



Victorian Gorse Taskforce
Progress Report



2014/15

Victorian Gorse Taskforce Progress Report 2014/15

Acknowledgements: The VGT wishes to acknowledge the support received from the State Government of Victoria through the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources that has assisted in producing this document.

Published and Authorised by: The Victorian Gorse Taskforce, November 2015

Designed by: Small Dog Design,
101-107 Albert Street, Ballarat Vic 3350
Tel 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 Economic Development,
Jobs, Transport and Resources,
402-406 Mair Street, Ballarat Vic 3350

www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au

Contents

Chairperson's Report	5
Background	6
On-Ground Gorse Control Projects 2014/15	8
Facilitated 'Action Group' Projects	8
Small Grants Program	15
Income and Expenses	20
Appendix 1 – VGT members 2014/15	22







Victorian Gorse Taskforce

Chairperson's Report

I am pleased to present the 2014/15 progress report on behalf of the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT).

Over the past 12 months the Taskforce has had continued success with implementing our new Control Strategy for 2014-2019 through a range of programs involving community education and landholder extension.

The Taskforce has assisted in the establishment of and supported a number of large co-ordinated community led gorse control projects around the Ballarat region. Through the provision of funding for landholder incentives for on ground works and project extension officers, successful group control projects have been implemented in the communities of Snake Valley, Invermay, Miners Rest, Creswick-Bald Hills, Napoleons-Garibaldi and Lal Lal-Moorabool. A number of these projects are long term requiring sustained efforts over many years to be successful. These groups have further consolidated their control areas during this year and in some cases control boundaries have been extended to adjoin and compliment neighbouring control target areas. These communities continue to maintain a strong will to tackle the gorse problem and the Taskforce is very committed to supporting these communities actively controlling gorse.

The Taskforce continue to offer a small grant program (up to \$5,000) to support smaller community based groups to assist landholders financially in sharing the cost of on ground control works. Eight small grants were commissioned around the State in the locations of Beechworth, Pipers Creek, Tylden, Drummond, Tarawingee, Hamilton, Glenlyon and Smeaton.

Partnerships with other land managers have been forged through these projects. Many local Shire Councils have been involved this past year, playing their part by ensuring that roadside control happens within project target areas and assisting with group co-ordinated landholder mail outs. Roadsides provide key avenues for the spread of weeds and with financial assistance through the

State Government's Roadside Weeds and Pests Management Program (RWPP), we hope that Municipalities continue with their control programs on roadsides into the future.

We are grateful to the State Government of Victoria for continued funding support. The sum of \$130,000 was again provided to the taskforce for 2014/15, part of this allocation goes towards employment for our former Department of Environment and Primary Industries hosted Executive Officer, the remainder is used for on ground projects.

There is no doubt that controlling Gorse requires a long term commitment from land managers. I believe that through the projects sponsored by the taskforce we are reinforcing this reality. Throughout many years involvement with Gorse control projects I have seen great inroads made by community volunteers and it is pleasing to be able to support this action wherever we can. Community ownership of the problem is something that the taskforce strives to promote; this is a key component of a successful project. Gorse always needs follow up control so it's important that communities are well aware of this. This is an underlying message in all of our project implementation work.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to the Taskforce committee representatives and to all our partner stakeholders for their continued support and commitment to our control strategy. Special thanks to our past Executive Officer Shane Herbertson, for his dedication and outstanding contribution to the Taskforce over the last seven years.

I would like to thank all people involved for their efforts in this past year and trust that you will have the energy and determination to continue the battle into the future.

Peter Everist
Chair – Victorian Gorse Taskforce

Background

The primary role of the VGT is to oversee the implementation of the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy 2014-2019.

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

1 Provide leadership in community-led invasive plant control

The VGT coordinates and implements the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy (VGCS) across Victoria. In doing so the VGT makes a valuable contribution to preventing the spread of gorse and developing the community-led invasive plant control model.

