

MOOP Map Procedural Summary

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on behalf of the Leave No Trace Crew.*

Introduction

A lot of burners have been asking about how the decisions on the MOOP Map have been made, and now that we are re-releasing a revised Map it makes even more sense to explain what the standards were, and how they were applied.

There are several standards to explain.

1. How the Red, Yellow and Green statuses are awarded
2. Why some camp statuses are faded from one colour to another
3. Why there were no specific penalties awarded for Red or Yellow statuses the year
4. What constitutes a red circle-cross
5. Why cigarette butts were specifically noted
6. Why other items were specifically mentioned

I will explain all of these points one-by-one.

Finally I will go over what we envision will happen with the Map in 2015.

MOOP (Matter Out Of Place) is anything left on site when the last community crew member left the site after the Burn, that was not on the site before any crew or participant from Burning Seed arrived on the site to begin preparing for the Burn. If it wasn't there to begin with, it shouldn't be there when we leave. This includes EVERYTHING we bring to the site – *including* food scraps or any other biodegradable items.

1. How Statuses Were Decided

The basic standard is based on volume found over a 20x20m area, and/or by the seriousness of any MOOP hazard found on the camp site.

A teacup's worth (about 300ml) of MOOP or less scores a Green status. Between a teacup's worth and a top hat's worth (301ml–2,000ml) scores a Yellow status.

A Red status can be awarded if one or both of the following are found:

- Over 2,000ml of MOOP is left behind
- A hot fire place is found

The case of Morning Joint deserves some discussion. The award of a Red status comes specifically down to the presence of a shipping container comprising 33m³ of Matter Out Of Place, still present when the last Burning Seed crew member departed site on Monday October 13th this year. The container's owner and the Burning Seed community crew know each other,

yet did not communicate with each other about when the container was to be collected. This was an oversight.

Likewise the DPI/Stockade and Temple changes from Green to Red also warrant some discussion. It is certainly unfortunate that the MOOP Troupe and the Leave No Trace Lead, Maddock, had needed to depart the Burning Seed site due to work commitments before these sites had been cleared. As a result, Maddock made agreements with DPI to the effect that the Stockade and other sites would be MOOP free when the crew finally left.

Sadly, this did not happen.

At the Stockade, a medium sized pallet clearly comprising more than a top hat's worth of MOOP just by itself tips the site into Red territory. Also left behind was a large amount of ash from the Stockade burn barrel, and a large compost pit which was covered with ash. This ash/compost pile has been in use by DPI in previous burns, however we now consider all ash and compost to be MOOP following discussions with NSW State Forestry about the low-nutrient ecosystem of the Matong State Forest. A wooden platform of unknown origin was also recovered from the Stockade site in late October. Additionally a number of lumber furniture items such as bench seats were at issue, however these existed on the site before Burning Seed ever started and were created by NSW State Forestry, so we do not consider them to be MOOP. Finally a lumber and plywood bar was fabricated by DPI this year, was left on site, and has been removed as of early November.

The Temple burn site was a point of contention in the follow-up to the burn on Sunday night. The contention arose when it was left unclear who was responsible for the burn clean-up – the Temple build crew, or DPI/Burning Seed. Notwithstanding that issue, the resulting MOOP is of significant concern to us. Left behind was a very large amount of ash, a number of nails and screws, and about a dozen unburned wooden stakes driven into the ground. Comparing this with the Effigy burn site, where virtually nothing was found including no ash, we will be making clear next year that we expect that standard of all major artwork burn sites.

Less messy but still of concern were a number of timber and metal items left behind by DPI at the Woop Woop site, which were also clearly far more than a top hat's worth of MOOP. No longer Green there, now it shows a hearty Red.

2. Why Some Statuses Fade From One Colour to Another

In learning how to apply the standards for the first year of MOOP Mapping, we have found that certain things were not made clear enough when we were defining our expectations. Where we found that the people responsible were not from the camp where the MOOP was found, we faded the colours from one to another.

For example, for Bean Bag Babylon, we initially signed off the theme camp as Green while the camp members were still on site cleaning up. Once they had departed site we conducted a detailed team grid sweep and found a number of cigarette butts on the perimeter of the theme camp area. Because we (i.e. the Moop Troupe) had not clearly defined the theme camp

boundaries before the camp had a chance to cover the whole area, we opted to share the accountability for the Yellow mark by fading the status from Green into Yellow.

MOOP found at Kids Kamp and Evolver Lounge were the result of things left behind by people who were not members of those camps. While those camps were ultimately responsible for their theme camp sites, they cannot reasonably be held accountable for the actions (or inactions) of others. Therefore we awarded Red-through-Green statuses for those camps, denoting shared accountability.

In all of these cases, changes will be made next year to how we promote our expectations in the run-up to the event. This year the boundaries were drawn up purely from the memory of the MOOP Troupe crew. Next year we will make it clear that theme camp boundaries will be defined before theme camps depart site by using small flags placed during the final day of the Burn. We will also make it clear in no uncertain terms that anything left behind by theme camps four days after the Burn, or by Burning Seed ten days after the burn, will be counted as MOOP on the Map.

3. Why There Were No Penalties This Year

This is a topic that is still under discussion amongst the Burning Seed community crew. There are several different viewpoints.

Some people say that there should be a financial penalty, such as a withholding of the financial support that theme camps receive from Burning Seed.

Others believe in a “name-and-shame” approach to the presentation of the MOOP Map.

Another group posit that there shouldn't even be a Yellow status – that it's either Green or Red, and that the Green status should denote Zero MOOP as a fair standard.

