



victorian gorse taskforce

progress report 2012/13



Victorian Gorse Taskforce

Victorian Gorse Taskforce Progress Report 2012/13

Acknowledgements: The VGT wishes to acknowledge the support received from the State Government of Victoria through the Department of Environment and Primary Industries that has assisted in producing this document.

Published and Authorised by: The Victorian Gorse Taskforce

Designed by: Small Dog Design
101-107 Albert Street, Ballarat Vic 3350
ph 03 5333 7777

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate. The Victorian Gorse Taskforce does not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence that may arise from relying on any information contained within.

Enquiries: VGT Executive Officer, Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 402-406 Mair Street, Ballarat Vic 3350

www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au



Contents

Chairperson's Report	4
Background	6
VGT Supported On-Ground Gorse Control Projects 2012/13	8
• Facilitated 'Action Group' Projects	8
• Small Grants Program	16
Income and Expenses	20
Present Distribution of Gorse	20
Gorse Control Project Target Areas 2012/13	21
Appendix 1 – VGT members 2012/13	22

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



On behalf of the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) I am pleased to present the 2012/13 progress report.

As the life of the current Victorian Gorse Control Strategy comes to an end all members of the taskforce can be proud of the goals achieved under this strategy during the period 2008 to 2013. The VGT committee has continued to focus upon a community-led focus to the Gorse problem within Victoria. We have successfully coordinated the establishment of both large and small community based Gorse control projects that have put the spotlight on the importance of community ownership and partnerships with all land managers.

Projects have continued to be geographically spread across Victoria with a deliberate focus in those areas where there is community will and commitment to do something about the problem. With many taskforce committee members from the Ballarat area, it was pleasing

to achieve the establishment late in 2012/13 of two new large and ambitious projects around Ballarat. These centre on the communities of Snake Valley and Napoleons/Garibaldi and follow a proven formula implemented for community led projects. They're allowing for local project input via a steering committee, creating project ownership within the local community including private and public land managers and have the services of a paid project officer to negotiate control work with landholders. I look forward to seeing on ground results from these projects as we move into the warmer weather. This type of project becomes a significant investment for the taskforce and supports communities to take action and manage gorse in the longer term.

The taskforce has supported a total of 13 projects during 2012/13 and our investment into these projects totals \$153,150. During 2012/13 a further refinement of our project establishment took place and our projects are



now divided into two categories – small grants (\$5,000 investment or less) and the larger facilitated action group projects. You can read about these projects in the body of this report.

The Victorian State Government has continued its support of the taskforce, acknowledging the value for money received and the notion of community led action. During 2012/13 the taskforce was fortunate to be able to negotiate funding to the tune of \$230,000. The majority of this has been sent to new projects or is earmarked for establishing new Community Action Group projects. The State Government funding received also allows us to contribute to the salary of our Executive Officer who continues to be employed by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI). We continue to have an excellent working relationship with the DEPI.

I am very pleased to be able to continue to support community action through the investments of the taskforce. We are building a great network of project officers who are promoting the long term nature of successful gorse control by asking land managers to sign up to long term voluntary agreements, which then in a small number of cases can eventually can be backed by DEPI compliance. We continue to form and refine our very beneficial partnerships with both private and public land managers, particularly with local Councils. It is pleasing to see many Councils become active in completing roadside gorse control within project areas, the

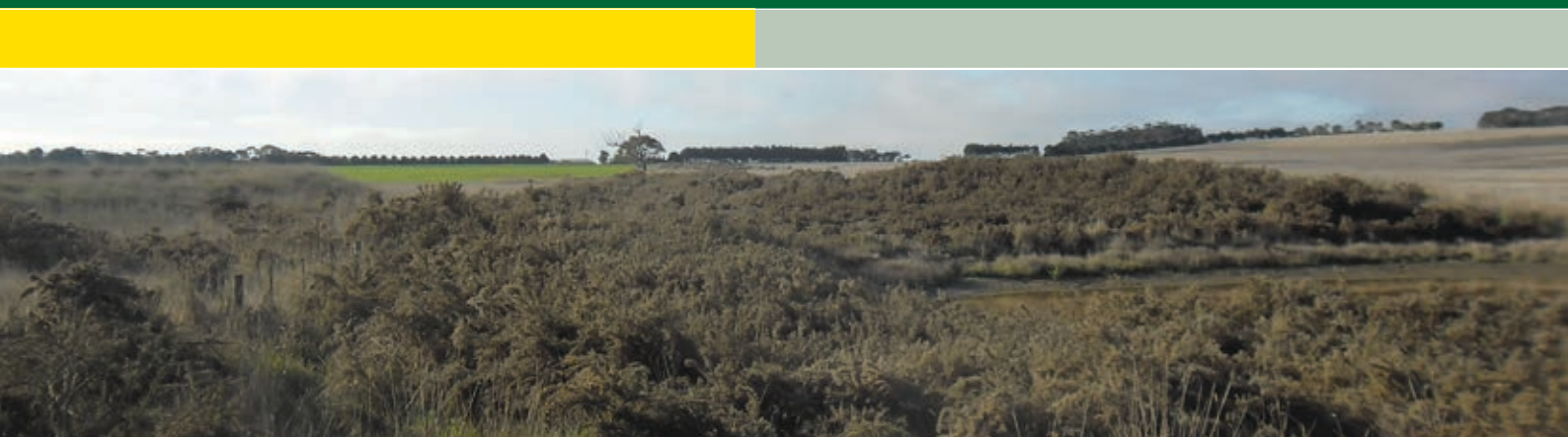
confusion around who was responsible for roadside control seems to have been remedied during 2012/13.