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. Accurate mapping of the extent of gorse distribution is an important management and education tool. The DEDJTR Biosecurity and GIS teams provide important support in this area.

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

The VGT places 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, where necessary, enforcement.

5 Achieve a reduction in the core infestations of gorse across Victoria

Ongoing programs are aimed at protecting key community assets where these are prioritised through regional catchment strategies and regional invasive plant and animal management strategies, and within core infestations.

6 Reduce infestations and the spread of gorse in and along corridors

The VGT and facilitators will work with the community and linear reserve managers in focus areas to reduce the spread of gorse in and along corridors.

7 Increase the community's capacity to be actively engaged in long-term gorse control

Communities are empowered to act and are committed to the long-term control of gorse, and are supported to do so.

8 Ensure communities are aware of their statutory obligations to control gorse

Communities are aware of their statutory responsibilities and the VGT will work with partners to advocate that, where necessary, enforcement complements community-led action.

9 Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy

The implementation of the VGCS is monitored, and stakeholders and the community are informed of its progress.



Focus Areas

To provide strategic direction for the control of gorse throughout Victoria, the state is divided into two focus zones (see Figure 1) considering principles of invasive plant control and mapping of present and predicted gorse occurrence (reference *Victorian Gorse Control Strategy 2014-2019*).

Reduction Zone

The Reduction Zone is the part of Victoria where substantial, scattered but not yet widespread and abundant populations of gorse occur. In this zone the Strategy aims to reduce populations (shaded orange on Gorse Control Areas map).

Eradiation and Prevention Zone

The Eradiation and Prevention Zone is the part of Victoria where gorse may already occur as isolated infestations or is predicted to occur based on potential distribution modelling (shaded green on Gorse Control Areas map).

Whilst this Strategy focuses on partnership development, capacity building and compliance, it will support eradication of isolated infestations where feasible. Prevention of gorse incursions will be the priority.

