

# Taking Action

# MEPAAW2-NT-01B

## The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Invasive Grass Species

GLENRAC Inc



### Increasing community knowledge and management of Chilean Needle Grass

#### The issue

The Glen Innes and wider region is currently under threat from the invasive grass species, *Nassella neesiana*, or Chilean needle grass (CNG), which is growing widespread across parts of the New England district. Regarded as one of Australia's worst weeds, CNG affects both sown and native grasslands, is unpalatable during its vegetative growth stage and can reduce farm productivity by as much as 50%. It has been recognised that there is a need for local landholders to up-skill in areas of identification and control of CNG.

#### The solution

Two morning workshops were held by GLENRAC in Glencoe and Dundee to increase landholder's knowledge of the CNG species, including how to identify the weed and the skills needed to control and manage the growth of the invasive species on their properties.

With the support of Weed Wise and the Local Land Services, GLENRAC hosted a two-and-a-half-hour community event, first at the Red Lion Tavern in Glencoe, and again a week later at the Dundee Hall, in Dundee, to educate landholders about the effects and control methods of CNG.

NSW Department of Industries Research Scientist for Pastures, Carol Harris, shared her knowledge of CNG management and new research being done to combat the weed through essential natural oils and seedbank management strategies.

Guyra farmer, Bill Perrottet, also spoke to landholders about his experience managing CNG as a winter pasture species and his experiments in controlling the weed through organised grazing systems at his property, 'Urandangie'.

Authorities from the New England Weeds Authority and Local Land Services were also on hand to share their knowledge of CNG and how to identify other invasive grass species.

#### The impact

23 people attended the workshop in Glencoe and 13 attended the workshop in Dundee. On average, 81% of workshop attendees surveyed said they had 'a lot' of knowledge of how to manage CNG after the workshops (compared to 36% before the workshops) and 62% surveyed said they had 'a lot' of confidence in controlling the weed species after the workshops (compared to 28% before the workshops). Landholders are now able to identify CNG by its seed, and have developed skills in controlling the weed which might include chemical and natural spraying and winter pasture grazing.



### Key facts

- CNG is an invasive grass species threatening pastures in the New England region
- Identification of the species is key to managing the threat of CNG spread
- New research is being done to explore the effects of natural oils and seedbank management strategies on CNG
- There is potential to control the weed through organised winter grazing systems

### Project Partners



The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative Program that enables the promotion of these case studies on the Gateway, is funded by the NSW Government and is supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW

