

# SYDNEY WEST ~ BLUE MOUNTAINS REGIONAL WEEDS SUB-COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF MEETING

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2011

Hosted by Hawkesbury River County Council

Venue: HRCC Office

Chair: Jonathan Sanders

### Attendance

Rebecca Coventry	Office of Hawkesbury Nepean
Anthony Schofield	Office of Hawkesbury Nepean
Craig Evans	Parramatta City Council
David Kuhle	Parramatta City Council
Bernadette Scott	Blue Mountains Council
David Whiteman	Blue Mountains Council
Janet Rannard	Penrith City Council
Angie Fricker	Hawkesbury Nepean CMA
Nicola Booth	Hawkesbury City Council
Keith Rossiter	Hawkesbury River County Council
Karen Jenkin	Hawkesbury River County Council
Chris Dewhurst	Hawkesbury River County Council
Mark Anderson	Blacktown City Council
Tim Withers	Muru Mittigar centre (guest)
Shaun Hooper	Muru Mittigar centre (guest)
Jonathan Sanders	NPWS - Cumberland North area
Ian Gill	NPWS - Cumberland North area
Jeremy Stacy	Sydney Water
Shelly Slater	Sydney Weeds Committee GIS/Project Officer
Rosanna Luca	Sydney Weeds Committee Acting Exec Officer

### Apologies

Maree Costigan	Holroyd Council
Mel Hall	NPWS (Metro North East region)
Samantha Gorny	Department of Defence
Leanne Cross	Australian Rail Track Corporation
Justine Clarke	Blacktown City Council
Robert Meyer	Hawkesbury Nepean CMA

### Roundtable Discussion

Before the formal meeting started, there was a Roundtable Discussion about each council's current approach to noxious weeds inspections on private properties, including the strengths and limitations of their programs and their organisational structures.

### Meeting Open

Jonathan Sanders opened the meeting.

### Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

### Introductions

Jonathan 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-committee is now on implementing the strategic actions and projects, and engaging more with the officers directly involved with the work on the ground.

Jonathan Sanders and Chris Dewhurst are the SWBM representatives on the Sydney Weeds Committee Board. The sub-committee's role is to inform the regional priorities back to the Board, and Jonathan and Chris are there to represent those interests. The Board looks at the whole picture of what is happening across Sydney to ensure co-ordination across the 4 regional sub-committees.

### **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, working strategically and any gaps.

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 ie. surveying is about "landscape vigilance".

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

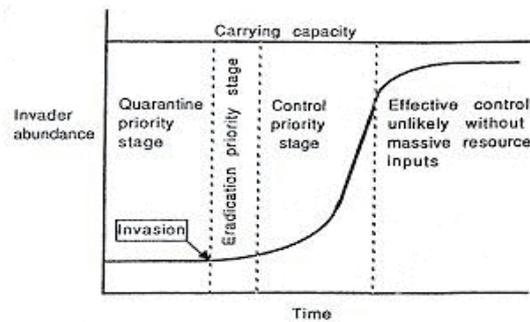
The information collected through this mapping activity is the start of an ongoing process to capture existing knowledge. Discussions will continue at the next sub-committee meeting about the information collected to date, identifying gaps and priorities areas and a strategic response where needed, at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

**ACTION:** Shelly to transfer the information manually collected to a GIS map.  
**ACTION:** Everyone who received WAP funding for inspections and survey locations, please send GPS locations to Shelly.

### **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."* ie. 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 following 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 SWBM region (within the last few years), that 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 SWBM 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.

SWBM Weed Alert Team: David Whiteman, David Kuhle and Jonathan Sanders.

ACTION: Rosanna to slightly modify the form (as suggested by sub-committee). Most current version to be placed on the website members page.

ACTION: **Everyone** – please send completed new incursion forms (for species found within last few years) to Shelly Slater.

ACTION: Rosanna to place in the website members page - contact details of new Weed Botanist at Royal Botanic Garden, Andrew Perkin.

### High Risk Weeds List

Rosanna provided a brief update on where the list is up to, and requested assistance for the next step. 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. The high risk weeds list needs to be finalized 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).

Weed Risk Assessment team, to assist Rosanna with finalising the list and assessment of remaining weeds: Rebecca Coventry, Janet Rannard, Karen Jenkin.

## **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 15<sup>th</sup> July 2011. Reminders will be sent leading up to this deadline. This is a strict deadline, to ensure all progress reports can be collated 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.

It was clarified that the annual membership fee is for membership of the SWBM sub-committee. Paid membership entitles a vote on the sub-committee and eligibility to apply for WAP funds, to be spent within the SWBM region. There are many associate organisations of the sub-committees (non-members) who are still welcome to attend the meetings and participate in collaborative projects.

### For Year 3

Once the reporting and procedures are all bedded down, The Board may consider applying for a larger amount of funds.