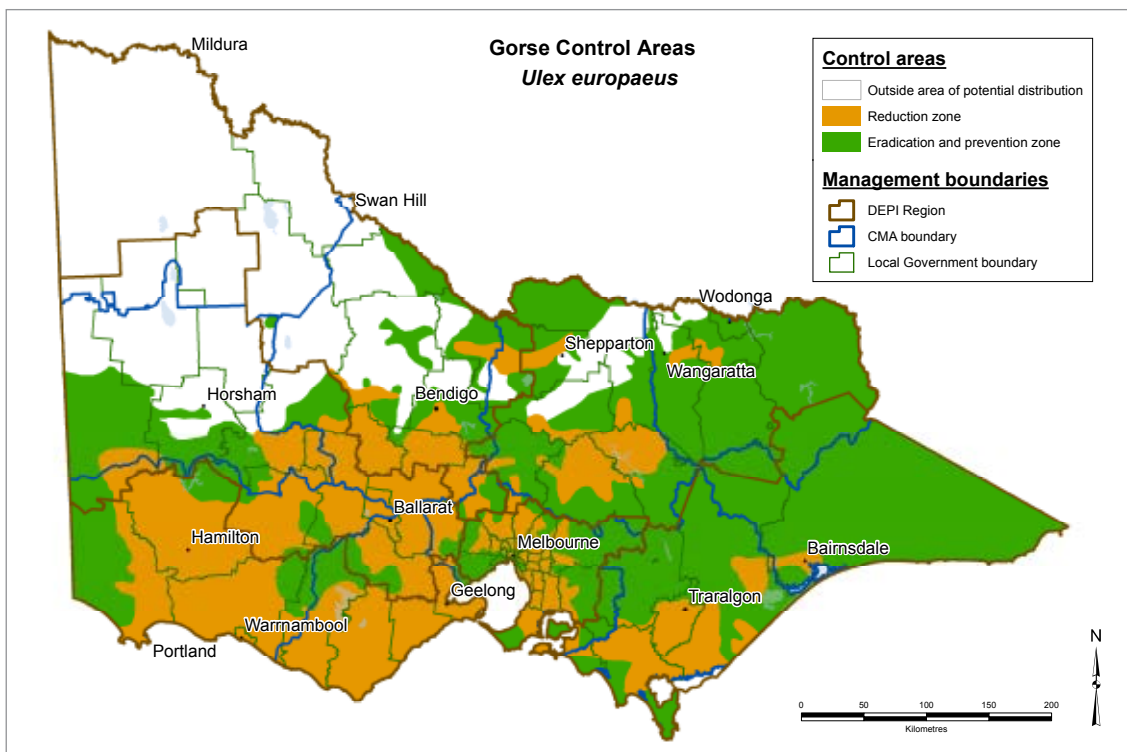


Figure 1: Victoria's gorse control zones. (DEPI, 2014)

On-Ground Gorse Control Projects 2014/15



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 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

Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) 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 2014/15 assist in implementing the goals and strategies found within the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy 2014-2019. These projects also work to prevent gorse from impacting upon important environmental and agricultural assets.

Snake Valley Gorse Action Group

VGT Contribution for 2014/15	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project Partners
\$25,000	\$25,000	85 / 75ha	Pyrenees Shire Council, Private landholders, Snake Valley Landcare Group, Upper Mount Emu Creek Landcare Network

Nearest Towns: Snake Valley, Carngham

The Snake Valley Project first commenced in May 2013 and targeted a large area with many landholders ranging from mixed farming operations to lifestyle blocks and residential properties. The project set out to involve as many as possible of these landholders in the target area. Over 500 properties were identified and letters sent (courtesy of Pyrenees Shire Council) to each landholder. The principal aims of the project were generally twofold:

- 1 To increase community awareness of the problems associated with gorse; and
- 2 To assist landholders (both financially and with practical advice) in implementing control programs to remove plants and to minimise its spread.

Due to the large number of absentee landholders, the project relied on landholders responding to the letters and the project officer visiting each property and discussing their various options. Two field days were also undertaken throughout the year.

Several recalcitrant landholders with large infestations were identified and information passed to DEDJTR for further action. Some were also issued with fire notices by the Shire and this seems to be a more timely and effective means of ensuring compliance with implementation of control programs.



Landholders cleaning up leased crown land (before and after).

Napoleons Garibaldi Gorse Action Group

VGT Contribution for 2014/15	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project Partners
\$17,762	\$17,762	42 / 55ha	Private landholders, Napoleons/Enfield and Garibaldi Landcare Groups, Leigh Catchment Group, City of Ballarat, Golden Plains Shire Council



Example of mulching work (before and after).

Nearest Towns: Napoleons, Garibaldi, Scotchmans Lead

There are approximately 179 properties in the Target area which was established in 2013 in consultation with key members of both Garibaldi Landcare group and Napoleons/ Enfield Landcare group on a steering group consisting of the Leigh Catchment Landcare coordinator Jenny Ryle and the VGT.

The properties are split on either side of the Yarrowee river valley as it flows south of Ballarat between Golden Plains Shire and City of Ballarat. The majority of landholders have lifestyle properties although there are a number of broad acre farms as well.

Landholders have been very enthusiastic about the program with 42 voluntary management agreements successfully negotiated by the project officer. Many landholders have been struggling financially with the cost of control works and hence the financial incentives component of the program has been very valuable. A large part of the success in completing this project has also been the regular liaison with and support of the weed contractors. The various contractors have helped co-ordinate works ensuring timely completion of works allowing rebates to be processed on time.

Miners Rest Gorse Action Group

VGT Contribution for 2014/15	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project Partners
\$7,675	\$7,675	11 / 36ha	Private landholders, Miners Rest Landcare Group, Upper Mount Emu Creek Landcare Network, City of Ballarat

Nearest Town: Miners Rest

This project covers a large population of mixed sized properties from house blocks and lifestyle properties through to large farms. Approximately 500 properties have been identified from Sulky through to Miners Rest with a small number being corporately owned.

