



## HAWKESBURY RIVER COUNTY COUNCIL

*The Local Control Authority for the management and control of declared noxious weeds in the local government areas of Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Penrith and The Hills Shire.*

### **Sydney Weeds Action Program 2014-15 Summary & Highlights**

The Sydney Region Weeds Action Project is a partnership between the NSW Government, local government and the Sydney Weeds Committees to reduce the impact of weeds across Sydney. The five year project targets the highest risk weeds, including

- preventing new weeds from establishing via inspections and monitoring,
- eliminating or preventing the spread of new weeds via monitoring and control,
- protecting significant natural assets (endangered ecological communities, wetlands and major waterways) through targeted control programs, and
- improving capacity through awareness and education targeting the weeds workforce and community.

2014-15 was the fifth and final year of the five year project, and saw more than \$2.5 million (\$1.18m from the NSW Government and \$1.4m from local governments and the National Parks and Wildlife Service) spent directly on weeds management activities across Sydney.

18 local councils, 2 National Parks & Wildlife Service Regions and 1 state government agency (Greater Sydney Local Land Services) are partners in the project, which is administered by Hawkesbury River County Council. The equivalent of 9 full time weed management staff were employed directly through WAP funding. During 2014-15 project partners have:

- Inspected 1662 km of high risk pathways (e.g. major roads, rail corridors and waterways) for high risk weeds, including the Nepean, Hacking and Hawkesbury Rivers, Old Hume Highway, Southern Highlands Railway Line, the East-West rail corridor, F3 Freeway, Pacific Highway, Great Western Highway, Princes Highway, Mona Vale Rd and the M2, M7, M4 and M5 motorways (up 13% on 2013-14)
- Inspected 10,696 private properties and 3,578 high risk sites such as nurseries, waste facilities, florists, landscaping suppliers, car parks, boat ramps and aquariums for high risk weeds (up 11% on 2013-14)
- Managed 3,574 ha of significant natural assets (endangered ecological communities, high conservation area) to prevent high risk weeds (53% increase over 2013-14)
- Controlled 184 km (no change) and 1,324 ha (15% increase) of high risk terrestrial weeds along high risk pathways (e.g. major roads, rail corridors and waterways) and perimeter of significant natural assets.
- Controlled high risk aquatic weeds along 466 km of waterways such as the Georges River and Hawkesbury-Nepean River and their tributaries (no change from 2013-14)
- Held displays at 70 community events across Sydney to help raise community awareness of high risk weeds (13% decrease since 2013-14)
- Facilitated training for more than 972 volunteers and staff across Sydney to identify and control high risk weeds (12% decrease from 2013-14), and
- Further developed more than 40 partnerships with other key land managers and groups responsible for weed control.

NEW SOUTH WALES

**WEEDS ACTION PROGRAM**

## Highlights in 2014-15 include:

### *Prevention*

- Of 10,696 private property inspections carried out throughout the region, 5,665 inspections were carried out by Blue Mountains City Council alone. All project partners reported a 70% or higher rate of voluntary compliance (i.e. landholders responded to inspection outcomes prior to s18a notice being issued). 17 section 18 notices were issued across the region.
- Strathfield Council initiated cut flower trader education at the Sydney Growers Markets - Australia's largest fresh cut flower market - and conducted 30 marketplace inspections.
- Strathfield Council developed eight strategic documents in relation to noxious weed management.
- Water lettuce was discovered for sale at Trash and Treasure markets in Liverpool LGA. Following inspections of the vendor's property at Campbelltown, 17.75kg were destroyed.
- Noxious terrestrial weeds (e.g. mexican feathergrass) identified for sale at nurseries in Camden and Warringah were immediately removed from sale.
- Stockpiles of Alligator Weed discovered at a development site in Camden. Developer complied with a notice to excavate affected areas and dispose of the material appropriately.

### *Control*

- 22 new incursions were discovered across the Sydney region.
- Detection, control and mapping of boneseed continues to be a priority throughout the region. Very few plants found within Sydney Harbour National Park. Sutherland, Campbelltown, Lane Cove and northern beaches councils reported good results.
- Release of crofton weed biological agent crofton rust in Strathfield LGA.
- Horsetail at Kimbriki Recycling Centre was eradicated. No further plants detected.
- Blue Mountains City Council reported greater than 99% control of a high priority infestation of salvinia and cabomba in Glenbrook Lagoon (9ha), which previously occupied close to 100% of the water column. Alligator weed controlled and contained to a small infestation in the upper portion of Lapstone Creek, below Glenbrook Lagoon.
- Successful containment of African Olive along Georges River corridor.
- Lane Cove Council successfully eradicated Cat's Claw Creeper from the Stringybark Creek catchment.
- Joint project between NPWS and Canterbury Council to control Corky Passionflower along Wolli Creek has resulted in significant reductions in coverage.
- Significant progress towards controlling kudzu along Boundary Creek, Penrith.
- Successful containment/reduction of serrated tussock, box elder, camphor laurel, alligator weed, salvinia and gleditsia along the Upper Nepean in Wollondilly, Camden and Campbelltown LGAs.

### *Education & capacity building*

- WAP funds helped fund 70 community / educational events and more than 972 people trained in various aspects of weed management.
- Significant mentoring efforts were made focusing on educating farmers in Camden LGA.
- In Sutherland Shire, significant mentoring of Australand, ANSTO, SITA, Caltex P/L and state government agencies occurred.
- Warringah Council issued 100 property owners and occupiers with information about the Regional High Risk Pathway Program and how they could make a difference in reducing the spread of high priority weeds along road corridors.
- More than 200 media articles promoting weed awareness and control efforts funded by the WAP program were produced.