The many people that volunteer their time on the taskforce committee and project steering groups are to be commended and I thank them all for their support during the time that I have been Chair. These committed people make the taskforce and the associated on ground projects a success and all put in immeasurable time promoting the Gorse control message.

I would like to finish by thanking all people that have been involved and continue to be involved in project implementation. This means landholders, committee people, volunteers, public land managers and those providing coordination and facilitation. I trust that you will continue your great work and the taskforce shall do its best continue to provide strategic and financial support wherever we can.

Peter Everist
VGT Chair

BACKGROUND



The primary role of the VGT is to oversee the implementation of the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy.

The ten principal Goals and Key Directions of the strategy are as follows:

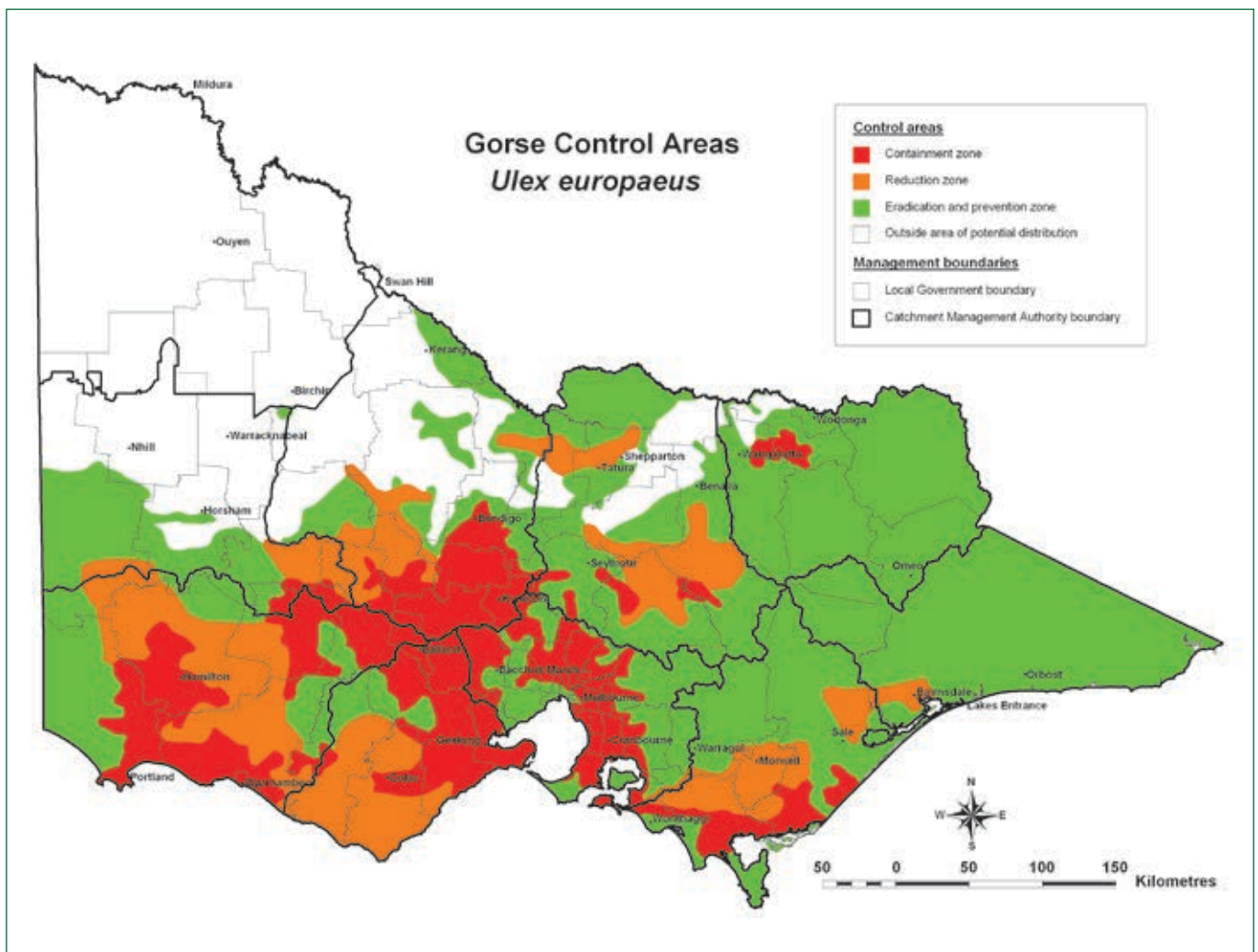
- 1 The Victorian Gorse Control Strategy is coordinated at a State level**
The Victorian Gorse Control Strategy (VGCS) is implemented in liaison with the National Gorse Coordinator and National Gorse Task Force, and programs are coordinated with other natural resource management (NRM) programs across Victoria, particularly with Regional Weed Plans.
- 2 Achieve an accurate knowledge of the extent and threat of Gorse in Victoria**
Knowledge of the extent of Gorse distribution including 'clean' areas provides the basis for effective planning and delivery of control programs.
- 3 Promote Best Practice Management for Gorse control in Victoria**
Gorse control and site rehabilitation is effective and efficient, using Best Practice Management methods.
- 4 Prevent the spread of Gorse into new areas of the state**
An emphasis on programs in the areas of the state that are at risk from invasion by Gorse, where the focus will be on prevention of spread activities, partnership development, community capacity building and compliance.
- 5 Achieve a reduction in the core infestations of Gorse across Victoria**
Ongoing programs aimed at protecting key community assets, prioritised through the Regional Weed Plans, within core infestations.
- 6 Reduce infestations and the spread of Gorse in and along pathways**
A focus on the management of linear corridors, which will be the major priority for facilitators working with the community.
- 7 Achieve a reduction of Gorse infestations within townships**
Township areas will be a high priority for control programs that protect public assets. These projects will advocate to the community that Gorse is an invasive plant that landholders are legally obliged to manage.
- 8 Increase the community's capacity to be actively engaged in long-term Gorse control**
Communities are empowered to act and are committed to long-term control of Gorse, and are supported to do so.
- 9 Ensure compliance with statutory obligations to control Gorse**
Communities are aware of statutory responsibilities and the VGT will work with partners to ensure that these are enforced.
- 10 Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of the VGCS**
The implementation of the VGCS is monitored, and stakeholders and the community are informed of progress.



