



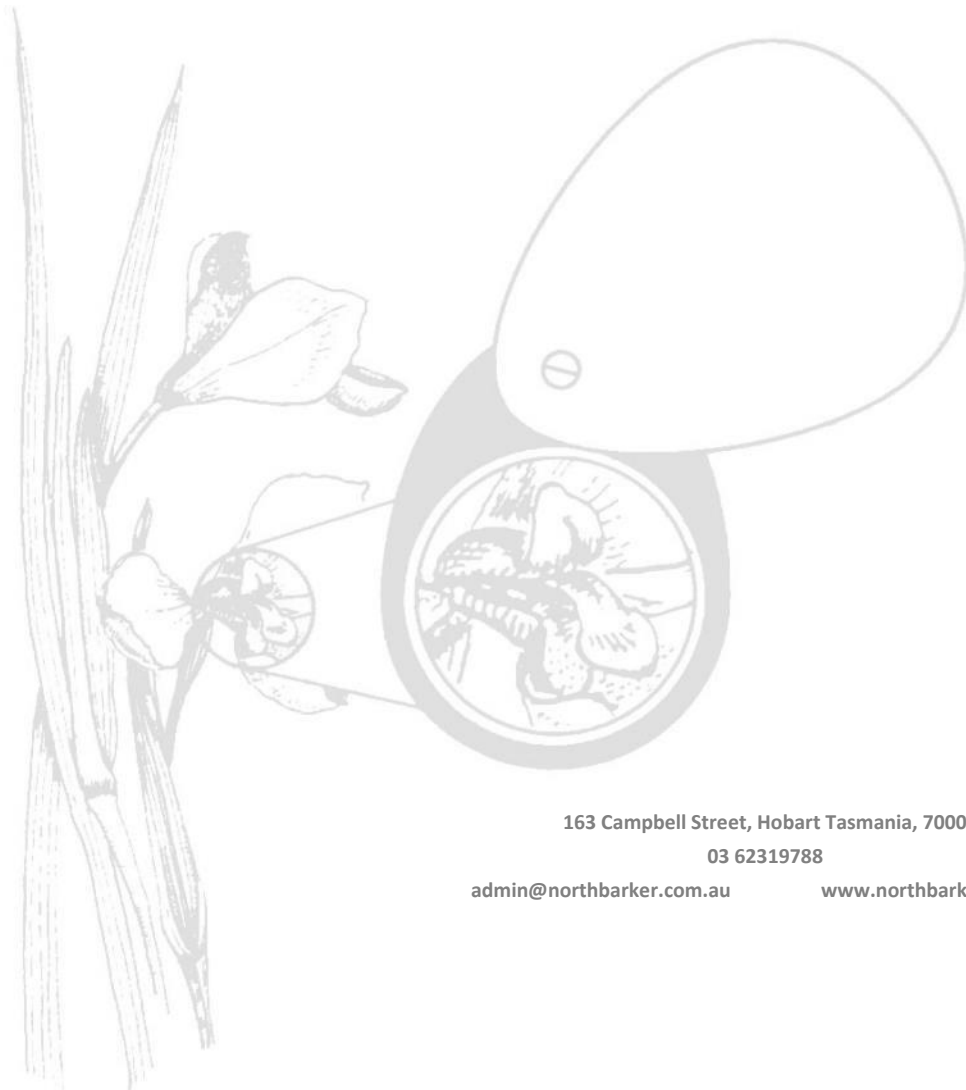
Forest Clearing Guidelines

in lieu of exemption from requiring a Forest Practices Plan

Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme

30th June 2022

For Tasmanian Irrigation



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1. Background

The Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme infrastructure construction is exempt from requiring a Forest Practices Plan in accordance with the *Forest Practices Regulations 2017*...

4. *Circumstances in which forest practices plan, &c., not required*

(j) the harvesting of timber or the clearing of trees on any land, or the clearance and conversion of a threatened native vegetation community on any land, for the purpose of enabling –

(i) the construction of a building within the meaning of the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 or of a group of such buildings; or

(ii) the carrying out of any associated development –

...with the project in its entirety requiring a permit under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and the pipeline itself meeting the definition of a building:

building includes –

(a) a structure and part of a building or structure; and

(b) fences, walls, out-buildings, service installations and other appurtenances of a building; and

(c) a boat or a pontoon which is permanently moored or fixed to land;

In the absence of this exemption, some (5) patches of forest through which the pipeline alignment passes would have otherwise triggered the requirements for a Forest Practices Plan, although several other areas were below requisite thresholds and did not trigger other clauses.

