

BushBroker®

BushBroker fees and services

Information sheet No. 22

BushBroker fees and services

BushBroker assists permit holders to find offsets through the use of Native Vegetation Credits. Native Vegetation Credits are listed on the Native Vegetation Credit Register and can be used as an offset for the approved clearing of native vegetation.

Commencing in October 2009, fees will be charged for services provided by BushBroker. During 2009/10 fees will only apply to some of the 10 separate services offered by BushBroker. Fees for the other BushBroker services will be phased in over the next two years.

Fees for BushBroker services have been introduced in order to allow the BushBroker program to continue to help permit holders to find third party offsets and to enable landowners to become providers of offsets. All monies raised by the collection of fees are allocated to fund the BushBroker program.

The BushBroker fees have been set in accordance with the Victorian Government's Cost Recovery Guidelines and Competitive Neutrality Policy.

The services provided by the Native Vegetation Credit Register, including registration of native Vegetation Credits and the provision of Credit Extracts, will continue to be free of charge.

Fees for services in 2009/10

The services and associated fees that will apply from 12th of October 2009 are shown in Table 1.

Collection of fees

The BushBroker fees will be collected from the party receiving the service – see Table 1 for details.

In most cases the fees will be collected at the time of the provision of the service. However BushBroker Landowner Agreement monitoring fees are not collected until the invoice has been paid by the permit holder (as specified under a BushBroker Credit Agreement). See Table 2 for details of BushBroker service specifications.

Table 1 Services and fees for 2009/10

Service for BushBroker:	Fee (\$)*	
Landowner Expression of Interest	250	Landowner pays on submission of BushBroker Expression Of Interest Form
Offset Search Request	300	Permit holder pays on submission of a BushBroker Offset Search Request Form
Landowner Agreement monitoring < 7.5ha > 7.5ha	1000 3000	A proportion of this fee is deducted from landowner's annual payment
Extended Search for unlisted assets	1500	Permit holder pays on submission of BushBroker Extended Search Request Form
<i>Over the Counter</i> transactions < 200 plants > 200 plants	200 400	Permit holder pays at the time of the BushBroker <i>Over the Counter</i> transaction
Credit Agreement	1000	Fee added to permit holder's invoice
Permit holder initiated site assessment < 50ha > 50ha	3500 5000	Permit holder pays on submission of BushBroker Offset Search Request Form

* fees include GST

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Fees in future years

Fees for the remaining three BushBroker services will be introduced over 2010/11 and 2011/12.

These services are:

- BushBroker site assessment
- Development of a BushBroker Landowner Agreement
- BushBroker Offset matching and tables.

Specification of BushBroker services

See Table 2 for the specifications of BushBroker services for.

Table 2 Specifications of BushBroker services

BushBroker Service	BushBroker specification
BushBroker Expression of interest	<p>BushBroker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ receive the BushBroker Expression of Interest (EOI) form from the landowner ▪ enter the EOI information into the BushBroker Database ▪ confirm and correct missing or conflicting information ▪ locate and enter additional preliminary site information including bioregion, Ecological Vegetation Class, default habitat score, conservation status, conservation significance and estimated number of Native Vegetation Credits ▪ send a copy of the information in the BushBroker Database to the landowner for verification and information ▪ amend the information in the BushBroker Database on the advice of the landowner. <p>A single EOI is one that relates to the sites nominated at one time on one property. Sites nominated by the same owner on another property constitute a separate EOI. Sites nominated on the same property more than two months after an initial nomination constitute a separate EOI.</p> <p>Landowners recruited through the BushBroker Extended Search process will not be charged the EOI fee.</p>
BushBroker Offset Search Request	<p>BushBroker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ receive the BushBroker Offset Search Request Form (Offset Search Request) from the permit holder ▪ enter the Offset Search Request information into the BushBroker Database ▪ confirm and correct missing or conflicting information ▪ send an acknowledgement within one week of receiving all information required. <p>A single Offset Search Request can comprise up to and including five clearing zones. If there are more than five clearing zones, additional Offset Search Request forms are required, each of which incurs the Offset Search Request fee. An Offset Search Request remains valid for one month from the date of the Offset Search Request response from BushBroker.</p> <p>After this period the initial Offset Search Request lapses if the response has not been acted upon and a new Offset Search Request is required and this incurs another fee. If a permit holder seeks to amend an Offset Search Request before BushBroker has sent the response, only one fee applies. If a response has already been sent, any major amendment to the original Offset Search Request will be considered as a new Offset Search Request and incur a new Offset Search Request fee. A major amendment is generally one that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ includes a significant change to the Ecological Vegetation Class sought, the assets sought or the quantities of the assets sought; and ▪ results in a response that is different to the initial response.

