

Greater Sydney RWC Meeting 13: BUSINESS PAPERS

Agenda Item 7	WAP Program report and Abridged Grant Round 2018-2020 outcomes
ATTACHMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GS WAP Year 3 - Summary and Highlights
BACKGROUND	<p>Update for the Weeds Action Program – Greater Sydney regional subprogram (GS WAP) for the period June to October 2018 is as follows:</p> <p><u>Weed professional capacity building program and Regional weed awareness event</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A NSW Weed Risk Management System training course was delivered on 14 June to 40 officers representing 29 agencies by Stephen Johnson from DPI.• This course will be offered again in 2018/19, as will the Recognising Water Weeds course and an Opuntoid ID course in response to the substantial trade of Opuntoids through online marketplaces.• A giant devil's fig and Chinese violet study tour was facilitated on 17 August, with 8 volunteers, council and state government agency staff attending.• No further developments in regards the regional event being planned in partnership with Sydney Weeds Committees Inc. to educate government, industry and community stakeholders about the state and regional priority weed species. <p><u>Annual report for Year 3 (2017/18)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All project partners submitted an annual report for 2017/18.• The collated subregional report was submitted to DPI on 8 October 2018.• As a region, Greater Sydney met or exceeded most program targets in 2018/19 – see item for distribution Year 3 Summary and Highlights.• The 14 project partners spent \$856K in WAP grant funds and made a co-contribution of \$1.58m.• \$324,453 in unspent funds has been carried forward into 2018/19.• The main reason for this large amount of unspent funds is the ongoing impacts of local council amalgamations and associated staffing losses, and \$125K additional funding being provided by DPI in 2017/18. <p><u>Emergency Fund Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency fund applications were submitted from Central Coast Council, Cumberland Council and OEH-NPWS, for the control of new weed incursions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- giant devil's fig- Sicilian sea lavender- Chinese violet- Christmas candlesticks- frogbit- kidney leaf mud plantain• The total value of these applications was \$22,800 in Year 4 and \$7,800 in Year 5.• All were approved by the WAP steering committee and letters of offer and Funding Deeds have been issued.

Project variation requests

- Project variation requests were submitted by Fairfield City, Hornsby Shire and Camden Councils, seeking a total increase in funding of \$21,016 p.a. in Years 4 and 5.
- All requests were approved by the WAP steering committee.

Unallocated funding

- As of 29 August, preliminary advice provided by DPI is that Greater Sydney will receive an allocation of \$1,176,715 in 2018/19 and \$1,206,133 in 2019/2020.
- This represents significant increases from the preliminary figures provided by DPI for program planning purposes in 2015 (increase of \$194,857 in 2018/19 and \$229,133 in 2019/20).
- As a result, \$184,702 of Year 4 grant funds and \$235,462 of Year 5 grant funds not currently allocated to any program activities.

Abridged Grant Round 2018-2020

- An abridged contestable grant round was announced on 2 July 2018, with applications nominally closing on 17 August, with funds available totalling **\$744,617**.
- City of Canterbury-Bankstown, Georges River Council, Greater Sydney Local Land Services, Hawkesbury River County Council and Ku-ring-Gai Municipal Council submitted applications to a total value of \$106,949 p.a. with the majority of applications being for Early Detection Activities and for Eradication and Containment Activities.
- Applications were assessed by the WAP steering committee on Wednesday 29 August.
- Clarification and/or revision has been sought from Greater Sydney Local Land Services and Ku-ring-Gai Municipal Council and these updated applications are yet to be received.
- Cumberland Council and North Sydney Council submitted Expressions of Interest only, to a total value of \$45,000 p.a. and have been invited by the steering committee to submit more detailed applications.
- City of Ryde has since verbally expressed an interest in submitting an application to partially-fund a dedicated weed officer/inspector role.
- City of Canterbury-Bankstown and Central Coast Council have expressed an interest in submitting applications for an expanded range of activities.
- The steering committee has increased the Emergency Fund budget to \$30K p.a. (formerly \$1,584 in Year 4 and \$8,212 in Year 5)
- The weed professional capacity building budget has been increased from \$11,264 p.a. to \$20K p.a.
- The final program for Years 4 and 5 will be presented to the GS RWC at Meeting 14 and submitted to DPI via project variation request.

**FOR
ACTION/DECISION/NOTING**

Noting

**DECISION REQUIRED BY
RWC MEMBERS**

1. Receive and note the WAP program update for the period June to October 2018.
2. Receive and note the GS WAP Year 3 Summary and Highlights.