A key strategic direction for the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy is to divide the state of Victoria into three focus zones that consider the principles of invasive plant control and the mapping of present and predicted Gorse occurrence.

These zones are:

- 1 Containment Zone** – the core infestations of Gorse where the plant is widespread and abundant.
- 2 Reduction Zone** – areas with substantial, scattered but not yet widespread and abundant populations.
- 3 Eradication and Prevention Zone** – the part of Victoria where Gorse exists as isolated infestations or is predicted to occur.



VGT SUPPORTED ON-GROUND GORSE CONTROL PROJECTS 2012/13



The taskforce has supported the implementation of these projects to help communities build successful control programs in their local areas. The aim for these projects is to increase landholder awareness and ownership of the problem so that long term control can be achieved.

The projects that the taskforce invests in are now divided into two categories – small grants (\$5,000 investment or less) and the larger facilitated action group projects. A description of these projects follows this introduction.

The taskforce actively promotes the implementation of a Community Led Approach to the management of this widespread pest. This is where a collective of concerned community members have come together to take action towards achieving successful control. Local communities have formed small groups to guide the planning and implementation of these projects. The Victorian Gorse Taskforce has supported these projects by providing resources for their implementation.

Facilitated 'Action Group' Projects

This approach is about placing a greater emphasis on voluntary compliance for Gorse management rather than regulatory enforcement. Through these projects Project Officers are encouraging landholders to sign up to long term voluntary management agreements recognising that successful Gorse control involves a commitment over many years. Where this Community Led Approach fails to convince landholders of their obligations to control Gorse, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) compliance is then recommended so that the sustained action of the majority of landholders is supported.

The projects that were supported by the VGT in 2012/13 helped to implement the goals and strategies found within the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy 2008-2013. These projects also worked to prevent Gorse from impacting upon important environmental and agricultural assets.



Barrabool Hills Gorse Control Program

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$23,000	\$35,000	52 / 50ha	Barrabool Hills Landcare Group, Surf Coast Shire, Private Landholders

Nearest towns: Ceres, Barrabool

The taskforce has supported this project since 2011/12. The project engaged landholders in the Wauron Ponds catchment and middle reaches of the Mid Barwon area located in the Barrabool Hills. The control program has provided an awareness and education program combined with financial incentives to landholders within the target area. The project officer has been negotiating 5 year Voluntary Management Agreements for the control of Gorse with landholders. Financial incentives to control the pest are available to landholders in the first year only. The project was facilitated and delivered through the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group with support from the Geelong Landcare Network.

Contractors were engaged to chemically treat Gorse infestations with landholders signing 5 year voluntary management agreements to ensure infestations are managed using best practice for follow up work, to prevent re-establishment long term. Landholders/managers were also engaged to discuss other related issues such as other priority weed control (e.g. serrated tussock), rabbit control and harbour destruction, indigenous native revegetation and perennial pasture establishment.

This project combined funding from the taskforce and the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority to engage landholders in the Barrabool Hills area to control Gorse infestations and provide support to prevent re-establishment.

Properties were identified via expressions of interest through a newsletter, contacting properties with known infestations and properties identified through adjoining landholders.

Landholders were encouraged to take up an offer of spray contracting which was part managed by the project officer. There were many smaller lifestyle/hobby farming properties plus several large farms with significant areas of gorse, predominantly along waterways.

This project has had a significant impact on the amount of gorse in this region and the capacity of landholders to maintain its control, landholders will require follow up contact to ensure annual respraying occurs. This will be completed through the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group.



Thompson Creek Catchment Gorse Action Project

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$29,550	\$38,800	49 / 64ha	Surf Coast and Inland Plains Network, Surf Coast Shire, Department of Primary Industries, Private Landholders

Nearest towns: Freshwater Creek, Moriac

This is the 3rd year of a facilitated gorse control program in the Thompson Creek Catchment. The project aims to protect the rich biodiversity of a key natural and public asset, the Thompson Creek, which contains a core infestation of Gorse. Thompson Creek stretches 20km from the mouth at Breamlea to the upper reaches at Gherang.

The target area has covered over 6,000ha which contains various outlying gorse infestations. These outlying infestations have a direct impact on Thompson Creek, continually spreading seed to the banks of the waterway. In 2012/13 the project involved 49 landholders, who all signed up to 3 year Voluntary Management Agreements to control gorse on their properties. These landholders were offered a maximum incentive of 50% to help with implementation of their first year control works.

