

Hervey's Range Shooting Complex

Environmental Management Plan

2010 - 2012



Approved by:

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Environmental Management – Hervey Range Shooting Complex

Introduction

1. Townsville Marksmen Rifle Club (TMRC) as site owners of the Hervey Range Shooting Complex (HRSC) requires an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), as responsible land owners. This EMP is a working document which is based on input from TMRC and on-site partners the Sporting Shooters Australia Association (SSAA) - Townsville Branch. Ongoing management of environment issues by TMRC and SSAA will be managed through the establishment of an Environmental Sub-committee, with the responsibility to develop an ongoing site management plan. This plan will be advised by North Queensland Dry Tropics (NQDT) who specialise in land and water management and other government departments who have environmental management responsibilities.

2. The shooting community at the HRSC wishes to employ best practice when it comes to managing environmental issues such as erosion control, installing Solar Power, reforestation programs and weed and feral animal control.

3. **Location and Site Description.** The HRSC is a multi-discipline range located adjacent to Hervey's Range Road some thirty kilometres North-West of Townsville. The complex is located at the base of Hervey's Range. The freehold property (40.55 hectares) is described as Lot 1 on Registered Plan 730808, Parish of Hervey, County of Elphinstone.

TMRC Environmental Management Objectives

4. The primary objective of this EMP is to provide robust guidance on:
- a. The requirements for the planning of future facilities or range upgrades at the HRSC, taking into account the impact to the environment and the requirement for environmentally friendly facilities.
 - b. A plan for the ongoing management of environmental issues at HRSC.
 - c. The establishment of a TMRC/SSAA environmental sub-committee which will deal with on-site issues at the HRSC and report to the HRSC Management Group.
 - d. To raise awareness among TMRC and SSAA members about HRSC as an environmental site, site requirements and the need for responsible property management.

Vision

5. The TMRC vision is to:

Employ best practice environmental management at the HRSC through consultation with on-site stakeholders, by seeking advice from professional agencies, and heightened user awareness of site environmental issues and policy to ensure the responsible long-term viability of the HRSC.

Current Issues

6. There are a number of current issues at the HRSC which impact on current environmental management. Consequently, the following issues must be addressed by this EMP to ensure that a robust management process is in place:

- a. The lack of a procedural format for dealing with land management issues, including a clear understanding of who the executive authority is for range development and environmental issues. This lack of procedural format has the potential to bring TMRC and its on-site partner SSAA into conflict with government agencies administering tree clearing and other legislation.
- b. A lack of consultation and clear management processes at HRSC also reduces TMRC's and SSAA opportunities to apply for government funding support.

HRSC Environmental Policy

Management

7. The TMRC reserves the right as owners of the land to manage environmental policy on the range for the benefit of all shooters and the long term viability of the land as a shooting complex. Consequently, the following principles are to be adhered to by all clubs on the range:

- a. TMRC will reserve the right to make executive decisions in regard to environmental management issues.
- b. All development work must be approved by the appropriate government body (Federal and State if required) to ensure that all development works meet current legislation. TMRC must be consulted and must approve any development work before it commences, including sighting of appropriate government approvals.
- c. Clubs must appoint an environmental officer to ensure that ongoing environmental management issues are addressed. It is expected that the environmental officers will brief the HRSC Management Group (HMG) at the quarterly meetings.
- d. The Environmental Policy contained in the following paragraphs of this EMP are applied.

Development Principles

8. All requests for range development, including the erection of buildings or earth works are to be submitted in writing to the HRSC Executive Committee. Approval for such development works is to be obtained by the HRSC Executive Committee prior to the works commencing. Clubs are to ensure, that developments works:

- a. Meet standard building standards for safety and environmental protection.
- b. Have met Townsville City Council planning guidelines and as such building approval has been obtained.
- c. Blend in with the HRSC complex.
- d. Are in the interests of the HRSC.
- e. Clearing of vegetation (flora) from the HRSC for development purposes must have environmental approval prior to the vegetation being cleared.
- f. Natural watercourses are not to be interfered with, unless environmental approval has been granted.
- g. Will not cause other environmental issues or damage due to their construction.

Tree Clearing at HRSC

9. Tree Clearing at HRSC is not permitted without Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management (QDERM) approval, including the approval of the HRSC Executive Committee. QDERM describes the HRSC area as Brigalow and New England Tableland Bore Regions vegetation. This description allows personnel to consult the latest information in the QDERM document a Landholders' guide to vegetation clearing applications, which provides guidelines for prospective clearing programs. Anyone contemplating tree clearing at the HRSC needs to consult this document. Also attached is a second document with the title Regulations for clearing regrowth vegetation (Attachment 1). Again personnel proposing clearing programs need to make themselves familiar with these requirements.

10. When tree removal has been approved, it is expected that the trees removed will be replaced with new native trees on a one for one basis. Key areas requiring native plants are waterways and other high erosion areas to reduce erosion.

