



ILLAWARRA DISTRICT (NOXIOUS) WEEDS AUTHORITY

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ANNUAL REPORT

2014 – 2015

Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority

Chairperson's Message

2015 marks the completion of the first five year Weeds Action Program (WAP). Commenced in 2010 the WAP replaced a range of noxious weed grant programs provided by the NSW Government to local councils. The NSW WAP targets funding directly at outcomes in the NSW Invasive Species Plan. The Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority (IDNWA) received \$531,678.00 in financial assistance from the State over this time supported by constituent contributions of \$645,680.00. An additional \$215,207.00 was received through other grant funding sources. All of these funds were put to good use by the Authority with 1695 initial private property inspections undertaken and 822 follow up inspections. 5,794km of roadsides were inspected and controlled for noxious weeds along with 1,456ha of public reserve land controlled. 542ha of Bitou bush was also aerially sprayed over this period. A total of 20 high risk weed incursions were also located.

Specifically over the last 12 months the IDNWA inspected and controlled noxious weeds along 1,400km of high risk roadways, along with 333ha of noxious weeds controlled in high priority public reserve lands. 425 private properties were inspected resulting in 13 new weed incursions being found for high risk weeds (Class 1 and 2).

A four (4) year program of increased operational works has been implemented during the year to utilise the Authority's unrestricted reserve funds. The purchase and outfitting of an additional spray vehicle, for use by IDNWA contracted staff, to undertake the current private works activity and some additional operational work has been completed. The Inspector/Operator's time currently spent on private works has now been freed up to undertake additional operational and inspectorial activities. \$82,568.00 of private works income has been generated a result of this initiative up from \$37,415.00 in 2013/14.

The Authority met on four occasions during 2014/15, with the year proving to be yet another busy time. The committee continued to be of great assistance in both policy and technical support and I would like to thank the members for their ongoing commitment to the successful operation of the Authority.

As we commence operations for the first year of WAP 2 (2015/20) some important changes are proposed at the State level in the coming year(s) that may have ramifications for the future operation of the Authority. The enactment of the NSW Biosecurity Act and implementation of the recommendations into the Review of Weed Management in NSW are both expected to be implemented over the coming 12 -18 months. Funding issues with respect to the delivery of WAP 2 are causing some initial concerns with the IDNWA budget proposed to be slashed by 35%.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to Chair the Authority and look forward to the next 12 months which from all indications promises to be a challenging and interesting period. I extend my thanks to all those who have been involved with the Authority over the past 12 months.

Councillor Jill Merrin
Chairperson

Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority

Weed Control Program Report 2014/15 Summary of Activities and Outcomes from 01 July 2014 – 30 June 2015

**A Final Report for the constituent member councils of the IDNWA
Wollongong City Council, Shellharbour City Council and Kiama
Municipal Council**

Report on IDNWA Activities 2014/2015

A Final Report prepared for the constituent member councils of the IDNWA on activities completed from July 2014 - June 2015

Name of Organisation	Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority
Address	PO Box 148 Kiama 2533

Administrative contact (name, position, fax, phone)	<i>Mr David Pomery Chief Weeds Officer Ph 02 4233 1129 Fax 02 4232 3665 email: dpomery@southerncouncils.nsw.gov.au</i>
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Technical contact (name, position, fax, phone)	<i>Mr David Pomery Chief Weeds Officer Ph 02 4233 1129 Fax 02 4232 3665 email: dpomery@southerncouncils.nsw.gov.au</i>
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Total Amount of funds received (Income)	Grant - \$112,090.00	For financial year/s	2014-2015
	Council - \$136,984.00		
	TOTAL- \$249,074.00		

Funds	TOTAL
Regional Coordination (staff administration)	\$57,149.00
Control/Inspection Cat A & B weeds	\$101,562.00
Control/Inspection Cat C & D weeds	\$65,070.00
WAP Priorities	\$26,479.00
TOTAL	\$250,260.00

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that all moneys paid have been expended or incurred by way of expenditure solely on noxious weed management activities as defined in the Noxious Weed Advisory Committee policy documents and conditions.

Signature of responsible officer of organisation	
Printed name	David Pomery
Position in Organisation	Chief Weeds Officer
Contact Telephone Number	02 4233 1129
Date	23rd November 2015

Report on Weed Control Coordination Assistance 2014/2015

Outcomes and results from July 2014-June 2015 A Final Report prepared for the constituent member councils of the IDNWA

Name Of Organisation	Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority
Address	PO Box 148 Kiama NSW 2533
Administrative contact (name, position, fax, phone)	David Pomery Chief Weeds Officer Ph: 42 331129 Fax: 42 323665
Technical contact (name, position, fax, phone)	David Pomery Chief Weeds Officer Ph: 42 331129 Fax: 42 323665

FINANCIAL REPORT

Activity	Expenditure
Private property inspections – Cat A & B	\$66,302.00
Private property inspections – Cat C & D	\$26,494.00
WAP Priorities	
Publicity	\$2,497.00
Training	\$6,034.00
NRM Integration	\$2,251.00
Alert Weeds	\$1,526.00
High Risk Pathways	\$14,171.00
Total	\$119,275.00*

* Includes on costs

I hereby certify that all moneys paid have been expended or incurred by way of expenditure solely on noxious weed management activities as defined in the Noxious Weed Advisory Committee policy documents and conditions.