The landowners that were visited, irrespective of whether they entered into voluntary management agreements, were engaged in discussions about weed and pest control. Many were not aware of other weeds they had, in particular serrated tussock. All were advised that working together

as a community and especially as neighbours is the best solution to get on top of these pest problems.

Over 6,000 hectares of land was inspected by a project officer with around 64 hectares of gorse identified treated. More than half of this area would be dense infestations and the remainder is scattered.

There are many small hobby and absentee landholders in the area and many are unaware of both gorse and their responsibilities. This project highlighted the importance of gorse extension, concentrating on its control and management. The project has been instrumental in information sharing and gaining further funds to help control gorse within the broader Thompson Creek Catchment. The project also provided landholders with the opportunity to hear and see control and management of difficult gorse sites. A combination of local knowledge and local expertise from Surf Coast and Inland Plains Network, Surf Coast Shire, Contractors and Department of Environment and Primary Industries provided a comprehensive overview of best practice control and management.



Ashbourne Weed Action Group

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$15,000	\$48,000	40 / 36ha	Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, Upper Campaspe Landcare Network, Ashbourne Landcare Group, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Private Landholders

Nearest town: Ashbourne

The Weed Action Group developed a Gorse and Blackberry Control Action Plan and this provided a sound base to guide the investment of the taskforce into this project. The Victorian Blackberry Taskforce were also contributors to this project.

The Weed Action Plan was designed to engage landholders in addressing the gorse and blackberry problem in the Upper Campaspe. There are 40 participating landholders and all of these have signed up to 3 year voluntary management agreements.

As part of the early stages of this project a Community Forum was held to gather landholders together to explain the program, discuss different methods of weed control and gain their commitment to developing 3 year plans to tackle the problem. Fifty people attended this forum including representatives from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Gorse Taskforce and Landcare Groups.

The group's main asset is the Campaspe River and its tributaries this project concentrated on reducing existing infestations and controlling the spread of Blackberry and Gorse to protect this natural asset.

Dales Gorse Control Group

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$15,000	\$20,000	9 / 18ha	Woody Yaloak Catchment Group, Golden Plains Shire, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI), Private Landholders

Nearest towns: Scarsdale, Smythesdale

The Dales Gorse Control Group has a target area of 400 hectares in the Scarsdale / Smythesdale area (near Ballarat), made up mostly of small blocks and lifestyle properties. The group has been working to overcome the issues associated with engaging lifestyle landowners to control gorse this has proven to be more difficult when compared to engaging landowners who utilise their properties for farming purposes.

This project has formed a strong partnership with DEPI crown land management and some excellent results have been achieved on unlicensed crown frontages. This has supported those landholders that have been controlling adjoining private land infestations.

- Letter drop to all landholders in target area undertaken, including absentee landholders (89 letters).
- 1 Gorse Control Field Day held on participating landholders property in spring last year
- 9 Landholders have committed to a three year voluntary management agreement for the control of gorse on their property.
- 1 roadside (Tannery Road) within the target area was treated with a Shire Council grant and partnership with the Woody Yaloak Catchment Group.

Barker's Creek Clean-up Project

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$15,000	\$45,000	48 / 19ha	Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Connecting Country Inc, Barker's Creek Landcare Network, Private Landholders

Nearest town: Castlemaine

This project has been supported in partnership with the Victorian Blackberry Taskforce since 2011. The project area of the Barkers Creek Clean-up Project includes all landholdings that either (a) encompass part of Barkers Creek or its major tributaries, or (b) occur in the immediate vicinity of Barkers Creek or its major tributaries. This included both private and public landholdings. The project area encompasses most of the length of the creek, from the Froomes Rd crossing in the south upstream to the headwaters in the north near Harcourt North.

Gorse (and Blackberry) along and near the creek have long been of concern to the Landcare groups, government agencies, landholders and other community members. There were some particularly large infestations along and near the creek at highly visible locations along the Midland Highway and near the Calder Freeway overpass. While there have been small scale attempts to control these weeds in the past, there have been no recent attempts to control them more broadly along the length of the creek.

The Barkers Creek Landcare Network established a steering committee for the purposes of coordinating the Barkers Creek Clean-up Project. This steering committee included representatives from the three Landcare groups and from Connecting Country. Monthly meetings were held, and support provided at other times as needed.

Using funding from the Blackberry and Gorse taskforces, a part-time project officer was employed by Connecting Country on behalf of the BCLN. Under the guidance of the steering committee, the role of the project officer was to:

- Engage with landholders along the length of the waterway,
- Undertaking site visits and assessments of landholdings along the waterway,
- Develop voluntary weed management plans for interested landholders, which included relevant information about control techniques for the gorse and blackberry infestations on their properties
- Encourage landholders to sign up to three year agreements for the implementation of the weed management plans on their properties
- Coordinate weed control demonstration days and other field days

Some funding was also obtained through a Landcare grant from the North Central CMA to develop an action plan for the creek, which was also coordinated by the project officer.

No incentive payments were paid directly to the landholders through this project. However, the project officer and steering committee regularly identified opportunities for landholders who had signed up to obtain incentive payments and other support from external sources. After signing up to a voluntary agreement, many landholders received financial or physical support to implement some their management plan actions through programs operated by the North Central CMA and Connecting Country. Other grant applications were also submitted to support landholders with weed control.