11. **QPS and Tree Clearance.** Rifle shooting is a sport requiring clear lines of fire. In order to establish clear lines of fire trees had to be removed from the HRSC range site. The HRSC was established in 1979 and

this is when the site was cleared of trees. Any future clearing should be minimal and be in response to safety directions from the Queensland Police Service – Weapons Licensing Branch (QPS/WLB) who administer safety standards for all Queensland rifle ranges under the Weapons Act 1990. QSP/WLB may indicate that trees need to be removed, however this directive does not meet QDERM requirements and as such the QDERM approval process will need to be followed.

Dumping of Domestic and Industrial Rubbish

12. Household generated rubbish of any description cannot be dumped at the HRSC. This includes placing household rubbish in the industrial bin at the front gate. Further, the dumping of industrial rubbish such as tyres and building materials is **strictly forbidden**. Dumping of items that could be of use, such as old furniture etc , may only occur after approval has been granted by the HRSC Executive Committee (on advice from the respective Club Captain).

Solar Panel Installation

13. TMRC is in favour of installing Solar Panels or other ‘Green’ energy solutions on HRSC. Technical advice has been obtained from Tropical Energy Solutions and Ergon Energy on this topic. There are several advantages, which makes this strategy attractive including it:

- a. Reduces greenhouse emissions and assists in producing cleaner energy.
- b. Generates more than enough electricity for ongoing club house needs.
- c. Surplus electricity can be fed into the mains grid and TMRC will receive payment for this product, making it a viable long term solution.
- d. Funding organisations look favourably on the installation of solar panels when reviewing funding applications because it endorses government policy on environmental issues.

14. Future facilities work on the HRSC is to include ‘Green’ energy solutions for the long-term viability of the range complex..

Erosion control

15. Erosion along the watercourses in HRSC and near the road network is of concern. TMRC will soon be engaging with organisations to firstly seek advice as to how to reduce this erosion and secondly source the funding to allow this erosion mitigation work to commence. In order to reduce erosion along waterways and roads, the following principles are to be adhered to:

- a. Tree and plant removal along waterways is not to occur. The priority areas for planting native flora are the waterways and high erosion areas.
- b. Dumping of items in waterways is strictly forbidden.
- c. Any range work, both upgrades to existing facilities/ranges and for new facilities/ranges is to take into account the need for good water removal and erosion control.

16. A separate development plan agenda item for erosion control will dictate future works. TMRC has had an erosion program in place for the past two years. Funding from the Queensland Department of Sport and Recreation has supported this program. In the first instance the TMRC/SSAA Sub-committee would need to meet and identify the areas of concern and allocate priorities. The next step is for TMRC, as site owners, to apply for funding. The Department of Sports and Recreation generally calls applications for erosion damage in April, which coincides at the end of the wet season.

Weed control

17. Clubs are responsible for managing noxious weeds and pests on their applicable ranges. It is expected that clubs actively pursue the removal of weeds and pests. A property pest management plan will be developed to ensure that HRSC takes a pro-active approach to reducing weeds and pests. The guiding principle at HRSC is that only native flora is to be planted at the HRSC. Non-native flora will be subject to removal.

18. Literature covering weed control is extensive and varied. QDERM advocates the use of a Property pest management plan. Detailed information covering this area can be found in the QDERM document Controlling weeds and pests (Attachment 2). A further document is attached with the title Lantana Control Methods (Attachment 3) and this has been included because of the Lantana growth on the HRSC site.

Feral Animal Management

19. TMRC will actively ensure that feral animals are eradicated from the HRSC. This responsibility will rest with the HRSC Caretaker, and it is expected that personnel would report sightings of pest animals so that they can be removed. The dumping of animals on the HRSC is **strictly forbidden**. Native animals will be protected and encouraged to stay and make the HRSC their home. The shooting of native animals is **strictly forbidden**.

20. The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (EEDI) have produced a fact sheet on the control of pest animals. The fact sheet has the title Pest animal management in settled areas. This document is very readable and cites control measures including lethal and non-lethal measures. A copy of this fact sheet is attached for the reader's perusal (Attachment 4). This area would also need to be addressed in the HRSC property pest management plan.

Native Fauna Management

21. The removal of any native plants from the HRSC is **strictly forbidden**. The trapping of native birds, reptiles, spiders and other native animals is also **strictly forbidden**. The relocation of native animals to the HRSC is **strictly forbidden**, unless prior written approval has been provided by the HRSC Executive Committee.

External funding

22. Two sources of funding that might be exploited to support HRSC projects are the Queensland Department of Communities-Sports and Recreation and the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. Depending on the issues to be addressed there are possibly other sources of funding. While TMRC and SSAA might reach agreement on issues to be addressed at SSAA locations, TMRC as the land owners are responsible for submitting the funding applications. This provides a financial advantage for both TMRC and SSAA in that it for every dollar invested by a sporting club, the government will potentially provide a further two dollars (as a general rule).

Consultation

23. This EMP will be produced after consultation with TMRC's on-site partner SSAA and input from North Queensland Dry Tropics who have expertise in land care management programs. Further, consultation then needs to be on going so that the document is adjusted continuously in order to addresses changing circumstances.

Contacts

24. The key TMRC/HRSC contacts in relation to this plane are:

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