

services & information for new landholders



Do you own a small property in rural Victoria?

weeds on my property - who's responsible?

A weed is defined as any plant that is growing where it is not wanted

There are over 23,000 weeds worldwide and more than 3000 introduced weeds in Australia. How do we describe weeds? They are usually in the form of categories such as 'environmental weeds' that effect the environment and others such as 'agricultural weeds' that affect agricultural production. These are very broad terms that are used across Australia, and perhaps the world.

Let's look at some terms for Victorian weeds. The six categories of weeds are Victorian Alert Weeds, State Prohibited Weeds, Regionally Prohibited Weeds, Regionally Controlled Weeds, Restricted Weeds and Noxious Aquatic Species.

Victorian Alert Weeds – These are potential weeds of the future. They may pose a serious threat to Victoria's agricultural and natural assets or could affect human health. They may be naturalised in small numbers but are still to be eradicated, or have not yet reached

Victoria but present a potentially huge risk. A rapid assessment process has focused on 410 of these species.

Declared noxious weeds in Victoria – are plants that have been proclaimed under the Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Act 1994. These weeds cause environmental or economic harm or have the potential to cause such harm. They can also present risks to human health. The CaLP Act defines four categories of noxious weeds and one species comes under the Fisheries Act. (The next five categories have a legal status).

The regions referred to are the ten catchment regions in Victoria. Each region recommends to the Minister, through a Catchment Management Authority (CMA), which plants should be declared noxious weeds, and the categories in which they should be placed.

State Prohibited Weeds – These weeds either do not occur in

Victoria but pose a significant threat if they invade, or are present, pose a serious threat and can reasonably be expected to be eradicated. If present, infestations of a State Prohibited Weed are relatively small. They are to be eradicated if possible from Victoria or excluded from the State. The Victorian Government is responsible for their eradication, but under Section 70(1) of the CaLP Act it may direct land owners to prevent their growth and spread. (Prevent their growth and spread also applies to Regionally Prohibited Weeds, Regionally Controlled Weeds and Restricted Weeds).

Regionally Prohibited Weeds – In general Regionally Prohibited Weeds are not widely distributed in a region but are capable of spreading further. It is reasonable to expect that they can be eradicated from a region and they must be managed with that purpose. Landowners, including public

authorities responsible for crown land management, must eradicate or control these weeds on their lands. Private landholders are responsible for control on private land but not on roadsides. Weed management responsibilities are currently being clarified between Department of Sustainability and Environment and Local Government.

Regionally Controlled Weeds –

These weeds are usually widespread and are considered important in a particular region. To prevent their spread continuing control measures are required. Landowners have the responsibility to take all reasonable steps to control and prevent the spread and growth of regionally controlled weeds on their land and the roadsides that adjoin their land. However, certain roadsides are exempt.

Restricted Weeds – This category includes weeds that are a serious threat to primary production, crown land, the environment or community health in another State or Territory of Australia they have

the potential to spread into or within Victoria, and pose an unacceptable risk of spreading in this State or to other parts of Australia if they were to be sold or traded in Victoria. Trade in these weeds, and materials containing them, are prohibited.

Fisheries Act Noxious Aquatic Species – These weeds pose a serious threat to a fishery, the aquatic environment or human health. It is an offence to bring them into Victoria or possess, sell, transport or release them.

*Classification of declared noxious weeds in Victoria is under the **Catchment and Land Protection Act**, proclaimed in Victorian Government Gazettes of 18 December 1997, 22 May 2003, 27 October 2005 and 5 April 2006, and plants declared Noxious Aquatic Species under the Fisheries Act 1995.*

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Further Information

Many Landcare Notes on particular weed species are available from DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au>. General information on weeds can be found in the following Landcare Notes :

LC0171: What is a weed?

LC0254: How weeds spread

LC0267: Weed management early identification of plants (Update 10/2007)

LC0172: How to manage weeds

LC0266: Weed management: evaluating the problem

LC0252: Declared noxious weeds

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