Report on Weed Control Operational Assistance 2014/2015

Outcomes and results from July 2014-June 2015

A Final Report prepared for the constituent member councils of the IDNWA

Name Of Organisation	Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority
Address	PO Box 148 Kiama NSW 2533

Administrative contact (name, position, fax, phone)	David Pomery Chief Weeds Officer Ph: 42 331129 Fax: 42 323665
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Technical contact (name, position, fax, phone)	David Pomery Chief Weeds Officer Ph: 42 331129 Fax: 42 323665
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FINANCIAL REPORT

Actual Expenditure		
	Total \$	Total \$
Noxious Weeds	A & B Weeds	C & D Weeds
African Lovegrass	\$1,421.00	-
African Boxthorn	-	\$154.00
Aquatic Weeds (Alligator Weed, Salvinia, Water Hyacinth)	\$3,864.00	-
Bitou Bush	\$1,687.00	\$23,977.00
Boneseed	\$116.00	-
Blackberry	-	\$12,512.00
Chilean Needle Grass	\$1,317.00	-
Coolatai Grass	\$4,006.00	-
Gorse	\$314.00	-
Glory Lily	-	-
Groundsel Bush	\$546.00	-
Ornamental Lantana	-	-
Pink Lantana	-	\$1,148.00
Ludwigia	-	-
Mysore Thorn	\$3,822.00	-
Pampas Grass	-	\$665.00
Prickly Pear	-	\$274.00
Giant Parramatta Grass	\$14,104.00	-
Rhus Tree	-	-
Sea Spurge	\$170.00	-
Serrated Tussock	\$2,287.00	-
Spiny Burr Grass	\$111.00	-
St Johns Wort	\$1,495.00	-
Total	\$35,260.00	\$38,576.00

Total Expenditure	\$73,836.00*
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* Includes on costs

I hereby certify that all moneys paid have been expended or incurred by way of expenditure solely on noxious weed management activities as defined in the Noxious Weed Advisory Committee policy documents and conditions.

Administration Expenses Report Form

Administration Staff:

Salaries and Allowances:	\$20,486.00
Contribution to SCG Secretariat:	\$ 8,039.00
Contribution to Kiama Municipal Council:	\$ 6,806.00
Extra Clerical Assistance:	

Sub-Total **\$35,331.00**

Office Expenses:

Depot Rental and Maintenance:	\$ 2,644.00
Office Equipment Rental and Maintenance:	-
Advertising (not noxious weed publicity)	-
Printing and Stationery:	\$ 1,054.00
Postage:	\$ 193.00
Telephones:	\$ 3,453.00
Photocopying:	\$ -

Sub-Total **\$ 7,344.00**

Computer Expenses:

(e.g. maintenance, agreements)	\$ 1,159.00
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Sub-Total **\$ 1,159.00**

Members Expenses:

Chairman's Allowance	-
Members Meeting Fees:	-
Travelling Expenses – Councillors:	-
Delegates Expenses:	-
Refreshments:	\$ 961.00

Sub-Total **\$ 961.00**

Other Administration Expenses:

Audit Fees:	-
Legal Expenses:	-
Insurances:	\$12,729.00
(Professional Indemnity, Public Liability, Accident & Property not covered by on-costs of field staff or plant running costs)	
Sundry Expenses:	\$78.00

Sub-Total **\$12,807.00**

TOTAL: **\$57,602.00**

85% for Apportionment to Grant Program:	\$48,962.00
Vehicle running costs:	\$8,187.00

TOTAL **\$57,149.00**

Other Programs Report

Vacant Crown Land Program

Income:

Vacant Crown Lands Grant - \$4,000.00

Expenditure:

Contractors (ground boat based spraying): \$4,000.00

TOTAL **\$4,000.00**

Funding of \$4000 for Bitou Bush control on Bevan's Island, Lake Illawarra was approved by the Department of Primary Industries (Catchments and Lands) for Weed Control on Crown Land.

Three other sites - Perkin's Beach, Coomaditchie Lagoon and Bass Point were all unsuccessful.

Whilst appreciative of the success of Bevan's Island, only 25% of projects submitted were funded, down from 100% of projects funded last year. Although funding is not guaranteed beyond year 1 it is a little disappointing to have long term projects impacted by inconsistent funding.

The Bevan's Island program, primarily aimed at Bitou Bush, has been essential in ensuring a co-ordinated and strategic approach to Bitou Bush within the local area is maintained. This project has helped achieve the stated aims of National, State, Regional and local action plans by –

1. supporting landholders in a collective program to contain the spread of Bitou Bush.
2. ensuring funds are targeted to species management where it will deliver the greatest benefit (i.e. asset protection).
3. developing and implementing programs to reduce environmental degradation and the loss of biodiversity through weed invasion (i.e. NSW Threat Abatement Plan for Key Threatening Processes).
4. preventing the spread of Bitou Bush within the local area.
5. reducing the area and distribution of Bitou Bush within the local area.

As with any weed control program, however, on-going control over several years will still be required to control any regrowth or missed plants, and prevent previous time and expense being wasted.

Contain and Connect

Income:

Grant -	\$5,000.00
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Expenditure:

Chemicals:	\$1,194.00
Contractors (aerial spraying):	\$ 2,860.00
IDNWA staff:	\$1,215.00

TOTAL	<u>\$5,269.00</u>
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The IDNWA was a successful partner in a 2013 Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) Biodiversity protection project covering south east NSW. The project involves 10 major land managers whom are provided funds to manage WoNS and secondary weeds in designated primary control sites. The project aims to bring partner agencies together to ensure coordination of on ground works, sharing of information, expertise and maximisation of resources. The program consolidates and builds on all previous works whilst providing additional funds to support existing programs.

Over 4 years, to June 2017, the Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority (IDNWA) will implement works to reduce the impact of WoNS (Lantana and Bitou Bush) and other environmental weeds within four designated control sites in the Illawarra region - Seven Mile Beach Reserve, Bass Point Reserve, Perkins Beach/Hill 60 Reserve and Cringila Park. The IDNWA will liaise with project co-ordinators at Wollongong City Council, Shellharbour City Council and Kiama Municipal Council to strategically contribute to control efforts being implemented by each land manager at these sites.

Environmental Trust Boneseed Biodiversity Protection Program

Income:

Grant: \$13,707.00

Expenditure:

Chemicals: \$34.00
Property Inspections: \$3,935.00
Boneseed control: \$3,129.00
Vehicle running costs/administration: \$3,170.00

TOTAL \$10,268.00

The IDNWA was a successful partner in a Boneseed project titled "NSW Boneseed Eradication and Biodiversity Protection". The project aims to build on the efforts achieved under the recently completed Caring for Country Boneseed program by eradicating or else suppressing infestations, updating maps and restoring and monitoring affected ecological communities. The IDNWA in partnership with adjoining south coast councils and the greater south-eastern region submitted this application to the NSW Environmental Trust under the Trust's Environmental Restoration and Rehabilitation program in October 2013. The project had a starting date of 1st September 2014 and runs for two years. The application is being coordinated by the SCG. \$67,800 was requested for implementation over two years with the IDNWA requesting \$27,414.00 of this amount.

Private works

Income: \$82,568.00

Expenditure:

Labour: \$32,562.00

Contractors: \$2,500.00

Administration: \$ 8,640.00

Chemicals: \$ 8,695.00

VRC: \$ 6,711.00

TOTAL **\$59,108.00**

PROFIT: **\$23,460.00**

The IDNWA has a policy to promote the use of Authority plant for contract weed control for private and government landholders. This policy allows for continuous and efficient use of resources. When demand exceeds resources the IDNWA will employ sub-contractors for either the public or private works.

Aim:

To provide an efficient and effective private works capability.

Outcomes:

The IDNWA generated an annual gross income from commercial spraying operations in 2014/15 of \$82,568.00. Operating profit net of all expenses was \$23,460.00.

Unrestricted Reserves Proposal

The IDNWA has designed a 4 year capital expenditure program which utilises the unrestricted reserve funds the IDNWA has available. The 4 year program has two components, an expanded operational works program and a mapping component.

The operational proposal involves the purchase and outfitting of an additional spray vehicle, for use by IDNWA contracted staff, to undertake the current private works activity and some additional operational work. The Inspector/Operator's time currently spent on private works will then be freed up to undertake additional operational and inspectorial activities.

The second component of the unrestricted reserves funds is the utilisation of a suitable mapping program that will contribute to better data analysis and management outcomes. Details of suitable programs are yet to be finalised as the State Government is developing its *NSW Biosecurity Information System (BIS)*. Any mapping or metadata will be required to conform to *NSW BIS* policy (refer to Weed Recording, Mapping and Reporting Activities below).

Budget

Income

Total unrestricted cash assets as at 30 June 2013:	\$556,854
Restricted for legal and other expenses:	\$300,000-
Annual interest on remaining \$300K @ 3% = \$ 9,000 x 4:	\$ 36,000
Annual Private Works Income x 4:	\$120,000

Total Available Income **\$ 412,854**

Expenditure

Vehicle - Toyota 4.5lt diesel manual dual cab:	\$ 60,000
Quik spray remote spray unit:	\$ 15,000
Installation:	\$ 5,000

Total **\$ 80,000**

Plant Running costs x 4

Vehicle Replacement Reserve:	\$ 32,000
VRC Costs:	\$ 40,000
Labour:	\$ 60,000
Chemicals, PPE & materials:	\$ 20,000

Total **\$152,000**

Four year additional operational and inspectorial program

Labour:	\$100,000
Chemicals, PPE & materials:	\$ 40,000
Total	<u>\$140,000</u>

Mapping Programs - Weedmap Pro or Tracer

Software:	\$ 3,000
Tablets:	\$ 4,000
Total	<u>\$ 7,000</u>

Training:	\$ 1,200
Yearly maintenance:	\$ 1,500
Monthly access @ \$125 x12:	\$ 1,300
Annual Total	<u>\$ 4,000</u>

x 4 years **\$ 16,000**

- Contingencies \$4000 pa x 4 Total **\$ 16,000**

Total Capital Expenditure **\$ 87,000**

Total 4-year operational expenditure **\$324,000**

Total 4-Year expenditure **\$411,000**

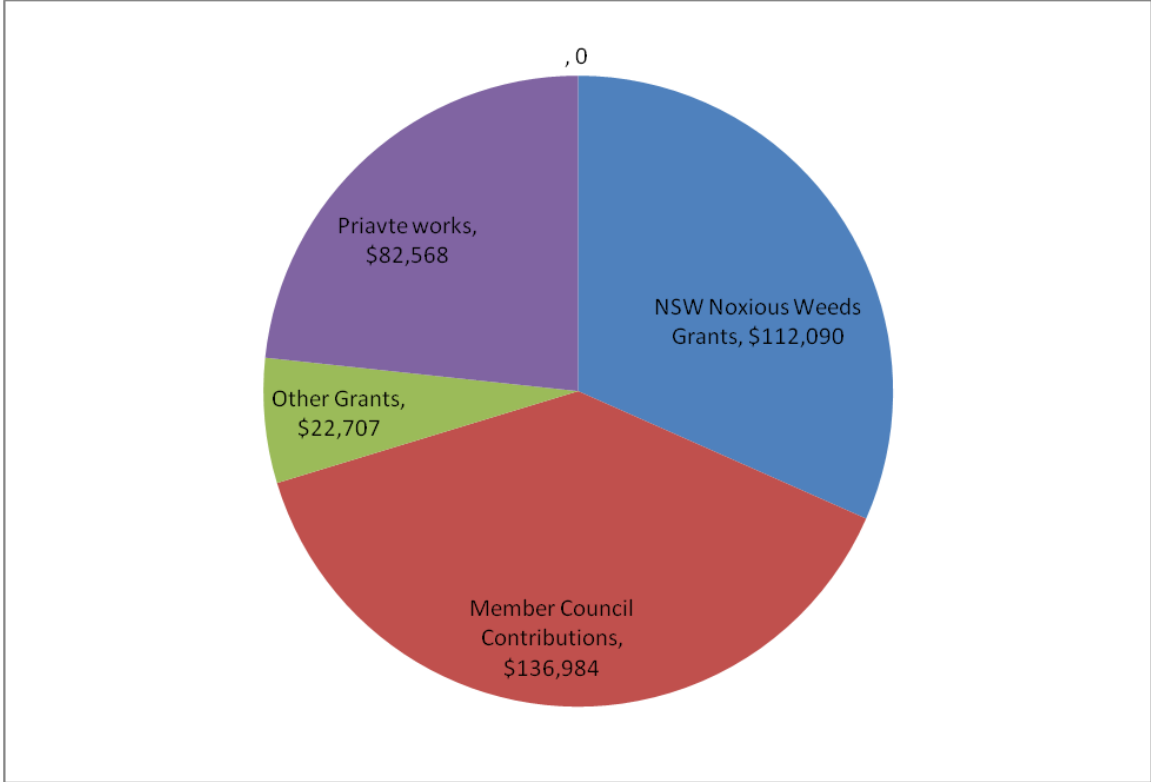
Expenditure to date:

Unrestricted Reserves Funds	Budget 14/15	Actual 14/15	Budget 15/16
Capital Expenditure	87,000	48,286	38,714
Operational expenditure	81,000	60,294	101,706
SUB TOTAL	168,000	108,580	
Credit (Debit)			140,420
TOTAL X 4 years	411,000	108,580	

IDNWA SUMMARY

- Southern Rivers Regional Weeds Strategy implemented with funding from the NSW Department of Primary Industries, constituent councils, South East Local Land Services and Department of Lands.
- Implemented Illawarra component of South Coast NSW Weeds Action Program under the NSW Invasive Species Plan.
- 327 inspections undertaken.
98 follow-up inspections.
- All nurseries and aquaria (29 outlets) inspected.
- 76ha of Bitou Bush aerially sprayed.
967km of roadsides inspected and treated for Cat A & B weeds.
446km of roadsides inspected and treated for Cat C & D weeds.
113ha of Cat B weeds treated in public reserves.
220ha of Cat C & D weeds treated in public reserves.
6 EECs managed and protected.
Thirteen (13) new incursions recorded for Class 1 and 2 weeds
- Two (2) displays were held over the last 12 months, three (3) media releases were issued and two (2) articles written for newsletters.
- Co-ordinated Illawarra component of WoNS Biodiversity weed project and Environmental Trust Boneseed Eradication Program. Implemented annual Crown Lands weed control program.
- Constituent council contributions of \$136,984.00 received and supported with NSW Noxious Weeds Grant funding of \$112,090.00 to implement inspectorial and operational programs.
- A four (4) year program of increased operational works has been implemented during the year to utilise the Authority's unrestricted reserve funds. The purchase and outfitting of an additional spray vehicle, for use by IDNWA contracted staff, to undertake the current private works activity and some additional operational work has been completed. The Inspector/Operator's time currently spent on private works has now been freed up to undertake additional operational and inspectorial activities.
- Secured funding of an additional \$22,707.00 for the region through other grant sources.
Contain and Connect - \$5,000.00
VCL grant - \$4,000.00
Environmental Trust - \$13,707.00
- Annual gross income of \$82,568.00 generated from private works / commercial spraying operations.

IDNWA Income 2014/15



Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority

**Weed Control Co-ordination and Extension Program Report 2014/15
01 July 2014 – 30 June 2015**

A Final Report prepared for the constituent member councils of the IDNWA

Executive Summary

The Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority (IDNWA) representing the local government areas of Wollongong City, Shellharbour City and Kiama Municipal Councils, has over the past 12 months continued to develop and implement an active noxious weed control program throughout the region, consolidating the work of previous years.

In maintaining a co-operative regional based approach to noxious weed control where funding is linked to outcomes, the IDNWA has addressed a number of key issues to ensure the Authority's Aims and Objectives are achieved. These issues may be summarised as follows:

- The Southern Rivers Regional Weeds Management Strategy was implemented with funding from the NSW Department of Primary Industries, constituent councils, South East Local Land Services (SELLS) and Department of Lands.
- A priority list of high risk weeds has been identified; regional inspection and control programs developed; high risk pathways targeted.
- Thirteen (13) new incursions recorded for Class 1 and 2 weeds
- Vacant Crown land funding projects on Bitou Bush and Federal and State Biodiversity funding for WoNS were implemented.
- Local Weed Control Programs for private landholders and government agencies have continued to be given high priority with 327 initial inspections and 98 follow-up inspections being undertaken over the past 12 months.
- Improved co-operation between stakeholders is being addressed through representation on State, regional and local weeds committees.
- Education and publicity activities have continued to be given priority through ongoing utilisation of the media and participation in community events (Refer [Attachment 1](#)). Two (2) displays, three (3) media releases and two (2) articles written for newsletters over the last 12 months.
- Operational programs have continued to be maintained, expanding as time and resources permit, thereby complementing the inspectorial program and allowing the Authority to continue to lead by example. 1,195km of rural roadsides and 218km of non rural roads were inspected and treated for one or more noxious weeds. 333ha of reserve land was controlled. Six (6) EECs have been managed and protected.
- A four (4) year program of increased operational works has been implemented during the year to utilise the Authority's unrestricted reserve funds. The purchase and outfitting of an additional spray vehicle, for use by IDNWA contracted staff, to undertake the current private works activity and some additional operational work has been completed. The Inspector/Operator's time currently spent on private works has now been freed up to undertake additional operational and inspectorial activities.

Control Authority Aims

Aim:

- To reduce the negative impact of noxious weeds on the community and environment of the Illawarra region by establishing control mechanisms to:
 - (I) prevent the establishment of new weeds,
 - (II) restrict the spread and reduce the area of existing weeds.

Objectives:

- To develop, implement and co-ordinate noxious weed control programs in close co-operation with landholders.
- To prevent the establishment of new high risk weed species, restrict the spread, and reduce the incidence of all established declared noxious weeds within the local area.
- To enhance community awareness and understanding of noxious weeds and their control.

Goals:

- The IDNWA aims to prevent all Class 1 noxious weeds from establishing on both private and public lands within the Wollongong Statistical District, to have all Class 2 noxious weeds eradicated, contain the spread and reduce the incidence of all Class 3 weeds and effectively manage declared Class 4 weeds.
- The IDNWA aims to provide a cost efficient noxious weeds control program, while taking appropriate steps to protect the environment.

Action	Who	Milestone
Media coverage, field days, talks, discussions, displays	LCA	Utilise print media, TV, radio on regular basis. Conduct field days to promote new/alternate technology. Promote and be involved in community events and discussions.
Inspection of lands	LCA	Property inspections to be undertaken on a regular basis.
Control undertaken on LCA lands	LCA	Carry out required control measures thereby leading by example.
Liaison with key stakeholders	LCA	Development of Regional Weed Strategies / LAPs Involvement in Regional/Local Committees.

Private Property Inspection Program

The IDNWA Private Property Inspection Program is aimed to complement the Authority's Operational Program. The core **aim** of the private property inspection program is to:

1. Prevent the establishment of designated high risk weed species whilst restricting the spread and reducing the incidence of established noxious weeds on private lands within the constituent council areas.

The IDNWA policy in relation to this aim is to achieve this in the closest co-operation with the landholder in the first instance, otherwise by use of the Authority's legal powers.

Objectives:

- To eradicate or otherwise prevent the spread and reduce the incidence of noxious weeds on all private lands.
- To ensure all land managers meet their obligations under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993.
- Raise the level of community awareness and understanding of noxious weeds and the need to control them.

The Authority's current method of implementing private property inspections is to target specific areas where the target weed is known to occur (or has the potential to occur) and where the potential cost to the landholder in terms of lost productivity, and potential damage to the environment, is greatest. In this regard the IDNWA undertakes strategic property inspections that prioritise high risk sites over properties that do not require as regular an inspection regime. Inspection regimes are risk-based and reduce the need for arbitrary inspections of properties in low risk areas.

Inspection programs focus surveillance and inspection activities at high-risk areas using tools such as pathway analysis to determine appropriate inspection intervals.

Water weeds are treated on a site by site basis, the aim being to work from the source in each case; to eradicate it from the upper reaches of catchments gradually working downstream until the entire catchment system is clean.

Specific areas have only been targeted at those times when the target weed has been susceptible to control methods. High risk pathways such as transport corridors, watercourses, stockyards and nursery/aquaria outlets have all been specifically targeted to prevent or otherwise slow the spread of high priority weeds. Target areas have been expanded as time and resources permit.

In undertaking its private property inspection program over the past 12 months the IDNWA has endeavoured to meet its stated aims and objectives through implementing a program of high level action plans in consultation with relevant stakeholders that complement other IDNWA activities.

Specifically, the INDWA undertook the following actions in relation to its Inspectorial program.

1. 327 initial inspections and 98 follow-up inspections were undertaken up to 30 June 2015.
2. A total of 285 initial inspections and 55 follow-up inspections for Category A & B weeds and 42 initial and 43 follow up inspections for Category C & D weeds were undertaken over the last 12 months.
3. All nursery and aquaria were inspected by 31 December 2014. A total of 29 outlets were inspected with no outlets found to be selling prohibited plants.
4. Thirteen (13) new incursions of Class 1 and 2 weeds were found on both private and public property over the last 12 months. Six (6) for Boneseed, four (4) for Cats Claw Creeper and three (3) for Groundsel Bush.
5. All private properties with previously recorded infestations of Class 1 and 2 weeds were targeted for inspection and control throughout all three member council areas. Properties with high risk aquatic weeds were inspected up to three times over the summer growing season. All emerging Class 3 weeds were inspected and control methods implemented throughout all three LGAs. Established Class 3 weeds and all Class 4 weeds were strategically inspected throughout the district in an effort to contain spread and reduce impact. Programmed surveys were undertaken throughout the urban areas of Kiama, Shellharbour and southern Wollongong.
6. Two (2) noxious weed displays were held – one each at the annual Kiama and Albion Park agricultural shows. Three (3) media releases were issued (Refer [attachment 1](#)).