### **Training needs & skills gaps for officers**

Training and knowledge needs identified:

- GPS - Simple training about using one. Best equipment to use (which brands). Use of GPS cameras. GIS application.

• **ACTION: Jonathan to research preferred equipment and options. And also ask DPI if WAP funds can be used to purchase GPS equipment.**

- Weed officer refresher training and Q&A session – refresher on protocols, sharing experiences, good practice standards across Sydney. Consistencies across councils in interpretation of the Noxious Weeds Act.

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

### **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 and associate members.

**ACTION: Rosanna to email login instructions and password**

### **Sydney Weeds stall at ABC Gardening Expo**

Proposed Sydney Weeds stall at the Expo, which is on from 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> 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 SWBM representatives: Janet Rannard, Karen Jenkin, David Kuhle, Craig Evans, Jonathan Sanders. Rebecca Coventry can assist with stall set up.

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

### **Follow up from Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed by Chris Dewhurst. Seconded by Rebecca Coventry.

**ACTION:** Rosanna to place on website members page: Noxious Weeds Act review submission from Sydney Weeds Committee and Mich Michelmore's DRAFT notes, from workshop held with sub-committee members.

### **Matters Arising from the Minutes/Action List** (not discussed already)

- It was agreed that Local Control Orders and Class 4 plans for each LGA should be placed on the website of that specific council. Not on the Sydney Weeds website.
- *Lantana* and *Egeria densa* don't require a Class 4 plan, as their control only relates to the prevention of sale and distribution.

### **General Business**

Rebecca Coventry: The Hawkesbury Nepean Weed Management Strategy is due for a review.

**ACTION:** Angie Fricker to follow this up with Robert Meyer at the HNCMA.

Rebecca Coventry: requested support for a letter to be sent to a horse publication, encouraging planting of Willows and St Johns Wort.

**ACTION:** Rebecca Coventry and Jonathan Sanders to write a letter to the magazine editor.

David Whiteman: question about the Weed Risk Assessments done last year, and where they are up to?

**ACTION:** Rosanna to follow up with Mich Michelmore in DPI

Janet Rannard: question about the progress of treatment of Kudzu new incursions found in Penrith and Wollondilly LGAs. Rebecca Coventry provided an update.

**ACTION:** Rosanna to check if Kudzu is on the SWC website as a "New Weed Alert"

David Kuhle: question about lists of noxious weeds on the Sydney Weeds website. It was agreed by all that any lists for each council area should only be on the DPI website, as the official site, which is updated regularly. Sydney Weeds website should not duplicate. If any information is out of date on the DPI website, DPI needs to be notified ASAP.

Question asked about the licences for sharing GIS data held by the Sydney Metropolitan and Hawkesbury Nepean CMAs.

**ACTION:** Shelly to place application form and information on the website members page

Before wrapping up, Jonathan invited some feedback about how the meeting was run today. It was acknowledged that a huge amount of work has been done to set up the Sydney Weeds Committee as an organisation. Procedures, reports forms, website members page etc are all being put into place to streamline operations, funding applications/reporting and gain more support from State government in the long run. Good turn out to today's meeting. Run well and to time. Mapping exercise was invaluable in gaining knowledge and sharing information.

### **Next Meeting date & host**

Date Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011. Host: Penrith City Council. Contact: Janet Rannard.

Sydney West Blue Mountains sub-committee

Action list June 2011 meeting	Responsibility
Transfer the mapping activity information a GIS map. Distribute when ready.	Shelly
Supply GIS data about recent/current inspection and survey locations.	All organisations that received WAP funds for inspections/ surveys
Finalise the New Incursion Form and place on website members page	Rosanna
Send completed new incursion forms (for species found within last few years) to Shelly.	Everyone
Circulate website login password to all sub-committee representatives	Rosanna
Put onto website members page: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact details of new RBG Weed Botanist</li> <li>• Noxious Weeds Act review submission</li> <li>• Mich Michelmore's DRAFT workshop notes</li> <li>• Information about CMA data sharing licences (Shelly)</li> </ul>	Rosanna/Shelly
Research the preferred GIS equipment and options. Ask DPI if WAP funds can be used to purchase GPS equipment.	Jonathan
Confirm availability and roster timeslots for ABC Gardening Expo stall, 19-21 August 2011	Rosanna Janet Rannard Karen Jenkin David Kuhle Craig Evans Jonathan Sanders Rebecca Coventry
Follow up with Robert Meyer about review of Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Weeds Strategy	Angie Fricker
Write letter to horse magazine editor regarding promoting use of St Johns Wort and Willows	Rebecca Coventry, Jonathan Sanders
Follow up with Mich Michelmore in DPI about progress of Weed Risk Assessments done last year	Rosanna
Check if Kudzu is on Sydney Weeds website as a "New Weed Alert"	Rosanna