



Ord Land and Water

Newsletter

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Wet Season Weed Control Completed

OLW has just completed its wet season weed control program across the region with over 22,000 hectares covered and a further 5,000 hectares surveyed. This included the control of bellyache bush and leucaena around Lake Argyle Village and the upper sections of Lake Kununurra. Prickly acacia control at Nulla-Nulla, just north of Home Valley Station. Sicklepod senna control on Argyle Downs Station and mesquite control on Nicholson station.

Wet season control is now an important component of the organization's yearly calendar despite the extreme conditions to work in and the lack of access due to flooding. It targets weed germinations brought on by the rain early in their life before they have a chance either to set seed or get too big. If the work



Filling up another load at Lake Argyle Village.

was left until the dry season it would take much longer to do with the risk of seed setting and becoming a problem next year.

Progress on the strategy is good with dividends starting to be paid out. Bellyache bush is steadily being reduced with only isolated plants setting seed. Only a couple of mature leucaena trees were located on the control sites and seedling numbers are starting to reduce after four years of continuous work. Prickly acacia has been reduced in its density by 95% and most of the mature mesquite trees at Nicholson were destroyed. The only unsuccessful program was the sicklepod senna control. The plant rapidly matures and access during the wet season on that particular site is very restricted. The heavy clay soil and rapidly rising creeks on the back of rainfall events makes work there risky. Other alternatives will be looked at in the future to enable more ground to be covered quicker in the limited windows of opportunity that present themselves.

Another important aspect of the work is securing funds for its continuation. The work to date will mean nothing unless enough funding can be found to ensure the work is completed. This will mean that some mop up work will need to be done on these sites for much of the next decade otherwise the weeds will return. The rapid return of neems to areas around Kununurra where they were controlled five years ago is a good example. In that situation funding dried up from providers as investment priorities were altered. To date OLW has funds secured for the next 12 month and will be looking at extending that over that period..

Any enquiries about OLW'S weed control program can be directed to Dick Pasfield dick@olw.com.au or Vernon Sadler vernon@olw.com.au

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Funding acknowledgements



OLW develops weed management plan for irrigation area

On the back of developing weed management plans for the six DEC-MG reserves surrounding Kununurra in 2012 OLW is now working with the Ord Irrigation Co-operative to develop a weed management plan for the water supply and drainage system within the irrigation area.

The focus of the plan will be on environmental weeds that are moving through the system from sources such as Lake Kununurra, the Kununurra town site and the irrigation area itself and agricultural weeds that have a negative impact on water distribution and farm production.

Weeds receiving highest priority include Sorghum alnum, feral trees, hairy merremia, bellyache bush and para grass. Some of weeds identified in the plan are of national significance due to their destructive capabilities in the environment and agricultural production others are declared by the Western Australian Government.

Fire EOI

OLW has recently placed an Expression of Interest with Rangelands WA to carry out a number of fire related projects in the East Kimberley. One would be the aerial suppression trial around Kununurra and the other main component would look at funding cross border collaboration between land care organisations, government agencies and land managers on both sides of the NT/WA border.

Last dry season a number of fires burnt out large sections of country along the border area, particularly around the Ord River Regeneration Reserve and stations to the south of that. It is hoped that the lack of rain over the wet season may reduce fuel loads and provide some respite from the fires this year.



Wet season growth of merremia growing over the top of a rock pile in the irrigation area. Note the power pole in the background with the vine making its way up the guy wire.

2013 Rubber vine program due to start in May

Two Government agencies have combined with industry, land care and Indigenous organisations to tackle the rubber vine infestation at the bottom end of Lake Argyle. The 2013 program has been ramped up to cover double the work done in 2012 on the back of receiving more funds from the State Government.

Rubber vine currently is known to lightly infest over 2,000 hectares of thick bush land around the junction of the Ord and Bow rivers and a couple of associated creeks to the west. It is currently one of the most destructive weeds found in Queensland.

OLW Board set new priorities for 2013 onwards

OLW Membership

Membership nomination is sought at anytime from people interested in Natural Resource Management in the east Kimberley region. Register your interest to become involved in NRM with OLW by contacting Dick Pasfield on (08) 9169 2222 or at dick@olw.com.au