In lieu of the requirement for Forest Practices Plan, the proponent intends for these Forest Clearing Guidelines to apply to civil works and vegetation clearance within all areas of forest (native and silvicultural) within the project area (Figures 1a and 1b). It will be beneficial if the clearance works in these applicable areas are undertaken by a contractor experienced with undertaking clearance operations in accordance with Forest Practices Plans under the *Forest Practices Act 1985*.

2. Forest Clearance Guidelines

All of the following clauses must be adhered to during works within the area applicable to the guidelines (Figures 1a and 1b).

In cases of conflicting conditions/requirements with project level approvals/permits, the legislated permit and approvals conditions will supersede clauses in these guidelines.

Boundaries

- (i) Clearly demarcate the construction corridor in situ and on construction plans and specify on all contractor agreements that works, vehicles and materials must be confined within this designated impact area – noting that the approved construction corridor is a maximum width of 30 m and in some places (specified on construction plans) is narrowed to 10 m (on account of adjacent high conservation values).
- (ii) The broader extent of the design corridor outside of the construction corridor must be treated as an exclusion zone.

Felling

- (i) Felling will be confined to the operational area as defined above.
- (ii) Trees should be directionally felled along the pipeline alignment and not into retained native vegetation.

Wet-weather limitations

- (i) Cartage of timber products across paddocks or on unsurfaced access tracks will occur in dry conditions only.
- (ii) Avoid the use of ground-based harvesting equipment on saturated soils.
- (iii) Ground-based extraction will cease when and where:
 - a. Soils are saturated and turbid water is flowing down an extraction track for more than 10 m, and/or
 - b. Soils are puddled, forming mud or slurry along an extraction track to a depth of more than 200 mm over a 20 m section or longer, and/or
 - c. Blading of mud or soil is required to maintain the trafficability of an extraction track, and/or
 - d. Turbid water or mud is flowing from an extraction track into a watercourse or lake (in which case immediate action will be taken to divert the flow away from the watercourse).
- (iv) Where (iii) applies, the effected section of the extraction track will not be by-passed by opening a new extraction track alongside or close by if on similar saturated ground.

Restoration

- (i) Extraction tracks will be drained by installing grips (refer to Forest Practices Code p47) as per the spacing in Table 5 of the Forest Practices Code for high erodibility soils.
- (ii) Landings and log processing areas will be effectively drained.

- (iii) Slash may be left in place or placed in small heaps (no greater than 4 m high) within the cleared area away from retained trees. Rubbish, metal, oil, soil and other foreign matter will not be included in heaps.

Streamside management/ water quality protection

- (i) If waterways are encountered, all aspects of the project's Environmental Protection Guideline 5: Watercourse Crossings, must apply.

Fire management

- (i) Appropriate fire suppression equipment will be on site during operations, and fire weather monitoring and shutdown procedures will be in place. Operations will adhere to the current "Fire Prevention at Forest Operations" procedure (Forest Industry Fire Management Committee).

<https://www.sfmcc.tas.gov.au/document/procedure-fifmc-fire-prevention-forest-operations>.

- (ii) Any wildfire which occurs during operations will be reported to and dealt with as directed by Tasmania Fire Service.
- (iii) Burning of residues if required may be undertaken between March and June, depending upon suitable weather conditions.
- (iv) Any burning will be carried out in accordance with a site-specific burn plan and will comply with Tasmania Fire Service Regulations.

Management of fuels, oils, rubbish and emissions

- (i) Fuel, grease and oils will be stored in a location where any inadvertent leaks will not enter watercourses, swamps or other still waters, either directly or indirectly.
- (ii) Fuel or oil spills that cause or threaten to cause environmental harm, or that are greater than 20 litres, will be reported to Tasmanian Irrigation as soon as possible.
- (iii) All rubbish to be cleaned up and removed from the site on a regular basis and at the conclusion of works within each forest coupe.

Conservation of natural and cultural values

All aspects of the project's Environmental Protection Requirements for Construction must apply, including but not limited the following Environmental Protection Guidelines:

- **EPG 1:** Disturbance to Terrestrial and Aquatic Flora and Fauna
- **EPG 2:** Erosion, Sedimentation and Surface Run-off
- **EPG 3:** Aboriginal Artefacts – Unanticipated Discovery Plan

- **EPG 4:** Weed and Hygiene Control
- **EPG 5:** Watercourse Crossings

Specific prescriptions to note include:

- (i) Threatened vegetation – the requirement to treat all patches of threatened communities within the design corridor as exclusion zones, other than those within the approved impact area of the construction corridor.
- (ii) Threatened flora occurrences – noting any requirements of permit/s to take threatened flora listed under the *Threatened Species Protection Act* 1995, and the requirement for all known threatened flora locations outside of, but adjacent to, the permitted works area to be taped or fenced off by a suitably qualified person to prevent incursion by machinery or personnel.
- (iii) Mitigation measures with respect to threatened fauna, including:
 - a. Constraints on works around eagle nests, including seasonal constraints aligned with breeding season, and a stop works clause in relation to the discovery of new nest/s during works.
 - b. Application of the Pre-clearance Check and Unanticipated Den Discovery Protocol for Tasmanian devils, eastern and spotted-tail quolls.
 - c. Requirements of the Habitat Tree (Hollow-bearing) Management Protocol.
- (iv) Minimising ground disturbance in areas of high soil erodibility.
- (v) Any avoidance areas associated with documented sites of cultural significance (as per the projects cultural heritage assessment results), and the requirements of the Aboriginal Artefacts – Unanticipated Discovery Plan.

REFERENCES

Fire Prevention at Forest Operations procedure (Forest Industry Fire Management Committee)
<https://www.sfmc.tas.gov.au/document/procedure-fifmc-fire-prevention-forest-operations>.

Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme Environmental Protection Requirements for Construction
(Pipelines, pump station, buffer dam and associated works), Tasmanian Irrigation, June
2022.

