

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Acting Minister for Local Government
Acting Minister for Suburban Development



Thursday, 2 September 2021

TACKLING WEEDS AND PESTS ON VICTORIAN ROADSIDES

The Victorian Government is continuing its support for regional and rural councils to prevent the spread of invasive plants and animals across the state.

Acting Minister for Local Government Mary-Anne Thomas today announced a further \$11.5 million in funding over the next four years for the *Roadside Weeds and Pests Control Program*, providing greater protections for agriculture, farms and the environment.

This year 56 councils will receive between \$5,000 and \$75,000 to manage invasive plants and pests along municipal rural roadsides, with the program to be revised annually.

Rural roadsides can provide a breeding ground for harmful weeds and pests and this funding allows councils to implement control measures that prevent their spread.

Weeds like serrated tussock and blackberries cost the Victorian economy over \$900 million each year as they have the potential to spread very quickly resulting in serious negative impacts on agricultural production, as well as contribute to the spread of fires.

Recent drought has accelerated the presence and spread of new and emerging weeds that can threaten native biodiversity.

In the past 12 months Gannawarra Shire Council inspected approximately 600km of roadside and treated 266.5km for weeds and pests.

Species targeted include rabbits, foxes, boxthorn, blackberry, briar rose, silver leaf nightshade, olive, wild cherry, and khaki weed.

Local Government Victoria and Agriculture Victoria work closely with local councils in ensuring plans to tackle weeds and pests are tailored to their local area and appropriate funding is allocated to fulfil each strategy.

To find out more about the Roadside Weeds and Pests Program visit localgovernment.vic.gov.au/funding-programs/roadside-weeds-and-pest-management.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Local Government Mary-Anne Thomas

“Weeds and pests along rural roadsides have the potential to wreak havoc on native plant species – the control program will help councils tackle this really important work in coming months.”

“Roadside weeds and pests can cost our farmers millions of dollars each year, so it’s an investment in prevention that pays massive dividends across the state.”