

ROADSIDE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Management Guidelines for Flora Roads

INTRODUCTION

A Flora Road is a road having roadside vegetation of special conservation or scenic value. Flora Roads provide travellers with an example of local flora. These roads provide attractive drives and can be used as the basis for a tourist route within a shire or region.

The purpose of a Flora Road is to promote the native flora present on roadsides and stimulate local community interest and promote a feeling of stewardship towards these priceless assets. As such they enhance tourism, study of native flora, wildlife corridors, habitat for native fauna, landcare and showcase the uniqueness of our flora to travellers. Roadside Maintenance should be reflective of the particular Flora Road and cater for conservation and tourism values present therein.

The ideal criteria for a Flora Road are:

- be a substantial length of roadside flora;
- contain significant native vegetation as defined in the RCC Assessing Roadsides Booklet;
- preferably have both sides of the road of a high conservation value;
- be recognised locally as having high flora values;
- not be located on major arterial routes such as freeways or interstate highways;
- not be identified for future major road upgrades.

DECLARATION OF A FLORA ROAD

Any person may nominate to the road manager, or to the RCC that a road, or a section of road fits the criteria of a Flora Road. However only the road manager can agree to a road being designated as a Flora Road. This has no legal status and does not impinge on the road manager in carrying out normal maintenance. Before a Flora Road can be declared it should be

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assessed in a preset process. N.B. Roadsides that have not been surveyed may still be nominated as a Flora Road, provided they meet set criteria.

Nomination Process

Anyone may identify a potential Flora Road on the basis of a:

- consultants report;
- recommendations from local interest groups; or
- on the basis of a Roadside Conservation Committee survey of roadside conservation value.

The nomination process is:

- provide a letter nominating road with details as outlined below;
- obtain road manager endorsement;
- send it to the road manager and a copy to the RCC;
- location of the road with salient detail e.g. grid reference for start and finish, length, width of road reserve, brief description of flora present.

Should include:

- photograph(s) of the road;
- list of the dominant plant species;
- threats (weeds, disturbances, fire history, etc).

FLORA ROAD REGISTER

The RCC has established a Flora Roads Register which contains details of the Flora Road (i.e. road name, location, length, etc). The register database will be maintained by the RCC and details forwarded to the WA Tourism Commission.

In order to plan road works so that these important areas of roadside vegetation are not disturbed, road managers need to know of these areas. It is of critical importance that all working (e.g. Works Supervisor, Western Power, Alinta Gas, Telstra, Water Corporation, Local

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Landowner) within the Flora Road area are aware of the status and importance of the flora therein.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The aim of Flora Road Management is to eliminate disturbance to the native vegetation growing on the roadside outside of the Maintenance Zone.

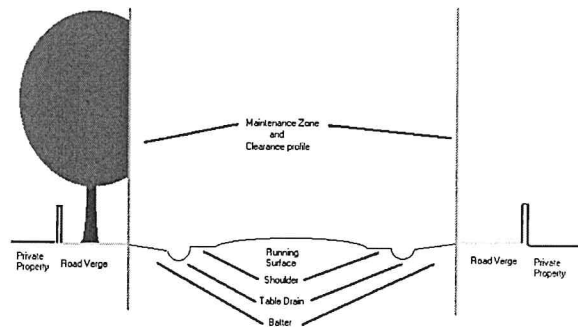
Please refer to RCC publications:

- Roadside Handbook;
- Guidelines for managing Special Environmental Areas in Transport Corridors;
- Environmental Guidelines for Road Construction and Maintenance Works;
- Assessing Roadsides: A Guide for Rating Conservation Value;
- Fire Management of Roadside Vegetation.

These publications are available on the RCC webpage at www.naturebase.wa.gov.au/RCC/index.html ????

Maintenance Zone

Is that area of a road reserve where normal maintenance activities occur.



The managing authority needs to consider the impact of road maintenance on vegetation within a Flora Road area.