Summary of Achievements

Inspections conducted:

Total number ground inspections: 425

Actual number properties inspected: 327

Specific Inspections for New Weeds

Aim:

To assist the community in preventing the establishment of high risk weed species in the Illawarra region.

Outcomes:

High risk pathways such as transport corridors, watercourses, stockyards and nursery/aquaria outlets have all been specifically targeted to prevent or otherwise slow the spread of high priority weeds.

As part of the IDNWA inspection and enforcement activities, inspections are undertaken of all nurseries, aquaria and related businesses. These inspections are generally undertaken annually over the Christmas/New Year period when sales of plants are likely to be maximised (and hence the opportunity to detect prohibited species). Some 29 enterprises were inspected over the last 12 months with no businesses found selling prohibited plants.

Two of the four (4) major water catchments were inspected along their length to ensure no new (aquatic) weed incursions.

75kms of coastline was also inspected covering the entire coastal strip in Kiama and Shellharbour along with the area from Bulli to Stanwell Tops and Port Kembla to Windang in the northern and southern parts of the Wollongong LGA respectively.

Transport corridors such as the South Coast rail line, M1 Princes Motorway and Gerringong Bypass were also inspected for noxious weeds along with over 1,400km of council controlled roadsides.

Residents and members of the community have also been encouraged to report new weed incursions through either 'phone-ins', providing details on a weed register list provided at all education/extension activities, or during routine noxious weed inspections carried out on private property by IDNWA staff.

Summary of Achievements

Specific Inspections Conducted

Number aquaria and pet shops:	12
Number nurseries:	13
Number other businesses:	4
Transport Corridors inspected:	3
Kms of Coastline inspected:	75
Water catchments inspected:	2
New weed incursions found:	13

Use of Enforcement Procedures for Noxious Weed Control

For the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, 327 properties were inspected, requiring 12 Section 18A Notices and 7 Section 18 Notices to be issued. These notices were issued only after it was apparent the relevant owner/occupier/s were making no attempt/or an insufficient effort to control the designated noxious weed/s as required.

No Section 20 Entries were undertaken over the last financial period 2014-15.

To date, the Constituent Councils have preferred to exercise their power under Section 20 of the Noxious Weeds Act 1993 and enter problem properties and undertake all necessary control works at that time, rather than implementing costly and time consuming court procedures against the landholder.

To ensure that owners and occupiers of land carry out their obligations to control noxious weeds as imposed under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993, the Constituent Councils through the IDNWA prefer to achieve this objective in the closest co-operation with the landholder, by adopting a conciliatory approach. Failure to reach reasonable consensus however, will (and has) resulted in council exercising its legal powers to ensure compliance. Prosecution will be undertaken at this time if deemed appropriate by the full committee of the IDNWA. Alternatively, a Section 20 Entry will be undertaken (as has been the case to date). Further, the IDNWA will also be implementing on-the-spot fines (SEINS) for small acreage properties that refuse to acknowledge their noxious weed responsibilities. This action will again be undertaken only if consensus cannot be reached with the landholder to undertake control works on the identified noxious weed(s).

Summary of Enforcement Actions

Serrated Tussock

Number of Section 18 Weed Control Notices: 1

Blackberry

Number of Section 18 Weed Control Notices: 3

Giant Parramatta Grass

Number of Section 18 Weed Control Notices: 3

Weed Recording, Mapping and Reporting Activities

Aim:

To compile accurate and concise information on the distribution of noxious weeds in the region over time, providing a benchmark for which performance can be measured and appropriate action undertaken.

Outcomes:

As part of the NSW Weeds Action Program (WAP), the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is currently developing a standardised mapping program for the state, known as the Biosecurity Information System (BIS). This program will improve reporting, issue visualisation and resource use. The BIS program includes the BIS Metadata Procedure which provides standards for data collection to ensure reports are consistent throughout.

Data submitted using this Procedure will be used to prepare consistent reports that measure real gains in weed management for all stakeholders. These reports will ensure each stakeholder has access to coordinated data and mapping information for weed management undertaken in their region and across the state.

The BIS is expected to be rolled out state-wide during the 2015/16 year. To support this process the IDNWA will be working closely with DPI and local council representatives to talk about the IT requirements and raise any questions surrounding the development and implementation of the program.

In the interim the IDNWA will continue to investigate other mapping options that are consistent with BIS reporting requirements and compatible to the constituent councils existing mapping software and property database systems. Weed Map Pro ® is one program being investigated for possible purchase.

Communication, Education, Extension and Publicity Activities

Aim:

To promote public awareness about noxious weeds and their control and encourage a sense of community responsibility about the problem.

Outcomes:

In keeping with the Authority's planned milestones and objectives, education and awareness campaigns have continued to be an important component of IDNWA noxious weed control activities throughout the year.

