

SYDNEY SOUTH WEST REGIONAL WEEDS SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Thursday 2nd June 2011

Hosted by Camden Council

Chair: Joel Daniels

Attendance

John Newton	Sydney Water
Paul Price	Sutherland Shire Council
Matt McNaughton	Camden Council
Lyndal Kaye	NPWS – Cumberland Area South
Alex Burgess	Wollondilly Shire Council
Andrew Attewell	Campbelltown City Council
Ian Perkins	Bankstown City Council
Charmaine Roberston	Bankstown City Council
Stan Rees	Crown Lands Division
Joel Daniels	Liverpool City Council
Eddie Ferry	Fairfield City Council
Peter Cuneo	Mt Annan Botanic Garden
Rebecca Coventry	Office of Hawkesbury Nepean
Shelly Slater	Sydney Weeds Committee GIS/Project Officer
Rosanna Luca	Sydney Weeds Committee Acting Exec Officer

Apologies

Dawn Emerson	Community representative
Denis Ashton	Sydney Catchment Authority
Jim Killen	Western Sydney Parklands Trust
Geoff Green	Camden Council
Andres Bianchi	NPWS - Metro South East region
Craig Shephard	NPWS - Metro South East region

Meeting Open

Joel Daniels opened the meeting.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

Introductions

Joel acknowledged that the Sydney Weeds Committee has been through a huge administrative phase over the last year. Most of the organisational structure and administrative procedures are in place. The focus of the sub-committees is now on implementing the strategic actions and projects, and engaging more with the officers directly involved with work on the ground.

Roundtable Discussion & Mapping Activity:

SURVEYING AREAS OF CONCERN/ HIGH RISK

The aim of this activity was to start capturing knowledge and information about where the weeds officers are 'keeping an eye' on areas of concern, high risk, surveying, concentrating private property inspections and working strategically.

The terms "inspections" and "surveying" were clarified.

- An inspection is a legal activity, referring to the official role and function of a weeds officer, under delegation of the *Noxious Weeds Act*. In this context, an inspection is a formal administrative process.

- A survey can be done in different ways, on private or public land and by anyone involved in weed identification and operation work, regularly spotting weeds on the ground. Can also include Bushcare volunteers. It is important that all weeds officers are surveying their “patch”, to ensure we are not missing areas where weed growth could be accelerating and going unnoticed.

The Department (DPI) is interested in the collective effort across Sydney, which includes both activities: inspections and surveying, as well as education, on-ground control etc.

The term “High Risk” was also clarified.

- Examples of high risk “pathways”: roads, railway corridors, easements, (utilities, drainage etc), waterways, which facilitate the movement of weeds. Eg the F3/M2/M7 corridor is a pathway for Boneseed, travelling south.
- Examples of high risk sites & “hot spots”: where a “pathway” intersects with an area of EEC, Dams, truck & machinery depots, industrial areas, nurseries & garden centres, landscape supplies, development sites, waste disposal sites, horse and boat activities etc

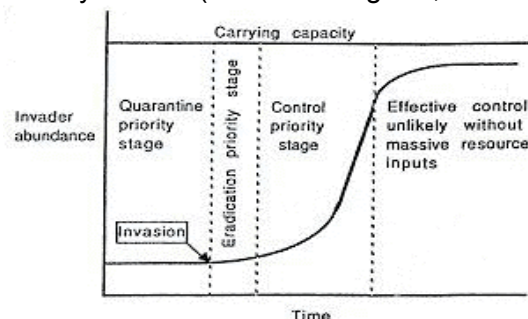
The information collected through this mapping activity is the start of an ongoing process to capture existing knowledge. Discussions will continue at the next sub-committee meeting about the information collected to date, identifying gaps and priorities areas and a strategic response where needed, at the regional level.

ACTION: Shelly to transfer the information manually collected to a GIS map.

Roundtable Discussion: NEW INCURSIONS

Invasive Species Plan definition of a “new weed incursion”:

“An isolated population of an invasive species detected in an area where it has not previously established.” i.e. the weeds that have recently been introduced into an area/landscape, the small populations of a species starting to establish, that are still in a state which we can effectively control (ie. in the diagram, the “eradication priority stage”).



Rosanna tabled the (recently revised and simplified) “New Incursion form”. There had been some confusion about the purpose of this form, with more detailed versions previously circulated.

The form is a simple procedure to record information about:

- Known new incursions in the South West Sydney region (within the last few years), which have not been formally recorded by someone on the sub-committee.
- Any new incursions that are detected from now on. As new incursions as detected, the form needs to be completed immediately and sent to Shelly.

The information about new incursions is being collected across all 4 sub-committee regions. It will be used to track where the new populations are and facilitate a rapid response for on-ground control.

Shelly needs to consult with a small team of people across the sub-committees to process the information received about new incursions and ensure that this information is communicated and acted on appropriately. This group will function mainly as a “sounding board” for the GIS/Project officer position, with communication via phone and email. For

example, if a weed has shown up in the South West Sydney region/Sydney region for the first time, a “New Weed Alert” is put out to the sub-committees, Department, RBG, Sydney Weeds website, other relevant people.