The Management Authority may:

- adopt a general policy on roadside conservation;

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- do an Environmental Impact Assessment prior to work. This will assist with conservation of native flora;
- manage fire in a way that does not impact on flora road areas;
- provide staff training and inductions to explain the management of flora roads;
- use local native plant species to rehabilitate;
- specify the maintenance zone width for the road and drainage.

Delineating the area

- Delineate the maintenance zone of the Flora Road and ensure workers are familiar with "no go areas:
- Mark the Flora Road on works maps and plans.
- Categorise the Flora Roads as part of the Shire road classification system. i.e. give Flora Roads their own category.
- Disseminate the information to all who work therein.

Note: changes to the Environmental Protection Amendment Act give greater protection to Native Vegetation.

Drainage

- Ensure that the use of offshoot drains in flora road areas are only constructed where absolutely necessary.
- Divert the offshoot drains into an already cleared area of land.
- Construct culverts that allow for the natural flow of water in the landscape.
- Locate sediment traps on the upslope side of the culvert to prevent culvert blockages.

Grading

- Train machinery operators in the identification of Flora Roads.
- Avoid smothering native vegetation with gravel or spoil.

Gravel Pits

- When taking gravel from the shoulder or table drain only go to the edge of the maintenance zone.
- When heeling gravel onto the edge of bitumen set the grader blade to avoid taking native vegetation on the road verge.

Pruning

- Remove only what is necessary to keep the road safe.
- Use the target pruning method when lopping branches off trees.
- Remove branches as alternative to removing whole trees or shrubs.
- Time pruning operations to allow seed that had formed to be collected by CLC.
- Consult with Landcare practitioners about seed collection from pruned material.

Mowing

- Raise mower to avoid disturbing the soil.
- Do not mow native vegetation unless growing within the maintenance zone.

Construction

- Select alternative routes if possible for heavy vehicles to use.
- Clear only what is need to do the work.
- Use appropriate machinery for the job. Use a chainsaw as an alternative to a bulldozer.
Note: changes to Department of Environment legislation in regards to clearing of native vegetation.

Weed and Dieback Management

Management of Weeds and dieback are based on similar approach:

- Start an area of lesser infestation and work towards an area that is infested;
- Do not disturb the soil outside of the maintenance zone. Soil disturbance allows weeds/dieback to establish and out compete native vegetation and moves dieback into unaffected areas;
- Do not carry waste along the Flora Road, find an alternative route to dispose of waste materials such as weeds/disease infested soil and spoil;
- Cover or contain dieback/weed infested soil when in transport to stop the spread of weed seed along roadsides
- Use clean, dieback/weed free fill for road works;
- Clean down machinery when moving from an area of infestation to a non infested area;
- Clean down machinery to remove soil and plant material before entering the Flora Road;
- Designate a clean down site out of the Flora Road.

Stock Piles

- Do not locate stock piles on the Flora Road.
- Locate stockpile sites on already cleared land.

Parking

- Provide adequate parking in areas that have already been degraded.
- Consult with tour operators as to location and type of parking and facilities required.
- Consider the safety of road users and tourists alike.

Fire

- Firebreaks and access tracks are not to be constructed in the Flora Road area.
- Liase with landowners about the use of fire.
- Apply the threat test before using fire as a risk management tool see RCC publication Fire Management of Roadside Vegetation.

Utilities

These organisations need to be aware of Flora Roads where service assets are located and the management principles that apply to these roads. A list of Flora Roads in your area needs to be sent to Utility Providers once a Flora Road has been declared. A map of its location may be useful. Notification to utilities should be part of the process of the declaration of a Flora Road.

Utility Providers in WA:

- Western Power
- Alinta Gas
- Water Corporation
- Telstra

Flora Road Brochure

Provide brochures of tourist routes and Flora Roads in the Shire offices and Tourist organisations in your area. These may include information on species present, flowering time, Aboriginal names of plants, attendant fauna and fauna/flora interactions etc. The RCC may be able to assist with the preparation of these documents.

