

Red Guide Posts – Riverina and Central Western NSW

COUNCIL NAME

Greater Hume Shire Council

WEB ADDRESS

greaterhume.nsw.gov.au

Overview

The Red Guide Posts are a simple system to assist in reducing the spread of high risk invasive vegetation species (weeds) along roadsides.

The concept has been developed through a collaboration with Eastern Riverina Noxious Weeds Advisory Group (ERNWAG), Western Riverina Noxious Weeds Advisory Group (WRNWAG), Lachlan Valley Weeds Advisory Committee (LVWAC), Macquarie Valley Weeds Advisory Committee (MVWAC), Riverina & central west Local Control Authorities (LCAs), Local Land Services (LLS) and Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). It involves the installation of red guide posts at the 'start' and 'end' of each weed infestation. The red guide posts identify the site and an extensive awareness campaign will advise that works are not to be undertaken between the posts without the local weed officer's permission.



Photo: Red Guide Posts image from flyer

Background

ERNWAG & WRNWAG were formed in 1989 and 1997 respectively to encourage the formulation of common noxious weed control policies and liaison between authorities. The two groups – collectively known as Riverina Weeds – comprise all key stakeholders involved in weed management, including 25 Local Control Authorities (LCAs) and 3 Local Land Services (LLS).

The Red Guide Post concept was born from a gathering of Riverina agencies discussing the best option for identifying roadside weeds to avoid sites of known noxious weed infestation being slashed or graded and spread. The objective of the project is to increase community acceptance of, and involvement in, effective invasive species management.

The Minister for Primary Industries called for new, innovative State Weeds Action Program Projects. Riverina Weeds wanted the initiative to be rolled out consistently across the region, so it pulled together a pilot project submission partnering with LVWAC & MVWAC and were funded over \$100,000.

Implementation

What started as a small regional project installing red guide posts on roadsides with a flyer has expanded dramatically into a state pilot project with 33 partners. The first 12 months of this 2 year project has seen over 2,000 red guide posts distributed to 33 participating councils across the Riverina & central western NSW to be installed next to existing white guide posts at the “START” and “END” of high risk noxious weed infestations.

Murray Local Land Services has also partnered with this project to expand the market reach of the TV commercial throughout the region, and also trial a new advertising medium displayed on Service Station Fuel Nozzles.

The project partners are: Albury City, Balranald Shire, Bland Shire, Bourke Shire, Cabonne Shire, Carrathool Shire, Castlereagh Macquarie County, Central Murray County, Coolamon Shire, Cootamundra Shire, Corowa Shire, Cowra Shire, Forbes Shire, Greater Hume Shire, Griffith City, Gundagai Shire, Hay Shire, Jerilderie Shire, Junee Shire, Lachlan Shire, Leeton Shire, Lockhart Shire, Murrumbidgee Shire, Narrandera Shire, Parkes Shire, Temora Shire, Tumbarumba Shire, Tumut Shire, Urana Shire, Wagga Wagga City, Wakool Shire, Weddin Shire and Wentworth Shire; Murray LLS and NSW DPI.

Outcomes

Project achievements are as follows:

- Increased knowledge and awareness of this initiative.
- Reduction in the spread of invasive species along high risk pathways.
- Reduction in unauthorised works taking place in red guide posted areas.
- Increased community acceptance of and involvement in effective invasive species management.

Weed officers are being surveyed to benchmark the effectiveness of the Red Guide Posts before and after the awareness campaign. The location of the sites are also collated into a regional map for circulation to RMS outdoor staff. Once the geocache has been published, the feedback from the Geocaching community will also provide valuable insight into how well the initiative is being adopted.

Key Learnings

A dedicated page has been created on www.riverinaweeds.org.au to ensure all the Red Guide Post information is readily available for any organisation (LCAs or RMS etc) that decides to take up the initiative in their area. All the resources (installation procedure etc) will ensure consistency is maintained across the state.

Given the timeframe for submitting the initial project proposal (1 week), the implementation and expansion of the initiative over the past 12 months has been a remarkable achievement. A great success for the 4 Regional Weed Advisory Committees (RWAC) involved. Roads & Maritime Services are also looking into state uptake & discussing with the Roadside Environment Committee.

Contact

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This project was the 2014 winner of the Weed Management Award at the LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards.