

Merry Creek Road Quarry (3M/2016) Weed Management Plan

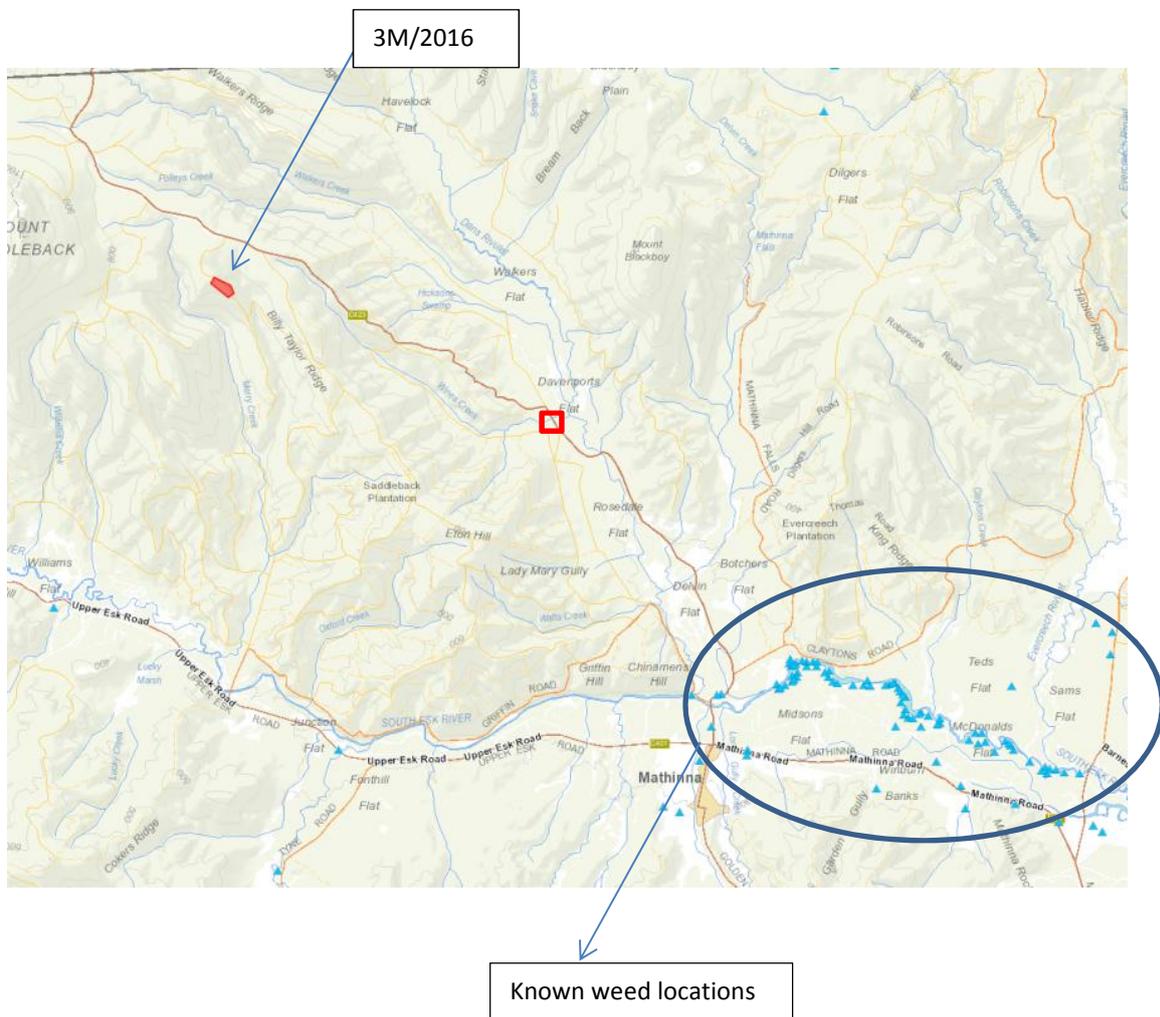


Background

The Merry Creek Quarry is located on Merry Creek Road, accessed from Mathinna Plains Road and is approximately 15km from the township of Mathinna. Council took over the mining lease from Forestry Tasmania in 2016 and is currently operating at level 1 activity.

It is very important to ensure this site is weed free, to prevent the spread of weeds in either the gravel or on vehicles entering and exiting the site. It is equally as important to prevent the spread of weeds into the quarry with good hygiene practices. This will also ensure non-contaminated product.

The map below shows the closest registered weed locations (Natural Values Asset, ListMap), demonstrating that the greater area around the quarry site is weed free. Personal observation revealed a small isolated patch of Spanish heath on Mathinna Plains Road (indicated by red square on the map), whose treatment will form part of this weed management plan.



Weed species

An inspection of the quarry was undertaken on the 12 September 2017, which included the road from the boom gate to the quarry. During the inspection no weeds were found at the quarry site or along the roadside into the quarry.

In June 2017, during an ecological assessment, a singular ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) rosette was found. Ragwort is a declared weed in Tasmania and is a serious invasive pasture weed. Ragwort in the Break O'Day municipality is classified as Zone A, meaning eradication rather than containment due to the relatively low numbers. During the same visit, a small number of foxgloves rosettes were also discovered. Foxglove is an environmental weed and not declared in Tasmania; however it is still extremely important to ensure weed establishment does not occur.

Seasonality of plants must be considered, and routine checks and inspections need to take place at different times of the year to cover all seasons.

Hygiene

The weed species present at the quarry (as mentioned above) are such that it could be classed as 'weed-free'. Consideration must then be given to the implementation of weed hygiene practices to ensure machinery, equipment or people are not introducing any weed species to the quarry. Weed management is often considered as containing or eradicating weeds, however stopping the introduction of weed species into a weed-free zone is as equally important.

The Break O'Day Contractor Health & Safety Handbook has a dedicated section regarding hygiene practices for weed and disease control. This handbook serves as part of all contractor inductions.

Currently, there is no documentation regarding in house practices or procedures for weed hygiene.

Actions and Recommendations

- Annual weed inspections using the Quarry Weed Management form is to take place in varying months to take seasonality into consideration. This will be incorporated into the annual Break O'Day Weed Management Program (form attached).
- Signage – it is recommended that additional signage be erected at the boom gate regarding hygiene e.g.

WEED FREE ZONE

Is your equipment, machinery and shoes clear of weeds?

- Inclusion of hygiene practices in Quarry Safety management plan and any Safe Work Method Statement that involves working quarry activities either directly or indirectly
- Recommended that all machinery are equipped with devices to aid in the removal of any material that may be contaminated with weeds (i.e. mud, dirt, vegetation). This could include a broom, stiff brush (ideal for boots) or air blower. In some cases a mobile wash down trailer may be required.
- Treat isolated occurrences of all weeds along Mathinna Plains Road. This not only complies with the councils weed management plan, it will aid in the suppression and spread of weeds along the relatively weed free area and ultimately to the quarry area.