

# Roadside Weeds & Pests Program Control Plan

## Municipality Details

Council Name: Towong Shire Council

Key Contact Name: Kenneth Whitehead

Position: Forestry Officer

Contact Details:

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## Regional Context of Noxious Weed and Pest Animal Management

To assist Local Government Victoria in gaining an understanding of the regional perspective, briefly provide a summary of noxious weeds and pest animal management on council managed roadsides in your municipality.

*The Shire of Towong is located in the northeast of Victoria and covers approximately 6,500 square kilometres. The landform consists of fertile river flats and sparsely treed rolling hills rising to extensive mountainous tracts of forested public land. The area is predominantly rural and includes large production farms down to smaller hobby farm plus significant commercial pine plantations. There are low density settlements surrounding the rural townships of Mitta Mitta, Eskdale, Bethanga, Walwa and Cudgewa and urban settlements in the major centres of Tallangatta and Corryong.*

*Towong Shire Council is responsible for the management of a local road network of approximately 1,183km and is dedicated to managing weed infestations on Council managed land and committed to the early prevention and control of weed species newly identified in the area.*

*Through past State Government funding initiatives Towong Shire Council has monitored and since 2015 has treated approximately 4800 km of roadsides for Regionally Controlled and Regionally Prohibited weeds as well as established pest animals. Please refer to Table 1 for a list of current target species.*

*The current plan has been developed from the visual monitoring of the ongoing blackberry control program carried out along local roads since 2005/06, with further refinement following programmed mapping of roadside infestations and community feedback. Remapping of blackberry along all local roads in the Shire was completed in December 2019 and provides an assessment of the achievements of the program. This mapping will form the basis for the treatment of blackberries along local roads from 2020-2021. An analysis of the mapping done since 2006, demonstrates that there has been about 80% reduction in blackberry infestation on Towong Shire roadsides. The majority of the infestations now fall in the "scattered" class and no longer fall into the highest infestation category (linear / dense).*

## Community Consultation

Briefly describe how Council stays informed of community priorities for weed and rabbit management. Examples may include; relevant public meetings, feedback/comment via Council website, meetings with relevant groups, recording of correspondence.

It is expected that prior to drafting the plan, Council will have notified the community that a plan is to be

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prepared and views are invited on what the plan should address. Views from the community should be considered.

*The Towong Shire Council's Forestry Officer is an active Steering Group member for both the Upper Murray and Mitta to Murray Blackberry Action Groups. Both groups have a wide representation from land managers and local Landcare groups. The groups are very active in implementing ongoing programs for the treatment of blackberries on private land via formal land management agreements with land owners. These groups actively coordinate with both public and plantation land managers to achieve an across boundary approach to blackberry control. The Forestry Officer is in close contact with the plantation owners who play an active role in the management of blackberries along plantation boundaries. He also stays closely in touch with community concerns via attendance at Action Group meetings, phone calls, emails and correspondence/complaints directed from individuals to Council. The Council specifically encouraged community views about roadside weeds via direct correspondence with Landcare, press releases to local newspapers, dialogue with interested parties, concerns raised with Council staff, attendance at Landcare meetings and monitors feedback received.*

*To further enhance community consultation, the council invited people to comment on the draft Roadside Weed & Pest Plan that was placed on the Council's Website via a media release issued on the TBA*

## Stakeholder Consultation

List key stakeholders who have been consulted in the development of this plan.

- *Lyn Coulston, Chairperson Upper Murray Blackberry Action Group*
- *Jim de Hennin, Chairperson, Mitta to Murray Blackberry Action Group*
- *Towong Shire Plantation Subcommittee*
- *Terry Barnard, Leading Biosecurity Officer – North East, DEDJTR*
- *John Silins, Parks Victoria*
- *Arthur Scholz, DELWP*

## Relevant Local, Regional Policies and Strategies and submissions

List policies, strategies and submissions relevant to this plan.

### State

- *Invasive Plants and Animal Policy Framework 2010*
- *Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria 2009*
- *Victorian Blackberry Strategy 2014-19*
- *Victorian Landcare Program Strategic Plan 2012*
- *Victorian Landcare Program Review Action Plan 2016*

### Regional

- *NE Regional Weed Action Plan 2000-2004*
- *NE Regional Catchment Strategy 2013*
- *NE Waterway Strategy 2014*
- *North East Landcare Support Plan 2013-15*

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## Local

- *Mitta to Murray Blackberry Action Plan 2012 – 2015*
- *Towong Shire Roadside Management Plan 2012 – 2014*

## Submissions

*Any submissions received by Council relating to RPWs, RCWs, EPAs or Restricted Weeds.*

## Objectives of the Plan

Provide a general overview of Council's objectives, activities, outputs and expected outcomes.

*The Plan contributes to the Council's ongoing roadside weed control program and complements past investments made by council enabled through State Government initiative funding since 2005/06.*

*Although the priority species to control is blackberry, the council has adopted a holistic approach and where deemed necessary has taken action to treat other declared invasive plant species across the Shire, particularly where such work augments similar programs on adjoining lands.*

*Towong Shire Council's overall roadside weed management objective is the effective and proactive management of invasive species on Council managed roadsides across the Shire. Investment of funds will be aligned to:*

- 1. Treatment for the eradication of Regionally Prohibited Weed infestations.*
- 2. Treatment for the containment or reduction in area infestations of Regionally Controlled Weeds, and established pest animals particularly but not exclusively, blackberry and rabbits – aligned to the DEDJTR weed and rabbit compliance project areas.*
- 3. Regularly monitoring the success of the blackberry control program along local roads*
- 4. Supporting community group investment in weed and pest control projects.*
- 5. Contributing to the maintenance of previous investment in the control of Regionally Controlled and Regionally Prohibited Weeds and established pest animals.*
- 6. Protect identified assets such as significant roadside vegetation under threat from weed invasion and encourage reintroduction of native species on treated areas.*
- 7. Addressing other roadside declared noxious weed infestations of concern to the Shire's community, in particular Tree of Heaven, Hawthorn, St John's Wort, Broom, Gorse and Sweet Briar.*
- 8. Treatment for the containment of Restricted Weed infestations.*

## Term of the Plan

Outline the term for which the plan is to operate.