Whilst Weedbuster Week is no longer a National event the slogan was used as the focus for two (2) displays held during the year. Displays were held as part of the Agriculture Show circuit at Kiama and Albion Park.

The local print and electronic media were also utilised to publicise various control programs and disseminate information on all aspects of the Authority's weed control activities ([Attachment 1](#)). Three (3) media releases were issued during the course of the year along with two (2) articles written for community based newsletters.

The Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority website (www.idnwa.com.au) is also established and receiving feedback.

To enhance staff skills and performance levels, the Chief Weeds Officer and Noxious Weeds Inspector/Operator also attended various field days and seminars organised by other groups. These days proved beneficial in covering most aspects of the Authority's weed control functions.

Staffing

Staff

Chief Weeds Officer
David Pomery

Key Outputs:

116 properties inspected; 58 follow-up inspections; co-ordinated inspectorial, operational and private works programs; supervised staff and contractors; implemented Regional Weeds Strategy; preparation of all media releases; preparation and acquittal of all grant funding applications and returns data; update LAPs; review policy; assisted in review of regional MERI plan, Rapid Response plan and Communication Strategy; provided feedback on statutory reviews and NRM policies and strategies; liaise with landowners and managers.

Qualifications:

Bachelor of Arts (Hons)
Advanced Diploma C.A.L.M. (Weeds)
Diploma C.A.L.M. (Weeds)

Noxious Weeds Inspector/Operator
Tony Martin

Key Outputs:

211 properties inspected; 40 follow-up inspections; inspection of all Class 1 and 2 noxious weed infestations; inspection of all nursery and aquaria; assist in displays and information days; liaise with landowners and managers; undertake all roadside and reserve spraying\control programs; supervise casual staff.

Qualifications:

Diploma Horticulture
Diploma C.A.L.M. (Weeds)
Advanced Certificate in Urban Horticulture
Certificate II Bush Regeneration
Certificate II and IV Weed Control Operation and Practice

Staff Training

Aim:

To retain well motivated staff who are trained to effectively implement the service which the Authority aims to provide.

Outcomes:

Chief Weeds Officer

Training completed 2014/2015:

Select/Modify Traffic Control Plans

Apply Traffic Control Plans

Noxious Weed Inspector/Operator

Training completed 2014/2015:

Select/Modify Traffic Control Plans

Apply Traffic Control Plans

Co-operation

Aim:

To effectively and without prejudice, work with all stakeholders within the guidelines of the noxious weeds legislation.

Outcomes:

The IDNWA is responsible for noxious weed control within the constituent local government areas of Wollongong City, Shellharbour City and Kiama Municipal Council. To oversee the supervision of the Authority's noxious weed control program and ensure constituent councils' obligations and responsibilities are being met; the IDNWA has its own Noxious Weeds Committee. The Authority also has its own Technical Sub-committee that provides technical advice and support within each of the constituent council areas.

The IDNWA is also actively involved with the Southern Tablelands and South Coast Region Noxious Plants Committee and corresponds with other Regional committees from time to time as the need arises.

A particularly close working relationship is held with the South Coast Councils group to discuss joint funding applications and regional weed control programs.

A WoNS Taskforce Committee has also been established to oversee and assist in the implementation of Regional WoNs projects. The Taskforce comprises representatives of all South Coast councils, Department of Environment and Conservation, Local Land Services South East and the community. The role of the Taskforce is to monitor the ongoing implementation of the Regional Weeds Strategy and Management Plan; implement public awareness campaigns; provide for coordination of activities with respect to WoNs and provide a body through which to make funding submissions at the regional level. The IDNWA is currently acting as Secretary/Treasurer for this committee.

The IDNWA is also involved with the South East Local Land Services (SELLS) Natural Resource Managers forum which aims to capture natural resource management issues, develop projects and communicate the results of natural resource management programs currently being undertaken within the region. Weeds are one of the NRM issues pertinent to NRM managers associated with this forum.

IDNWA staff also hold positions on various working groups at State, regional and local levels providing valuable input and feedback on a range of weed related issues.

The IDNWA has a close working relationship with most government agencies within the area. A prime objective of the IDNWA Policy of Control is to ensure, so far as practical, that occupiers of land carry out their obligations to control noxious weeds. To this effect the IDNWA is in constant liaison and consultation with a number of government agencies with regard to noxious weed control programs on the land they occupy.

In the development of the SRCMA Regional Weeds Strategy a number of key government agencies were consulted and their input to the Strategy received. In ensuring the objectives of this Strategy are being met, ongoing consultation and co-operation with respective government agencies has been required. This level of cooperation has further been built on through the implementation of the NSW Weeds Action Program and in particular the focus on high risk pathways.

Good compliance has been achieved with most government agencies with regard to the Authority's weed control programs over the last 12 months. Most control works are implemented on a request only basis, although some government authorities (Transgrid, Sydney Water, NPWS) are undertaking annual programs on lands under their care and control. The IDNWA has regular contracts with the Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) and Sydney Water.

One area of ongoing concern however is land under the management of Sydney Trains. In late 2013 the IDNWA wrote to the Minister for Primary Industries advising of its concerns that Sydney Trains is not meeting its obligations under the Noxious Weeds Act, and that this is having a detrimental impact on effective weed management in adjoining areas. The IDNWA requested the Minister serve Notices on Sydney Trains.