Landholders became aware of the project through a variety of ways, including:

- Being made aware of the project by their local Landcare group
- Publicity and advertising in local papers
- Two separate mail-outs to landholders, which had significant support from both the Greater Bendigo Council and the Mount Alexander Shire Council
- Promoting the project through the Connecting Country website and other events (e.g. market stalls, community meetings, etc.).
- At a large public meeting held as part of the development of the local action plan
- Through speaking with their friends and neighbours who were already involved in the program.

Three community events were held:

- A Woody Weed Control Field day was held, which included demonstrations of different techniques for the control of blackberry and gorse.
- A community launch of the Barkers Creek Action Plan included a 'walk and talk' session along an adjoining section of Barkers Creek in Harcourt to discuss ways of addressing the weed issue.
- A community workshop for the development of the Barkers Creek Action Plan was also a valuable forum for the discussion of the local weed issue and approaches to managing it.

Landholders representing 48 properties have signed a three year voluntary management agreement as a part of this project. 9 hectares of gorse control and 10 hectares of blackberry control has resulted from these agreements.



Moyne Weed Eradication Network

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$20,000	\$22,000	21 / 32ha	St Helens Landcare Group, Moyne Shire Council, Warrnambool City Council, Southern Moyne Landcare Group, Hopkins Moyne Landcare Group and Hopkins Falls Landcare Group, Department of Primary Industries, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Private Landholders

Nearest towns: Hawkesdale, Koroit, Framlingham

The target area here includes the Moyne River and its catchments. 21 landholders have signed up to a long term voluntary management agreement for the control of gorse. Landholders that commit to a long term program are then eligible for control incentives which generally cover 50% of the cost in the first year of implementation.

This project has aimed to treat gorse on the Moyne River, Hopkins River and Drysdale creek. This work will not only protect the clean sections of these waterways but also the Merri River and Russell's creek.

The weed eradication network is a partnership between, the St Helens, Southern Moyne, Hopkins Moyne and Hopkins Falls Landcare groups.

Some statistics from the project include:

- 418 letters sent offering gorse rebate to properties along the Moyne River and within 3 km of either side. The letter was sent to all landholders, regardless of whether they had gorse or not.
- Moyne Shire Council became a key partner in the project and assisted by allowing contact by letter to be made with landholders.
- 89 properties contacted the gorse project officer – either to say they did not have gorse or to enquire about the rebate.
- 8 Crown parcels have been identified with gorse for action under coming rounds of the Good Neighbour Program. A 10ha parcel of railway (Victrack managed) land containing gorse was treated – an action which was as a direct result of the facilitation efforts of the gorse project officer.
- 6 properties identified with gorse either by neighbours or through observation by the gorse project officer are yet to participate in this project. These properties have received a reminder letter and will be followed up again in October 2013. If no action results, these properties will be identified to DEPI for enhanced enforcement. Out of a total pool of 418 possibilities, this is an excellent result.
- A follow up "Happy New Gorse" card will be sent to the rebated properties in early January as a reminder to treat newly emerging gorse and check treated gorse. At this time of the year the gorse is very obviously green compared to the rest of the landscape.





Up2Us Landcare Alliance Blackberry/Gorse Control Project

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$7,950	\$28,100	22 / 150ha	Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, Up2Us Landcare Alliance, Mansfield Shire Council, Parks Victoria, Department of Environment and Primary Industries

Nearest towns: Mansfield, Tolmie

A lack of a coordinated and collaborative approach to blackberry/gorse control was highlighted amongst Council staff, community, agencies and local landholders over the last two to three years. The Up2Us committee acted on this concern and gained financial support from the Victorian Blackberry and Gorse Taskforces in order to instil a community led partnership program.

Up2Us Landcare Alliance Blackberry/Gorse project began employing a paid project officer in January 2013. The goal of the group was to work strategically with as many key land areas as possible throughout the Mansfield Shire.

This control project has achieved:

- The formation of a formal working group involving local community, individual landowners, a local shire representative, government agency representatives, and incorporating where possible private agencies such as Hancock's Pine Plantations. This has allowed for a coordinated response to control works
- Regular steering committee meetings to review the program and ensure the project officer is meeting key outcomes
- Community consultation in targeted regions about the program. Discussions at these forums have included community involvement and expectations, suggestions about control techniques and safety specifications
- The provision of the latest techniques in control, discussions on land owner contributions and an offer incentives where appropriate
- The mapping of blackberry/gorse and other weeds on-site.

This project is continuing to operate into 2013/14 and has a target to sign on 50 landholders to voluntary management agreements by the end of 2013.

Small Grants Program

This program is designed so that smaller community based groups can be empowered to implement key gorse control projects in Victoria. These projects are generally designed to run with minimal facilitation. The small grants has provided up to \$5,000 to support community-led projects. A description of the projects funded under this program follows:

South Central Cairn Curran Catchment Area

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$4,700	\$4,200	47	Blampied Kooroocheang Landcare Group, Hepburn Shire, Private landholders

Nearest towns: Blampied, Smeaton

The majority of landholders affected have water frontage to the Muddy Creek, Joyces Creek, Captains Creek, Middle and Little Middle Creek. The target covers approximately 10,000 hectares. The project has sought to offer landholders a 50% cost subsidy on the control of Gorse infestations. An existing Project Officer associated with the Landcare Group has been actively visiting properties and assessing their eligibility for the control incentive. Works have been completed by landholders

themselves or by private contractors. Landholders have matched the available incentive with their own contributions and have agreed to complete follow-up control in the subsequent years.

