

# Roadside Weeds and Pests Program Control Plan 2023-2026

**1: Council Name:** Mildura Rural City Council

## 2: Contact Details:

**Name:** [REDACTED]

**Position:** [REDACTED]

**Telephone:** 03 5018 8100

**Email:** [mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au)

## 3: Regional context of noxious weed and pest animal management:

*Outline the regional perspective by briefly provide a summary of noxious weed and pest animal management on council managed roadsides in your municipality.*

Situated in north west Victoria, Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC) covers almost ten per cent of the State. The region's landscape includes Mallee vegetation, broadacre grain properties and extensive horticultural properties.

With over 5,100 kilometres of road, the Mildura municipality is within the boundaries of the Mallee Catchment Management Authority. Of this total, approximately 1,000 kilometres of road is classified as sealed, with the remaining kilometres of road classified as unsealed.

The Mildura municipality is a predominantly rural region, with substantial residential areas, particularly in the city of Mildura itself. Much of the rural land is used for agricultural and horticultural purposes, including wool, wheat, maize, citrus fruit and grapes. Tourism is also considered to be an important industry.

Invasive plant and animal species pose a serious threat to primary production and biodiversity in the region. Pest species can reduce farm productivity, disturb native species habitats and food sources and contribute to land degradation. There is a significant financial cost to farming communities in particular, through lost production and the cost of control measures. The cost to the environment is immeasurable.

Council recognises the need to control pest species across the land it owns and manages within the municipality. Council owned and managed land is defined as: parks, gardens, Council buildings and grounds, sporting grounds and designated roadsides.

This Control Plan provides a strategic framework for Council to work with landowners to mitigate the ongoing impacts of invasive species on municipal roadsides. The continuation of partnerships with community groups, landowners and stakeholders will ensure that desired outcomes are achieved.

#### **4: Community Consultation:**

*Briefly describe how council stays informed of community priorities for weed and rabbit management. Examples may include 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 prepared and views are invited on what the plan should address. Views from the community should be considered.*

Effective management of invasive pest species within the Mildura municipality relies on the involvement of the wider community. It is important that all stakeholders understand the significance of invasive species in the region, are aware of their responsibilities in managing them and have opportunities to participate as partners in all aspects of management. The goals of the Plan will be communicated to stakeholders, particularly those with responsibility for pest management.

Twice a year a Roadside Invasive Plants and Animals Working Group meets. This group comprises state government departments, statutory authorities and local community groups, such as the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Parks Victoria, VicRoads, VicTrack, Mallee Catchment Management Authority, Lower Murray Water, First People of the Millewa Mallee and local Landcare groups. The aim of this group is to share information about invasive species control and promote cooperative management.

Reports from the community can be submitted through the Council website and via phone reporting about weeds and rabbits are collated and acted upon where possible and appropriate, prioritising control according to this plan.

## 5: Stakeholder Consultation:

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

- Mildura Rural City Council
- Local Landcare groups
- Relevant community members
- Local landowners
- Local Aboriginal/ Indigenous Groups
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- VicRoads
- Mallee Catchment Management Authority
- VicTrack
- Vline
- Grampians Mallee Water
- Lower Murray Water
- Parks Victoria
- Victorian State Government

## 6: Relevant Policies, Strategies and Submissions:

List policies, strategies, and submissions relevant to this plan (State, regional, and local).

### Commonwealth

- Australian Weeds Strategy 2017-2027
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

### State

- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Advisory list of environmental weeds in Victoria 2022
- Catchment and Land Protection Act (CaLP) 1994

- Conservation, Forest and Lands Act 1987
- Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Land Act 1958
- Local Government Act 1989
- Local Government Act 2020
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Road Management Act 2004

#### Regional

- Mallee CMA Regional Catchment Strategy 2022-2028

#### Local

- Mildura Rural City Council Roadside Weeds and Pest Animal Plan 2019-2020
- Mildura Rural City Council Invasive Plants and Animals Plan 2020-2024
- Mildura Rural City Council Native Vegetation Plan 2020-2024
- Mildura Rural City Council Plan 2021-2025

## 7: Objectives of the Plan:

*Provide a general overview of council's objectives, activities, outputs and expected outcomes, ensuring that investment of RWPP funds will be aligned to:*

