

## Vegetation Management Standards Policy

Date Approved by Council: May 10, 2016

County Commissioner: 

### 1. Purpose

This policy outlines the vegetation management standards established for all Sturgeon County owned lands to ensure compliance with the *Alberta Weed Control Act*, to reduce fire risk and to improve aesthetics. It provides the breakdown of all vegetation management activities to be performed annually on Type 1, Type 2 and Type 3 classified areas, as well as the work to be performed on Sturgeon County local road allowances. This policy further outlines the conditions under which Sturgeon County may perform vegetation management in public areas which are not county-owned, should there be public benefit in doing so.

### 2. Revision History

Approval Date	Revision Number	Modification
2016/05/10	1.0	New Document

### 3. Persons/Areas Affected

Sturgeon County Agriculture Services Department

### 4. Policy Statement

The County shall ensure that minimum vegetation management standards are maintained on all Sturgeon County owned lands including municipal reserves, environmental reserves and road allowances.

To achieve this objective, the Agriculture Services Department shall ensure that:

For all lands classified as 'Type 1', the following activities occur:

- mowing a minimum frequency of four (4) times per growing season
- weed trimming around man-made obstacles a minimum frequency of two (2) times per growing season
- inspection for noxious and prohibited noxious weeds a minimum frequency of one (1) time per growing season
- herbicide application for nuisance weed control one (1) time per growing season if required

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- herbicide applications for noxious and prohibited noxious weed control as often as required

For all lands classified as 'Type 2', the following activities occur:

- mowing at a minimum frequency of two (2) times per growing season
- inspected for noxious and prohibited noxious weeds a minimum frequency of one (1) time per growing season
- herbicide application for nuisance weed control one (1) time every two (2) years if required
- herbicide applications for noxious and prohibited noxious weed control as often as required

For all lands classified as 'Type 3', the following activities occur:

- mowing at minimum frequency of one (1) time per growing season
- inspection for noxious and prohibited noxious weeds a minimum frequency of one (1) time per growing season
- herbicide applications for noxious and prohibited noxious weed control as often as required

For all local road allowances, the following activities occur:

- shoulder mowing of a 15 foot wide swath a minimum frequency of one (1) time per growing season
- inspected for noxious and prohibited noxious weeds a minimum frequency of one (1) time per growing season
- herbicide application for nuisance and noxious weed control a minimum frequency of one (1) time every two (2) years
- herbicide applications for prohibited noxious weed control as often as required

Sturgeon County may consider providing vegetation management services on public areas which are not owned by the County. To outline the terms and conditions under which such services will be provided, Sturgeon County may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding that formally outlines the arrangement.

## 5. Definitions

*Man-made obstacle* - an obstacle intentionally installed by Sturgeon County or on behalf of Sturgeon County to serve a specific purpose. Does not include natural obstacles such as trees, shrubs or rocks. May include: signs, mailboxes, playground structures, benches, and garbage receptacles.

*Growing season* - time of year during which vegetation grows; typically May 1- September 30.

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*Prohibited noxious* - weed classification as defined in the *Alberta Weed Control Act*.

*Noxious* - weed classification as defined in the *Alberta Weed Control Act*.

*Type 1* - classification category for Sturgeon County lands; classification assigned using specific evaluation criteria including accessibility, size, adjacent land uses, amenities, usage patterns and environmental significance. Municipal Reserves with playground structures and sports fields often fall within this category.

*Type 2* - classification category for Sturgeon County lands; classification assigned using specific evaluation criteria including accessibility, size, adjacent land uses, amenities, usage patterns and environmental significance. Municipal Reserves with limited or no infrastructure improvements often fall within this category.

*Type 3* - classification category for Sturgeon County lands; classification assigned using specific evaluation criteria including accessibility, size, adjacent land uses, amenities, usage patterns and environmental significance. Environmental Reserves that serve as wildlife habitat often fall within this category.

## 6. Responsibilities

Council is responsible for approving updates this policy to reflect adjustments in program resources and priorities.

Administration will maintain an active inventory of all Sturgeon County lands and ensure the Vegetation Management Standards Administrative Procedure is used to categorize lands within the inventory.

Administration may update the evaluation criteria outlined in the Vegetation Management Standards Administrative Procedure.

## 7. Procedures

N/A

## 8. Cross Reference

- Vegetation Management Standards Administrative Procedure
- *Alberta Weed Control Act, SA 2008 c.W-5.1*