Approximately 40ha of Gorse control has been completed across 10 properties in the Blampied area. To support the action of local community members, 7ha of roadside control has been completed by the Hepburn Shire.



Gorse is a goner

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$4,020	\$9,000	6	Upper Mount Emu Catchment (UMEC) Landcare Network, Pyrenees Shire Council, Ballarat City Council, Private Landholders

Nearest town: Beaufort

This project has supported control activity in 6 Landcare groups (part of the UMEC Network) across 2 municipalities.

The project within the six groups has undertaken adjoining private land weed control works in support of Council roadside weed control. Sites nominated are dependent on Council proceeding with works on the adjoining roadside.

Target sites have in most cases consisted of roadside infestations, with "in paddock" infestations. The group projects have addressed infestations as follows:

Landcare Group	Road name and length (km)	Number of landholders involved
Burrumbeet	Trawalla East Road, Kayley's and Modesty Lane (1.1km)	3
Cardigan	Blind Creek Road (1.2km)	16
Invermay	Alkera Road (1.2km)	15
Lake Goldsmith	Stockyard Hill and Wangatta Roads (0.8km)	4
Lexton	Mile Creek, Jones and Waterloo Roads (0.8km)	3
Miners Rest	Davenport Road (0.4km)	2

Upper Hopkins waterways stage two

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$5,000	\$8,000	50	Upper Hopkins Land Management Group, Ararat Rural City Council, Private Landholders

Nearest towns: Ararat, Buangor

All major waterways in the upper Hopkins catchment from Fiery Creek west of Beaufort to the Grampians have been targeted over several years. To date gorse has been largely controlled on Good Morning Bill, Denicull, Billy Billy, Jacksons, Charleycombe and Captains Creeks and the Hopkins River. In this year work was completed around and north of Ararat (Hopkins River, three Mile Creek and several unnamed creeks) and at Fiery Creek.

Assets to protect from infestation are mostly grassy woodlands along the floodplains. The gorse if not controlled provides a seed source downstream in higher value agricultural areas. Through this project 25 landholders have been involved in control works. Gorse infestations vary in density from sparse to low density and cover many kilometres of waterway frontage. This project will complement a major gorse control project on roadsides by Ararat Rural City Council. The area of infestation controlled is approximately 50 ha.

Mount Bolton/Mount Beckworth and surrounds Gorse Eradication

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$4,730	\$4,930	20	Mount Bolton/Beckworth Landcare Goup, Lexton Landcare Group, Pyrenees Shire Council, Hepburn Shire Council, City of Ballarat, Private Landholders

Nearest towns: Clunes, Evansford

This project has involved 10 landholders in the Mt Bolton/Beckworth area and another three in the Lexton area. The Shires of Hepburn, Pyrenees and City of Ballarat have worked on neighbouring roadsides as part of the project.

Most treated infestations have been narrow (less than 30mts) and follow streams and fences which adjoin roadsides. The project has used herbicide

spraying and the "ecoblade", a machine which mulches and distributes small amounts of chemical as it cuts the stems of the plants. This project has treated 20 hectares of private land with the 3 Shire Councils treating approximately 9 kilometres of roadsides at the same time.

Mt Bolton/Beckworth Landcare Group have an extensive follow up plan for all of their gorse works. Project participants are requested to monitor work sites on a regular basis and complete any follow up work that is required.



Gorse control in the Bamganie / Meredith Landcare Group

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$5,000	\$5,000	14	Meredith Bamganie Landcare Group

Nearest towns: Meredith, Bamganie

This project has coordinated control works with 5 large landholders. This project has aimed to stop seed migration via drainage lines to the Coolaburgurk and Cargarie Creeks which in turn flow to the Leigh River.

Gorse here exists in medium to high density and through this project control works totalling approximately 14 hectares has been completed. All work has been undertaken through herbicide application.

Gorse removal, Avoca district

VGT contribution	Other contributions	Approx. hectares of control	Project partners
\$4,200	\$4,400	10	Avoca Landcare Group, Pyrenees Shire Council

Nearest towns: Avoca, Moonambel

This project area is within the catchment of the Avoca River and covers the Upper Loddon and Avoca catchments. The Regional Catchment Strategy indicates that weeds are a major threat to waterway health, biodiversity and regional agriculture. This project has involved 8 landholders in the Avoca, Percydale and Moonambel districts. The Pyrenees Shire will be working on neighbouring roadsides as part of the project.

Most treated infestations are narrow (less than 50mts) and follow streams and fences which adjoin roadsides. The project has involved herbicide spraying and the use of the "ecoblade" a machine which mulches and distributes small amounts of chemical as it cuts the stems of the plants. This project has treated 10 hectares of private land with the Pyrenees Shire Council treating approximately 2 kilometres of roadsides at the same time.