Infestations throughout this area are found along creek lines with heavy patches along Burrumbeet Creek, roadsides particularly Olliers Road and Millers Road, fencelines and the old quarry site. The region to the north east of the target area is potentially the most severe with 5-20 acre lifestyle properties and consistent patchy gorse throughout.

The VGT has operated in Miners Rest in the past and infestations in this area were heavily targeted with successful reduction in coverage. During the year there has been a change in project officer working in this area.

To date a total of 11 voluntary management agreements have been developed with landholders and the project officer continues to working closely with the Ballarat City to control gorse on roadsides and with the Conservation Volunteer Australian Green Army Program. Whilst significant progress has been made in this area there is considerable work to undertake and this project will continue in future years.

The area has an enthusiastic community with a growing sense of town pride and is currently a town of focus for the Ballarat City Council.



Example of spraying work (before and after).

Lal Lal – Moorabool Gorse Action Group

VGT Contribution for 2014/15	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project Partners
\$34,900	\$34,900	42 / 91ha	Private landholders, Lal Lal Catchment Landcare, Group, Moorabool Landcare Network, Moorabool Shire Council

Nearest Town: Millbrook

The project commenced in 2013 aiming to engage 50 landowners each year over the planned 3 year lifespan, including planning for follow up with revegetation of pasture or native species. In addition, an education program will be maintained stating that gorse is not an acceptable plant in the area and that “one year’s seeding means 25 years weeding”.

Gorse in the Lal Lal catchment is concentrated along fencelines, made and un-made roads, with significant infestations of gorse in paddocks. One of the challenges faced in addressing gorse across the project area is the number of absentee owners, and landowners for whom their land provides a secondary income.

Gorse has been identified by the Lal Lal Catchment Landcare group as the most significant weed in the area and this is supported by the Moorabool Landcare Network. Moorabool Shire Council also has identified gorse as a major weed and has a campaign to control the pest along roadsides and in reserves.

To date a total of 42 landholders have developed voluntary management agreements in this target area and the majority of landholders have been very motivated to undertake gorse control.

Both smaller landholders right up to some of the largest landholders in the area have been engaged in the program.

By June 2015, there was a noticeable landscape change across much of the target area in terms of gorse control. The Moorabool Shire Council sprayed most of the heavily infested roadsides and landholders have tackled large infestations on private land and encouraged their neighbours to join the program as well.

The most successful area in the program was in Lyons Road South, where every landholder was actively involved in Gorse control. The local residents were concerned about the fire hazards associated with gorse along the roadside and with the assistance of a small grant provided by the Shire, the Landcare group hired a contractor to spray out the roadside. This was a fantastic case study in cooperation between neighbours, community Landcare and the Shire Council.

The project officer has also engaged VicTrack who are responsible for easements through the project area to undertake control works and this has had a significant visual effect in the area particularly near the Warrenheip township.



Spraying road reserves and adjacent private land (before and after).

Bald Hills – Creswick Gorse Action Group

VGT Contribution for 2014/15	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project Partners
\$10,000	\$10,000	15 / 20ha	Private landholders, neighbouring Landcare Groups and Landcare Networks (Upper Loddon and Avoca Landcare Network, Upper Mount Emu Creek Landcare Network), Creswick Community Centre, Hepburn Shire Council.

Nearest Town: Creswick

Creswick Bald Hills Landcare Group is situated around 20km north of Ballarat and has had an ongoing battle with gorse. In recent years, there has been little to no gorse control in large areas of the community, particularly on public land. There has also been a change in the residents of Creswick with many tree changers and town people moving into lifestyle properties.

The Creswick Bald Hills Landcare Group recently held a community meeting inviting residents with issues around gorse to attend. Over 30 people attended which is the highest attendance to a meeting seen by the group in many years. Everyone who attended is willing and ready to be part of a collaborative effort to reduce gorse infestations and raise awareness among residents. In addition, a representative from the Hepburn Council attended and pledged their support for an application to the VGT.