TOURISM

Attractive Flora Roads are an important feature of the wildflower tourism industry.

Promotion of Flora Roads by:

- Advertise a flora road as a Tourist route in a shire or region;
- Developing a brochure or booklet;
- Producing Flora Road maps of the region or State;
- Using specially designed signs to delineate the Flora Road section;
- Constructing roadside flora rest areas where people can get out and enjoy the flora;
- Establishing links with the Tourist Commission for inclusion on wildflower tourist maps.

Special Environmental Areas (SEA)

Special Environmental Areas are delineated by the use of yellow markers and are placed around the SEA at points outlined in the RCC publication *Guidelines for Managing Special Environmental Areas in Transport Corridors*. These should not be confused with Flora Road Signs.

POLICY

- Develop local policy on management of Flora Roads or adopt the RCC Management Guidelines for Flora Roads as policy.
- Develop communication strategy to ensure that the location and values of Flora Road within the local area are known to all who work therein.
- Encourage adjacent landowners to set their fences back 20m or more to widen the Flora Road and enhance the conservation values.

SIGNS

The Flora Road sign is used to delineate a Flora Road and will advise travellers and workers of the high conservation value present on the roadside. It is the responsibility of the managing authority to erect Flora Road signs, provide signposts, auxiliary signs and carry out maintenance. One sign may be placed at each approach to the area. Auxiliary signs indicate the length of Flora Road and/or give it a specific name. These signs are of a



Flora Road sign

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recognised standard and should be manufactured and erected in accordance with MRWA standard guidelines. Specifications for Flora Road signs are provided in Appendix 1. The yellow pages or a business directory should be consulted to locate sign manufacturers in your area.



Alternative Flora Road Sign

Appendix 1.

Main Roads WA drawing of Flora Road sign: under revision by RCC

Sign MK-VM-6: Dimensions: 600mm wide, 450mm high. Text: "FLORA" (60 DN LETTERS), "ROAD" (60 DN LETTERS). Features: 2 # 10 HOLES, 40R, OVERLAY. Spacing: 171, 257, 172; 150, 300, 150; 194, 211, 195.

Sign MK-VMAX-3: Dimensions: 600mm wide, 340mm high. Text: "NEXT" (100 DN LETTERS), "200 m" (100 DN NUMERALS). Features: 2 # 10 HOLES, 40R.

Sign MK-VMAX-4: Dimensions: 600mm wide, 340mm high. Text: "NEXT" (100 DN LETTERS), "200 km" (100 DN NUMERALS). Features: 2 # 10 HOLES, 40R.

NOTES:
 1. EDGE STRIP 15 mm.
 2. MATERIAL-ALUMINIUM SHEET SIGN PANEL.
 3. COLOURS- WHITE CL2 REFL. LEGEND ON LEAF BROWN GROUND. OVERLAY-LEAF BROWN KANGAROO PAW ON WHITE CL2 REFL. GROUND.
 4. SYMBOL- 300mm GRID.

IN THE ABSENCE OF THE APPROVED SIGNATURE THIS DRAWING SHALL BE TREATED AS PRELIMINARY					TOURIST SIGN AND TAGS FLORA ROAD		MAIN ROADS DEPT W.A.			
AMENDMENTS	SURVEYORS AND DATE	ORIGINAL SIZE A3	NAMES PRINTED IN FULL	DATE	SIGNATURES	DATE	TRAFFIC BRANCH	FILE NUMBER	DRAWING TYPE	DRAWING NUMBER
		MICROFILMED	DESIGNED	C.WOOLDRIDGE	19.10.89	AUTHORIZED <i>Ed. Gaddell</i>	20/10/89	85-306	6007	8920-706
	SURVEY BOOKS	BY ICT 1988	DRAWN	C.WOOLDRIDGE	19.10.89	RECOMMENDED <i>Tony Harrison</i>	20/10/89	-22		
		DATUM	CHECKED			APPROVED <i>[Signature]</i>				
		EXAMINED								

SCALE: 1 : 7.5

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