

Rhododendron Eradication – Manual – Medium

This is an old version of the page

Date published: 22 July, 2017

Date superseded: 15 June, 2023

For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#).

Medium specification: bushes are greater than one metre in height and the slope of the ground is less than 33 per cent.

For the [Woodland Improvement Grant – Habitats and Species](#) option, this capital item will be targeted at those priority areas identified as red and orange in the 'Rhododendron Control Target Areas' as shown in the 'FGS (2014-20) Target Areas' folder on the [Forestry Commission Scotland Map Viewer](#).

Applications for areas outwith the red and orange areas will need to make the case for being funded (e.g. by including a letter of support from Forestry Commission Scotland or Scottish Natural Heritage).

Please refer to the [Prioritising control of rhododendron guidance](#).

These exceptional cases would include any designated site that is in unfavourable condition because of rhododendron, or which needs rhododendron control to maintain it in favourable condition.

The latter could include small areas of rhododendron on a site, which are not in themselves sufficient to make it unfavourable – five per cent cover is required for unfavourable – but since it spreads, any small amounts should be controlled as soon as possible to prevent future problems.

We might also consider there to be an exceptional case if there was rhododendron on adjacent land, which hadn't spread onto a designated site yet.

Support for rhododendron control will be dependent on the applicant producing a Rhododendron Control Plan for the property (and ideally collaborating with adjacent neighbours) which will demonstrate a long term strategy to eradicate and control invasive rhododendron.

The plan should draw on the current advice and guidance given on the Forestry Commission Scotland website, and should reflect the structured and co-ordinated approach promoted in the new national rhododendron control strategy.

The plan must also, wherever needed, commit the applicant to working collaboratively with adjacent neighbours (Forestry Commission Scotland woodland officers may need to verify if collaborative work is required). This plan must be attached to your application.

The plan must include:

- a map that details the extent and percentage cover of the rhododendron (to evidence the net area of hectares you will be claiming grant on), and categorises the rhododendron by grant type (for example: manual – medium)
- details on the control method and follow-up for five years, justifying why this method is preferable to stem injection (which otherwise is our preferred method)

For the [Tree Health](#) option, this capital item is only available within Statutory Plant Health Notice areas and as dictated by the terms of the Statutory Plant Health Notice – therefore a Rhododendron Control Plan is not required.

This method of control must only be considered for sensitive sites and / or for difficult areas where mechanised or chemical clearance methods are not possible.

This operation is for the manual cutting and burning / chipping / stacking of rhododendron and includes costs for assessment and one initial chemical follow-up control. If a further follow-up is required this can be applied for separately.

All rhododendron to be removed must be cut as low as possible to the ground to minimise opportunity for re-growth.

If you are burning you must notify the Scottish Environment Protection Agency of the exempt activity under the Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (Paragraphs 29 and 30). The amount burned must be less than 10 tonnes in a 24-hour period.

Take care positioning fires and ensure that site disturbance is kept to a minimum.

Do not use tyres to start fires.

Claims can be made after the initial clearance has been carried out, but applicants must ensure that at year five there must be no rhododendron present on site.

The site must be surveyed at year four to ensure that eradication has been achieved.

Please provide the survey results and photographic evidence to your woodland officer. The site may be inspected by Forestry Commission Scotland at this time.

Further information

Guidance on what constitutes best practice rhododendron control can be found in the Forestry Commission Practice Guide '[Managing and controlling invasive rhododendron](#)'.

[SEPA exempt activities](#)

[SEPA online notification](#)

Please make sure you abide by conditions set out in the Forestry Grant Scheme claim form and guidance.

Recent changes

Section	Change
Main section	We've replaced the spatial prioritisation map with the Forestry Commission Scotland Map Viewer.

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

Download guidance

Click 'Download this page' to create a printer-friendly version of this guidance that you can save or print out.