This project compliments work being undertaken in surrounding districts including Miners Rest/Sulky and Invermay with Creswick probably being the most impacted community north of Ballarat. This project has concentrated on the heavily infested areas of north Creswick but has also extended the

opportunity for involvement of all residents within the Creswick region.

Within the north areas of Creswick there are many smaller lifestyle properties as well as larger agricultural properties. Independent works by both the Hepburn Shire Council and landholders have seen some properties take control of their gorse whilst other properties are in need of support both financial and informative. Other land managers including Vic Track, DELWP and Parks Victoria have significant land management interests in this project area.

Whilst the program was delayed in commencing, the project officer has contacted 36 landholders and developed 15 landholder voluntary agreements. Landholder letters and gorse control flyers have been distributed widely around the project area via the local post office and the Creswick and District newsletter to raise awareness.

The project officer will continue to work with private landholders and the public land managers who have significant gorse infestations in 2015/16 developing further management agreements, providing technical control advice and offering financial incentives where appropriate for on ground control works.



Large areas of mulched land (with follow up scheduled) (before and after).

Invermay Gorse Action Group

VGT Contribution for 2014/5	Other contributions	Voluntary management agreements signed with landholders / approx. hectares of control	Project Partners
\$14,000	\$7,000	33 / 10ha	Private landholders, complementary gorse control programs at Miners Rest (west) and Creswick (north), Upper Mount Emu Creek (UMEC) Landcare Network, Invermay Progress Association and the local CFA.



Mulching (before and after).

Nearest Town: Invermay

The Invermay project adjoins the Miners Rest Landcare Gorse Action Area and has been a historical strong hold of gorse. There are a number of properties that have demonstrated good success in removal of gorse with the assistance of gorse task force around 12 years ago, some properties still managing and reducing gorse and a number of properties with extensive infestations of several hectares. The area is primarily smaller properties between 1 and 8 hectares in size, although a number of large properties still remain. The target area extends on the northern boundary to the Creswick State Forest.

The project was initially delivered through engaging a facilitator to raise community awareness and provide assistance and direction for the removal of gorse. There continues to be widespread concern from the community about the impacts of gorse and the battle continues against the weed which is so widespread in the area.

The Project Officer has engaged with over 30 landholders including 20 landholders who have taken up financial assistance with a Gorse rebate to tackle their infestation. Many landholders in this area have the capacity to pay for their gorse programs, however there are other landholders who are more financially limited and these are often the properties with some of the larger infestations. The on ground incentive funding has been fully allocated to those requiring assistance and further additional funding will be applied for in the future to expand the program. Future work by this group will aim to extend the target areas to the east and north east to adjoin with the public land boundary, as well as to the north to link in with the Creswick gorse control area.



‘Small Grant’ Projects

The small grants program is designed so that smaller community based groups can be empowered to implement key gorse control projects in Victoria. The small grants program in 2014/15 funded 8 projects up to \$5,000 (GST exclusive) to support community-led action.

South Central Cairn Curran Gorse Project – Stage 4

(Proponent: Blampied – Kooroocheang Landcare Group)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$4,500	\$4,500	14

Nearest Town: Smeaton

The South Central Curran Catchment Gorse Project Stage 4 is a continuation of a previous gorse project managed by the Blampied – Kooroocheang Landcare Group.

The majority of landholders affected have water frontage to the Muddy Creek, Joyces Creek, Captains Creek, Middle and Little Middle Creek. The project has made available a financial incentive for local landholders to complete control works, this is based on a 50% cost share arrangement.

The Landcare Group possesses a spray unit and this has been used to good effect within this project. Some property owners have also used commercial sprayers, as some of the infested areas are very steep (escarpment) and some owners are elderly. A particular focus has been engaging with newly arrived landholders within the Landcare Group region, as a result they have shown keen interest to tackle gorse infestations on their properties.

