

Increasing cooperative management of serrated tussock

The way forward for NSW and the ACT

Recommendations

The following recommendations were prepared and presented by Clare Hamilton, NSW/ACT Serrated Tussock Coordinator, to the Serrated Tussock Working Party for NSW & the ACT in October 2011.

They form the basis of the way forward for the Weed Action Project: *The Battle against Serrated Tussock 2010 – 2015*.

Increasing cooperative management of serrated tussock – the way forward for NSW and the ACT - Recommendations

Objective	Rationale	Change needed
Accurate and verifiable mapping to support ongoing management and monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure resources are invested in agreed priority areas at both a farm, regional and State level. • Monitor the effectiveness of on ground actions/programs and allocation of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources for mapping to the regional rather than State level. • Development of the capacity for regional mapping programs to be collated into one set of State-wide data. (based on current mapping programs)
Land purchasers are aware of their obligations with regards to noxious weed legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown legal requirements and commitment required on purchase of land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to conveyancing act • Ongoing communications
Align noxious weed management with natural resource (agricultural and environmental) management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NSW Invasive Species Plan</i> - linking State and Regional Weed Plans with Catchment Action Plans. • Weed management needs to be undertaken in a holistic manner. Focus on the invaded ecosystem rather than the invader. • Reduce the number of jurisdictions - less complex, easier coordination. • Strategic approach to increasing resources to weed management. • Build on existing extension expertise. • Greater emphasis on integrated land management. NRM and outcome focused – ecological and productivity • Current participation in weed programs; integrated weed management plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divest weed management to Catchment Management Authorities rather than in Local Government. • Establish a business model for weed management

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Resolve community/individual benefit with regard to funding and resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noxious weed management is complex and often the community benefit is greater than the individual benefit. • Where there is public investment should be able to prescribe treatment and land-use afterwards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on ‘fairness’ and implementation of public funding allocation. What and how?
State owned land to have same enforcement as private land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this a perception or reality? • NPWS acknowledge they are currently underfunded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine reality of the issue • Ensure/promote government responsibility with land management
Weed Officer training to focus more broadly on land management and extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective noxious weed management requires equally, a knowledge of pesticide use and farming systems/nrm • Weed Officers (greatest resource) are often under resourced with regards to extension techniques, landscape management and agricultural production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training to have a greater emphasis on extension and nrm/land management • Skilled weeds officers – farming systems/nrm background needed at the planning level
Plan for intractable lands (mother lode)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of intractable lands are beyond the capability of individual land managers • Grassland acquisitions in Victoria as offsets for urban development as precedent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to look for potential for offsets of intractable lands. • Need systems level thinking from eradication to management on low fertility, inaccessible land

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Shift focus from management plans to real on ground land management changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current management plans are inadequate as a tool to induce long term land management change • Management plans seldom take into account the long term aspirations for the farming enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plans need to reflect the management of the whole farm • Develop a different way of writing a management plan that works legally and also for the Weed Officer and land manager
Best practice review panel – regular review of research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New technologies may be slow to be adopted • Existing research outcomes are being lost • Changing focus and programs – no continuity of research or carry through of corporate knowledge • New trials being undertaken in the absence or ‘context’ of work that has happened before leads to conflict and not collaboration of a way forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular independent ‘expert’ panel to review existing and new technologies and research
Communications – keep issue continuously alive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complacency and lost motivation in land managers • Little support in the wider community for serrated tussock management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus communications on targeted messages relating to economic and environmental realities

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Effective regulatory system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No real information on the success of implementation of the Act • Perception that state owned land is given more leniency • Fines often result in little or no change in real on ground management • General public support for implementation/enforcement of weed laws is low as is the allocation of resources to public education/communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review effectiveness and consistency of current legislation • Trial compulsory training rather than fines • Undertake widespread awareness campaign of the impact of serrated tussock
Incentives – rewarding positive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics and short term financial decisions drive investment in noxious weeds at a farm level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to look at funding from a systems approach not single issue to attract resources
Continuing research and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research needed into: • winter active native grasses so we have a native competitor in non arable, poor fertility areas • soil microflora etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and encourage appropriate research projects