



CHIEF WEEDS OFFICER'S REPORT

For the Period June 2023 – August 2023

Submitted to the Illawarra District Weeds Authority Meeting

Friday 15th September 2023

At Wollongong City Council

From 9.30am to 12.30pm

To Secretary:

1. Property Inspections / Spraying Program

Conditions have continued to deteriorate over the last three months with rainfall figures dropping away and dry conditions now prevailing. Despite the drier conditions good soil moisture levels have persisted from the wetter periods last year and earlier this year, ensuring winter weed growth was maintained.

Roadside and Reserve control programs have over the last three months been directed towards Groundsel bush, Bitou bush, Sticky leaf nightshade and Giant devils fig. Private property inspection programs have largely mirrored operational programs.

Groundsel Bush control programs on all council owned lands commenced in late May and were completed in late June with seedling regrowth now being the ongoing cause for concern with respect to this weed. Inspection programs for Groundsel bush on private lands commenced in June and were directed at known areas of infestation to ensure the regional eradication objective for this weed is achieved. Control of Bitou bush commenced in July with good control now beginning to be achieved in several areas across all three LGAs. The Bitou Bush program is expected to continue until at least the end of September. The drone spraying component of this program has been completed despite several interruptions to earlier attempts.

Giant Devils Fig (GDF) and Sticky nightshade were targeted for control within the Tongarra area where the inspection area has been expanded. This year's program was undertaken in July/August. No GDF plants at this stage have been found on council land, although scattered Sticky nightshade plants were found along some road verges coinciding with infested private properties. Sticky nightshade is an emerging regional priority weed identified in the recently updated Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023-2027.

Unfortunately, inspection and control program have not yet commenced on Pampas grass and Gorse, although Boneseed inspections scheduled to commence in early September should see some alignment of programs.

680 inspections have been undertaken over the last three months of which 99 parcels recorded one or more weeds present. 63 public reserves and council managed roads were also controlled for priority weeds. No Section 123 Individual Biosecurity Directions have been issued. No entries have been undertaken. Online monitoring of sales has been undertaken as time permits.

[Attachment 1](#) (Figure1) provides a breakdown of IDWA weed activity data for the period June 2023 to August 2023 as reported under BIS.

Inspection and treatment programs for spring growing weeds Boneseed, Mysore thorn, Coolatai grass ((Kiama only) and Cats Claw Creeper are expected to commence later in September and continue through to November.

The Parthenium weed incursion continues to require monthly inspections and control with only three (3) plants found over the last three months.

Chief Weeds Officer (CWO) - David Pomery

Month of June 2023

- Week 1 – General administration duties
 - Report writing/ Conference presentation.
 - Staff training- Weeds Big Day Out
 - Monitor online sales.
- Week 2 – Annual leave
- Week 3 – General administration duties
 - Update OH&S policies – SWMS
 - Biosecurity Policy
 - Monitor online sales.
- Week 4 – Property Inspections- Gorse- (Croom) - Shellharbour
 - Parthenium weed inspection & control.

Month of July 2023

- Week 1 – Annual leave
- Week 2 – Annual leave
- Week 3 – Drone spraying operations.
- Week 4 – Parthenium weed inspection & control.
 - Property inspections / resident complaints - Wollongong

Month of August 2023

- Week 1 – Property Inspections- Broughton Village- Kiama
- Week 2 – NSW Weeds Conference Dubbo
- Week 3 – Sydney Water audit inspections- STP – Shellharbour / Wollongong
- Week 4 – General administrative duties
 - SEWAP Final report
 - Update and amend local management plans.
 - Monitor online sales.

Other time spent on property inspection office time, report writing and general correspondence. Time was also spent supervising staff and contractors and organising work programs.

Biosecurity Inspector - Tony Martin

Month of June 2023

- Week 1 – Aquatic weed reinspection's – K/S/W
- Week 2 – High risk site/pathway office time.
- Week 3 – High risk site inspections- Wollongong
- Week 4 - Property inspections BB- (Rose Valley)- Kiama

Month of July 2023

- Week 1 – Property inspections BB- (Rose Valley)- Kiama
- Week 2 – Property inspections GDF + SN - (Tongarra/Tullimbar) – Shellharbour
- Week 3 - Drone spraying program
- Week 4 – Annual leave

Month of August 2023

Week 1 - Property inspections GDF + SN (Tongarra/Tullimbar) - Shellharbour

Week 2 – NSW Weeds Conference Dubbo

Week 3 – Property inspections- BB- Wollongong

Week 4 – Property inspections- GB- Wollongong

Week 5 – Property inspections- Boneseed -Kiama/Shellharbour

Biosecurity Operator – Matthew De Daveri

Month of June 2023

Week 1 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush - Kiama

Week 2 – Resident complaints- K/S/W

Week 3 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush - Kiama

Week 4 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Shellharbour

Month of July 2023

Week 1 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Shellharbour

Week 2 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Shellharbour

Week 3 - Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Nth Wollongong

Week 4 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Nth Wollongong
Staff training- Weeds Officer Induction training.