- *treating 'regionally prohibited weeds' on municipal rural roadsides;*
- *controlling and preventing the spread of 'regionally controlled weeds' and the control of rabbits on municipal rural roadsides that align with DJPR compliance project areas and/or support community-led weed and pest control activities;*
- *follow-up treatment works for projects funded in councils' previous roadside weeds and pests control plans;*
- *control activities for 'regionally controlled weeds' and rabbits on municipal rural roadsides that support other investment for integrated landscape protection projects or address community concerns;*
- *control activities for 'restricted weeds' on municipal rural roadsides where there has been demonstrated widespread community concern;*
- *undertaking planning, mapping, and community consultation for the control of 'regionally prohibited weeds', 'regionally controlled weeds' and 'restricted weeds';*
- *controlling and preventing the spread of high threat environmental weeds and weeds at the early stage of invasion where there is demonstrated widespread community or agency concern.*

The aim of the MRCC Roadside Weeds and Pests Program Plan is to provide a framework under which Council may approach and manage pest species in a strategic and sustainable manner. The central objective of the plan is to combat the environmental, economic, and social impacts of invasive species by preventing the spread and introduction of invasive plants and animals across the Municipality and the region as a whole.

Council hopes to meet this objective by providing support to build on community and landowner investment in weed and pest control projects.

Expected outcomes of the Plan are:

- To integrate and establish partnerships with community members and groups involved in invasive species management.
- To contain and reduce the impact of regionally controlled weed and established pest animal species.
- To achieve a reduction in the impact of existing pest species infestations.
- To prevent the introduction and establishment of new and emerging invasive species.
- To provide a basis on which to apply for funding for regional investment in pest species management.

Prevention principles:

- Minimise physical, hydrological, and chemical disturbance to soils and vegetation.
- Employ responsible management when slashing, mowing, roadside grading, soil removal and roadside stockpiling.
- Employ responsible vehicle and machinery hygiene practices when moving through infested land to clean areas.

#### Intervention principles:

- Detection and treatment of new infestations as early as possible. For weed species this would be before fruits and seed mature.
- Focus control measures in areas where there is a high potential for infestations to spread.
- Focus control measures on infestations that are small and can effectively be treated and eradicated.
- Large infestations to be managed with the short-term goal of preventing infestation spread and with the long-term goal of eventual eradication.

#### Best practice procedures:

- Undertake pest species control programs in partnership with Landcare groups, adjacent landholders, and other public land managers.
- Consult with DEECA staff for most appropriate control methods and best practice procedures to be implemented.
- Plan control programs to be implemented at optimal treatment time. For weed species, during non-flowering or non-seeding times. For pest animals this would be prior to breeding season.
- Consider revegetation programs to prevent infestation of other pest species.

#### Best practice guidelines:

- Treatment of small outbreaks and isolated patches on the periphery initially, then isolate the major infestation and work towards the centre.
- Areas of indigenous vegetation should be avoided unless this presents a conflict with Municipal Fire Plans.
- Removed pest plant species are to be disposed of to a disposal site designated by Council.
- Pest plants in seed should not be removed from an infested site - transport of pest plants with seeds capable of germination is an offence under the CaLP Act 1994. A permit must be granted from DEECA prior to any transport or disposal.

It is important to note that whilst every effort is made by Council to undertake effective pest management, budget constraints require external funding to be sourced for all projects. Where possible, Council does provide an 'in-kind' component by contributing staff labour and the use of Council vehicles and equipment.



## 8: Term of the Plan:

The plan will run for a maximum three-year period to 30 June 2026.

## 9: Full time equivalent (FTE) resourcing:

*Provide an estimate of the full time equivalent (FTE) number of staff and contractors who will be working on achieving control plan outcomes. Include both office and field-based staff and contractors.*

Council staff: 0.2 FTE

Contractors: 0.04 FTE

In addition, work is undertaken through local Landcare Groups via funded projects.

## 10: Target Species:

List the species that will be targeted during the duration of this control plan; eg.

*Serrated tussock*      *Nassella trichotoma*      Regionally Prohibited Weed      1      To support Agriculture Victoria compliance programs

Common Name	Scientific Name	CaLP Act Classification	Priority Rating	Reason for Management
(European) Rabbit	<i>Oryctoagus cuniculus</i>	Established pest animal	1 1 highest - 4 lowest	Severe economic and environmental consequences of insufficient control. Landcare communities highly active in control efforts.
African boxthorn	<i>Lycium ferocissimum</i>	Regionally controlled species	2	Established, abundant and invasive species. Presents significant detrimental effects to the environment.
Boneseed	<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera</i>	Regionally controlled species	2	Highly invasive species. Boneseed is established in the Red Cliffs area. Management will be targeted towards containment within infested localities.
Bridal creeper	<i>Asparagus asparagoides</i>	Regionally controlled species	2	Established, abundant and invasive species. Presents



significant detrimental effects to the environment.