Gorse Control – Little Coliban River

(Proponent: Tylden Landcare Group)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$2,500	\$2,500	2

Nearest Town: Tylden

This project involved six properties for Gorse control works along the Little Coliban River to protect assets of soil stability, water supply (to Upper Coliban system), Little Coliban River water quality and native vegetation along the river.

Gorse control works have included both mechanical grooming and herbicide application to reach inaccessible areas. Control has also removed pest animal harbour and promoted native vegetation along the waterway.

Get Rid of Gorse

(Proponent: Hamilton to Coleraine Railway Line Landcare Group)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$1,310	\$1,310	1km of waterway

Nearest Town: Hamilton

The Hamilton to Coleraine Railway Line Landcare Group has worked closely with the Hamilton to Coleraine Railway Reserve Management Group who have been actively working at Gorse eradication programs on the disused Hamilton to Coleraine Rail Reserve. The committee has worked in with adjoining landholders, some who are members of the Hamilton to Coleraine Railway Line Landcare Group, to assist in eradicating linear

growth of Gorse both on the disused reserve and along tributaries to the Grange Burn Creek, Violet Creek and Wannon River.

This project has targeted tributaries of the Grange Burn Creek, and four landholders have undertaken successful gorse control works along approximately 1km of waterway beginning at the corner of Lovett's Road and Pelchen's Road and Pelchen's Road to the Grange Burn Creek.

Landcare Supporting Local Landholders

(Proponent: Hodgsons and Horseshoe Landcare Group)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$4,300	\$1,310	10

Nearest Town: Tarrawingee

The area targeted ranges from steep hill country to river flats. The river flats have had extensive work on Gorse control in the past with isolated patches remaining along Reedy Creek. The project has provided assistance to landholders to control these isolated infestations. The hill areas are bordered by State park and landholders struggle

to manage the dense infestations apparent in these areas. Buffer zones are not well established between Public and Private land managers. This project supports private landholders to establish a buffer zone within their property. It also helps the Landcare group to advocate the public land managers for support to develop buffer zones around participating landholders that border public land.



Using local contractors to do manual spraying and clean up on bush blocks (before and after).



Drummond Gorse Control Showcase Properties

(Proponent: Malmesbury District Landcare Group)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$5,000	\$16,500	10

Nearest Towns: Malmesbury, Drummond

This project involved four properties along the Kangaroo Creek and Back Creek adjoining the Fryers Ridge Nature Conservation reserve. All current landholders have a strong history of gorse control on their property and have invested significant amounts of time and money into controlling gorse on their land.

This grant has provided landholders with the incentive to keep going with their control program and to enable effective control of their gorse within

two years and move to a maintenance phase where they are managing regrowth only. Three properties have successfully treated all problem areas whilst more than 50% control on a fourth property has been achieved.

Malmesbury Landcare Groups' aim has been to capitalise on previous successes and promote a "You Can Win Against Gorse" attitude to the adjoining landholders in an effort to stimulate them to start making advances on their own properties.

Community Support for Gorse Control

(Proponent: Glenlyon Upper Loddon Landcare Group)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$3,900	\$8,500	20

Nearest Town: Glenlyon

This project has offered financial support for landholders undertaking control of gorse along a section of the Loddon River within an area identified by the DEPI for Compliance action in the 2014/2015 financial year.

Approximately 45 landholders are involved in the target area with all landholders complying with compliance actions. Landholders with extensive infestations have agreed to two year control programs as part of the DEPI compliance program.

The group has provided up to 50% of the cost of chemicals used to control gorse up to a maximum subsidy of \$300 in a calendar year but not to subsidise costs associated with mechanical means such as grooming or mulching. The group has however identified the need to review this policy in light of successful mechanical control measures undertaken this season.