Month of August 2023

Week 1 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Nth Wollongong

Week 2 – NSW Weeds Conference Dubbo

Week 3 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Nth Wollongong

Week 4 – Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Nth Wollongong

Week 5 - Reserve spraying – Bitou bush- Nth Wollongong

Casual staff

Month of June 2023

Week 1 – VCL control- Perkins beach- Wollongong

Week 2 – VCL control- Perkins beach- Wollongong

Week 3 – VCL control- Perkins beach- Wollongong

Week 4 - VCL control- Perkins beach- Wollongong

Month of July 2023

Week 1 – Bitou bush control- Hill 60

Week 2 – Bitou bush control- Hill 60

Week 3 – Not available

Week 4 - Bitou bush control- Hill 60

Month of August 2023

Week 1 – Private works

Week 2 – Bitou bush control- Warrawong

Week 3 – Bitou bush control- Nth Wollongong

Week 4 – VCL control- Coomaditchie

Week 5- Bitou bush control- Nth Wollongong

Casual staff employed up to 2 days per week.

Notices to Control issued - refer to Attachment 2 (to be distributed at meeting) - "Private and Confidential"

2. NSW Weeds Conference – August 7th – 11th- Dubbo

[Attachment 3](#) provides a written summary of the NSW Weeds Conference held in Dubbo and attended by IDWA staff.

This matter is open for discussion.

3. SE Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023-2027

The DRAFT SERSWMP was officially published in early July. Unfortunately, Local Land Services have been directed not to promote the Plan due to political reasons. The SE region is however trying to organise a consistent region wide message. The final plan is a more streamlined document on that developed initially; focussing heavily on new and emerging weeds as opposed to the more common and widespread weeds that typically were the focus of past regional programs.

A copy of the Plan is available on the IDWA website: isjo.nsw.gov.au/program/llawarra-district-weedsauthority/ for members information or by visiting the LLS website: <https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/help-and-advice/pests,-weeds-and-diseases/weed-control/regional-strategic-weed-management-plans>

This matter is open for discussion.

4. NSW Weed Action Program Grant 2020- 2025

Weeds Action Program (WAP) funding applications for the period 2020/25 were submitted to NSW Department of Primary Industries for approval in early 2020. The IDWA formed part of a regional bid with the South East Local Land Services (SELLS) as the lead agency.

At this stage it is not known what grant funds will be received for the 2023/24 year, as no consultation has been forthcoming. Anecdotally it is expected to be similar to the 2022/23 allocation of \$133,190.00, allowing for a small CPI increase.

With council contributions of \$190,682.00, a total WAP of \$325,682.00 in Year 4 is expected.

This matter is open for discussion.

5. IDWA Biosecurity Weed Control Policy and Management Plan 2023-2027

The IDWA Biosecurity Weed Control Policy & Management Plan 2023-2027 has been reviewed and updated in line with the release of the SERSWMP 2023-2027. A copy of the Plan is attached for members information (Attachment 3) and will also be available on the IDWA website.

Recommendation: That the IDWA Biosecurity Weed Control Policy and Management Plan 2023-2027 be adopted and endorsed.

5. Budget Summary of Expenses Incurred and Accrued to 1 September 2023

	Budget 2023-2024	Actual to 1 Sept 2023	Draft Budget 2024-25
Income			
WAP Program			
Council contributions	125,000	-	129,500
State government Grant	135,000	-	138,000
Sub- Total	260,000	-	267,500
Other Programs			
<u>VCL Program</u>			
Council contributions	9,500	-	9,500
Grant	60,000	-	60,000
<u>Widespread Weed control program</u>			
Council contributions	16,000	-	16,000
<u>IDWA General administration</u>			
Council contribution	40,182	-	40,449
<u>NSW WAP New Incursion program</u>			
Council contributions			-
Grant	3,425	3,425	-
<u>Bald Hill Boneseed program</u>			
Grant	5,000	5,000	5,000
<u>LLS Roads and Reserves Program</u>			
Grant	58,390	58,390	-
Sub Total	192,497	66,815	130,949
Biosecurity inspection fees	-	-	-
Sundry income (interest)	5,000	-	5,000
Leaseback	9,000	1,158	9,000
Private Works	70,000	3,103	70,000
Sub Total	84,000	4,261	84,000
TOTAL	536,497	71,076	482,449