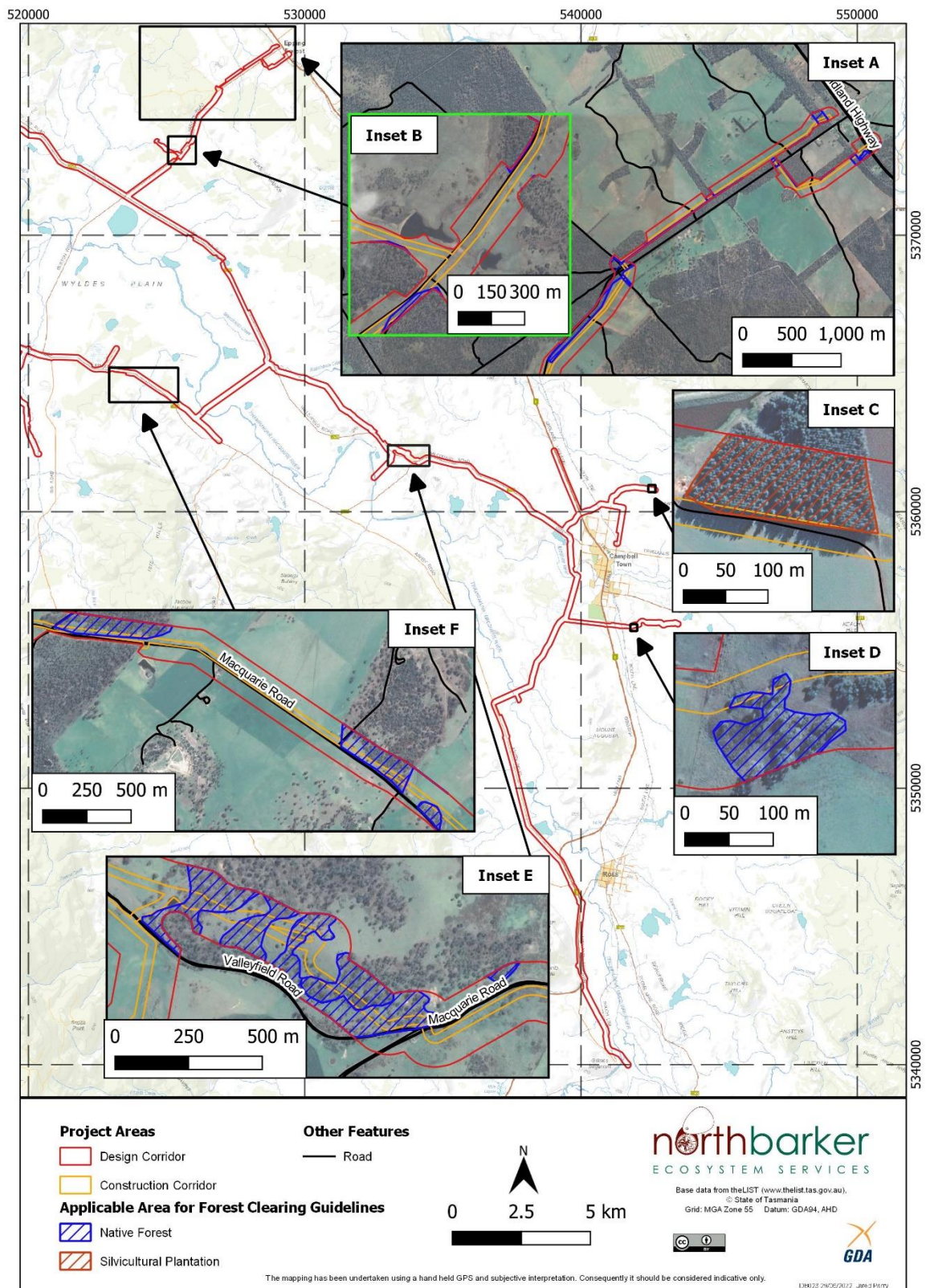


Figure 1a: Applicable areas for application of the protocol

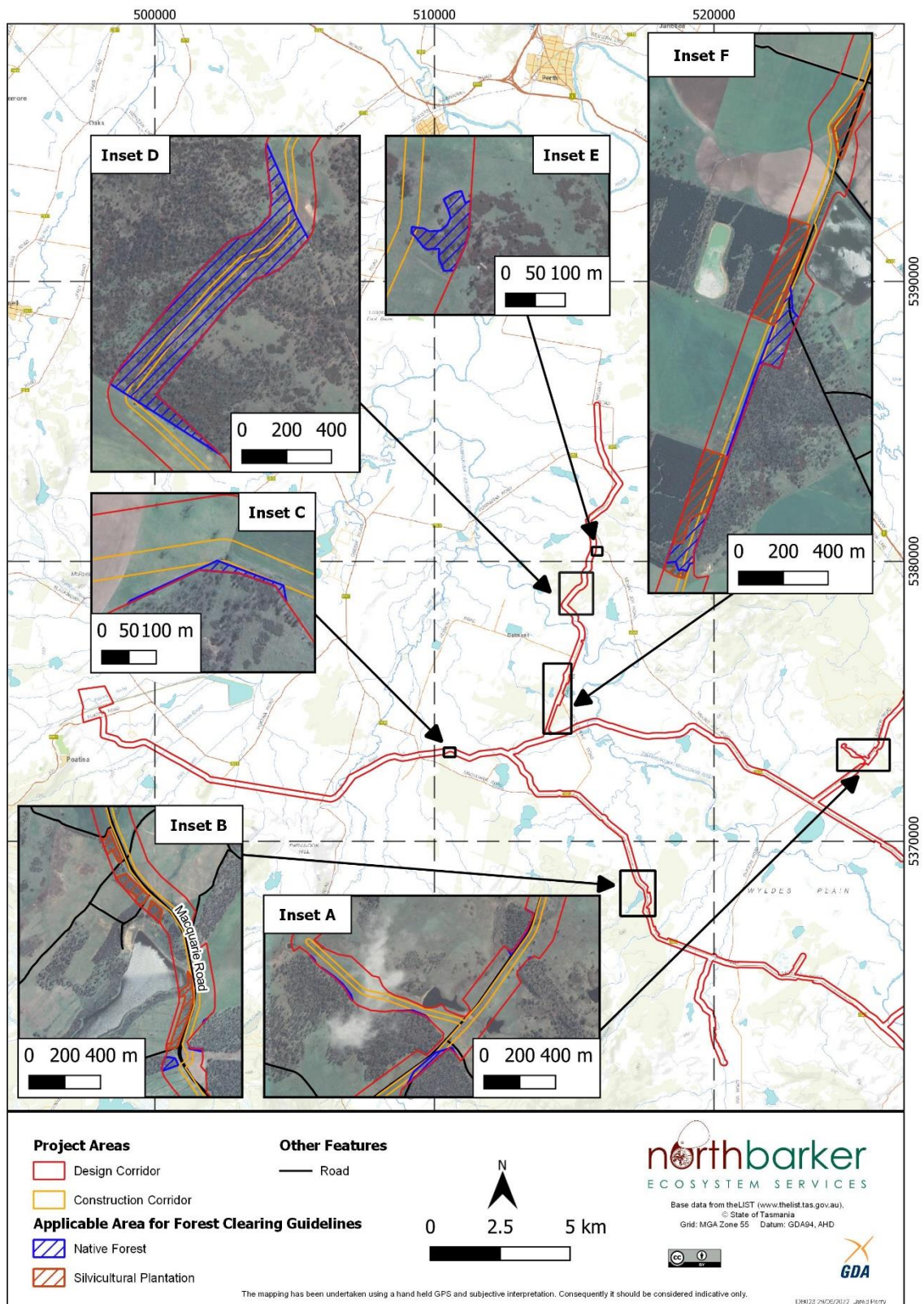


Figure 1b: Applicable areas for application of the protocol