

**DUNGOG SHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL WEEDS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF MEETING ON
26 February 2019**

Meeting Commenced at 3.00 pm at Council Chambers Dowling St Dungog

Cr John Connors- Chairperson

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Present: Eric Pasenow (DSC), Paul Minett (DSC), Cr John Connors, William Flannery, Bill Dowling, Ian Turnbull (LLS), Bob Doyle (arrived 3.20pm)

Apologies; Peter Lawrence, Rod Kater

2. PRESENTATION FROM IAN TURNBULL- REGIONAL WEEDS PLAN

Ian Turnbull gave a background to his role as Regional weeds Co-ordinator with Hunter Local Land Services and an overview of the Hunter Regional Weeds Action Plan.

He noted that the Noxious Weeds Act and some others had been replaced by the Biosecurity Act which has changed the way weeds are managed in NSW. It also established a regional coordination role for LLS.

Ian explained the new management regime by utilizing the PECA curve. This curve showed how weeds were categorised into the following areas:

Prevention – a small number of weeds that are not prevalent as yet and must be prevented from entering the region as a priority

Eradication – a category of weeds that exist in small numbers but that must be eradicated if found as a priority.

Controlled- weeds that are larger in number and need to be controlled to ensure no further spread.

Asset Protection – weeds that need to be managed on the basis of protecting assets only.

Ian explained that there were many weeds now on the Regional list that probably never appeared on the “prescribed” list before. These include weeds such as lantana and fireweed that appear on the asset protection list for the Hunter.

There was some discussion about land holders responsibilities relating to the “General Biosecurity Duty” concept.

Bill Dowling asked where the document could be accessed. Noted that it was on the LLS website - https://hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/806509/Hunter_RSWMP_FINAL.pdf

Bob Doyle asked how Dungog can be protected from the movement of weeds such as Coolatai from other areas and was advised that the Regional Plan is seeking a more cooperative approach across borders and amongst government agencies. The new Act also advocates a “tenure neutral” approach to weed management so there should be no impediment to the Council seeking other authorities to control weeds threatening Dungog.

Ian Turnbull also referred to an online action request system that is being developed regionally to hold authorities accountable for action requests relating to weed control on public land.

The Chair thanked Ian for his presentation.

3. REPORT ON WEED OFFICERS ACTIVITY BY ERIC PASENOW

Eric reported that since the beginning of 2019 he had carried out 45 property inspections and 25 reinspections.

Eric advised that due to the predominant drought conditions he didn't believe that currently weeds were growing excessively- this is evidence by the small amount of GPG evident.

He advised that GPG is continued to be sprayed along roadsides every second year and it appears as though roadsides are mainly GPG free. He advised that PSC are now also doing roadside spraying for GPG and Coolatai along the Buckets Way which has assisted.

Eric has carried out some Alligator Weed inspections by boat with PSC and has found 3 large floaters near Tucker Park in Paterson.

Bill Dowling asked if there has been any Groundsell bush found lately. Eric advised that one site was found near the railway crossing at Martins Creek with a few more sites adjacent to the railway line in that area.

Bill Dowling advised that he had found some Groundsell in some mulch that had come to the area from the North Coast.

4. Field Day

The Group was advised of an intention to organize a field day to provide information on "The control of Riparian zone weeds- Chemical and Non Chemical".

Eric Pasenow advised that he had been discussing the possibility of using a property in Munni as the owner has expressed an interest in hosting.

It was proposed that the field day be scheduled for Saturday 18th May 2019 between 10am-12pm (with a sausage sizzle concluding)

Potential speakers include:

Non Chemical treatment

Jeremy Bradley- paratrooper GPG fungus

Nikki Brown- Wildcraft

Chemical treatment

Phil Milling (Contractor engaged to treat former Hunter Water land)

Eric Pasenow- traditional chemical treatment demonstration

Weeds to be targeted include Green Cestrum, Cats Claw Creeper, GPG.

Action :Members were asked to think further on guest speakers and topics and provide feedback to Paul Minett

5. General Business

- Bill Dowling advised that further to his previous advice there had been more koala sightings at the Dungog Common but also that there did not appear to be a large food supply on the common. He advised that some of the traditional "koala food trees" like Slaty Red Gum had been found to be not favoured by Koalas. It was suggested that a list of preferred koala food trees be compiled but this wasn't explored further.

- Bill Dowling advised that an infestation of Native Narrawa Burr (*Solanum Cinereum*) had been identified at the Dungog Common. This was originally thought to be tropical Soda Apple. It has been treated.
- Bob Doyle suggested that at the next meeting a brainstorming session be held to determine the future direction of the Weeds Committee. There was agreement with this suggestion.

Action: A Brainstorming session be held at the next meeting of the committee to determine members thoughts on the future direction of the group.

TIME AND DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16 April 2019

Meeting closed at 4.45pm