Established, abundant and invasive species. Presents significant detrimental effects to the environment.

Established, abundant and invasive species. Presents significant detrimental effects to the environment.

Prickly pear species

*Opuntia monacantha, Opuntia robusta, Opuntia stricta*

Regionally controlled species

2

Silverleaf nightshade

*Solanum elaeagnifolium*

Regionally controlled species

2

## 11: Control Measures and Target Roadsides:

List the control measures and target roadsides; eg.

*Serrated tussock*      *Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in*      *Smith Road, Smithville*      *5km*      *Feb – Oct*

Common Name	Control Measures	Location of Proposed Works	Estimated Length of Roadside to be Treated Annually	Approximate Annual Timing of Treatment
	To be based on accepted best practice management of the target species	Location of proposed works should be specified, and a map where possible should accompany the plan	Km = length of road along which both sides are treated. Where only one side is treated halve the figure	
(European) Rabbit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ripping of burrows</li> <li>- Fumigation of re-opened burrows</li> <li>- Baiting control if ripping or fumigation is not feasible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership projects with Landcare Groups/Land Managers located within the Mildura Rural City Council municipality.</li> <li>• Mallee Landcare Group</li> <li>• Manangatang Landcare</li> <li>• Millewa Carwarp Landcare</li> <li>• Murrayville Landcare</li> <li>• Red Cliffs Landcare</li> <li>• Weeah Landcare</li> <li>• Yelta Landcare</li> </ul>	Estimated 350km (based on project approvals)	Primarily December - February.

<p>African boxthorn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label</li> <li>- Mechanical removal</li> <li>- Cut-stump herbicide application</li> </ul>	<p>Areas that support community programs.</p> <p>In areas that protect roadsides with a high conservation value/status.</p> <p>In response to ratepayer requests with clear impact of roadside infestation spreading to private land, budget permitting.</p>	<p>0.5 km</p>	<p>Primarily June - August. Other times of the year as required.</p>
<p>Boneseed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label</li> <li>- Cut-stump herbicide application</li> </ul>	<p>Areas that support community programs.</p> <p>In areas that protect roadsides with a high conservation value/status.</p> <p>In response to ratepayer requests with clear impact of roadside infestation spreading to private land, budget permitting.</p>	<p>0.5 km</p>	<p>Primarily June - October. Other times of the year as required.</p>
<p>Bridal creeper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label</li> </ul>	<p>Areas that support community programs.</p> <p>In areas that protect roadsides with a high conservation value/status.</p> <p>In response to ratepayer requests with clear impact of roadside infestation spreading to private land, budget permitting.</p>	<p>0.5 km</p>	<p>Primarily August - October. Other times of the year as required.</p>

Primarily June - August. Other times of the year as required.

0.5 km

Areas that support community programs.

In areas that protect roadsides with a high conservation value/status.

In response to ratepayer requests with clear impact of roadside infestation spreading to private land, budget permitting.

- Inject with herbicide
- Remove plant where possible

Prickly pear species

Silverleaf nightshade

- Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label

0.5 km

Areas that support community programs.

In areas that protect roadsides with a high conservation value/status.

In response to ratepayer requests with clear impact of roadside infestation spreading to private land, budget permitting.

Primarily August - March. Other times of the year as required.

## 12: Maps:

Works locations vary each year depending on Landcare Group priorities.

Maps showing where works are undertaken will be submitted each year as part of the funding acquittal.

## 13: Declarations:

*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). Any personal information contained in the control plan should be redacted prior to publishing. The signatures on the approved control plan may also be redacted prior to publishing.*
- *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.*
- *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 on request.*
- *Obtain approval from Agriculture Victoria before substantially modifying or varying the plan.*
- *Carefully consider any proposals from Agriculture Victoria to modify or vary the plan in response to changed circumstances.*

## Council Declaration

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

**Key Council Contact Name:** [REDACTED]

**Date:** 4 January 2024

**Signature:** [REDACTED]

**Council CEO Name:** [REDACTED]

**Date:** 15 January 2024

**Signature:** [REDACTED]



## **Agriculture Victoria Endorsement**

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

**Agriculture Victoria Regional Biosecurity Manager – Plants, Chemicals and Invasives**

**Name:**

[Redacted Name]

**Date:**

17/1/24

**Signature:**

[Redacted Signature]