

Environmental Management Guidelines for Construction Sites

Introduction

The Mount Hotham Alpine Resort Management Board (RMB) is the land manager for the Mount Hotham Alpine Resort under the *Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997*. The MHARMB works with other key agencies including the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in relation to native vegetation and revegetation issues.

The RMB works closely with stakeholders, builders and developers to ensure that the site, spoil, drainage and revegetation are managed in accordance with best practice environmental management principles.

These guidelines are an initiative of the RMB and aim to promote a preventive rather than reactive approach to project planning and implementation. The guidelines are intended to provide an outline of the key factors that need to be considered to ensure successful site management and rehabilitation.

Objective

To understand and work with the alpine environment so that soil disturbance is minimal and site rehabilitation is both achievable and sustainable.

Potential issues

The following issues will require careful management during construction:

- direct and indirect damage to indigenous flora and fauna habitats;
- vehicle and construction crew access;
- storage of construction materials, equipment and machinery;
- run-off and sedimentation;
- proliferation of existing weeds and pest animals and potential introduction of additional weed species; and
- waste management.

Recommended Guidelines

Pre-construction

- Incorporate environmental management into project planning and design to avoid areas of high sensitivity;
- Hold a preliminary meeting on-site with representatives from the RMB to discuss the following:
 - site characteristics;
 - environmental constraints;
 - site specific management issues;
 - construction timing and sequence;
 - construction access and storage requirements.
- Develop a rehabilitation and revegetation plan (with advice from the RMB) detailing:
 - indigenous species to be used;
 - seed or plant purchase arrangements;
 - sod management techniques (if applicable);
 - site preparation works required (e.g. earth works);
 - top soil management techniques;
 - resources and skills required for planting.
- The specific requirements for site rehabilitation and revegetation will vary depending on the site characteristics. A significant commitment is required to ensure a successful outcome and revegetation works must be an integral part of the construction schedule;
- Assign responsibility for maintaining environmental management and liaison with authorities such as the RMB and the DELWP.

Construction

- Minimise construction disturbance footprints to avoid and minimise vegetation/habitat/fauna loss;
- Limit snow gum removal and disturbance to undisturbed vegetation;
- Fence off/peg the construction area and clearly mark no-go areas;
- Designate specific areas for access and storage of construction materials in consultation with the RMB. Utilise existing disturbed and non vegetated areas;
- Ensure all construction vehicles and equipment are cleaned of soil and organic matter to remove seeds prior to arriving on site to prevent the introduction and/or spread of weeds and pathogens;
- Keep construction areas free of litter at all times. Ensure adequate waste bins are provided ;
- Establish sediment run-off controls (e.g. silt fencing) and drainage around all construction areas;
- Conserve and contain topsoil and spoil which is vital for stabilisation and revegetation works;
- Minimise the exposure of excavations at any given time to prevent erosion, sediment runoff and protect water resources; and
- Maintain contact with authorities such as the RMB and the DELWP and obtain advice on specific issues as necessary.

Further Information

It is not expected that all land owners, operators and developers are experts in environmental management and rehabilitation. We encourage you to contact the RMB to seek assistance and ask questions relating to your specific site during both the planning and implementation stages of your development.

Contacts

Georgina Boardman

Environmental Manager, RMB

P/ 03 5759 3550

E/ georginab@mthotham.com.au

For rehabilitation and plant species advice

Rebecca Read

Manager—Victorian Alps Nursery, Ovens

P/ 0408 151 130

E/ alpinenursery@mthotham.com.au

Post-construction

- Monitor all construction areas following construction to identify and eradicate any introduced or environmental weed species;
- Remove all equipment, construction materials and waste as part of site clean up works;
- Transport waste to the appropriate off-site landfill (determined in consultation with the RMB);
- Assess and confirm rehabilitation and revegetation requirements in consultation with the RMB and DELWP
- Replace top soil and hand rake to restore soil surface and make ready for planting;
- Replant any sods that may have been recovered;
- Stabilise bare soil using seed-free straw mulch or fibre matting;
- Plant tubestock;
- Irrigate plantings; and
- Monitor plant growth and conduct maintenance activities such as weed control and supplementary planting, mulching etc as necessary for at least 3 years after construction.