*The plan will run for a two year period from 1 July 2021 (date of commencement) to 30 June 2023*

## Funding

Outline how council plans to fund the implementation of the plan.

- *RWPP Allocation - TBA*
- *Council Contribution - TBA*
- *Other funding.*

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**Table 1: Target Species**

Common Name	Scientific Name	CaLP classification	PRIORITY RATING (1 highest – 4 lowest)	Reasons for Management
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	<i>Established Pest Animal</i>	1	- Response to information received from residents.
Blackberry	<i>Rubus fruticosus (agg.)</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	1	- Support and contribute to community led blackberry management projects across the shire. - Demonstrate responsible land management and protection of community assets. - To support DEDJTR CaLP Act compliance programs
Sweet Briar	<i>Rosa rubiginosa</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	4	- Treat in conjunction with Blackberry
St Johns Wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	4	- Good neighbour policy only, supporting successful control on adjacent privately managed land.
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	3	- Persistent woody weed. Treat in conjunction with blackberry where appropriate.
Wild Watsonia	<i>Watsonia meriana</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	4	- Treat in conjunction with blackberry where appropriate.
English Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	3	- Treat in conjunction with blackberry where appropriate.
Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	3	- Treat in conjunction with blackberry where appropriate.
Gorse	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	<i>Regionally Controlled Weed</i>	3	- Treat in conjunction with blackberry where appropriate.
Californian Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	<i>Regionally Prohibited Weed</i>	1	- Treat when present

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**Table 2: Control Measures and Target Roadsides (this table can be used as part of Council's yearly or acquittal report to LGV)**

Common Name*	Control Measures (to be based on accepted best practice management of the target species)	Location of where works will be done (location of proposed works should be specified, and a map where possible should accompany the plan)	Estimate of length of roadside to be treated annually over 3 years (Km = length of road along which both sides are treated. Where only one side is treated halve the figure)	Approximate Annual Timing of Treatment	Estimated Cost
<i>Rabbit</i>	- <i>Warren destruction and fumigation</i>	- <i>Random nominal locations identified to Council</i>		<i>Mar - May</i>	<i>Periodic nominal cost</i>
<i>Blackberry</i>	- <i>Spot spray application of a registered herbicide(s) in accordance with the product label</i> - <i>includes simultaneous treatment of co-located Sweet Briar, Wild Watsonia, Gorse, Broom and Hawthorn</i>	- <i>Throughout the Shire</i> - <i>All local roads</i>	<i>900km</i>	<i>Nov - March</i>	<i>\$29,815.00 per annum</i>
<i>St John's Wort</i>	- <i>Good neighbour treatment of St John's Wort on request (Council funded)</i>	- <i>Selected properties</i>	<i>1 km</i>	<i>Dec-Jan</i>	<i>\$2000 per annum (Council funds)</i>
<i>Tree of Heaven</i>	- <i>Spot spray or Cut &amp; Paste application of a registered herbicide(s) in accordance with the product label</i>	- <i>Throughout the Shire</i> - <i>All local roads</i>	<i>0.5 km</i>	<i>Nov - March</i>	<i>Periodic nominal cost</i>
<i>Californian Thistle</i>	- <i>Spot spray application of a registered herbicide(s) in accordance with the product label</i>	- <i>Wire Lane</i>	<i>0.5 km</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Periodic nominal cost</i>
	- <i>Observe weed hygiene practices in conduct of local roads maintenance programs</i>	- <i>Throughout the Shire</i> - <i>All local roads</i>		<i>July - June</i>	<i>Council capital works funds</i>
	- <i>Mapping of Roadside Weeds</i>	- <i>Throughout the Shire</i> - <i>All Local roads</i>		<i>Nov-March</i>	

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## Maps

Map 1 Proposed location of control works.

Map 2 Known infestations of Regionally Prohibited Weeds, Regionally Controlled Weeds and Established Pest Animals and Restricted Weeds.

## Statement of Responsibilities

Council will:

- Publish this approved plan (or approved variation to this plan if relevant) on its website within 28 days of approval and ensure copies are available for public inspection at Council's office/s.
- Coordinate the implementation of this plan on Council managed roadsides in accordance with the investment principles stated in this plan and the control measures specified in Table 2.
- Implement best practice weed hygiene principles and protocols.
- Maintain accurate records sufficient to provide evidence that the plan has been carried out and provide these to Local Government Victoria on request.
- Obtain approval from DEDJTR before substantially modifying or varying the plan.
- Carefully consider any proposals from DEDJTR to modify or vary the plan in response to changed circumstances.

Provide a completion report to Local Government Victoria within 30 days from expiry of this plan outlining the outcomes of the control measures undertaken.

## DEDJTR Endorsement

I declare that I am an authorised representative and that this plan has been reviewed and aligns with eligible activities.

**DEDJTR Regional Manager - Plants, Chemicals  
& Invasive Species**

Name:

Signature:

Date:

## Declaration

I declare that I am an authorised representative and the information given on this form is complete and correct

**Key Contact Name:** Kenneth Whitehead

Date:

Signature:

**Council CEO Name:** Juliana Phelps

Signature:

Date: