

Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998

Information Sheet No. 2

Permit Application and Assessment

How do I apply for a Wet Tropics Permit?

For the convenience of applicants, the Authority has established integrated permitting arrangements with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS).

Steps in making an application:

1. Discuss your proposal with a permits officer from a district office of QPWS or WTMA.
2. Obtain a Wet Tropics Permit Application Form (or Supplementary Information Form with your QPWS application) from the Authority or District Offices of QPWS.
3. Complete the application form. Contact the Authority or QPWS if you need to discuss further any details of your application.
4. If your proposal involves an activity on National Park or Protected Area you should lodge your application at any Queensland Parks and Wildlife Office. All other applications should be lodged with the Wet Tropics Management Authority.
5. Staff have 60 days to assess the application and determine any permit conditions which may apply.
6. If more information is required to make the assessment, the permitting authority may “stop the clock” by requesting additional details from the applicant who has a minimum of 90 days to respond.
7. If the application is not successful, the applicant may ask the Authority to review the original permit decision. Only the Authority can review permit decisions.
8. If the applicant is still not successful, the applicant may appeal against the review decision to the Queensland Planning and Environment Court.

How will my Wet Tropics Permit be assessed?

Wet Tropics Permit applications will be assessed by either the Authority or the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service based on principles, criteria and guidelines, outlined in Part 4 of the Plan, and summarised overleaf. It is important that the applicant attempts to address the assessment criteria by completing all relevant questions on the application form when defining the activity or proposal.

Area Integrity

The most important consideration for deciding the application is the likely impact on the Area’s integrity. Other important considerations include:

The precautionary principle

The Authority must decide an application under the principle that, if there is scientific uncertainty regarding threats of serious or irreversible environmental harm, the decision must exercise caution on the side of the environment.

Prudent and feasible alternatives

The authority must consider whether there are any prudent and feasible alternatives to the proposed activity which may reduce impact to the World Heritage Values, including the option of not conducting the action, and any alternative locations or ways of carrying out the activity.

World Heritage Values

The Authority must decide the application in a way that minimises likely adverse impacts of the proposed activity on the area's World Heritage values. This includes considering the likely impacts of the proposed activity on the following:

- wildlife and habitats of wildlife,
- threatened plant and animal communities,
- cultural values,
- natural ecological processes,
- the scenic quality of the area,
- and potential cumulative impacts on the Area's integrity.

Community considerations

The Authority must have regard to the potential effects of the proposed activity on the community in particular the following:

- The community need for the proposed activity,
- The likely effect of the proposed activity on the amenity of the area,
- The likely effect on the land-holder, any native title holder or any other Aboriginal persons concerned with the land.

The Authority also has a legal obligation to have regard to the tradition of Aboriginal people particularly concerned with the land in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and to involve them in the management of the Area.

Carrying capacity

The Authority must have regard to the carrying capacity of the land in terms of the impact of an activity on the integrity of its World Heritage values and the quality of the experience enjoyed by visitors that may be affected by the proposed activity.

For further information contact:

Wet Tropics Management Authority
15 Lake Street
PO Box 2050
CAIRNS QLD 4870

Ph: (07) 4052 0555

Fax: (07) 4031 1364

Website: www.wettropics.gov.au