# Hunter Regional Weeds Committee Communique

## September 2017

The HRWC met on 13 September at Paterson for its first meeting after the approval of the Hunter Strategic Weed Management Plan. The focus of the committee is now on the implementation of the plan.

The regional weed calendar is being developed and being led by Mid Coast Council. This will be for the 2018 year and 20,000 copies will be produced. It will have focus weeds each month and there will be regional campaigns relevant for each of those weeds in the given month.

Easy to read one page management guides for 11 priority weeds will produced in the first run of communication products to assist landholders to manage weeds better. The guides will assist landholders to identify the weeds, work out what the impacts are for them and what the best management or treatment options are. The information will link to NSW WeedWise which is a great app to have on your phone and works even when you don’t have signal.

A program that increases awareness about weed hygiene, which is how landholders can prevent weeds from entering their land is in development. Short educational videos and useful resources such as checklists and standards for contractors are being developed to help reduce the risk of weed transfer. The products will be launched in October.

There has been a successful program to control a new incursion of Amazon Frogbit (*Limnobium laevigatum*), this is a NSW Priority Weed to be prevented from entering the State. It was found at Green Point in Wallis Lake and property inspections found it at two properties, where it has now been treated. Follow up inspections and treatments are planned. Unfortunately it is sometimes still sold for aquariums and ornamental ponds so increased awareness about the risk and stopping import and sale in NSW is a high priority.

The committee will soon have access to regional maps of the combined effort of all the control, compliance, extension and inspections completed by weed Local Control Authorities through DPI’s Biosecurity Information System. There are still some gaps that have to be addressed for how public and other land managers weed efforts are reported in the BIS system.

Regional weed budgets have had a boost for the 2017/18 year. Hunter LLS have allocated $200,000 for strategic projects to boost outcomes for weeds affecting agricultural production, communications standards for the RSWMP and targeted weed eradication projects. The regional Weed Action Program allocation from DPI has also increased to $1,148,964 which is up by $253,588 on last year’s amount. Hunter LLS also has $296,000 funding in 2017/18 across National Landcare Programme, Catchment Action NSW and Hunter Catchment Contributions to invest in weed outcomes. The RWC established a sub-committee to look at leveraging investment opportunities that are appropriate to weed management to maximize the benefits of the funding that we receive.

The Hunter Weeds Technical Team, which is the group of professional weed officers across the region reported back on operational issues.

* Educational road signs about where the State Alligator weed biosecurity zone will be discussed with Roads and Maritime. 20 sites have been identified- numbers of passing motorists will be significant.
* Three weeds for regional eradication are actively being eradicated or management plans being put in place for timely eradication - Gorse, Glush weed and Chinese Violet. This is really getting on with the job of implementing the RSWMP straight away.
* The technical team members are pushing the boundaries on research for the aerial spraying of African Olive and also for injecting plant hormones into mature weed trees that need to be retained but we want to prevent from flowering and reproducing.
* The team is increasing their capacity for community engagement through working with DPI on the State Weeds Communication and Engagement Strategy. This will be followed up with training in Sept.

The committee will meet again in December 2017 and looks forward to reporting increased activity in the fight against weeds.

Contact for further information

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