Sydney South West Weed Alert Team: Alex Burgess, Lyndal Kaye, Matt McNaughton

ACTION: Rosanna to place the finalised new incursion form on website members page.
ACTION: **Everyone** – please send completed new incursion forms (for new species found within last few years) to Shelly Slater.

It was agreed to re-introduce a regular Agenda item “New incursions in the region”.

Lyndal Kaye asked if pathogens are within the scope of the weeds committee? Eg Myrtle Rust, Phytophthora. The information on the DPI website is not in enough detail, and the location maps are not updated regularly. The Sydney Weeds website could include hygiene information, links and known locations to keep an eye out for. The localized information would be to share among Weeds Committees, not to duplicate with other Departments.

ACTION: Rosanna to discuss with the Board about incorporating information about Myrtle Rust and Phytophthora onto Sydney Weeds website.

ACTION: Rosanna to locate the Phytophthora hygiene protocols developed years ago by Cheryl Bate, and place on website members page.

High Risk Weeds List

Rosanna provided a brief update on where the list is up to, and requested assistance for the next step. The high risk weeds list needs to be finalised by (i) identifying if there are any gaps, weeds that have not been through WRA and (ii) identifying which of the weeds on the list are still in the “eradication priority stage” (ie have not yet become widespread).

Paul Price asked if the high risk weeds list incorporates prioritisation work (of assets, EECs, high risk weeds to the assets), done by SMCMA in the past?

ACTION: Rosanna to clarify how the current high risk weeds list has been developed.

Weed Action Program (WAP) Funding

Year 1 (2010-2011)

- Year 1 reporting form and procedure has just been emailed to all organisations that received funding. The report form to use and procedures are on the website members page.
- Progress Reports for the financial year 2010-2011 are due 15th July 2011. Reminders will be sent leading up to this deadline. This is a strict deadline, to ensure all progress reports can be collated in time for the DPI reporting deadline.
- Organisations that did not receive WAP funds will also be asked to report on weed management activity, to assist with providing statistics on the total effort across Sydney. DPI wants to know what else is happening in the region, parallel to the WAP project.

Year 2 (2011-2012)

- The Year 1 funds were received and distributed late, so all funding recipients need to catch up on expenditure and work programs, which will run over into Year 2.
- Calls for Year 2 WAP applications scheduled around July 2011.
- The Board agreed to invite existing project partners to nominate for slightly increased amounts in Year 2 and justification for why the extra is needed.

Training needs & skills gaps for officers

The new Conservation & Land Management training package comes into force from 2012. Matt McNaughton is discussing with a DPI training officer about opportunity to do CLM course through Recognition of Prior Learning.

ACTION: Future information sessions to be planned, once the review of the Act is complete and publicised.

Sydney Weeds website Members page

The website now has a Members Page, requiring a login password. The information on this login page is for internal use, to be shared among sub-committee members.

Weed Risk Assessments (WRA) have been done by DPI for the highest priority weeds (eg Salvinia). Sydney Weeds Committees representatives did WRAs for several Sydney region weeds last year. It was requested to place the Weed Risk Assessments and the older Regional Plans on the Members Page.

ACTION: Rosanna to email login instructions and password, and discuss with Frances Pike about uploading WRAs and old Regional Plans

The community reporting flow chart was discussed. There was general agreement that it needs to be very simple. A flow chart format is not necessary, still too complicated. Just needs a list of basic information for people to provide, when a new invasive species is seen:

- Date sighted
- Description of location
- Photo (keep the guidelines of using a coin, pen etc to show scale)
- The person's contact details

The information should be emailed directly to the council officer (as per the list of contacts on the Sydney weeds website). Officers will have to check the site anyway, and they can complete the new incursion form if needed.

ACTION: Rosanna to simplify the community reporting procedure on website

Sydney Weeds stall at ABC Gardening Expo

Proposed Sydney Weeds stall at the Expo, which is on from 19th - 21st August 2011 at Rosehill Racecourse. Representatives from all of the sub-committees are being asked to do 3-4 hour shifts at the stall over the weekend. The stall meets a major target of the Weed Action Program, for regional community education events.

ABC Gardening Expo stall/ interested Sydney South West representatives: Andrew Attewell and Joel Daniels. Alex Burgess may be able to assist with pack up on the Monday.

ACTION: Rosanna to confirm availability and the weekend roster with all.

Follow up from Previous Meeting

The previous minutes were confirmed by Matthew McNaughton. Seconded by Shelly Slater.

Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action List (not already discussed)

It was requested to put some additional information on the website members page:

- Phytophthora hygiene protocols developed by Cheryl Bate
- Machinery hygiene protocols developed by Graham Pritchard, Port Stephens (2 page flyer)

ACTION: Rosanna to upload this extra information to members page

General Business

- Use and access to Sydney Metropolitan CMA mapping information (Eg draft EEC information, needing to be ground-truthed). It was requested to have an index of the SMCMA currently available, with basic information about:
 - How it was collected
 - When it was collated
 - What program is the data generated from?
 - Specific data licences required
 - How the information can be used (strengths & limitations)

This index has partially been done, and a simple list can be made to suit the needs of the weeds-committees.