	Budget 2023-2024	Actual to 1 Sept 2023	Draft Budget 2024-25
Expenditure			
WAP Program			
Management of high risk sites	11,000	-	12,000
Management of high risk pathways	22,000	-	22,000
Property Inspections	146,000	19,980	148,000
State Priority weed inspections.	8,000	-	8,000
State Priority weed control	4,000	-	4,000
Inspection and control of Priority sites	22,000	10,320	22,000
Inspection and control of priority pathways	31,000	-	31,000
Community awareness and participation (staff publicity)	3,000	1,163	3,500
Skilled workforce (staff training)	5,000	8,506	7,500
SEWAP regional coordination.	6,000	-	7,000
Monitor Online sales	2,000	918	2,500
Sub- Total	260,000	39,969	267,500
Other Programs			
IDWA General Administration	40,182	1,217	40,449
Widespread Weed Control Program	16,000	3,772	16,000
VCL Program	69,500	-	69,500
NSW WAP New Incursion program	3,425	1,163	-
Bald Hill Boneseed program	5,000	-	5,000
LLS Roads and Reserves Program	58,390	-	-
SUB -Total	192,497	6,152	130,949
Private Works	40,000	2,143	41,000
Sub Total	40,000	2,143	41,000
TOTAL	492,497	48,264	439,449
Credit (Debit)	44,000	22,812	43,000

5b. Budget Summary of Expenses Incurred and Accrued to 30 June 2023

	Budget 2022-2023	Actual to 30 June 2023	Draft Budget 2023-24
Income			
WAP Program			
Council contributions	122,738	122,738	125,000
State government Grant	135,500	137,150	135,000
Sub- Total	258,238	259,888	260,000
Other Programs			
<u>VCL Program</u>			
Council contributions	10,400	10,400	9,500
Grant	58,465	58,465	60,000
<u>Widespread Weed control program</u>			
Council contributions	15,000	15,000	16,000
<u>IDWA General administration</u>			
Council contributions	29,251	29,251	40,182
<u>NSW WAP New Incursion Program</u>			
Council contributions			
Grant	2,500	2,500	-
	11,407	11,407	3,425
<u>Bald Hill Boneseed Program</u>			
Council Contributions			
Grant	4,000	4,000	5,000
<u>LLS Roads & Reserves Program</u>			
Grant	51,240	51,240	58,390
Sub Total	182,263	182,263	192,497
Biosecurity inspection fees	500	-	
Sundry income (interest)	5,000		5,000
Leaseback	9,000	8,000	9,000
Private Works	70,000	79,613	70,000
Sub Total	84,500	87,613	84,000
TOTAL	525,001	529,764	536,497

	Budget 2022-2023	Actual to 30 June 2023	Draft Budget 2023-24
Expenditure			
WAP Program			
Management of high risk sites	9,000	13,637	11,000
Management of high risk pathways	20,200	21,656	22,000
Property Inspections	146,000	139,297	146,000
State Priority weed inspections	6,300	6,746	8,000
State priority weed control	1,500	2,111	4,000
Inspection and control of Priority sites	21,851	21,730	22,000
Inspection and control of priority pathways	32,250	27,146	31,000
Community awareness and participation (staff publicity)	3,500	4,421	3,000
Skilled workforce (staff training)	10,947	9,154	5,000
SEWAP regional coordination	5,000	5,809	6,000
Monitor online sales	1,690	2,074	2,000
Alligator weed project.	-	1,650	-
Sub- Total	258,238	255,431	260,000
Other Programs			
IDWA General Administration	29,251	41,358	40,182
Widespread Weed Control Program	15,000	39,030	16,000
VCL Program	68,865	73,006	69,500
NSW WAP New Incursion Program	13,907	7,982	3,425
Bald Hill Boneseed program	4,000	4,000	5,000
LLS Roads & Reserves Program	51,240	-	58,390
SUB -Total	176,763	165,376	192,497
Private Works	36,750	40,399	40,000
Sub Total	36,750	40,399	40,000
TOTAL	469,441	461,206	492,497
Credit (Debit)	55,560	68,558	44,000

Attachment 1:

Figure 1.

