



# Vegetation Management (Protection and Removal) Guideline

9TP-SD-111/2.0

Supporting Document – Applicable to Transport Projects  
Delivery Office

## Quality Management System

Status:	Approved
Version:	2.0
Branch:	Planning and Environment Services
Business unit:	Environmental Management
Date of issue:	14 April 2015
Review date:	14 April 2016
Audience:	Project Delivery/External TSR
Asset classes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heavy Rail; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Light Rail; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multi Sites; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Systems; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fleets
Project delivery model:	TP Project/Alliance/Novo Rail
Project type:	Not Applicable
Project lifecycle:	<input type="checkbox"/> Feasibility; <input type="checkbox"/> Scoping; <input type="checkbox"/> Definition; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Construction readiness; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finalisation; <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Process owner:	Technical Director Planning and Environment Services

## Document history

Version	Date of approval	Doc. control no.	Notes
1.0	30 Jul 2014	3139046_1	First issue
2.0	14 Apr 2015	3139046	Updated to be published to TfNSW website

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to site personnel for protecting and managing vegetation on Transport Projects Delivery Office (TPO) project sites. Vegetation includes:

- native vegetation endemic to (i.e. naturally occurring in) the area
- other native vegetation
- exotic (non-native) vegetation.

Native vegetation is valuable because plant diversity sustains biodiversity and ecological processes, including providing habitat for wildlife. Native vegetation also maintains soil integrity and improves the visual amenity of an area.

Endemic native vegetation has evolved and adapted to the environmental conditions of a particular area. It is the highest valued type of vegetation suited to the soil types and climate and most resilient to adverse conditions.

In recognition of this value, in New South Wales there are strict laws to protect biodiversity and native vegetation with large penalties for mismanagement of vegetation. Furthermore, TPO is committed to compensating the loss of native vegetation and biodiversity as a result of its projects.

Other native and exotic vegetation may also have heritage or aesthetic importance and play an important role in the ecological community.

Vegetation management measures must be implemented on TPO project sites to minimise the risk of harm to vegetation and biodiversity, as well as the risk of penalties to individuals, TPO and its contractors. To manage these risks, appropriate control measures to protect vegetation are required.

## 2. Scope

This guideline applies to the protection and management of vegetation on site, including all native vegetation and exotic vegetation identified as having ecological, aesthetic or historic importance as detailed in the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the project. It does not apply to:

- management of weed species (refer to the [Weed Management and Disposal Guideline 3TP-SD-110](#))
- biodiversity offsetting as may be required under the relevant planning approval and/or to meet TPO sustainability target of 100% replacement of all native vegetation in accordance with [Vegetation Offset Guide – 9TP-ST-149](#).

This guideline includes references to some of the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements but is not intended to replace them. It is not intended to replace any requirements for vegetation management identified as part of the EIA process.

## 3. Definitions

All terminology in this document is taken to mean the generally accepted or dictionary definition with the exception of the following terms which have a specifically defined meaning:

**EIA**            Environmental impact assessment

**TfNSW**      Transport for NSW  
**TPO**        Transport Projects Delivery Office (TfNSW)  
**TSR**        TfNSW Standard Requirement

## 4. Accountabilities

The Technical Director Planning and Environment Services is accountable for this document including authorising the document, monitoring its effectiveness and performing a formal document review.

Project directors are accountable for ensuring the requirements of this document are implemented within their area of responsibility.

Project directors who are accountable for specific projects/programs are accountable for ensuring associated contractors follow this document to the extent they are required under TSR E – Environmental Management and the contract.

Contractors are accountable for following this document, where this guideline forms a part of their contract.

## 5. Legislative requirements and due diligence

Table 1 lists some of the relevant legislation/regulations for the management of vegetation in NSW. It should be noted that significant penalties exist for breaches of the listed legislation as a result of unauthorised removal of vegetation. Further, it is noted that vegetation that has been identified and assessed in an environmental impact assessment, and will be removed as part of TPO works, is exempt from these offences.

To avoid breaches of legislation, it is important that TPO and its contractors are aware of their legislative obligations under relevant legislation and that the extent of vegetation impacts assessed as part of a TPO project is clearly understood and appropriate management measures are in place prior to commencement of construction.

Contractors/alliances will need to ensure that they undertake their own due diligence to identify any other legislative requirements that apply for a given project.