The ultimate reason why there were no penalties this year is down to the Leave No Trace crew ourselves being unfamiliar with the application and interpretation of standards. As a result of the experience we gained this year, we feel much more able to discuss how to approach poor MOOP standards next year.

For us, the most important factor to consider is *accountability*. It is not enough to expect participants and theme camps to aim for Zero MOOP, we actually have to educate and support our community towards that result. So, while theme camps and participants are finally accountable for the state of their site, we ourselves are also accountable for supporting you to do that.

In a more philosophical manner, we also do not believe in a penal system. Instead we are intercepting and transforming MOOP problems as they come up, and holding those who cause those problems accountable.

One of the things we are considering for proposal next year for theme camps is taking the name

of one or more people in the camp and holding them personally accountable for returning to Matong Forest if there is any MOOP found left on their camp's site. Any refusal to do so would result in a Red status on the resultant Map.

It is more difficult to encourage accountability in the casual camping areas, and therefore a direct education campaign is probably our best bet. One idea is to hold a MOOP Parade on Sunday during the event, in which the MOOP Troupe dress up and parade through the entire site singing songs, banging drums, and drawing in participants to pick up MOOP and educate them along the way.

4. What A Red Circle-Cross Means

These marks show where a notable MOOP hot-spot was found. In the cases of hot-spots within theme camp or Burning Seed organisation sites, on the map these are described in the expandable speech bubbles in the enhanced PDF version of the Map. In the cases of casual camping hot-spots, they are described with red arrows and speech boxes on both the JPEG and PDF versions of the Map.

Hot-spots are places where more than just random items were found. They were places where numerous items had clearly been discarded and ignored, or intentionally left behind. In some cases they were things that were virtually impossible to MOOP up, such as patches of glitter in amongst the lichens and grasses of the paddock.

A few particular hot-spots really concerned us. A huge pile of cold ash was left at the Effigy fire pit, containing a large number of nails and screws. After talking to DPI this was found to be a process issue, as the tools to collapse and clean the pit had been packed away before that could happen. What is particularly frustrating is that the pit was left for a number of weeks before a DPI member was finally able to clean it up. Once again, clear standards and procedures will need to be kept in 2015.

Poop is MOOP. Feces on open ground are invitations for flies to breed, and if the flies like what they find then they will be there to greet us when we arrive again next year.

Compost and ash are also MOOP. The ecosystem of the Matong Forest is adapted to a low-nutrient soil, and any increase in nutrient density encourages the growth of faster-growing weeds which can threaten to take over the Forest.

In light of this, no feces, nor compost, nor ash may be buried by ANYONE, including Burning Seed organisation, within the Matong Forest. Any such places where we find these things are counted as MOOP.

The Ciggie Butt Thing

Cigarette butts are the single most common item of MOOP found after the Burn, more numerous than anything else. In this first year of the MOOP Map we wanted to highlight this fact and wedge it firmly into the consciousness of the entire community.

Regardless of how you feel about smoking, filters and papers are insanely MOOP-y.

No fewer than 628 butts were recovered from the paddock this year, even after a concerted no-butts campaign by the MOOP Troupe during the Burn. We gave out over 200 pocket ashtrays and walked around the entire site during the six days. We watched as virtually all theme camps cleaned up a huge number of butts that we didn't even get to count.

As far as MOOP goes, this is as bad as it gets, and it has to change.

The ciggie butt problem is one of the major reasons that the Leave No trace crew has taken on the motto, "**Nothing Hits the Ground.**" This motto reflects our intention to educate our community towards preventing anything from ever even becoming MOOP.

Let's keep Burning Seed butt-naked!

Other Stuff the Got Special Mention

There were a number of other hit-ticket items that we will be raising consciousness about in the run up to Seed 2015. These MOOP-y things were found all across site and will need some extra-special attention if we are to not let them hit the ground.

In no particular order:

- ❖ The stick-on rhinestone bindi things
- ❖ Astro turf
- ❖ Carpet (and the thread it's made from)
- ❖ Glitter and tinsel
- ❖ Tent pegs
- ❖ Food waste
- ❖ Feces
- ❖ Baby wipes
- ❖ Clothing
- ❖ Batteries
- ❖ Bottle caps
- ❖ Seals from plastic water and drink containers
- ❖ Can tabs

Okay, Sounds Cool! What About Next Year?

We have a number of nascent ideas in development for next year. Critically, we need more people on the Leave No Trace / MOOP Troupe crew.

Ideally about 15 or 16 people would complete the package. Being a part of the crew will get you a wicked green tee shirt, your own personally engraved MOOP-stick (a long-arm grabber for

picking up MOOP), and some other schwag like lanyard laminates or whatever else we can think of.

Next year we want two teams of 6 Troupers doing post-burn MOOP line-sweeps in an organised and pre-drilled manner, which should result in the entire site being checked in under two days.

The MOOP Parade is also on the cards.

We are also beginning to plan a series of YouTube videos that will highlight some of the more common and serious MOOP hazards and items.

We also want to see a MOOP Consulate close to Centre Camp on the last day of Burning Seed and for two days after the finish next year, where theme camps (and perhaps participants) can have a point of contact for when they want to sign off on their sites as they pack out. Here camps would be able to check in and have the MOOP Consul radio to the two teams sweeping the area that the camp is ready for checking. In this way we hope to have all theme camps signed off as Green before they depart the site, and held accountable for any MOOP they may have missed.

And in terms of the Map, we are not going to have any fading between colours next year. Whether we retain a Yellow status is still up for discussion. We are also still discussing any possible penalties.

Finally, we are developing a range of messages to get the mindset out there that,

“NOTHING HITS THE GROUND!”