Whilst Sydney Trains staff appear cooperative and willing to undertake the work requested, unfortunately most works are not undertaken in a timely manner and are more often than not adhoc and incomplete. With the South Coast rail line being a major transport (and weed) corridor within the region failure to undertake adequate control of identified noxious weeds can have a major impact on surrounding properties and subsequent weed spread.

After writing to the Minister, Sydney Trains have taken a more proactive approach, however further action may still be necessary to ensure momentum is continued. The IDNWA is continuing to work with Sydney Trains to iron out any issues that arise from time to time.

Operational Program

The IDNWA Operational Weed Control Program is primarily designed to complement the Inspectorial Program whilst ensuring the IDNWA continues to lead the way by setting the example.

Aim:

To eradicate or otherwise effectively manage noxious weeds on all council controlled lands.

Outcomes:

The main focus over the past 12 months on Council controlled lands has been –

1. To eradicate all Class 1 and 2 weeds.
2. To restrict the spread of all Class 3 weeds and effectively manage declared Class 4 weeds.
3. To expand this program as time and resources permit.
4. To target all new and emerging noxious weed infestations outside programmed areas.

This approach has involved the use of integrated techniques aimed at –

1. Preventing the establishment of any new weeds within the district whilst simultaneously slowing the spread and reducing the incidence of existing noxious weeds on council lands within the constituent council areas.
2. Ensuring the impact of noxious weeds on council lands as a threat to agriculture and the environment is minimised.

The Authority's current Operational Weed Control Program is co-ordinated in such a way as to target areas within the inspection program. Some roadside and reserve spraying was undertaken outside programmed or previously treated areas so as to target new and emerging noxious weed infestations and/or following special requests by Constituent Councils / resident complaints.

With reference to specific actions and milestones in achieving the stated Aims and Objectives of the IDNWA Operational Program the following actions were achieved for the 2014-15 year period.

1. All council lands infested with Class 1 and 2 weeds were inspected and treated at least 3 times* by 30 April 2015.
2. All council lands with infestations of Class 3 weeds were inspected and treated at least once over the last 12 months.
3. 1,413km of council controlled roadside and 333ha of public reserve land were inspected and treated by 30 June 2015.

4. At least six (6) EECs were protected and managed for Bitou Bush and Lantana.
5. 76ha of heavy or otherwise inaccessible Bitou Bush was controlled by aerial spraying as part of the winter 2015 control program.
6. High priority non declared weeds Sea Spurge, Glory Lily and Spiny Burr Grass were all targeted for control on known infested council land.
7. Specifically, all Bitou Bush and African Lovegrass on council controlled lands within the Kiama and Shellharbour local government areas were inspected and treated by 30 October 2014 and 30 November 2014 respectively. All Groundsel Bush, Giant Parramatta Grass, Gorse, Serrated Tussock, and Mysore Thorn infestations within Kiama, Shellharbour and Wollongong were inspected and treated by 30 June 2015. Known St John's Wort infestations were controlled by 30 November 2014, whilst any Salvinia, Alligator Weed and Water Hyacinth infestations on council lands were treated at least three times by 30 April 2015. Pampas Grass, Bitou Bush, and African Lovegrass were strategically targeted for control within the Wollongong LGA according to local action plan guidelines. Marginal infestations of Blackberry and Lantana were targeted throughout the three member council areas so as to contain spread and reduce the impact of this weed.

All reported new noxious weed incursions were inspected and/or treated within 5 days of being reported.

* Aquatic weeds only

Weed on worst list turns up

ELIZA WINKLER

A WEED on the nation's top hit list has been discovered in Dunmore.

Alligator Weed is an introduced species from South America and is considered the greatest threat to Australia's fresh water and river systems and regarded as one of the worst weeds in the world.

David Pomery from the Illawarra Noxious Weed Authority said he discovered it during routine inspections on a private property in Dunmore.

"We can't be sure as to how it got here but its means of spread is generally by machinery," he said.

"It's been found in Lake Illawarra in the past, near the lake's entrance and a patch was also recently found at Yallah.

"Alligator Weed is very aggressive by nature and completely suffocates anything in its path.

"Our main concern is that it could spread into the wetlands of Swamp Oak Forest and run into Minnamurra River."

The illegal weed is a class two notifiable noxious weed in all of Australia's states and territories. It primarily

CONTINUED PAGE 2

NEWS

Alligator weed a threat to swamp

FROM PAGE 1

grows on water but can also survive and grow on land.

Swamp Oak Forest is an endangered habitat and Mr Pomery said it could severely impact the swamp as well as natural waterways, wetlands, pastures and wildlife.

"It spreads mat-like over the surface of water impacting fish life by reducing sunlight to the water and changing the whole environment, as well as the birds that survive off the nutrients in the water," he said.

"It can also block culverts and drains creating flooding issues."

Mr Pomery had been conducting sprays in the affected areas.

"I think we can get it under control, but it's going to take a while," he said.

The Alligator Weed has a white paper daisy-like flower about the size of a finger nail and similar to that of a white clover flower.

It has a hollow stem, usually grows along the ground in a mat-like form and its leaves grow directly opposite one another.

Mr Pomery said the plant flourishes in summer and if you



David Pomery from the Illawarra Noxious Weed Authority examines the Alligator weed found at Dunmore. Picture: Eliza Winkler

spot Alligator Weed do not disturb it and report it to the weed authorities on 4233 1129 within three days.

Penalties of up to \$11,000 can apply for owners and occupiers who fail to control noxious weeds under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993.

For more information visit www.weeds.org.au