenance under section 56 of the Forestry Act. A separate authority ensures that relevant considerations can be taken into account for each specific situation.

The ongoing maintenance activities are authorised for a set period of time determined through negotiation between the QPWS officer and the lessee. Authorities for clearing are assessed and approved on a case-by-case basis (as per the current arrangement). Where applications are received, QPWS officers will endeavour to deal with these applications in a reasonable timeframe.

Thinning regrowth on State forests:

State forests tenure are reserved for timber production. No timber regrowth thinning will be allowed unless specifically authorised.

Pest management

Control of pests:

Lessees must manage declared pests (that result from the lease activity) on the lease area, consistent with the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management Act 2002)*.

NPRSR complies with its own weed management policy “Pest plant and pathogen spread prevention” for the purpose of minimising pest plant and pathogen spread into, within and from QPWS managed areas. This policy is available at: [NPRSR Operational policy: Pest plant and pathogen spread prevention](#)².

Fire management

Fire management should aim to mutually benefit grazing, timber production and conservation outcomes as well as the principal protection of life and property. To encourage the appropriate use of fire across the landscape, QPWS has developed a series of Bioregional Planned Burn Guidelines which cover the different environments throughout Queensland. These guidelines assist to protect life and property, maintain healthy ecosystems, identify fire management objectives based on adaptive management, identify suitable fire behaviour, burn tactics and weather conditions, and to provide information and tools to assist in implementing planned burns. These guidelines are available at: NPRSR Bioregional planned burn guidelines³.

² This document is available on the NPRSR website at: <<http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/pdf/op-pk-nrm-pest-plant-pathogen-spread-prevention.pdf>>.

³ This document is available on the NPRSR website at: <<http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/managing/planned-burn-guidelines>>.

Grazing leases and grazing values on State forest tenures are recognised in QPWS fire strategies, and burning by lessees should be consistent with the relevant fire strategy.

Lessees should submit simplified burn proposals to QPWS detailing:

- (a) person/s responsible for the burn;
- (b) the purpose of the burn;
- (c) limiting conditions within which the burn will be conducted; and
- (d) a map showing the area intended to be burnt.

Lessees are encouraged to submit their burn plans to QPWS for approval and inclusion in Regional burn programs. QPWS can assist lessees to submit burn plans and to ensure timely approvals. Given the risks and responsibilities surrounding burning on QPWS managed areas, QPWS does not support lessees burning outside of burn plans or at short notice.

All lessee burning must be conducted under a 'permit to light a fire' issued under the *Fire and Emergency Service Act 1990*.

Under section 66(2) of the *Fire and Emergency Service Act 1990*, lessees require approval from QPWS prior to the local fire warden issuing a permit to burn. QPWS approval of the burn plan is seen as approval under section 66(2) for local fire wardens to issue a permit to burn on QPWS managed areas.

When a permit to burn is issued by the local fire warden, the lessee is still required to notify QPWS the day the fire is to be lit, as a condition of the burn. This ensures QPWS is aware of the fire and can prevent false alarms, or lessees undertaking burns under high risk conditions. QPWS would only refuse a burn on the day if weather forecasts or seasonal drought conditions were outside safe parameters for the proposed burn.

Water management

Access to water:

The Chief Executive of NPRSR may authorise the use of water in a State forest by other users but will only do this if the usage does not unreasonably affect the grazing operations. In some circumstances, other water use authorities may be granted under legislation administered by other Government departments, depending on the use, but these would not need to be endorsed by the Chief Executive of NPRSR.

Stock management and fencing

Type of fence:

Lessees must construct and/or maintain fences as outlined in the lease conditions.

Three barb with a top plain wire is required for new internal fencing unless a special condition is added to allow for the internal fencing to deviate from this requirement. This special condition would only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

NPRSR Regional contacts:

If you have any enquiries in relation to the rolling term grazing leases over State Forest tenures please contact the relevant NPRSR officer as indicated below:

Region	Name	Title	Telephone contact
Central Region	Peter Naske	Senior Ranger, Estate Management	(07) 4936 0560
South West Region	Stuart Henry	Senior Ranger, Estate Management	(07) 4699 4309
Northern Region	Craig Dean	Senior Conservation Officer, Estate Management	(07) 4222 5369
South East Region	Troy Spinks	Principal Ranger, Technical Support	(07) 5520 9645
Sunshine & Fraser Coast Region	Peter Lusk	Ranger	(07) 4121 1628

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Approved by

Ben Klaassen

Signature

Deputy Director-General
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

12/12/2014

Date

Enquiries:

Major Projects and Estate Management Unit
Email: ParksPolicy@nprsr.qld.gov.au