**Table1: Legislation and due diligence for protection of vegetation in NSW**

Relevant requirement	Objectives and offences
<b><i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth) (EPBC Act)</i></b>	<p>Seeks to protect the environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are matters of national environmental significance (MNES). Listed threatened species and endangered ecological communities is one of the MNES that are of national significance identified in the EPBC Act.</p> <p>A person who proposes to take action that will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on a MNES must refer that action to the Minister for a decision on whether assessment and approval is required under the EPBC Act.</p> <p>It is an offence to take such an action without approval against any listed threatened species or ecological community. Depending on the specific offence, penalties can include 7 years imprisonment (for an individual) or up to \$5.5 million penalty for a corporation.</p> <p>Offences do not apply if the action has been assessed and approved under another Act.</p>
<b><i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i></b>	<p>Seeks to conserve nature, including habitat, biological diversity and species. It is an offence to pick or have in the person's possession any protected</p>

Relevant requirement	Objectives and offences
<b>(NPW Act)</b>	<p>native plant (as listed in Schedule 13 of the NPW Act). Maximum penalty for doing so is \$11,000 plus \$1,100 in respect of each whole plant affected by the action, and/or 6 month imprisonment.</p> <p>It is also an offence to pick any plant that is, or is part of, a threatened species, endangered population or ecological community. Depending on the type of species (i.e. presumed extinct, critically endangered species, endangered species or vulnerable species), the maximum penalty can be \$55,000 or \$220,000 plus an additional penalty in respect of each whole plant affected by the action.</p> <p>Penalties can include 2 years imprisonment and up to \$220,000.</p> <p>Offences do not apply if the action has been assessed and approved under another Act (e.g. licence granted under the <i>Threatened Species and Conservation Act 1995</i> (NSW)).</p>
<b>Native Vegetation Act 2003</b>	<p>Seeks to promote the management of native vegetation, prevent broad scale clearing and protect native vegetation of high conservation value.</p> <p>It is an offence to clear native vegetation in areas where the Act applies, except with development consent or in accordance with a property vegetation plan.</p> <p>Penalties can include up to a maximum of \$1.1 million.</p>
<b>Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act)</b>	<p>Seeks to conserve biological diversity and promote ecologically sustainable development, prevent extinction and promote recovery of threatened species, populations and endangered ecological communities.</p> <p>It is a criminal offence to harm any fauna or flora listed under the TSC Act.</p> <p>It is an offence to contravene an order from the Director General to cease an action that is likely to result in the picking of threatened species, population or ecological communities, or damage to their habitat.</p> <p>Maximum penalties for a corporation can include \$1.1 million plus a daily fine of \$110,000 per day the offence continues.</p> <p>Offences do not apply if the action has been assessed and authorised under another Act (e.g., if a licence has been granted under the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i> (NSW)).</p>
<b>The Heritage Act 1977</b>	<p>Seeks to promote the understanding and encourage the conservation of the state's heritage. This can include trees, gardens, parks, landscapes, either individually or within the curtilage of a built heritage item. It is an offence to undertake works which damage a heritage item on the State Heritage Register without an approval under the Act.</p> <p>Penalties can include up to a maximum of \$1.1 million (for a corporation) and/or 6 months imprisonment.</p> <p>Local heritage is also protected by law under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>.</p>

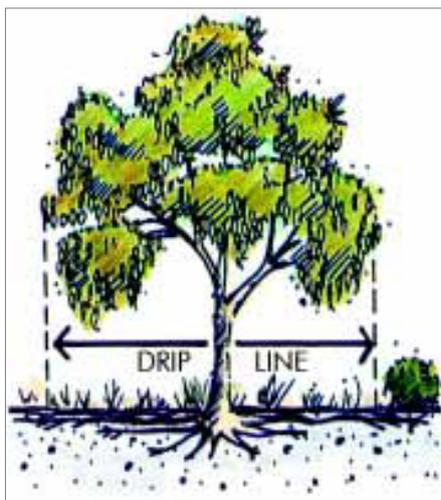
## 6. Vegetation management

The inappropriate management of vegetation has the potential to result in impacts on native vegetation and biodiversity, and penalties to individuals and corporations involved in the works. The following provides guidance on vegetation management prior to, during and after construction.

## 6.1. Prior to construction

Prior to the commencement of construction the following vegetation management measures should be implemented:

- Review the EIA to identify the type and location of vegetation on the site.
- Incorporate specific vegetation management measures identified in the EIA into the site induction, toolbox talk and pre-start meetings.
- Incorporate specific vegetation management measures identified in the EIA into the Construction Environmental Management Plan and environmental control maps (refer to [Guide to Environmental Control Map – 3TP-SD-015](#)).
- Conduct a site inspection and mark vegetation to be removed and fence and mark vegetation to be protected as identified in the EIA.
- Install highly visible barriers around the perimeter of the construction site.
- Fence trees and vegetation to be retained, ensuring fencing is outside the tree protection zone (see Figures 1a and 1b).
- Install signs clearly identifying areas of protected native vegetation.
- Install branch and trunk protection where construction works are in very close proximity to trees (Figure 2).
- Locate construction parking, compounds, stockpiles and chemical storage away from vegetated areas (including tree protection zones) and in areas which do not necessitate anymore clearing of vegetation than necessary.
- Refer to the TPO [Weed Management and Disposal Guide 3TP-SD-110](#) if weeds have been identified on the site and require specific management.
- Refer to the TPO [Fauna Management Guideline 3TP-SD-113](#) if tree hollows or other habitat values have been identified on the site and require specific management measures.