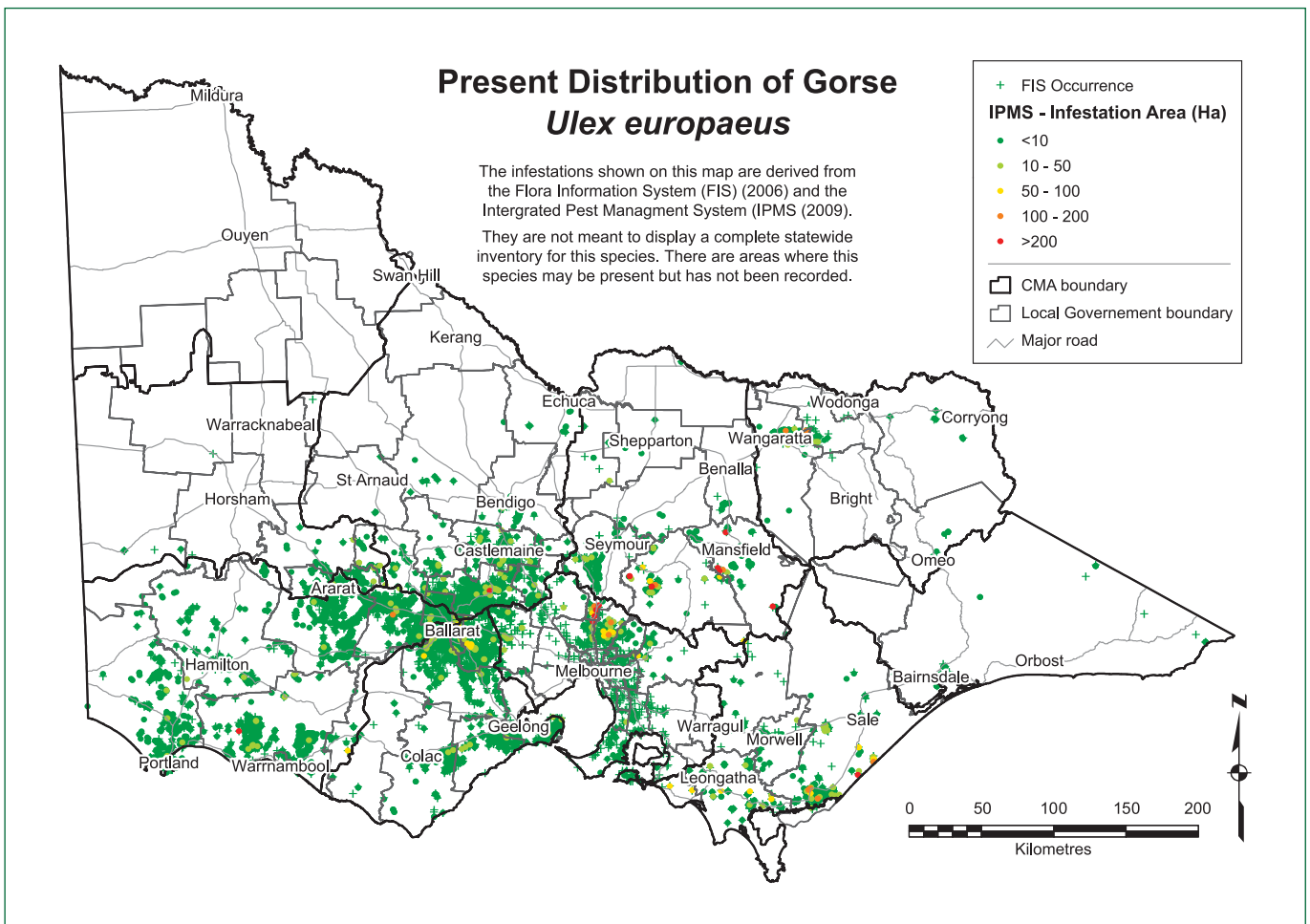
INCOME AND EXPENSES

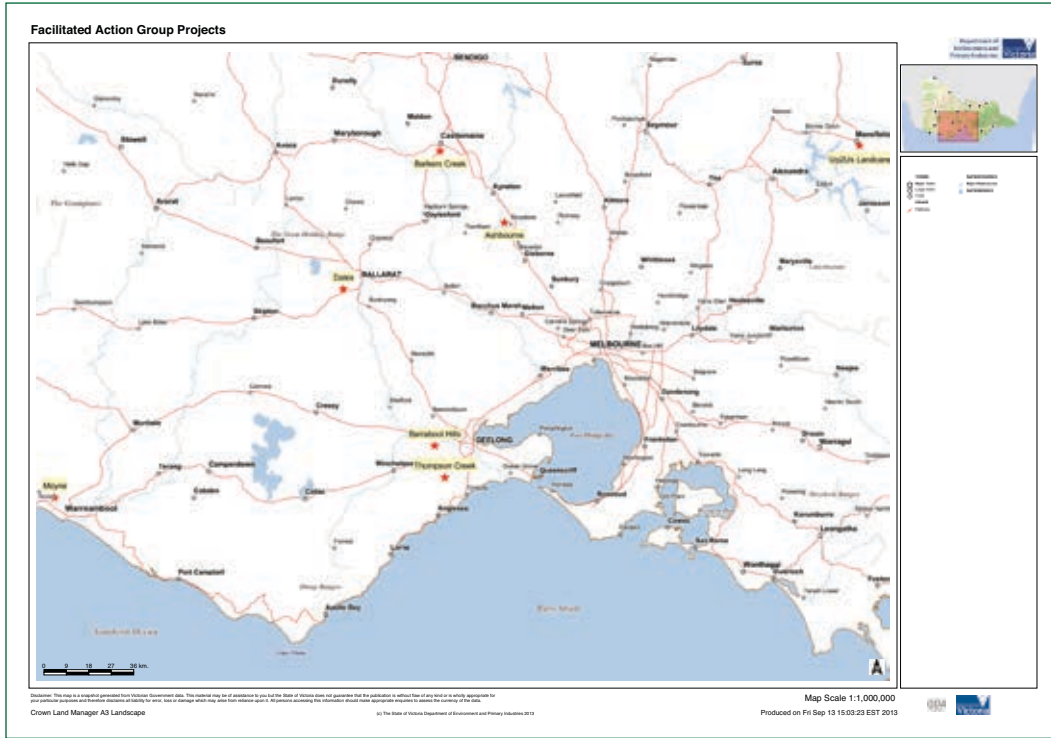
Summary of VGT income for 2012/13:

