

KANGAROO ISLAND ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007

5.12 WEED MANAGEMENT

Management of weed species on Kangaroo Island Road Reserves is undertaken by numerous organisations and individuals. There is currently no requirement for Council to be aware of what is being undertaken on road reserves. This plan sets out to change this process.

The control of proclaimed plants, under the *Natural Resources Management Act*, on road reserves is the responsibility of the Kangaroo Island Natural Resource Management Board, the Board can request property owners control these weed species. The Kangaroo Island Natural Resource Management Board has an agreement with Council where landholders controlling proclaimed plants do not need to obtain permission from Council prior to undertaking the work. Landholders require permission from Council if controlling plants that are NOT proclaimed.

From the adoption of this plan organisations and individuals will be required to obtain permission from Council to undertake weed management on road reserves, other than for proclaimed plants. Weed management focus for road reserves will be the protection of Category A roads from weed invasion.

Council supports the strategy of the development of a weed buffer being established around Prospect Hill to prevent weed species moving from Dudley Peninsula to the western portion of Kangaroo Island.

Council machinery and Council contractors moving past Prospect Hill will undertake *Phytophthora* hygiene practices prior to moving through. This will also clean weed species from the equipment. Soil, rubble and water will also not be translocated past Prospect Hill. In some cases this is not possible, for example bitumen rubble, however it will be prevented in all possible cases.

Appendix 6 provides the application form for undertaking weed management.

Appendix 9 provides the Native Vegetation Council Fact sheet “Clearance of Native Vegetation Associated with the Control of Plant and Animal Pests”

Objective: *Manage weed management activities to ensure Council interests are maintained*

Actions:

- *Phytophthora* hygiene practices must be undertaken at all times
- Public liability insurance of \$10M is required or become a registered volunteer with Council
- All operators must be aware of and use appropriate traffic management techniques
- Council must be aware of the species targeted and the control method used. This also includes the assurance that best practice chemical mixing ratios according to the containers are used.
- The operator must ensure the impact on non-target species is minimal. Council has the power to stop works occurring if this continues
- Crash “grazing” may be an appropriate weed control method on Category C and D roads and will be supported by Council in some circumstances. Permits will be only issued for up to 1 week at a time (or longer if part of a wider plan). Appropriate signage will be supplied by the person undertaking the grazing.
- Council will ensure all Council and Council contractor machinery travelling past Prospect Hill undertakes *Phytophthora* washdown prior to travelling through
- Council, and Council contractors, will not transport soil, rubble or water past Prospect Hill.

Clearance of Native Vegetation associated with the Control of Plant and Animal Pests

INTRODUCTION

The *Animal and Plant Control (Agricultural Protection and Other Purposes) Act 1986* sets the framework for control of proclaimed animals and plants in South Australia and places an obligation on landholders to undertake pest control programs.

The *Native Vegetation Act 1991* similarly sets a framework for conservation of native vegetation such that, in general terms, the clearance of native vegetation requires the consent of a State committee, the Native Vegetation Council.

The methods used for proclaimed plant and animal control should always be in accordance with advice from the local Animal and Plant Control (APC) Authorised Officer and APC Board, in line with policies established by the Animal and Plant Control Commission. In general it should be possible to avoid damage to native vegetation and it should be noted that the minimisation of such damage is a requirement of the Animal and Plant Control Act (1986), Section 64.

However, in some situations a problem will not be controllable without at least some damage to native vegetation. In the past, such damage or clearance often required a consent under the *Native Vegetation Act*.

To provide a more streamlined process for pest control in areas of native vegetation, the regulations under the *Native Vegetation Act* have been amended to provide for clearance of native vegetation where this is necessary for pest control AND complies with guidelines issued by the Native Vegetation Council. These guidelines have been prepared for that purpose.

It must be noted that the implementation of these guidelines requires some knowledge of native vegetation, particularly if a non-targeted approach is to be adopted in the control of proclaimed animals and plants. Removal of native plants in ignorance of their status is not acceptable. If there is any doubt about the identity of plants in this situation, a second opinion should be obtained from someone familiar with native vegetation (eg local council Natural Resource Officer AN appropriate Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) Officer OR an officer from the Department of water Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC), Biodiversity Assessment Services Section or Native Vegetation Council Secretariat [see contact details below]).

