

BushBroker[®]

Introduction to BushBroker

Information sheet No. 1

The Victorian Government established BushBroker to help improve the quality and extent of native vegetation in the State.

In most cases the clearing of any native vegetation that requires planning approval must be offset by a gain elsewhere. Offsets are permanently protected and linked to a particular clearing site.

Offsets can often be generated on the permit holder's own property. But there are situations where this is not possible. For example, where there is no suitable site on the property or the permit holder is not able to manage the native vegetation in the long-term.

BushBroker is a program which assists in generating and sourcing Native Vegetation Credits. A Native Vegetation Credit is a gain in the quality and/or quantity of native vegetation that is subject to a secure and ongoing agreement. BushBroker Native Vegetation Credits are listed on the Native Vegetation Credit Register and can be relied upon by the responsible authority as an offset for the approved clearing of native vegetation. Permit holders may source offsets through BushBroker.

Benefits of BushBroker

Landowners: BushBroker provides an opportunity to improve biodiversity on their properties and generate a potentially new income stream from their native vegetation by generating Native Vegetation Credits.

Permit holders: BushBroker provides a simple and secure process for locating third party offsets (subject to approval from the responsible [local council] or referral [Department of Sustainability and Environment - DSE] Authority).

Approval process

Once Native Vegetation Credits have been identified through BushBroker, permit holders must seek approval to use these credits as the offset from the responsible or referral authority. The rules regarding improving native vegetation are outlined in *Victoria's Native Vegetation Framework: A Framework for Action*.

BushBroker is not responsible for issuing compliance with planning permits.

Generating Native Vegetation Credits

Landowners can generate **three types** of Native Vegetation Credits:

1. Habitat Hectares: Protecting, maintaining and improving the management of a remnant patch of native vegetation. This could include activities such as weed control, rabbit control and/or stock exclusion. For more information refer to BushBroker Information Sheet No. 5 - *Landowner Agreement*.

Donating freehold land to the Crown for incorporation into Victoria's Parks and Reserve System can also generate Habitat Hectare credits. For more information refer to BushBroker Information Sheet No. 6 - *Transferring freehold land to the Crown*.

2. Large Old Trees: Protecting Large Old scattered trees and/or protecting Large Old Trees in a remnant patch from adverse impacts and managing the area around the tree to facilitate the regeneration of native plants. For more information refer to BushBroker Information Sheet No. 11 - *Specifications for management - Scattered trees*.

3. New Recruits: Planting New Recruits into an area that was previously cleared of native vegetation through revegetating using plants indigenous to the area. For more information refer to BushBroker Information Sheet No. 10 - *Specifications for management - Revegetation*.

Permit holders require different types of Native Vegetation Credits depending on their offset requirements.

Landowners wishing to generate Native Vegetation Credits can register an Expression of Interest with BushBroker. To obtain an Expression of Interest form, landowners should contact the DSE Customer Service Centre on **136 186** or visit the DSE website at:
www.dse.vic.gov.au/nativevegetation.

Introduction to BushBroker

BushBroker will contact landowners to arrange a site assessment when permit holders express interest in their Native Vegetation Credits. This can take some time depending on the demand for different vegetation types.

Following a site assessment, BushBroker will develop a draft BushBroker Landowner Agreement (Landowner Agreement) in consultation with the landowner to determine the potential Native Vegetation Credits.

For more information please refer to BushBroker Information Sheet No. 3 – *BushBroker process - Landowner*.

Matching Native Vegetation Credits

Permit holders are able to register with BushBroker and request a search of the BushBroker Database for Native Vegetation Credits matching their specific offset requirements.

To obtain an offset search request form, permit holders should contact the DSE Customer Service Centre on **136 186** or visit the DSE website at: www.dse.vic.gov.au/nativevegetation.

BushBroker will provide the permit holder with information on the available Native Vegetation Credits. The permit holder can select their preferred possible matching credits.

BushBroker will then provide the permit holder which the landowners contact information.

Negotiations (i.e. agreement of a price) are between the landowner and permit holder. BushBroker is not involved in these negotiations. Once a price has been agreed BushBroker will prepare the necessary documentation.

For more information please refer to BushBroker Information Sheet No. 20 – *BushBroker process - Permit holder*.

Further information

For further information on BushBroker, please contact the 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.

BushBroker is a registered trademark of the State of Victoria (Department of Sustainability and Environment)
Published by the Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne, September 2009
© The State of Victoria Department of Sustainability and Environment 2009
This publication is copyright. No part may be reproduced by any process except in accordance with the provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968*.
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)

For more information contact the DSE Customer Service Centre 136 186

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.