Amount	Source
\$230,000	Victorian Government, Department of Environment and Primary Industries

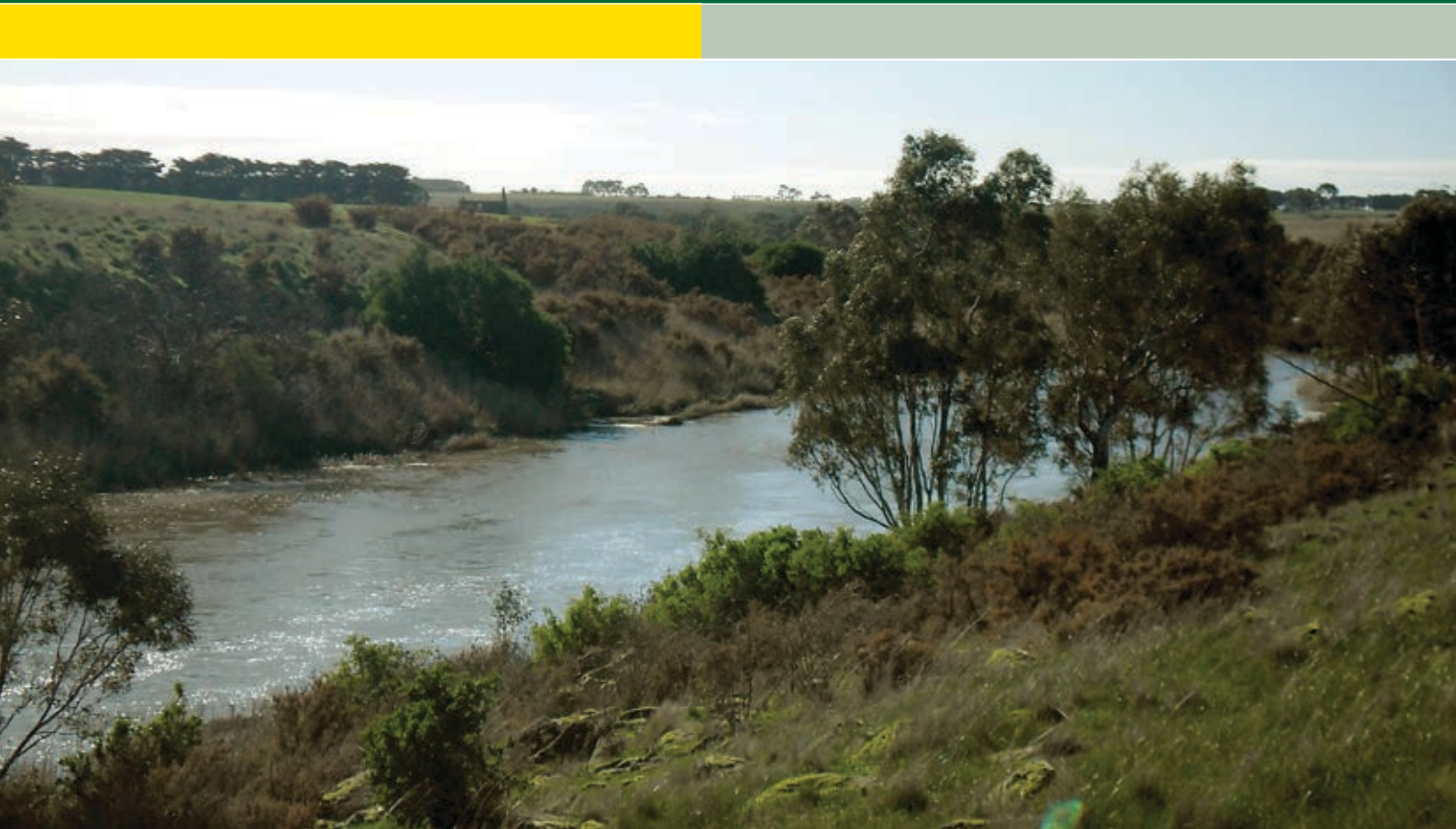
Summary of VGT expenses for 2012/13:

Amount	Expense
\$60,000	Employment of the VGT Executive Officer through the Department of Environment and Primary Industries
\$153,150	On-ground projects (note that some 2012/13 project payments included in this figure were made prior to 1 July 2012)





APPENDIX ONE



2012/13 VGT Members

Nigel Ainsworth	Department of Environment and Primary Industries
Jenny Blake	Golden Plains Shire
David Clark	Upper Mount Emu Landcare Network
Ron Cosgrave	North Central CMA, Natural Resource Management Committee
Doug Dagleish	Newham and District Landcare Group
Peter Everist	VGT Chair – Haddon Landcare Group / Woody Yaloak Project
Singarayer Florentine	University of Ballarat
Martin Forbes	Dales Landcare Group / Woody Yaloak Project
Peter Forster	Upper Hopkins Land Management Group
Margaret Hatton	Sunday Creek / Sugarloaf Sub-Catchments Inc
Shane Herbertson	Executive Officer
Brian Rowe	Blampied-Kooroocheang Landcare Group
Robert Watson	Leigh Catchment Group / Napoleons-Enfield Landcare Group



