

SYDNEY NORTH REGIONAL WEEDS COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday 20th September 2012 at Kimbriki Ecohouse and Garden, Terrey Hills

Attendance:

Rob Gleeson	Ku-ring-gai Council
David Field	Ku-ring-gai Council
Matthew Watts	Lane Cove Council
Garth Debney	North Sydney Council
Jacqui Vollmer	Hunters Hill Council
Sean Granger	Manly Council
Adam Burrowes	Warringah Council
Jillian Macintyre	Warringah Council
James Brisebois	Warringah Council
Steven Smith	Mosman Council
Sophie Cottier	Lane Cove Council
Frances Davis	Willoughby City Council
Diane Campbell	Hornsby Shire Council
Jonathan Sanders	NPWS
Mel Hall	NPWS Metro North East region
Gith Strid-Nwulaekwe	City of Ryde
Lavinia Schofield	Pittwater Council
David Cleary	Railcorp
Karen Kennedy	Sydney Metropolitan CMA
Rosanna Luca	Project Officer (Weeds Action Project)
Liz Pearce	Project Officer (Weeds Committees)
Michael Michelmore	DPI Invasive Species Officer

Apologies:

Welcome

Jillian Macintyre (Chair) opened the meeting at 10.00am and welcomed all in attendance. No pecuniary interests were declared.

Weeds Action Project (WAP) planning session

Rosanna Luca facilitated a planning session about the strategy for the next three years of the WAP Project. The session was based on the background paper that was distributed prior to the meeting.

Main points of discussion and priorities identified:

- There are still questions about which organisation is responsible for controlling weeds road sides? Council and RTA have responsibility for different roads, easy to shift blame. Contractors doing the work for the RTA - the contracts only specify spraying (no other control techniques). RTA is aware of this deficiency. Traffic control is sometimes needed for control work.
- RTA managed roads - responsibility is kerb to kerb.
- Hills M2/Transurban – unlike RTA – the company is responsible for vegetation management. Have prepared a weed management plan, Hornsby provided input.
- Management plans for transport corridors - need to be mindful that weedy vegetation corridors are also habitat corridors!
- Rail corridor – a hard one. Weed control needs to be strategic and prioritised. It's one big construction site/highly disturbed and will never be weed free.

WAP & regional priorities:

Boneseed control

- Update mapping records for the region, get all locations recorded onto Sydney Weeds GIS layer.
- Keep documentation on where it has been controlled for follow up and check in future years as it has long seed viability.
- Treat plants at same time as recording, if possible.
- Write into bush regeneration contracts/request to volunteers to record and also pull out plants.
- DPI wants to see targeted property inspection/landholder education programs around areas where WAP funds weed control. Deal with the source of the weeds also.

NPWS: Boneseed containment is a priority. Has been eradicated from West Head and Garigal NP. Sydney Harbour NP is a concern – attempts have been made at Dobroyd Head however haven't started at North Head Need to reduce core infestations). Support needed from Manly and Mosman councils. In locations where access is difficult (rope access only), control Boneseed and Bitou at same time.

Lane Cove River catchment: need to confirm if it is present.

Pittwater: Boneseed scattered through most reserves – important to record all. More property inspections required around Ingleside.

Warringah: Dunes at Dee Why/Curl Curl

ACTIONS:

Lane Cove, Ryde and Hornsby council officers and NPWS to confirm if Boneseed is in the Lane Cove Valley

Rosanna Luca to distribute existing data on Boneseed locations and request updates

Control of New Incursions and not yet widespread weeds

- Heteranthera: infestation in Arcadia (not yet reported to Sydney Weeds)
- Horsetail in Pittwater Council. Being contained. On private land.
- Mexican Feather Grass in Hornsby LGA.
- Water Hyacinth at Cowan
- Salvinia at North Turramurra (Ku-ring-gai Council) and Pittwater. Pittwater is using biocontrol with assistance from DPI. Lavinia says they have had success with weevils, they have wintered for the first time. Inspections in surrounding areas/high risk sites are also important. Where has it come from? Salvia was seen in the Bali shop in Pittwater LGA.

ACTIONS:

Hornsby Council (Anthony or Di) to confirm locations of Heteranthera and Mexican Feather Grass

Jonathon Sanders to advise of Water Hyacinth location in Cowan

Pittwater Council (Lavinia) to provide update on progress of the Salvinia weevils

Control of widespread weeds – what's the strategy?

Alligator Weed

- Located in Ryde LGA in Macquarie Uni pond. Gith has inspected, it is being contained.
 - Lane Cove River infestation can't be eradicated. Ongoing control and suppression program needed. NPWS may request WAP funds for upstream control/Hornsby LGA at top of Lane Cove catchment.
 - Alligator Weed flea beetle - under right conditions it can obliterate plants.
- ** Good contact for more info: Royce Holtcamp from DPI, could advise harvest numbers required to establish population.

Cats Claw Creeper

Requires mapping to find out what it's doing, where it is spreading. Then work out what is the strategy for the years to come. Request from Rob Gleeson to include Dipogons as they show up together.

- NPWS land – asset protection only
- Manly – eradication possible on two Council properties and one residential locations. It is part of Council's weed control program.
- Pittwater – located on Scotland Island and several other Council reserves.
- Ryde – has been identified on private property and at Darvall Park. Ryde currently not dealing with this due to changes in staff arrangements and lack of support for inspections and control.

