

GLEN EAST WEEDS STRATEGY

Providing the mechanism for a co-ordinated sustained effort to weed management east of Glen Innes.

Version 4 8/12/15

GOAL

To provide the mechanism for enhanced productivity to landholders and reduced costs through strategic actions by all stakeholders to reduce current weed infestations and prevent incursions by new pasture and environmental weeds.

This Strategy must be:

- Realistic
- Achievable
- Be developed with support of all stakeholders

BACKGROUND

Many locals are acutely aware of the result of the lack of early action in relation to African Lovegrass. These new pasture weeds pose the same threat of invasion level but also invade native bushland and in the case of Chilean Needle Grass can be much more difficult to identify. At this stage Coolatai Grass is not declared a noxious weed and therefore there has not been a control effort applied by Council. This constraint does not prevent Council from spending resources on this critical problem should they resolve to do so. Some good work has been done on Coolatai Grass on the Grafton Road by volunteers over a period of four years.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Economic considerations for the landholder and rural enterprise include:

- Reduced pasture productivity
- Inability to operate a prime lamb business (Chilean Needle Grass)
- Control costs

Biodiversity / Environmental impacts

Both Chilean Needle Grass and Coolatai Grass invade bushland without difficulty. This creates much greater management problems than has Love Grass. Biodiversity /

Environmental impacts include:

- Reduced native animal habitat
- Increased bush and grass fire risk due to higher fuel load / higher intensity fires

AREA COVERED BY STRATEGY

The proposed area covered by this strategy is: Bald Nob, Shannon Vale, Dundee east and Glen Elgin. The suggested boundaries are:

- Grafton road east of Beardy Waters to the Corrective Services main entrance
- Old Grafton to the TSR camping paddock
- Shannon Vale Road east of Beardy Waters
- Bald Nob / Dundee Road east of the New England Highway
- Donnelly Road north of Red Range Road

This proposal does not seek to exclude areas beyond the above, however the areas covered are seen as an achievable goal for this strategy. It is quite possible that this strategy may become a pilot for other areas in the district and beyond.

CONTROL CONCEPT

Chilean Needle Grass, Coolatai Grass, Whiskey Grass, Fireweed, Bahia Grass

See Attachment 2: Weed Control Options

Awareness → Contain → Manage → Eliminate →
Monitor

Nodding Thistle, St. John's Wort, Blackberry, Serrated Tussock

Awareness → Manage → Eliminate → Monitor

African Love Grass

Individual or groups of landholders (with view to minimise impact)

Manage → Reduce → Eliminate → Monitor

Buffer zones

- Bald Nob / Dundee Road between New England Highway and Severn River Bridge (Whiskey Grass)
- Donnelly Road between Red Range Road and Lil Vale Road (Chilean Needle Grass)
- Old Grafton Road between Council gravel pit # 17 and TSR camping reserve (Coolatai Grass)
- Grafton Road between 60 k limit and Beardy Waters (Chilean Needle Grass)

WEEDS SCHEDULE – See Appendix 1

TARGET WEEDS – Including Emerging Weeds

The specific target weeds for this strategy are Chilean Needle Grass, Coolatai Grass, Whiskey Grass and Bahia Grass. This strategy will also enhance current control efforts for Bahia Grass, Blackberry, St. John's Wort, Serrated Tussock, Nodding Thistle, Privet, Honey Locust, Fireweed, Blue Periwinkle and Pyracantha.

STAKEHOLDERS

- *Landholders*
- *Glen Innes Severn Council*
- *Industry and Investment*
- *Northern Tablelands Local Land Services*
- *New England Weeds Authority*
- *NPWS*
- *GLENRAC*
- *Glen East Landcare*
- *Weed spray contractors*
- *Hay contractors / merchants*
- *Drovers*
- *NSW Farmers Association*
- *Australia Post / mailmen*
- *Roads & Traffic Authority*
- *Rural Fire Service*
- *Forests New South Wales*
- *RTA service contractors (Camping areas, waste disposal)*
- *Real Estate Agents*
- *Stock Agents*
- *Country Energy*
- *Telstra*
- *Kangaroo harvesters*
- *General community / recreation*

ACTIONS

Mapping / Surveys

This initial component has already commenced with an inspection of the areas involved completed on 25/1/11. Further work will be required to produce the supplementary maps for this document. It is expected that individual stakeholders may have further information to add to this strategy component.

Awareness

- Mini field days
- Signage
- Public meeting to endorse strategy
- Radio community service announcements
- Proactive visits to landholders

Coolatai Grass Weed Classification

- Provide forum for discussions on Noxious Weed Classification for Coolatai Grass

Protocols

- Wash down (and under) of vehicles after entering properties where there are weeds issues.
- Limited farm access during summer months
- Roadside grass slashing
- Road grading
- Roadside rest areas and parks clear of weeds
- Travelling stock (Summer months – Mid October to Mid March)

Attached is Appendix 3 which had been provided to the RTA some years ago via the CMA system.

Appendix 4 gives landholder options to limit weed spread.

Weed spraying

To be effective there must be good communication between stakeholders to ensure that the most effective result is achieved from the limited resources available. There must also be a continuity of resources committed over the long term. Different weed species will require different chemicals and require spray application at different periods of the spray season. Some chemicals will require signage and notifications.

CONTROL LEVELS:

- 1/ High Priority / Level One – Hotspots**
- 2/ Strategic monitoring and control (Seed source points – eg Truck parks, TSR holding paddocks)**
- 3/ Balance of area not covered above**

Details of specific areas are listed in the attached appendix. Please note: The above control priorities would not limit control efforts to specific areas. Obviously, small infestations will be dealt with.

STRATEGY ACTIONS FOLLOWING LAUNCH MEETING 23/2/11

- Amend document to incorporate comment from meeting to create Version 3
- Disseminate to stakeholders via e-mail
- Version 3 tabled at next Glen East Landcare meeting
- Version 3 (with any amendments) presented to Glenrac with a request that they have carriage of the document
- Recommendation to Glenrac that the document be circulated to:
 - Real Estate Agents
 - Livestock Agents
 - RTA
 - Other stakeholders at time of revision

Weeds of National Significance:

- Blackberry
- Chilean Needle Grass
- Serrated Tussock

Noxious Weeds:

- Blackberry C4
- Bathurst Burr C4
- Chilean Needle Grass C4
- Giant Parramatta Grass C3
- Serrated Tussock C3
- Nodding Thistle C4
- St. John's Wort C3
- Privet (Narrow Leaf) C4
- Privet (Broad Leaf) C4
- Sweet Briar C4
- English Broom C4
- Fireweed C4

No Classification:

- Bahia Grass (Pasture weed)
- Coolatai Grass (Pasture weed, Environmental Weed)
- Honey Locust (Environmental Weed)
- Japanese Honeysuckle (Environmental Weed)
- Blue Periwinkle (Environmental Weed)
- Pyracantha (Environmental Weed)

C1 Weeds

Notifiable. The plant must be eradicated from the land and the land must be kept free of the plant.

C2 Weeds

Notifiable. The plant must be eradicated from the land and the land must be kept free of the plant.

C3 Weeds

The plant must be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed.

C4 Weeds

The growth and spread of the plant must be controlled according to the measures specified in a management plan published by the local control authority.

C5 Weeds

Notifiable. The requirements in the Noxious Weeds Act 1993 for a notifiable weed must be complied with.

No Classification

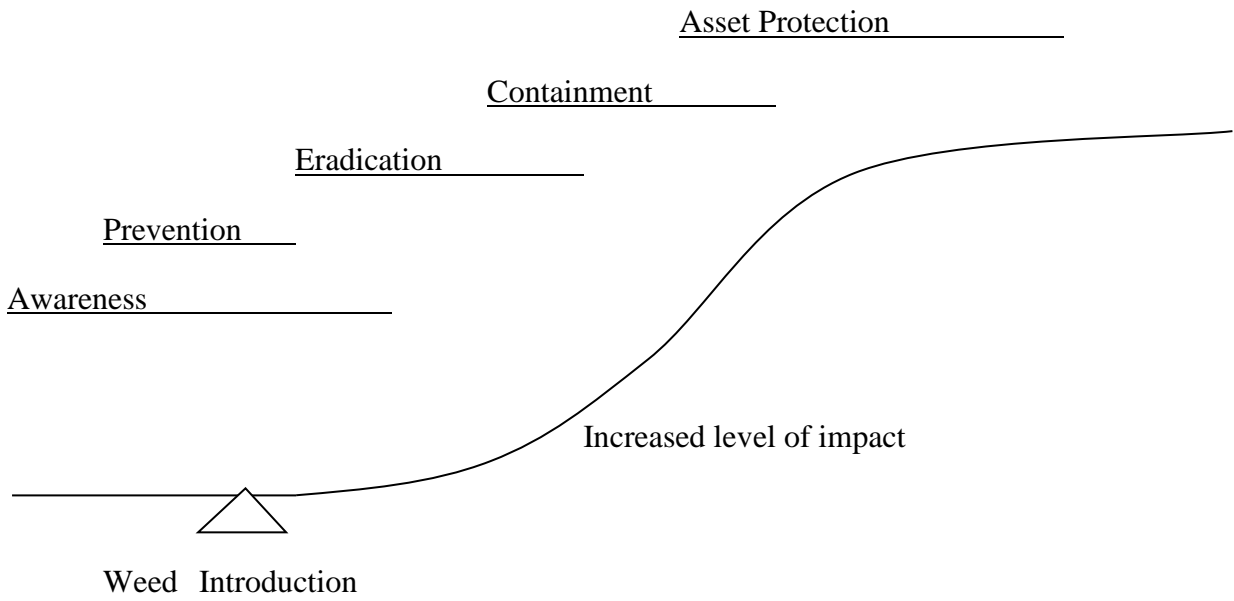
Generally Councils (including Regional Weeds Authorities) will not receive funding support for non classified weeds. There is potential for authorities such as the LLSs to assist in these situations. Local Government can still apply resources to non scheduled weeds if they resolve to do so.

A number of the weeds included within this category are classed as “Environmental Weeds” and thus funding from other sources may apply.

APPENDIX 2

WEED MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Adapted from Draft NSW Draft Fireweed Strategy



HOW NOT TO AID DEGRADATION OF FARMLAND AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BY AVOIDING BEING A WEED SEEDS CARRIER

Background

A little effort by roads and crown land authorities will prevent the need for millions of dollars in resources being required to overcome a problem that should not have existed in the first place.

Roads authorities protocols:

- 1st spring / summer roadside slashing to be carried out before first seeding of weeds in spring.
- Consider the option of spraying of roadsides (rather than slashing).
- Slashing contractor required to follow protocols:
 - Contact local Council weeds officers 30 days prior to slashing.
 - Direction of slashing program to be agreed.
 - West to East on Grafton Road with wash down before proceeding East of Golf Links Road
 - High pressure wash down of equipment at town centres, and by
 - Local Fire Brigades at specific risk barriers.
- Grading, drainage and construction works – As for slashing

APPENDIX 4

LANDHOLDER OPTIONS TO PREVENT WEED SPREAD

Weed management and control options will vary from property to property and from district to district. The suggestions listed below are simply considerations for the individual or group of landholders:

- Restrict roo shooter access during summer months
- Provide access gates under power lines and possibly slash access track
- Spray out mailbox locations
- Spray weeds on public land in preference to waiting for them to enter own land
- Series of holding paddocks for purchased livestock
- Require contractors to ensure vehicles are clean

The publications listed below are accepted as being good management tools for weed management.

- Weed Management Guide for North West New South Wales
- Blackberry Control Manual (Weeds of National Significance)
- Serrated Tussock (National Best Practice Manual)
- Chilean Needle Grass (3D Weed Management)
- Chilean Needle Grass Case Studies (3D Weed Management)
- African Lovegrass Case Studies (3D Weed Management)

HOT SPOTS

Coolatai Grass

- 8 km east of Glen Innes on the Grafton Road
- 12.5 km east of Glen Innes on the Grafton Road
- 20 km east of Glen Innes on the Grafton Road

Whiskey Grass

- Bald Nob Dundee Road north west of Severn River bridge

Chilean Needle Grass

- Red Range area
- Glen Innes township to 100Km signage

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AREAS

Coolatai Grass

- TSR Holding paddock on Old Grafton Road
- Glen Innes Severn Council Quarry # 17 on Old Grafton Road
- Surrounds of Mann River Reserve Recreation area

Note: The Mann River Nature Recreation Reserve TSR perimeter area has high levels of Coolatai Grass infestation. This area is probably the seed source for many of the outbreaks on the Gwydir Highway / Grafton Road. Whilst spaying may not be a viable control option (given the extent of the weed area), it may be practical to provide access strips into fishing and recreation areas plus awareness signage. A suggestion is that these access routes could be treated by the weed wiping technique rather than slashing.

Whiskey Grass

- Bald Nob / Dundee Road north west of Hartmann's gate.

Note: An option to limit the vehicle seed collection along this road may be roadside slashing or boom spraying.

Chilean Needle Grass

- Beardy Waters Recreation Area
- Centennial Parklands