ACTION: Shelly & Rosanna to develop an index of the SMCMA mapping information.

- A question was asked about the location of DPI's distribution maps of listed noxious weeds

ACTION: Stan Rees to follow up.

- Rebecca Coventry provided an update on the treatment of the Kudzu infestation in Penrith LGA.

ACTION: Rosanna to put contact details of new Royal Botanic Garden Weed Botanist/Biologist on members webpage.

- 2011-2012 Crown Lands funding applications are coming up (feral animal and weed control).

ACTION: Stan Rees to circulate information and closing dates.

- It was asked whether Crown Lands can become a financial member of the weeds sub-committee and be eligible to receive WAP funding (Year 3)

ACTION: Rosanna to follow up with the Board about expanding membership to other state agencies.

- Class 4 plans - Councils all vary in where they are up to. Class 4 plan templates developed by Sydney North sub-committee/Sutherland are available on the members webpage. *Lantana* and *Egeria densa* don't require a Class 4 plan, as their control only relates to the prevention of sale and distribution.
- A large Caring for Our Country application has been submitted for Boneseed control along the coast (including Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Bega councils etc)
- There is a new General Use permit for African Olive control. Stronger rate, applicable for larger trees.

ACTION: Peter Cuneo to send PDF of the new permit, for the members webpage

Agency Roundtable

Wollondilly Council

- Kudzu infestation on private property being treated. Source unknown. Has been there for approx 5 years.
- Gorse spraying on private property, residents have been co-operative
- New incursion: *Sagittaria montevidensis*

NPWS – Cumberland South Area

- Alligator Weed control, hard to get into the gorge (Bents Basin) during rain and flash floods.
- Have been working with Muru Mittigar Aboriginal organisation, training teams in bush regeneration, TAFE certificate.

Fairfield Council

- Only location of *Salvinia* in the LGA is an artificial wetland, west of Cowpasture Road at Abbotsbury.
- They are spraying, digging out and have installed educational signs.

Sutherland Council

- Heavy focus on Bitou Bush spraying/target weeding at the moment.
- Feral animal control focused on cane toads, foxes and deer.

Mt Annan Botanic Garden

- Funding received from Endeavour Energy for African Olive control
- New seedbank and research facility opening at Mt Annan “PlantBank”

Camden Council

- Hot spot at Kemps Creek – large problem with Alligator Weed
- Source is the surrounding market gardens, nutrient rich water, machinery travelling to different properties (eg one landowner owns a few properties)
- Contaminated water issues also.
- They are trialing deep burial.

Campbelltown Council

- Lots of reactive private property inspections – very time consuming.
- Rabbit control

Crown Lands

- Mine site rehabilitation, Wollondilly Washdown.

Bankstown Council

- Ongoing Alligator Weed control
- Yeramba Lagoon, tidal water
- They are revisiting a more strategic approach to weed control.

Liverpool/Wollondilly/Fairfield/Campbelltown all have Riverkeeper teams, focused on bush regeneration and rubbish removal.

Next Meeting date & host

Date: Thursday 22nd September 2011

Host: Fairfield Council. Site tour after lunch (optional).

Sydney South West weeds sub-committee

Action list June 2011 meeting	Responsibility
Transfer the mapping activity information a GIS map. Distribute when ready.	Shelly
Finalise the New Incursion Form and place on website page	Rosanna
Send completed new incursion forms (for species found within last few years) to Shelly.	Everyone
Discuss with the Board about incorporating Myrtle Rust and Phytophthora information into the Sydney Weeds website.	Rosanna
Put onto website members page: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phytophthora hygiene protocols Machinery hygiene protocols 	
Simplify the community reporting procedure on website	Rosanna
Clarify how the Sydney high risk weeds list was developed.	Rosanna
Circulate website login password to all sub-committee representatives.	
Discuss with Frances Pike about uploading WRAs and old Regional Plans onto website members page	Rosanna
Index of the SMCMA mapping information available	Shelly & Rosanna
Follow up about DPI's distribution maps of noxious weeds	Stan Rees
Confirm availability and roster timeslots for ABC Gardening Expo stall, 19-21 August 2011	Rosanna Andrew Attewell Joel Daniels Alex Burgess
Put contact details of new Royal Botanic Garden Weed Botanist/Biologist on members webpage.	Rosanna
Future information sessions to be planned, once the review of the Act is complete and publicised.	Rosanna/handover to Frances Pike
Circulate information 2011-2012 Crown Lands funding and closing dates.	Stan Rees & Rosanna
Follow up with the Board about expanding membership to other state agencies (eg Crown Lands)	Rosanna
Send PDF of the new general permit for African Olive control, for the members webpage	Peter Cuneo & Rosanna