Figures 1a and 1b: Identifying and fencing a tree protection zone  
 (1a: Transport SA 2001; 1b: Campbelltown City Council SA 2011)

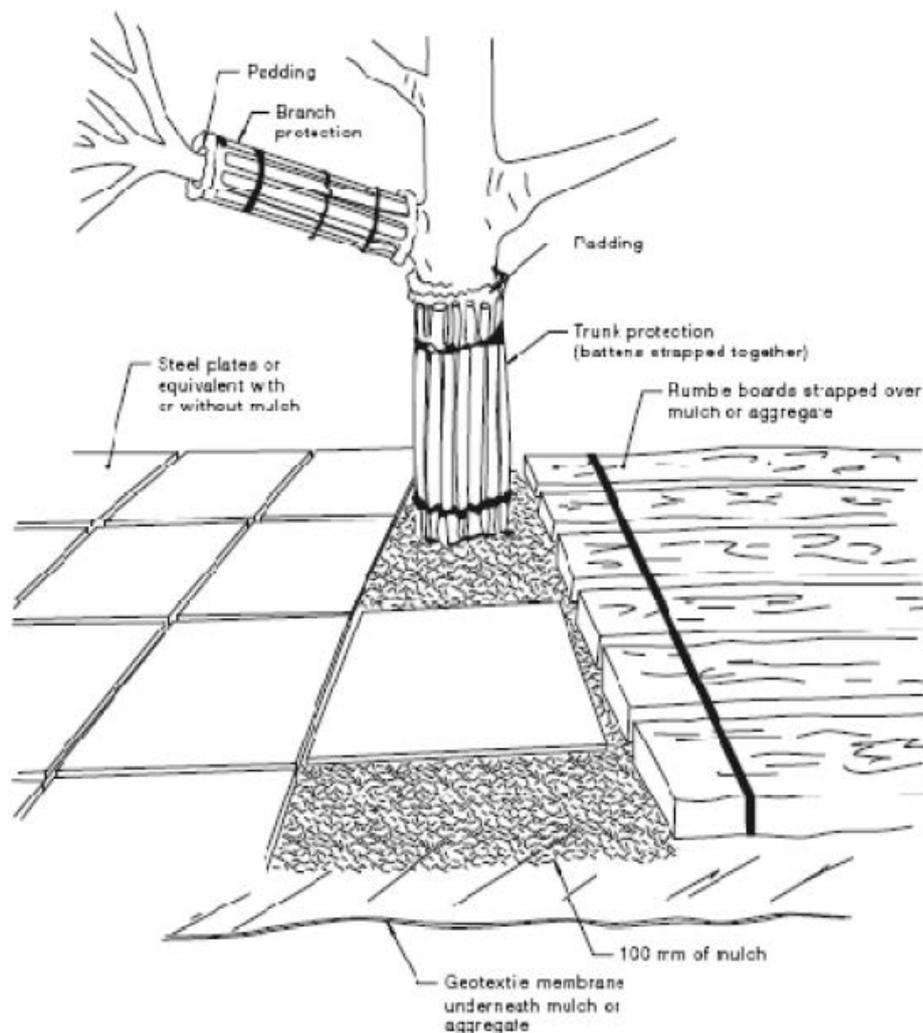


Figure 2: Examples of branch and trunk protection (Australian Standard AS4970-2009)

## 6.2. During construction

During construction, the following vegetation management measures should be implemented:

- Use only defined access tracks and entry/exit points for all vehicle movements.
- Use only designated areas for parking, stockpiles, materials and waste storage.
- Do not store materials or park equipment/vehicles within tree protection zones (Figures 1a and 1b).
- Revegetate or mulch disturbed areas, particularly batter slopes at the earliest opportunity.
- Mulch and reuse cleared vegetation on site for site stabilisation and/or landscaping where appropriate.
- Undertake regular inspections of vegetation management measures to ensure they are in place and effective.
- Monitor the health of retained vegetation and seek advice from an arborist if vegetation shows signs of stress (discolouration, die back).

- Submit for approval [Removal or Trimming of Vegetation Application – 9TP-FT-078](#) for any removal or trimming of vegetation not identified in the EIA.

### 6.3. After construction

After construction, the following vegetation management measures should be implemented:

- Stabilise all disturbed areas, implement landscaping and remove vegetation protection measures.
- Ensure a maintenance program is in place for any landscaping or revegetation undertaken as part of the project.

## 7. Incident management

An environmental incident occurs when vegetation, which has not been approved for removal in the EIA or via an [Removal or Trimming of Vegetation Application – 9TP-FT-078](#), is damaged or cleared. Refer to [Environmental Incident Classification and Reporting - 9TP-PR-105](#) for TPO requirements for reporting and investigating environmental incidents.

## 8. Related documents and references

### Related documents and references

[Environmental Incident Classification and Reporting – 9TP-PR-105](#)  
[Guide to Environmental Control Map - 3TP-SD-015](#)  
[Weed Management and Disposal Guide 3TP-SD-110](#)  
[Fauna Management Guideline – 3TP-SD-113](#)  
[Vegetation Offset Guide – 9TP-ST-149](#)  
[Removal or Trimming of Vegetation Application – 9TP-FT-078](#)