

SYDNEY WEST ~ BLUE MOUNTAINS REGIONAL WEEDS SUB-COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Friday 16th September 2011 at Penrith City Council

Attendance:

Dan Long	Blue Mountains Council
David Whiteman	Blue Mountains Council
Janet Rannard	Penrith Council
David Kuhle	Parramatta Council
Nicola Booth	Hawkesbury Council
Karen Jenkin	Hawkesbury River County Council
Chris Dewhurst	Hawkesbury River County Council
Chris Stanfield	Hawkesbury River County Council
Mal Decker	Railcorp
Justine Clarke	Blacktown City Council
Tim Withers	Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural & Education Centre
Jeremy Stacy	Sydney Water
Robert Meyer	Hawkesbury Nepean CMA
Rosanna Luca	Executive Officer, Sydney Weeds Committee

Apologies:

Jonathan Sanders	NPWS - Cumberland North area
Rebecca Coventry	Office of the Hawkesbury Nepean
Craig Shephard	NPWS Metro South region
Angie Fricker	Hawkesbury Nepean CMA
Samantha Gorny	Department of Defence
Bernadette Scott	Blue Mountains Council
Shelly Slater	GIS Officer, Sydney Weeds Committee

Meeting Open

Chris Dewhurst (Chair) opened the meeting at 9:30am.

No Pecuniary interests were declared at the meeting open. Tim Withers arrived later, and declared interest of Muru Mittigar as a contractor undertaking weed control, as well as a community based organisation.

High Risk Pathways & Hot spots in the region

The discussion continued (from last meeting) about the highest priority locations for weed spread within the region.

ACTION: Rosanna Luca & Shelly Slater to collate the new information, and add to the GIS layer.

Discussion: there are pathways for weeds all over Sydney, and the GIS map may get quite busy. It was suggested to develop further criteria for what defines a "high risk" pathway, which can then assist with ranking the pathways and focusing on those of highest risk

Eg: what weeds are spreading, are the weeds being controlled and how often?, How is the linear infrastructure maintained? What are we talking about when we say "risk"?

Robert Meyer suggested looking at the WRA matrix as a guide: *how invasive is the weed, how impactful is it, what are the assets being threatened? What is the size of infestation? Is there a land manager or someone in the community willing to contribute to controlling it?*

ACTION: Rosanna Luca to work with the High Risk Pathways Project Team to develop criteria and a ranking process.

Roundtable information sharing

Hawkesbury Nepean CMA – less funding in the CMA this year for weed management projects. Rob is co-ordinating a steering group for African Olive management in Western Sydney.

ACTION: Rosanna Luca to invite Rob Meyer to attend the March 2012 Sydney South West sub-committee meeting.

Hawkesbury River County Council – Chris Stanfield recently started in the role as Operations Manager. Ongoing terrestrial weed control in reserves. New initiative of Black Willow control, working with Muru Mittigar, CMA. Includes mapping and reporting components.

Blacktown Council – weed control contracts are now more focused on *eradicating* weeds, rather than just controlling them.

Railcorp – bush regeneration contracts underway in rail corridors across Western Sydney region. Focus on young trees and saplings within 5m of rail line. Need to consider other weeds that may come up after primary work. Weed control also at 5 sites of *Acacia pubescens*.

Hawkesbury Council – Community nursery upgrade almost complete. Some council staff will be based there. Interested in river bank projects for Community Action grants, to match landholder interest and other works happening.

Penrith Council – lace lerp badly affecting *Euc. mollucana* trees along M4. This also happened in Blacktown in the mid 1990s. UWS is looking for a grant to do research.

Parramatta Council – new tender process implemented for 6 year contracts.

Sydney Water – African Olive control at Camden STP. Sydney Water manages over 3000 sites. 140 significant sites have been identified.

Muru Mittigar – undertaking African Olive control at Prospect Reserve, Scheyville National Park, Wianamatta Regional Park (former ADI site). Willow control about to commence in Penrith area – all species of Willow!

Blue Mountains Council – council resources have been redirected to the recent wind storm damage, so some weed management work was temporarily on hold. Broome control along Great Western Highway, working with RTA. Working with Sydney Water to prioritise sites.

Noxious Weed Control Order 28 - update

- Rosanna Luca, Chris Dewhurst and Jonathan Sanders (SWC Board members) met with a representative from DPI to clarify the implications of the proposed new changes.
- The only legally enforceable documentation is the Noxious Weed Act itself, the associated letters that can be issued and the new control category wording declared noxious weeds (changes to the wording will be in Order 28).
- It is understood that Class 4 Plans (in their current format) are no longer required and are not legally enforceable documents. Councils should still have their own adopted policies for how Class 4 weeds are to be managed within their LGA, but an individual Class 4 plan for each weed is not needed. The council policy can also be used to inform private landholders on controlling the weed/s in their LGA.

Discussion:

- Councils enforce and inform landholders about the Act in different ways. Some Councils issue letters that are more “educational”, notifying people about the presence of weeds, but not as a formal s.18 or s.18A letter.
- Suggestions were made about alternative wording for the Class 4 control category, eg. “managing” the weed is vague. Preference for the wording to say something such as the weeds must be controlled or managed in a way “that reduces the area of the infestation” and in a way that is “consistent with Councils own weed management plan or policy”.

ACTION: Rosanna Luca to place information updates on the Sydney Weeds member’s webpage, and collate the comments made for a Sydney Region submission to DPI on the proposed Order 28

The proposed new and changed declarations for Class 3 & 4 weeds in the Sydney Region were not included in Order 28. DPI staff are still finalizing these for the whole State, and it is expected that they will be changed officially in 2012.

New Incursions found in the region

Reported by HRCC: Boneseed at Prospect Reservoir

Reported by BMCC: only known infestation of *Ludwigia longifolia*

ACTION: HRCC and BMCC contacts to provide Rosanna with more detailed information about these new incursions.

Sub-Committee meetings from 2012

It was agreed by all to now have a minimum of two sub-committee meetings each year, to be held in March & September. In place of the sub-committee meetings, new Project Teams are being formed with specific tasks and outcomes to be achieved.

Project Teams

It was agreed by all to have people participate on the new Project Teams being formed to achieve some of the strategic tasks outlined in the Sydney Region Weed Action Program. So far, the following people offered to be involved:

Dan Long - High Risk Pathways Team

Dave Whiteman – Weed Risk Assessment Team/New Incursions Team

Karen Jenkin – Education Team

David Kuhle - New Incursions Team

Justine Clarke – Weed Risk Assessment Team

Nicola Booth - Weed Risk Assessment Team/High Risk Pathways Team

Robert Meyer – High Risk Pathways Team

Janet Rannard – New Incursions Team

Mal Decker – High Risk Pathways Team

Chris Dewhurst and Jonathan Sanders are both SWC Board Members.

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes from the meeting of 16th June 2011 were accepted by Karen Jenkin. Seconded by David Kuhle.

General Business

- Good feedback received about Sydney Weeds stall at ABC Garden Expo.
- The Hawkesbury Nepean CMA region weed strategy has expired and will not be renewed. The same has been discussed for the SMCMA weed strategy. The *NSW Invasive Species Plan* is now in place as a good strategic document to follow.

Next meeting: March 2012. Exact date & venue TBC.