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BushBroker Service	BushBroker specification
Monitor BushBroker Landowner Agreements	<p>BushBroker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ receive and evaluate Annual Reports from the landowner ▪ process annual payments to the landowner ▪ manage the BushBroker trust fund holding the landowner's payments ▪ undertake site visits during the 10 year management period ▪ undertake compliance actions where necessary ▪ provide reports on offset site management and protection where requested by relevant planning authorities.
BushBroker Extended Search	<p>The BushBroker Extended Search is designed to meet the requirements of the 'reasonable search' obligation. BushBroker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ search the BushBroker Database ▪ check suitable land purchase/surrender options on DSE internal land acquisition nomination lists ▪ contact relevant DSE officers in the bioregion and check for suitable land purchase/surrender options ▪ map the relevant Ecological Vegetation Class, vegetation quality and property information and identify landowners with potentially suitable native vegetation ▪ seek BushBroker Expressions Of Interest from landowners with relevant native vegetation (e.g. through a mail out) ▪ map the relevant Ecological Vegetation Class, native vegetation quality and public land categories ▪ seek cooperation of land managers with relevant native vegetation type ▪ check with regional BushBroker Project Officers, BushBroker Agents and others with local knowledge for suitable options ▪ provide a response to the permit holder. <p>The extended search fee is in addition to the BushBroker Offset Search Request fee.</p> <p>The rules relating to number of clearing zones and validity period of BushBroker Offset Search Request also apply to BushBroker Extended Searches (see above).</p>
BushBroker Over The Counter	<p>BushBroker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ undertake the transaction with the permit holder on behalf of the landowner ▪ provide the permit holder with an BushBroker Offset Plan (including the BushBroker Landowner Agreement) approved by the Department of Sustainability and Environment as the referral authority ▪ advise the Native Vegetation Credit Register of the change of name for the Native Vegetation Credits ▪ provide a receipt and a Native Vegetation Extract from the Native Vegetation Credit Register for the permit holder. <p>One BushBroker <i>Over The Counter</i> transaction relates to an individual BushBroker Offset Plan.</p>

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BushBroker Service	BushBroker specification
BushBroker Credit Agreement	<p>BushBroker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ receive the Credit Agreement Advice form from the landowner▪ prepare the relevant BushBroker Credit Agreement (Credit Agreement)▪ circulate copies of the Credit Agreement to the permit holder and landowner for execution▪ arrange execution of the Credit Agreement by the Secretary (or delegate) of the Department of Sustainability and Environment on behalf of the State of Victoria▪ prepare and issue an invoice to the permit holder▪ advise the Native Vegetation Credit Register of the change of name recorded against the specific Native Vegetation Credits▪ send signed copies of the Credit Agreement to the permit holder and landowner.
Permit holder initiated site assessment	<p>BushBroker will assess sites and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ brief the landowner on BushBroker processes▪ undertake due diligence on the parcel of land▪ assemble site information▪ undertake site assessments▪ enter Confirmed Asset data into the BushBroker Database▪ prepare draft BushBroker Management Plan▪ calculate the Native Vegetation Credits that could be generated. <p>Where there are multiple sites on a property, BushBroker will give priority to assessing the site or sites that match the permit holder's enquiry.</p> <p>Subject to the time available at the property, as much other information as possible will be collected including the assessment of other sites, especially those generally in demand or of Very High or High conservation significance, and the verification of Expression Of Interest information such as Ecological Vegetation Class, Large Old Trees and site area for other sites.</p>

Permit holder initiated site assessments

A search of the BushBroker database in response to a BushBroker Offset Search Request can result in locating a Native Vegetation Credit, a Confirmed Asset, an Expressions of Interest or any combination of these three. The search can also result in no match being found in the BushBroker Database. This latter result can trigger the 'BushBroker Extended Search' procedure as described table 2.

Where the search finds only Expressions of Interest, BushBroker will offer to undertake, initially at its cost, the assessment of one selected site, which will be either the first-listed or one nominated by the permit holder. The following sequence will then apply:

1. If the process leads to a BushBroker Credit Agreement from the selected site, the landowner will be charged the site assessment fee (to be introduced in the second year [2010-2011] of cost recovery).
2. If the process does not lead to a BushBroker Credit Agreement from the selected site, and the permit holder does not nominate another Expressions of Interest site, BushBroker bears the cost and the site will be listed as a Confirmed Asset on the BushBroker Database. If a BushBroker Credit Agreement subsequently occurs as a result of another BushBroker Offset Search Request, the landowner will be charged the site assessment fee.
3. If the process does not lead to a BushBroker Credit Agreement, and the permit holder nominates a second Expressions of Interest site, the permit holder is required to pay the site assessment fee for the first Expressions of Interest site. BushBroker will undertake, initially at its cost, the assessment of the second site. If the process then leads to a BushBroker Credit Agreement from the second selected site, the landowner is charged the site assessment fee.

4. Further to step 3, the first site is listed as a Confirmed Asset on the BushBroker Database. If a BushBroker Credit Agreement subsequently occurs as a result of another BushBroker Offset Search Request from another permit holder, the landowner will be charged the site assessment fee and the original permit holder will be refunded.
5. If the process does not lead to a BushBroker Credit Agreement from the second selected site, and the permit holder does not nominate another Expressions of Interest site, BushBroker bears the cost. The site is listed as a Confirmed Asset on the BushBroker Database. If a BushBroker Credit Agreement subsequently occurs as a result of another enquiry from another permit holder, the landowner will be charged the site assessment fee.

Further information

For further information on BushBroker, please contact the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or visit the DSE website at: www.dse.vic.gov.au/nativevegetation. All BushBroker Information Sheets are available on the website.

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Authorised by the Victorian Government, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne
Printed by Stream Solutions
ISBN 978-1-74242-181-0 (print - set)
ISBN 978-1-74242-182-7 (online - set)

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