Gorse (and Blackberry) infestations remain an ongoing problem in the Landcare area and further assistance will be offered to seven landholders within the target area who are undertaking the second stage of control action in the 2105/2016.

Berry/Gorse Grief 3 – Gorse Control Assistance

(Proponent: Upper Campaspe Combined Landcare Groups)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$5,000	\$5,000	15



Combination spraying and mechanical removal (before and after).

Nearest Towns: Pipers Creek, Kyneton

The project focused around Pipers Creek which includes headwaters for the Campaspe River catchment, significant remnant vegetation scattered throughout the landscape and large vegetation reserves such as Cobaw Ranges and Bald Hill. Landowners in the project area range from peri urban residences to hobby farmers to large scale commercial farmers.

Using local knowledge and environmental attributes, the project has helped control the spread of gorse beyond the containment zone and protect local assets. Properties that have been identified as having significant native vegetation values (NCCMA Priority Endangered/Vulnerable EVCs); tributaries of the Campaspe River; are a community concern; or threaten significant vegetation reserves were of highest priority.

The size and density of gorse infestations in the project area ranges from small and scattered infestation amongst pasture and bushland to dense large scale infestations of multiple hectares.

This project was implemented in conjunction with a Blackberry control project in the same area and in total 19 landholders were contacted resulting in 7 landholders developing new voluntary 3 year management agreements. The project offered a 50% chemical rebate to participants with a management agreement, or where participants are unable to spray and the site is deemed a high priority the project will also provide 50% reimbursement for contractors. As part of the agreement participants are required to conduct follow up works next season. The provision of rebates is viewed as a critical incentive to achieve the project's success and begin a change in practice.

Follow up site visits may be conducted for compliance or to provide further assistance where required.

Woolshed Valley Community Engagement

(Proponent: Wooragee Landcare Group)

VGT contribution for 2014/15	Other Contributions	Approx. hectares of control
\$4,600	\$4,600	10

Nearest Town: Beechworth

This project aimed to engage with landholders in the Woolshed valley area, specifically along a section of McFeeters Road and Woolshed Road. This area comprises of lifestyle and commercial property owners that surround a section of Mt Pilot National Park. The terrain is undulating to steep hill country which can make access difficult without the appropriate equipment. The targeted section also encompasses a section of Reedy Creek, a significant tributary of the Ovens River.

The Gorse infestations through this section are very dense and a significant threat to the National Park and risk of spread via the creek. The Landcare group has undertaken substantial work within the National park on woody weeds along the section bordered by the target area. This section is also the only remaining significant section of Gorse infestation along Reedy Creek in the Landcare group area.

The group has engaged with landholders on a one on one capacity to discuss with them the effect Gorse is having on the surrounding environment and the importance of controlling this woody weed on their property. Landholders have been engaged in a voluntary management agreement with subsidies to support coordinated spraying along the targeted sections.



Tackling large infestations (before and after).

Income and Expenses



Summary of VGT income for 2014/15:

Source	Amount
Grants – DELWP	\$130,000.00
Interest Received	\$16,297.26
TOTAL INCOME	\$146,297.26

Summary of VGT expenses for 2014/15:

Source	Amount
Executive Officer Salary	\$60,000.00
Project Subsidies	\$111,300.43
Research and Promotion	\$18,685.04
Administration and Other Expenses	\$3,352.56
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$193,338.03



Appendix



2014/15 VGT Members

Nigel Ainsworth	Department of Environment and Primary Industries
Emma Bennett	Upper Mount Emu Landcare Network
Jenny Blake	Golden Plains Shire
David Clark	Upper Mount Emu Landcare Network
Ron Cosgrave	North Central CMA, Natural Resource Management Committee
Doug Dalgleish	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
Nicole Garfi / Shane Herbertson	Executive Officer
Margaret Hatton	Sunday Creek / Sugarloaf Sub-Catchments Inc
Brian Rowe	Blampied/Kooroocheang Landcare Group



Good spraying work (before and after).