GUIDELINES

1. **The clearance of native vegetation during programs for control of proclaimed animals and plants must be kept to the minimum needed for effective pest control (in accordance with advice from the local Animal and Plant Control Authorised Officer or APC Board) and must be in accordance with these guidelines.**

2. **Pruning of Native Vegetation**

The pruning of native vegetation, if essential to provide access for pest animal and plant control, is acceptable provided that it is kept to a minimum and does not affect the overall viability of the plant(s) involved.

3. **Spraying of Herbicides in Native Vegetation**

Spraying of proclaimed plants in native vegetation is acceptable provided that a careful and selective approach is used (eg spot-spraying) and damage to nearby native vegetation is avoided or minimised. The use of herbicides must be in strict accordance with APC advice and with instructions for use provided by the manufacturer.

Any broader spraying program in native vegetation (eg boom-spraying) requires the endorsement of the Biodiversity Assessment Section or Native Vegetation Council Secretariat, DWLBC, and may require the consent of the Native Vegetation Council through a clearance application.

4. **Removal of Entire Native Plants**

The removal of entire native plants (if considered essential to facilitate animal and plant control) must be discussed with and endorsed by the Biodiversity Assessment Services Section or Native Vegetation Council Secretariat, DWLBC.

This consultation can take one of two main forms:

- (a) **Case-by-case consultation**

Minor clearance of native species known to be common in a district may be resolved through verbal or electronic communication without the need for site assessment by DWLBC staff. For larger scale clearance, or for cases where the identity of the native plants is unclear, a site inspection will usually be undertaken.

NOTES: 1. *In this situation, either the landholder undertaking the work or the authorised Animal and Plant Control officer (the authorised officer) should initiate the consultation by contacting the Native Vegetation Council Secretariat.*

2. *Whether a proposed clearance is "minor" (and therefore not warranting a site inspection) will be determined through discussion between the DWLBC officer and the landholder / authorised officer. As a guide, the clearance of up to 10 kangaroo thorn (*Acacia paradoxa*) for rabbit control in the South East, or up to 10 nitre bush (*Nitraria billardierei*) for rabbit or boxthorn control in northern areas could be regarded as "minor".*
3. *Where minor clearance is agreed without a DWLBC inspection, it will be recorded by notation on the appropriate DWLBC file. Where an inspection is undertaken, the landholder / authorised officer is to be advised of DWLBC's endorsement in writing.*
4. *If, as a result of the above consultation, the Biodiversity Assessment Section or Native Vegetation Council Secretariat determines that a clearance proposal is of particular environmental significance or sensitivity, the proposal is to be referred as a clearance application to the Native Vegetation Council for decision. This may occur, for example, where a substantial area of native vegetation is involved, or where the clearance involves plant species of particular conservation significance.*

(b) Consultation based upon a broader planning approach

Broader planning arrangements may be developed between APC Boards / Authorised Officers and DWLBC.

For example, it may be agreed that certain methods will be applied within a Board district for control of pests often associated with particular native species - such as boxthorn or rabbits associated with nitre bush, or rabbits associated with banksia-heath vegetation. This would be in the form of a management plan initiated by the local board and prepared in consultation with the Native Vegetation Council Secretariat. Once endorsed by the Native Vegetation Council, the plan could be put into effect and the need for consultation with the Secretariat about each program would be avoided.

It is envisaged that plans of this type would normally be prepared on a Board basis. However, there may be issues and management approaches of State-wide relevance, in which a State-wide management plan could be prepared, presumably at the initiation of the Animal and Plant Control Commission.

5. The control of proclaimed animals and plants in native vegetation should also take the following factors into account:

- the removal of tree saplings or more mature trees is not normally necessary for pest control;
- very localised pest control issues might be manageable with hand-held equipment rather than heavier machinery which could have greater environmental impact;
- there is an increasing range of pest control equipment available, some of which has less environmental impact than the equipment used more traditionally;
- any control method involving soil disturbance has the potential to promote further establishment of proclaimed plants or other introduced plants which may disrupt the ecology of the native vegetation: Soil disturbance must be minimised and control works should be followed with site monitoring and selective eradication of any introduced plants which re-establish;
- fire has some potential for inclusion in pest control programs in native vegetation to improve access, reduce the bulk of proclaimed plants, and possibly to promote the regeneration of native species: however, the issues associated with fire can be complex and any such burning in native vegetation must be discussed with *DWLBC*.

6. Contact Details

The Native Vegetation Council Secretariat and Biodiversity Assessment Services Section, Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation can be contacted as follows:

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