African Olive

- Pittwater – Avalon golf course, half complete. Also on road reserves.
- KMC – it's everywhere
- Some established street trees
- NPWS – Mel Hall doesn't think control is a realistic option, prefer to focus funding and effort on Boneseed.
- Ryde – one of the top 10 weeds but no evidence of spread into bushland.

Focus WAP funds on North, South and West containment lines for Sydney Region.

Tussock Paspalum

- Located in Warringah and Pittwater. Epping Rd into Lane Cove Valley. Being targeted every year as part of routine control.
- Suggestion to group together with grasses weed control programs including Pampas Grass, Coolatai and Pennisetum
- WAP funds may be sought for control on Bantry Bay Rd (NPWS) and where infestations are adjacent to EECs.

Pampas Grass

- Some say it's too widespread to be included for WAP funding. Others say it should be included to do follow up on control programs funded years ago.
- Asset protection programs only. Warringah may seek WAP funds.
- Even if grasses are not included as priorities for WAP funds, they should still be included as part of the Sydney Region weed strategy, as it supports council's internal funding and weed control programs.

Ludwigia, Asparagus

Widespread weeds – asset protection and containment only.

NPWS – Ground Asparagus is well established, asset protection approach. Asparagus is spreading west and getting entrenched in Garigal NP. Awaiting release of WONS plan by Hilary Cherry.

Other newly escaped Asparagus are more of concern. NPWS have one site identified with new Asparagus variety.

Madeira Vine

Requires mapping to find out what it's doing, where it is spreading. Then work out what is the strategy for the years to come. Is it everywhere?

Pittwater and Railcorp land – everywhere

Manly – isolated locations

Mainly in disturbed edges in locations. Other LGAs such as Ryde, Ku-ring-gai its everywhere. Should be part of routine local control program.

Use WAP funding to help with collating the mapping, so that the region can then prioritise areas for strategic control.

** Look out for a Madeira Vine seeding variety which has appeared – a mutation?

Council inspection programs / capacity building

- Very different approach and levels of resource allocations across the councils. Some councils fund a part-time proactive inspector through WAP grant (Pittwater, Hornsby).
- For some councils, it is a very small aspect of one person's job. Would be useful to identify priority areas to focus their inspections.
- There was some interest in the idea of a shared weeds inspector working for a few councils (similar model to Sydney Central region, inspector shared by Rockdale and Canterbury councils). This needs more discussion and clarification about which Sydney North councils would be interested.

ACTIONS:

Rosanna Luca to write up case study on strategic weed inspections programs adopted by Hornsby and other councils.

Rosanna Luca to finalise the high risk weeds list and reporting procedure – also for distribution to contractors, other operational staff and Bushcare volunteers.

WAP can also fund capacity building activities about high risk weeds – for other operational staff and Bushcare volunteers. Use existing resources such as the aquatic weeds ID book designed for contractors for drains etc. Speak to Rob Gleeson about how to get extra copies)

Normal Weeds Committee meeting

1. Confirmation of Minutes from last meeting on 14th March 2012

Confirmed by Gith Strid-Nwulaekwe with the following correction to the last dot point in Item 1 "A weed management strategy is being developed for the M2 motorway.

The City of Ryde has recently been invited to provide input into the strategy".

Seconded by Jillian Macintyre

2. Completion of actions

All actions from the previous meeting have been completed.

3. Matters arising from previous minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

4. New weed incursions or unusual sightings

- Budlia/ Butterfly Bush: Located in Edgecliff Boulevarde, Collaroy. Growing over escarpment, similar to Lantana. Sprayed with metasulphurine but has grown back. A local incursion from garden escape.
- Austrameria/Peruvian Lily located in Manly
- Apple of Peru (*Nicandra physalodes*) – Rob Gleeson has located in Killara in Council carpark – sprayed with mix of Roundup and metasulphurine.

ACTIONS:

Jillian Macintyre, Sean Granger and Rob Gleeson to provide more details to Rosanna of the locations/photo/status of these new incursions.

5. Recent changes with the Sydney Weeds Committees ~ any Qs? None raised

6. General business None raised

7. Next meeting date and host

Date: Thursday March 28th 2013 Host: Willoughby, TBC

Presentation: *Noxious Weeds Act* changes

Mich Michelmore, Department of Primary Industries

Mich led a discussion of the rationale and requests from 2 years ago for new and changed noxious weeds declarations. The analysis of these new requests has not yet been finalised by the Department, and would be included in the next Order 30.

A huge number of requests for noxious weed changes and new declarations were received from the Sydney region. What are the priorities for this region? Two years later, are they still the same?

Important points from the discussion:

- Need to have a clear reason for why a weed is declared noxious
- Can't be just for administrative consistency across a group of councils.
- Some additional class 4s seem to be a "wish list", can't be enforced across an LGA/the region.

Which plants are the ones that we can slow down, and if nothing done the invasion process will take over (eg Boneseed).

If nothing will change with distribution of a plant, why have it declared noxious?

ACTIONS:

Liz Pearce to post a copy of Mich's discussion paper on Sydney Weeds member's webpage.

Mich Michelmore to collate a matrix of the new declaration requests from the region, highlighting the ones that need to be reconsidered and justified further.

All local control authorities to do an analysis of the matrix with reference to Mich's discussion notes (see SWC website member section) and consider which listings to justify on more detail or remove from the list.

Further questions?

Mich Michelmore, Department of Primary Industries

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Meeting closed at 2.30pm.